

**City of Cleveland Heights
Citizens Advisory Committee
April 21, 2020
Virtual Public Hearing**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Patrick Akers	Laura Black
Bradley Eckert	Cory Farmer
Simcha Geller	Jonathan Goldman
Christine Henry	Allison McCallum
Gretchen Mettler	T. Nadas
Brittany Rabb	Rory Saint Jean
Jessica Schantz	Barbara Shelton
Amy Smith	Steve Titchenal
Sonya Trice	Andre Witt

MEMBERS ABSENT

David Benson

STAFF PRESENT

Brian Iorio	Karen Knittel
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GUEST PRESENT

Rick Sicha and Marcia Moll, Placemark Collaborative

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Cory Farmer called the meeting to order. Secretary Bradley Eckert called the roll; a quorum was present.

PUBLIC HEARING

Rick Sicha and Marcia Moll of Placemark Collaborative presented on the 2020-2024 5-Year Consolidated Plan. Placemark Collaborative is the consultant that drafted the plan on behalf of the Cuyahoga Housing Consortium. Rick and Marcia gave a brief history of CDBG, HOME and the Cuyahoga County Housing Consortium.

They next went over the process for the development of the Consolidated Plan, including the consultation process, the needs assessment and the housing market analysis. The five-year goals included in the plan are: Improve, maintain, and expand affordable housing; Revitalize residential neighborhoods; Provide needed public services; Increase economic opportunities.

Rick and Marcia discussed the other elements of the plan that are included in the County's plan that is available on their website. They also discussed the data and maps that HUD makes available that allows the analysis necessary in order to complete the plan. They finished their presentation by discussing the schedule for submitting the plan to HUD after the approval by City Council.

Mr. Iorio next discussed the Annual Plan that Council reviewed in the Fall of 2019 after the CAC reviewed and recommended allocations. The allocations are as follows:

Goal I: Improve, Maintain, and Expand Affordable Housing: provide programs for renters and owners, including down-payment assistance, home improvement, weatherization/energy efficiency, accessibility improvements, and correction of building code violations. Eligible areas will receive housing code enforcement services.

PROGRAMS & PROJECTS

Housing Preservation Office (HPO)

<i>HPO Operating/Staff</i>	<i>\$336,000</i>
<i>Paint Program</i>	<i>\$ 80,000</i>
<i>Violation Repair Program for Seniors</i>	<i>\$ 20,000</i>
<i>Strategic Home Repair</i>	<i>\$ 50,000</i>
<i>LMI Code Enforcement</i>	<i>\$ 42,000</i>

Home Repair Resource Center (HRRC)

<i>HRRC Program Delivery</i>	<i>\$126,204</i>
<i>Assist Incentive Grant</i>	<i>\$ 10,000</i>
<i>Deferred Loan Match Program</i>	<i>\$ 10,000</i>
<i>Senior Home Stability Grant</i>	<i>\$ 8,000</i>
<i>Lead Remediation</i>	<i>\$ 500</i>
<i>Assist 0% Program</i>	<i>\$ 500</i>

<i>FutureHeights - Future Homes Program</i>	\$ 45,000
TOTAL	\$728,204

Goal II: Revitalize Residential Neighborhoods: improve the physical condition, health, and safety of neighborhoods with projects such as improvements to rights-of-way, water and/or sewer lines, and/or public facilities. The City may also fund activities to remediate blighted conditions.

<i>PROGRAMS & PROJECTS</i>	
<i>ADA Curb Ramp Construction Project</i>	\$195,000
<i>Severance Tower LAC - Community Garden</i>	\$ 12,000
<i>Compton Road Greenway</i>	\$ 30,000
TOTAL	\$237,000

Goal III: Provide Needed Public Services: focus on the elderly, frail elderly, persons with physical disabilities, persons with developmental disabilities, and low- and moderate-income families with children to improve access to needed public services that improve household stability and educational, work, transportation, healthcare, housing and healthy food access. The City will also assist public service activities on issues such as – but may not be limited to – youth, diversity, food assistance, homebuyer/foreclosure counseling, and fair housing.

<i>PROGRAMS & PROJECTS</i>	
<i>HRRC Housing Counselor</i>	\$ 25,000
<i>Office on Aging - Social Workers</i>	\$ 25,000
<i>Heights Emergency Food Center</i>	\$ 27,450
<i>Family Connections - Family School Connection</i>	\$ 25,000
<i>Family Connections - Parent Cafe</i>	\$ 5,000
<i>Open Doors Academy - Academic & Enrichment Prog. for Middle School</i>	\$ 15,000
<i>Open Doors Academy - Pathways to Independence at Heights High</i>	\$ 15,000
<i>Start Right CDC Food Program</i>	\$ 10,000
<i>HPO - Neighborhood Relations Program</i>	\$ 40,000
<i>Gesher Benefits Resource Center</i>	\$ 10,000
<i>Lake Erie Ink - Ink Spot Program</i>	\$ 12,000
TOTAL	\$209,450

Goal IV: Increase Economic Opportunities: provide public infrastructure improvements to aid economic development; assist for-profit commercial enterprises with access to working capital, building rehabilitation and new construction activities designed to create or retain jobs; eliminate substandard or blighted building and neighborhood conditions.

