

**City of Cleveland Heights
Citizens Advisory Committee
September 15, 2020
Council Chambers, Cleveland Heights City Hall**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Patrick Akers

Laura Black

Bradley Eckert

Jonathan Goldman

Allison McCallum

T. Nadas

Steve Titchenal

David Benson

Bradley Eckert

Cory Farmer

Christine Henry

Gretchen Mettler

Jessica Schantz

André Witt

MEMBERS ABSENT

Amy Smith (exc.)

STAFF PRESENT

Brian Iorio

CALL TO ORDER

Cory Farmer Chair, called the meeting to order.

ROLL CALL

Secretary Jessica Schantz called the roll. A quorum was present.

MINUTES

Minutes from the June 16th, August 4th and August 13th CAC Meetings were approved as amended.

STAFF REPORTS

Mr. Iorio discussed the financial report from August, 2020. He mentioned that the Nuisance Abatement fund has been almost entirely depleted and that there is a need to replenish the fund with a reallocation of funds and/or program income. Mr. Iorio shared that he will not have a prepared draft admin recommendation for several weeks.

Mr. Iorio shared that a third round of CDBG-CV was announced. Cleveland Heights will receive around \$198,000. He noted that the Office on Aging and Gesher requested funding for Pandemic related expenses and they could likely be funded out of the third round of funding.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Farmer asked that the subcommittees present their reports.

FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION SUBCOMMITTEE

Committee members: T. Nadas, Stephen Titchenal, André Witt.

<u>Year 47</u>	<u>Request</u>	<u>Committee's Recommendations</u>
CDBG Administration	\$188,392	\$188,392 - carryover
Fair Housing	\$34,000	\$34,000
GIS	\$12,000	\$12,000
Future Hts Community Capacity Building	\$50,000	\$50,000
2021 Strategic Impact Opportunity	\$100,000	\$100,000
ADA Curb Ramp Construction	\$195,000	\$195,000
Shannon Road Waterline Replacement and Street Resurfacing	\$179,532	\$179,532 - carryover
Severance Tower Local Advisory Council Board Community Garden	\$14,400	\$14,400

CDBG Administration

Funding request: \$188.392

Recommendation: \$ 188.392 - ~\$25,000 carryover

Program/Project Description:

The Department of HUD regulations and guidelines require that an entitlement community receiving CDBG funds provide administration for the general management of the funds, oversight and coordination of recipients, and regulatory reporting. The request of \$188,392 includes salaries and operating costs, including indirect costs, for CDBG administration. The subcommittee continues to be impressed with the outstanding professional administration of the block grant program.

Subcommittee Recommendation:

The subcommittee supports the full funding request of \$188,392, minus any carryover, of the CDBG Administration.

Fair Housing Activities

Funding request: \$34,000

Recommendation: \$34,000 - carryover

Program/Project Description:

Fair Housing Activities are a HUD requirement for CDBG funding. The Racial Equity & Inclusion Institute Training conducted as part of the 2019 CDBG allocation has been partially completed with pandemic limitations but the 2-day training has been postponed for now.

Subcommittee Recommendation:

The subcommittee supports the full funding request of \$34,00, minus any carryover, of the Fair Housing.

Geographic Information System (GIS)

Funding request: \$12,000

Recommendation: \$12,000

Program/Project Description:

The City of Cleveland Heights seeks to renew the GIS software (license) and support 50% of the salary of a full-time GIS Analyst. 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 encourages synergy between City departments and its partners. The subcommittee recognizes that the technology serves not only the city and the community but has also created efficiencies and operational cost savings.

Subcommittee Recommendation:

The subcommittee supports the City's GIS initiative and recommends fully funding the request.

FutureHeights (FH) Community Capacity Building

Funding request: \$50,000

Recommendation: \$50,000 (full)

Program/Project Description:

FutureHeights has as its goal the increased vitality of cohesive, strong, and actionable neighborhoods. FH is seeking CDBG funds to help sustain its Community Capacity-Building Program. Community Capacity-Building has initiated capacity building through facilitating the development of and strengthening of neighborhood groups, assisting these groups in developing neighborhood plans, prioritizing related issues, and identifying and supporting neighborhood leaders. This is done through organizing workshops, issue related gatherings, and responding to requests for assistance. FH has been very effective in engaging expert volunteers and academic research groups to supplement its small but productive staff. They are continuing to develop and apply tools to evaluate the effectiveness of their activities and measure outcomes. FH has a demonstrated track record of successfully engaging citizens in capacity-building.

Subcommittee Recommendation:

The subcommittee supports FH Community Capacity Building in the amount of \$50,000 for CDBG Year 46.

FutureHeights (FH) Community Capacity Building

Funding request: \$50,000

Recommendation: \$50,000

Program/Project Description:

FutureHeights has as its goal the increased vitality of cohesive, strong, and actionable neighborhoods. FH is seeking CDBG funds to help sustain its Community Capacity-Building Program. Community Capacity-Building has initiated capacity building through facilitating the development of and strengthening of neighborhood groups, assisting these groups in developing

neighborhood plans, prioritizing related issues, and identifying and supporting neighborhood leaders. This is done through organizing workshops, issue related gatherings, and responding to requests for assistance. FH has been very effective in engaging expert volunteers and academic research groups to supplement its small but productive staff. They are continuing to develop and apply tools to evaluate the effectiveness of their activities and measure outcomes. FH has a demonstrated track record of successfully engaging citizens in capacity-building. FH has also exhibited flexibility to respond to the needs of the community around the Covid-19 situation; e.g. holding zoom training to facilitate continued community involvement.

