

**City of Cleveland Heights  
Citizens Advisory Committee  
September 6, 2016  
Executive Conference Room, Cleveland Heights City Hall**

MEMBERS PRESENT

David Benson	Robin Koslen
Vetella Camper	Allison McCallum
Kim DeNero-Ackroyd	Marian Morton
Douglas Dykes	T. Nadas
Bradley Eckert	Donalene Poduska
Dawn Ellis	Amanda Shaffer
Cory Farmer	Steve Titchenal
Jonathan Goldman	Meg Vanderbilt
Christine Henry	Parker Zabell

MEMBERS ABSENT

Gail Larson (exc.)	Katura Simmons
Menachem Lubling (exc.)	Sarah West (exc.)

STAFF PRESENT

Nancy McLaughlin

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Allison McCallum called the meeting to order. Secretary Amanda Shaffer called the roll; a quorum was present.

MINUTES

Minutes from the August 9, 2016 and August 16, 2016 meetings were approved as presented.

STAFF REPORT

Nancy McLaughlin reviewed the financial statement noting that there were no unusual expenditures. She is hopeful that our expenditures will bring us closer to meeting the timeliness goal by October 31.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS

Allison McCallum asked that the subcommittees present their reports.

**Finance and Other Subcommittee Report**

Committee members: Douglas Dykes (Chair); Kim DeNero-Ackroyd (Vice Chair); Donalene Poduska, Menachem Lubling, T. Nadas (Committee Members)

<u>Year 43</u>	<u>Request</u>	<u>Committee's Recommendations</u>
CDBG Admin.	\$149,400	\$149,400 (full)
Fair Housing	\$8,500	\$8,500 (full)
GIS	\$76,770	\$32,770 (partial)
Cleve. Ten. Org.	\$7,000	\$7,000 (full)
Hts. Comm. Congress	\$13,000	\$6,000 (partial)
Future Hts. Comm. Capacity	\$46,000	\$30,000 (partial)
Future Hts. Ec. Dev.	\$50,000	\$0 (none)
Street Resurfacing	\$250,000	\$250,000 (full)

**CDBG Administration**

Funding request: \$149,400 + \$8,500

Recommendation: \$149,400 (Full)

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regulations and guidelines require that an entitlement community receiving CDGB funds provide administration for the general management of the funds, oversight and coordination of recipients, and regulatory reporting. The request for \$149,400 includes salaries and operating costs for CDBG administration. The subcommittee continues to be impressed with the outstanding professional administration of the block grant programs. The CDBG administration-funding request is an appropriate and necessary expense for the program and is completely reliant on CDBG dollars. The subcommittee supports the full funding request of the CDBG Administration.

Funding request: \$8,500

Recommendation: \$8,500 (Full)

**Fair housing activities** are a HUD requirement for CDGB funding. The Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing identifies areas that need to be addressed. The \$8,500 request for 2017 would be to conduct 10 citywide audits. The subcommittee supports the full funding request of the Fair Housing Activities.

### **Geographic Information System (GIS)**

Funding request: \$76,770

Recommendation: \$32,770 (Partial)

The City of Cleveland Heights seeks to purchase GIS software (license) and support 50% of the salary of a full-time GIS Analyst/Manager. The software and staff person is needed to manage volumes of data, which will be used to support various city programs and activities. Effective management of such data will encourage synergy between City departments and its partners. Over the last few years, the City has attempted to work with Cuyahoga County Government on this initiative, but has been unsuccessful.

The subcommittee is encouraged and supports the City's GIS initiative and recommends to fund the personnel cost for the GIS Analyst/Manager. This recommendation supports the City's partial request in the amount of \$32,770. At this time, the subcommittee would ask the City to conduct additional research and analysis regarding the purchase of the software and to approach the CAC in CDBG Year 43, if needed. The subcommittee's approach will also allow the new GIS Analyst/Manager to weigh-in on the selection of software.

### **Cleveland Tenants Organization**

Funding request: \$7,000

Recommendation: \$7,000 (Full)

The Cleveland Tenants Organization (CTO) provides critical services to Cleveland Heights residents. The organization informs tenants of their rights and duties in rental housing by means of face-to-face and phone counseling, email communication and workshop presentations. Their services focus on remedies under local, state and Federal landlord/tenant laws. CTO also resolves disputes for both landlords and tenants. CTO has requested \$7,000 from CDBG for Year 43. The subcommittee supports the full funding request of CTO.

In the 42nd year of CDBG, the CTO anticipates serving up to 400 Cleveland Heights residents, 62.5% of who are designated as "Low and Moderate Income."

