NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS
NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION TAX CREDITS PROGRAM (NRTC)

PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS, 2018

The information on the following pages is intended for use as part of the NRTC Program “Qualified Projects Pool” (or Q.P.P.). It contains information and details about the proposed activities for each project listed in the Q.P.P. The information herein was composed and submitted by the NRTC applicants in the fall of 2018; it has been edited only as necessary, for correction of typographical errors, for clarity and for spacing/formatting/length purposes. NRTC staff have added text boxes with information regarding each qualified project’s non-profit sponsor/applicant.

The Table of Contents contains hyperlinks for each listed project. By hovering the cursor over a listing name, then left-clicking with the mouse, you will move in the document to that listing’s text. A hyperlink at the end of each listing text will return you to the Table of Contents.
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Camden Lutheran Housing, “North Camden 2019”

North Camden’s NRTC 2019 project includes nine activities with seven organizations that are collectively working to implement the North Camden Neighborhood Plan. As members of the North Camden Stakeholder Committee, the organizations included meet monthly and collaborate often to achieve shared goals, revitalize the neighborhood and improve the quality of life for all. All activities can start immediately, if funded, and have a timeline of 12 months with the exception of the new home construction which will probably have a 18-24 month timeline.

“CLHI Cooper’s Walk Phase I” will build the first 6 of 18 newly constructed single-family homes in the Pyne Poynt section of North Camden along N. 10th Street, Ray Street, and Borton Street. When complete, this development will transform 80 under-sized vacant lots into 18 new homes that will be sold to income-qualifying first-time homebuyers. Of the six homes built and sold in Phase I, CLHI will sell two homes to low-income families (>50% AMI), two homes to moderate-income families (51-80% AMI), and two homes to emerging market income families (81-120% AMI), all with deed restrictions. In a pivotal time in North Camden’s revitalization, we know that newly constructed, quality housing is in high-demand. This activity will further Housing Objective #2 by "increasing the home-ownership rate by increasing production of home-ownership units for new residents or existing renters" which in turn "increases disposable income and purchasing power by increasing access to facilities and services at affordable prices such as housing." In addition, it will further the Housing Outcome that "the residential population of North Camden will grow by 15%" by increasing the number of residents in North Camden and supporting Housing Objective #4 to "enhance the quality of life in the neighborhood...in ways that have the potential to increase the market competitiveness of the neighborhood and its attractiveness to potential homebuyers and renters..."

“CLHI Community Initiatives” will continue to enhance the physical appearance of North Camden and activate neighborhood residents through the Block Supporter Initiative, Change the Message, and a new effort called Porch Light All Night. These initiatives will engage residents in keeping their neighborhood clean, beautifying the front of their homes, stabilizing vacant lots, sharing positive messages, increasing light on the streets at night, and providing local jobs. The Block Supporter Initiative will host weekly block clean-ups and install events in the spring, summer, and fall while providing 10 part-time jobs for neighborhood residents and maintaining at least 25 vacant lots. Change the Message will replace historically negative advertising with 60 positive messages, events, and/or resources on 6 neighborhood billboards in 2019, changed monthly. Porch Light All Night will enhance public safety by hiring 2 neighborhood residents to work part-time, surveying and reporting non-working street lights and porch lights. We will offer free new porch light fixtures (installation included) and energy-efficient L.E.D. light bulbs to North Camden residents who need them and will pledge to keep them on all night. Collectively, this activity will further the Human Capital Plan Outcome that "25% of neighborhood residents will report participating in a community meeting, clean-up, art project, celebration, or other organized community activity" by "increasing levels of participation as well as the number of community events and meetings for residents to participate in" as well as the Economic Development Plan Outcome that "3% of neighborhood residents will retain new jobs that are created within North Camden" by "increasing the number of residents who are employed within the neighborhood." Porch Light All Night will also further the Public Safety Plan Outcome that "all of the street will be bright, well-lit, and feel safe" by "increasing the number of streets that are well-lit and feel safe, prioritizing areas

Funding Requested: $985,000
Municipality: Camden (North Camden neighborhood)
Applicant’s Website: www.clhi.org
Contact: Betsy Clifford, bclifford@clhi.org, (856) 342-8088
where crime problems are the worst." In addition, the Block Supporter Initiative will further the Public Safety Outcome that "50% of unmaintained vacant land will be cleared, seeded, and well-kept until a permanent use is found" and the Circulation and Infrastructure Outcome that "key North Camden gateways will be enhanced to create a sense of arrival" by increasing the presence of streetscape enhancements and plantings.

"Hopeworks CRIB" will continue the Community Responding in Belief (CRIB) program by providing housing for 10 Camden youth enrolled in college or a technical school/program, with rent ($300/month) that is drastically less than that of a dorm or private rental housing. CRIB youth will have access to mentors, collaborative study environments, and a safe and stable home - providing them with the support system they need to be successful. In addition, Hopeworks will provide 10 CRIB youth with technical training and paid internships at Hopeworks or a partner company, giving them hands-on learning experiences to complement their classroom education. The activity will place 3 youth in full-time employment in 2019, with starting salaries anticipated at $30,000 - $50,000, and 7 youth in part-time employment. This will further the Human Capital Neighborhood Plan outcome to reduce the percentage of "at-risk youth (not in the labor force)" by 10% through the objective to "reduce unemployment, including creating jobs, increasing access to jobs, [and] creating business activities."

"YMCA Safe Places to Play" will continue to provide structured and supervised physical activity and healthy meals/snacks Monday through Friday for approximately 3,000 children in public parks during after-school hours (3-6pm) and in the summer (1-6pm) in Pyne Poynt Park, Northgate Park, Dominick Andujar Park, and a new location – Cornelius Martin Park. This activity will bring youth programming to 4 neighborhood parks during out-of-school hours while providing 12 park counselor jobs for local residents, paying $9-10/hour, as well as positions for a Program Coordinator and Program Specialist paying approx. $13-$15/hour. This activity will further the Parks and Open Space Plan Outcome that "North Camden residents will be able to enjoy well-equipped, programmed, and maintained park and recreational facilities at a variety of locations in North Camden" which contributes to Objective #4 of improving "quality of life in the neighborhood, as reflected in physical and/or programmatic improvements." It will also support the Human Capital and Community Building Plan Outcome that "60% of North Camden's youth under 18 will participate in recreational, educational or other programming during summers and after school within North Camden" by "increasing the number of spots available for youth to participate in recreational, educational or other programming in North Camden." The jobs created through this activity will further the Economic Development Plan Outcome that "3% of neighborhood residents will retain new jobs that are created within North Camden" through Objective #3 to reduce employment, create new jobs, and increase access to jobs.

Through "CFP Connect the Lots," Cooper's Ferry Partnership (CFP) will activate North Camden's parks and vacant lots with family-friendly programming including but not limited to fitness classes, artistic performances, festivals, and community movie nights to create a sense of place and increase social connections in North Camden. Weather-permitting, this activity will bring 12 boot-camp classes to Cooper's Poynt Waterfront Park, 12 aqua-fit classes at the pool located in the North Camden Community Center, 8 movie nights and 2 vacant lot events in locations to be determined, 1 "Camden Night Gardens" festival at Cooper's Poynt Waterfront Park, and 1 "I Walk Camden" event in a location to be determined in 2019. This activity furthers Objective #4 to enhance "the quality of life in the neighborhood, as reflected in physical and/or programmatic improvements, in ways that have the potential to increase the market competitiveness of the neighborhood and its attractiveness to potential homebuyers and renters. Such improvements include...improved open space and recreational facilities and enhanced community..." With that, this activity furthers the Plan Outcome that "25% of neighborhood residents will report participating in a community meeting, clean up, art project, celebration, or other organized activity."
“Rutgers Camden Mural Arts Project” will facilitate the creation of a community-made mural in North Camden to brighten and beautify the neighborhood while offering an outlet for creative expression to residents. The location of the mural will be determined with community input at the start of the project. Residents will be involved with developing and creating the content of the mural, both as volunteers and as staff. Rutgers Camden Center for the Arts (RCCA) will hire professional mural artist Cesar Viveros to work alongside volunteers and 3 paid project apprentices from North Camden. This activity builds on a successful mural arts project completed by CLHI and RCCA in the fall/winter of 2017 in North Camden at N. 7th and Erie Streets. It furthers Objective #4 to enhance "the quality of life in the neighborhood, as reflected in physical and/or programmatic improvements, in ways that have the potential to increase the market competitiveness of the neighborhood and its attractiveness to potential homebuyers and renters.

Such improvements include...improved open space and recreational facilities and enhanced community..." It will also further the Human Capital Plan Outcome that "25% of neighborhood residents will report participating in a community meeting, clean-up, art project, celebration, or other organized community activity" by "increasing levels of participation as well as the number of community events and meetings for residents to participate in" as well as the Economic Development Plan Outcome that "3% of neighborhood residents will retain new jobs that are created within North Camden" by "increasing the number of residents who are employed within the neighborhood."

Through the activity "LAEDA Micro-Enterprise Partnership," CLHI and the Latin American Economic Development Association (LAEDA) will host two "Turning Your Hobby Into A Business" workshops in the community room at CLHI's office in North Camden. LAEDA will partner with CLHI to promote the course to North Camden residents, including members of the Block Supporter Initiative. LAEDA will conduct the two 2 ½ hour workshops, offer five $100 seed grants for participants per workshop (10 total grants), and offer one-on-one complimentary business counseling to the 10 awardees. Residents will submit applications to be considered for the seed grants and business counseling, to be reviewed and awarded by LAEDA and CLHI. LAEDA expects at least 6 individuals will continue to grow and operate their micro-enterprise through multiple seasons. Workshops will be planned for the spring and fall of 2019. This activity will further Objective #3 of the NRTC Plan by reducing neighborhood unemployment through the creation of "business activity and strengthening existing neighborhood-based business enterprises."

"CCDA E-Waste and Used Tire Recycling" will continue its efforts to coordinate and collect potentially hazardous electronic devices from residents' homes, sidewalks and vacant lots while adding a discarded used tire component in 2019. The Camden Community Development Association (CCDA) will employ 2 neighborhood residents to facilitate the activity on a part-time basis, implementing a community education campaign with residents, schools, churches, and local businesses while responding to requests for e-waste and used tire pick-up. CCDA will ensure that approximately 250 pieces of waste items are discarded of and recycled properly in 2019. This effort will support the Economic Development Neighborhood Plan outcome of "3% of neighborhood residents will retain new jobs that are created in North Camden" as well as the Public Safety outcome to better maintain vacant lots, where TV's and tires are often illegally dumped. This activity will further Objective #4 by contributing to "enhancing the quality of life in the neighborhood."

"3rd and Erie Community Garden" will preserve a beautiful community garden and monarch butterfly sanctuary that was established in 2018 by North Camden residents and youth by purchasing the city-owned lots at 301 and 303 Erie Street. Camden resident Jackie Santiago adopted the lots in late 2017 to turn them into a community garden, which has been an astounding success in 2018. With help from the Block Supporter Initiative (BSI) of which
Jackie Santiago is highly involved, the garden features 2 milkweed plots for monarch butterflies, 2 large vegetable beds, an over-sized wrap-around bench covered in art, 2 benches made from wood and used tires, decorative split rail fencing, and a BSI corner post. The purchasing of these properties will ensure the garden remains for the long-term, which is especially important because the lots were included in Camden’s recent property auction. This activity will further the Plan Outcome that "60% of North Camden’s youth under 18 participate in a recreational program..." and "25% of neighborhood residents will report participating in a community meeting, clean-up, art project, celebration, or other organized activity..."
Unity Square 2019 continues advancing and achieving the specific outcomes of the Unity Square NRTC Neighborhood Plan. The project’s four objectives – 1. Rehabilitation of Distressed Housing; 2. Housing Resource Center; 3. Community Programs, Activities, and Organizing; and 4. Administration/Personnel – address: a) Creation of new affordable rental units, and improvement to the Remsen Avenue strip, Creating Healthy Housing; b) the Housing Resource Center; c) Latino Crime Watch; d) Operation of the Community Center, including the Peer Language Exchange; and e) “Neighborhood Networks” and Local Leadership Development. In addition to the programs we have offered in the past, we have partnered with Holy Family Parish to extend our offering of services to include women’s circles, other classes and access to mental health services at Holy Family Parish.

**Objective 1**, Rehabilitation of Distressed Housing, fulfills the Neighborhood Plan’s homeownership outcome by creating 10 rental housing units through new construction at 45 Remsen Avenue. The properties will be targeted to be affordable for residents making 50% and 80% of County Median Income. Construction and sale will be carried out by collaborative partner Community Asset Preservation Corporation (CAPC). With active lines of credit, CAPC will leverage $500,000 of its own equity and financing to complete these rehabilitation projects.

**Objective 2** will strengthen and carry forward the work of the Unity Square Housing Resource Center, which is the Neighborhood Plan’s first listed outcome. The Housing Resource Center continues to be greatly utilized by neighborhood tenants – 84% of neighborhood households rent – and has expanded its impact over the last year.

The heart of the Center’s work is education and assistance to neighborhood households on issues related to tenant rights and responsibilities. It also acts as a clearinghouse for tenants seeking vacancies at properties managed by responsible, high-road landlords, thus addressing the information asymmetries that adversely affect the neighborhood rental housing market. The Center works with the City to address substandard housing conditions, and with the local hospitals to educate the community on housing-based environmental health hazards like lead and mold.

The Center will also carry out educational programming and outreach aimed at preparing neighborhood families for homeownership through referrals to HUD approved housing counseling agencies and other resources. It is hoped that this work can develop a local market of potential homebuyers for the neighborhood properties being rehabilitated by CAPC.

**Objective 3**, Community Programs, Activities, and Organizing, contains activities that address a number of Neighborhood Plan outcomes. The first of these outcomes is the “Construction and Operation of [the] Community Center.” This objective provides funding for this key anchor asset in the community to achieve its full positive potential as a hub of neighborhood meetings, activities, and programs for adults and youth. Among the regular programs at the Community Center supported by this Objective are English as a Second Language classes, which address the “Peer Language Exchange” Plan outcome (especially as community members fulfill volunteer teaching roles in the classes), the bilingual neighborhood Crime Watch, which addresses the “Develop a Latino Crime Watch” outcome. Objective 3 will also advance the Plan’s “Development of ‘Neighborhood Networks’ and Local Leadership Development” objective.

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**Funding Requested:** $700,000

**Municipality:** New Brunswick (Unity Square neighborhood)

**Applicant’s Website:** [www.ccdom.org/usq](http://www.ccdom.org/usq)

**Contact:** Julio Coto, jcoto@ccdom.org, (732) 324-8200

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Leadership Development” Objective, through supporting community organizing and leadership development efforts. Empowering community leaders, or “Block Captains,” through this Objective will help drive outreach and better enable the community to participate in revitalization activities and resolve community problems together. Real community participation and buy-in is essential to the overall success of the Unity Square revitalization initiative.

In addition under Objective 3 we will be implementing “A Micro-enterprise Training and Resource Center”: New Brunswick Tomorrow will jointly engage with Metuchen Community Services staff to provide Entrepreneur training & support through recruiting and connecting aspiring and existing entrepreneurs to the Community Business Academy and other entrepreneurship resources. services will include: Hosting a 12-week Community Business Academy annually at the Unity Square community center (provided in partnership with Rising Tide Capital), Outreach and promotion of business resources to Unity Square small businesses, and Coordination of food entrepreneurism through the use of the Unity Square community center commercial kitchen

The final objective, Administration/Personnel, ensures that Catholic Charities maintains the internal staff capacity to implement these activities and advance the Neighborhood Plan outcomes. Catholic Charities’ Unity Square team operates in a dynamic, bilingual environment, collaborates closely with community residents and partners, manages the Community Center facility and its many activities, and ensures the NRTC activity and financial milestones are met.

Most recently we have updated the site to include 3 communal desk top computers with free Wi-Fi to enhance the services we’re able to provide and offer new services.

As a whole, this project builds upon a record of success in continuing to advance and bring toward completion the Neighborhood Plan’s outcomes. Catholic Charities and its key partners CAPC and Metuchen Community Services (MCS) have proven capable of achieving NRTC project goals, rehabilitating housing, and managing NRTC financial reports. Based on this record, all of the Project’s activities are feasible and ready to proceed.

This project also addresses both physical and economic distress. It achieves the former by rehabilitating currently distressed and abandoned properties into homes. It achieves the latter by decreasing the overall housing cost burden by increasing the supply of affordable housing, and providing English classes that increase employment opportunity in a community where 57% of the population older than five is non-English speaking.

The Unity Square community, Catholic Charities, the City of New Brunswick, and this project’s other partners are very excited to see this project proceed. It will further complete the outcomes of the NRTC Neighborhood Plan, and continue driving forward the revitalization of the Unity Square neighborhood.
This NRTC Project application continues the revitalization of the East Trenton neighborhood of Trenton, New Jersey. The revitalization activities included in this Project application advance all four of the Neighborhood Plan’s Outcomes, as represented in the East Trenton NRTC Neighborhood Plan:

1. Promote a community-driven neighborhood planning process;
2. Increase the supply, accessibility, and quality of affordable housing available to neighborhood residents;
3. Increase the number of local businesses that provide goods and services to local residents and local employment opportunities; and
4. Increase the supply, accessibility, and quality of public services to neighborhood residents including recreation, open space, education, social services, etc.

This project builds on the prior success, experience, and capacity of New Jersey Community Capital (NJCC), the East Trenton Collaborative’s lead agency, and that of its project partners. The project leverages outside funding, the neighborhood’s assets, and the support of the City of Trenton. It also engages microenterprises in a number of its activities.

The Project’s first three Objectives all fulfill the second Neighborhood Plan Outcome by “increase[ing] the supply, accessibility, and quality of affordable housing available to neighborhood residents.”

In Objective 1, Housing Rehabilitation, NJCC, through its development subsidiary Community Asset Preservation Corporation (CAPC), will acquire and rehabilitate four distressed or abandoned single-family homes into four units of homeownership housing. The completed homeownership properties will be affordable to residents earning between 50% to 80% of County Median Income. With active lines of credit, CAPC will leverage $169,000 in financing to complete these rehabs.

Objective 2, Homeownership Promotion, seeks to promote homeownership opportunities in the neighborhood for households earning less than 80% of County Median Income. A real estate consultant will coordinate regular homeownership workshops at the East Trenton Center. These workshops will include real estate and lending professionals, who will educate neighborhood residents about the home buying process and the preparatory steps interested households should take. NJCC will also provide free, HUD-certified pre-homeownership counseling to East Trenton residents ready to take the next steps toward homeownership. Workshops and counseling will be provided in both English and Spanish so that all neighborhood residents can fully take advantage of this opportunity. Lastly, NJCC will provide down-payment assistance to LMI neighborhood homeowners ready to purchase a home in East Trenton.

Objective 3, Homeownership Repairs, will complete repairs on at least 15 owner-occupied homes in East Trenton, increasing the quality of the neighborhood’s existing affordable housing stock. Eligible homeowners will earn less

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**Funding Requested:** $985,000

**Municipality:** Trenton (East Trenton neighborhood)

**Applicant’s Website:** www.newjerseycommunitycapital.org

**Contact:** Jason Rowe, jrowe@njclf.com, (732) 640-2061
than 80% of County Median Income. In contracting out the repair work, NJCC will ensure that at least 25% of the work goes to local contractors that are microenterprises with five or fewer employees inclusive of the owner/principal.

Project Objectives 4 and 5 address the third Neighborhood Plan Outcome, as they “increase the number of local businesses that provide goods and services to local residents and local employment opportunities.”

Objective 4, Youth Employment, will place 20 East Trenton youth, ages 14 to 18, in paid summer intern/employment positions at neighborhood microenterprises, ETC partner organizations, and other host organizations in the City of Trenton. In addition to the hands-on learning opportunities provided by these job placements, program participants will also take part in enrichment and service-learning activities. At least 15% of the youth in the program will be placed at microenterprises, and additional resources may be made available to microenterprises to help support the continuation of these youth positions beyond the summer.

Objective 5, Microenterprise, will provide neighborhood small businesses that qualify as microenterprises (a commercial enterprise with 5 or fewer employees, one or more of whom owns the enterprise) with small grants of up to $6,000. These grants, which will be provided through an open and fair solicitation process, can be used for improvements to their commercial storefronts or other investments that enhance the provision of goods and services to neighborhood residents or provide job opportunities to local residents. It is hoped that these grants will strengthen existing microenterprises, and provide at least three new employment or internship opportunities for neighborhood residents at recipient institutions. In implementing these activities, NJCC and East Trenton Collaborative partners will leverage our existing relationships with over 20 neighborhood microenterprises.

Objective 6 of this Project application, Community Participation, Organizing, Events, advances two of the Neighborhood Plan Outcomes: Outcome 1, “Promote a community-driven neighborhood planning process;” and Outcome 4, “Increase the supply, accessibility, and quality of public services to neighborhood residents including recreation, open space, education, social services, etc.”

Objective 6 engages partner UrbanPromise Trenton to foster broad and deep community participation through an expansion of its East Trenton community-organizing program. By employing both a full-time and part-time community organizer, this program will realize 50 community meetings and community-improvement events, with a combined total attendance of 750. The bilingual community organizers, working with NJCC’s East Trenton Program Director, will build a grassroots leadership cohort of 30 neighborhood residents, who will plan and lead issue- and activity-focused workgroups.

Objective 6 also further activates the East Trenton Center as a hub of neighborhood activity, services, programming, and social capital. The Center will host over 250 events and activities over the grant period, with a combined total attendance of 3,000. These activities at the Center include ESL classes, an afterschool program, tax preparation services, immigration legal consultations, and a weekly food distribution — among other recreational, educational, health-awareness, and civic programs. Lastly, the East Trenton Collaborative will host 18 “Family-Fun Days” both in the Center and outside at sites throughout the neighborhood, with a combined total attendance of over 800 residents.

Objective 7, Personnel & Administration, maintains NJCC’s talented and experienced staff engaged in the implementation of Project activities and the administration of the Project grant. NJCC’s East Trenton Collaborative Team operates in a dynamic, bilingual environment, collaborates closely with neighborhood residents, manages the East Trenton Center facility and events, and ensures that NRTC activity and financial milestones are achieved.
As an organization with $185 million in total assets, sound financial and administrative infrastructure, and extensive community-development resources and capacity in lending, construction, neighborhood planning, and strategy development, NJCC is capable and ready to lead this NRTC Project and continue catalyzing neighborhood change in East Trenton. The Project’s collaborative partners bring additional capabilities and resources to the table. The Project can count on the support of the City of Trenton – particularly that of new Mayor Reed Gusciora, who has twice met with residents at the East Trenton Center in his only four-month-long tenure, and who named four NJCC staff members to his mayoral transition team.