Subcommittee Recommendation:

The subcommittee supports FH Community Capacity Building in the amount of \$50,000 for CDBG Year 47

City of Cleveland Heights - Strategic Impact Opportunity

Funding request 150,000

Recommendation: \$150,000

Program/Project Description:

The City of Cleveland Heights 2021 Strategic Impact Opportunity would reserve some funds for awards to projects that meet the criteria during the 2021 FY 48 application process and would be available to be spent after Council approval rather than in the second half of 2021. This is in a sense a contingency fund that reserves some money for allocation closer to the time the money can be spent on the identified priorities.

Subcommittee Recommendation:

The subcommittee recommends that some funds be reserved in this way, but the amount should be determined based on other Year 47 needs already identified.

ADA Curb Ramp Construction

Funding Request: \$195,000

Subcommittee Recommendation: \$195,000

Program/Project Description:

The project consists of the removal and replacement of curb ramps throughout the city replacing existing non-compliant curb ramps to ramps that are compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Previous funding from CDBG and other sources related to street improvements or schools have resulted in many replacements already. There is not an up-to-date count of ramps that are still in need of replacement, but the most seriously out of compliance ramps probably have been done or will be completed this year.

Subcommittee Recommendation:

The subcommittee fully supports this request and recommends continued funding to complete this project, but some flexibility in determining the exact amount allocated for 2021 could be considered in order to fund other applicants.

City of Cleveland Heights - Shannon Road Waterline Replacement & Street Resurfacing

Funding Request: \$179,532

Subcommittee Recommendation: \$179,532 - ~\$140,000 carryover

Program/Project Description:

4285' of waterline replacement on Shannon Road along with pavement resurfacing, spot curb replacement, and new ADA compliant curb ramps. 55% of Shannon Road is eligible for CDBG funds. A majority of funding is from the City Street Construction Fund, Cleveland Water and other sources.

Subcommittee Recommendation:

The subcommittee supports keeping our streets safe and accessible for our residents and recommend we support this effort.

Severance Tower Local Advisory Board - Severance Tower Community Garden

Garden/Patio Project Last Phase

Funding Request: \$14,400

Subcommittee Recommendation: \$14,400

Program/Project Description:

The Severance Tower Local Advisory Board is a volunteer board made up from residents who live in the building. The building houses seniors, residents with disabilities or are low income. Previous CDBG funding has constructed beds that are handicapped accessible and is adding additional beds this fall. The Board has worked with City staff and local businesses to make the most of the CDBG funding. This year's request is to make improvements to the patio area near the garden.

Subcommittee Recommendation:

The subcommittee recommends support for this program for the full amount.

COMMERCIAL AREAS

Subcommittee Committee Members: Allison McCallum, Jonathan Goldman, Gretchen Mettler

<u>Year 47</u>	<u>Request</u>	<u>Committee's Recommendations</u>	<u>Vote</u>
FutureHeights – Cedar Lee Mini Park Placemaking Project	\$33,510	\$33,510	3-0-0
FutureHeights – Outreach Position for Small and Minority-Owned Businesses	\$25,000	\$25,000	3-0-0
City of Cleveland Heights – Economic Development Programs	\$225,000	\$225,000	3-0-0

City of Cleveland Heights – Economic Development/Storefront Renovation Programs

Funding Request: \$225,000

Recommendation: \$225,000

Program/Project Description:

The City of Cleveland Heights is requesting a total of \$225,000 in CDBG funds for its Economic Development Programs. An amount of \$150,000 was requested for Economic Development administration, which supports the day-to day administration of programs by supporting 50% of the cost of two full-time economic development staff plus six hours per week from Planning Department staff to coordinate the Storefront Renovation program. An additional \$50,000 was requested for the Storefront Renovation Program to support the loans, rebates, and design consultants that are part of the program. Finally, \$25,000 in funding was requested for the Microenterprise Loan Program, which provides loans to small businesses with five or fewer employees.

Subcommittee Recommendation:

The subcommittee continues to be impressed with the effective and professional administration of the City's Economic Development Programs. The subcommittee values the programs and the assistance they provide to the City and its businesses. This assistance is especially beneficial to smaller businesses, which are so valuable to the vitality, stability and growth of the City. Thus, the subcommittee recommends the full funding of \$225,000 to support the work of the Economic Development and Storefront Renovation programs.