CTO is critical to the preservation and maintenance of Cleveland Heights housing stock and the creating of housing opportunities in the city. Ensuring and informing citizens of their rights is a critical to head-off discrimination and disparate treatment. CTO has demonstrated that they continue to provide a critical service to both landlords and tenants within the Cleveland Heights community and throughout the greater Cleveland area.

### **Heights Community Congress (HCC)**

Funding request: \$13,000

Recommendation: \$6,000 (Partial)

HCC is an advocate for social justice, through monitoring fair housing activities and serving as facilitator for building communities. HCC serves a vital role through the generation of conversations that are geared towards race relations. With recent US tension in both Black and Blue Lives Matters and the upcoming Presidential election, venues where people have an opportunity to dialogue are key.

HCC has increased their presence and is beginning to exhibit ROI on some of their initiatives. The Oxford Permaculture Program had about 20 students and their parents; 7 to 8 adults took the class offered. The Home and Garden Tour welcomed approximately 1,000 visitors. The event at Obama yielded 35 participants, and 80 individuals experienced The Ensemble Play.

In addition, HCC is beginning to comprehensively work towards identifying and addressing relevant issues facing our schools, and ultimately facing our community. They have reached out to University Circle Inc., courting them to assist Cleveland Heights residences with mortgages for people purchasing in the Oxford and Noble neighborhoods.

Overall the subcommittee is committed to the support of HCC, and we are encouraged by much of their recent and current activities. With that said, the subcommittee continues to emphasize that HCC must maintain a focus on, "To What End?" Dialogue is necessary, but measured outcomes must include behavior changes as a part of HCC's equation. The subcommittee is encouraged and willing to support the partial funding of \$6,000 for HCC.

### **FutureHeights (FH) Community Capacity Building**

Funding request: \$46,000

Recommendation: \$30,000 (Partial)

FutureHeights understands the vitality of cohesive, strong and actionable neighborhoods. Cleveland Heights vitality continues to be challenged because of shifting demographics, the remnants of the housing crises, unemployment, increase poverty, decrease in home ownership, etc. FH envisions Cleveland Heights as the core of the region's cultural and intellectual scene, with thriving local business, attractive neighborhoods, strong connections with neighboring communities, and a deeply engaged citizenry. FH wants to focus on the assets of each neighborhood, and build up leadership in each individual neighborhood to strengthen the entire City.

FH capacity building initiative includes facilitating the development of and strengthening of neighborhood groups, assisting these neighborhood groups in developing neighborhood plans, prioritizing related issues, etc.

The subcommittee supports FH Community Capacity Building in the amount of \$30,000, which is a little more than 65% of their request and is at the current level of support for HC for CDBG Year 42.

### **FutureHeights (FH) Economic Development**

Funding request: \$50,000

Recommendation: \$0 (None)

Although FH's request for Economic Development funding is understood, the subcommittee couldn't in good conscience support this request at this time, due to the recent hires of the City's Economic Develop Director and Business Development Manager. The subcommittee does not support funding, at this time.

### **Street Rehabilitation**

Funding request: \$250,000

Recommendation: \$250,000 (Full)

The City is seeking CDBG funding for pavement improvements for Coventry Road. Coventry Road has reached a state of disrepair. It is a main thoroughfare of Cleveland Heights, and is host to one of the most unique business districts in the city. The proposed project will include the resurfacing of the road and improvements to pedestrian safety including new Americans with Disabilities Act

(ADA) sidewalk ramps at all intersections. CDBG funding will assist in driving total funding of \$1,965,000 for the entire cost of the project.

The subcommittee recommends full funding of \$250,000.

**Commercial Areas Subcommittee Report**

**Committee Members:** Amanda Shaffer (Chair), Jonathan Goldman (Vice Chair), Meg Vanderbilt, Dawn Ellis

**Meeting date and Committee Members present:** 30 August 2016 – all members present

<b>YR (42) Applicants</b>	<b>Request</b>	<b>Interviewer(s)</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Vote</b> (yes, no, abstain)
City Economic Development Programs	\$355,094	Dawn Ellis, Amanda Shaffer	\$355,094	YES: 4 of 4
Cedar Taylor Development Association	\$30,000	Meg Vanderbilt, Amanda Shaffer	\$10,000 plus \$5,000 if matched	YES: 4 of 4
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$385,094</b>			

**Name of Applicant: City of Cleveland Heights – Economic Development Programs**

**Amount of Request: \$355,094**

- \$225,000 Storefront Renovation Program
- \$ 5,200 Operating Expenses
- \$40,000 Storefront Renovation Program Consultant
- \$84,894 Economic Development
  - \$63,532 Director
  - \$21,362 Business Development Manager

**Recommendation: \$355,094**

**Report of Vote: All 4 members agreed and voted yes on this recommendation**

**Short description of the request:** The City’s request is for staffing and funds to implement successful economic development programs that CDBG funds have

invested in over the past number of years. While the Economic Development request in Year 42 was significantly lower due to staff vacancies, 100% of the Year 42 funding will be expended to the benefit of several neighborhoods in the city (see attached). The Commercial Loan and Storefront Renovation programs generate much needed improvements in our commercial districts as well as private investment in our city by requiring matching funds from participants. The subcommittee strongly believes that it is important to leverage dollars already invested and perpetuate a cycle of improvements created by these programs in the City.

