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2022 Holiday Gift Guide Proposal

Introduction

Our local businesses need every opportunity they can get to attract customers who are increasingly in the habit of shopping online. This is especially true for independent and locally owned shops and restaurants. A village-focused Holiday Shopping Guide that is widely distributed, both in print and digitally, within Oak Park and the surrounding suburbs can go a long way in creating and enhancing much needed visibility for Oak Park's businesses and business districts. With a shared partnership between the Village of Oak Park, the Chamber of Commerce and Growing Community Media, we can create a powerful marketing tool that will energize and entice people to shop locally for the 2022 holiday season.



Background

In late 2021, the OPRF Chamber of Commerce partnered with the Wednesday Journal to launch a [Holiday Gift Guide](#) to allow all licensed businesses in Oak Park (food service, retail and service-based businesses) the opportunity to advertise to the community during the holiday season. The Gift Guide was 56 pages and contained both local business advertising as well as editorial content highlighting local businesses.

Funding from the Village of Oak Park (\$10,000) was used to subsidize marketing ad costs for local businesses, whereby all licensed Oak Park businesses would be eligible for a \$100 discount on the cost to advertise in the Gift Guide. The Gift Guide was sent out as a digital publication as well as printed hard copy.

Summary of 2021 - How did we do?

The following information combines marketing data from the OPRF Chamber, the Wednesday Journal and the Forest Park Review. This does not include any information from other community partners who also helped to market the *Gift Guide*, such as DTOP, local business districts and individual businesses.

2021 Email Marketing

A total of 8,799 received email marketing right after the Thanksgiving weekend.



| | Holiday Gift Guide | National Average holiday email marketing* | National Average E-commerce newsletter** |
|---|--------------------|---|--|
| Average Open Rate (how many saw it in their in-box and opened the email.) | 52% | 12% | 15.68% |
| Average Click-through Rate (how many clicked through a link for more information.) | 12% | | 2.01% |
| <small>*These averages have been ascertained using holiday email marketing benchmarks from late 2020 and early 2021. The specific information can be found at https://www.dmdconnects.com/blog/to-send-or-not-email-open-rate-trends-during-the-holidays. **These averages have been provided by industry/sector. For purposes of this proposal, the industry benchmark chosen was E-commerce. This specific information can be found at: https://mailchimp.com/resources/email-marketing-benchmarks/</small> | | | |

In addition, all ad buys in the digital version of the Gift Guide were hyperlinked directly back to the business, directly helping them to maximize SEO potential during this critical time.

2021 Hard Copy Distribution

Almost four and a half thousand (4,490) copies of the holiday gift guide were published on December 8, 2021 and distributed directly to homes across the Oak Park and River Forest areas.

Digital Publishing

The Gift Guide was also published digitally as an e-book and appeared on OakPark.com.

In the short time between Dec 8, 2021 and the end of December 2021, there were 655 page views, with an average time spent looking at the Guide on-line about 2 minutes.

Feedback from our business community

Overall, there was incredible enthusiasm for the 2021 Gift Guide from the local Oak Park business community. Local businesses were thrilled to have an opportunity to market to the local community and to leverage the “*Shop Local*” sentiment so prevalent in Oak Park. One common sentiment however from many was to start soliciting advertising much earlier in the season.

How many businesses participated?

The 2021 Village funding (\$10,000) for the Holiday Gift Guide would have allowed 100 local businesses the opportunity to have a \$100 subsidy to off-set the marketing ad costs for the publication. By the publication deadline (December 1, 2021) 60 local businesses had signed up to advertise in the Gift Guide.



2022 Proposal

The OPRF Chamber of Commerce has again partnered with the Wednesday Journal and Growing Community Media to bring the *Holiday Gift Guide* to the community, and to allow all licensed businesses in Oak Park (food service, retail and service-based businesses) the opportunity to advertise to the community during the holiday season.

The Gift Guide will again be produced in hard copy (ie. print edition) as well as an on-line digital version that can easily be shared throughout partner agency networks.

The OPRF Chamber requests financial support of \$16,000 for this project:

- \$10,000 to subsidize marketing ad costs for up to 100 licensed Oak Park businesses.
 - Each eligible business (holding a valid business license) would receive a \$100 ad cost discount.
- \$2,000 for advertising and editorial content highlighting the various business districts in the Village.
- \$4,000 to increase distribution of the printed Gift Guide.

2022 Marketing & Distribution of the Gift Guide

Once the Gift Guide has been published, with this support from the Village, we anticipate the following distribution:

IN PRINT

- Printing and distributing an additional 3,000 copies of *Wednesday Journal* and an additional 500 copies of *Forest Park Review* to bring the total Oak Park, River Forest and Forest Park circulation to 9,000.
- Adding an insertion into Austin Weekly News, Village Free Press (Proviso), and Riverside-Brookfield Landmark
- The total print circulation for all five newspapers would be 16,000.

PLEASE NOTE - the cost of the premium paper used in this project has risen by over 50% over one year ago. The costs included in this proposal reflect these increases due to supply chain and inflation related cost issues.

DIGITAL CIRCULATION

Digital marketing in November and December through the following channels:

- Wednesday Journal email newsletter - 15,000 subscribers
- OPRF Chamber e-newsletter - 1,200 subscribers
- OPRF Chamber member email promotion - 1,050 subscribers
- OPRF Chamber & Wednesday Journal social media - FB and Instagram



HOW TO GET BETTER MARKET PENETRATION?

Additional distribution through community partner agencies and the Village of Oak Park will extend this marketing reach significantly.

For little to no cost, the digital version of the Gift Guide could also be highlighted through the following channels:

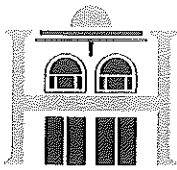
- On the Village of Oak Park website
- Village of Oak Park social media
- Pick Oak Park
- Village of Oak Park "VOakPark News" community e-mails
- Visit Oak Park
- Oak Park Economic Development Commission

Value-ad for local businesses

The OPRF Chamber continues to be committed to the success of our business community. Despite notable paper cost increases, GCM is holding advertising rates to local businesses to an 8% increase over one year ago.

Additional discounts will also be available for OPRF Chamber members as a member benefit.

With a record number of new businesses coming to Oak Park (72 new business licenses issued by the end of July 2021 alone!), this support will be critical to the holiday marketing efforts of many of the smaller start-ups, and shows a clear commitment from the Village to the success of all businesses in the community.



THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF OAK PARK & RIVER FOREST

October 17, 2022

Lisa Shelley, Deputy Village Manager
Village of Oak Park
123 Madison
Oak Park, IL 60302

Dear Lisa:

The Historical Society of Oak Park and River Forest respectfully requests \$125,000 in 2023 from American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds allocated to the Village of Oak Park. This funding would help the Historical Society address the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on our organization beginning in early 2020 and still impacting us and our colleagues in the tourism industry today.

This funding would be used toward upgrading the Drupal content management system of the Historical Society's current website and related technology improvements to more fully integrate the Historical Society's website, retail Point of Sale System, and communication technology to serve residents and tourists more efficiently and nimbly, responding to the ongoing need to provide a hybrid mix of in-person and virtual services and programming. The funding also would be used to support a staff position focused on collaboration with local organizations, schools, other partners and the public to ensure that the community's diverse stories are shared with visitors and Oak Parkers alike.

In addition, the Historical Society requests an allocation of \$500,000 in 2024 toward the construction of an elevator and rooftop solar array at 129 Lake Street, the Oak Park Landmark structure built in 1898 as a firehouse and owned by the Village of Oak Park. In partnership with the Village of Oak Park, the Historical Society raised \$1million in private donations to transform this previously vacant building into Oak Park River Forest Museum, including a geothermal HVAC system and other building systems such as a first-time fire sprinkler system. When it opened in 2017, the renovated facility offered an exciting new anchor and community gathering place in east central Oak Park. The new museum was immediately recognized as a notable tourist attraction: In 2018, the Illinois Association of Museums named the facility its Illinois Small Museum of the Year. Yet the building is not ADA compliant, preventing those with mobility challenges from visiting the second floor. We are seeking ARPA funding to provide universal accessibility for all visitors to second floor exhibit and gathering spaces.

The two projects are both essential to meeting challenges created by the pandemic and serving the community and visitors in alignment with Village of Oak Park board goals. Crucial technology and staff funding will allow the Historical Society to better serve local residents and tourists immediately. The required ADA facility upgrade would ensure equitable, universal access to a village-owned facility by the end of 2026, concurrently upgrading the building to be heated, cooled and lighted with a combination of geothermal and solar power. I look forward to answering any questions you or the village board may have about these proposals.

Cordially,

Frank Lipo, Executive Director

2022-23 Board of Directors: Peggy Tuck Sinko (president), Kurt Etchingham (vice president), Jack Norton (treasurer), Mary Boyaris (secretary), Wendy Daniels, Sarah Doherty, Jim Grogan, Fran Knechel, Nancy Lynn, Ty Mayberry, Jennie Stevens, Joel Summy, Clyde Watkins. Staff: Frank Lipo and Rachel Berlinski.