FutureHeights – Cedar Lee Mini-Park Placemaking Project

Funding Request: \$33,510

Recommendation: \$33,510 (\$25,000 if cuts needed)

Program/Project Description:

FutureHeights is leading the transformation of an under-realized public right-of-way into a welcoming and public gathering space for the Cedar-Lee Business District. The project has two phases: Phase I (completed 2019): engagements, visioning, and interim improvements; Phase II: permanent improvements. Cleanups, plantings and a grant to work with Heights High Students on artwork and augmented reality applications have improved the landscape. FutureHeights has agreed to assume responsibility for the site. In addition, in 2017, a group of residents organized Friends of Cedar-Lee Mini-Park. FutureHeights indicated the current steps and ramp leading to the Mini-Park will be replaced as part of the permanent improvements. The subcommittee made suggestions regarding additional Phase II improvements. Additional seating is needed with

shade and shelter, including some for people with physical difficulties. Additional café-type tables have been added as well, good for socializing. There also needs to be a bike rack. These and other improvements are also planned such as a fountain, a-v equipment, further landscaping and shading and shelter.

Subcommittee Recommendation:

FutureHeights has improved the looks of the mini-park throughout Phase I of the Mini-Park Placemaking Project. A FutureHeights intern led the Phase I effort with assistance from the FutureHeights staff. The organization is now moving forward with Phase II of the project to initiate permanent improvements. An RFP, funded by the 2019 CDBG Grant, was issued and an architectural firm selected which recently presented its plan and design to further implement Phase II of the project. The subcommittee believes there is leadership to oversee the continuation of project with volunteers helping. The city of Cleveland Heights and the Cedar-Lee Special Improvements District have given enthusiastic support. The \$33,510 will be used to assist in executing the approved design with a total estimated cost of \$160,000.

FutureHeights – Outreach Manager Position for Small and Minority-Owned Businesses

Funding Request: \$25,000

Recommendation: \$25,000 (\$20,000 if cuts needed)

Program/Project Description:

FutureHeights has worked with residents and neighborhood groups who have recognized the need for coaching and mentoring of the businesses in their neighborhoods. The areas include inventory planning, signage and merchandising, managing a digital footprint, all to increase exposure and sales. FH, already working with the city and the SIDs, would bring the kind of support they excel at, especially to LMI areas and businesses that can benefit from such assistance. The program is focused on supporting small, particularly minority-owned businesses in the Noble, Taylor, and Mayfield Lee business districts. Businesses in these distressed districts need a coach with an MBA to provide technical assistance and access government assistance programs, as well as develop merchant associations and help to retain existing businesses and attract new ones.

Subcommittee Recommendation:

FutureHeights has extensive experience in working with the neighborhoods to increase cohesiveness, encourage solidarity and organization. They are developing a new role in economic development working closely with the city's new development directors using their area of expertise to complement the development department in facilitating solid and lasting growth in Cleveland Heights. CAC has supported their recent staff additions which have brought significant assistance in these areas. This staff position will bring vital support to members of the business community and thus their neighborhoods in even greater need due to the pandemic. The \$25,000 will enable FH to hire a part-time manager to get this program started and help small businesses in Cleveland Heights survive and prosper, overcoming the challenges facing them.

NEIGHBORHOOD ACTIVITIES SUBCOMMITTEE

Committee Members: Bradley Eckert, Christine Henry, Patrick Akers, Jessica Schantz

<u>Year 47</u>	<u>Request</u>	<u>Committee's Recommendations</u>	<u>Vote</u>
City of Cleveland Heights – Office on Aging	\$30,000	\$30,000	4-0-0
City of Cleveland Heights – WAVE Mentoring Program	\$10,000	\$10,000	4-0-0
City of Cleveland Heights – Homelessness Street Outreach Pilot Program	\$30,000	\$10,000	4-0-0
Heights Emergency Food Center	\$29,000	\$27,450	4-0-0
Family Connections – Family School Connection	\$25,000	\$25,000	4-0-0

Open Doors Academy – Middle School Program	\$20,000	\$20,000	4-0-0
Start Right CDC – Start Right Hunger Center	\$10,000	\$10,000	4-0-0
Gesher – The Benefits Center	\$18,000	\$10,000	4-0-0
Lake Erie Ink – Ink Spot After School Program	\$12,000	\$12,000	4-0-0
Bhutanese Community of Greater Cleveland	\$20,000	\$10,000	4-0-0
SIO – Family Connections – Parent Café	\$5,000	\$5,000	4-0-0

City of Cleveland Heights / Office on Aging Social Work Program

Funding Request: \$30,000

Recommendation: \$30,000

Program/Project Description:

The Cleveland Heights Office on Aging has as its mission to improve the quality of life for Cleveland Heights residents over the age of 60 while being responsive to the community's diverse groups and their changing needs. The Office on Aging serves a vulnerable population – elderly and frail elderly – who may be facing multiple challenges, such as mental or physical health concerns, loss of a spouse or partner, difficulty navigating or accessing social programs and services, and the general loss of sociability that can come with aging if supports are not in place. Most seniors wish to remain in their homes, and the social work program helps them to remain comfortable and safe in their homes as long as possible. CDBG funds allow the Cleveland Heights Office on Aging to employ 2 part-time social workers. The basic scope of work they perform is assessing senior residents' needs for services and helping these residents access services. Social workers document client visits and phone calls. Most clients are monitored every 6 months. The social workers reassess to be sure changing needs are being met. Last year, \$20,000 was allocated to this program.