<i>PROGRAMS & PROJECTS</i>	
<i>FutureHeights - Cedar Lee Mini-Park Placemaking</i>	

<i>Project</i>	\$ 15,000
<i>FutureHeights - Noble Road Corridor Early Action Project</i>	\$ 10,000
<i>Economic Development Department</i>	
<i>ED Administration</i>	\$144,000
<i>Storefront Renovation</i>	\$ 60,000
TOTAL	\$229,000

CDBG Administration, Planning & Fair Housing

<i>PROGRAMS & PROJECTS</i>	
<i>CD Administration</i>	\$147,000
<i>Fair Housing Activities</i>	\$ 37,300
<i>Geographic Information Systems</i>	\$ 37,100
<i>FutureHeights - Community Capacity Building</i>	\$ 37,141
<i>2020 Strategic Impact Opportunity</i>	\$ 75,442
TOTAL	\$333,983

TOTAL CDBG PROGRAMS & PROJECTS \$1,737,637*

T Nadas asked if other cities in the consortium saw the same minimal change in their goals from 2015 as Cleveland Heights did. Rick Sicha answered that all members of the Consortium, except for Lakewood, saw very minimal change in their goals due to the fact that Greater Cleveland's economy has not changed significantly from five years ago.

Steve Titchenal asked if the COVID-19 crisis changes how we allocate funds. Karen Knittel and Brian Iorio answered that the CARES Act funding will be used to address these issues however there may be times throughout the year that the administration asks the CAC to review changes in allocations among City CDBG budgets due to the crisis.

Chairman Farmer asked if any guests had any questions or comments. There were none.

Jonathan Goldman moved to recommend to Council the approval of the 5-Year Consolidated Plan and the 2020 Annual Action Plan. Chris Henry seconded the motion, the motion was passed unanimously.

STAFF REPORT

Mr. Iorio explained that the CDBG-CV funding as a part of the CARES Act came with several waivers in regards to the process to submit a plan to use the funds and the waiver of the 15% cap on public services. Mr. Iorio shared the administration's recommendations for allocating these funds. The City was awarded \$956,215. The idea for the allocation of CDBG-CV funds is to ask Council to ap-

prove broad categories that allow the administration to deploy funds in different activities as the crisis changes and as more funds are made available through different sources. The categories that are being recommended to Council are as follows: CDBG Administration, Emergency Assistance, Commercial District Revitalization, and Subrecipient Support. The CDBG Administration program is budgeted at \$91,215 and will be used for administering programs, communicating with residents and assisting businesses access assistance funding. The Emergency Assistance program is budgeted at \$550,000 and will be used for the Office on Aging, Food Assistance, Emergency Rent/Mortgage/Utility Assistance and Housing and Benefits Counseling. The Commercial District Revitalization program is budgeted at \$290,000 and will be used for Microenterprise Development and Small Business adaptation Grants. The Subrecipient Support program will be used to assist our subrecipients that are not already covered in the previous categories to carry out their programs in accordance with social distancing standards.

Sonya Trice asked if households will receive a direct benefit for food assistance. Mr. Iorio said that the City would need to pay the food provider directly and that it is more likely that the City will assist food pantries accept and distribute food rather than pay for the food directly.

Barbara Shelton asked if there was data that could inform us of the scope of food insecurity such as unemployment. Marcia Moll said that unemployment data is released with at least a one month lag. Rick Sicha said the best place to get this type of data is directly from the usage rates at the food pantries.

Allison McCallum asked how the beneficiary data for housing assistance was calculated. Mr. Iorio said that it is based on \$2,500 per household. She followed up to ask if unemployment through the CARES Act would count as a duplication of benefits. Mr. Iorio said that he does not know the answer and agreed that it is a question that needs to be answered.

Barbara Shelton asked why we are not providing rental assistance to businesses. Mr. Iorio responded that the intention with these funds are to avoid assisting a business that will inevitably go out of business anyways due to the economy and the social distancing protocols. Barbara Shelton suggest that the City develop a way to evaluate the sustainability of a business. Amy Smith agreed that businesses need rental assistance in order to remain viable.

Mr. Iorio next discussed the March financial report. He pointed out that there was a slowdown in the approval and payment of invoices due to the work at home order.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes from the January and February CAC Meetings were accepted as amended.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mr. Iorio discussed the change in the Local Definitions that was first discussed in January. The change is to allow for a change in budget of 10% of an allocation or \$10,000, whichever is greater. Jonathan Goldman moved to accept the change in Local Definitions. Seconded by Gretchen Mettler, the motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Iorio next proposed some changes to the Citizen Participation Plan that are necessitated by the change in Local Definitions and the waivers granted by the CARES Act to accommodate an expedited public comment period and to allow for virtual meetings. The changes allow for public notice on the City's website rather than in a newspaper and public notice of four days rather than 10 days of the meeting date, time and location.

Laura Black made a motion to accept the changes to the Citizen Participation Plan as amended. Seconded by Chris Henry, the motion was approved unanimously.

The last agenda item was to select a nominating committee for CAC officers. Chris Henry, Bradley Eckert and T Nadas volunteered to serve on the nominating committee. The officers will be voted on at the May CAC meeting.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:42 p.m.

Cory Farmer, Chair

Bradley Eckert, Secretary