LOCATED IN OAK PARK RIVER FOREST MUSEUM, 129 LAKE STREET, OAK PARK (LAKE AND LOMBARD)
P.O. BOX 771, OAK PARK, ILLINOIS 60303-0771 • PH: 708.848.6755 • OPRFMUSEUM.ORG

Village of Oak Park ARPA Community Request Application

1. **Project Name:** Bringing History to the Streets—and to Everyone’s Personal Devices
2. **Contact Person:** Frank Lipo, Executive Director **Email:** oprfhistorian@sbcglobal.net

Agency Overview:

3. **Please describe your agency and your organization’s mission and/or operations**

The Historical Society of Oak Park and River Forest is a 501(c)3 organization founded in 1968 for educational and charitable purposes. The organizational meeting was held under the auspices of the Oak Park Beautification Commission, at that time a citizen’s commission created by the Oak Park Village Board. The Historical Society was formally incorporated in 1970 in the State of Illinois and soon was registered with the IRS as a not-for-profit, tax-exempt organization, which continues until today. As specified in its Bylaws, the Historical Society’s Mission is:

- To collect, preserve, exhibit, and interpret the history of the villages of Oak Park, River Forest, and vicinity through the operation of an archive, research library, and museum. A new museum facility was opened in 2017, called Oak Park River Forest Museum;
- To disseminate and provide to the public access to such historical information;
- To assist in the designation and preservation of buildings, monuments, and other sites significant to the history of the area; and
- To inspire, engage, and educate the residents of and visitors to Oak Park, River Forest, and vicinity.

In essence, the Historical Society is the community’s Archives and its Storyteller. Over time, The Historical Society of Oak Park and River Forest aims to tell all of the community’s diverse, complicated stories through exhibits, a research center, and public programs. Some of these stories can be inspiring and celebratory and others can be disturbing and challenging.

The Historical Society brings history into the streets with historic walking tours and it acts as an expert resource for local residents, its fellow not-for-profit organizations, the media, businesses, and local government. Its collection includes hundreds of thousands of documents, photographs, and artifacts which shed light on many aspects of the community’s past and present development. Special collections include the organizational records of OPALGA+, local women’s clubs, business associations, cultural organizations, governmental records, school collections, and a growing archive of material related to the experiences of Black residents of the near west suburbs. In late 2021, Oak Park River Forest High School transferred its Archives to OPRF Museum for its skilled management and potential for increased public access.

After nearly 50 years being based on the second floor of Pleasant Home in Mills Park, the Historical Society partnered with the Village of Oak Park to create a new community amenity and anchor in east central Oak Park. After raising \$1 million in private funds, the organization completely renovated a vacant and deteriorating structure built as a fire house in 1898, and owned by the Village of Oak Park at the corner of Lake and Lombard next to Stevenson Park. This facility opened as Oak Park River Forest Museum in 2017 and in 2018 was named the Small Museum of the Year by the Illinois Association of Museums. This project was accomplished with

no tax dollars and no debt was accrued for the project. The building is still owned by the Village of Oak Park and leased for a renewable term of 30 years. OPRF Museum is a still new institution in east central Oak Park, especially since it was open for less than three years before the pandemic shutdowns, that aspires to be an anchor in the community and a model of adaptive reuse of a historic building that is designated an Oak Park Landmark.

In 2018, the organization celebrated its 50th year of operation, during which it has become the community's archive and key repository of stories and materials that help the community and its residents to understand the strengths and struggles of our sister villages and neighboring communities in west Cook County. The Historical Society's budget supports two full-time staff members and occasional part-time staff and it multiplies its work through 40 active volunteers who live and work and spend their lives in Oak Park and surrounding towns. OPRF Museum attracts visitors from other parts of the metro area and from other states as one of the Oak Park area's key tourism attractions, recognized by its partnership with Visit Oak Park and its annual participation in Open House Chicago. More details? oprfmuseum.org

- 4. For your most recently ended fiscal year, provide the following: Total revenues, expenses (including breakout of salaries/benefits) and total ending cash and liquid investments**

In its last completed fiscal year (FY 2021-22) ending April 30, 2022, the Historical Society earned revenue of \$205,533 and had expenses of \$196,348. Of its expenses, \$142,739 was spent on salaries and benefits. On April 30, 2022, the Historical Society had cash and liquid investments of \$241,482.

- 5. Are there similar non-profit or private organizations that perform essentially the same services as your agency? No.**
- 6. Do you have partners that you are collaborating with to support this program financially or in other ways? Name them and the support you will receive from them.**

The Historical Society has a long and ongoing tradition and track record of collaborating with colleagues at fellow non-profit organizations, local businesses, schools, governments, and the community at large. Our research center's resources are tapped daily by residents, visitors, realtors, and anyone who needs to learn more about any aspect of local history. This includes organizations like the Oak Park Area Arts Council, Visit Oak Park, OPALGA+, the OPRF Community Foundation, Wonder Works Children's Museum, and educators at OPRF High School District 200 and Oak Park Elementary School District 97. Frank Lloyd Wright Trust volunteers research houses to be included on the Wright Plus house walk, Village of Oak Park staff examines historic Sanborn fire insurance maps when property is being developed, and Hephzibah staff looks to our archives to trace its 125 years of operation. Our collaborations and community service as described here do not come with direct financial support toward our operation from these colleagues. We are seeking ARPA funds to allow us to continue and expand this community service to all who need it.

Project Narrative:

7. Please describe or attach to this form a description of your proposed program.

The Historical Society of Oak Park and River Forest respectfully requests \$125,000 in 2023 from American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds allocated to the Village of Oak Park. This funding would help the Historical Society address the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on our organization beginning in early 2020 and still impacting us and our colleagues in the tourism industry today.

We are calling this initiative “Bringing History to the Streets—and to Everyone’s Personal Devices.” In essence, we are focusing on reaching tourists and residents through our website and related technology *and* on in-person, face-to-face programming outside the walls of the museum including walking and bike tours, Block Party outreach, and virtual programming that can be accessed at any time. A new staff member will be hired to coordinate and spearhead these existing and new initiatives.

The pandemic taught us and so many others to value and cherish face-to-face interactions even as we changed our operating plans to create a variety of technology-based and outdoor, non-traditional forums appropriate to share programming and tell stories when face-to-face interactions are not possible or are constrained.

This funding will be used to augment a public-centric focus on using technology to collaborate with the community to widely disseminate stories about Oak Park’s rich heritage that are lesser known and which privilege stories of Black residents, the emerging Hispanic community, and other minority groups sometimes left out of the narrative. Building on “Open House: The Legacy of Fair Housing,” the award-winning exhibit developed in-house by staff and volunteers and featured at OPRF Museum since 2018, the funding will be used in part to spread awareness among visitors and residents about this diversity of stories. A traveling version of the “Open House” exhibit will be shared at locations around Oak Park and the Black History Bike Tour developed by OPRF Museum for Oak Park’s first official Juneteenth celebration will be promoted aggressively to tourists and local residents alike.

This funding would be used in part toward upgrading the Drupal content management system of the Historical Society’s current website and related technology improvements to more fully integrate the Historical Society’s website, retail Point of Sale System, and communication technology to serve residents and tourists more efficiently and nimbly, responding to the ongoing need to provide a hybrid mix of in-person and virtual services and programming.

The funding also would be used to support a staff position over the next two years focused on collaboration with local organizations, schools, other partners and the public to ensure that the community’s diverse stories are shared with visitors and Oak Parkers alike. With only two full-time employees currently, this additional staff position is essential to accomplish the goals outlined here.

Approach/Impact/Goals

8. How does the proposed initiative address immediate or delayed public health, economic or other community harms resulting from or exacerbated by the Covid-19 public health emergency?

When the pandemic began in early 2020, Oak Park River Forest Museum was just over two years from its grand opening and the new facility was still being introduced to the public and gradually becoming part of the tourism menu for those visiting Oak Park. For much of the previous decade, the Historical Society had planned, raised private funds, and built the improvements to 129 Lake Street and was finally reaping the benefits as the new Oak Park River Forest Museum was seeing an increase in visitors and public awareness. The goal of putting the new facility “on the map” was being realized.

But after the pandemic began, like all Illinois museums, OPRF Museum was required to be closed for two separate periods over the next 18 months that exceeded six months. Even when open, many visitors declined to return because of the ongoing public health crisis, and the museum instituted restrictions and program changes that limited the public’s attendance. All school field trips and field trips by youth organizations (ie Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts) were cancelled and not reinstated until 2022. Such field trips are a crucial activity for most museums.

To meet the new need for reaching the public at a time of in-person restrictions, the Historical Society pivoted to Zoom-based programming, recorded to re-share via its YouTube channel, and the introduction of new walking tours in various neighborhoods and a new Black History Bike Tour.

But all of these changes were done on the fly and with existing staff and have relied on a website that is nearing the end of its useful life and lacking user-friendly features expected by the public (and only supported until the end of 2023 in its current Drupal-based iteration). The proposed initiative will dedicate the staff and technology resources to make permanent and expand these initiatives to more fully realize public-facing services outside the walls of the museum, both literally in the streets of Oak Park and also accessible by phone, tablet, PC and other devices.

9. Describe overall program goals

As described earlier, the collaborative creation of Oak Park River Forest Museum at Lake and Lombard was a milestone for the Historical Society and for the neighborhood in and around Lake Street stretching from OPRF High School to Austin Boulevard. The Historical Society is proud that the new facility was named Small Museum of the Year in 2018 and that it serves a wide range of tourists and local residents. We will continue to maintain regular hours and offer distinctive, in-person exhibits, public programs, and research services. It will remain the headquarters and focal point of our service to tourists and residents.

