

## Frequently Asked Questions for UPLIFT 2024 Rolling Application Cycle

These FAQs have been compiled based on questions DHCD has received in regard to the 2024 UPLIFT Program. As more questions are asked, the Department will release updated versions of the FAQs. Questions may be sent to [uplift.dhcd@maryland.gov](mailto:uplift.dhcd@maryland.gov).

### FAQs as of March 25, 2024

#### Application Process

**Question:** What is the application process?

**Answer:** The application process is as follows:

1. Read the entire [Program Guide](#), review application forms and [UPLIFT website](#).
2. Put together your project's scope of work, development plan, and financials.
3. Schedule a [Pre-Application Meeting](#) to discuss your prospective project and its fit for the UPLIFT program, including program details, an estimated timeline, and financing.
  - a. In advance of the Pre-Application Meeting, you will provide the information listed in the following question.
4. If the proposed project is considered ready, you will submit an [Electronic Application Submission Request Form](#)
5. After you complete the Pre-Application Meeting, you will receive a link to submit an Electronic Application

**Question:** How do you request a pre-application meeting?

**Answer:** You may fill out the [Pre-Application Meeting](#) Request to schedule your pre-application meeting. In preparation for your Pre-Application Meeting, you must send the following to [uplift.dhcd@maryland.gov](mailto:uplift.dhcd@maryland.gov) two business days prior to your meeting. Additionally, you are expected to have read the entire [Program Guide](#) prior to your appointment.

Required Information:

- Project site (include city, county, and address - please ensure your project is in an [qualified area](#))
- Project site map
- Number of units
- Project type (acquisition/rehabilitation or new construction)
- Development team
- Project economics (if you do not have your own, please use our [template](#))

Optional information:

- Meeting agenda
- Project Narrative including:
  - Site Characteristics (environmental; physical condition, etc.)
  - Number of vacancies in project area
  - Anticipated Scope of Work (overall program; green features; accessibility)
  - Current Occupancy (physical, economic, etc.)
  - Acquisition (appraisal, market, etc.)
  - Estimated Schedule/Timeline
- Site Photos
- Anticipated Waivers
- Other Issues/Questions

**Question:** How do I submit an application?

**Answer:** After you complete your Pre-Application Meeting, you may complete the [Electronic Application Submission Request Form](#) to request access to the online application platform, which is divided into subfolders to mirror the application submission kit. This process will be discussed in further detail during the Pre-Application Meeting.

**Question:** Can I submit applications for multiple projects?

**Answer:** Yes.

**Question:** Where can I send the application fee?

**Answer:** Application fees must be made payable to the Community Development Administration or CDA and remitted directly to the attention of:

Community Development Administration  
 Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development  
 Post Office Box 2524  
 Landover Hills, MD 20784

**Question:** Can electronic signatures be used, or are original signatures required?

**Answer:** UPLIFT applications may be executed by electronic signature, which shall be considered an original signature for all purposes and shall have the same force and effect as an original signature. Without limitation, "electronic signature" shall include electronically scanned and transmitted versions (e.g., via pdf) of an original signature and any typed signature, including any electric symbol or process adopted by either party with the intent to sign the Commitment, including the use of DocuSign or other similar programs.

**Question:** Does the hard copy of the application need to be submitted at the same time as the electronic submission?

**Answer:** Yes, the physical copy should arrive within a day of the electronic submission.

**Question:** Do development teams have to be based in Maryland or can developers from other states apply for UPLIFT?

**Answer:** Developers based in other states can apply for UPLIFT. With that being said, local knowledge is especially valuable in UPLIFT's program model.



## **Threshold Criteria**

**Question:** Who is eligible to apply for UPLIFT?

**Answer:** UPLIFT engages affordable housing developers to renovate and build single-family houses in targeted neighborhoods. Development teams must consist of a developer, builder/general contractor, architect, Neighborhood Engagement Facilitator, and marketing and sales entity. A single entity may fill more than one role. Each development team member must have had experience as a significant participant or developer in comparably scaled projects that built, or significantly renovated housing of the type proposed within the last five years. One of those projects must have entailed at least three units.

**Question:** Can vacant land be an eligible project site for UPLIFT?

**Answer:** Yes, as long as it is in an UPLIFT [Qualified Area](#).

**Question:** Are duplexes and triplexes eligible building types for UPLIFT?

**Answer:** Yes, as long as the units will be independently owned.

**Question:** Is factory-built/manufactured housing an eligible project type for UPLIFT?

**Answer:** Yes, but design and construction criteria will require further discussion.

**Question:** How can I meet the site control requirements?

**Answer:** The application must demonstrate that the developer has direct control of at least 70% of all vacant properties in the defined Project Area. Waivers may be requested for projects where the developer demonstrates critical mass to the Project Area but does not meet the 70% requirement. Acceptable evidence of site control includes deeds, contracts of sale, leases, purchase options, land disposition agreements, letters of intent, and other similar agreements from a local government, or other evidence at DHCD's discretion. The application will include an Acquisition Schedule including a complete roster of all such properties, current ownership, and a projection of how and by when it will be conveyed to the applicant.

**Question:** Are environmental assessments required for project applications?

**Answer:** Due diligence, which entails the consideration of the environmental and health risks a site/project may pose, is required. For the application, the threshold requirement is completion of the program's environmental checklist. Subsequently, further assessment may be required based on the specific character of the site. The specific requirements for a site will be determined on a site-by-site basis starting with the developer's application followed in underwriting by DHCD.

**Question:** What is the difference between the Neighborhood Engagement Plan and the Neighborhood Plan Alignment?

**Answer:** The objective of the "Neighborhood Engagement Plan" is not to duplicate the role of a community-based organization or to have the developer undertake an extensive community organizing effort. It is primarily to ensure that homebuyers are connected to their neighbors and to local institutions. It is also to ensure that residents in the neighborhood are aware of how they might become homeowners, or get considered for employment or contracting opportunities.



**Question:** What is the role of local governments in UPLIFT?

**Answer:** Local jurisdictions are critical partners in the UPLIFT model. In many projects, local governments will be important for site assemblage and site control. Local infrastructure investments are encouraged as a source of leveraging.

### **Waivers**

**Question:** Can I apply for UPLIFT if my project exceeds the 25 unit limit?

**Answer:** You may request a waiver. Your project's waiver request is more likely to be approved if your appraisal gap is below \$50,000. Program funding is limited, so we anticipate holding the cap on the award at \$1.25 million.

**Question:** When are waivers due?

**Answer:** Waiver requests do not have a firm deadline. Applicants should submit waiver requests as soon as possible, since the approval or denial of a waiver may have a material impact on the project's feasibility.