The Year 43 request includes a much needed investment in the staff required to implement and expand the reach of the Economic Development program. With the addition of a Business Development Manager to address the ongoing needs of our existing businesses, the Economic Development Director will be able to focus on redevelopment, revitalization, and attracting new business to our city. Due to long-term, unavoidable city budget reductions, our economic development staffing is far below that of comparable inner ring suburbs, forcing reactive responses rather than proactive outreach.

**Rationale for committee recommendation:** Investment in economic development has been a long-time core value of CDGB fund allocation. In meeting with the subcommittee the city manager indicated that the decision making around economic development planning, and the Year 43 request, was data driven and aligned with the city's strategic goals. Professional staff is an essential component for well-run programs, new business generation, and maintaining the success of our existing businesses all of which would be supported through the Year 43 funding.

The City continues to demonstrate good oversight with the Storefront and Loan programs and endeavors to work with building owners on larger projects rather than the tenants, so that investments remain in the city even if a business should leave or close. The subcommittee sees tremendous value in the economic development programs the city offers and supports the strategic expansion of program staffing to make an even greater impact in the city.

**Name of Applicant: Cedar Taylor Development Association (CTDA)**  
**Amount of Request: \$30,000**  
**Recommendation: \$10,000 plus \$5,000 if funds are matched**

**Report of Vote: All 4 members agreed and voted yes on this recommendation**

**Short description of the request:** The Cedar Taylor Development Association requested \$30,000 in Year 43 to continue the implementation of the Streetscape Improvement Plan they began planning for 3 years ago. The CTDA has successfully created a commercial district, complete with branding and an identity, where none existed before. The first wave of improvements are now installed and the area has come alive with 15 banners, 16 planters, 5 bike racks, and 4 benches. All CDBG funds received have been used to implement and maintain the streetscape plan, with no salary or other overhead expenses. The CTDA has obtained cash donations from 25 of the 52 storefronts and the board and other volunteers donate time and energy planning, planting flowers, and cleaning up the neighborhood. In 2016 the planters were planted with over \$1,000 worth of flowers contributed as a donation from Bremec Garden Centers. The Year 43 request would fund the purchase and installation of the remaining planters, banners, bike racks and benches in the recommended locations from the Streetscape Improvement Plan (see attached). The cost per unit of the unifying streetscape items are: \$370 per planter, \$775 per bench, \$1525 per bike rack, \$250 per banner sign. The request also includes public art in the form of a mural (see attached) for which CDTA has already raised \$1,000 through a mini-grant from FutureHeights. The CTDA also continues to reach out to the city of University Heights to increase the collaboration, and funding for improvements to the neighborhood.

**Rationale for committee recommendation:** The subcommittee is extremely impressed with the continued growth of the CTDA. They have leveraged the CDBG investment by raising funds through donations, grants and volunteer services.

Their membership is now almost 50% of businesses in the district with 25 paying members out of an estimated 52 storefronts. The subcommittee recommends that we encourage their continued success and capitalize on their momentum by remaining committed to the completion of the Streetscape Improvement Plan for 3 years. With unlimited funds the subcommittee would wholeheartedly recommend funding the full \$30,000 request, but in light of the limited CDBG resources the committee recommends \$10,000 with an additional \$5000 commitment contingent upon CTDC raising \$5000 in matching donations.

Business in the district have successfully utilized the City’s economic development programs to renovate property demonstrating how multiple programs funded by CDBG monies intersect for a positive impact in our city. While work remains to be done in this commercial area, the subcommittee believes that the continued support for the CTDA with CDBG funds would help sustain and grow the initial investments made by the city.