But the pandemic and its ongoing effects have highlighted the public expectation and the necessity of delivering high-quality virtual services, an engaging social media presence and face-to-face programs and services outside the walls of museums. The program as described here will create a new staff position to coordinate the new initiatives described here and continue to build such community engagement through 2024. Essential to these efforts is an updated and refreshed website that will use the current Drupal industry standard instead of an earlier and less robust Drupal platform that will no

longer be supported beyond 2023. Together, the staff expansion and technology upgrades will allow OPRF Museum to more effectively serve tourists AND local residents.

Program Eligibility

Strategic Goals

10. Can you describe a link with this proposed program and the Village Board's goals?

This program squarely falls within the Village of Oak Park's ongoing commitment to tourism as a boon to the local economy and its support of individual tourist attractions and entities with collaboration, funding, and coordination. The tremendous negative impact of the pandemic on the tourism industry is widely acknowledged and such a use is highlighted for ARPA funds.

The Village Board's goal of Covid recovery that includes infrastructure and business recovery is met by this use of ARPA funding that would bolster the operation and expand the community service of a key not-for-profit business which is an anchor in east Oak Park.

The proposed use of ARPA funds as described here also links directly with the Village Board's goal of being a leader in Racial Equity. Specifically, the exhibits and educational programs developed by the Historical Society already have been a tremendous resource in helping the community better understand the real history as researched and shared by the Historical Society. This sort of education is the bedrock upon which public policy can be built. This funding will support the expansion of that work.

Community Benefit

11. Describe the residents impacted (#,age) and over what duration; Is this program for low-moderate income recipients?

One of the advantages of this program is its emphasis on making programming website-based and accessible out in the community instead of solely at OPRF Museum. This makes this initiative accessible to tens of thousands of interested local residents and countless others who live elsewhere. While not specifically geared toward low/moderate income residents it has the potential to reach many who might believe they cannot afford even a modest in-person entry fee or whose work or life schedule prevents access during typical daytime open hours. Nothing described here is specifically geared toward the pre-school age, but all others will find they are welcome.

Race/Equity Impact

12. What racial/ethnic groups are currently most advantaged and most disadvantaged by the issues this proposal seeks to address?

As a community that was 99 percent white until 50 years ago, there is a long history of exclusion and marginalization and lack of full accessibility to the many positive resources that exist in Oak Park, River Forest and the surrounding towns. Even when the community grew more diverse, barriers remained and were never fully eradicated. Many people seem to think that the struggle for "Fair Housing" in the 1960s was a magical moment that "happened" and now we reap the benefits with the need for little or no ongoing effort. This common attitude stems in large part

from the lack of understanding of the real history underlying these issues. So our efforts supported by ARPA funds will bring more of these stories out into the community via face-to-face and virtual ways and not merely on display or in the archives of OPRF Museum.

While the traditional narrative has been about the growing Black population of Oak Park, recent increases in the Hispanic, Asian and Bi-racial population categories also provide new some new lens to examine these issues.

The Historical Society has spent many years gathering the materials that tell these stories and the last few years developing tools and strategies and tactics to share this real history. The operational support we are seeking will allow us to more widely and creatively share the history of marginalized groups, help young people under 25 to build knowledge and skills as leaders, and increase youth engagement with extracurricular programming related to local history.

In essence we are suggesting that it is important to offer multiple, non-traditional entry points for young people and adults alike to learn about this community history and to offer opportunities for them to share their stories and build confidence and sense of belonging in this history, which is their history too.

We will be using a new website as the main outreach tool, which will be supplemented by discussion groups and field trips including our Black History Bike Tour, which includes 16 stops in Oak Park where Black residents left their mark and our exhibit “Open House: The Legacy of Fair Housing” and its traveling version, conveniently distilled to five portable pop-up banners.

The Black History Bike Tour stretches from the 19th century through 2020. Obvious stops like the site of the pioneer African American Mt. Carmel Baptist Church (1905-1931) and the home of Dr. Percy Julian are just the starting points; two sites associated with the racial reckoning of 2020 in the wake of the murder of George Floyd and other tragedies that highlighted American racial inequality bring the story to today. Free paper copies and a free pdf of the tour remains available on our website on an ongoing basis.

“Unvarnished: Housing Discrimination in the Northern and Western United States,” is a free online exhibit unveiled launched in 2022 about the history of discriminatory housing practices and segregation. It is linked to our website and an excellent overlapping complement to this ARPA-funded initiative. It can be viewed at UnvarnishedHistory.org. Supported through an Institute of Museum and Library Services Museum Leadership Grant and the Healing Illinois Grant Program, the Historical Society was one of a consortium of six history museums and cultural organizations from across the USA that collaborated from 2017 to 2022 to research and present their community’s history of exclusion. The project was developed and directed by Naper Settlement, an outdoor history museum in Naperville and includes museums from California, Wisconsin, Ohio, and Connecticut. Online visitors will learn how housing discrimination, often based on race, ethnicity, or religion, was a large-scale system that resulted in segregation patterns across the Northern and Western United States that intensified over the twentieth century—and which puts Oak Park’s unique story in this broader context.

Nearly two dozen interactive articles, accompanied by in-depth explainer videos, photos, interviews, and other primary sources, showcase how formal systems of segregation were developed through individual practices and expanded through federal policy, sustained over

time, and continue to affect today's communities. The online exhibition includes teacher resources for middle and high school students. In four inquiry modules, students will explore compelling questions that will help them discover and share the local dimensions of national segregation patterns and see them through the wide lens of American history. The four inquiry modules are based on the National Council on Social Studies and Common Core Standards for Literacy in History and Social Studies.

And a Reader's Theater-style play will debut on Nov. 6, 2022 about Lew Pope, a Black football player at Oak Park River Forest High School in 1937, who faced discrimination in his own community and from the Jim Crow South as he sought a chance to play the game he loved. The play will be produced multiple times in coming years. The plan is to engage current BIPOC students who play on the football team and in other sports.

13. What positive impacts on equality and inclusion, if any, could result from this proposal? What racial/ethnic groups could benefit? Will it reduce disparities or discrimination?

Understanding the real history and causes underlying racial disparities is essential to changing that reality as we move forward as a community and a society. While it is simplistic and overly optimistic that such programming as described above will reduce disparities or discrimination by themselves, they are a crucial to change the narrative and move in new directions. We fully believe that the ARPA funding we seek will have positive impacts on equality and inclusion.

Open House: The Legacy of Fair Housing was the first major exhibit developed by Oak Park River Forest Museum, opening in 2018, less than a year after the museum's grand opening. In November 2019, the exhibit received an Award of Excellence for Exhibits from the Illinois Association of Museums, the exhibit was positively reviewed by the Chicago Tribune, and it has been visited by hundreds of middle school, high school and university students. It has yielded lots of feedback as visitors learned more about how Oak Park transformed itself over two generations, even as its aspiration to be an inclusive and equitable community remains incomplete.

Clearly, we need an ongoing way to bring these stories to the community to demonstrate that equity and inclusion are values that require ongoing effort and commitment and not something that was "done by someone else years ago." The new traveling version of this exhibit will meet people in public places and confront them with these stories. With an investment of this ARPA funding as requested, the Historical Society will be better able to make this history relevant to all ages and to those of all backgrounds. Further, history can be a tool for the young people who are spending their formative years in the two villages; by learning about the people who walked the streets before them and the people who have stood up for their values (such as the community leaders who pursued open housing in the 1960s), they can be inspired to leadership themselves. The success of all youth can be spurred by this sense of how life in 2022 and beyond fits into our overarching story, past, present and future.

Measures & Reporting

14. Do you have program success indicators and progress benchmarks (list them)

Yes. The new staff member hired with this funding and website and technology upgrades will be evaluated and benchmarks established:

- Evaluation of new staff member's work will use a matrix of remote, hybrid, and in-person programming against the size and composition of the audience
- Growth in diversity of audience as tracked, program by program
- Website traffic tracking before Drupal upgrade and monthly thereafter

15. How would you describe the impact to the community? How will these impacts be documented and evaluated that you are meeting the intended goals and community benefits? Please provide examples.

As outlined above, the Historical Society's efforts to engage the community with the ARPA funds being requested will be focused on face-to-face programming out in the community, as well as web-based and virtual offerings, leveraging social media and reaching people where they are—on their devices, in the street at a Block Party, or walking or biking around the community. This programming will be planned, advertised and tracked by the new staff member charged with developing and coordinating these efforts.

This will include a matrix of programs across the 2023-24 period, including but not limited to number and type of activities scheduled, attendance or viewing of each such activity, social media activity, and feedback received. This effort will also include a limited amount of surveying to determine the level of engagement and the participation of individuals from various demographic groups.

So for instance, a virtual lecture will be evaluated against the community goal of reaching a diverse demographic as measured by initial attendance when held and the subject matter. After it is posted to our YouTube channel, the views will be tracked at three months, six months and one year. A link to the video will be shared via social media and by email blast at least twice in the first six months. These overlapping efforts to document and evaluate goals and community benefits will create a matrix that can be used to compare each activity to other similar activities over the first year and then the second year.

