

Rivers House Project Timeline (Capital, Governance & Funding Plan)

3-Year Phased Development Plan

This timeline is an estimated planning framework and is subject to change based on the funding ability, legal review, construction progress, and city approval.

Overall Project Goal

The goal of the Rivers House Committee is to achieve full occupancy, programming, and operational readiness within approximately 36 months of a formal agreement with the City. Early phases will focus on organization, fundraising, grant readiness, and community engagement before any major construction begins.

PHASE 1: Foundational & Organizational Phase (0–12 Months)

Primary Focus: Agreements, Organization, Branding, Fundraising, and Grant Readiness

(No major construction during this phase)

Governance & City Coordination

- Finalize agreement and working framework with the City
- Establish nonprofit structure, board roles, and committee responsibilities
- Maintain regular coordination meetings with City staff and grant writer
- Clarify roles between the City (building owner) and nonprofit (operator)

Branding, Vision & Public Awareness

- Establish official name, brand identity, and messaging
- Develop website, social media, and core communication materials
- Create a clear public vision narrative based on the council-approved concept
- Install on-site signage to communicate the vision and gather community interest and support
- Schedule volunteer presence and informational engagement opportunities on-site and at park events

Fundraising & Community Support

- Launch initial fundraising campaigns and donor outreach
- Develop sponsorship and founding donor opportunities
- Begin grassroots fundraising and membership efforts
- Conduct community presentations and outreach to civic and local organizations

Planning & Pre-Construction Preparation

- Clarify intended building uses for the Building Official and engineering team
- Identify and engage engineers and architects (estimated design and engineering costs: \$40,000–\$75,000)
- Coordinate with the City on bid processes for engineering and architectural services
- Evaluate interim storage solutions for future equipment and operational needs (if necessary)
- Identify potential future vendors or partners for outdoor recreation components (long-term phase)

Grant Preparation (Major Priority)

- Work closely with the City's grant writer
- Prepare and coordinate applications for:
 - CDBG Grants
 - CRA Funding
 - Clay County support and tourism-related funding
 - Florida Division of Historical Resources Grants
- Use engineering and design information to strengthen grant applications and project justification

PHASE 2: Funding, Design & Exterior Progress Phase (13–24 Months)

Primary Focus: Securing Funding and Advancing Design and Exterior Improvements

- Continue applying for grants based on funding cycles and eligibility timelines
- Expand fundraising campaigns, sponsorships, and membership programs
- Refine final project scope based on awarded funding and City coordination
- Advertise and solicit contractor bids using engineered and approved plans
- Partner with local garden clubs, civic groups, and sponsors to enhance exterior appearance and demonstrate visible progress on the property
- Begin exterior improvements, site work, and approved construction activities (pending funding, approvals, and City coordination)

PHASE 3: Interior Construction & Occupancy Phase (25–36 Months)

Primary Focus: Final Rehabilitation, Compliance, and Launch Preparation

- Begin interior construction and rehabilitation of the historic structure (pending secured funding)
- Complete accessibility, life safety, and public facility improvements
- Finalize interior spaces for education, exhibits, visitor information, and community use
- Coordinate inspections, code compliance, and occupancy approvals with City staff
- Establish an official occupancy timeline and phased opening plan
- Prepare for operational launch aligned with mission and staffing capacity