**Neighborhood Activities Subcommittee Report**

**Subcommittee Members:** Cory Farmer (Chair), Christine Henry (Vice Chair), Marian Morton, Sarah West, Gail Larson, Bradley Eckert, Robin Koslen, Katura Simmons

**Meeting Date:** August 30th, 2016

**Members Present:** Cory Farmer, Christine Henry, Marian Morton, Sarah West, Gail Larson, Bradley Eckert, Robin Koslen

<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Request</b>	<b>Interviewer(s)</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Vote (Yes-No-Abstain)</b>
Family Connections	\$30,000	Marian Morton	\$30,000	7-0-0
Gesher	\$25,000	Cory Farmer, Christine Henry	\$10,000	4-2-0
Heights Emergency Food Center	\$19,645	Robin Koslen	\$19,645	7-0-0
Heights Youth Club	\$68,145	Sarah West	\$35,000	7-0-0
Lake Erie Ink	\$8,872	Bradley Eckert	\$8,872	7-0-0
Office On Aging	\$25,000	Marian Morton	\$25,000	7-0-0
Open Doors Academy	\$15,000	Gail Larson	\$15,000	7-0-0
Start Right CDC	\$10,000	Cory Farmer	\$10,000	7-0-0

<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Request</b>	<b>Interviewer(s)</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Vote (Yes-No-Abstain)</b>
Triple Threat Kingdom Sorority	\$78,000	Christine Henry	\$0	7-0-0

## **FAMILY CONNECTIONS**

### **REQUEST \$30,000 RECOMMENDATION \$30,000**

Family Connections serves the youngest Cleveland Heights residents and their families. The Family School Connection program, specifically, eases the transition of children and families to kindergarten, especially difficult for children with no pre-school experience.

Academic expectations for today's five-year-olds are high. For example, at the beginning of kindergarten, a child should be able to "recognize the difference between letters and words" and "with modeling and support, use a combination of drawing, dictating and emergent writing"; by the end of kindergarten, a child should be able to write "a meaningful, legible sentence using upper case letters, spacing and punctuation marks." However, according to the latest data from the Ohio Department of Education, 88 of 400 Cleveland Heights-University Heights kindergarteners were "not on track for reading at grade level" at the start of kindergarten. At the same time, the family members of many of these children were economically disadvantaged or otherwise stressed. This combination can spell academic difficulties for children and the school district down the line. The Family School Connection seeks to get students "on track" with programs that engage both families and children: Kindergarten Kickoff, ABC's of Kindergarten, Kindergarten Discovery, and Home Visits.

Believing that strong students and strong families help create a strong community, Family Connections requests funding for the Family Liaison staff, based in every elementary school, who work closely with classroom teachers, administrators, and family members.

## **GESHER**

### **REQUEST \$25,000 RECOMMENDATION \$10,000**

Gesher is a five year old organization whose mission as a benefits and resource center is to help families in need to access assistance programs that will aid them in achieving stability. Gesher works with several organizations and services such as WIC, HEAP, Cleveland Housing Network, Ohio Benefits Bank, and Neighborhood Family Practice. Gesher serves 10-15 clients per day, and expects to have helped over 500 families by the end of this year. While Gesher originally

was founded to help members of the Jewish community, it serves all people who seek its services. Geshher is requesting \$25,000 towards hiring additional staff to work with its growing clientele.

When asked of its role as a referral agency, the interviewees highlighted their organization's role as advocates for their clients. When benefits and services are in high demand, bottleneaking the output of case workers, Geshher advocates for clients in order to expedite application processing. The interviewees pointed to the fact that organizations around the country are modeling their programs on Geshher's work. Geshher fills a gap by helping applicants understand which benefits they qualify for, and by helping them choose programs that will actually prove to be advantageous.

### **HEIGHTS EMERGENCY FOOD CENTER**

#### **REQUEST \$19,645 RECOMMENDATION \$19,645**

Heights Emergency Food center functions differently than many food pantries in that the pantry area is not open for individuals to "shop" for their food but the food is given from predetermined categories in predetermined allotments. The amount of food given to the individuals/families is determined by the size of the family unit and availability of food beyond those received from the county food bank. The bulk of the food comes from the county food bank but donations are secured from individuals and groups. There is a local magistrate who requires young folks to donate food to the food center as a part of their community service sentencing. The volunteers attempt to give clients as much choice as possible within the predetermined categories of food. They also encourage clients not to take items if they are unlikely to use them.

Heights Emergency Food Center is manned by volunteers. There are no paid staff members. The organization clearly works on a limited budget. There has been a decrease in the number of families served by the organization this past year. Perhaps the improved economy has created less of a need. The food center services clients of many ages, ethnic groups along with some of the refugees in the area.

