

PIMLICO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY



March 14, 2022

Mayor Brandon Scott
City Hall
100 N. Holliday Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

Re: FY23 Pimlico Area Local Impact Aid

Dear Mayor Scott:

As Chair of the Pimlico Community Development Authority (PCDA), I hereby submit PCDA's recommendations regarding the City's Proposed Spending Plan for FY 2023 Video Lottery Terminal (Slots) Revenue, released on January 14, 2022.

PCDA considered all public input to develop these recommendations. Public meetings were held on January 25 and February 1 to review the Proposed FY22 Spending Plan and to receive verbal feedback from interested stakeholders. Stakeholders were also invited to submit written comments. A PCDA work session was held on March 8, 2022, to review public feedback on the Spending Plan. All written comments received were posted on PCDA's website.

The PCDA meetings were very well attended and there were 84 written comments (letters and e-mails) received from all Pimlico Local Impact eligible areas. Stakeholders generally provided comments on the following topics: support for homeowner repair grants, business support, a community organizer position, and the Langston Hughes Resource Center.

Recommended changes to the spending plan are detailed below.

Park Heights Master Plan Area

The following items are recommended to be changed in the spending plan:

- **Homeowner Repair Grants:** Increase the amount available for homeowner repair grants from \$750,000 to \$900,000 based on the overwhelming interest in this program. This year, 41 residents of Pimlico Terrace submitted letters of support for homeowner repair grants in their neighborhood. The additional \$150,000 would fund 15 home improvements at \$10,000. While we agree that the \$750,000 should be targeted to specific areas, we would recommend that the additional funds be available for homeowners anywhere in the Park Heights Master Plan footprint.

- **Development Incentives:** Shift funding for development incentives to focus on acquisition in the Pimlico Terrace neighborhood. Reduce the funding for acquisition/development incentives from \$325,000 to \$100,000 for FY23, understanding that additional funding will be needed in the future. \$100,000 should allow for the acquisition of approximately 6 vacant houses in the target area.
- **Library:** PCDA does not recommend including funding for the library in the FY23 spending plan. PCDA has already set aside \$2.5 million towards a library, which is available to be leveraged with state, federal, private, or other funding sources. While there is strong support for a library in Park Heights, allocating \$500,000 is not enough to move the needle on this project. If allocated, this funding would potentially be sitting unused for many years to come. It makes more sense to allocate local impact funds on projects that can use the funding now.
- **Art in the ROW:** Based on community input, this project is not a priority at this time. Funds should be reallocated to critical needs as listed below.
- **Shared Use Path Network Connections:** Based on community input, this project is not a priority at this time. Funds should be reallocated to critical needs as listed below.
- **Care-a-Lot:** Based on community input, this project is not a priority at this time as PHR's Clean and Green Program also maintains vacant lots. Funds should be reallocated to critical needs as listed below.

The following items are recommended to be added to the spending plan:

- **Business Development and Main Street Initiative (\$300,000):** PCDA recommends \$100,000 for PHR to work with current business owners, merchants, residents and stakeholders to apply for a Main Streets designation for Park Heights. Additionally, PCDA recommends \$200,000 for PHR to leverage its business development funds to provide grants for business enhancements, business growth, provide technical assistance/workshops for grant research and grant submissions. The business development funds should be primarily focused on supporting legacy businesses, including business repair grants, similar to the homeowner repair grants.
- **Lighting and Safety Enhancements in Business District (\$139,500):** Based on survey responses from business owners who are part of the Pimlico Merchants Association, enhanced lighting and safety measures such as cameras are necessary. Funding is recommended for these safety enhancements.
- **Education (\$150,000):** PCDA recommends supporting PHR as the lead agency for five (5) schools in the community by providing \$150,000 for Out of School Time programming and partners.
- **Langston Hughes Community and Business Resource Center (\$200,000):** Based on letters received from the community, there is strong support to provide funding to the Langston Hughes Community Resource Center to complete renovations so that they may reopen their doors soon. The Center recently had a fire, and these funds would serve to expedite the renovation process. Part of the \$200,000 should be used for a reliable sprinkler system.
- **Workforce Development (\$100,000):** Provide funding for a job training program in the Park Heights area that prepares clients for living wage employment, such as the Jane Addams Resource Corporation (JARC), which has an established pathway to green jobs through wind turbine employment opportunities at Tradepoint Atlantic.
- **PCDA Communications (\$100,000):** Pimlico Local Impact Aid is entering its 12th year, and it is important to make known all of the services, projects, and benefits to the community that the Pimlico Local Impact Aid funding has provided. This funding will provide for hiring a

communications firm to tell the story of what has been accomplished with Pimlico Local Impact Aid, create a user-friendly PCDA website, send mailers to all Park Heights residents, and provide other communication tools.

One Mile Radius Area

In the One Mile Radius, PCDA generally agrees with the projects and priorities as set out in the Proposed FY23 Spending Plan. PCDA recommends that the Final Spending Plan include the following items:

- **Northwest Park:** The funding proposed for Northwest Park was not enough to fully fund this project, therefore PCDA recommends removing this funding from the spending plan and finding alternative sources of funding for this project. Senator Hayes committed to working with the 41st District Delegation to identify State funding to meet the full \$300,000 needed to fund this phase of redevelopment of Northwest Park.
- **Community Grants:** PCDA recognizes there may be challenges administering community grants in FY23, but due to the importance of these grants, we recommend allocating \$30,000 for this purpose.
- **Grant Administration:** PCDA recommends increasing this line item from \$55,000 to \$100,500 due to shifting management of the community grants. This increase will allow for administration of FY23 projects as well as prior year projects that have not been completed yet.

PCDA would like to thank you for your leadership and the strategic manner in which local impact aid will be used to rebuild the Park Heights community, as well as benefit the surrounding neighborhoods. We are confident you will give serious consideration to PCDA's recommendations as you finalize the Spending Plan. The entire greater Pimlico community looks forward to seeing the Final Spending Plan and, most importantly, moving forward with implementation.

Sincerely,

Chris Ryer
Chair, Pimlico Community Development Authority

cc: Scott C. Davis, Director, Mayor's Office of Neighborhoods