Subcommittee Recommendation:

There remains an increasing need of the services provided by the Office on

Aging due to a growing senior population in Cleveland Heights. In 2019, 568 Cleveland Heights residents needed the services of the social workers, such as home visits, arranging transportation services, or helping obtain assistance benefits, or connecting available community resources for residents. Due to COVID-19, the social workers have become more engaged with city seniors through more frequent phone contact, sometimes through weekly outreach. The subcommittee recommends to increase our allocation to meet the full funding of \$30,000 to support the work of two part-time social workers.

City of Cleveland Heights / Parks and Recreation Dept., W.A.V.E. Mentoring Program

Funding request : \$10,000

Recommendation: \$10,000

Program/Project Description:

The mission of the City's Parks and Recreation Department is to enhance the quality of our community life through the arts, leisure activity and recreational programming for all age groups. The Department feels that a number of youth in Cleveland Heights are experiencing high levels of stressful issues due to poverty, substance abuse, mental illness, crime, violence, abuse and trauma. Such issues manifest themselves in disruptive and risky behavior, that, when left unaddressed, creates additional problems in early adulthood. Research shows that a primary factor for building resilience within young men and women residing in high-risk environments is having positive relationships inside and outside of the family.

To address this issue in Cleveland Heights, the Department is proposing to partner with the CH-UH school district to provide mentoring, summer programs and trips, team building activities, financial literacy, study skills, and job skill development to 16 male and female Heights High students. The program, called WAVE (We are a Village of Efficacy), will provide activities that also include a parent engagement component. The school will help to identify the potential participants. Program options will be based on a student lead curriculum, and tailored to meet the needs of the individual students. Recent Heights High alumni will serve as volunteer mentors. The students will meet weekly at the CH Community Center, transportation will be via bus tickets and van pick up. Because of COVID the program will start via Zoom, then to the Community Center in 2021. The funds will be used for supplies, activities, and a part time staff person to help run the program. The plan is to start with 16 students and grow from there.

Subcommittee Recommendation:

The proposal was very light on details, but the program is well intended. Since the Heights Youth Center and the Center for Families and Children are no longer

operating in Cleveland Heights, the need for this type of services for youth has increased. The Parks and Recreation Department already offers extensive youth programming around sports and recreation, and is in a good position to expand its offerings to programs for youth who are in need of guidance and support in their personal lives. The person who will facilitate the WAVE program, Steve Walker, has worked at Open Doors and other youth programs, and is a Heights High alum. Partnering with the schools and parents helps lend strength and resources to this program.

City of Cleveland Heights / Homelessness Street Outreach Pilot Program

Funding Request: \$30,000

Recommendation : \$10,000

Program/Project Description:

The City of Cleveland Heights is updating its panhandling ordinance as required by law. Individuals may now passively panhandle. The Homeless Street Outreach Program (the "Program") seeks to (i) mitigate increased panhandling, and (ii) reach vulnerable community members such as those experiencing homelessness or suffering from mental illness. The Program would reduce law enforcement interactions among these populations, and instead employ an Outreach Coordinator to directly reach individuals in need of assistance. The Outreach Coordinator would connect program participants to social services and provide immediate benefits, such as bus passes, food, and clothing. The Outreach Coordinator would also educate businesses and visitors about panhandling, and provide information on resources that are available to people in need. The Program would provide alternative methods for those that would like to donate money as an additional measure to deter panhandling. The Program would primarily operate in the Coventry Business District, with other districts added as needed.

Subcommittee Recommendation:

The Subcommittee recognizes the differences in opinion as to (i) whether panhandling is an issue, and (ii) assuming panhandling is an issue, how to adequately address it. While the program is well thought-out, the Subcommittee believes that these issues can be further understood through a pilot program. The Subcommittee understands that there are between 20-25 known panhandlers in Cleveland Heights. Through a pilot program, the City can better understand how receptive these panhandlers will be to the program, while further understanding the effect of panhandling in the Coventry Business District. At the conclusion of the pilot program, the City will better understand the scope and effect of panhandling, and will have additional information to better balance the rights of panhandlers and concerns of businesses.

Heights Emergency Food Center

Funding Request: \$29,000

Recommendation: \$27,450

Program/Project Description:

Founded in 1981, Heights Emergency Food Center is Cleveland Heights' oldest and most accessible food pantry, open four days a week and evenings on the last two Thursdays of the month. The center operates for 14 hours each week of the month, ensuring a variety of hours are available to meet the needs of our community. The center supplies families with a three-day supply of food once a month. Numbers of clients have remained steady from year to year, dependent, however, on external forces such as the economy and changes in state or federal law. The center's staff, including its executive director Debby Shewitz, are all volunteers. Most of its funds come from the federal government, channeled through the Food Bank and the Hunger Network. CBDG funds have always helped pay for rent and utilities at Disciples Christian Church, the center's home since its beginning. Last year, CAC was able to grant the center \$27,450, the full amount the organization requested.