### **HEIGHTS YOUTH CLUB**

#### **REQUEST \$68,145 RECOMMENDATION \$35,000**

Heights Youth Club (HYC) is an agency which aims to provide a safe space for youth to learn and develop skills related to education, interpersonal growth, and community involvement. HYC seeks CDBG funding for Project Learn, a Boys & Girls Clubs of America modeled program which will address academic underperformance in the CHUH school district. Through daily mandatory homework support sessions and learning activities HYC aims to increase the

number of students who pass state-administered tests and improve graduation rates. Project Learn will be open to all youth ages 6-18 who reside in Cleveland Heights and/or attend a school within the CHUH school district.

While Heights Youth Club does duplicate other programming offered in Cleveland Heights, past performance and present demand attest to the need for Project Learn. While HYC has benefitted from CDBG funding in the past, the agency will not modify Project Learn if CDBG funding is not awarded. While the subcommittee could not recommend the requested amount of \$68,145, members unanimously agreed upon the past efficacy of and future need for HYC's programming.

### **LAKE ERIE INK**

#### **REQUEST \$8,872 RECOMMENDATION \$8,872**

This grant request is for support of the Ink Spot after school program at Noble Elementary to continue for another year, with a goal of enrolling 25 students for Year 43; the program's goal in Year 42 was 20 students, although 26 students enrolled and exceeded anticipated demand. The expectation is that 80% of those enrolled at Noble will continue to be LMI. The program will continue two days per week (Tuesday & Thursday) and include adding a staff member to serve as an assistant to work with the larger class size of students from Noble. Homework assistance will continue to be half of the programming, along with creative expression opportunities for participants (e.g., writing, theater, music, and digital media). Currently, there is only one staff person, so the addition of a second staff member will lower the teacher-to-student ratio and allow for more hands-on learning and engagement with the students.

During the past year, the program reported positive outcomes including a 100% reporting of each child learning something new about writing, that each child wishes to write more following enrollment in the program, and that each child took at least one creative risk of trying something new since enrolling in Ink Spot. Now moving into its third year, the program has proven to be a successful entity that not only provides students with opportunities for academic enrichment and creative expression in a safe environment, but also the ability to build relationships with their fellow peers.

The recommendation of \$8,872 continues the level of funding provided by CDBG last year of \$6,780, plus the partial support of the Ink Spot Assistant. Without CDBG funding, it is likely that the Ink Spot at Noble would be reduced in enrollment or eliminated.

### **OFFICE ON AGING**

#### **REQUEST \$25,000 RECOMMENDATION \$25,000**

The Cleveland Heights Office on Aging serves the city's oldest residents with a wide variety of programs, ranging from table tennis to studio art to music lessons. The office is requesting funds for the salaries of two part-time social workers who help those who need services beyond education and recreation. These services include Meals on Wheels, advice and assistance on housing and legal problems, and transportation to local stores and medical offices. Social workers also refer seniors to the appropriate benefit providers and to other agencies, including Jewish Family Services, Legal Aid, and the County Board of Health. More than 500 residents used these services in 2015.

In 2016, the office received two new grants – one from the Ohio Arts Council for a storytelling project involving seniors and one from Cuyahoga County to support regional planning for volunteers. However, the office currently has only one full-time staff member, the director, and seven part-time employees. The two part-time social workers are completely funded by block grant monies; the office is requesting only \$25,000 because of \$33,000 in roll-over funds.

This is a small investment in Cleveland Heights' aging population with a substantial return for the community: a growing number of seniors who can remain healthy and safe in their own homes.

### **OPEN DOORS ACADEMY**

#### **REQUEST \$15,000 RECOMMENDATION \$15,000**

Open Doors Academy (ODA) provides support services to low and moderate income middle and high school students living in at-risk environments. 95% of ODA students live in "below poverty" households, 92% are African American and 70% are from single-parent homes. ODA bridges the gap between home and school and provides a network of support throughout the adolescent years. This support network impacts a child's academic performance and their overall social and emotional development. All of the activities that the ODA lists in its application directly support their goal to support the students to achieve academic success, to strengthen their personal skills and give them opportunities to see what the world has to offer. Families must commit to supporting their child if they are enrolled in ODA.

ODA uses the funds they receive from CDBG for staffing at their Middle School locations, St. Paul's Episcopal Church and Monticello Middle School. 100% of the enrolled students are Cleveland Heights residents. Currently, there are 80 openings for students for the 2016-2017 school year. The future goal is to

expand that number to 50 openings at each site—Monticello and St. Paul's Episcopal Church.

ODA is a program that fills a need in our neighborhoods for accessible, structured academic and emotional support for the CH/UH middle school students. Every student in our district deserves access to explore all the opportunities this world has to offer—to be given hope for their future. ODA has a proven plan and deserves our full support. In Cleveland Heights, there is no greater need than supporting our Youth. If they are engaged in a program like ODA, they have an opportunity to become independent, employed and successful in life.