Project Cost

16. **Total Project Cost:** \$200,000 **Total ARPA request:** \$125,000

17. Provide timetable when funds will be spent

We expect to hire a new staff member with this funding in the first quarter of 2023 and the planning for a new website will also begin in Q1 of 2023.

The new staffer will be employed through 2024.

Website development will extend from spring 2023 into fall, with the website debugged and launched by Dec. 31, 2023.

18. Do you need all the grant funds in one distribution?

No. Of the \$125,000 we are requesting to receive in 2023, it would be appropriate to receive half early in the year with the balance before the end of 2023 funding the position into 2024.

19. Do you have a plan to keep this initiative in place once the one-time ARPA funds are used? Please describe.

Yes. We expect the revamped website to have a five-year life-cycle and we will work on additional fund raising to continue to fund the new staff position beyond FY 2023-24.

Timetable

20. Provide a comprehensive timeline to implement your proposed program and what is the duration of the program.

This proposal anticipates a two-year duration for the program as outlined here.

A website vendor to redesign and migrate oprfmuseum.org to its new Drupal platform will be selected by late 2022. Work will begin in Q1 on the project. Estimated completion of the new website will be fall 2023, but certainly not later than Dec. 31, 2023 to ensure continuity and no loss of community service

A job description for the staff position described in this application is currently being developed and is anticipated to be completed by Dec. 31, 2022. The draft position title is Manager of Community Engagement.

If this ARPA funding is received, a hiring timeline will be developed and executed in Q1 2023. This position is expected to be filled by the end of Q1 2023.

ARPA funding for this position as requested will be used through 2024.

The current goal is to extend this position into 2025 after evaluation in the 3Q 2024 and may be altered depending on available funding and evaluation of the accomplishment of stated goals.

Other:

21. If you don't receive the funds, what are the impacts and will the program not occur in the future? What would be your plan to get this program running without ARPA assistance?

If we don't receive the ARPA funds we will continue to seek funding from any and all sources. Because our website's platform will cease to be supported after 2023, we will prioritize funding for that above a new staff position.

- 22. Can your program or a portion of your project wait until January 2023 to coincide with the anticipated next phase of community ARPA requests? What would be lost if this program waited until 2023? Do you have a plan to make up this loss?**

This proposal anticipates receiving full funding in early 2023 or two distributions divided between early 2023 and late 2023.

- 23. Are you requesting ARPA funding from other agencies for this program? Are you requesting ARPA funding from other agencies for other programs?**

No.

Village of Oak Park ARPA Community Request Application

1. **Project Name:** Universal Access Powered by the Sun
2. **Contact Person:** Frank Lipo, Executive Director **Email:** oprfhistorian@sbcglobal.net

Agency Overview:

3. **Please describe your agency and your organization's mission and/or operations**

The Historical Society of Oak Park and River Forest is a 501(c)3 organization founded in 1968 for educational and charitable purposes. The organizational meeting was held under the auspices of the Oak Park Beautification Commission, at that time a citizen's commission created by the Oak Park Village Board. The Historical Society was formally incorporated in 1970 in the State of Illinois and soon was registered with the IRS as a not-for-profit, tax-exempt organization, which continues until today. As specified in its Bylaws, the Historical Society's Mission is:

- To collect, preserve, exhibit, and interpret the history of the villages of Oak Park, River Forest, and vicinity through the operation of an archive, research library, and museum. A new museum facility was opened in 2017, called Oak Park River Forest Museum;
- To disseminate and provide to the public access to such historical information;
- To assist in the designation and preservation of buildings, monuments, and other sites significant to the history of the area; and
- To inspire, engage, and educate the residents of and visitors to Oak Park, River Forest, and vicinity.

In essence, the Historical Society is the community's Archives and its Storyteller. Over time, The Historical Society of Oak Park and River Forest aims to tell all of the community's diverse, complicated stories through exhibits, a research center, and public programs. Some of these stories can be inspiring and celebratory and others can be disturbing and challenging.

The Historical Society brings history into the streets with historic walking tours and it acts as an expert resource for local residents, its fellow not-for-profit organizations, the media, businesses, and local government. Its collection includes hundreds of thousands of documents, photographs, and artifacts which shed light on many aspects of the community's past and present development. Special collections include the organizational records of OPALGA+, local women's clubs, business associations, cultural organizations, governmental records, school collections, and a growing archive of material related to the experiences of Black residents of the near west suburbs. In late 2021, Oak Park River Forest High School transferred its Archives to OPRF Museum for its skilled management and potential for increased public access.

After nearly 50 years being based on the second floor of Pleasant Home in Mills Park, the Historical Society partnered with the Village of Oak Park to create a new community amenity and anchor in east central Oak Park. After raising \$1 million in private funds, the organization completely renovated a vacant and deteriorating structure built as a fire house in 1898, and owned by the Village of Oak Park at the corner of Lake and Lombard next to Stevenson Park. This facility opened as Oak Park River Forest Museum in 2017 and in 2018 was named the Small Museum of the Year by the Illinois Association of Museums. This project was accomplished with

no tax dollars and no debt was accrued for the project. The building is still owned by the Village of Oak Park and leased for a renewable term of 30 years. OPRF Museum is a still new institution in east central Oak Park, especially since it was open for less than three years before the pandemic shutdowns, that aspires to be an anchor in the community and a model of adaptive reuse of a historic building that is designated an Oak Park Landmark.

In 2018, the organization celebrated its 50th year of operation, during which it has become the community's archive and key repository of stories and materials that help the community and its residents to understand the strengths and struggles of our sister villages and neighboring communities in west Cook County. The Historical Society's budget supports two full-time staff members and occasional part-time staff and it multiplies its work through 40 active volunteers who live and work and spend their lives in Oak Park and surrounding towns. OPRF Museum attracts visitors from other parts of the metro area and from other states as one of the Oak Park area's key tourism attractions, recognized by its partnership with Visit Oak Park and its annual participation in Open House Chicago. More details? oprfmuseum.org

- 4. For your most recently ended fiscal year, provide the following: Total revenues, expenses (including breakout of salaries/benefits) and total ending cash and liquid investments**

In its last completed fiscal year (FY 2021-22) ending April 30, 2022, the Historical Society earned revenue of \$205,533 and had expenses of \$196,348. Of its expenses, \$142,739 was spent on salaries and benefits. On April 30, 2022, the Historical Society had cash and liquid investments of \$241,482.

- 5. Are there similar non-profit or private organizations that perform essentially the same services as your agency? No.**
- 6. Do you have partners that you are collaborating with to support this program financially or in other ways? Name them and the support you will receive from them.**

The Historical Society has a long and ongoing tradition and track record of collaborating with colleagues at fellow non-profit organizations, local businesses, schools, governments, and the community at large. Our research center's resources are tapped daily by residents, visitors, realtors, and anyone who needs to learn more about any aspect of local history. This includes organizations like the Oak Park Area Arts Council, Visit Oak Park, OPALGA+, the OPRF Community Foundation, Wonder Works Children's Museum, and educators at OPRF High School District 200 and Oak Park Elementary School District 97. Frank Lloyd Wright Trust volunteers research houses to be included on the Wright Plus house walk, Village of Oak Park staff examines historic Sanborn fire insurance maps when property is being developed, and Hephzibah staff looks to our archives to trace its 125 years of operation. Our collaborations and community service as described here do not come with direct financial support toward our operation from these colleagues. We are seeking ARPA funds to allow us to continue and expand this community service to all who need it, especially those who currently cannot venture to our second floor.

Project Narrative:

7. Please describe or attach to this form a description of your proposed program.

The Historical Society of Oak Park and River Forest respectfully requests an allocation of \$500,000 in 2024 from American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds allocated to the Village of Oak Park to fund universal access to Oak Park River Forest Museum. This funding would help the Historical Society address the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on our organization beginning in early 2020 and still impacting us and our colleagues in the tourism industry today.

This funding will make possible the construction of an elevator and rooftop solar array at 129 Lake Street, the Oak Park Landmark structure built in 1898 as a firehouse and owned by the Village of Oak Park. We are calling this project "Universal Access Powered by the Sun."

In partnership with the Village of Oak Park, the Historical Society raised \$1million in private donations to transform this previously vacant building into Oak Park River Forest Museum, including a geothermal HVAC system and other building systems such as a first-time fire sprinkler system. When it opened in 2017, the renovated facility offered an exciting new anchor and community gathering place in east central Oak Park. Yet some Oak Park residents and visitors to the community cannot visit the second floor because there is currently no elevator in the building.

The new museum was immediately recognized as a notable tourist attraction: In 2018, the Illinois Association of Museums named the facility its Illinois Small Museum of the Year. Yet the building is not ADA compliant, preventing those with mobility challenges from visiting the second floor. We are seeking ARPA funding to provide universal accessibility for all visitors to second floor exhibit and gathering spaces.

The required ADA facility upgrade would ensure equitable, universal access to a village-owned facility by the end of 2026, concurrently upgrading the building to be heated, cooled and lighted with a combination of geothermal and solar power.

Approach/Impact/Goals

8. How does the proposed initiative address immediate or delayed public health, economic or other community harms resulting from or exacerbated by the Covid-19 public health emergency?