Subcommittee Recommendation:

HEFC continues to excel as a well-run all-volunteer operation that provides valuable services to residents of our community. Last year, they served 7,466 Cleveland Heights residents, clearly an important resource in our community. We remain impressed with the organization and support their request for funding to maintain their services at Disciples Christian Church. Given the limited availability of CDBG funds, we recommend to maintain funding at last year's level of \$27,450

Family Connections / Family School Connection

Funding Request: \$25,000

Recommendation: \$25,000

Program/Project Description:

For 35 years, Family Connections has provided a broad array of services to Cleveland Heights children and their families. The Family School Connection program, which has been in place for more than nine years, is focused on the transition of children and families to kindergarten, which can be especially difficult for children with no pre-school experience. Family Connections has placed family liaisons in elementary schools throughout the Cleveland Heights-University Heights system, working directly with teachers and administrators to

identify children that may need additional support and resources to achieve literacy benchmarks throughout the first year of school. The Family School Connection program seeks to assist those individuals with activities that engage both families and children through five specific outreach components: Home Visiting, Kindergarten Kickoff, Classroom Support, ABC's of Kindergarten, Kindergarten Discovery, and Bridge to First Grade. In addition to working with students after school in the elementary schools, each of the participating children in the program participates in home visits twice per month.* These visits are individualized educational opportunities for the family liaison to work with the child and family on literacy enrichment and promoting activities families can complete together to assist the child's education.

*Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Family Connections has had to retrofit its programming to a mostly virtual and socially-distanced home-visit model. Staff are working evenings and weekends, on top of normal business hours, in order to meet family needs.

Subcommittee Recommendation:

Hoping to continue their work in advancing literacy promotion and building strong family support for children in the CH-UH district, Family Connections requests funding for the family liaisons at four specified Cleveland Heights elementary schools. Given the importance of literacy and helping our students meet the educational goals of kindergarten, we support continued funding of their Family School Connection Program. Family Connections has a strong and successful history in Cleveland Heights, and the subcommittee recognizes their continued effort at being a resource for children and parents in our community, especially during these unprecedented times. We recommend funding at the full \$25,000.

Open Doors Academy / Academic and Enrichment Programming

Funding Request: \$20,000

Recommendation: \$20,000

Program/Project Description:

Open Doors Academy (ODA) offers a 7-year continuum of support to middle and high school youth that aims to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty. ODA programs include out-of-school time support to its scholars (the name for ODA student participants) in CH-UH schools as well as other area middle and high schools. ODA requests support for its Middle School Program that is offered during out-of-school time hours at Monticello and Roxboro middle schools in Cleveland Heights. Programming provides scholars with a safe environment to address academic barriers, develop essential soft skills, and build healthy relationships with

peers and adults. Most importantly, scholars are provided the necessary academic and social-emotional support that puts them on a path to high school graduation, post-secondary education/career training, and self-sufficient adulthood. School-year programming operates Monday through Friday, from 3:00pm to 6:00pm. ODA engages scholars in experiential learning through multi-week projects, team-building exercises, mindfulness practice, service learning, and field trips. It costs approximately \$200,000 (including in-kind support) to operate an ODA on campus. Staff (two full time, one part time) and scholars need access to computers, mobile phones, office supplies, and educational materials. The CH-UH district provides in-kind space for programming during the school year. The Greater Cleveland Foodbank provides a daily meal for scholars year-round. Volunteers assist with family events and other activities, including enrichment programming and homework help. Community partners provide guest instruction for enrichment programming during the school year and summer.

Subcommittee Recommendation:

ODA is a program that continues to fill a need in our neighborhoods for accessible, structured academic and emotional support for the Cleveland Heights middle school students. 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. This year, ODA's operations have been adversely impacted by state funding mandates, which now requires one teacher for every nine students (from seventeen pre-COVID-19). In spite of these hardships, ODA has gone all-in to assist Cleveland Heights students impacted by COVID-19. ODA has partnered with St. Paul's Episcopal Church to provide a space for 36-45 students to learn remotely and receive out-of-school programming. We, therefore, recommend full funding of ODA's programming for middle school students given their commitment to Cleveland Heights and their track record of success for students.

Start Right Community Development Corp / Start Right Hunger Center

Funding Request: \$10,000

Recommendation: \$10,000

Program/Project Description:

Start Right Community Development Corporation is requesting \$10,000 to assist in the continued running of its hunger center. The center receives free or reduced-cost items from the Food Bank (Income guidelines are provided by the Ohio Department of Human Services) and serve over 100 households each month. They are open only on the fourth Saturday of each month. They need to be open only once since families or individuals receive a 3-day supply of food (minimum 9 good

meals) once a month. Rather than giving food in a bag as selected by a volunteer, they have an open pantry; that is, the client typically walks through the pantry selecting items desired. Due to COVID-19 pandemic, staff have had to restructure the physical environment and minimize the number of people handling food.

Subcommittee Recommendation:

Because food is mostly donated, and the church was able to secure PPE through other outlets, the requested amount is for the continued operation of the Center, including rent, utilities, and cleaning services. Therefore we recommend the full funding of \$10,000.

Agudath Israel of Ohio / Geshher Career Development and Benefits Center

Funding Request: \$18,000

Recommendation: \$10,000

Program/Project Description:

Geshher was founded in 2013 to help Jewish and other low income Cleveland families to access much needed support by eliminating cultural barriers to accessing and applying for assistance programs that target financial hardship. Its activities focus on providing all who seek services with trained benefit counselors who can advise about local, state and federal benefits for which they are eligible. These benefits include WIC (Women, Infant and Children), senior citizen health programs, HEAP (Home Energy Assistance Program), utility assistance, Medicaid eligibility, SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), and weatherization programs. Geshher continues to operate its Warrensville Center Road location, while also continuing to support the local WIC office at the MetroHealth location in Severance Town Center. Geshher has recently added career services and consultation to their list of available services. Their vision of success is a twofold desire to help clients in a welcoming and friendly environment, while desiring a time when people are no longer in need of the benefits with which they connect people.