Additionally, this Project addresses both physical and economic distress. Its activities, which collectively alleviate poverty by increasing household income, increase access to affordable housing, strengthen neighborhood-based business enterprises, and enhance the quality of life in the neighborhood, tackle all of the four distress criteria outlined in the August 2014 NRTC Program Rules.

Lastly, this Project incorporates local microenterprises into three of its Objectives. Objective 3, Homeownership Repairs, will direct a minimum of 25% of the repair work to local contractors that qualify as microenterprises, including two with whom we already work. In Objective 4, Youth Employment, microenterprises will be an important venue for hand-on learning as part of this job-training and workforce-development program for neighborhood youth.

Objective 5, Microenterprise, will, through an open and fair solicitation process, provide local microenterprises grants for storefront improvements or other investments that enhance their ability to thrive economically, provide local services, and sustain local jobs.

Truly believing in its potential, the East Trenton Community, NJCC, the City of Trenton, and our other collaborative partners are excited to see this NRTC Project move forward. It will continue to advance the NRTC Neighborhood Plan, build on strengths and past success, and further catalyze positive community change in East Trenton.
Cooper's Ferry Partnership  
Cramer Hill NOW! 2019 Revitalization Projects

Cramer Hill NOW! 2019 Revitalization Projects builds upon the momentum in the Cramer Hill community, where investments in infrastructure, parks, community centers, and schools, continue to uplift one of Camden’s most stable neighborhoods. Cooper’s Ferry Partnership (CFP), in partnership with St. Joseph’s Carpenter Society (SJCS) and the Camden Special Services District (CSSD), will further the implementation of the Cramer Hill NOW! Neighborhood Plan. A resident-driven blueprint for the community, Cramer Hill NOW! outlines a vision to create a social service network tailored to Cramer Hill, connect to the waterfront, revitalize River Avenue, improve local parks and schools, create a mixed-income community, and promote Cramer Hill as a cleaner and safer community. NRTC support of the Cramer Hill NOW! 2019 Revitalization projects directly advances these goals for families in Cramer Hill through vacant housing rehabilitation, home repair, commercial corridor improvements, and park programming, and trail design.

1) Rehab Housing Development

St. Joseph’s Carpenter Society will transform 4 vacant and blighted properties into beautiful homes for 4 new families in Cramer Hill. Located off of the River Avenue commercial corridor, adjacent to the Mi Casa Village (opened on 2008), each of the four properties will be expanded from its current 784 sq. ft, to 1200 sq. ft residences with 3 bedrooms and 1.5 baths.

The properties are:
- 921 N. 22nd Street – Block 855/Lot 4
- 905 N. 22nd Street – Block 855/Lot 66
- 923 N. 22nd Street – Block 855/Lot 72
- 932 N. 21st Street – Block 855/Lot 95

All units are a complete gut rehab and will include new Energy Star rated appliances, including new refrigerator, stove, microwave and dishwasher, windows, a central air conditioner and gas heat. All units will be carpeted, feature numerous closets and hookups for washer and dryers. The 4 properties are owned by the Camden Redevelopment Agency (CRA). The CRA has provided a letter of support indicating its willingness to “reserve/hold these properties in its inventory for a potential sale to SJCS for the rehabilitation and resale by SJCS of the properties to qualified homebuyers.”

Funding Requested: $981,464
Municipality: Camden (Cramer Hill neighborhood)  
Applicant’s Website:  [www.coopersferry.com](http://www.coopersferry.com)  
Contact: Kris Kolluri, kkolluri@coopersferry.com, (856) 757-9154

The Primary Market Area (PMA) of the Cramer Hill neighborhood has a population of 10,650 representing one-seventh of the total population of the city of Camden. According to 2015 American Community Survey data, approximately seventy-four percent of the population is of Hispanic origin. Forty-one percent of the population owns their home and this number continues to rise. The vacancy rate, income levels and unemployment metrics in Cramer Hill are better on average than the City of Camden as a whole. The population, and the homeownership rate, in the PMA are on the rise.
The supply of renovated housing is low across the city and in the market area. The cost of rehabilitation exceeds what the private market will invest, relying upon significant subsidy or patient private capital. However, demand for renovated housing at reasonable prices in Cramer Hill is steady, in stark contrast to the city as a whole. Market perception holds that this is an area of higher safety, better quality housing and more amenities than other Camden neighborhoods. The neighborhood offers a plethora of restaurants, a large park where the community naturally congregates, many corner stores, a brand-new school, a bustling commercial corridor on River Road, and the one-of-a-kind Salvation Army Kroc Center.

With few exceptions, SJCS sells their units within 30 days of construction completion. This has remained unchanged in spite of the difficulties in the overall housing market. SJCS has a waiting list of potential homeowners who have completed homebuyer and home maintenance trainings, and who have established credit-worthiness necessary to obtain a mortgage. There is a steady stream of candidates taking classes and establishing financial capacity to buy.

Because of low supply of updated/renovated housing and the natural demand for homes as a result of SJCS’s homebuyer education classes, the capture rate for this development is 2%. This is well below 10%, the maximum cap recommended for comparable projects. This capture rate suggests SJCS has to sell one of their units for every 50 individuals available and willing to purchase. This pace indicates a high likelihood of project success.

The combination of a desirable neighborhood, a relatively low supply of renovated units, and the track record of SJCS supports the likelihood that SJCS will sell the proposed units within 60 days of issuance of occupancy certificate.

This housing development is being leveraged by the on-going homeownership counseling and education that SJCS provides to all homebuyers. The counseling and education program include group education classes and private one-on-one counseling sessions to ensure that the homebuyer is ready to become a homeowner. Typically, this includes two months of classes and at least 10 hours of counseling sessions which converts to $2,000 per client. Funding for the Homeownership Academy is provided by SJCS and is underwritten by numerous foundations and corporations.

This project will transform four spots of blight in the community to strengthen the entire neighborhood and promote family self-sufficiency. This objective supports the Cramer Hill NOW! Neighborhood Plan goal to “mix market rate development with affordable housing to build a mixed-income community.”

2) Home Repair Program

Cramer Hill continues to be among Camden’s most stable neighborhoods, with vacancy, income, and unemployment metrics better than the city as a whole. Cramer Hill’s large homeownership base (41%) is supportive of the neighborhood’s continued revitalization. As a result, programs that provide support to the existing homeowners is of utmost importance. St. Joseph’s Carpenter Society (SJCS) will administer myHome, a homeowner occupied rehabilitation program that will provide $5,000 grants to homeowners making 100% or below the median family income for the area. This grant is used for health and safety repairs to necessary basic systems in a home, including electrical, plumbing, weatherization, heating/air conditioning and roofing. Typically, low-income residents have a difficult time in accessing capital for major renovations if the work was delayed and not accomplished as routine maintenance. In researching HMDA data, the home improvement denial rate for minority homebuyers is very high (61.8%). While it is also high for white buyers (38.6%), the minority denial rate is still 60% higher than white buyers. Combining this data with the older housing stock in Cramer Hill and low
incomes of homeowners in the area demonstrate the need for this type of program. The myHome home repair program will provide access to capital for safe and healthy renovations, or sometimes even simple upkeep and maintenance, particularly for more elderly homeowners.

This program will offer $5,000 grants to 33 homeowners in Cramer Hill. The maximum may be exceeded if a case is clearly warranted to fix health and safety issues beyond the $5,000 limit.

The program is helping SJCS achieve two results. The first is to stabilize clients’ largest assets, their homes, and ensure that this portion of their investment portfolio (perhaps their only asset) is on solid ground. The second is to continue to stabilize the neighborhood. In achieving these two goals at once, Cramer Hill will continue on its path to being a neighborhood of choice. In addition, this activity helps preserve existing homeowners, enhances the appearance of the neighborhood and increases the homeownership rate. The myHome home repair program directly supports the Cramer Hill NOW! Neighborhood Plan goal to “expand financial assistance to homeowners for home improvement projects.”

3) Commercial Corridor Improvements/Clean & Safe

CFP is partnering with the Camden Special Services District (CSSD) to improve the environment of Cramer Hill’s primary commercial corridor, River Avenue. Commercial Development is a key component of the Cramer Hill NOW! Neighborhood Plan and this objective supports the Plan goal to "strengthen River Avenue" with subgoals to "invest in targeted public realm improvements to revitalize the corridor" and "improve gateways to River Ave." In partnership with the City of Camden, CFP is managing the River Road Improvement Project. This $4.3 million project, funded by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) via NJ Department Of Transportation (NJDOT), will mitigate truck traffic and promote investment along River Avenue. The goal of this project is to build upon previous planning efforts undertaken by NJDOT in 2005 to develop an implementation plan for River Road that will reduce truck traffic, improve the streetscape, and provide a better environment for retail commercial activities in a high-impact and cost-effective manner. Construction of this project began in summer 2019 and will be completed in early 2019.

The NRTC Commercial Corridor Improvement Project will amplify the efforts underway and help create a sense of place along the River Avenue corridor (State Street to 36th Street). Working with Cramer Hill businesses and residents, CFP will oversee the design and installation of two "Welcome to Cramer Hill" signs at the gateway entrances to the neighborhood on River Road. Additionally, 50 banners will be installed on light poles along the River Avenue corridor.

To complement these public realm improvements, CFP has partnered with the CSSD to provide two full-time CSSD ambassadors will service River Avenue (River Ave from 19th – 36th Streets and 27th St from Arthur to Wayne Avenues) five days per week, removing trash and debris, removing graffiti from public property and local businesses, and providing hospitality services. The CSSD creates local job opportunities by exclusively hiring Camden residents. The CSSD will play a vital role in keeping the Cramer Hill commercial corridor clean and safe. Ambassadors work hard to keep the district clean to increase the quality of life in Camden, help improve perceptions of the city and reduce crime for this district in an era of redevelopment.

4) Park Programming – Connect the Lots

Connect the Lots (CTL) is a community-driven initiative to activate Camden’s vacant and underutilized spaces through the identification and implementation of artistic, cultural, and recreational projects and activities. The
goals of the initiative are to engage Camden residents in neighborhood transformation, create safe nodes of activity, and to bring vibrancy to Camden’s corridors and public spaces. Building off of CTL’s successful 2018 season, which engaged over 10,000 residents with more than 100 opportunities to get outside and enjoy the vibrancy of eight Camden parks, CFP seeks to expand CTL offerings in Cramer Hill in 2019 utilizing NRTC funding. CFP, in partnership with the City of Camden, via the Connect the Lots (CTL) initiative will facilitate programming and placemaking in Cramer Hill parks (primarily Von Nieda Park) to increase park usage, strengthen community connections, and provide opportunities for positive family interactions. This objective supports the Cramer Hill NOW! Neighborhood Plan goal to "expand park programming for community events." This work will also build upon previously NRTC-supported projects to enhance and mitigate flooding at Von Nieda Park.

Section 5.4 of the Plan states that, “many residents expressed a desire to have more events in the neighborhood’s parks that were more oriented toward the local community.” Via Connect the Lots, CFP will work closely with residents to ensure optimal participation in the following events and programs:

- “I Bike Camden” annual 12-mile leisure ride through Camden starting in Cramer Hill
- 4 outdoor movie nights with family activities
- A visual arts workshop for youth at the Cramer Hill Community Center in partnership with the City of Camden Summer Recreation Program and Rutgers-Camden Center for the Arts.

Through these programs, CFP will provide over 200 residents with a chance to engage in healthy and family-friendly outdoor activities in their neighborhood, promoting a culture of health in Cramer Hill.

5) Cramer Hill Waterfront Park Trail Connector (Design)

The Cramer Hill Waterfront Park Connector will be a critical link along the Cramer Hill Waterfront segment of the Circuit Trails, connecting the terminus of the half-mile long trail being constructed as part of the $34 million development of the Cramer Hill Waterfront Park on the former Harrison Avenue Landfill to Harrison Avenue. At present, the plans for the Cramer Hill Waterfront Park do not include a street connection to the eastern terminus of the trail, limiting its usability for recreation and commuting. The connector will utilize the existing right of way and City-owned property east of the Cramer Hill Waterfront Park to connect the park’s trail to the existing street grid. The property includes Block 814 Lot 2 and City of Camden ROW at 24th Street between Harrison Avenue and the Delaware River. The trail will be designed and constructed in accordance with the 2017 Camden GreenWay Design Guide. This objective supports the Cramer Hill NOW! Neighborhood Plan goal to "make Cramer Hill bike-accessible" by establishing "a multi-use recreation trail network."

The 5 Cramer Hill NOW! 2019 Revitalization Projects address several priority goals and objectives of the Cramer Hill NOW! Neighborhood Plan, build off of a track record of success by the project partners involved, and continue the momentum of community change underway in Cramer Hill. In addition to the five projects, CFP has requested Administrative Support for the overall NRTC grant to ensure that all projects meet all objectives, metrics, and timelines, that the community is informed and engaged, and that all grant reporting requirements are met.
Elizabeth Development Company
“Elizabethport Housing and Services”

1. Economic Development: Affordable Housing

The Elizabeth Development Company (EDC) will use $305,000.00 to provide a predevelopment loan to the Housing Authority of the City of Elizabeth (HACE) to develop a site in the Elizabethport NRTC neighborhood. This is to implement one of the Plan’s Goals which is to “Develop full range housing options within the neighborhood to meet the needs of all residents “and the specific Objective which is to Identify areas for additional residential development and redevelopment.”

The HACE has recently entered into an agreement with the Community Assets Preservation Corporation (CAPC) to purchase 170-176 First Street, which they had purchased a part of a liquidation plan of the real estate portfolio of Brand New Day (BND), another non-profit, which had been forced to sell off affordable sites due to ongoing financial difficulties. In total, CAPC has purchased three sites in Elizabeth with a total of 24 units. Of those sites, they are currently rehabilitating 2 for occupancy by low and moderate income families with the third site being sold to HACE. HACE also directly purchased one of the BND sites, Marina Village containing 35 units. In 2017, HACE received a Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) commitment from HUD which will allow that project to remain as affordable. Those units should be rehabilitated by the end of 2019.

While the site at 170-176 First Street was owned by BND, it had received in 2012, a $602,000 allocation of Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) from the NJHMFA for 44 units, 12 of which were to be occupied by clients of BND’s YouthBuild Program. Unfortunately, due to the aforementioned financial difficulties BND was not able to initiate the construction of the project within the LIHTC time frame and in 2014; they had to return the credits to NJHMFA so they could be reallocated to another project. In the interim, the structures on the site which would have been rehabilitated were heavily damaged and had to be demolished due to their weakened condition which has had a negative impact on the neighborhood which has been undergoing significant revitalization.

This site was always important to the implementation of the Elizabethport Revitalization Plan approved by NJDCA for the NRTC program. It housed the administrative offices of Brand New Day, one of the founding partners of the original collaborative effort. It also sits directly across First Street from the HOPE VI project which was the principal catalyst for the revitalization of the neighborhood and across Court Street from the new HACE project under construction. The site at 170-176 First Street also abuts the new location of the Elizabeth Presbyterian Center and the Elizabethport Neighborhood Health Center at 184 First Street. Finally, it is within one block from the offices of the EDC and the 30 unit affordable senior project at 205 First Street. This makes it critical that this site is redeveloped in a manner consistent with the NRTC Plan. EDC is committed to utilizing all available resources to accomplish this and providing HACE with predevelopment funding to advance this project is a good investment.

Since CAPC was busy rehabilitating their existing portfolio of BND units and their longstanding commitment to ensure that the BND units remain affordable, they approached HACE to purchase the site, knowing of HACE’s track record in developing affordable units in Elizabethport (HACE is presently building two LIHTC funded buildings in

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**Funding Requested: $650,000**

**Municipality:** Elizabeth (Elizabethport neighborhood)

**Applicant’s Website:** www.edcnj.org

**Contact:** William O'Dea, wodea@edcnj.org, (908) 289-0262
In October 2018, HACE and CAPC executed an agreement to transfer the property to HACE for development as low and moderate income housing. HACE is aiming to undertake predevelopment activities on the site and submit an application for LIHTC and other funding sources in 2019-2020.

The EDC is seeking an allocation of funds under the NRTC program to provide a predevelopment loan to HACE for certain predevelopment expenses which will allow HACE to expedite the necessary planning for the project. This loan will be repaid to the EDC upon HACE’s receipt of a permanent loan commitment for the project. These funds will then be used by EDC for other projects in the Elizabethport neighborhood. These predevelopment funds will be used for acquisition costs, environmental, engineering and architectural costs necessary to secure site plan approval from the City, a LIHTC allocation, and other funding.

2. Economic Development: Workforce Development and Education

The EDC will use $150,000 to provide medical, hospitality, food-service, and construction pre-apprenticeship training to E’Port residents to create pathways to permanent employment in those fields; in furtherance of the DCA approved Neighborhood Plan’s Economic Development Objective to create job opportunities for E’Port residents. This will continue the EDC’s use of NRTC funds to take advantage of the region’s growth by training and finding employment opportunities for the residents of the City’s underserved neighborhoods. In Elizabeth, there are a number of major construction projects that will be under construction in the next 12 months. This includes the reconstruction of Terminal A at Liberty Airport, the 500,000 sq. ft. expansion at Jersey Gardens Mall, the rehabilitation of the TRMC New Point Campus, the reconstruction of the Midtown Train Station and the mixed-use redevelopment project located adjacent to the train station. The EDC will negotiate with these and other contractors to secure jobs for the graduates of its training programs.

As was the case in previous years the EDC would use these funds to augment the efforts the EDC is undertaking in the larger Union County region. In May of 2018, the EDC signed a $200,000 contract with the NJDOL under their NJBUILD program to provide job readiness and training in the construction trades to women and minorities in Union County. The EDC has scheduled more than 5 public sessions around the County to inform residents, local and county officials and appropriate service providers of the program to identify potential candidates. Once identified the EDC administers a drug test and TABE to identify those potential candidates that are ready to enter the 6-week training program. At the conclusion of the 4-month training program, the graduates are retested to see if they meet the qualifications of each of the trade unions. If necessary, the EDC provides individual tutoring to assist clients in passing the test. Upon certification, they are placed in pre-apprenticeship positions with one of the seven trade unions that have signed agreements with the EDC. The EDC has also signed agreements with local developers to utilize the graduates of EDC’s training program which is administered by the National Career Institute (NCI), a nationally recognized and certified training organization. The unions have worked with the EDC and NCI to ensure that the program meets their requirements. In addition to paying for the training, the EDC uses the NJBUILD grant to pay for tutoring, violation expungement, necessary drug, and TABE testing, transportation and other out-of-pocket costs.

We will also work with Trinitas Regional Medical Center (TRMC) and Union County College (UCC) to develop and implement a training program to provide qualified clients for the various medical fields. Both TRMC and UCC already provide the training and have been successful in providing employment opportunities to local Elizabeth residents. However, their efforts to recruit Elizabethport residents have not been as successful. For example, TRMC has 2700 employees of which approximately 21% are Elizabeth residents. Of those 580 Elizabeth employees, 462 (80%) are from Midtown while only 106 (18%) are from Elizabethport. Even at the closer New Point campus of
TRMC, only 19% of the employees are from E’Port while 78% are from Midtown. If it secures the NRTC funding the EDC will undertake a targeted effort in E”Port to train and place residents in positions at TRMC, other hospitals in the region, and private practice medical offices and clinics.

We also offer preparation for employment in the Food, Beverage, Culinary and Hospitality industry which includes hospitality fundamentals, customer service principles, event planning, decorating, hotel and guest services, server training and food safety. The program lasts approximately 10 weeks and is given in English and Spanish. The Culinary training program is an additional 16-week program. Students receive certification in Serve Safe, TIPS, CPR/AED/1st Aid. Placement assistance is provided to those who complete the program, and with a large hotel industry in and around Newark Airport, job opportunities are always available. EDC has a unique relationship with these employers because of its role in assisting development and business expansion. EDC offers all applicants soft skills training that includes but is not limited to customer service/relations, leadership/ethics, active listening, and speaking skills, interpersonal skills, critical thinking, problem-solving, time management, empowerment building, resume preparation, job search assistance, and interviewing skills. This program is in support of our Economic Development Outcome which states that “Elizabeth residents will have training and access to jobs created in the neighborhood and the surrounding employment centers”

3. Micro-Enterprise Component

Elizabeth-port is our city’s neediest neighborhood and in great need of entrepreneurial investment. EDC will seek to offer a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) from a neighborhood Micro-Enterprise as described and defined by this FY 2019 NRTC RFP for a $47,350.00 grant/loan award. Our focus will be to businesses in the Food-Service sector who can partner with us in training and/or employing our WDE program participants. The award would go to share costs such as rent expense for hosting program events and for the use of facilities during the WDE training cycle.

Funds will also be used for marketing the business, working capital expenses, and physical improvements to the location that will help accommodate the WDE - Hospitality, Food-Service, and Culinary program and the overall, marketability of the micro-enterprise. The award will seek to create a least two full-time jobs at the end of the cycle. EDC will review the needs of the business and can provide additional support and technical assistance through our CDBG Micro-Enterprise Lending program and/or our Urban Enterprise Zone Micro-enterprise lending program.

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Garden State Episcopal Community Development Corp  
“I Love Greenville Community Plan 2018”

The I Love Greenville Community Plan’s (GCP) 2018 application includes six (6) priority community development activities which demonstrate the commitment of local nonprofit organizations to the community, highlight the collaborative and inclusive nature of the GCP effort, and leverage the new investments in the neighborhood to benefit all residents. Unlike previous years, GCP’s NRTC FY2019 submission includes an arts and culture focus to provide another route to engage and unite area stakeholders to build community. These activities will be executed by GCP charter members, Garden State Episcopal Community Development Corporation and Rising Tide Capital, and newly participating organizations: Jersey Artist Exchange, Jersey City Medical Center Foundation, Jersey City Theater Center and Kismet of Kings.