When the pandemic began in early 2020, Oak Park River Forest Museum was just over two years from its grand opening and the new facility was still being introduced to the public and gradually becoming part of the tourism menu for those visiting Oak Park. For much of the previous decade, the Historical Society had planned, raised private funds, and built the improvements to 129 Lake Street and was finally reaping the benefits as the new Oak Park River Forest Museum was seeing an increase in visitors and public awareness. The goal of putting the new facility "on the map" was being realized.

But after the pandemic began, like all Illinois museums, OPRF Museum was required to be closed for two separate periods over the next 18 months that exceeded six months. Even when open, many visitors declined to return because of the ongoing public health crisis, and the museum instituted

restrictions and program changes that limited the public’s attendance. All school field trips and field trips by youth organizations (ie Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts) were cancelled and not reinstated until 2022. Such field trips are a crucial activity for most museums.

To meet the new need for reaching the public at a time of in-person restrictions, the Historical Society pivoted to Zoom-based programming, recorded to re-share via its YouTube channel, and the introduction of new walking tours in various neighborhoods and a new Black History Bike Tour. Full accessibility to the second floor via new elevator had been explored in 2018 and 2019 and preliminary plans developed. These plans were set aside because of the public health crisis and economic disruption that followed.

But as visitors have returned to OPRF Museum in increasingly larger numbers in 2022, it is time to address the lack of ADA accessibility to the second floor of this Village of Oak Park-owned facility.

9. Describe overall program goals

As described earlier, the collaborative creation of Oak Park River Forest Museum at Lake and Lombard was a milestone for the Historical Society and for the neighborhood in and around Lake Street stretching from OPRF High School to Austin Boulevard. The Historical Society is proud that the new facility was named Small Museum of the Year in 2018 and that it serves a wide range of tourists and local residents. We will continue to maintain regular hours and offer distinctive, in-person exhibits, public programs, and research services. It will remain the headquarters and focal point of our service to tourists and residents.

All three floors of the building need to be served by an elevator so that every resident and tourist has the opportunity to access this Oak Park Landmark and the stories it contains via exhibits and public programming.

Program Eligibility

Strategic Goals

10. Can you describe a link with this proposed program and the Village Board’s goals?

This program squarely falls within the Village of Oak Park’s ongoing commitment to tourism as a boon to the local economy and its support of individual tourist attractions and entities with collaboration, funding, and coordination. The tremendous negative impact of the pandemic on the tourism industry is widely acknowledged and such a use is highlighted for ARPA funds.

When the Historical Society installed an all new HVAC system for 129 Lake Street at its own expense, it chose to install a geothermal system, matching the Village Board goal of investing in a Sustainable Future. The addition of solar panels to the roof of the elevator addition, and perhaps to the roof of the existing building, would power this new elevator with green energy and likely power part of the electricity that now supplies the geothermal system and lights for the museum.

Universal Access to public accommodations is required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The Village Board's goal of Covid recovery that includes infrastructure and business recovery is met by this use of ARPA funding that would bolster the operation and expand the community service of a key not-for-profit business which is an anchor in east Oak Park.

The proposed use of ARPA funds as described here also links directly with the Village Board's goal of being a leader in Racial Equity. Specifically, the exhibits and educational programs developed by the Historical Society already have been a tremendous resource in helping the community better understand the real history as researched and shared by the Historical Society. This sort of education is the bedrock upon which public policy can be built. This funding will allow everyone who enters the building to see every public space.

Community Benefit

11. Describe the residents impacted (#,age) and over what duration; Is this program for low-moderate income recipients?

Mobility disabilities affect Americans and Oak Parkers regardless of race, sex, age or walk of life. While virtual programming and programming offered remotely in the community are important and being pursued by the Historical Society, equally important is ensuring that every exhibit and every floor of OPRF Museum is accessible to all. While not specifically geared toward low/moderate income residents, an elevator is likely to especially benefit those with mobility disabilities. Statistically, people with mobility impairments are more likely to be found on the low/moderate portion of the economic scale.

Race/Equity Impact

12. What racial/ethnic groups are currently most advantaged and most disadvantaged by the issues this proposal seeks to address?

All residents of Oak Park need to know the story of how Oak Park chose to transform itself into a diverse, welcoming community, regardless of their mobility. Today, without an elevator to serve the second floor, the award-winning exhibit "Open House: The Legacy of Fair Housing" is out of reach for those who cannot climb a steep staircase to the second floor.

As a community that was 99 percent white until 50 years ago, there is a long history of exclusion and marginalization and lack of full accessibility to the many positive resources that exist in Oak Park, River Forest and the surrounding towns. Even when the community grew more diverse, barriers remained and were never fully eradicated. Many people seem to think that the struggle for "Fair Housing" in the 1960s was a magical moment that "happened" and now we reap the benefits with the need for little or no ongoing effort. This common attitude stems in large part from the lack of understanding of the real history underlying these issues. So our efforts supported by ARPA funds will make these stories accessible

While the traditional narrative has been about the growing Black population of Oak Park, recent increases in the Hispanic, Asian and Bi-racial population categories also provide new some new lens to examine these issues, which is also included in the "Open House" exhibit.

13. What positive impacts on equality and inclusion, if any, could result from this proposal? What racial/ethnic groups could benefit? Will it reduce disparities or discrimination?

Understanding the real history and causes underlying racial disparities is essential to changing that reality as we move forward as a community and a society. While it is simplistic and overly optimistic that adding an elevator to OPRF Museum will reduce disparities or discrimination by themselves, universal access is a key step toward inclusion for all. We fully believe that the ARPA funding we seek will have positive impacts on equality and inclusion.

Open House: The Legacy of Fair Housing was the first major exhibit developed by Oak Park River Forest Museum, opening in 2018, less than a year after the museum's grand opening. In November 2019, the exhibit received an Award of Excellence for Exhibits from the Illinois Association of Museums, the exhibit was positively reviewed by the Chicago Tribune, and it has been visited by hundreds of middle school, high school and university students. It has yielded lots of feedback as visitors learned more about how Oak Park transformed itself over two generations, even as its aspiration to be an inclusive and equitable community remains incomplete.

The new traveling version of this exhibit was developed in part to meet people in public places and confront them with these stories, improving access for those with mobility issues. With an investment of this ARPA funding as requested, the Historical Society will ensure its own exhibit galleries promote that same inclusion.

Measures & Reporting

14. Do you have program success indicators and progress benchmarks (list them)

Yes. Our request to receive \$500,000 in ARPA funding in 2024 to fund the construction of a new elevator topped with solar panels has obvious, specific progress benchmarks. We will work with Oak Park architect Lou Garapolo to develop final drawings for an elevator addition, based on his 2019 preliminary sketches. This architect was the architect of record for our successful \$1 million renovation and adaptive reuse of 129 Lake Street and has a tremendous track record of success in Oak Park.

These drawings will be submitted to the typical village planning process, per our agreement with the Village of Oak Park as outlined in our lease for 129 Lake Street. The planning timeframe would allow completion of the elevator no later than Dec. 31, 2026, which is our understanding of the final date to spend ARPA funds.

15. How would you describe the impact to the community? How will these impacts be documented and evaluated that you are meeting the intended goals and community benefits? Please provide examples.

Oak Park self-describes itself as a diverse, welcoming community. Nothing is more welcoming to someone who is mobility challenged than the option of taking an elevator rather than walking a steep flight of stairs—if they are even able to do so. This impact is obvious and after an elevator is constructed, the community benefit will be obvious as many choose that mode of traveling upstairs.

The addition of an elevator to the Oak Park Landmark 129 Lake Street would have an immediate impact on anyone who has a mobility disability. Currently, even some visitors and residents who come to Oak Park River Forest Museum choose to not walk to the second floor exhibit gallery, daunted by the steep staircase. This disproportionately affects senior citizens who are mobility challenged.

We will document the use of the new elevator in its first year of operation, demonstrating that many people choose to travel to the second floor via elevator vs. the 1898 staircase.

Project Cost

16. **Total Project Cost:** \$700,000 **Total ARPA request:** \$500,000

17. Provide timetable when funds will be spent

Q2 2023 Plans developed for elevator addition
Q3 2023 Village of Oak Park administrative review of elevator addition
Q4 2023 Projected approval of plans by village staff

Funds received 2024, perhaps in two installments

Q1 2024 Village manager approval of elevator addition plans, per lease agreement
Q2-3-4 2024 Construction of elevator addition

Funds spent by Q2 2025

18. Do you need all the grant funds in one distribution?

No. Of the \$500,000 we are requesting to receive in 2024, it would be appropriate to receive half early in the year with the balance before the end of 2024 to be disbursed in 2025.

19. Do you have a plan to keep this initiative in place once the one-time ARPA funds are used? Please describe.

Yes. This elevator will serve OPRF Museum and the community for many decades to come with routine maintenance.

Timetable

20. Provide a comprehensive timeline to implement your proposed program and what is the duration of the program.

2023 Village Board approves \$500,000 in ARPA funds for elevator addition at 129 Lake

Q2 2023 Plans developed for elevator addition
Q3 2023 Village of Oak Park administrative review of elevator addition
Q4 2023 Projected approval of plans by village staff

Funds received 2024, perhaps in two installments

Q1 2024 Village manager approval of elevator addition plans, per lease agreement

Q2-3-4 2024 Construction of elevator addition

Final payout of any contractors using ARPA funds by 2025.