**START RIGHT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION  
REQUEST \$10,000 RECOMMENDATION \$10,000**

Start Right Community Development Corporation is an organization which aims to develop programs that will help low and moderate income families in blighted areas. While covering a large span of community issues, Start Right CDC is requesting a total amount of \$10,000 for its Hunger Relief program. This program will provide a site for free lunch for children during the summer for 7 weeks, and 6 days during Winter Break. Start Right CDC's Hunger Relief program will also provide a 3 day supply of food options to families and individuals once per month throughout the year. If funded, this money will be used for operating expenses. Start Right CDC's Hunger Relief program will not be modified if full funding is not received, as Start Right CDC also seeks funding through church donations and community contributions. Start Right CDC has lowered program costs by acquiring free and low cost food items from the Cleveland Food Bank.

When asked about challenges the program faces, Executive Director Rev. Jimmie Hicks Jr. pointed to food storage, transportation and utilities as major concerns. Through past CDBG funding, Start Right CDC has been able to acquire an energy efficient, commercial grade freezer for perishables. The number of freezers operating at all times, and the need to adequately heat waiting areas during Hunger Center programming contribute to the request of funds for Utilities. Executive Director Hicks expressed his intent to implement a motorized rail system to transport food from ground level to the lower level area where Hunger Center programming is held. Cleaning and recycling packaging after programming was also seen as an area where the applicant seeks modification/improvement.

Start Right CDC states that each year the number of individuals reached by its program has increased. This program does duplicate other services offered in

the City of Cleveland Heights, namely the Heights Emergency Food Center. However, given the program's location, unique experience and continual growth, full funding is recommended for Start Right CDC's hunger relief program.

**TRIPLE THREAT KINGDOM SORORITY  
REQUEST \$78,000 RECOMMENDATION \$0**

Triple Threat Kingdom SorORITY is a startup whose vision is to provide life skills education to young girls (starting at age 8) and women, including cooking, housekeeping, etiquette, leadership, business development, health, fitness, beauty and fashion, and sports. The idea is that Triple Threat Kingdom SorORITY will operate as a club that meets weekly, with older members paying \$15 per month in membership dues while mentoring younger members. Triple Threat Kingdom Society seeks block grant funding to offer a sixteen-week workshop to twenty 18-28 year old underprivileged women in Cleveland Heights. The workshop will focus on life skills, specifically preparing healthy food and housekeeping. Costs for the program include a professional chef, a nutrition consultant, a hospitality manager, a house mother, kitchen rental, and bus passes.

While Triple Treat Kingdom SorORITY has lofty goals, in the opinion of the subcommittee the organization is not yet stable enough to ask for grants. The organization has four board members, including its Executive Director, Ms. Ballard. Major concerns of the interviewer were the Executive Director's role as board member, the board's size, and the absence of board members who bring specific skills to the organization (such as legal, financial and human resources.) At this time the organization has no funds. During the interview the applicant was advised to take steps toward building a solid base for the organization, like recruiting a strong board, developing a strategic plan, seeking out community partners, and identifying similar organizations. The subcommittee is concerned the organization does not yet have the skills, resources or plan to move forward.

The request of \$78,000 is excessive for a 16-week program serving 20 people. With all taken into consideration the Neighborhood Activities subcommittee recommends no funding for Triple Threat Kingdom SorORITY.

**Preservation and Housing Subcommittee Report**

**Committee Members:** Parker Zabell (Chair), Vetella Camper (Vice Chair), Steve Titchenal, David Benson

**Meeting date and Committee Members present:** 8.26.16 – All Members Present

<b>YR 43 Applicants</b>	<b>Total Request (Individual Request)</b>	<b>Interviewers</b>	<b>Total Recommendations</b>	<b>Vote (yes, no, or abstain)</b>
<b>Home Repair Resource Center (HRRC) Operations + Programs</b>	\$229,251	Full Committee		
HRRC: Operations	\$173,573		\$173,573	4-0
HRRC: Housing Counseling	\$55,678		\$55,678	4-0
<b>Housing Preservation Office (HPO)</b>	\$455,600	Full Committee		
HPO: Operations	\$320,600		\$320,600	4-0
HPO: Paint Program	\$100,000		\$100,000	4-0
HPO: Violation Repair	\$25,000		\$25,000	4-0
HPO: Nuisance Abatement	\$10,000		\$10,000	4-0
LMI Code Enforcement (HPO)	\$60,000		\$60,000	4-0
Neighborhood Relations (HPO)	\$60,000		\$60,000	4-0