1) Greenville Home Ownership Initiative – Phase II

Garden State Episcopal Community Development Corporation (GSEDC) aims to realize the goals of the neighborhood plan by reducing the stock of abandoned or foreclosed property in the GCP target area while creating quality, affordable housing. The Greenville Home Ownership Initiative – Phase II involves the acquisition of four (4) vacant lots from the Jersey City Redevelopment Agency (JCRA) through the Abandoned Properties Rehabilitation Act (APRA). GSEDC is a designated developer entity to develop properties on the City-wide list. This effort will include lot acquisition and the new construction of four (4) two-family homes in the Greenville Neighborhood which will be affordable to first time home buyers of moderate income (under 65% of the AMI).

**Funding Requested:** $985,000  
**Municipality:** Jersey City (Greenville neighborhood)  
**Applicant’s Website:** [www.gsecdc.org](http://www.gsecdc.org)  
**Contact:** John Restrepo, jrestrepo@gsecdc.org, (201) 209-9301 x304

These lots have been abandoned for a significant time and in need of improvement. As with previously committed JCRA property, GSEDC will be designated developer for the sites (see attached JCRA letter of support). The two-family homes will be approximately 2,800 gross square feet. The owner will have a 3 BR/2 BTH unit with approximately 1,500 usable square feet.

The rental unit will offer a 2BR/1 BTH with 900 square feet. The amenities include central HVAC, powder rooms, spacious living room, dining room, ample closet space, carpeting, ceramic tile and hardwood floors, spacious backyards and stainless steel appliances including dishwasher, refrigerator and range. All unit appliances will be Energy Star rated.

All 8 units will be deed restricted. The properties are located in close proximity to transportation, jobs, shopping, schools and recreation. The Fair Market Rate for 3 BR units in Jersey City is up almost 10% over last year - now at $2,000. The owner of these homes will pay $500 below the market rate (This is based on an FHA product, it could be much less if the buyer qualifies for a conventional product with No PMI).

Similar homes are valued at $450-$500,000 and rising. GSEDC will offer these homes for $100-150,000 less. NRTC funding will be used for property acquisition and a portion of construction costs to achieve an affordable rent or sales price. GSEDC also has other funding sources (committed to &/ anticipated for) available through New Jersey Community Capital, Jersey City HOME Fund to ensure successful completion of this project.
To date, GSECDC has developed and sold over 55 two family homes (rehab and new) in and around this neighborhood providing affordable housing to 110 families. These efforts have stabilized the community, generated tax revenue for the City of Jersey City and created affordable housing in area within the City where housing costs are skyrocketing. (GSECDC has developed close to 100 homes to date - including a 2017 NRTC funded 5 two-family new construction project currently in the foundation laying phase. (GSECDC has developed close to 100 homes to date - including a 2017 NRTC funded 5 two-family new construction project currently in the foundation laying phase)

2) Greenville Small Business Support Initiative:

Rising Tide Capital's (RTC) aims to equip I Love Greenville Community Plan stakeholders to start, strengthen, and expand businesses. As a previous recipient of NRTC funding, RTC plans to continue supporting the creation of a vibrant and healthy commercial corridor centered on MLK Drive, through its Greenville Small Business Support Initiative – Phase II.

This activity aligns directly with the neighborhood plan goals of reducing business turnover and increasing the number of business owners within Greenville by providing entrepreneurship training and technical assistance to residents. Each grant year, the plan aims to enroll and graduate at least 25 current, local business owners in a course on good business practices (i.e. effective advertising, displays, bookkeeping, succession, etc.). RTC currently works with over 750 entrepreneurs per year across 4 cities in NJ and prior to receiving the NRTC funding for this project, RTC did not have the capacity to focus exclusively on businesses in one specific geographic area. With support of NRTC funding, RTC was able to designate sustained year-round services exclusively to businesses in the Greenville neighborhood and coordinate with the activities of other members of the Greenville Community Plan to harness the role that local small business owners as stakeholders will play in the work ahead.

With prior NRTC funds RTC provided year-round consulting services solely to businesses within the targeted Greenville neighborhood, which resulted in 82 GCP residents/business receiving technical support services, as well as 11 new businesses started and 19 FTE jobs created within the GCP target area. This initiative also provided tangible improvements to Greenville businesses like Kobe Kuts Barbershop owned by Greenville resident Alberto Henriques.

Through the RTC’s training and technical support services Alberto experienced a 23% increase in his business sales and continues to work with one-on-one with the coach to expand his business. The focus of phase II of this project is to continue executing this strategy and deepen RTC’s level of service to Greenville residents by providing entrepreneurial training & technical assistance services to 50-100 Greenville residents/businesses over 2 year grant period. As a result, we project that at least 10 new businesses will be started and at least 20 businesses strengthened or expanded by 2021 - the end of FY2019 NRTC grant period.

3) Tiger’s Den at Snyder High School

The Jersey City Medical Center (JCMC) aims to further the goals of the I Love Greenville Community Plan by developing work readiness skills and increasing job opportunities for target area youth through the Tiger’s Den at Snyder High School. Greenville section of Jersey City is the most vulnerable section of Jersey City, due to its extremely high crime rate, levels of unemployment, percentage of people below the poverty level and lack of access to fresh and healthy fruits and vegetables.
Jersey City Medical Center is consistently working to help address many of these issues, including the launch of its new Social Impact initiatives that work to help reduce the high crime rate in Greenville by launching a violence prevention initiative. Also launched was an initiative to address the lack of access to healthy foods by building a greenhouse in Greenville in collaboration with the city of Jersey City. The newly proposed project will allow JCMC to increase job opportunities for youth in this community, which will ultimately reduce the high percentage of people living below the poverty level in this community. JCMC’s Tiger’s Den at Snyder High School aligns with the NRTC, plan goals by offering students over the age of sixteen from support services that will deliver additional educational and employment opportunities for youth in the within the Greenville Community Plan target area.

Snyder High School students will be offered job readiness training throughout the school year, qualify for a paid summer internship with JCMC, obtain First Responders and CPR certifications through the internship program, enter into robust EMT program and take the state exams upon successful completion of the internship, and interview for job opportunities with JCMC, as well as community partners New Jersey City University and Goya after graduation from the program. The project will also give students participating in the JCMC internship program an opportunity to plan and facilitate a Community Health Fair/ Back to School/Work Event that will educate the community on living healthy, job readiness and provide hundreds of school children with much-needed school supplies.

Over the 2 year grant period, the Tiger’s Den at Snyder High School will provide job readiness training to 100 students and will engage 20 students through paid summer internship. Additionally, the interns will meet with the JCMC outreach committee to begin planning the 4th Annual Health Fair/ Back to School Event which will be a collaborative event with I Love Greenville Community Partnership to serve the Greenville Community.

4) Jersey City Level Up

Kismet of Kings (KoK) intends to further I Love Greenville Community Plan goals by address the quality of life issues related to employment, education and economic development. Through the Jersey City Level Up program, KoK in partnership with the Jersey City Anti-Violence Coalition (JCAVC), will address the three (3) aforementioned issues with specific activities based on need and utilizing tools to evaluate the success of adolescents and the community at-large. Jersey City Level Up will provide expanded learning opportunities for adolescents and reduce drug use and violence: hip hop literacy education programs, summer “occupy the corner” activity, financial literacy modules, conflict resolution workshops and character education and culturally relevant sessions.

Ultimately, these programs will enhance the educational, employment and economic development of the Greenville community. Programs will serve 15-20 middle and high school young males who will participate in the afterschool activities, workshops and employment & community service ventures. 3 hours a week (1.5 hrs two days a week) youth programs will consist of enrichment activities (KoK curriculum), hip hop education and financial literacy modules (EVERFi) over 30 weeks during the school year. Additionally, JCAVC will conduct 3 conflict resolution workshops per month during the school calendar year. “Occupy the Corner” - a community engagement model - will occur every Friday during summer 2019 & 2020.

Field trips will also be included to intensify the experience for the adolescents which will take place 6 times a year. Program Goals are as follows: 1) Adolescents to improve literacy, comprehension and social emotional skills, using Hip Hop genre as means of engagement 2) Adolescents to learn about money management and personal finances. 3) Adolescents to develop healthy attitudes and lower their risk for substance abuse and involvement with the juvenile justice system. Over the grant term, KoK & JCAVC expects to serve 15 – 20 NRTC target area middle and high school young males.
5) JCTC Stories of Greenville

Jersey City Theater Center endeavors to realize the goals of the I Love Greenville Community Plan (GCP) through the “Stories of Greenville” - a multi-year project by Jersey City Theater Center (JCTC) that establishes a workable network of artists and other community members in Greenville and then presents multiple genres of art throughout the community.

In urban neighborhoods across the nation, Art has proven to integral at every stage of community improvement. By uplifting the quality of life, effective art projects that engage individuals and groups within that community spur development and reverses urban decay and disinvestment. Stories of Greenville – JCTC’s multifaceted proposal – which begins by establishing a network of Greenville arts organizations, Greenville artists, developers and other businesses, schools and other community members and includes a range of different projects from multiple genres of art under the JCTC banner that will empower individuals and the community, encouraging a positive economic and social impact.

Over the 2 year grant period, JCTC will execute the Stories of Greenville program as follows:

   a) Phase One - Local stakeholder/artist outreach to create database of contacts and collaborators. Opportunities for interns, volunteers and part-time paid workers. Hands-on experience for careers in marketing/promotion, theatre production, the arts and nonprofit organizations

   b) My Greenville - Devised theatre piece using various artistic methods (monologue, dialogue, theatre technique, visual arts, etc). GCP target area residency & 18yo will be a pre-requisite for participation

   c) My Community - Over 18 weekly sessions, a JCTC teaching artist will take the class through a series of exercises that use theatrical modalities & culminates in an original devised theatre piece by the students to be presented at the individual schools and elsewhere

   d) JCTC Presents - will bring theater, dance, music and visual arts to “found spaces” throughout Greenville. These spaces – such as empty storefronts and other buildings – will be temporarily transformed into useable spaces for an art event.

Through Stories of Greenville, JCTC expects to employ 20 – 25 GCP target area residents for part-time &/or internship opportunities. JCTC also will engage 150 – 200 GCP target area stakeholders in artistic and cultural activities.

6) JAX for Greenville at Lincoln High School

The Jersey Arts Exchange aims to further goals of the plan by providing music education programming for youth in the Greenville community. The JAX teens will have access to mu-sic equipment, music training, music theory and history workshops and ongoing experiences with professional musicians who will serve as role models. In addition, JAX will provide college-readiness workshop for students applying to art & music bachelor programs. These services align with the NRTC neighborhood plan to create youth programming and activities supporting educational/arts and/or employment opportunities for GCP area youth. Our program will inspire our young neighbors to develop fluency in music and become self-motivated, confident learners.

JAX’s music programs are designed to build skills, provide a creative outlet for self-expression and facilitate ongoing positive experiences. All music activities provided in the Center will be hands-on, collaborative, fun and
intellectually stimulating. Our teen leadership and job training program will prepare them for the workforce. Jersey Art Exchange will engage at least 150 target area youth attending Lincoln High School music education programming and college readiness workshops for students intending on pursuing art & music in college.
HANDS, Inc, “Makers Mark”

HANDS will work in partnership with our joint venture partners, The Alpert Group to create maker space for artisan and creative makers/light manufacturers of various types. We will completely renovate the solid former industrial building at 534 Mitchell Street. The 7,300 square foot, one-story brick building will be flooded with light from above, likely with a sawtooth roof. Makers Mark is located within the Valley Arts District in the Valley neighborhood of Orange and within two to three blocks of the 15 other arts mixed-use and housing projects created by HANDS and the partnership over the last 14 years.

The building is adjacent to the Mitchell Street staircase to the Highland Avenue NJ Transit Rail Station platform and part of the historic fabric of the neighborhood with a proud and continuing history of making and manufacturing. The building is also adjacent to a structure that was part of the historic No-Name Hat Factory, the predecessor of the Stetson Brothers Hat Company that started in the Valley. This building, 540 Mitchell Street, now vacant and severely deteriorated is also slated for future redevelopment by the partnership. Community program activities will support arts programming and events; micro-grant funding of projects to empower residents to actively address what they view as community needs; neighborhood promotion; and the growing music economy in the Valley.

Joint Venture Partnership – HANDS, The Alpert Group and Applied Development are the municipally Designated Developers for five blocks of the Valley Neighborhood since 2006. The partnership, with the private sector partners in the lead, recently completed the new construction of the Harvard Printing Apartments at 550 Central Avenue with 128 units of mixed-income housing, adaptive reuse of a former industrial building as a 160-car parking deck and the daylighting of the east fork of the east branch of the Rahway River that formerly ran underground adjacent to the development.

The second phase of that project is in West Orange and known as Valley Road Residential. One hundred mixed-income, new construction apartments and a pedestrian greenway along the river are now under construction with an expected completion date of December 2019. The joint venture partners will take a lead role on the day to day development of the Makers Mark project as well. Lead partner, the Alpert Group has a proven track record of completing work on time in Orange and with adaptive reuse projects in New Jersey.

Real Estate

Rehabilitation of the 7,300 square foot vacant and deteriorating one-story brick former industrial property will include returning large front windows to the façade, a new roof, new windows and floors, all new building systems, shared restrooms, and interior finishes and fit-out of work space. The work spaces will each be rented to small artisan businesses and microenterprises. HANDS will provide an equity contribution with NRTC funds for acquisition, soft costs and construction. The other source of funds during construction will be partners equity and a loan.

Funding Requested: $985,000
Municipality: Orange (The Valley neighborhood)
Applicant’s Website: www.handsinc.org
Contact: Luther Flurry, Luther@HANDSinc.org, (973) 678-3110
As the Valley Arts District becomes a recognized destination for arts and entertainment, market demand for real estate is rising. HANDS seeks to develop more units of long-term affordable space where artists put down roots and know that they will be able to stay and be part of the community for years to come.

Community Programs

To grow the arts and entertainment district, support those that make a living in the arts and enrich the lives of residents through social connectedness, civic engagement and cultural richness, HANDS supports community partner organizations to bring programming and events that generate economic development and strengthen community.

ValleyArts Programs, Events and Business Support - ValleyArts will provide arts programs and events, opportunities and support for entrepreneurs (mostly microenterprises) through gallery shows, artist talks and a business support through training and networking. ValleyArts partners with the Greater Newark Enterprises Corporation among others to provide small enterprise training and support with a focus on artists and creative economy microenterprise.

Luna Stage Theater - Support the work of Luna Stage repertory theater located in the Valley Arts District. Luna has a year-round program of workshopping and producing plays on their Main Stage, theater education programs connected with local schools, summer and weekend acting classes for youth and adults and a variety of performances that takes place on both of their stages.

University of Orange – Support the growing music economy in the Valley through the Music City initiative and provide music education, affordable instrument rental and community gatherings centered around music and celebrating cultural diversity.

Neighborhood Project Grants - ValleyArts and the HUUB will administer a micro-grant program that will continue the program after the funding from the 2018 grant. The grants support grassroots community initiatives that further the objectives in the neighborhood plan by enabling community groups to take an active role in implementing the plan vision especially ensuring safe streets, increasing social support services, beautification and artist empowerment.

Video Competition - HANDS will plan and execute a video competition with a monetary prize for the winning videos. The criteria will include a message that strengthens the neighborhood identity and promotes community engagement and economic development – all goals stated in the Neighborhood Plan.

Urban Essex Coalition for Smart Growth – HANDS will support the part time Coordinator housed within our offices and operating expenses. Each active Coalition partner contributes a membership that continues the vital work of advocacy, resource development, education and early action projects for developing sites near the five Inner Essex train stations using the principles of Smart Growth redevelopment that benefit the current residents and local economy. HANDS is the fiscal agent and lead administrator for the Coalition.

Administration

HANDS Administration - Administration and overhead grant funds will support the HANDS organization and administrative staff meeting the reporting requirements and payment request procedures of the NRTC program.
HANDS Community Engagement - Staff support for the Community Organizer, Communications and Relationship Management Coordinator and the Executive Director in his role of community engagement leadership.

Alignment with the NRTC neighborhood plan, goals and strategies: This grant will further these goals of the Plan to Revitalize the Valley Neighborhood of Orange, NJ:

- Strengthen Neighborhood Identity
- Encourage Community Groups and Promote Their Role in the Implementation of the Plan
- Redevelop pivotal underdeveloped sites
- Strengthen the Valley’s Commercial Areas
- Assure Safe Streets
- Improve the Area’s Appearance
- Establish an “arts district” and Involve Artists in the Community
- Increase the delivery of social services
HANDS, Inc., “History Lives Here”

HANDS will restore a landmark building on a street that has been neglected and unloved to spur economic activity in neighboring vacant commercial properties, to preserve an important piece of local history, build community pride and create four units of affordable housing.

The Harmony is specifically called out in the Heart of Orange Neighborhood plan as a building key to community pride and history. The Harmony is significant to the history of Black civic leadership in Orange, New Jersey AND in the context of regional political organizing for Black participation in government and politics in the 1950’s and 1960’s. The recent passing of its longtime owner, and an intention to sell was brought to HANDS’ attention by a community member with the hope we could preserve of the institution, history and proud legacy. There is a moment of opportunity NOW to engage in this project, which may not be possible later due to intrusive remodeling or competing economic forces. The project will rehabilitate 117-119 Central Avenue, Orange, NJ to renew the historic façade and interior for enhanced commercial and affordable housing uses. In its own right, the building is a prominent and exceptional example of Victorian Second Empire architecture from the 1870s.

Community activities to be funded will empower residents to actively address what they view as community needs with micro-grant funding of projects; support smart growth planning and project advocacy; support community programs, projects and events; provide resident leadership training and recognize places of importance to the history of Orange with the placement of historic plaques.

Role of Harmony in Orange Black community history

The Harmony Bar is an important part of the history of the Black community in Orange. It is remembered as the 1958 birthplace of Citizens for Representative Government, a pioneering civil rights organization. The Harmony was a gathering place for black men and women during the period of Orange’s segregation. Important black leaders like Paul Robeson and Coleman Young stopped by the Harmony during their visits to the City of Orange. The road to political representation of the black community in Orange municipal government and the strategies to meeting essential community needs were charted at meetings at the Harmony. This history needs to be more widely known and be highlighted as an example of the power of constituent organizing to bring change.

Real Estate

Rehabilitation project interior and exterior – HANDS will preserve and restore the historic façade and undertake urgently needed repairs to maintain the viability of the historic building by replacing an aged part of the roof, repairing the exterior walls, soffits, entrances and windows to improve the historic look of the storefronts that house a bar/neighborhood gathering place and a packaged goods store for the existing businesses to improve their profitability. On the second and third floors, HANDS will completely renovate three uninhabitable apartments and do a partial rehab of the fourth unit. All units will be affordable. At this time, only one of the apartments is close to habitable. A likely oil tank will be also be remediated. The NRTC budget will also fund consultants including construction management and project carrying costs during construction.
This rehabilitation will have direct and indirect Economic Development impact. Affordable housing is key to the economic stability of the four households renting. An improved facade will benefit the legacy microenterprise. Improved curb appeal, historic markers, and an historic facade will improve foot traffic and business prospects for nearby businesses.

Community Programs

Heart of Orange Historic plaques – In partnership with the Orange Historic Preservation Commission, HANDS will select historic sites in the Heart of Orange and create and install historic plaques on the building/site exterior. The Orange Historic Preservation Commission will collaborate on selecting the locations, design and wording for the plaques. We anticipate creating and installing approximately 8-10 plaques with this budget.

Neighborhood Project Grants – The HUUB will administer a micro-grant program that will continue the program after the funding from the 2017 grant. The grants support grassroots community initiatives that further the objectives in the neighborhood plan by enabling community groups to take an active role in implementing the plan vision especially improving and activating public spaces, promoting health and wellness, engaging youth and adults in neighborhood improvement, promoting lifelong learning and ensuring public safety.

Urban Essex Coalition for Smart Growth - HANDS will support the part time Coordinator housed within our offices and operating expenses. Each active Coalition partner contributes a membership that continues the vital work of advocacy, resource development, education and early action projects for developing sites near the five Inner Essex train station using the principles of Smart Growth redevelopment that benefits the current residents and local economy. HANDS is the fiscal agent and lead administrator for the Coalition. A specific project is the design of a demonstration project, an artistic lighting plan for the area adjacent to the NJ Transit rail stations that can be replicated at multiple stations.

Heart of Orange Programs and Events – includes support for being the catalyst for projects such as the nascent Orange Farmers Market at the Orange Train Station and implementing the demonstration lighting project near the Orange NJ Transit Train Station.

Resident Leadership Training – University of Orange will provide resident leadership training to emerging and established community leaders and those they engage. The goal is to build capacity and strength to be proactive advocates and doers to bring a vision of Orange as a Just and Beautiful City to life and respond to needs as they arise.

AmeriCorps VISTA - Community events and documentation - Support for one AmeriCorps VISTA member for a one-year term to increase capacity for involvement in community outreach and documentation of neighborhood events. This person will be an “on the ground” person providing photo and video documentation of Neighborhood Project Grants and events happening in the Heart of Orange neighborhood.

Administration

HANDS Administration - Administration and overhead grant funds will support the HANDS organization and administrative staff meeting the reporting requirements and payment request procedures of the NRTC program.

HANDS Community Organizing and Outreach - Staff support for the Community Organizer, Communications and Relationship Management Coordinator and the Executive Director in his role of community engagement leadership.
Alignment with the NRTC neighborhood plan, goals and strategies: This grant will further the following goals of the Heart of Orange Neighborhood Plan:

- Stabilize and revitalize the Heart of Orange
- Expand economic activity with specific mention of restoring historic commercial properties
- Engage youth and adult residents in neighborhood improvement
- Promote lifelong learning
- Promote health and wellness (i.e. the Orange Farmers Market)
- Improve and activate public spaces
- Support local and regional planning
- Enhance public safety
Holly City Development Corporation  
“Building Health and Wealth”

500 Block Project – Phase II:

Phase II of the 500-block project entails the acquisition of an additional property, located at 511 Buck Street (Millville), Block 35/Lot 7, needed for infrastructure and streetscape. The .55-acre property is critical in providing an estimated 60 space parking lot to the rear of the new construction. Both the site improvements and the demolition of the vacant, concrete building that currently sits on the lot will be completed by the Cumberland County Improvement Authority.