Subcommittee Recommendation:

Geshher's services play an integral role in the lives of the Cleveland Heights residents it serves. Geshher has a unique model that connects people with benefits/services in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and promotes relationships between the organization and its clientele. While Geshher is part of a state network (other locations in Columbus and Cincinnati) that is centered in Cleveland, its local budget is \$150,000. It also receives funding from the Mt. Sinai Foundation and the Jewish Community Federation. While it serves the Cleveland Heights Jewish population, its services are also actively marketed to and available

to anyone in the community who is in need. The number of people Gesher serves has risen every year. \$10,000 of the request is for operations. For the remaining \$8,000 Gesher should work with Brian Iorio to identify possible COVID funds through CDBG for 2021.

Lake Erie Ink / Ink Spot After School Program

Funding Request: \$12,000

Recommendation: \$12,000

Program/Project Description:

Lake Erie Ink seeks continued funding for its after-school writing program for children in grades 4-7. Programs run two days a week at satellite schools Noble Elementary and Monticello Middle School. They plan to serve approximately 30 children who are selected for the program with input from teachers and administrators. Lake Erie Ink staff have created a structure and a safe place for students to attend to homework, socialize, and engage in the process of writing. Lake Erie Ink provides academic support for students who have barriers to learning. They focus on tailoring solutions that help overcome those barriers. This can mean using dictation for children who have hand-eye coordination problems; drawings, comics, and puppets for kids who have difficulty putting words on paper; and writing prompts for those who need starting ideas. These techniques help the participants engage in various writing genres with adult supervision and engage in all stages of the writing process. Each year the participants produce an anthology. Lake Erie Ink anticipates being back in person once this cycle of grant funding is allocated. That said, the organization is making efforts now to offer all-virtual programming to students in case the learning-from-home requirement for students in the district extends into the 2021/22 school year.

Subcommittee Recommendation:

Since 2011, Lake Erie Ink continues to provide a safe, creative, and educational opportunity for students after school. Their programs continue to operate at full capacity, highlighting the strong outreach of the organization and the valuable resource they provide for students. Students have been so successful with the program that they requested the extension into higher grades from the original 4-5 grade range. Both parents and students report positive outcomes inside and outside of school. We support Lake Erie Ink's continuation of programming two days per week at Noble and Monticello. We recommend full funding of \$12,000 to support these programs at these schools.

Bhutanese Community Center

Funding request: \$20,000

Recommendation: \$10,000

Program/Project Description:

The Bhutanese Community Center's (BCC) mission is "Unity in Diversity is the Strength of Humanity". Cleveland is home for many refugees and immigrants. BCC wants to welcome them and help create a friendly neighborhood environment by creating job opportunities, a secure environment and good community relations with other Cleveland Heights residents. Started in 2014, the main focus is on supporting the 80 Bhutanese families (approximately 60 children) in Cleveland Heights so they can better navigate the community and schools, and become employed, contributing residents. Most have limited English language proficiency. The Bhutanese Community Center programs are open to low and moderate income Americans and other immigrant groups in Cleveland Heights as well. Currently, due to Covid, the Center is only offering its services, where possible, over the phone as many Nepalese don't have computers or the Internet. The services that would normally be offered include English classes, citizenship classes, job readiness, home rental assistance (including tenant rights), yoga, and other health and wellness classes. The Center is supported by donations and memberships. Currently there are about 25 members who pay \$20 per month. The operating budget for the Cleveland Heights Center is \$8,000-9,000 annually. The 25 memberships bring in \$6000. The proposed \$20,000 would pay for one full-time and one part-time staff member to carry out the activities.

Subcommittee Recommendation:

While the proposal is light on financial information, the intentions are good. \$10,000 would help keep them functioning as they are, given Covid. There's not enough information about how an additional \$10,000 would be spent.

Family Connections / Parent Cafe

Funding Request: \$5,000 [SIO]

Recommendation: \$5,000

Program/Project Description:

A Parent Cafe is a gathering of parents, for parents and by parents. It is a parent education experience designed to create opportunities for parents to connect, share, and learn from each other in a space that appreciates that all parents have something to offer and have all that they need. Parent Cafes are driven by the knowledge that parents have to offer one another, and are guided by trained hosts, who lead small-group discussions and explore questions that really matter to parents. Through these meaningful conversations, Family Connections hopes that parents are able to build protective factors that will have a positive impact

on their families and the community. Building on the Parent Cafes it held last year, and together with the guidance of other local entities that have successfully implemented Parent Cafes and research supporting this model, Family Connections is confident that their existing relationships with families in the community, and the families' relationships with each other, will grow as a result of this effort.

The requested funding would go to materials (e.g., printing, dinner, bus tickets) and would fund marketing and personnel costs. Family Connections intends to offer two Parent Cafes, and expects to recruit families from other services they offer, including the general low-to-moderate income family population in Cleveland Heights. Family Connections anticipates being back in person once this cycle of grant funding is allocated. That said, the organization is making efforts now to offer all-virtual programming to parents in case social-distancing orders are still in place.