**Name of Applicant: Home Repair Resource Center – Operations, Programs, and Grants**

**Amount of Request: \$173,573**

**Recommendation: \$173,573**

**Short description of the request:** HRRC salaries and program expenses are paid out of operations and program funds. The Financial Assistance program (FAP) funds consist of the Deferred Loan Match Benefit program (DMI), the Incentive Grants program (IG) and the Senior Home Stability Grant program. These programs assist LMI homeowners with roof, furnace, masonry and exterior painting projects. HRRC continues its mission to keep Cleveland Heights houses in good repair. In the past 45 years, HRRC has provided almost 1300 loans to homeowners (and produced over \$14 Million in repairs and improvements to homes in Cleveland Heights), and has a default rate of less than 6% with a population deemed un-lendable by the primary lending market.

**Rationale for committee recommendation:** The committee recommends the full funding of \$173,573 for operating expenses, which includes \$30,000 requested for the Assist Incentive Grant (\$10,000), Deferred Loan Match (\$10,000) and the Senior Home Stability Grant (\$10,000) programs. Full funding will guarantee the capability of providing uninterrupted service to those that request home repair assistance.

The Executive Director has expressed a renewed enthusiasm for working in Cleveland Heights first and foremost and has also increased fundraising efforts by asking several organizations (St. Luke's, Gund, Cleveland foundations and Eaton Corporation) for contributions. Through conversation with the Executive Director it is obvious that there is enthusiasm regarding the focus of HRRC's direction.

**Report of Vote:** Unanimous Approval.

**Name of Applicant: Home Repair Resource Center – Housing Counseling Program**

**Amount of Request: \$55,678**

**Recommendation: \$55,678**

**Short description of the request:** HRRC's request for a program director/housing counselor and a housing counselor is due to the involved needs of the down payment assistance program, home buyers education program and

refinancing options. Homeowners receive detailed information for maintaining their properties and making wise home buying decisions prior to purchasing a home. The housing counselors also assist with guiding homeowners in creating a workable household budget along with understanding refinancing options. The housing counseling program was the responsibility of two staff members, but was reduced to 1.5 staff members because of the promotion of one housing counselor to Executive Director. Due to the current need, at this time the Executive Director acts as a part-time housing counselor; and because of the vast responsibilities of the executive director, it would be beneficial for a full-time housing counselor to be hired to directly focus on the stability of the housing programs.

HRRC's Housing Counselor continues to offer a wide variety of classes. Many lenders require these sessions, including Cleveland Heights, who requires any residents using our down payment assistance program to attend HRRC's Housing Counseling. In 2015, HRRC entered into a contract with the City to take over the management of the Down Payment Assistance Program. The numbers of unduplicated Cleveland Heights persons in the application does not currently reflect "intent to buy" in Cleveland Heights and so remains low compared to the overall service numbers. The Executive Director indicated they will begin tracking this more closely to report in future.

**Rationale for committee recommendation:** The goal of the HRRC is to provide solid programs and services for community homeowners. It was emphasized by the Executive Director that HRRC's focus is providing the services necessary in helping LMI and seniors repair and maintain their properties. For 2017 (Year 43), it is estimated that 55-60% of the housing counselor and 75% of the program director/housing counselor's time will be spend on CDBG programs. The request is to fund these positions at 55% and 75% respectively to continue their success for Cleveland Heights residents. The housing counselor is also responsible for overseeing/conducting the classes for Cleveland Heights residents who apply for the Down Payment Assistance Program.

**Report of Vote:** Unanimous Approval.

\*\*\*Note – while the subcommittee believes full funding is deserved, we also understand that some cuts may be required due to constraints in the overall CDBG budget. If Cuts are required, we recommend cutting back operating costs first and funding the grant programs fully because the grant funds go directly back into Cleveland Heights homes in need. In making operating cost cuts, we recommend cutting the Housing Counselor first ONLY because the counselor falls

under the Public Service Activities Cap, and we strongly recommend funding the balance of the operating costs as fully as possible to make up for any such cuts.

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**Name of Applicant: Housing Preservation Office**

**Amount of Request: \$455,600**

**Recommendation: \$455,600**

**Short description of the request:**

- \$320,600 HPO Operating/Staff: Salaries, benefits and operating expenses for housing office.
- \$100,000 Paint Program: LMI owner-occupants age 62+ or disabled eligible for a grant of up to \$3500 for labor and paint. A licensed Lead Paint contractor must be used.
- \$25,000 Violation Repair: Assists senior or disabled homeowners with violation repair.
- \$10,000 Nuisance abatement: Pays for demolition or other abatement at nuisance properties. The requested amount is reduced from past years because there is \$30k-\$40k rollover but Alan believes all requested funds could be used. These funds give the City the tools to respond relatively quickly in the event a serious nuisance needs to be abated.
- No request in Year 43 for sewer remediation because the City of Cleveland is now taking on that responsibility.