This project, which represents the redevelopment of a full block, is comprised of new construction, commercial rehabilitation, infrastructure, parking and site improvements. The core of the acquisition was funded in Phase I of the 2018 tax credit round. Phase I included site work/land acquisition for the development of a 20,000-sf, three-story, commercial facility at 530 North High Street, which combines the renovation of a 10,000-sf vacant, deteriorating building with the new construction of a 10,000-sf building.

A full-service, healthcare provider, Complete Care, and a pharmacy, will be the tenants of the new facility. Medical services will include dental, optometry, adult/primary care practices, and behavioral counseling and will bring 30 permanent jobs into the neighborhood. Both tenants will provide direct, walkable access to affordable healthcare services that will benefit the residents of the entire Center City neighborhood and their families, creating additional opportunities for growth and self-sufficiency, without the need for expensive transportation.

The facility will generate a significant amount of employee, visitor and pedestrian traffic, providing a new customer base in Millville’s Central Business District. This project aligns with the City’s strategy to diversify its economy and provide new opportunities for businesses in Center City.

Current status of Phase I: Complete Care has provided their specifications for the building, and construction drawings are underway. Bids are expected to be received in January 2019, with the contract award expected to be made in February 2019. The CCIA is working with NJ Community Capital to complete the financing which will include New Market Tax Credits. This redevelopment project represents an investment of $6.4 million dollars.

Acquisition, Rehab and Resale of Neighborhood Housing:

After years of disinvestment and economic decline, the housing market in Center City must be rebuilt. Vacancies, abandoned homes, and foreclosures have diminished homeownership rates and the aesthetics of the neighborhood. A recent parcel survey found the neighborhood averaged sales of only 26 homes per year for the last five years, and only 3 of those purchases per year were for homeownership. Similarly, median sales prices have declined while rents have held steady, creating an attractive market for investors. As homeownership is significant in growing household wealth, community engagement, and commitment to place, reestablishing a diverse and healthy housing market is a key necessity for neighborhood renewal. Without direct intervention in the market,
abandoned and foreclosed homes will end up in the hands of investor-owners, with little ability to increase the ratio of homeownership.

HCDC will work in partnership with private developers to begin rebuilding the housing market for veterans and potential homebuyers. Due to the poor condition of many of the homes, extensive rehab will be required to bring them up to code and energy efficiency. In fact, the rehab costs will probably be greater than the acquisition costs and greater than the amount the homes can realistically be sold for based on the existing market. To that end, HCDC has designed a program to provide construction subsidy funding for scattered site, single-family homes. HCDC will issue a request for proposals for private developers/contractors interested in purchasing, rehabbing, and reselling 5 or more existing housing units. Based on the per unit pro formas provided, HCDC will commit up to $24,000 per unit to eliminate or narrow the gap between the total project cost and the sales price for each unit.

Developers will be selected based on their experience and track record with providing quality home designs and affordable housing at reasonable costs. HCDC has already met with three developers interested this program.

This type of project assistance has been demonstrated through programs like the NJ DCA Choice Program, to be a catalyst for creating viable homeownership markets where home values do not support a sustainable new construction housing market.

Developers will be responsible for all phases of creating the affordable units, from acquisition to resale. HCDC will assist in marketing the program and finding qualified buyers. HCDC already works with a pool of potential buyers in their family advocacy programs funded by Pascale Sykes.

Once purchased and rehabbed, the homes will be marketed for resale to homebuyers. There are several local banks that have homebuyer assistance programs that not only provide favorable terms for extended mortgages, but also have assistance for down payments. As part of this project, an additional $12,500 will be budgeted by HCDC to provide up to 5 homebuyers, $2,500 in closing cost assistance. It will be mandatory that any homebuyers obtaining the closing cost assistance complete a homeowner training course designed to provide a strong foundation for financial stability.

Homeowner Rehab Program:

Retaining current homeowners in Center City is also critical to revitalization. A parcel survey completed in November 2017 indicated that only 39% of residents were homeowners.

This housing rehabilitation program is designed to retain homeowners within the neighborhood while strengthening the physical conditions of the housing stock. Most of the stock is greater than 50 years old and needs updated systems, roofs, windows and energy efficient upgrades. Many residents cannot afford the types of preventative improvements/emergency repairs needed to keep their homes compliant with current safety codes.

HCDC will target homes in the 10 blocks between 5th and 6th Street, where a greater portion of the housing stock is held by homeowners. Although the remaining blocks would be eligible, those indicated would be the primary focus for rehabilitation funds. The entire target area is also part of the city’s Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) target area and the city has similarly dedicated funding to housing rehabilitation. Together, these two resources, NRTC and CDBG funding, can begin to have an impact and offer significant resources to homeowners on a first come, first serve basis.
HCDC previously offered a small housing rehab program, funded by 2016 NRTC funds. That program offered $7,000 per household in the form of a forgivable loan. In this round, we will increase the amount of assistance to $10,000 per household in the form of a 0% loan, secured by a lien on the property. When the property transfers ownership for any reason, the loan will be immediately due in full. Repayment of these funds will go into a dedicated account for future housing projects. HCDC will hire a consultant to serve as program coordinator, with experience in construction/housing rehab to implement the program from marketing to inspections. It is estimated that 15 homes will be rehabbed utilizing local contractors through this program.

Public Safety:

Safety is a basic quality of life issue for any neighborhood and a foundational need upon which reinvestment is dependent. HCDC has an excellent relationship with the Millville Police Department and supports their community policing initiative as imperative for the revitalization of Center City. An original objective of the NRTC neighborhood plan was to make a 20% reduction in crime in the neighborhood. To that end, HCDC is requesting $100,000 for three public safety projects:

Continue Increased Community Policing Patrols: Officers will be assigned patrols to participate in neighborhood activities and prevent criminal activity. Building stronger, positive relationships is the goal of community policing and can be one of the cornerstones of engaging residents to guide the redevelopment of their neighborhood. These officers are also involved in the Police Athletic League (PAL), so the ongoing work and activities of PAL will be complimented by this strategy. This approach was successfully deployed last year with NRTC funds, providing neighborhood patrols for special events and for pro-active patrols during the summer months.

HCDC will contribute $40,000 over 24 months to the Millville Police Department (MPD) for the exclusive use of salaries for two officers assigned to the community policing division covering Center City. As this does not cover the salary of one officer, the city of Millville will contribute the balance of the officers’ salaries and benefits.

Upgraded Lighting: One tested strategy for increasing public safety is to upgrade the level/scope of lighting, which makes it more difficult for crimes to be committed out of public view.

To identify and target hot spots, crime data provided by the MPD from 2014-2017 was analyzed. It determined that while more serious crimes were concentrated in the northern section of the neighborhood, crime incidents were dispersed throughout the entire neighborhood. For a stronger housing market to be recreated, all crime needs to decline and therefore, the MPD has requested upgraded lighting in the residential area between 2nd and 5th Streets. This upgrade would entail replacing the current 100w, High-pressure, sodium lights with 250w LED lighting, providing a very bright, white light.

Code Enforcement is the final prong of the public safety request and critical for sustaining any successful improvement efforts. To ensure that code enforcement activity is consistent and proactive in seeking violations in problems areas, HCDC is proposing a shared service agreement with the City of Millville to provide a dedicated code enforcement officer for the Center City Neighborhood that will proactively look for code violations. They would survey the neighborhood each day, follow up on any questionable properties, and ultimately create a database that will be constantly updated.

Neighborhood Activities/Improvements:

Resident involvement remains a key ingredient for successful neighborhood renewal. Residents, particularly youth, must be engaged in the design and implementation of activities that will positively impact them. These activities
promote the NRTC goals of a more comprehensive engagement of young people and greater empowerment of residents. This funding will complement the outreach efforts for engaging neighborhood residents in developing a 10-year plan (currently underway) for the neighborhood’s future. Funding will also be utilized for both recreational and educational opportunities. Activities and programming may include: neighborhood meetings/resident engagement, development of a community garden, vacant lot upgrades, Playstreets, neighborhood cleanups, and other events as defined by residents.

It is anticipated that over 1,200 residents will participate and be impacted by the proposed activities.

Apprenticeship Employment Program:

The availability of job training, employment and microenterprise development opportunities is critical to increasing the equity and wealth of the neighborhood. HCDC will facilitate job opportunities for neighborhood residents. These jobs will provide residents with work skills and employment experience, while also directly improving the aesthetic condition of the neighborhood.

HCDC will utilize NRTC funding through Community Benefit Agreements to provide apprenticeships or, earn-while-you-learn opportunities to neighborhood residents. Apprenticeships are a proven but underutilized model to develop a skilled, flexible and mobile workforce through employment-based learning. Residents will obtain a combination of skills and practical work experience that employers’ value. HCDC will facilitate apprenticeship opportunities through three programs:

In partnership with the Department of Parks and Public Property, the City will hire up to 4 neighborhood residents to strategically cut, clean, and maintain the 79+ vacant properties located within Center City on a full-time, temporary basis. City staff will train the residents in the operation of all equipment, safety precautions, customer service and city policies and procedures.

In partnership with a local construction company and as part of the Housing Rehab/Resale RFQ process, a contractor will be encouraged to hire 2 neighborhood residents to provide on-the-job training in basic construction. Bonus points will be awarded during the RFQ review process for a commitment to hire neighborhood residents. In both programs, residents will gain work skills and employment experience, while also directly improving the aesthetic condition and value of the neighborhood in which they live.

In partnership with local businesses, non-profits, and/or educational institutions, employers will hire Center City residents to receive a combination of on-the-job training and related technical instruction to master the practical and theoretical aspects of a skilled occupation. The goal is having these jobs turn into permanent positions.

In all three programs, HCDC will utilize the help of a paid consultant to act as a liaison between Center City residents and the different businesses, while collecting data and providing support/resources where needed. The consultant will facilitate placement of potential employees based on their career goals and their past experience and in this position, the consultant will visit work/employment sites weekly to track and assess the residents’ progress and skill development.

HCDC will identify current or future Center City businesses to participate through an application process and a letter of commitment. As part of the Community Benefit Agreements, HCDC will reimburse the employers on a monthly basis for up to 50% of the employees’ wages, not to exceed $5,000 for the year. The employer will be responsible for payroll taxes and for submitting reports on the residents’ work habits/skills development and their
hours and paid wages. HCDC will work to with microenterprises to increase and enhance their employment needs. It is anticipated that 5 positions per year will be created for a total of 10 over the course of the grant period.
Interfaith Neighbors
“West Side Asbury Park, Project VIII”

Interfaith Neighbors NRTC Project VIII application focuses on three major areas of need in the Westside Asbury Park Neighborhood. These include: 1) employment training and job placement; 2) programming and services for youth; and 3) affordable housing focused on providing homeownership opportunities for Westside residents and assisting existing homeowners in the neighborhood, many of whom are elderly and of limited means, with the maintenance of their homes so that they are not forced to sell and move out of the neighborhood. The project also includes an initiative – the Woman’s Hospitality Network – that addresses emergency housing for women suffering from homelessness, domestic violence or otherwise unstable housing so that they are safely sheltered during the winter months and assists those women to find safe, permanent housing.

**Funding Requested: $985,000**
**Municipality:** Asbury Park (West Side neighborhood)
**Applicant’s Website:** www.interfaithneighbors.org
**Contact:** Paul McEvily, paulm@interfaithneighbors.org, (732) 775-0525

Finally, the application includes funding to continue the Monday Music in the Park concert series coordinated by the Asbury Park Music Foundation. Over the past three years, this concert series has been the best community building program in the West Side neighborhood and has done more to dispel the notion that the West Side neighborhood is unsafe and unwelcoming to outsiders. These concerts have brought people together from all over the City and surrounding communities to enjoy live music while supporting music programming for youth in Asbury Park, the City where “Music Lives!”

NRTC Project VIII application includes the following initiatives:

- **Employment training and placement:** Kula Café Hospitality Training Program; Kula Urban Farm program; Interfaith Neighbors new SOAR (formerly Career Corp) program; Community Affairs and Resource Center job placement program
- **Programs to support West Side Neighborhood YOUTH:** Big Brothers Big Sisters – youth mentoring program; Fine Arts & Technology Summer Camp program
- **Homeownership and Supportive Housing:** Parkview AP housing project- Phase III; Single family affordable home at 1274 Washington Avenue; Coastal Habitat’s Love Your Neighbor housing rehabilitation program; Land Bank to acquire properties for future affordable housing development; Woman’s Hospitality Program
- **Neighborhood Building Program:** Asbury Park Music Foundation’s Music Monday’s in the Park concert series

These initiatives build on the successes achieved through previous NRTC projects. A more detailed description of each of these initiatives appears below.

1. **Kula Café Hospitality Training Program:**

The Kula Café, established April 2013, is a social enterprise addressing high unemployment in the Asbury Park area. The program is a workplace skills training program focused on the hospitality industry and conducted in a working eatery in the Springwood Center building.
Since inception, the café has provided hands-on hospitality training to over 100 young adults from Asbury Park and the surrounding area with impressive results: 76% graduation rate; 94% of graduates earn ServSafe Food Handler certification; 96% placed in permanent employment upon completion of their training. Kula Café follows up on participant placement for no less than one year after graduation; an average of 86% of graduates are still permanently employed one year after graduation.

2. Kula Urban Farm Program

The Kula Urban Farm, launched in 2014 as an expansion of the Kula Café Hospitality Program, utilizes hydroponic and traditional growing techniques to produce fresh produce on a year round basis. Product yield from both a state-of-the-art year-round greenhouse as well as seasonal outdoor raised beds has increased each year of operations. In addition, a STEM-based after school “Green Thumbs” curriculum has been designed to introduce local elementary school student to the operation of the hydroponic systems in the greenhouse and more generally about the production of healthy food.

Through the Kula Farm Experience (KFE) program, the farm offers paid, short-term work opportunities for chronically unemployed adults from the Asbury Park area. In 2016, the farm expanded to create the Farm Without Borders, a community garden managed and maintained by graduates of the KFE program. Development of leadership, planning and operational management skills provides participants with work experience that positions them to seek employment in the growing urban farming industry.

Kula Urban Farm has made great strides in expanding growing activities on the property, creating more opportunity to engage residents and increasing the volume of free produce available to the community. IFN has recently entered into an MOU with Bethel AME Church to expand farm operations onto the adjacent property owned by Bethel which consists of an empty lot and a food pantry building. Development of a farmers market for the neighborhood is a longer term goal for the farm team.

3. Interfaith Neighbors SOAR program

The SOAR Program, originally called Career Corps, is a community-based program providing job training and educational opportunities for disadvantaged young adults who are not currently college bound but have demonstrated a level of achievement and purpose to qualify for participation in the SOAR program. Modeled after our Kula Hospitality Program but with a greatly expanded mission, SOAR will serve the greater Asbury Park area by redefining job training as it currently exists, serving as a resource to both residents and area employers matching training to the community’s needs as well as to the participant’s skills and desired direction in employment.

SOAR provides participants with a pathway to well informed, successful career placement as well as strong connections with local businesses and industries. It goes beyond workforce programs that yield only minimum wage, entry-level job placements that lack stability or meaning for employees. SOAR represents a valuable resource for both employees and employers. Employers will know that employees identified through SOAR will have the preparation, commitment and desire to succeed. Employees will gain from workplace successes with the aid of follow up coaching from SOAR’S staff. Higher levels of long-term success will be achieved by tapping into in-demand industry sectors and occupations in Monmouth County.

We anticipate enrolling 30 participants during the grant cycle, and up to 30 participants in subsequent years.
4. Community Affairs and Resource Center’s job placement program

Community Affairs and Resource Center (CARC) has successfully run their Let’s Work Program for the past several years successfully preparing local residents for employment and placing them in meaningful, sustainable jobs. The program offers a holistic approach, tailoring support and services to the individual needs of the participants. Participants meet one-on-one with a Career Counselor/Program Facilitator in order to identify individual personal qualities, strengths and weaknesses. Realistic goals are established with overall focus on assisting the individual in obtaining gainful employment. In past funding cycles, CARC has found employment for more than 400 West Side residents. That track record of success has prompted us to again include CARC in the current application for NRTC funding.

5. Big Brothers Big Sisters – youth mentoring program

Similarly, we are again including Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Monmouth and Mercer Counties (BBBS) in the current NRTC application. BBBS has provided one on one mentoring programs for the young children of the West Side currently serving over 150 children. Through this funding, BBBS will create 15 new matches and sustain 70 matches they currently have between a volunteer mentor (Big) and child (Little) from the West Side in addition to offering gang prevention workshops and presentations. These funds will also allow BBBS to continue to operate the school-based mentoring programs that they have developed. Each year, BBBS measures the impact these mentoring relationships have on the children participating in these programs. The results regularly demonstrate improved school performance, higher self-esteem and fewer issues with peer violence, substance abuse and other risky behaviors.

6. Fine Arts & Technology Summer Camp program

In the summer of 2016, Second Baptist Church of Asbury Park ran a successful weeklong pilot program for 20 youth using the model Inspire LIFE Fine Arts & Technology Summer Camp. This past summer, the camp was repeated for the third time with 64 children participating. Both students and parents were very pleased with the experience and the positive effect it has had on the students’ approach to school. Based on the success of the previous camps, we are seeking NRTC funds to allow this camp to be funded for an additional year.

This uniquely designed hands-on and performance intensive camp gives children in the Asbury Park an opportunity to experience extended summer learning in a fun, healthy, and wholesome environment. The two week camp exposes young and creative minds to the principles of fundamental music theory, creative artistry, dance, technology concepts, creative writing, various aspects of theater, and vocal techniques. This past year an additional component was added – video and film production and editing – which was hugely successful. This will be incorporated in future camps.

7. Parkview AP housing project- Phase III

Parkview AP is a ten property, 20 unit for-sale housing project. Each property will consist of a detached main residence facing Springwood Avenue and a detached garage at the rear of the property with a one bedroom rental apartment above the garage. This will be a mixed income property with 4 of the 10 units to be sold as deed restricted affordable units. The Parkview AP project is the only home-ownership project planned for the Springwood Avenue corridor. In a neighborhood where fewer than 25% of the properties are owner-occupied, this is an important project for the long term stability of the neighborhood.
8. Single family affordable home at 1274 Washington Avenue

Interfaith Neighbors will construct a high quality, affordable single family, detached home totaling 1668 sq. ft. on this site. The design includes a three bedroom, two bath home with all appliances, high efficiency gas furnace, central air conditioning, security system. The property will be fully fenced and landscaped with off street parking.

Interfaith Neighbors will perform as General Contractor for this project securing all sub-contractors, obtaining all required building permits, monitoring actual construction and obtaining all inspections and certificates of occupancy. John Vacchiano, a master carpenter and home builder with more than 50 years of experience in the construction business, will oversee construction activities in the field. Patrick Durkin, Interfaith Neighbors Director of Real Estate Development will handle all of the administrative, permitting and approval requirements for the project. Interfaith Neighbors will be responsible for marketing and buyer selection.

9. Coastal Habitat’s Love Your Neighbor housing rehabilitation program

Love Your Neighbor (LYN) expands Coastal Habitat’s (CHFH) current housing renovation and repair programs by adding a component of community engagement and resident leadership. Once a qualified project is identified, staff and volunteers will outreach to neighbors requesting help with the host project as well as correcting existing block problems such as trash and overgrown vegetation. LYN will both preserve affordable housing and encourage residents to take a leadership role in recreating neighborhoods where residents live safely and embrace opportunity.

CHFH will work with residents to identify strategies to address other community problems, e.g. poor rental conditions, insufficient lighting, etc. and connect residents to needed City services. West Side Citizens United and the Midtown Urban Renaissance Corporation, two resident groups and collaborative partners, will assist with LYN and will use the project to inform decisions about additional resident driven projects and initiatives such as a block captain program, neighborhood watch and/or community education programs. 12-15 projects are planned annually. This was an initiative supported in the recently completed HUD Choice Neighborhood planning process sponsored by the City of Asbury Park and the Asbury Park housing Authority.

10. Land Bank program:

Interfaith Neighbors continuously monitors the local real estate market to identify properties that are available for purchase that would be suitable for affordable housing development. By having access to the NRTC funds, IFN is able to act quickly when such properties become available. By acquiring title to properties in advance, Interfaith is able to demonstrate the necessary site control when funding becomes available for future development.

The availability of land bank funds is particularly important now as we are seeing rapidly rising property values as the Asbury Park market with negative gentrification effects increasingly being felt in the West Side neighborhood.

11. Woman’s Hospitality Program

The Women’s Hospitality Network (WHN) is a collaborative effort of houses of worship, social service organizations, and individuals from the greater Asbury Park area who work to provide emergency, night-time housing from December through March for single women that are experiencing homelessness. WHN is modeled after the program established by the Freehold Clergy Association (FCA) in New Jersey and other successful national programs.
The member congregations have set up ‘safe rooms’ where the women are housed each night. Trained screeners will perform intake and background checks for each woman. WHN coordinates with social services and health agencies to help guests re-establish a normal life.

12. Asbury Park Music Foundation (APMF) Music Monday’s in the Park concert series

APMF hosts a free weekly concert series from late June through the beginning of September in the Springwood Avenue Community Park, which was dedicated in the spring of 2016. This concert series, which has now completed two successful years, has contributed to the revitalization of the West Side by extending Asbury Park’s flourishing live music scene, long active on the East Side, to a West Side stage for the first time in more than 40 years.

One of the goals of the APMF’s strategic plan is to bridge the divide between the east and west sides of Asbury Park. This concert series has contributed greatly to that effort as people have come from all parts of Asbury Park for these shows.

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The NRTC plan submitted to DCA for Old Trenton Neighborhood (“OTN”) is focused on eight goals: (1) affordable housing, (2) financial and educational strength, (3) community safety, (4) open space development, (5) recreation opportunities, (6) leadership development, (7) community cleanliness, and (8) environmental health. In large part because of NRTC funding, in partnership with Passage Theatre, we secured funding from the National Endowment for the Arts Our Town program to plan for Trenton’s first arts and culture district, which is centered on OTN.

The Creek to Canal Creative District Plan was released in 2016 and substantially updates the OTN neighborhood plan. It identifies community needs and priorities, and offers recommendations specifically for OTN, for development of the District overall, to support the arts and artists citywide, and to connect development of the District with the citywide arts scene. Some of the most prominent needs and priorities in the Creative District plan mirror those identified in our original OTN plan – safety, community cleanliness, recreation opportunities, affordable housing (with the additional acknowledgement of a need for live/work housing as well as mixed-income housing), and employment options.