Other:

21. If you don't receive the funds, what are the impacts and will the program not occur in the future? What would be your plan to get this program running without ARPA assistance?
If we don't receive the ARPA funds we will pursue other fund raising initiatives since the addition of an elevator to 129 Lake Street is required by ADA rules and is also the right thing to do to serve every visitor and every resident who desires to visit OPRF Museum.

22. Can your program or a portion of your project wait until January 2023 to coincide with the anticipated next phase of community ARPA requests? What would be lost if this program waited until 2023? Do you have a plan to make up this loss?

Not applicable.

23. Are you requesting ARPA funding from other agencies for this program? Are you requesting ARPA funding from other agencies for other programs?

No.

Village of Oak Park

ARPA Community Request Application

1. Project name (if you have more than one project, use a separate impact sheet for each):

Housing Forward, Emergency Shelter

- 2. Contact Person:** Lynda Schueler **Email:** lschueler@housingforward.org

Agency Overview:

3. Please describe your agency and your organization’s mission and/or operations:

Housing Forward is a homeless and housing service provider founded in Oak Park 30 years ago with a mission to transition people from a housing crisis to housing stability. We prevent homelessness whenever possible, respond to housing crises and stabilize those facing homelessness with permanent housing and services. Our programs are designed to meet people where they are and support them in overcoming the precipitating events that led to their homelessness.

4. For your most recently ended fiscal year, provide the following:

- a. Total revenues \$13,135,848
- b. Total expenses, 12,358,476
- c. Included in total expenses, how much was for salaries/benefits? \$4,404,587
- d. Total ending cash and liquid investments \$2,297,054

5. Are there similar non-profit or private organization that perform essentially the same services as your agency? If so, please list them.

No, Housing Forward is the only agency in Oak Park whose solely mission is to serve those at-risk of homelessness and those who are unsheltered.

Collaboration & Community Partnerships

6. Do you have partners that you are collaborating with to support this program financially or in other ways? Name them and the support you will receive from them.

Housing Forward is partnering the Oak Park Homelessness Coalition to re-engage faith community partners and reimagine emergency shelter in Oak Park post-COVID. Our intention is to establish several ‘host’ facilities which are supported by area volunteers. We are currently in conversation with Good Shepherd Lutheran and St. Giles. We have broad support from over 30 congregations which are currently providing meals to those at our Interim Housing program at the Write Inn.

Project Narrative:

7. Please describe or attach to this form a description of your proposed program.

For 28 years, Housing Forward operated the PADS Emergency Shelter. This rotating system of shelter for persons experiencing homelessness worked in partnership with area faith communities and operated from mid-September to mid-May, and a Transitional Shelter, June to August. Housing Forward is requesting \$300,000 over two years to support the next iteration of a low-barrier, crisis response shelter program in the community.

The proposed emergency shelter will be limited to 15 beds at “host” facilities led by 2-4 congregations. The shelter will operate at one location for 2-3 nights and then rotate to a new “host” facility, rather than rotating each night like the PADS model. A full-time Shelter Coordinator will organize and oversee the program which will be staffed by volunteers and supplemented by employees when volunteers are not available. The program will offer dinner, breakfast and lunch and overnight sleeping accommodations. Staff will be responsible for all intakes and making connections to Housing Forward’s array of programs. Ideally, the new shelter space will have showers for clients to reduce barriers for addressing basic hygiene.

Approach/Impact/Goals

8. How does the proposed initiative address immediate or delayed public health, economic or other community harms resulting from or exacerbated by the Covid-19 public health emergency? People experiencing homelessness are at risk for infection during community spread of COVID and therefore immediate access to homeless services is critical to a community response. While Housing Forward shifted to a fixed-site facility during COVID, the need for a small decompression community emergency shelter remains. HUD has strongly encouraged communities to not close or exclude people who are having symptoms or test positive for COVID or other public health emergencies within the population. Additional temporary housing and shelter sites that provide appropriate services, supplies, and staffing will greatly reduce community spread. Housing Forward will continue to offer isolation and quarantine rooms at the Write Inn for people who are waiting to be tested, or who know that they were exposed to COVID-19.
9. Describe overall program goals:
 1. Year 1- Re-establish a low-barrier Emergency Shelter in partnership with area faith communities with a goal of achieving 7 days a week
Year 2 – Continue to operate emergency shelter and evaluate Year 1 – sufficiency of bed capacity, nightly bed availability and summer month capacity and determine where adjustments are needed.
 2. Provide overnight Emergency Shelter accommodations (i.e. shelter and meals) for 15 unsheltered people per evening
 3. Expand street outreach presence in Oak Park with one FTE Street Outreach Worker
 4. Create a pathway for individuals and families to Interim Housing and Permanent Housing placement.

Program Eligibility

Strategic Goals

10. Can you describe a link with this proposed program and the Village Board's goals?

The unsheltered population does not have immediate access to shelter since the PADS Emergency Shelter closed under the COVID crisis. The proposed project is directly linked to the Village's goal of 'Addressing Negative Economic Impacts' and Public Health as access to immediate shelter benefits the recipients and the community as a whole.

Community Benefit

11. Describe the residents impacted (#, age) and over what duration; Is this program for low-moderate income recipients?

Individuals and families accessing Emergency Shelter are homeless, extremely low-income, and require assistance in meeting their basic human needs: shelter, hunger, and safety. Beyond homelessness, the population is disproportionately impacted by a lack of income, domestic violence, chronic illness, and disabling conditions such as untreated mental health or substance abuse. Historical demographics of the shelter population:

91% are adults; 9% are children

 - 44% of adults have a serious disabling condition (medical, mental illness and/or substance abuse)
 - 12% are survivors of domestic violence
 - 10% are Seniors (62+)
 - 8% are Transition Aged Youth
 - 6% are U.S. Military Veterans

Race Equity Impact

12. What racial/ethnic groups are currently most advantaged and most disadvantaged by the issues this proposal seeks to address?
 - 78% of those served identify their ethnicity as Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino
 - 61% of clients identify their race as Black/African American
 - 19% as White
 - Other - 1% as American Indian/Alaskan Native, 2% as Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, 1% as Asian and the remaining 16% refused to identify

13. What positive impacts on equality and inclusion, if any, could result from this proposal? What racial/ethnic groups could benefit? Will it reduce disparities or discrimination?

Homelessness and racial disparities are well documented in data and national literature and have been caused by systemic racism and inadequate investments in affordable housing and living wages. While this project does not address systemic issues of poverty, inequities to health care or social injustices, people experiencing homelessness are directly impacted by these deeply harmful to persons of color. Emergency Shelter is a critical component of the homeless services systems. Access to immediate shelter meetings critical access to basic needs and effectively orients those who are unsheltered to permanent housing attainment. Creating immediate emergency shelter solutions in the community will create an equitable response and reduce the perpetual racial disparities experienced by those living on the streets.

Measures & Reporting

14. Do you have program success indicators and progress benchmarks (list them)?

Since 2020:

- 43% of callers seeking Emergency Shelter were diverted from landing in the homeless system by Diversion services and accompanying flexible funding under COVID;
- Unknown exit destinations reduced by 75% and exits from homelessness to housing stability increased 166% due to 1) increased engagement and 2) having a new 24/7 Interim Housing
- 27% increase in available supportive housing units and rental assistance during COVID.

15. How would you describe the impact to the community? How will these impacts be documented and evaluated that you are meeting the intended goals and community benefits? Please provide examples.

Unsheltered homelessness remains a persistent issue for those living on the streets in Oak Park. In 2021, prior to entering the Interim Housing program at the Write Inn:

- 41% had spent the previous night in a place not meant for human habitation
- 15% were coming from an institutional setting
- 10% were coming from a doubled-up situation

The community, but particularly the Oak Park police department, the community's two hospitals, the township, public library, and park district, will be positively impacted by having an emergency shelter in which to refer unsheltered individuals and families. Housing Forward will document and evaluate the program's intended goals by using a HUD approved HMIS (Homeless Management Information System) to collect, monitor and track client demographics, service transactions and program outcomes. Housing Forward recently created a Wraparound Services Team, led by a Director of Impact and System Performance, to ensure clients are moving through the agency's system of care from the initial point of access through our Street Outreach Team to being stabilized in one of our many housing programs.

Project Cost

16. Total Project cost: \$444,630 over two years Total ARPA request: \$300,000

17. Provide timetable when funds will be spent: Funds will be spent 12/1/22 to 12/31/24

18. Do you need all the grant funds in one distribution? No

Project Sustainability

19. Do you have a plan to keep this initiative in place once the one-time ARPA funds are used? Please describe.

Housing Forward will advocate for and request funding for sustaining the Emergency Shelter after 2024 through the state's Emergency and Transitional Housing (ETH) fund and through Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funding.

Timetable:

20. Provide a comprehensive timeline to implement your proposed program and what is the duration of the program:

October '22 thru December '22 – Engagement of congregations and listening sessions with volunteers; solidifying new shelter model

November '22 – recruitment of Shelter Manager, purchasing supplies (pads, etc.), marketing and related printing

December '22 – one shelter facility secured, 2-3 days per week

January '23 – one shelter secured, 2-3 days per week

February '23 – one shelter facility secured, 2-3 days per week

We hope to operate the program year-round, but this will be dependent on securing sufficient facilities willing to host the program or Housing Forward's ability to secure one-location available year-round.

