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# Housing Finance Authority Submits \$67 Million Electrical Grid Action Plan for Federal Approval

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**High voltage transmission lines for electric power. By. GETTY IMAGES**

The V.I. Housing Finance Authority announced Thursday that it closed off 2022 with the submission of a finalized Electrical Power Systems Enhancement and Improvement Action Plan to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development that ultimately determines how \$67 million in CDBG-DR funding awarded to the territory for unmet energy infrastructure needs will be spent.

The funding was appropriated by Congress in response to the storms of 2017. Within the plan, \$53 million is proposed for the installation of new conventional generation and battery energy storage to improve reliability at the Estate Richmond Power Plant on St. Croix while \$10 million will be

put toward independent, community-oriented local projects that will benefit the electrical grid. The balance of the \$67M will be used for planning and administration of the grant funds, V.I.H.F.A. said.

“Energy reliability is one of our territory’s most pressing concerns, and being able to partner with the V.I. Water and Power Authority and make investments in the installation of new and efficient generation capacity will yield tangible improvements for the people of the Virgin Islands,” stated the authority's interim executive director Dayna Clendinen.

Expanding those efforts beyond WAPA is a community innovation component which allows local entities – businesses and non-profits, for example – to offer new solutions and apply for the federal funding needed to implement them, the authority said.

“This component is significant because it paves the way for the development of innovative projects that can begin to meet the energy needs of our communities in ways that may supplement WAPA’s efforts,” Ms. Clendinen added.

According to the release, once formal approval of the plan by HUD is received and a grant agreement executed, VIHFA will begin accepting applications. These will be reviewed for eligibility and compliance with federal requirements and undergo a capacity and environmental assessment. VIHFA anticipates funding awards to be made in the Spring of 2023.