In the years since the OTN plan was completed, with the development of both the Creek to Canal Creative District Plan and Trenton’s new municipal master plan, Trenton 250, a greater emphasis has been placed on downtown redevelopment, economic development, and arts activity. The activities proposed for this grant are directly aligned with all three plans, with targeted outcomes designed to meet the original OTN plan objectives.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT**

**TDA BSB Gallery**

In early 2018, the Trenton Downtown Association (TDA) opened a gallery in the long-vacant first floor retail space at the base of the Broad Street Bank building, located at the corner of E State and N Montgomery Streets in the heart of OTN and the Creek to Canal Creative District. The gallery highlights Trenton artists as well as those from farther afield. It has generated jobs for two part-time gallery staff one of whom is a local artist, and a part-time curator, who is a local photographer. In addition to featuring popular regular gallery shows (the last show had more than 350 visitors), it also hosts community events and has become a defining feature of the Creative District. Funding will support ongoing operations of the gallery and expansion of staffing to include a full-time curator. The gallery is located one block from the area that the City is targeting through the NJEDA-funded Innovation Challenge Grant.

**Orchid House Café**

The Orchid House is a coop market, art gallery, and event space – with a future café – started by an OTN-based young entrepreneur and several other local residents. It is in a mixed-use building with a first-floor retail and community space, including an outdoor seating and event area, and three affordable apartments upstairs. The members of the cooperative (The Orchid Group, a microenterprise) operate the building as residents and employees, and have so far dedicated more than $190,000 in equity, private debt, and sweat equity to creating...
this new amenity in OTN. The Orchid House sells locally-made goods, hosts community events like the Trenton People’s Book Fair (which gives local artists an outlet to sell their books), and is currently hosting several programs funded by OTN Art & Community Grants. Funding will support the ongoing development of the café. Orchid House is located in the area that the City is targeting through the NJEDA-funded Innovation Challenge Grant.

3D Design & Printing Training

We will engage Marcus Mera, sole proprietor of MMMera, Inc., a microenterprise, to provide training for OTN residents in 3D design and printing. 3D design and printing is a growing field with applications in medicine, architecture and planning, engineering, fashion and jewelry, industrial design, manufacturing, software development, and more. (For example: https://www.forbes.com/sites/louiscolumbus/2014/09/15/demand-for-3d-printing-skills-is-accelerating-globally/#72222bea522e, and https://www.businessnewsdaily.com/10211-hot-3d-printing-jobs-on-the-rise.html.) Marcus is an artist who has experience as a jewelry and apparel designer. He has created award-winning jewelry for companies such as Harry Winston, Van Cleef & Arpels, John Hardy, and David Webb.

He has conducted 3D education programs for clients including Tristar, Sony Pictures, Toy Association, and jewelry designers. Marcus has exhibited in Las Vegas and NYC trade shows, and has designed apparel for companies like Nick Graham UFC and Sonja Morgan from the show Real Housewives of New York. Marcus made his name in New York City, but has been expanding into New Jersey. With NRTC support, he will expand into Trenton. He has been working as a project manager with the A-Team out of 51 N Stockton Street in the role of artist liaison and space coordinator, but we are seeking to expand his role in Trenton and to employ his design and technology skills to help OTN residents get prepared for the jobs of the future.

We will offer four, eight-week training sessions with five to ten trainees each. The trainings will be held at 51 N Stockton St, 219 E Hanover, or other OTN spaces. We will also develop a web site where trainees and other local artists can sell their creations. This activity dovetails with the City of Trenton’s intentions to define OTN/the Creek to Canal Creative District as an innovation hub where the region’s main institutions of higher learning, including Princeton University, come together to offer OTN and Trenton residents access to next generation learning and practicum opportunities.

A-Team at 51 N Stockton

The Trenton Community A-Team (T-CAT) is a group of Trenton residents who create art but lack the resources to pursue their creative endeavors on their own. They began as an outgrowth of the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen (TASK), but are now an independent nonprofit located in Isles’ renovated carriage house at 51 N Stockton St. Requested funding will support the A-Team with continued rent and operational cost subsidies for 51 N Stockton. The A-Team will occupy 51 N Stockton Street under an existing three-year lease.

The space will allow A-Team artists to work on their art and to provide community art and gallery events. A-Team recently engaged a new project manager who has revamped how the organization works with artists to sell their creations, including the development of a new ecommerce web site and a series of YouTube videos featuring the artists and their work. A-Team has also drastically increased the number of events they host and redesigned the interior of 51 N Stockton to function more like a commercial art gallery as well a work space.

In addition, the A-Team has expanded to incorporate other local artists beyond those who joined while it operated out of TASK. This is helping the group to expand its reach and build relationships between artists with direct
background and skill sets. We want to ensure that this fledgling nonprofit can continue to afford its first home, to develop additional capacity, and to help artists earn an income from their work. A-Team and Studio 51, as they call it, has become an important location within OTN and the Creek to Canal Creative District.

Small Grants – OTN Art & Community Grants

Our successful small grants initiative began in THDC, expanded to ETC, and is now in the midst of a first round in OTN. In OTN, the focus is on activities that help to implement the Creative District plan and provide funding to artists, creative entrepreneurs, and small businesses who need support to carry out projects that will help to revitalize the neighborhood and set the stage for creatively-inspired economic development. Under this grant, we will expand OTN small grants with a second round in 2019. Having long-term plans for grants in OTN that we can announce early will help potential grantees to prepare for more impactful projects.

The grants will target grassroots organizations and individuals who generally do not otherwise have access to or know how to apply for grant funding. The small grants initiative is a way to help residents, small businesses and nonprofits, and community groups take a more active role in improving their neighborhoods beyond coming to meetings and filling out surveys to express their priorities; it has been very successful in actively engaging residents and local stakeholders in revitalization projects that are meaningful to them and highlight their skills. We have also found that these grants tend to help individuals and organizations generate income for themselves or otherwise drive economic activity. For this reason, and because we will seek to fund initiatives that further define the Creative District, which is intended as an economic development tool, we have included Small Grants as part of overall economic development efforts in OTN.

Clean & Green Commercial District Improvement

OTN is on the verge of major redevelopment. It is critical that existing businesses are supported in their efforts to make their properties as welcoming and attractive as possible, that public spaces are clean and activated, that litter and dumping are controlled, and that underutilized spaces are treated so they appear as opportunities rather than blighted challenges. C&G is a multipurpose service that lays important groundwork for economic development, residential redevelopment, and implementation of the Creative District.

C&G, modeled after similar programs in other cities, hires and trains un- and underemployed people to carry out critical neighborhood revitalization tasks, such as design and installation of seating and other spaces to support small businesses; assistance to small businesses to improve their facades and entrances; installation and maintenance of public art; and the clean-up, maintenance, and beautification of unsightly vacant lots and distressed neighborhood parks.

C&G has been successfully operating in THDC and ETC for years, and has recently begun work in OTN. With continued/expanded service in OTN, we will be better able to support the downtown commercial district and the Creative District, of which OTN is a part. C&G crews will clean up and beautify OTN by focusing on facades, parklets, planters, streetscapes, vacant lots, neighborhood parks, and community gardens in the area.

They will mow grass, cut hedges and trees, pick up trash, coordinate the removal of dumping, plant flowers, design activation and beautification strategies for vacant lots, assist with pop up events, and more to support the commercial district and change residents’ perception and experience of place. They will continue to collaborate with local businesses and TDA’s Clean & Safe program, and will seek a collaboration with MCCC’s facilities team to enhance the Broad Street commercial corridor.
C&G will also work with local artist Bruce Lindsay, who operates Integral Sculpture Works – a microenterprise located one block from the OTN boundary and within the Creative District, to design and install a community information kiosk near the intersection Broad and State Streets. Bruce has worked with the OTN Stakeholders and the Creek to Canal Implementation team, both of which Isles convenes, to develop the concept for this kiosk, which will be a large, metal sculpture in the iconic shape of Trenton. This will be both an eye-catching piece of public art, a map to help visitors find their way around downtown, and a central location for Trentonians to post information about their businesses, events, and more. C&G activities will help to set the stage for the innovation hub proposed by the City in its successful application to NJEDA for an Innovation Challenge Grant.

SCATTERED SITE REDEVELOPMENT

OTN is currently attracting a significant amount of private investor interest, much (but certainly not all) of which has come from Ajax Management, who worked with Isles on Stockton Street Apartments (SSA). Ajax has redeveloped several scattered site buildings in addition to SSA and now has approvals to redevelop most of the south side of East Hanover and the north side of State Streets between Montgomery and Stockton Streets.

This project will result in more than 650 market rate apartments, two parking decks, several thousand square feet of retail and commercial space, and several new and rehabbed buildings. In response to these market shifts, Isles has begun to acquire vacant and abandoned properties in order to redevelop them as affordable homes and retail spaces. Our goal is to be a moderating influence in the market and to ensure equitable, inclusive development over the long term.

We are currently working on five vacant lots (43 N Stockton, 208 Academy, 212-216 N Montgomery) and three vacant buildings (118 N Montgomery, 238 E Hanover, and 100 Olive). This funding request will primarily support the redevelopment of 118 N Montgomery and 238 E Hanover. 118 includes a first floor retail/work space and a two-story apartment above. We plan to rehab and rent it as a live/work space. 238 is a four-unit building that we will rehab and rent as apartments.

RECREATION & RESIDENT SERVICES

Outreach & Organizing

Isles will continue working with residents and stakeholders to identify their needs and priorities, and to engage them in redevelopment activities. We will organize and build an audience for OTN community meetings, which have just re-started after a nine-year hiatus, and will host events and beautification initiatives that foster relationships among neighbors. This activity will include continued field work to organize residents and increase outreach and engagement, programming at Roberto Clemente Park and the Children’s Garden, and deployment of T-Recs, our mobile recreation service that brings safe, free, fun to unexpected places and to where people already are.
The Trenton Historic Development Collaborative (“THDC”) Neighborhood Plan, in Trenton’s West Ward, focuses on the following strategies: (1) increase mixed income housing opportunities for renters and owners, improve housing conditions, and reduce the presence of abandoned buildings and vacant properties; (3) redevelop neighborhood gateways and key physical assets; (3) redevelop commercial corridors and increase availability of neighborhood scale businesses; (4) provide more and better quality recreational opportunities for residents of all ages; (5) increase residents’ job readiness and access to employment opportunities; (6) provide leadership, development, employment, and educational resources for youth; (7) improve community engagement and resident access to and awareness of services; (8) clean, green, and beautify the neighborhood; (9) increase neighborhood safety, both real and perceived. The proposed activities below relate directly to these strategies and priorities.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Clean & Green Job Training Expansion

Since its inception in 2015, C&G has focused on improving the public realm by hiring un- and underemployed Trenton residents to maintain, beautify, and activate underutilized parks, unsightly vacant lots, and uncared for streetscapes. We now intend to expand C&G with a more robust job training element. Training will be targeted to 10 to 12 un- and underemployed THDC residents and will consist of three components: 1) job training and certification, 2) internships focused on community beautification projects, and 3) job readiness and placement services.

Training will consist of coursework and certification in PACT (Pre-Apprenticeship Certificate Training) or a similar accredited curriculum along with specialty training in landscaping and certifications in OSHA, CPR, and First Aid. Participants will receive a stipend upon successful completion of training. Training will take place at various locations including the Carver Center and Isles’ 33 Tucker Street location, half a block from the Carver Center.

Participants will be placed in 12-week paid internships overseen by C&G and urban ag staff, and deployed to beautification and improvement projects in the neighborhood including vacant lot and park clean-ups/maintenance, lot activations, gardens, beautifications, or green infrastructure projects such as rain gardens, wildflower meadows, and tree plantings.

Job readiness and wrap-around services will also be provided, including credit counseling, resume development, and referrals for license restoration and criminal record expungement. Referrals for other Isles training will also be possible for interested participants. These include community health worker and healthy homes training, lead safe renovation, weatherization, and building performance analyst training. Additional referrals can be made for those interested in obtaining their NJ DEP Pesticide Applicator’s license, ServSafe Food Handler’s Certificate, specialized training in food production, or continued education through Mercer County Community College’s Horticulture program or Rutgers Continuing Education landscaping/horticulture program.

Funding Requested: $985,000
Municipality: Trenton (THDC/West Ward neighborhood)
Applicant’s Website: www.isles.org
Contact: Marty Johnson, mjohnson@isles.org, (609) 341-4700
Job placement services will consist of referrals to local contractors. We have consulted with industry professionals, certifying bodies, and board members of the NJ Nursery and Landscape Assoc. to understand what critical skills and qualifications they look for in prospective employees. We also have a staff member on the NJ Dept of Corrections Horticulture Advisory committee, so understand the challenges that job-seekers face from a re-entry perspective.

3D Design & Printing Training

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He has conducted 3D education programs for clients including Tristar, Sony Pictures, Toy Association, and jewelry designers. Marcus made his name in NYC, but has been expanding into NJ. With NRTC support, he will expand into Trenton. He has been working as a project manager with the A-Team in OTN in the role of artist liaison and space coordinator, but we are seeking to expand his role in Trenton and to employ his design and technology skills to help THDC residents prepare for the jobs of the future. We will offer 8, 8-week sessions at the Carver Center with 5-10 trainees each. We will also develop a web site where trainees can sell their creations.

HISTORIC TOURISM DEVELOPMENT of the BELVIDERE AREA

Nixon School Stabilization & Feasibility Study

The Nixon School, a City-owned National Historic Landmark, was built in 1857 as the first public school for the education of African American children. It operated as a school facility until the 1980s and has been vacant since. It is in relatively good condition given its age and how long it has been vacant, but it needs significant work, as documented in a historic preservation/ predevelopment study Isles completed using NRTC funds. This site is an important community asset that residents and City officials want to see saved, but a feasible future use of the property needs to be determined. This project will both undertake a feasibility study to identify potential future uses and begin the work identified in the historic preservation study required to stabilize the building.

The Nixon School is located close to Downtown and the Capitol in the THDC neighborhood node of strength surrounding the Belvidere Greenway. The Greenway, the Carver Center, Shiloh Baptist Church, and Shiloh's future Rev. S. Howard Woodson Family Life Center are all within half a block of each other in this area, and the D&R Canal is nearby. This is a prime area in which to focus on heritage tourism as an economic development strategy due to the rich African American cultural history of the neighborhood and the key assets within it.

As noted in the 2016 THDC market study, THDC has the potential for strong neighborhood-scale retail, but should focus first on clean and safe initiatives (which we do elsewhere in this and previous applications) and on building nodes of social service offerings that will attract customers and help change the perception of place. Completing the adaptive reuse of this building at the same time that the Family Life Center is being developed, the Carver Center is being rehabilitated, and the City of Trenton is collaborating with Isles to spend NRTC and State Urban Blight Reduction Program funds on demolitions, will ensure that we can quickly reactivate this node of strength by serving residents and attracting visitors to the many historic sites.
Carver Center Rehab

The Carver Center is a historic asset in THDC that is well-loved by the community. The building is in need of repairs in the immediate term while the NJ State Federation of Colored Women’s Clubs (NJSFCWC), which owns the building, considers its future plans. This funding will supplement a CDBG grant from the City of Trenton that is supporting roof repairs. Upgrades will include façade, lighting, and signage improvements so that the building is more attractive to and functional for community services – we have heard over the years from residents that Fowler Street is dark and uninviting, reducing attendance at events.

Upgrades will also include repairs to the gym and commercial kitchen so they are functional and can host increased uses. Upgrades to the Carver Center in conjunction with upgrades to the Nixon School a half a block away and other streetscape improvements will help support increased programming at the Center. This is critical now because, due to a lack of funding in the THDC neighborhood in recent years, the activation of the Carver Center that we worked so hard to increase between 2012 and 2017 has dropped off. With fewer programs and events taking place there, HUD has begun to question whether the building serves a strong enough community benefit to justify CDBG funding for it. We have been working with the City and NJSFCWC to document past use and to increase future use of the building.

Small Business Support Services

A 2016 THDC neighborhood market study showed that there is not currently a strong market, but that there is significant potential, especially given the proximity to downtown. We will implement some of the key short-term recommendations in the market study, including assisting businesses with marketing and façade improvement. This builds on work we carried out with 3 Passaic St businesses under THDC 1.

We will assist at least 3 businesses with marketing, signage, façade improvement, and related work that can improve the look and feel of their businesses and drive customers to them. We will also organize at least 2 pop up events in conjunction with area businesses. Finally, we will leverage funding received from the NJ Council on the Humanities in 2017 to do early phase planning to create a series of 2 tours to drive economic development in and around downtown. One of the target areas under that grant is the Belvidere area. We will develop a tour of the area and begin to offer it in person and online as a means of driving interest in both the history and future of the area.

ACQUISITION & PIPELINE DEVELOPMENT

The THDC neighborhood has more homeownership opportunities than, for instance, OTN, but many of the homes are in disrepair. In order to appropriately plan for redevelopment, properties need to be acquired in places and in concentrations that make sense, and there must be an opportunity to assess the buildings to determine the appropriate reuse strategy and cost. We will acquire properties as they become available and essentially landbank them for the short term until their best reuse can be assessed. We will focus in/near the Belvidere area.

RECREATION & RESIDENT SERVICES

Outreach & Organizing

Over the past few years, resident engagement in the THDC neighborhood has dwindled. This is due to several factors: a loss of funding from several large sources that meant a reduction in services and engagement by THDC partner agencies, decreased capacity at Shiloh CDC and a cutback of their operations, and the relocation of key
resident leaders that led to the dissolution of several neighborhood groups. Outreach and organizing is more critical than ever in THDC.

Isles will host community meetings and events, reconceive and reconvene the THDC stakeholders group, and implement creative ways of securing community input for redevelopment activities. This activity will include field work to organize residents and increase outreach and engagement, programming at neighborhood parks, and deployment of T-Recs, our mobile recreation service that brings safe, free, fun to unexpected places and to where people already are. We will collaborate with C&G and our urban ag team to provide environmental education and nutrition education while also ensuring that parks are clean, safe, functional, and well programmed so that residents can begin to feel welcome in them and they can become the meeting places they should be.

Small Grants

Grassroots organizations were a central force during the planning process, and over the years they have provided services to neighborhood residents using money out of their own pockets. They are either not nonprofits or do not have the experience to apply for or qualify for grants from traditional funders. By continuing our successful small grants program, we seek to increase the capacity and effectiveness of neighborhood organizations. Isles will continue to work with the I Am Trenton Foundation to develop program guidelines and marketing materials, market the program to THDC groups, receive and process applications, award and monitor grants, and help local groups and youth to build capacity.

The grants will target grassroots organizations and individuals who generally do not otherwise have access to or know how to apply for grant funding. The small grants initiative is a way to help grantees take a more active role in improving their neighborhoods beyond coming to meetings and filling out surveys to express their priorities. The funded projects allow grantees to bring their particular skills and insights to bear on real neighborhood revitalization activities that take place in ways that are meaningful to them. We anticipate putting out a broad call for proposals that invites all sorts of projects, as opposed to small grants initiatives in other neighborhoods that are more tightly focused on economic development.

Drop-In Center at Carver Center

Isles Youth Institute currently offers an Extended Evening Program (EEP) based at its 33 Tucker Street location. The EEP provides structured, pro-social activities for 100 youth ages 16 to 24, five days a week, during the key at-risk hours between 3 and 7 PM. However, there is not enough space at 33 Tucker St to create the kind of atmosphere we feel would be most beneficial for this activity. In addition, Isles is currently applying for – and has a strong chance of receiving – a Mercer County grant to develop a drop-in center for the same population we already serve but with extended hours to 9 pm and the provision of dinner in addition to the provision of activities, training, and tutoring. We intend to move the EEP to the Carver Center and expand its hours and offerings.

The Carver Center has several rooms where different activities can be held, as well as a gymnasium/basketball court and a commercial kitchen. (The gym and kitchen need upgrades, which would be covered under the Carver Center rehab project discussed above.) Hosting the EEP at the Carver Center creates an opportunity for disconnected at-risk or out-of-school youth to enter the EEP, engage with caring adults and peer youth, and gain access to services that they need. The EEP will conduct educational and recreational activities at the Carver Center, such as workshops, learning opportunities, cooking and nutrition training, and fitness activities in cooperation with Isles services and partner agencies. The EEP will also provide dinner to all participants, and run a food pantry at the
Carver Center. Furthermore, youth will be transported home in Isles vans by staff or provided with free bus tickets. Finally, the EEP will engage community mentors and tutors for youth.
Jewish Renaissance Foundation
“Perth Amboy Alliance for Community 2019”

HOUSING AND ECONOMIC PROJECTS: The following proposed projects will address the following goals of the NRTC Plan (for the “Greater Budapest” neighborhood of Perth Amboy):

Goal 1: Encouraging Greater Economic Opportunity
Goal 2: Creating a Clean, Safe and Healthy Neighborhood

Home Acquisition and Repair: It is our intention to purchase and rehabilitate two houses in the neighborhood and then sell them to first-time home buyers as a way of restoring the neighborhood. Our goal is to increase the affordable housing stock, add significant value to rehabilitate homes and neighboring properties, spur economic activity through the creation of jobs and timely collection of property taxes and provide quality, affordable houses for purchase. We will contract with New Jersey Community Capital to ensure properties are redeveloped into quality affordable housing. We will also partner with the Perth Amboy Housing Authority for the First Time Homebuyer identification.

Senior Repair: As people enter their senior years, they may find themselves adjusting to living on a fixed income. This can make it difficult to pay for unexpected home repairs and maintenance. Home updates can also reduce energy and save money; make them safer and more accessible, therefore reducing falling risk, preventing accidents and increasing independence. Available to homeowners ages 62 or older, seniors will receive home-repair-assistance grants or free home repairs for up to $5,000.

Our goal is to assist 20 homeowners. We will work with the City of Perth Amboy, Office of Housing and Social Services which administer the Home Improvement Grant Program, First Time Soft Cost Homebuyers Program, Exterior Paint Reimbursement Program and Safe Housing Program. We have increased our capacity to provide repairs by securing a grant from PSE&G to support Comfort Partners Program. Comfort Partners program provides free energy conservation measures to income-eligible to families living at or below 225% of the 2018 Federal Poverty Guidelines or participate in one of the Federal/Safety Net Partnership programs. Certified Building Performance Institute contractors will install energy saving measures to help lower energy bills. Seniors will also be taught new ways to conserve energy and how to create an Action Plan to support their efforts.

