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August 24, 2021

Ms. Lisa Shelly, Acting Village Mgr.  
Village of Oak Park  
123 Madison Street  
Oak Park, IL 60302

#### RE: 2022 Village of Oak Park Budget Request

Dear Ms. Shelly,

In keeping with the illustrious history between the Oak Park Regional Housing Center and the Village of Oak Park, we are seeking to re-engage the Village of Oak Park, the Staff of the VOP municipality and the Board of Trustees in ways that will make the work of all parties involved more meaningful, particularly to the dismantling institutional forces of segregation in housing here in the Oak Park Community.

As you know, the COVID-19 global pandemic has allowed America to see our ways of being as we truly are. Particularly with the recent census data, as well as the challenges facing Oak Park with the wealth gaps of many of our traditional long-time residents. With this said, I am requesting that we, the VOP and the OPRHC team, together re-scope our partnership to reflect the needs assessment of the community and design the scorecard of success to reflect the goals of the Village. There is no better way than to do this, as we have been doing for the past 49 years, than through housing. We can do this by initiating the following:

- 1) Re-developing our existing contract agreement. There are many items that need to be removed from the existing contract as they do not reflect the work as it needs to happen today. We need to spend time to discuss this in detail to arrive to a joint working plan.
- 2) OPRHC will work to become a collective impact agency of Diversity, Integration, and Equity (DIE). It was through the intentional work of OPRHC to achieve the diverse vibrant Village of Oak Park. OPRHC will continue this work by bringing together all of the equity groups of Oak Park in a very meaningful way, once again setting a vision and a premise for progress to equity.
- 3) While keeping our vision to continue on the path to an even more integrated Village of Oak Park, we will partner with professional counsel to improve the metrics for institutional measurement for affirmative moves while also improving our marketing and outreach to aid to continue to prescribe Oak Park as a "welcoming" community to live and thrive. While this may seem easy and as if it is already accomplished, this will take work on behalf of the agency and our block-by-block programming to make a significant change, particularly in those Oak Park neighborhoods that need it most.

In order to continue this pathway, Oak Park Regional Housing Center is requesting support of **\$300,000.00** from the Village of Oak Park general funds, in addition to \$100,000 to support an extensive outreach and marketing plan, and an additional \$100,000 to support research to convene institutional support to develop and implement true research for the metrics for affirmative moves.

We appreciate our strong and long-standing partnership with the Village of Oak Park and look forward to continuing to work with the Village to sustain a diverse, inclusive, and prosperous community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Athena Williams', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Athena Williams  
Executive Director