Subcommittee Recommendation:

Family Connections has a proven record of success in the Cleveland Heights community. Family Connections implemented Parent Cafes for the first time last year, and had great feedback from participants (e.g., better relationships between parent and child, lifestyle changes). Providing an open and safe space for idea exploration and networking can be a valuable tool to strengthen families and our community moving forward. We support Family Connection's \$5,000 request for implementation of this opportunity and are excited to see its continued immediate and long-term impact.

Open Doors Academy / Pathways to Independence at Cleveland Heights High School

Funding Request: \$20,000 [SIO]

Recommendation: \$20,000

Program/Project Description:

Open Doors Academy (ODA) offers a 7-year continuum of support to middle and high school youth that aims to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty. ODA programs include out-of-school time support to high school scholars (those who are graduates of ODA's middle school programs) who are attending Cleveland Heights High School. This program, titled *Pathways to Independence Program (PIP)*, offers personalized guidance to 40 scholars to help them identify career paths and develop life skills essential to a self-sufficient adulthood. Components of PIP include activities that focus on career readiness, core competencies of adulthood, global and intercultural learning (including service trips to Honduras), individual and small group coaching, development of individual success plans, college and career readiness workshops, and college tours. Three ODA staff

provide programming for three hours per day, Monday – Friday, for 35 weeks of the school year. Parent participation is required in order for a student to be in the PIP program. The cost of providing the PIP program at Heights High is \$200,000, including in-kind support, and covers staffing (two full time and one part time counselors), as well as management and oversight from ODA administration.

Subcommittee Recommendation:

ODA is a large, well run nonprofit that has a proven track record of success. It had its founding in Cleveland Heights, and continues to be committed to students in the CH-UH school system. In 2017, ODA launched its new high school program during the summer and in 2018, expanded to daily programming during the academic year. The subcommittee remains impressed with ODA’s commitment to educational programming for Cleveland Heights students and hopes that the high school program will provide more stability, resources, counseling, and enrichment for our students as they focus on graduation, college, vocational education, and/or future employment. This year, we voted to fully fund PIP.

ODA has gone all-in to assist Cleveland Heights students impacted by COVID-19. During this upcoming school year, PIP will continue to work with students both remotely and in-person.

PRESERVATION AND HOUSING SUBCOMMITTEE

Committee Members: David Benson, Laura Black, Amy Newman Smith

Home Repair Resource Center (HRRC)	Request	Recommendation
HRRC: Operations	\$169,000	\$169,000
Housing Counselor (HRRC)	\$30,000	\$30,000
Housing Preservation Office (HPO)		
HPO: Operations	\$332,000	\$319,000
HPO: Paint Program	\$100,000	\$80,000
HPO: Violation Repair Program for Seniors	\$20,000	\$20,000
HPO: Nuisance Abatement	\$50,000	\$50,000
HPO: LMI Code Enforcement	\$50,000	\$42,000
Strategic Home Repair (SIO) (HPO)	\$50,000	\$0

Future Heights		
FutureHomes Program (SIO)	\$75,000	\$75,000
Start Right CDC		
Good Neighbor Home Rehab Program	\$50,000	\$45,000

Home Repair Resource Center – Operations and Programs

Funding Request: \$199,000

Recommendation: \$199,000

Program/Project Description:

- \$139,000 HRRC Operating Expenses pays staff salaries and overhead for the organization to run the following programs;
- \$20,000 Assist Incentive Grant: This is a program for Cleveland Heights owner occupants who need a repair that corrects health or safety issues and meets federal requirements. Clients also must meet federal LMI guidelines to qualify for ASSIST Incentive Grants which provide \$1,000 toward the cost of replacing any one of four major systems (roof, heating, masonry rebuild, or exterior painting).
- \$5,000 Deferred Loan Match: Clients must provide a “match” of personal funds or funds from other programs (HRRC can sometimes provide “gap funding” when programs like the County Lead Grant are not sufficient to cover all required work, which would otherwise mean that nothing could get accomplished). Counselors work with the clients to assess the best repair financing for their situation.
- \$4,500 Senior Home Stability Program: provides grant funding, individualized consultations and educational workshops on all aspects of aging in place and home maintenance.
- \$500 for 0% Assist Benefit Program:

Home Repair Resource Center's Financial Assistance Program (FAP) makes financing necessary repairs more affordable and accessible for Cleveland Heights homeowner/occupants who meet federal LMI guidelines. CDBG-funded programs provide benefits that reduce payments on bank loans; assist with the extra costs of complying with lead regulations; and ensure sufficient staff expertise to counsel and administer benefit programs, all to assist Cleveland Heights homeowners to repair and maintain their homes. The homeowners HRRC serves

with the FAP are, for the most part, in difficult financial situations and have no other home repair options.

For those homeowners who do not qualify for bank loans, HRRC is filling the gap with Incentive Grants and Deferred Loan Matches and funding from the previously funded Challenge program. HRRC is reaching out to the City of Cleveland Heights, other agencies and financial institutions to compile a list of resources that will give more residents a chance to purchase and keep a home. The values of the housing stock will increase and the neighborhoods of Cleveland Heights will continue to benefit greatly from the commitment of the staff at HRRC to our community.