If eligible, participants receive: Installation of cost-effective energy efficiency measures in the home (determined on a home-specific basis) which can include: efficient lighting products; hot water conservation measures (water heater insulation, water heater pipe insulation and energy-saving showerheads and aerators); replacement of inefficient refrigerators; thermostats; insulation upgrades (attic, wall, etc.); blower-door guided air sealing; duct sealing and repair; heating/cooling equipment maintenance and other measures. Our secondary goal with this project, is to contract local handy men in the community to do some of the rehab work when possible.

Funding Requested: $985,000
Municipality: Perth Amboy (Greater Budapest neighborhood)
Applicant’s Website: www.jrfnj.org
Contact: Alexandra Cross, alexandra.cross@jrfnj.org, (732) 324-2114 x126
Youth Entrepreneurship (YEP): In partnership with the Academy for Urban Leadership (AUL) Charter High School, located in our neighborhood, this initiative will focus on helping students start their own micro-enterprises. As part of their senior internship project, 100 students will participate in business education and entrepreneurship classes. Students will gain the skills and confidence to consider self-employment and start their own business as a possible career choice. Through experimental learning executed in real-market based situations, students will be introduced to starting and running a small business. In doing so the students will work in partnership with an already existing small business (40 businesses recruited) to solve a problem they are experiencing. We will work closely with the neighborhood revitalization efforts in the Budapest areas as well as the UEZ and the BID.

The YEP program will build upon students creativity, innovation, passion, critical thinking and problem solving skills. Students will be exposed to entrepreneurship concepts through lectures and hands-on activities. Students will be asked to formulate their business ideas and pitch their corresponding business plan to a panel of “angel investors” in a major event named pitch day. Startups with realizable business ideas will be selected for funding and will enter a rigorous program tailored to help them launch their product or service.

ESL Classes: While lack of job training continues to be an obstacle to increase the income of neighborhood residents, we’ve learned that speaking English has the potential to generate better employment opportunities. Over 80% of resident in the Budapest Neighborhood speak limited English. As a result they experience the highest unemployment rate, lowest rate of full-time employment, and lowest median earnings. For this reason, we propose to conduct Adult ESL Classes. Courses are contextualized by integrating listening, speaking, reading and writing skills with occupational specific knowledge and skills designed to prepare students to transition into postsecondary and/or into employment. The goal is to help residents obtain language survival skills, improve their job prospects, attend higher education classes, and participate more actively in the community. Since many adults in the neighborhood are currently already working during the day, this project will be offered at night. Classes will be offered in six 6-week cycles per year. Classes will be limited to 20 residents a cycle or 180 residents.

Small Business Support & Development: Another crucial component for community development included in the plan is the development of an environment that is conducive to the establishment and operation of small businesses. Startups and growing ventures need better training and improved access to financing and social capital. For this reason, we are proposing a monthly workshop in Spanish, conducted not only for businesses found in the Amboy Ave. corridor, but also outreach to home businesses as well. The training would be held in local restaurants to encourage patronage. Training will focus on understanding local rules and regulations, general business management, and clarity regarding national and international industry trends. Further, small businesses need increased financial access, including access to capital and other financial instruments, such as micro-loans and full financial portfolios. Resources to support this business will be included during the workshops and we will work closely with the businesses if necessary to fill out the appropriate paper work. Additional small business support and initiatives include the sponsoring of Small Business Saturday.

COMPLEMENTARY PROJECTS: The following proposed projects address the following goals of the NRTC Plan:

Goal 3: Building a Better Network

Goal 4: Enhancing Services in the Neighborhood

Budapest Neighborhood Association (BNA): As the Budapest neighborhood continues to improve, the BNA has become pivotal in creating change. This group of homeowners, renters, business owners, school faculty/staff and church officials from the neighborhood are responsible for identifying and addressing challenges and concerns the
neighborhood experiences. It was their input in 2008 that created the initial plan and it was their input that helped to craft the most recent plan update. It is their intent to engage an additional 5 residents to join, to ensure that their needs continue to be addressed. Since BNA has been involved in most aspects of promoting their programs, many of the complementary activities will fall under this priority. The community garden, Thursday Nights at Park, financial literacy and healthy lifestyles programming are considered essential mainstays by the BNA.

Community Garden: Currently two community gardens were created with the assistance of NRTC. We are looking to add an additional garden to reduce the impact of food deserts in the neighborhood. We have identified the vacant lot in the community and have already had preliminary discussions with the owner of the lot, who is open to creating a community garden using raised beds. These gardens not only increase the availability of nutritious foods, they strengthen community ties, improving air and soil quality, reduce neighborhood waste through composting, improve mental health and promote relaxation, increase property value by eliminating vacant land that has been used for illegal dumping of litter, tires etc.

Thursday Nights @ the Park: Every Thursday, during the summer months residents are encouraged to come out to the Francis Street Park between 6-9pm for 8 straight weeks. The project features, Movies Under the Stars, concerts, talent shows, arts & crafts and much more. It’s the perfect way to spend an evening, especially if children are not attending camp and families are in a fixed income. It helps residents to get to know each other creating opportunities for children to play, socialize and make lifelong friends.

Financial Literacy: One sure way that families increase their disposable income is to help them learn how to manage their finances. By participating in the Dave Ramsey Financial Peace University Course, residents will increase their knowledge regarding their finances. This proven program runs for 6 weeks. Participants will gain access to online support and tools, learn about budgeting, how to reduce debt, managing credit, life insurance, investments and more. Employees of the JRF have been trained in this curriculum and having been running this program in other communities for three years. A total of 20 residents may participate per cycle and the program will run 3 cycles a year.

Healthy Lifestyle Programming: In an effort to provide programs in the neighborhood, we are proposing to conduct monthly nutrition/healthy living workshops for residents. Currently, through the Building a Better & Healthier Perth Amboy Initiative, this is being conducted in the downtown area of Perth Amboy. For many residents, this is inconvenient, as some do not have transportation and do not like to drive at night. To meet this need, the workshops would be provided in the neighborhood schools where families feel comfortable going to in the evening.

Streetscaping: This past summer a Walkability Audit was conducted on Amboy Ave. The audit identified issues and concerns for pedestrians and bicyclists related to the safety, access and convenience. It also included recommendations such as traffic calming features aim to encourage more responsible driving, potentially reduce traffic flow and decrease the likelihood of accidents. There were 8 areas on Amboy Ave. that are missing crosswalks. Clearly designated crosswalks permit safe access to the YMCA, the Academy for Urban Leadership Charter School, and other local schools and businesses. Clearly designated crosswalks are crucial to the safety of the neighborhood residents and consumers that shop on this busy street. Without these crosswalks, there is low pedestrian visibility for oncoming drivers. Since parents and young children primarily use this route to commute to school, ladder type crosswalks will be painted on the road with the assistance of the City of Perth Amboy, Office of Economic and Community Development. In addition, 12 areas where identified as having faulty pedestrian crossings. Faulty pedestrian crossing with missing truncated domes adversely affects visually impaired
pedestrians. These would also need to be added. Updating the Amboy Ave. corridor with these and other streetscaping initiatives play an important role in forming the visual image of a sustainable community. In an attempt to continue creating this cohesion, curb bulbs and planting buffers and a gateway marker are also included in the plan.

Francis Street Park: With an obesity rate of 30% in Perth Amboy, neighborhood residents are not immune. Promoting regular physical activity is a public health priority. Research is proving that the use of outdoor fitness equipment found in Fitness Parks for adults are providing a variety of meaningful outcomes to communities including engaging participants in substantially more moderate to vigorous physical activity. To expand the work already done at the Francis Street Park, adding outdoor fitness equipment would contribute to the overall health of the community and promote a sense of pride in the neighborhood. Residents will have an opportunity to design this portion of the park like they did during the renovation of the park, to include equipment such as Cardio Walker, Step Up Station, Vault Bar and Elliptical. The park would include signage identifying the types of exercise and what muscle groups would be used.
New Jersey Community Development Corp.
“Paterson Youth Performing Arts Center”

Through this application, New Jersey Community Development Corp. (“NJCDC”) proposes to purchase and rehabilitate an historic neighborhood church into a Youth Performing Arts Center, build additional affordable housing, and continue to undertake neighborhood programming through our Great Falls Promise Neighborhood Initiative.

By way of background, NJCDC’s approved neighborhood plan is an ambitious plan which seeks to change the physical, economic, and social conditions within our boundaries. It is a comprehensive plan for which we submitted a Plan Review Update in November of 2015. Through our neighborhood plan we continue to create lasting change by implementing a variety of economic development and social service activities.

With the support of NRTC, NJCDC has constructed more than 150 units of affordable housing and invested more than $75 million in neighborhood brick and mortar projects. We have rehabilitated and repurposed abandoned historic mill buildings into active community spaces. One example is our work to convert a former textile factory into a neighborhood charter school serving 500 elementary students. Just last year, with the assistance of NRTC, we completed construction of the Great Falls Education & Training Center (GFE&TC) which provides educational, job training and microenterprise development services to neighborhood residents.

Given that NRTC funds must be used for neighborhood preservation and revitalization activities, this application proposes to finance acquisition and predevelopment to repurpose the historic First Presbyterian Church of Paterson into a state-of-the-art Youth Performing Arts Center. In creating this new performing arts center, neighborhood residents, schools, and community organizations will gather to teach and practice performing arts and to host performances for families, children and visitors from the greater Passaic County region. Just as other performing arts centers have done, this new facility will attract both local residents and out-of-town visitors and will spur economic activity throughout the neighborhood’s diverse mix of restaurants, shops and businesses. While we seek acquisition and predevelopment funding from NRTC, we are anticipating state tax credits that will fund the balance of this project (see attached development budget as well as Mayor’s letter).

Also on the development side, we proposed to finance acquisition and development of four new units of affordable housing on a vacant neighborhood lot located at 157 Wayne Avenue. The proposed affordable housing project will consist of a mix of 2- and 1-bedroom rental units, for which there is a need in the neighborhood.

Both proposed development projects are in keeping with our neighborhood real estate development strategy which was crafted in alignment with our neighborhood plan and broader municipal and county development plans.

As our application will demonstrate, the proposed projects will address distress, spur economic activity, and leverage investment from additional sources. In addition to the anticipated state tax credits which will yield $3 million, we have also been awarded a $500,000 HOME grant from the City of Paterson for the housing project and a $50,000 grant from the New Jersey Historic Trust for the First Presbyterian Church.

Funding Requested: $985,000
Municipality: Paterson (Great Falls/Spruce Street neighborhood)
Applicant’s Website: www.njcdc.org
Contact: Robert Guarasci, rguarasci@njcdc.org, (973) 413-1635
In addition to these development projects, our application proposes to continue and expand upon our Great Falls Promise Neighborhood Initiative, including funding program expenses for educational, job training and microenterprise services at the Great Falls Education & Training Center (GFE&TC). Programming at GFE&TC includes instruction in cutting edge fields such as audio and video production to engage disaffected young people in meaningful job training and to serve as a pathway to employment.

Each of the development and non-development projects identified in this application are in full alignment with NJCDC’s approved neighborhood plan – both its economic development and social service elements. Specifically, this application is intended to achieve and bolster the following strategies and outcomes of the approved neighborhood plan:

- Making the neighborhood safer and friendlier; Goal 1. Creating an Empowered Community
- Expansion of Youth Activities; Goal 1. Creating an Empowered Community
- Establishment of New (Non-Traditional Education Programs and Facilities; Goal 2. Lifelong Learning
- Expanding housing choices; Goal 3. Housing Opportunities.
- Coordination of Job Readiness Programs and Technical Training; Goal 4. Restored Productivity
- Creation of an Arts and Technology Youth Center; Goal 4. Restored Productivity
- Developing Paterson’s arts and cultural potential; Goal 4. Restored Productivity.
- Improving the gateways to Paterson and the Greater Spruce Street neighborhood; Goal 7. Strengthened Identity, Heightened Awareness.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT – YOUTH PERFORMING ARTS CENTER**

NJCDC’s Greater Spruce Street neighborhood plan calls for the physical revitalization of the neighborhood through the rehabilitation of current structures or the construction of new facilities, particularly for the purpose of benefitting neighborhood youth. NRTC funding will help us to acquire and commence pre-development activities to rehabilitate the historic First Presbyterian Church of Paterson into a state-of-the-art Youth Performing Arts Center where neighborhood organizations, schools and community groups will gather and ultimately host performances for families, children and visitors from the greater Passaic County region.

Located at the key intersection of Main and Ward Streets in downtown Paterson, the First Presbyterian Church of Paterson has a storied history—not only in terms of Paterson’s history—but in American history. Founded in 1813 and reconstructed in 1852, it is the oldest religious structure in Paterson still in operation and its congregants played a crucial role in the civic and industrial development of the city. We have an executed sale agreement and we will acquire the Church and complete a preservation plan with $50,000 secured from the New Jersey Historic Trust that will detail the repurposing of the space into a youth performing arts center. NJCDC is requesting NRTC funds to support acquisition debt-service costs and predevelopment costs including architecture. Construction financing will largely come from the anticipated State ERG tax credits awarded to Paterson via S1968 signed by Governor Murphy in June of 2018. This bill along with a Mayor’s letter confirming use of the tax credits for this project are provided.
The First Presbyterian Church is comprised of approximately 19,000 sq. ft. and is located within our neighborhood. In acquiring and repurposing this structure, we will ensure its interior and exterior historic architecture is preserved. The planned use as a youth performing arts center is compatible with NJCDC’s expertise and core service areas in arts, education, youth development and community building. As shown on the attached conceptual plan we envision repurposing the Sanctuary of the Church into a grand space for performances. The spaces that adjoin the Sanctuary will become areas for programming, classes and rehearsals, specifically targeted for neighborhood children/students. It should be noted that there are five charter schools serving thousands of students in the neighborhood, but none contains any performing arts space.

To date, NJCDC has invested approximately $60,000 to undertake due diligence and predevelopment activities including environmental investigations, structural assessments, architectural concepts and estimates. We have completed a Phase 1 Environmental Investigation, Hazmat Analysis, Asbestos Assessment, Structural Study, and Architectural Capacity Study. The findings of these investigations support the feasibility of the project. In addition, state tax credits will be used for construction costs, which are fully expressed in the attached project development budget.

NJCDC will shortly close on the property and start developing the preservation plan. As indicated, significant predevelopment activities have already been completed. All necessary land-use approvals and construction permits will be obtained at a later date, after we acquire the property.

HOUSING – AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR FAMILIES

NJCDC’s real estate development strategy is consistent with our neighborhood plan. It was developed by examining physical neighborhood characteristics, demographics, lessons learned from past NJCDC projects, eligible funding sources, and alignment with municipal and county plans. Our real estate strategy recognizes that while the overwhelming majority of neighborhood families rent their respective homes, the bulk of new or renovated housing options are for special needs individuals or first time homebuyers.

There is a shortage of new or renovated housing options for families that require homes larger than efficiency and 1-bedroom units. Accordingly, NJCDC has developed a project model suitable for smaller properties that will consist of a combination of 2- and 1-bedroom units. NJCDC seeks to acquire the property situated at 157 Wayne Avenue to develop a model multi-family affordable housing project. The City of Paterson is in support of this model as evidenced by their award of a $500,000 HOME grant. NJCDC is seeking NRTC funding to assist with project financing for this site including acquisition, soft costs and construction.

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES – GREAT FALLS PROMISE NEIGHBORHOOD INITIATIVE

Through this application, NJCDC also seeks funding to support programs, services, and activities designed to promote our approved plan’s objectives to enhance the well-being of children and families residing within our neighborhood, with a specific emphasis on youth and young adults. More specifically, the funding is for our Great Falls Promise Neighborhood Initiative, through which we are working to replicate the pioneering work of the Harlem Children’s Zone. We are seeking NRTC funding to continue this work.

Though the Great Falls Promise Neighborhood Initiative, we are expanding upon our substantial base of successful programs for children and their families to create a pipeline of services that address the needs of children throughout every phase of childhood from birth through adolescence—with the ultimate goal of all 8,000 neighborhood children reaching adulthood ready for college and careers.
There are five distinct programs within our Great Falls Promise Neighborhood Initiative for which we are seeking NRTC funds in this application. Each of these is linked directly to the relevant portion of our approved neighborhood plan: linking with area colleges and universities; expanding youth activities; and coordinating job readiness programs and technical training.

1. Great Falls Education & Training Center (GFETC). Created with previous NRTC funding, we now seek continued programming support in the area of educational, job training, and microenterprise development services for youth and young adults in our neighborhood. This will be achieved by hosting workshops, classes, community events, and providing co-working opportunities to link youth with careers in the technology and hospitality sectors, and with volunteer mentors to help them build skills and obtain internships and employment. These services will be provided to 200 youth over the grant period.

Since opening its doors on March 16, 2018, GFETC has served 239 students. In addition to a roster of enrolled students who attend programming at the site each day, GFETC is also home to three different youth programs operated by NJCDC—the Paterson Youth Council (30 students); YouthCares (15 students); and YouthBuild (40 students). These youth development programs meet regularly at the site and benefit from its amenities such as the computer lab.

2. Neighborhood Help Center. NJCDC’s Neighborhood Help Center (NHC) is a one-stop-shop where neighborhood residents can find referral assistance related to housing, employment, immigration, and more. The NHC also hosts workshops on a variety of topics, including financial literacy, job readiness, and healthcare, last year reaching more than 300 residents. The NHC’s community outreach arm actively collects community input on matters of neighborhood concern, in addition to assisting with volunteer recruitment, neighborhood revitalization initiatives, and community service projects.

It should be noted that NHC is the main portal through which NJCDC generates substantial community support and engagement. NHC facilitates monthly Community Advisory Board meetings consisting of neighborhood stakeholders and recruits neighborhood residents for various volunteer service projects in the neighborhood. NHC also coordinates ongoing cleanup projects with the Great Falls Street Team, collecting nearly 600 bags of trash this year alone.

3. Great Falls Street Team. This program will engage neighborhood residents in cleanup projects and revitalization activities to make the neighborhood more visually appealing and foster a sense of community pride. NRTC funds would be used to purchase materials and supplies for cleanup and beautification events and to pay stipends for up to 8-10 neighborhood youth who will participate in this program. The Street Team is overseen by the NHC Coordinator.

4. Paterson Youth Arts Program. This program provides arts instruction and programs for students at school, after school, and during summer months in order to increase their exposure to audio arts (e.g. piano and percussion), visual arts (e.g. painting and drawing) and performing arts (e.g. dance and theatre). NRTC funds would be used for materials and supplies, to pay art instructors and to pay a cash match obligation for two full-time AmeriCorps members who will each be assigned to the program for two years.
5. Great Falls Gateway Mural. As part of a strategic effort to beautify the Spruce Street gateway to the Great Falls National Park, we will convene volunteers and artists to create a large outdoor mural at 59 Spruce Street (a property we own) to enhance the corridor's visual appeal and celebrate its vibrant arts community. We seek NRTC funds for materials, supplies, and expenses related to producing the mural.
Parkside Business & Community In Partnership (PBCIP)
“Revitalization of Parkside”

The Parkside Neighborhood Strategic Plan of 2005 provides a systematic approach to bringing transformative impact along with public and private investment to Parkside community. The detailed action steps and timelines incorporated into the plan enable PBCIP to target resources very specifically in four core areas: amenities, commercial development, quality of life and housing. This approach maximizes the return on investment by ensuring that time and energy are focused on matching strategically selected partners with the action steps that partner can most effectively help Parkside to accomplish.

PBCIP’s continued commitment to the implementation of programs and development activities aligned with the 2005 Parkside Neighborhood Strategic Plan can be viewed as a living example of its mission to assist Parkside families and children in overcoming barriers to self-sufficiency while working to revitalize the community for an improved quality of life.

PBCIP is seeking NRTC funding to support the following activities:

**Housing:** Cornerstone Community Partners (CCP), a regional Benefit Corporation in Pennsylvania, and Cinnaire Solutions a non-profit development affiliate of Cinnaire have joined forces with PBCIP under the framework of Parkside Urban Renewal (PUR). The team is working collaboratively to offer a 46-unit mix of housing choices that include multi-family style apartment and single homes in 1, 2 and 3 bedroom styles at attractive rental rates. The goal of the project is to retain and attract diverse residents to Parkside while preserving existing housing and blocks with significant value. Estimated development project totals $12.4 million and is referred to as the Haddon Euclid project.

The project includes 1484-1492, 1473 and 1410-1412 Haddon Ave along with vacant parcels of land at 1412 ½ - 1416. Vacant lots and properties located at 1481, 1466-1468, 1463 Kenwood and 1444, 1487, 1489, 1491, 1493 Princess Ave have been incorporated in the project. Site control has been secured through a layered acquisition process that includes lien procurement with prosecuted tax lien certificate foreclosure actions, private sales and redevelopment agreement with Camden Redevelopment Agency. Targeted rental market include families, singles and active seniors at 30-80% of area median income.

The rehab of these buildings will bring a new face to Haddon Avenue and transform the aesthetics of sites that have been vacant, in some instances, well over 25 years. Development of the project will have a tremendously positive effect on the social, environmental, physical and economic landscape, and further enhance PBCIP’s efforts to revitalize the Haddon Avenue corridor.

Through the project, PUR partners will contribute new resources and expertise to Parkside, ensuring a holistic approach to scattered site new construction, adaptive reuse and rehabilitation. PBCIP’s housing construction and rehabilitation project objectives include:

- Continued success in eliminating blight
- Inspiring private investment in the form of residential and commercial development

**Funding Requested:** $985,000

**Municipality:** Camden (Parkside neighborhood)

**Applicant’s Website:** [www.pbcip.org](http://www.pbcip.org)

**Contact:** Bridget Phifer, bphifer@pbcip.org, (856) 964-0440
- Quality development of mixed income housing
- Creating an urban residential neighborhood where success is sustainable

The Haddon-Euclid project design team is being led by Haley Donovan Architects of Camden. Haley Donovan is a full service firm dedicated to affordable, sustainable residential design in urban spaces.

