



A+ Schools
ACTION-Housing, Inc.
Allegheny City Central Association
Allegheny Land Trust
Amani Christian CDC
Bona Fide Bellevue
Bloomfield Development Corp.
Bloomfield-Garfield Corp.
Brookline Area Community Council
Design Center Pittsburgh
East Allegheny Community Council
East Hills Consensus Group
East Liberty Development, Inc.
Economic Development South
Etna Economic Development Corp
Fineview Citizens Council
Friendship Community Group
Garfield Jubilee Association
Grounded Pittsburgh
Habitat for Humanity of
Greater Pittsburgh
Hazelwood Initiative, Inc.
Highland Park CDC
Hill District CDC
Hill District Consensus Group
Hill House EDC
Hilltop Alliance
Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania
Larimer Consensus Group
Lawrenceville Corp.
Lawrenceville United
Manchester Citizens Corp.
McKees-Rocks CDC
Mexican War Streets Society
Millvale Borough Development
Corp.
Mount Washington CDC
NeighborWorks Western PA
Northside Leadership Conference
Oakland Planning and
Development Corporation
Operation Better Block
Penn Hills CDC
Perry Hilltop Citizens Council
Pittsburgh Downtown CDC
Pittsburgh Project
PULSE
Polish Hill Civic Association
POWER Link
Rebuilding Together Pittsburgh
Sharpsburg Neighborhood Org
South Side Community Council
South Side Local Development
Company (Emeritus)
South Side Slopes Neighborhood
Association
Squirrel Hill Urban Coalition
Troy Hill Citizens, Inc.
Tube City Renaissance
Uptown Partners of Pittsburgh
Urban Innovation21
Washington Citywide CDC
Wilksburg CDC

June 18, 2021

Office of Management and Budget
City of Pittsburgh
Kevin Pawlos, Director
City-County Building
414 Grant Street
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15212

Dear Mr. Pawlos,

On behalf of our member organizations, Pittsburgh Community Reinvestment Group (PCRG) would like to thank the City of Pittsburgh's Office of Management and Budget for taking community input as the administration continues to frame the 2022 operating and capital budget priorities. PCRG is a non-profit organization made up of a coalition of over 40 community-based organizations (CBOs) and community development corporations (CDCs) located throughout the City of Pittsburgh.

As the administration, city departments, and City Council members consider the capital budget in the upcoming months, PCRG would like to emphasize the importance of community and economic development programs. Moreover, PCRG members hope to see a significant budget increase from 2021 levels on the following programs and initiatives as we fight for a more equitable city: Pittsburgh Land Bank (PLB), neighborhood stabilization and infrastructure, neighborhood economic development, small business development and transit improvements.

PCRG has been a leader when it comes to bringing communities together with city departments regarding vacant property, including coordinating the Vacant Property Working Group. In that vein, PCRG would like to urge the administration to prioritize increased funding for the Pittsburgh Land Bank (PLB). PCRG and other community development stakeholders need a well-funded PLB partner to streamline the title process to move properties out of property reserve to eliminate the blight that is plaguing many of our neighborhoods and stripping the wealth of those residents. Furthermore, PCRG would like to urge the city to consider alternatives to demolition while addressing neighborhood blight. While the city does invest in vacant property maintenance, PCRG believes the city is not able to meet the growing maintenance demands of its properties and has shifted to a demolition first policy. This shift in course is not sustainable if the city wants to reach its affordable housing goals, maintain the fabric of our neighborhoods, and keep the cost of housing within reach for low and



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moderate-income residents. PCRG and other partners call on the administration to increase funding for neighborhood stabilization programs and expand its partnerships with local nonprofits to help in the maintenance of these assets.

As the city works to close the gap on developing 20,000 new affordable housing units, PCRG would like to urge the administration to increase funding for economic development tools to help foster the investment in these projects. Additional funding streams to the Housing Opportunity Fund (HOF), specifically the Housing Stabilization Program, For Sale Development Program, and the Homeowner Assistance Program that ensure our working-class residents can remain in our city. Additionally, PCRG urges the city to maintain its annual funding commitment to the HOF from the operational budget to ensure we can make meaningful advancements in housing for our low-income residents.

As the City of Pittsburgh receives its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) allocations from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, PCRG would like to highlight the need for additional funding to the Neighborhood Economic Development program (formerly ACCBO) and the Initiative Fund that is supporting citywide programing. These critical neighborhood investment dollars are the lifeblood for many of our members. These dollars assist organizations by increasing their capacity with staff, fund neighborhood planning needs, or provide funding for community brick and mortar projects.

Each year, the city has made an investment in local businesses and entrepreneurs through programs offered by the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh (URA). PCRG applauds the city's commitment to place-based investments within historic minority owned business districts. PCRG and its members believe this is a valued investment and hope to continue to make it a priority in the capital budget. With the challenges for Women and Minority Small Business Owners (WMOB), such as access to capital and lending, continued investment in these entrepreneurs is paramount. This has never been truer as small businesses continue to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Lastly, PCRG continues to be a critical regional voice in mobility and transportation issues. We encourage the city and its partners to continue with the investment in advancing accessible and safe multi-modal transportation. PCRG members look forward to working with the city and its intergovernmental partners on improving access to safe and reliable



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transportation on projects and initiatives such as Rapid Bus Transit, complete streets, ramps and safe public walks.

Pursuant to all applicable Office of Management and Budget guidelines, please accept this letter as part of the official record on public comment. PCRG and our members look forward to continuing the work with various city partners, including the Office of Management and Budget, in the effort to provide equitable funding opportunities for the critical programming above. Moreover, we have shared your capital and operating budget surveys with our members. Should you or any member of your staff have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact PCRG Director of Policy, Chris Rosselot at 412-354-0642 or by email at crosselot@pcrg.org.

Sincerely,

Ernie Hogan
Executive Director, PCRG

CC: Members, Pittsburgh City Council