HRRC Housing Counseling, pays for one staff position for the program.

This position provides counseling to the clients of HRRC. The staffer educates community residents on financing repairs, and provides Home Buyer Education to help prospective buyers make decisions that meet their family and budget needs. Individual Counseling and Group Education are available. This position is an integral part of the programs at HRRC that continue to benefit the clients and the community. Director Allen noted that "our operating expenses are on the rise due to the amount of training that is required for finances". HRRC has increased the number of housing counselors from 1 ½ to 2 positions.

The Executive Director and the staff at HRRC are committed to improving the housing stock in Cleveland Heights and placing families in this community of affordable housing. Cleveland Heights has many homes that have been vacant and neglected. HRRC is working closely with the City, concerned citizens and financial institutions to improve the neighborhoods by aiding new home buyers and helping current homeowners repair their homes to keep them safe and livable.

Housing Preservation Office

Funding Request: \$602,000 Includes All Programs in HPO applications

Recommendation: \$602,000

Program/Project Description:

--\$332,000 HPO Operations/Staff pays for salaries, benefits and operating expenses for the housing office.

--\$100,000 Paint Program: LMI owner-occupants age 62+ or disabled are eligible for a grant of up to \$3,500 for labor and paint. A licensed Lead Paint contractor must be used.

--\$20,000 Violation Repair: Assists senior or disabled homeowners with violation repairs.

--\$20,000 Nuisance Abatement: Pays for demolition or other abatement at nuisance properties.

--\$50,000 LMI Code Enforcement: Comprehensive inspection of 100% LMI area housing stock.

--\$50,000 Strategic Home Repair: This is a newer program to serve LMI residents living in SIO targeted areas of Cleveland Heights to assist them with paint and violation repairs.

The Housing Preservation Office staff is responsible for providing Cleveland Heights residents crucial CDBG programs to help LMI families and seniors and disabled to be able to afford to stay in their homes. The services the HPO staff manages to assist these residents are the Paint and Violation Repair Programs. LMI Code Enforcement inspects properties in LMI areas to identify properties that need repairs and make certain the homeowner complies with any citation that may be written. New software and tablets for the field inspectors via a county grant to the First Suburbs Consortium will enhance the efficiency of the department. Nuisance Abatement is applied when the HPO staff determine a home is beyond repair.

HPO is requesting CDBG funds to expand the Paint and Violation Repair programs to **Strategic Impact Opportunity (SIO)** areas to give more income eligible Cleveland Heights residents the benefit of these services. The HPO director plans to reach out to the newly targeted areas to advise residents of this opportunity.

Subcommittee Recommendation:

The work that is done by the HPO continues to enhance the goal of making Cleveland Heights housing stock affordable for new home buyers and livable and safe for current homeowners. HPO staff are working closely with the HRRC, Future Heights, nearby municipalities, the County, the Land Bank and financial institutions to address the neglected properties which are causing property values to decline. New software tools are being implemented to give staff the ability to identify areas of need and areas where improvement has been made. This department is vital to the health and welfare of all Cleveland Heights residents.

FutureHeights FutureHomes Program

Funding Request: \$75,000

Recommendation: \$ 75,000

Program/Project Description:

FutureHeights is requesting CDBG funds to fully rehabilitate a minimum of one home in the Center City or Caledonia neighborhood. Their intent is to use the money as capital to secure a house that is not being rehabilitated and work with local contractors to restore it and sell it to a buyer who will occupy the home. The profits from the restoration/sale will be used for the next project.

Subcommittee Recommendation:

Future Heights continues to show commitment to the city through their work. The funds requested are increased from Year 46, but include a more realistic estimate of project costs. FutureHeights' serves as the city's community development corporation partner and the FutureHomes project has proven success revitalizing Cleveland Height's unique housing stock and improving LMI home ownership.

The committee recommends full funding for this program.

Start Right CDC, Good Neighbor Rehabilitation Program

Funding Request: \$50,000

Recommendation: \$ 45,000

Program/Project Description:

Start Right CDC is requesting the funds to rehabilitate a minimum of one home in the Caledonia Neighborhood and sell it to a buyer who will occupy the home. The profits from the restoration/sale will then be rolled into the next project.

Subcommittee Recommendation:

The Start Right CDC has rehabilitated 3 homes in the Caledonia Neighborhood since 2012 and is dedicated to improving housing conditions and property values in this target neighborhood. The Good Neighbor Home Rehabilitation Program has proven success rehabilitating homes in the Caledonia neighborhood. The use of CDBG funds will allow the CDC to complete the work without the use of private investors looking to make a profit. This will enable the CDC to provide the property to LMI owner occupant.

The committee recommends full funding for this program.

Mr. Iorio will present the administration's recommendations at the next meeting. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, October 20th at 7:30 p.m. via Zoom. The committee will make their final recommendations at that time.

Chairman Farmer thanked the subcommittees for their reports.

CAC Members asked about Council appointing more members before the end of the year. Mr. Iorio said that he did not know the situation but will inquire.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Cory Farmer, Chair

Jessica Schantz, Secretary