Synergy abounds between the 2005 Parkside neighborhood plan, the Urban Land Institute) study of 2004 and the 2017 Parkside neighborhood strategic plan that included the buy-in of 700+ residents and stakeholders. Proper coordination and public-private collaboration is underway to effectuate the transformation of Parkside which in turn will attract the necessary investment that will bring greater opportunity to all of the community’s stakeholders.

**Commercial Development:** Parkside residents and community stakeholders have identified the lack of diversification of retail goods and services on Haddon Avenue as a key issue limiting the potential of the commercial corridor. A related challenge to business diversification is the lack of a strong retail anchor to support the establishment and viability of additional retail on the corridor. However, the lack of a retail anchor offers a window of opportunity to incubate businesses created by entrepreneurs within the community.

Through partnerships with Latin American Economic Development Association (LAEDA), Rutgers Small Business Development Center and Haddon Avenue Business Association (HABA), PBCIP is seeking to cultivate a Microenterprise in utilizing the following strategies -

1) Workshop Series – Turning Your Hobby Into a Business Title  15-20 people per session

   Seminar 1 – Turning Your Hobby Into a Business Overview
   Seminar 2 – Fundamentals of Product Development & Determining Cost of Goods Sold
   Seminar 3 – Marketing Your Business – Branding, Logos & Look and Feel – Social Media
   Seminar 4 - Sales – Public Markets and E-commerce
   Seminar 5 – Basics of Bookkeeping and Accounting

2) Capital Access – Those who complete the workshops series above and have a well-defined business plan may apply for a small capital loan. PBCIP will establish a loan pool ranging from $25,000 to $30,000 in capital. LAEDA graduates and Rutgers SBDC referrals can apply for loan amounts of $500 to $5,000. Capital is loaned out and revolves as principal, and interest payments are received back into the fund by the borrowers. As the loan fund grows, PBCIP will secure additional capital in order to maintain adequate balance available to lend out. Once the loan fund reaches a certain level, it becomes sustainable and does not need any new infusion of funds. All borrowers must have received credit counseling from PBCIP and LAEDA staff.

3) Incubate - Micro and small local enterprises will be given the opportunity to be housed in a start-up environment with a range of administrative, consulting, and networking services. In essence the program will serve as home for new enterprises. Low-cost space, shared equipment, and the comradeship of fellow entrepreneurs will be offered. The incubator will house tenants, who stay two to three years, then 'graduate' to commercial space located at 1366 Haddon Avenue. At our best, we hope to help new businesses create jobs and revive community. Statistics indicate that firms incubated through a microenterprise approach have a significantly greater chance of survival than do other start-up businesses.
Additionally, CAMcare has indicated an interest in establishing a wellness center that will greatly enhance the corridor’s public infrastructure and health access. The facility will be housed at the former ReNew site, 1301 Haddon Ave. PBCIP is in the process of developing a MOU with CAMcare to initiate the building and staffing of a Federally Qualified Health Center that will serve the neighborhood. In addition to doctor’s offices, the facility will house a commercial community kitchen that will build economic opportunity, environmental sustainability, and community health.

PBCIP is also in conversations with Camden Coalition of Health Care Providers (CCHP) to provide an administrative office next to CAMcare. CCHP is a citywide coalition of hospitals, primary care providers, and community representatives that collaborate to deliver better healthcare to the most vulnerable citizens. The CCHP mission is to spark a field and movement that unites communities of caregivers in Camden and across the nation to improve the wellbeing of individuals with complex health and social needs.

Quality of Life: Tangential to the housing and commercial development efforts are several other programs that focus on related priorities expressed by residents. Training and vocational education for Parkside’s youth is one such priority. PBCIP believes that having a collaboration of agencies involved in vocational training will provide the youth of Camden with an opportunity to obtain education and employment skills to help them achieve economic self-sufficiency through demand occupations or post-secondary education. This effort can truly have an impact upon the youth in Parkside and the City of Camden.

Under its 2017 Wells Fargo Regional Foundation Implementation grant, PBCIP contracted with Hope Works of Camden to provide heightened access and opportunity to enroll in its youth engagement and empowerment program for career success. The organization uses education, technology and entrepreneurship to partner with young men and women as they identify and earn a sustainable future. As part of its program, Hopeworks runs four businesses, offering a complete array of web site design, development, maintenance and hosting services, along with online mapping products, and a complete set of Salesforce administration offerings. In addition, Hopeworks Youth Healing Team offers training and consultation to schools and nonprofits about working with youth and adults affected by trauma. The program’s youth are Latino and African-American, ages 14 to 23. They live in Camden and have experienced a tremendous level of adversity. Hopeworks has become a certified Sanctuary organization. What does this mean? It means they have radically shifted their priorities and values to a "trauma" framework.

PBCIP continues to work with its network of block captains - through the PRIDE (Providing Residents with Information to Directly Empower) Network - to enhance communication and cooperation between neighbors to prevent crime and provide an additional layer of assistance in enhancing the quality of life for Parkside residents. PRIDE captains serves as the underpinning of these endeavors. PRIDE captains are the link between residents and PBCIP, disseminating timely information about meetings, events or issues of concern that may arise. PRIDE captains also troubleshoot resident problems and work with PBCIP to connect residentsto appropriate agencies and institutions. The PRIDE captains are the eyes and ears of PBCIP in the community.

Unemployed or underemployed residents build work history and skills by providing lot clean-up, distributing flyers and unskilled labor for PBCIP projects. This supports residents’ entrepreneurial mindset and desire for work that meets their current skill level with opportunity for improvement and advancement. PBCIP will continue to support business and property owners by helping to organize the merchants so they can lead efforts to carry out planned activities for the corridor. Additionally, we will provide Clean Team services no less than three days per week to keep Haddon Avenue commercial corridor clean and litter free.
PBCIP has a schedule of themed monthly community-wide meetings to provide topical information to residents and feature information on sustainable practices that families and the community can incorporate into their daily lives. Community meetings include a wide-range of topics from school construction and environmental safety in Parkside schools, to healthcare, role of local government, sex trafficking and job opportunities. Recent topics have included Camden High Reconstruction Project Overview, Haddon Avenue concept development plan, “I Walk Parkside” with Mayor Moran, health screenings and preventative care with Lourdes Medical Center, fire safety with officers of Camden Fire and public safety with Metro Police.

PBCIP continues to maintain its focus on strategies that seeks to engage residents, business owners, faith based organizations, local police force and government agencies in addressing the factors that contribute to the community’s crime, delinquency and disorder. To that end, the Parkside Neighborhood Implementation plan targets the underlying reasons why men, women and youth in the community are involved in negative life choices, which we believe is the lack of opportunity. The idea is to break the cycle through a series of well-developed and realistic programs (with credible partners) that will foster a holistic wraparound approach linked to viable housing, resident engagement, academic and vocation training for youth, entrepreneur training and incubation and urban gardening.

PBCIP through a partnership with Camden County Historical Society is working to obtain a collection of historical knowledge/perspective from residents via video recordings of residents who have personal recollections or a connection to the past and future of Parkside. Residents who have lived in the community for at least 30 years have been asked to participate in the Parkside Oral History project. Videos are being archived at CCHS.

PBCIP is leveraging its own funding with both strategic partners and its recreational assets along the Cooper River to promote a healthier and more resilient Parkside. This ambitious effort involves expansion of healthy food access, encouraging more active lifestyles and promoting greater environmental sustainability. Taken together, these activities will have a transformative impact.

All of these efforts began with the creation of Parkside’s Roots to Market (RTM) Initiative, creating income opportunities through gardening training and support. Today Parkside RTM has funding to continue its free beginners workshops and integrate active recreational programs and facilities into its purview. For 2019, PBCIP wishes to leverage this funding to seek additional financial support to operate more advanced for-profit foods production training. The goal of this work is to foster the creation of a value-added cooperative venture such as food pickling supported by the growing of fresh local produce.

Community gardening space is provided at Camden High School, Big Picture Learning Academy as well as Parkside Methodist Church. These sites provide income opportunities as well as a supplemental food supply for both Camden residents as well as students.

Further investments to the Parkside Learning and History Gardens will support more programs and activities that help educate families about a healthy food economy as well as history and culture through farming and cooking. In the near future, PBCIP envisions the History Garden will serve as a gateway between recreation facilities, local food production and history. New editable trails will encourage more park visitation as well as support healthy eating education and access through signage promoting “Forging in Farnham”.

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Paterson Habitat for Humanity
“Northside Homes, Parks & Microenterprises”

Paterson Habitat for Humanity (PHFH) continues to work towards the goals included in its community-driven neighborhood plan, Building Pride in the Northside (NRTC Plan), in the design of this 2019 NRTC project. This project includes four activities that support the NRTC Plan: the demolition of a vacant and abandoned housing unit, an infill housing development, the development of public green spaces and a micro-grant program for microenterprises. The Housing component, labeled Home Safe Home, will add to much-needed affordable and quality single-family housing stock in this area. The green space component, labeled Green Space for Everyone, will transform a city-owned parcel of land that is now attracting dubious behavior into a public park. Green Space for Everyone will also convert a vacant overgrown property located at the gateway of the East Main Street commercial corridor into a welcoming Multi-use Outdoor Community Space that may be used to support Northside Neighborhood community activities. The Micro-grants for Microenterprises activity will provide resources to private businesses with 5 employees or less, including the owner, to further develop or expand their business.

Funding Requested: $985,000
Municipality: Paterson (Northside neighborhood)
Applicant’s Website: www.patersonhabitat.org
Contact: Barbara Dunn, director@patersonhabitat.org, (973) 595-6868

The Northside Neighborhood community identified increasing home ownership as a high priority when developing the NRTC Plan as home ownership rates within the community are well below national and state statistical averages. According to the US Census Bureau, home ownership rates nationally and in New Jersey are about 64%. In Paterson, home ownership rates are about 26% and in certain neighborhoods are as low as 12%.

Low home ownership rates are a direct result of several socioeconomic variables in the City. The US Census Bureau reports that, nationally, 12.3% live in poverty. In Paterson, 29.1% live in poverty. Annual median household incomes in New Jersey are $73,702. In Paterson, the annual median household income is $34,042, less than half of the state median income. This income does not allow a household to afford to buy a home, especially when considering the value of homes in Paterson and the surrounding real estate market. The US Census Bureau reports that the median monthly owner costs in New Jersey and in Paterson, with a mortgage, are over $2,300. Paterson rental rates are also high, typically in the $1,100 to $1,300 range. This compared favorably with the monthly PHFH homeowner costs of $931/month. Renters, nationally, tend to move every 3 years on the average. This instability impacts families and often contributes to challenges that threaten family and community health.

PHFH developed the Home Safe Home program to address these housing needs. NRTC Plan Goal 4: Housing - Performance Measurement System cites the need to construct new energy-efficient affordable homes as an outcome of the NRTC Plan. Goal 4: Housing also cites the need to upgrade housing conditions by beautification activities, weatherization & minor repairs, and, to decrease the number of vacant and abandoned housing units. The Home Safe Home program has been developed to implement the NRTC Plan and work towards these outcomes. The Home Safe Home project included in this funding request will result in the demolition of a vacant and abandoned housing unit and construction of a new single-family energy-efficient affordable home at 51-53 North 1st Street, the construction a new single-family energy-efficient affordable home at 113-115 North 3rd Street over the next two years.
In keeping with the Goal 4: Housing plan to upgrade housing conditions, PHFH will rehabilitate 8 homes, including homes at 74 Clinton Street and 127 3rd Street. The remaining 6 rehabilitation homes will be identified through an outreach program among Northside Neighborhood home owners, with the intention of targeting critical home repairs.

PHFH applies a Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) strategy to support the NRTC Plan (Goal 2: Quality of Life) to improve quality of life through a decrease of crime and vandalism. CPTED includes improved visibility and the installation of safety features on new and existing homes to make the neighborhood more open and less likely to draw unwanted behavior. PHFH proposes to provide 25 Northside Neighborhood residents with solar powered exterior light fixtures, reflective house numbers and carbon monoxide and fire detectors. The exterior light fixtures will improve visibility around these homes. A clear and visible house numbering system supports any police or fire department response to incidents that may occur in the Northside Neighborhood.

New carbon monoxide and fire detectors will allow homeowners and emergency responders more time to identify and respond to a carbon monoxide health hazard or a fire. Improving public safety will help stabilize the Northside Neighborhood.

NRTC Plan Goal 5: Environmental and Open Space - Performance Measurement System lists the creation of more open space and recreational areas, redesigning/beautifying existing green spaces and mitigating flooding as Planned Outcomes of the NRTC Plan. The PHFH Green Space for Everyone program is designed to meet these outcomes. PHFH is creating new public open space at a vacant lot on E Main Street and redesigning & beautifying an existing open space on Clinton Street.

The two open spaces in this application will include green infrastructure measures to help reduce off-site storm water run-off. Reducing off-site storm water that flows into the combined sewer outfall (CSO) collection system will reduce the flow of storm water to the Passaic River and will help reduce flooding and uncontrolled discharge of untreated sewage into the Passaic River. PHFH has integrated green infrastructure into the Green Space for Everyone program to help mitigate flooding while creating more open space in our Northside Neighborhood. Both are goals of the NRTC Plan.

The Open Space/Environmental chapter of the NRTC Plan describes the Clinton Street Park as an uninviting deteriorated property that is not maintained. This property is found at 63-95 Clinton Street (formerly known as 87-99 Clinton Street) and has been owned by the City of Paterson since 2008. This 1.04-acre site is identified on the tax maps as block 201, lot 2. The former Head Start building on-site was demolished by the City of Paterson earlier this year to stabilize the property; however, this project area has now become a hangout and is a nuisance area for nearby Northside Neighborhood residents, including several Habitat homeowners immediately adjacent to the project area. PHFH continues to focus on the Clinton Street target area, as was completed in the 2014, 2015 and 2016 NRTC funded projects.

PHFH will partner with the City of Paterson to convert this neighborhood liability into an asset by improving the park to meet the open space/environmental goals of the NRTC Plan. PHFH has forwarded a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for City review and approval. The MOU will provide PHFH with access to this city-owned property to conduct an environmental assessment and community-based planning charrettes, to allow a landscape architect to design the park, and, to agree to work cooperatively accessing Green Acres funding to develop the community-designed park. The City has asked that the NRTC funding be in place before the MOU is executed. In the interim, PHFH has received a letter from City Administration confirming referral of the MOU to City Council upon approval of funding.
PHFH is eligible for funding from the New Jersey Hazardous Discharge Site Remediation Fund (HDSRF) that will pay 100% of the costs to conduct a Preliminary Assessment, Site Investigation and Remedial Investigation of the entire site. PHFH has contacted the Passaic County HDSRF Coordinator at the NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection and confirmed our eligibility for this grant. The City of Paterson is eligible for 75% of Remedial Action (site cleanup) costs once the extent of contamination is known, at the end of the Remedial Investigation.

Once the MOU is executed, PHFH will retain a Licensed Site Remediation Professional to apply for the HDSRF grant and, once the HDSRF grant is approved, will complete the Preliminary Assessment, Site Investigation and Remedial Investigation.

Once NRTC funding is approved, PHFH will retain a landscape architect to guide the community-based planning charrettes and design the park based on the findings of the planning charrettes. PHFH anticipates a minimum of three charrettes will be necessary to understand the community needs and wants.

Once the park design is complete, a scope of work and cost estimate will be developed for park development. The City will then apply for Green Acres funding to finish the development of the park. Final development of the park will be completed in a manner to ensure that children and other users of the park are not exposed to environmental contamination. The completion of this park will be the culmination of several years of community-based planning and NRTC funding.

The second Green Spaces for Everyone activity in this application is the acquisition and conversion of a vacant overgrown lot at the corner of Bergen Street and East Main Street into a Multi-use Outdoor Community Space that may be used as a space to provide food to homeless and other community support services, outdoor movie nights for children, public arts projects and similar activities. This property is found at 89-93 East Main Street (Block 106, Lots 8 and 9).

PHFH will acquire the site from the current owner and work with our community advisory committee to develop a plan for the property that will advance the open space and flood control strategies of the NRTC Plan. This activity will create a new recreational space that will be used to host social services and, by design, will help reduce flooding by on-site management of storm water to the greatest extent practicable.

One of the major economic development goals that emerged from the community outreach conducted during the development of the NRTC Plan was to enhance the physical appearance of the commercial corridors of Haledon Avenue and West Broadway and to redevelop and create a new central commercial corridor on North Main Street. The NRTC Plan promotes a coordinated effort of streetscape improvements such as new sidewalks, planting of new trees and planters, and new garbage bins that would enhance the visual amenity of the corridor and promote walk-ability. Since the West Broadway and Haledon Avenue is such a visible corridor for vehicular traffic, this will showcase the positive change within the neighborhood.

PHFH is starting a Micro-grant for Microenterprises initiative to make small grants, no more than $5,000, available to microenterprises within West Broadway, Haledon Avenue and North Main Street corridors that meet the above NRTC Plan economic development goals.

PHFH intends on awarding two $5,000 micro-grants to microenterprises that meet the above criteria. One of the micro-grants will be funded by NRTC funds, if approved, and the other will be funded by other resources available to PHFH.
A short description of the PHFH Micro-grant for Microenterprises initiative will be distributed to business owners along the West Broadway, Haledon Avenue and North Main Street corridors. Proposals will be solicited. Candidates will provide a scope of work and cost estimate for projects that meet the above goals. Eligible projects will include physical appearance and facade enhancements for microenterprises along Haledon Avenue and West Broadway. CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) improvements will be a mandatory criterion for grant proposals that include physical appearance and facade enhancements along Haledon Avenue and West Broadway.

Micro-grants will be available to new or expanding microenterprises along North Main Street that support the redevelopment and creation of a new central commercial corridor on North Main Street. These proposals will be reviewed by PHFH staff, with the strongest proposal forwarded for review and approval by the PHFH Board of Directors.

Overall, the projects included in this application build off of previous NRTC grants in the Clinton Street area and on North 3rd Street. The NRTC funded Library Feasibility Study has resulted in the opening of a Northside Library Branch at the Christopher Hope Community Center (CHCC), on the same block as the proposed Clinton Street Park. The proposed North 3rd Street home will be built next to a site where NRTC funding was used to construct another new home.

PHFH, with the support of the NRTC program, is having a beneficial impact to the Northside Neighborhood. The Haledon Avenue Green Streets Complete Streets program, an outgrowth of the 2015 NRTC-funded Economic Market Study of the Haledon Avenue-East Main Street corridors, is nearing completion. Zillow's, an on-line real estate listing service, is predicting a 29% increase in property values in the Northside Neighborhood. The projects described in this application will build off of these successes by demolishing a blighted home, increasing quality affordable housing and green spaces and providing local microenterprises with resources to develop or expand their businesses.
Saint Joseph’s Carpenter Society  
“My East Camden Wave 6”

East Camden is a vibrant community that is coming together to revitalize and reenergize the neighborhood. With a vacancy rate of one-half to one-quarter of that of the overall City, East Camden’s residents describe themselves as investing in the community, living near family and friends, and willing to invite in others to live in the community. 75% of the residents are somewhat satisfied, satisfied, or very satisfied living in the neighborhood. This is a clear indication that East Camden is improving, however there remains much work to complement past investment to continue this revitalization over time.

East Camden, aptly named, is a culturally diverse, yet isolated neighborhood in the eastern portion of Camden. East Camden is primarily residential with a number of other assets, including one of the best commercial corridors in the City of Camden and an up and coming industrial area. “Cultivating Community” is at the center of My East Camden – building upon the existing assets within the Neighborhoods of East Camden and the values of East Camden residents to ensure a healthy and viable future.

There are four overarching goals set out to help achieve this resident-driven vision, and guide the strategies of My East Camden:

1. Improve Housing,
2. Improve Neighborhood Conditions,
3. Foster Commercial Revitalization and Economic Development,
4. Enhance Culture, Arts, Open Space and the Public Realm.

This group of NRTC projects features projects that will continue to build upon the foundation of homeownership in East Camden. At the core of this application are housing development activities: the rehabilitation of 6 formerly abandoned properties for sale to low to moderate income homebuyers and the planned acquisition of 8 blighted and vacant properties for future homeownership. In addition, the myHealthy Home initiative will improve a resident’s health by partnering with Cooper Hospital to identify and address adverse health impacts inside a person’s home. To increase economic development in East Camden, this application proposes to work with local small construction contractors through the creation of the Home Maintenance Lab, a one of its kind micro-enterprise co-working program for construction contractors.

East Camden's small businesses will be supported through the Commercial Facelift program, a program that will work with local businesses on Federal Street, Westfield Ave and Marlton Pike on facade improvements, the development of a signature mural and other beautification efforts. Socially, we propose to "connect" residents to their parks physically through the development of a necessary bike trail to Dudley Grange Park and connect residents to each other through programs and events that bring residents to the park to meet one another and on their blocks to work together on a shared goal of neighborhood improvement.

These projects will improve housing, improve neighborhood conditions by removing blight, support economic development and enhance culture, arts, open space and the public realm. These projects will all contribute to East Camden's continued revitalization.
Camden’s ascension as a community of choice for the diverse Latino, Asian and African American populations that call East Camden home. As East Camden continues to develop as a healthy neighborhood, the core components of safe and healthy homes and streets continue to be important and are considered the priority of the neighborhood.

Improving East Camden along all four objectives and targeting issues linked to families, youth, employment, housing, and neighborhood bring together a comprehensive approach to revitalizing the entire community. Saint Joseph’s Carpenter Society (SJCS) began revitalization efforts in East Camden in 1985. Thirty years later, SJCS has created over 990 homes for families of which over two-thirds are homeownership.

This work has greatly reduced the vacancy rate in East Camden and has created a residential real estate market which has allowed for an enhanced commercial district based on increased population with stable incomes compared to Camden City as a whole.

The following is a summary of projects for this NRTC application. Each of these initiatives touch on objectives as prioritized by residents and help achieve projected outcomes as referenced on Form NP-3 - Projected Outcomes from the NRTC approved plan. Our partners in this NRTC application include Cooper Hospital and Cooper’s Ferry Partnership. All the partners in this project remain committed to East Camden’s vitality and continue to work with residents to fully implement My East Camden with the final goal of our communal vision for tomorrow.