Other:

21. If you don't receive the funds, what are the impacts and will the program not occur in the future? What would be your plan to get this program running without ARPA assistance?

Housing Forward will not be able to launch this program without seeding from ARPA. Housing Forward has made substantial investments in creating the Interim Housing program and creating new housing during COVID, but we lack sufficient funding to reestablish an Emergency Shelter at this time. We will seek funding from the state of IL, and federal funding – ESG and FEMA in the future.

22. Can your program or a portion of your project wait until January 2023 to coincide with the anticipated next phase of community ARPA requests? What would be lost if this program waited until 2023? Do you have a plan to make up this loss?

The program could wait until January 2023, however, the cold months are upon us and we'd like to begin recruitment of personnel and engagement of the faith community and our volunteer network in the 4th quarter 2022.

A delay will result in a delay in getting a program operational during the coldest months of the year. We do not have an immediate funding to fill the gap in emergency shelter services.

23. Are you requesting ARPA funding from other agencies for this program? Are you requesting ARPA funding from other agencies for other programs?

Housing Forward is currently receiving ARPA funds from Cook County, Town of Cicero and the State of Illinois to support Interim Housing, Rapid Re-Housing, Homeless Prevention and Street Outreach activities.

| | EMERGENCY SHELTER 2023 | EMERGENCY SHELTER 2024 | EMERGENCY SHELTER TOTAL | notes |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| Village of Oak Park ARPA | | | | |
| INCOME: | | | | |
| Private: | | | | |
| Business | \$ 10,000 | \$ 10,500 | \$ 20,500 | |
| Congregations | \$ 15,000 | \$ 15,500 | \$ 30,500 | |
| Public: | | | | |
| Berwyn CDBG | \$ 5,000 | \$ 5,000 | \$ 10,000 | |
| IDHS | \$ 25,000 | \$ 30,000 | \$ 55,000 | |
| FEMA | \$ 15,000 | \$ 15,600 | \$ 30,600 | |
| Village of Oak Park ARPA | \$ 150,000 | \$ 150,000 | \$ 300,000 | |
| | \$ 220,000 | \$ 226,600 | \$ 446,600 | |
| EXPENSES | | | | |
| Personnel: | | | | |
| Shelter Supervisor .10FTE | \$ 8,375 | \$ 8,626 | \$ 17,001 | |
| Volunteer Manager .20FTE | \$ 13,750 | \$ 14,163 | \$ 27,913 | |
| Shelter Coordinator 1 FTE | \$ 55,000 | \$ 56,650 | \$ 111,650 | |
| | | | | 3 nights a week @ 8 hours @ 16.00 per hour @ 52 weeks |
| Overnight staff (as needed) | \$ 20,367 | | | |
| Street Outreach 1 FTE (Oak Park only) | \$ 55,000 | \$ 56,650 | \$ 111,650 | |
| | \$ 152,492 | \$ 157,067 | \$ 309,559 | |
| Benefits @25% | \$ 38,123 | \$ 39,267 | \$ 77,390 | |
| Operations: | | | | |
| Progrm Supplies | \$ 10,500 | \$ 10,815 | \$ 21,315 | |
| Insurance | \$ 8,000 | \$ 8,240 | \$ 16,240 | |
| Laundry | \$ 1,000 | \$ 1,030 | \$ 2,030 | |
| Staff recruitment, training | \$ 700 | \$ 721 | \$ 1,421 | |
| Staff travel | \$ 1,000 | \$ 1,030 | \$ 2,030 | |
| Telephone | \$ 700 | \$ 721 | \$ 1,421 | |
| Client Services: | | | | |
| Transportation passes | \$ 3,500 | \$ 3,605 | \$ 7,105 | |
| Hotel Vouchers | \$ 4,000 | \$ 4,120 | \$ 8,120 | |
| | \$ 220,015 | \$ 226,615 | \$ 446,630 | |

Village of Oak Park

ARPA Community Request Application

1. **Project name (if you have more than one project, use a separate impact sheet for each):**

Oak Park Interim Housing Solutions (OPIHS).

2. **Contact Person(s):**

David Pope.
Lynda Schueler.

Email:

dpope@oakparkrc.com
lschueler@housingforward.org

Agency Overview:

3. Please describe your agency and your organization's mission and/or operations:

This is a joint application by the Oak Park Residence Corporation (OPRC) and Housing Forward (HF).

The Oak Park Residence Corporation is the Village of Oak Park's affordable housing partner organization. OPRC was founded in 1966 as a not-for-profit residential development corporation with the goals of providing quality affordable housing in Oak Park, and eliminating blight by purchasing, rehabilitating, and managing older multi-family residential properties. Today, OPRC's mission continues to promote Oak Park as a diverse and economically balanced community by providing high-quality multi-family rental housing at reasonable rates for households of all income levels.

Housing Forward's mission is to transition individuals and families from housing crisis to housing stability. HF believes housing is a basic human right and that individuals cannot achieve stability until they are housed first. HF's operations include programs that attempt to combat the various aspects of homelessness by providing the following: housing (interim and permanent), medical respite, street outreach and diversion services, employment, prevention, and all encompassing "wraparound services" that begin with the clients being assigned a case manager upon intake and end when permanent housing is found.

4. For your most recently ended fiscal year, provide the following:

- a. Total revenues: 2021: OPRC = \$9,726,596. HF = \$13,135,848. Total = \$22,862,444.
- b. Total expenses: 2021: OPRC= \$10,392,742. HF = \$12,358, 476. Total = \$22,751,218.
- c. Included in total expenses, how much was for salaries/benefits?
2021: OPRC =\$1,358,479. HF = \$4,404,587 Total = \$5,763,066.
- d. Total ending cash and liquid investments:
2021: OPRC= \$4,128,333*. HF = 2,297,054. Total = 6,425,387

*Over 80% of OPRC's cash reserve balance is currently pledged as equity to its 7 Van Buren multifamily development which began in August 2022 and is expected to be complete by November 2023.

5. Are there similar non-profit or private organization that perform essentially the same services as your agency? If so, please list them.

No, OPRC is the designated affordable housing partner organization of the Village of Oak Park, and the second largest housing provider in Oak Park, and the only not-for-profit housing provider dedicated to providing housing singularly in Oak Park.

No, Housing Forward is the only homeless service organization providing interim housing and medical respite services in 26 communities in west suburban Cook County including Oak Park.

Collaboration & Community Partnerships

6. Do you have partners that you are collaborating with to support this program financially or in other ways? Name them and the support you will receive from them.

OPRC and HF are partners in this collaboration.

As it relates to the delegation of responsibilities, OPRC will be charged with the oversight of all space planning, architecture and engineering design, inspections, and vendor, contractor, and subcontractor coordination. Additionally, OPRC will be responsible for all with all land/property related acquisition and development activities. OPRC will own the property upon redevelopment, and will master lease any residential portion to HF, for use as interim housing.

HF will be responsible for master leasing and operating the facility following acquisition and redevelopment. Further, HF will actively engage and participate in the professional space planning, architectural and engineering design, and development stages, and will support associated legal and professional activities.

Other Partners:

- Alliance to End Homelessness in Cook County
- Oak Park Homelessness Coalition
- Community of Congregations
- MacNeal Hospital/Loyola Medical System
- Community Mental Health Board of Oak Park Township
- Cook County Health/Hospital System
- Village of Oak Park

Project Narrative:

7. Please describe or attach to this form a description of your proposed program.

The mission is for OPRC to acquire and develop a property to serve as a long-term home for HF's interim housing program serving persons experiencing homelessness. Upon acquisition, the property would be developed, and master leased to HF for the purpose of operating as an interim housing facility offering temporary accommodations to clients experiencing homelessness.

Approach/Impact/Goals

8. How does the proposed initiative address immediate or delayed public health, economic or other community harms resulting from or exacerbated by the Covid-19 public health emergency?

- 24/7 location that minimizes the opportunity for exposure and cross infection re: COVID-19.
- 24/7 medical respite care and stable housing environment leads to better health conditions.
- 24/7 climate-controlled location better for individuals at risk of adverse health outcomes from exposure to cold in winter and heat in summer.
- 24/7 isolation and quarantine space for public health emergencies
- Centralized air handlers may present some opportunity for transmission mitigation.

9. Describe overall program goals:

The goals of the program are to provide interim housing for individuals and families with small children experiencing health trauma and uncertain refuge because of the Covid-19 crises. In addition to offering interim housing, the program provides short-term residential and post-acute medical care for patients experiencing homelessness who are too ill or frail to recover from a physical illness while living in a shelter or on the streets, but who are not sick enough to be hospitalized.

Program Eligibility:

Strategic Goals

10. Can you describe a link with this proposed program and the Village Board's goals?

The proposed program focuses on the Village Board's goals of providing rental assistance, residential affordability, racial equity, community safety, sustainability, and neighborhood support through its focus on providing housing services to all need-based individuals.

Rental assistance, residential affordability, community safety and neighborhood support are all addressed through the placement of local, Village of Oak Park persons, who would alternatively be living on the streets, into cost-free, temporary accommodation (with medical care available) until permanent residences become available.

Sustainability in the Oak Park Interim Housing Solutions program is achieved during the redevelopment process by employing green building practices. The redevelopment will focus on using environmentally preferable building materials, energy and water efficiency, waste, and toxin reduction and indoor air quality (IAQ).