The Housing Preservation Office (HPO) offers various programs to assist Cleveland Heights homeowners and residents with repairs to their homes and promotes a healthy housing stock. The HPO staff continues to be responsible for implementing the Deferred Loan Program, Emergency Loan Program, Lead Safe Cuyahoga and Healthy Home programs funded through various federal, county, and state programs.

The CDBG-funded programs that HPO is responsible for include Exterior Paint, Violation Repair for seniors, and Nuisance Abatement. The operating expenses for Staff this year have increased because the City would like to hire a new position for a Rehab Specialist, who would be dedicated to running various rehab programs. The position is required because of a reduction of support staff over the last few years and the 1 Senior Rehab Specialist may be nearing retirement creating a huge need to train a new person. Each rehab project requires a lot of interaction with residents and contractors and it is becoming too much for 1

person to handle. For the on-going success of the programs, a new position is required.

Funds are requested for operating costs for HPO as well as for the Exterior Paint Grants, Violation Repair, and Nuisance Abatement programs.

**Rationale for committee recommendation:**

HPO continues progress on stabilizing our housing stock which is vital to the overall health of the City. Some of the successes of the past year included 25 exterior paint projects, 13 violation repair projects, 7 deferred loan renovations, 1 total home renovation, 13 Lead Safe projects, 12 healthy home projects and 30 demolitions. The HPO staff oversees all of these projects. The demand for the paint program and violation repair remains high, and all available funds continue to be used well before the end of the year for each program.

**Report of Vote:** Unanimous Approval.

\*\*\*Note – while the subcommittee believes full funding is deserved, we also understand that some cuts may be required due to constraints in the overall CDBG budget. If Cuts are required, we recommend cutting back the grant programs to no less than last year's levels to keep these programs available for citizens who need them most.

**Name of Applicant: Housing Preservation Office – LMI Code Enforcement**

**Amount of Request: \$60,000**

**Recommendation: \$60,000**

**Short description of the request:** Funding for 1 housing inspector dedicated to 100% LMI areas.

**Rationale for committee recommendation:** It is recognized that this is part of the overall program for maintenance of the housing stock and a core HUD objective. In 2015, the CDBG funded LMI inspector inspected 1071 housing units which included 2000 residents. The amount of inspections is consistent with past years and is a recurring obligation. Therefore, continued funding is warranted.

**Report of Vote:** Unanimous Approval.

**Name of Applicant: Housing Preservation Office – Neighborhood Relations**

**Amount of Request: \$60,000**

**Recommendation: \$60,000**

**Short description of the request:** City representative acting as a direct liaison between citizens addressing problems that affect the quality of life in our neighborhoods.

The Neighborhood Relations position has been making progress over the last couple of years implementing a program that directly interacts with citizens to address problems between neighbors or between residents and a problem commercial property. Over the last year, the program has focused more on commercial properties and some recent successes were the closing of Helen's Game Time and the Sunny Spot which were both repeated nuisances for the surrounding neighborhood. The program coordinator attempts to prevent issues from bubbling up to where they become a problem to the entire block or neighborhood and works closely with the Police Department.

**Rationale for committee recommendation:** The program continues to demonstrate efficacy through its defined process for bridging communication gaps that cannot be addressed through policing alone. The program also generates income by certifying liens on properties that are assessed fees for grass cutting, excessive police calls, etc. but it is unclear what percentages of these liens actually get paid back to the city. Even so, the program's purpose is not to create income, but instead, any income generated will help fund the HPO office in the future.

**Report of Vote:** Unanimous Approval.

\*\*\*Note – The subcommittee believes full funding is deserved, but there was a misunderstanding as to the total eligible amount for CDBG. If the total eligible hours are 25/40 per week and the total salary without fringe is \$60,000, the total eligible CDBG funding should be reduced to \$37,500. We also understand that some cuts may be required due to constraints in the overall CDBG budget and specifically the cap on Public Service Activities. If Cuts are required, we recommend cutting back this program first only to provide more room under the Public Service Activities cap and hopefully funding remaining HPO operating expenses more fully can help fund this position.

CAC was reminded that the next meeting will be on Tuesday, September 16 at 7:30 p.m. in the Executive Conference Room. The committee will make their final recommendations at that time.

Allison McCallum thanked the subcommittees for their reports.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

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Allison McCallum, Chair

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Amanda Shaffer, Secretary