East Camden Home Rehab NRTC VI:

Using $175,000 of City of Camden HOME funds, SJCS will work on the transformation of six previously abandoned properties in East Camden into homeownership opportunities. These units were acquired through the Abandoned Properties Act or through the Neighborhood Community Stabilization Trust and will convert long vacant units into for-sale housing for local low and moderate income families and first time homebuyers. These planned projects address the four priority objectives and strategies as referenced in the NRTC approved plan. East Camden has greatly benefited from continual investment over the past thirty plus years. This project will leverage the over 80 units of homeownership developed in the past five years by SJCS in East Camden alone and will help achieve the projected outcomes of reduction of vacancy, increased homeownership rate, preservation of existing homeowners and the enhancement of the appearance of the neighborhood. East Camden’s communities, compared to other neighborhoods in Camden, have higher rates of homeownership and reduced rates of blight.

Residential Acquisition Fund:

Foreclosures, absentee owners and "zombie" properties plague New Jersey, and especially Camden. In areas that require massive investment in a residential property with little return, these properties become eyesores or places where drugs are freely used or developed. Property vacancies continue to be a significant problem in Camden City whose vacancy rate is triple the county and state rates. However, in New Jersey, the Abandoned Properties Rehabilitation Act and the National Community Stabilization Trust have given municipalities the ability to bring these properties back to life. SJCS has acquired over 30 units through the Act and through the Trust, respectively. Abandoned or vacant properties can be obtained by negotiated purchase, accelerated tax lien foreclosure or spot blight/eminent domain. These actions are permissible under the Abandoned Properties Rehabilitation Act. This allows SJCS to acquire the properties at the market price after construction costs are subtracted and rehabilitate the property. The residential acquisition fund will allow SJCS to pay for acquisition of an additional eight units. These properties will be redeveloped and sold to families who complete our Homeowner Academy. This project speaks to several plan objectives including: improve housing and improve neighborhood conditions.
myHealthy Home:

myHealthy Home is an enhancement to a previous homeowner occupied rehabilitation program that provides $5,000 in home repair assistance to homeowners making 100% or below the median family income for the area. Our intention with this program is to address poor health outcomes at a person's home directly by partnering with Cooper Hospital's Community Health Department and ensuring that a homeowner's repairs are leveraged or preserved by the mandatory attendance at our home improvement seminar classes. The Community Health Department will be responsible for assisting SICS staff to determine immediate health hazards in a person's home. Additionally, the Community Health Department will help with identifying health related gaps and connecting these homeowners to appropriate resources to address their needs. Homeowners who receive this assistance are required to attend home repair seminars offered through the Home Maintenance Lab. The program is helping SICS achieve two results. The first is to stabilize clients' largest assets, their homes, and ensure that this asset stays preserved. The second is to work to address health needs in the community. In achieving these two goals at once, East Camden will continue on its path to being a neighborhood of choice. In addition, this activity helps preserve existing homeowners, enhances the appearance of the neighborhood and increases the home ownership rate. Fourteen of these homeowners will be assisted and tracked to better determine the health outcomes of our work.

Home Maintenance Lab:

SICS has developed over 994 units of housing with the help of local micro-enterprise construction contractors and first time homebuyers. In working with local contractors, we realize that they need assistance to grow and obtain bigger and better contracts. Our assistance to these contractors is in the form of informal technical support for insurance, bonding, invoicing, cash flow, accounting and proposal writing. In working with first-time homebuyers, we realize that this population is eager to learn about a set maintenance schedule and about small improvements that they can take on in their home to improve it. The Home Maintenance Lab is a program that assists both small contractors and homeowners through education and technical assistance. For small contractors, SICS staff will work with them to address their needs in growing their business by offering these contractors "desk space" and access to technology, training and a technical assistance coach. The coach will work with the contractors on developing and implementing an action plan to grow their business. For residents, the Maintenance Lab will offer seminar style classes on simple but interactive home repair topics. These classes will be taught by local contractors enrolled in the Maintenance Lab and allow a resident to personally preserve their biggest investment. SICS proposes to work with 3 micro-enterprise contractors directly to improve an aspect of their business and have at least 20 people attend our seminar style home improvement classes.

Commercial Facelift:

East Camden has one of the best commercial districts in Camden. However, the corridor can be unwelcoming or easily missed by outsiders. SICS, business owners and partners will work together in a "facelift" beautification initiative on the commercial corridors in East Camden to give the commercial district more vibrancy. This program has three interrelated components that will increase the viability of the commercial district in East Camden: (1) direct facade improvements to at least 3 businesses, (2) the installation of a community mural at a key intersection in the commercial district and (3) addressing vacant lots and "sore spots" in the commercial district through beautification efforts. This project fosters commercial revitalization and economic development as well as improves neighborhood conditions.

This program helps to develop a more vibrant, walkable, mixed-use commercial district in the middle of East Camden. Additionally, the program achieves the outcomes of transforming commercial districts into destinations
for residents and out of area customers, increases employment for area residents, increases the number of commercial opportunities, enhances the appearance of the neighborhood and increases resident satisfaction with neighborhood open space.

Better Blocks:

Simple outdoor improvements can enhance the appearance of a place. Improvements made along adjacent properties can enhance the appearance of an entire block or street. Improvements to a home's exterior and neighborhood directly increases the property values of these homes. Better Blocks incentivizes these improvements by directly working with residents to take their ideas of neighborhood improvement and implementing them. SJCS will open up a "request for proposals" for neighborhood residents through the solicitation of a simple one page worksheet. A group of neighborhood residents, stakeholders and SJCS will review all proposals and select 3 to implement. SJCS will work with partners to provide in-kind assistance, while the residents will provide "sweat equity" on the project. After the implementation of these beautification efforts, SJCS will track vacancy and property value increases in the long term.

Connecting the Parks:

There is growing literature in neighborhood development that mentions the importance of parks in low-income areas. This initiative will connect residents to the parks in East Camden, both physically and socially. Physically, Cooper's Ferry Partnership, our partner in this project, will work with an engineer/landscape architect to design the Camden-Merchantville Circuit Connector. The Camden-Merchantville Circuit Connector addresses a small but significant gap in the current Camden County piece of the Circuit, Greater Philadelphia's Regional Trail Network, connecting communities throughout Pennsylvania, New Jersey and beyond. This bike trail connects residents to Dudley Grange Park through an off-street bike trail into the park from the Rosedale neighborhood in East Camden. Socially, CFP will also program these parks with family-friendly activities to improve the social cohesion of the neighborhoods. Activities include free fitness classes, an annual "Camden's Got Talent" event, and outdoor nighttime movie nights. Our outcomes is the completion of the design of this bike trail and the attendance of over 300 people in total to our East Camden events.
The Cooper Health System
“Cooper Plaza Housing and Economic Development, Phase VII”

The Cooper Health System (“Cooper”) has a successful model to work with its non-profit partners to implement a comprehensive program to advance the neighborhood’s community development goals while utilizing the expertise of its partners to complete activities. This NRTC project will provide a variety of activities with Cooper Hospital, Camden Special Services District, Center for Family Services, Cooper’s Ferry Partnership and St. Joseph’s Carpenter Society.

The activities will complement ongoing and completed efforts in the neighborhood. Activities will specifically advance the neighborhood plan outcomes to reduce the number of vacant properties, improve conditions of occupied homes, reduce the number of properties with maintenance code violations, increase the number of homes participating in home improvement programs, maintain improved neighborhood parks, address unemployment with increased training and access to jobs to increase income levels for residents.

Activities will include housing acquisition and rehabilitation, job-readiness training, “healthy home” improvements to preserve occupied units, clean and safe maintenance services and park improvements.

1. InDemand Job-Readiness Training Program

One of the most persistent issues Cooper Plaza and Camden City residents face is a high unemployment rate, which is substantially higher than the national average. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the national unemployment rate as of July 2018 is 3.9% nationally. In Camden County the unemployment rate was 5.3% and in Camden City, significantly higher at 9.8%. In the Cooper Plaza neighborhood, the unemployment rate stands at 22.5%; this is triple the rate of Camden County and more than double the rate of Camden City. Plus youth who do not finish high school struggle to find gainful employment and often find themselves underprepared for the jobs that are available and in Camden, 32% of residents lack a high school diploma. The InDemand workforce development program is specifically designed to be the intervention needed, as the program works with both participants and potential employers to make sure employees are effectively trained in the most needed skills to be successful employees.

**Funding Requested:** $985,000

**Municipality:** Camden (Cooper Plaza neighborhood)

**Applicant’s Website:** [http://foundation.cooperhealth.org/who-we-are/transforming-our-community](http://foundation.cooperhealth.org/who-we-are/transforming-our-community)

**Contact:** Brian Bauerle, bauerle-brian@cooperhealth.edu, (856) 963-6705

The InDemand program, to be provided by the Center for Family Services in a training office on Benson Street in Cooper Plaza, will provide a program for participants with an intensive life skills curriculum focused on job readiness that is tailored to specific skills and training that Camden City employers have identified as priorities. The training will be provided in a once vacant property that CFS has rehabilitated. InDemand has three core concentrations: 1) intensive job skills training, 2) workforce employability skills curriculum, and 3) extensive support services during and following program participation for up to one year. The goal to tailor job training to equip participants with focused skills required for long-term success in the workforce.
Participants will have access to classes and training impacting a variety of industries. The program will emphasize intensive training and work to make hands on training opportunities available to learn the relevant skills quickly and smoothly transition into the workforce. As relevant, participants will also improve their job-related basic skills like training in English as a Second Language (ESL), computer literacy, math, and reading. InDemand program participants will also be eligible to receive a minimum of one industry-valued and state recognized credential/certification. All participants will receive certification in Mental Health First Aid and have the option of currently choosing from First Aid/CPR, Basic Life Support and OSHA 10 and potentially others. InDemand is not a resume building class, but identifies the unique needs of each participant and establishes relationships built on understanding, trust and the potential of gaining employment developed specifically to support and empower individuals and families.

CFS recognizes that many participants live with a variety of challenges including poverty, low levels of education, lack of transportation, that may present barriers to successful employment, even with the training available. The program works to enable participants to overcome these obstacles. In addition to job and life skills training, the program provides case management and success coaching to participants. Participants will also have access, as necessary, to a broad array of supportive resources, including referrals for childcare, assistance with driver’s license restoration and record expungement, referrals and linkages for housing, substance abuse treatment, medical and mental health services, domestic violence support services and parenting skills.

This project activity supports the neighborhood plan outcomes to facilitate educational development, alleviate poverty by increasing total household income, reducing unemployment and increasing access to jobs.

2. St. Joseph’s Housing Rehabilitation

Improving quality and availability of homeownership opportunities in the neighborhood plays a vital role in the continued development of a vibrant community. St. Joseph’s Carpenter Society (SJCS) will rehabilitate a boarded and vacant single-family unit at 714 Royden Street as a 3 bedroom and 1.5 baths home. SJCS has the property under agreement and ready to acquire the property. The rehab will preserve the exterior facade of the home to bring it back to the intended character, consistent with the existing housing stock on this block. The home will be gut-rehabbed and brought up to code and sold to a qualified homebuyer. The rehab will include interior, exterior, roof, site and mechanical system improvements, new appliances, flooring and exterior improvements. It will also include an alarm system, energy star appliances, green components and forced hot air heating and central air-conditioning. SJCS will use its management team and experienced contractors to complete the work. The rehab is a key property as it will complement a unit being rehabbed next door. The rehab will support the specific NRTC Plan outcomes to reduce vacant properties and provide mixed-income housing.

3. My Healthy Home Program

Housing development in a community does not always include rehab or new construction, but development is also investments in preserving existing occupied homes so that they do not become vacant. The housing stock in Cooper Plaza is aging and in many cases showing signs of homeowner neglect, due to a variety of reasons that includes inability to make actual repairs, lack disposable income, age of homes and the number or types of repairs needed. In addition, low-income residents have a difficult time in accessing funds for home improvements to keep their homes safe, as data shows that home improvement denial rates for minority homeowners are very high, further limiting resources for needed repairs. The availability of stable and quality housing is also a significant social determinant of health, research shows where people live and how they live directly affects their well-being. My Healthy Home Program is a housing development program to preserve existing homes, while providing an
innovative approach to evaluate families for other determinants of health focused on addressing barriers affecting their well-being. To address poor conditions, St. Joseph’s Carpenter Society (SJCS) will focus on repairs and improvements for major systems, safety issues and overall poor conditions so residents do not have to live unsafe or unhealthy conditions. The program will offer a maximum of $5,000 in improvements for a home. Improvements can include basic home repairs to reduce unsafe or poor conditions, with a focus on safety and major systems repairs or replacements including roofs, electrical, plumbing, heating and cooling systems. Repairs and improvements may also include but not limited to: door and window repairs, sheetrock and carpentry, kitchen or bathroom improvements to provide for a safe and usable facilities, flooring, weatherproofing and remediation, railings, trip hazards and other repairs or improvements to provide for a quality and safe home.

With a growing body of evidence showing that unmet social determinants of health lead to poor health outcomes, Cooper Hospital’s Community Health department will implement a new approach to addressing the social determinants of health for residents in the neighborhood. SJCS will be able to link the residents in the homes receiving the repairs directly to Cooper. Cooper will do outreach and provide the opportunity to conduct an evaluation to identify health related gaps in care and connect them to appropriate resources.

This is a holistic approach to providing healthy homes and capturing an already at-risk population with options related to other social needs to include but not limited to food insecurity, utility needs, employment, interpersonal violence and transportation. Follow-up, education and health system navigation through Cooper’s community health team will be available to residents with additional health-related needs. Cooper will also collaborate with Uplift Solutions, a national nonprofit that addresses the complex dynamics that keep people in poverty and unhealthy: access to fresh and healthy food, healthcare, economic opportunity and employment. Through the social determinants of health evaluation, Cooper will have the ability to directly connect residents to Uplift to receive free one-on-one support to navigate public benefits including SNAP, Medicaid, TANF, utility assistance, earned income tax credits, WIC and more. Uplift navigators develop a plan and guide participant through entire application processes. By systematically identifying and addressing their gaps in care, we can provide them with the appropriate information to influence better outcomes.

This activity specifically supports the neighborhood plan outcomes to improve conditions of occupied housing, the reduction of property maintenance or code violations and increasing the number of properties participating home improvement related programs.

4. Cooper Plaza Housing Acquisition

The acquisition of vacant and abandoned homes in the neighborhood have become a critical step in the reinvestment and rehabilitation of homes in the Cooper Plaza. Having the ability and funds to acquire targeted units can be a significant hurdle. This activity will facilitate the acquisition of a minimum of 2 vacant and blighted properties. Cooper and SJCS have targeted strategic homes on key blocks that will further stabilize the rehabs completed on these blocks. Many of these units have been challenging to acquire but are critical properties. The units targeted are: 554 Newton Ave; 716, 646 and 610 Royden St; 544 and 550 S. 6th St; 517 S. 7th St; 556, 567 and 559 Berkley St. Additional properties may also be identified based upon new vacant properties on key blocks.

Not all of the units will be acquired with a goal to acquire as many as possible to gain critical site control. Cooper and SJCS may utilize both direct acquisition and the City of Camden Abandoned Properties Act (APA) process to acquire the homes. The APA process is an integral tool to gain site control of abandoned properties and has allowed Cooper and SJCS the opportunity to acquire homes that would have historically been very difficult to acquire, if at all. Having funding in place for the acquisition of these blighted homes is a key component to
facilitate the redevelopment phase. This advances the outcomes of the neighborhood plan to reduce vacant properties in the neighborhood.

5. Clean & Safe Cooper Plaza

With major investments in the neighborhood including new and rehabilitated housing, new apartments and commercial space on Broadway, a public renaissance school, institutional growth and active parks and green space it is very important to maintain neighborhood conditions, preserve community assets and provide a reliable presence in the neighborhood.

The Clean and Safe Cooper Plaza program, through the Camden Special Services District (CSSD), will provide maintenance and security services in Cooper Plaza to directly support the neighborhood. Uniformed ambassadors will serve as a visible presence in the neighborhood daily with supervision. Ambassadors provide services to pick up litter, clean graffiti, power wash sidewalks, remove trash, park cleanup, weeding and minor landscaping, snow removal from ADA accessible ramps, offer assistance to residents or visitors, address hazardous conditions and report issues to the City for immediate action. Ambassadors provide assistance at special events, community activities and free public concerts in the park and work to keep the homeless population out of public areas and connect them to resources they may need. CSSD employees are all Camden residents, which provide job opportunities with salaries and benefits. The services will help to reverse and improve conditions that have plagued the neighborhood which compound the challenges facing the community These services are critical to maintain and preserve community assets in the neighborhood and continue to foster an environment that is attracting additional investments and encouraging new businesses and organizations to come to Cooper Plaza. This activity furthers the neighborhood plan to improve neighborhood conditions, specifically the outcomes to identify partners for vacant lot stabilization, maintaining improved parks and to attract new retail.

6. Cooper Plaza Park Improvements

The Cooper Plaza neighborhood is home to 4 parks that provide various opportunities for residents, visitors and individuals that work in the neighborhood to visit and use on a regular basis. Sheila Roberts Park, 6th and Washington Streets, serves as a main focal point. The park is a central meeting place for the community, the main location for activities and events during the year and for children to play. Cooper provides the maintenance and regular upkeep for the park. Residents and neighborhood association leaders identified a real need to improve the playground area. Based upon community feedback and review of the playground conditions, the playground surface has deteriorated over time and is becoming a hazard for the children. In addition, several pieces of play equipment are showing significant signs of deterioration, damage or graffiti. This activity will provide for the replacement of the playground surface with a new durable play surface and replacement damaged and outdated playground equipment. This activity addresses current conditions, but more importantly, will discourage further damage and disregard for the play area. Cooper’s Ferry Partnership will use its expertise to fully manage and implement the improvements. This project activity specifically addresses neighborhood plan outcomes to maintain improved parks.
Urban League of Essex County, “Fairmount Neighborhood Advancement Phase IV”

The Urban League of Essex County ("The League") requests $985,000 in funding for proposed projects that are aligned with the mission and vision of NRTC to foster revitalization of distressed neighborhoods and invest in the economic and community development of low and moderate-income communities. If approved, our proposal will support the construction of an Early Childhood Center at West Village and establish a "Fairmount Tech House", an information technology education and job training center. Our proposal also aligns with and advances the goals and objectives of the DCA-approved Fairmount Neighborhood Plan ("The Plan").

Detailed Project Description:

This project will (1) contribute to the new construction of a state-of-the-art early childhood center adjacent to West Side High School, transforming a formerly blighted city block in Newark's west ward as part of the RBH Group's "West Side Village" development initiative; and (2) establish an information technology focused education and job training center in the Fairmount community.

Our project will revitalize a currently blighted and abandoned city block along one of Fairmount’s two business corridors, creating badly needed economic and job opportunities in the area, leverage The League’s successful Newark Kids Code programming to expand services to job-seeking adults for in-demand technology based careers, and build the capacity of The League as an anchor institution to successfully obtain and deliver higher quality workforce development training grants that will result in Fairmount residents' improved ability to secure in-demand, living wage and higher paying employment.

The proposed project addresses market demand and needs of the neighborhood and multiple touchpoints, positively impacting youth, adults, families and small businesses.

The Early Childhood Center at West Side Village:

The League will support the RBH Group’s planned development of a former New Jersey School Development Authority’s parcel on the main thoroughfare of South Orange Avenue. Funding would support planning, site preparation and foundational activities for the construction of a new building. In this project, The League would be a minority construction partner, but primary service delivery partner as the Early Childhood Center’s managing entity once completed. The center will serve up to 72 early learners aged 18 months - 3, and up to 90 pre-school students aged 3 - 5+.

The new building will be a 2-story, 28,000 SF masonry building that will contain 12 classrooms of 1,000 SF/each, nurses office, directors office, meeting and multipurpose space, a commercial kitchen, laundry and storage rooms. It will include a site layout that will allow for children drop off, parking and an outdoor play area for recreation. The building will be built to green standards including energy star certification.

Funding Requested: $985,000
Municipality: Newark (Fairmount neighborhood)
Applicant’s Website: www.ulec.org
Contact: Vivian Cox Fraser, vfraser@ulec.org, (973) 624-9535 x102
The Fairmount Tech House:

The League will establish The Fairmount Tech House at 152 Littleton Avenue, Newark, NJ. This will require the retirement of original debt on the property to convert the facility to a commercial purpose, and fit-out of the building for advanced computer networking capabilities and compliance with commercial building standards.

The Tech House will provide an innovative, best-in-class solution to the demand for high value job training, internet access, and extended learning opportunities in a safe space for youth and adults in Fairmount. With NJIT as a committed partner, we have solid funding for coding tutors associated with NJIT that will cover the full cost of instructors.

Together, these projects build the capacity of The League to deliver on its mission in an economically sustainable fashion. Currently, space limitations prevent the organization from fully accessing training opportunities that require computer resources, including standard 21st-century workplace skills such as proficiency in Microsoft Office Suite products. Our childcare centers are also below the threshold for full reimbursement from the Newark Public Schools district, which puts additional financial stringency on The League to deliver quality services while critical staff and leadership positions are not fully funded. The Early Childcare Center would enable The League to combine service location, maximize efficiencies of scale, and meet eligibility requirements for fully funded staffing.

The Tech House will enable The League to expand its competitive grant seeking for quality job training programs, and expand offering of in-demand training programs for job seekers. Currently, our space limitations necessitate that we limit our computer lab, job search, and online training to accommodate the many programs required in service to Opportunity Youth, Seniors, and individual clients. Having dedicated computing space will increase our capacity to become an approved training agency covering additional career areas with NJDOL.

The League's mission is to help African Americans and disadvantaged residents achieve social and economic self-sufficiency. For more than 100 years, we have been proudly resolute in that commitment. Today, the needs of this community are equally as great, and challenges equally as complex. We have been an anchor institution in Fairmount for 48 years, and have a proven track record of successful community outreach. We are now transitioning to a full community development corporation model to address the realities of obstacles that intersect place and circumstance. Our proposed projects advance this overarching goal.

We expect to seek and realize addition funding from private and philanthropic sources as our successes increase. We also expect to see private investment in Fairmount increase as neighborhood quality and attractiveness rise. The Department of Community Affairs has been a significant stimulus and invaluable partner in this work of revitalizing Fairmount and we look forward to your continued collaboration as we strive to create a community that we can all be proud of - "a neighborhood that is a place where neighbors help each other in order to provide good and safe schools, jobs, businesses, housing, transportation and recreation to every person who lives here. Our home. Our hope. Our neighborhood."

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