Community Benefit

11. Describe the residents impacted (#, age) and over what duration; Is this program for low-moderate income recipients?

Yes, the residents will earn either zero income or wages so minimal and intermittent as to not allow for livable indoor shelter at the time of program entry.

It is the goal of the program to create a facility that will accommodate up to 55 living spaces (a combination of studios, one-bedroom units, and two-bedroom units). The age of the residents typically ranges from 18 to 75 with an average age of 45-55 years old.

Historical demographics of the Housing Forward's shelter population:

- 91% are adults; 9% are children
- 44% of adults have a serious disabling condition (medical, mental illness and/or substance abuse)
- 12% are survivors of domestic violence
- 10% are Seniors (62+)
- 8% are Transition Aged Youth
- 6% are U.S. Military Veterans

Race Equity Impact

12. What racial/ethnic groups are currently most advantaged and most disadvantaged by the issues this proposal seeks to address?

Racial disparities for those living in poverty and experiencing housing insecurity and homelessness are well documented in national, regional, and local data and research literature. The disproportionality in homelessness, especially among Black and Indigenous people, is a by-product of systemic inequity and the lingering effects of racism that continue to perpetuate disparities in critical areas such as segregation and housing discrimination, lack of access to health care, and incarceration.

What positive impacts on equality and inclusion, if any, could result from this proposal? What racial/ethnic groups could benefit? Will it reduce disparities or discrimination?

OPIHS will offer a fixed-site temporary housing location for unsheltered individuals and families as an equitable and dignified crisis response and a solution to resolving their homelessness. OPIHS will provide 24/7 temporary and private residential services and necessary supports to resolve the immediacy of their homelessness and to begin the process for improving health and mental wellness and a path to permanent housing placement. African Americans are disproportionately represented in Housing Forward's unsheltered population at 61% and therefore will benefit the most from the proposal. This program will reduce disparities in access to temporary housing, access to health and behavioral health services, and permanent housing solutions.

Measures & Reporting

13. Do you have program success indicators and progress benchmarks (list them)?

Potential program success indicators and progress benchmarks may include, but not be limited to

- Occupancy and vacancy rate
- Total program inquiries and total program participation
- Permanent housing placements
- Participant job placement and wage earnings
- Staffing retention rate
- Volunteer participation
- Operating Surplus/Deficit

14. How would you describe the impact to the community? How will these impacts be documented and evaluated that you are meeting the intended goals and community benefits? Please provide examples.

The program will impact the Oak Park community by bringing homeless individuals off its streets and out of its parks. The program will document the number of participants into the program upon entry and will assess their health condition, current job status and future workforce capabilities. The program will provide one-on-one career coaching and will offer a five-week job readiness course. Job search and placement results will be tracked and reported to those organizations providing program funding support.

Specific real-world examples from HF's current interim housing program include the following:

"Following a surgery to remove her gallbladder, Jackie had nowhere to go to recuperate. Her doctor recommended the Medical Respite Center and Jackie is glad that he did. After getting settled in her room and in her recovery routine for a few weeks, Jackie learned that she had breast cancer and was soon hospitalized to have the breast removed. Returning to the Center, Jackie began her plans for recovery from the second surgery. She shares, "My family thought I might die because the wound was so big. Housing Forward did a very good job taking care of me. The staff support is so important. They made sure I went to my doctor's appointments, and they built me up when I was feeling low." During her healing, Jackie discovered that her chemo treatments had taken a toll on her lungs. She has now had to adjust to living with an oxygen tank, but she credits her faith in God with getting her through the remainder of her cancer treatments. Jackie is looking forward to recovering and moving into her own apartment in the Forest Park community so that her children and grandchildren (including one named after her) can visit her regularly."

"Ricardo and Lisa met while living on the street. While Lisa had a long history with homelessness, Ricardo had owned his own home before his life took a very different turn. They moved into a tent together. When they learned that Ricardo had a serious heart condition, they reached out to Housing Forward for help so Ricardo could focus on his health. They joined our Interim Housing Program, and after undergoing heart surgery Ricardo received the recuperative care he needed until he was well enough to move into a permanent apartment. Lisa and Ricardo have now settled into a cozy space in Elmwood Park. The couple now meets with a case manager to explore ways to maintain their new home, including looking for work. Ricardo told us that "there have been a lot of challenges and a lot of progress. We are moving forward." Lisa added, "Once we got the apartment, we didn't know how to pay the electric bill. Housing Forward recommended a ComEd program that could help us. We needed to get around and were offered bus passes. Ricardo needed different sized clothes after the surgery, and we were able to get help with that, too! We could not have succeeded without Housing Forward."

Project Cost

15. Total Project cost: \$12,070,000* Total ARPA request: \$1,000,000

16. Provide timetable when funds will be spent:

- Acquisition: 2023
- Redevelopment: 2023-2024

17. Do you need all the grant funds in one distribution? Yes.

Project Sustainability

18. Do you have a plan to keep this initiative in place once the one-time ARPA funds are used?
Please describe.

Yes. Acquisition and redevelopment of a property for this purpose will provide a permanent home for the Oak Park Interim Housing Solution’s program. Ongoing operating costs, including maintenance and capital reinvestment are, and will continue to be, available through funding sources that currently are designated for this important work. The provisions of interim housing is a core programmatic initiative of Housing Forward and will continue to receive funding support in the future.

Timetable

19. Provide a comprehensive timeline to implement your proposed program and what is the duration of the program:

Please see following “Exhibit A”.

Other:

21. If you don’t receive the funds, what are the impacts, and will the program not occur in the future? What would be your plan to get this program running without ARPA assistance?

If the program does not receive the ARPA funds, it will impede its ability to secure a site for its facility. Although the amount of ARPA funding will not be enough to cover the acquisition of a site or a facility, it will materially contribute toward property acquisition and redevelopment.

Should the program not receive financial assistance from ARPA, its viability may be jeopardized or materially limited.

22. Can your program or a portion of your project wait until January 2023 to coincide with the anticipated next phase of community ARPA requests? What would be lost if this program waited until 2023? Do you have a plan to make up this loss?

Project planning is currently underway. Predevelopment activities must occur in 2022 to facilitate timely acquisition and development to meet the timeline included with this proposal. Extending the timeframe will cost this effort approximately \$80,000 per month in additional rental expense.

23. Are you requesting ARPA funding from other agencies for this program? Are you requesting ARPA funding from other agencies for other programs?

Yes, OPRC and Housing Forward are in the process of securing capital funding through Cook County's ARPA program. It is anticipated that any such funds awarded will be announced and conveyed in the 4th quarter 2022 or 1st quarter 2023. Such timing would coincide well with a prospective Village of Oak Park project award. Housing Forward is also currently receiving ARPA funding from Cook County and the Illinois Department of Human Service's (IDHS) Emergency Transitional Housing Program for service and operating expenses.

Please submit completed application via email to ARPAcomments@oak-park.us

| EXHIBIT A - TIMETABLE | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Dates | Activity | Projected Cost |
| Through 2/1/2023 | Predevelopment Activities | \$ 450,000.00 |
| 2/1/2023 | Space Planning | \$ 80,000.00 |
| 3/1/2023 | Design & Engineering | \$ 155,000.00 |
| 4/1/2023 | Design & Engineering | \$ 155,000.00 |
| 2/1/2023 | Property Acquisition and Closing | \$ 5,000,000.00 |
| 5/1/2023 | Design & Engineering | \$ 155,000.00 |
| 6/1/2023 | Redevelopment & Construction | \$ 675,000.00 |
| 7/1/2023 | Redevelopment & Construction | \$ 675,000.00 |
| 8/1/2023 | Redevelopment & Construction | \$ 675,000.00 |
| 9/1/2023 | Redevelopment & Construction | \$ 675,000.00 |
| 10/1/2023 | Redevelopment & Construction | \$ 675,000.00 |
| 11/1/2023 | Redevelopment & Construction | \$ 675,000.00 |
| 12/1/2023 | Redevelopment & Construction | \$ 675,000.00 |
| 1/1/2024 | Redevelopment & Construction | \$ 675,000.00 |
| 2/1/2024 | Redevelopment & Construction | \$ 675,000.00 |

Village of Oak Park

ARPA Community Request Application

1. Project name (if you have more than one project, use a separate impact sheet for each):

2. Contact Person: Melanie Garrett

Email: mgarrett@newmoms.org

Agency Overview:

3. Please describe your agency and your organization's mission and/or operations

Founded in 1983, New Moms serves young moms (aged 24 and under) and their young children, who are experiencing poverty and homelessness in Chicagoland. Serving ~350 families annually, our programs include:

Housing: housing & supportive services for young moms and their children who are experiencing homelessness, via 40 center-based housing for 40 families in Chicago and 18 families in Oak Park. Serves ~78 families annually.

Job Training: individualized career planning; education re-enrollment support; 16 weeks of paid training and transitional jobs at our social enterprise candle company, Bright Endeavors; and permanent employment placement assistance. Serves ~100 young moms annually.

Family Support: home-based parent coaching; doula services supporting healthy pregnancies; weekly prenatal/parent support groups; child health monitoring, and other best-practice early interventions to support young moms as they build strong families. Serves ~220 families annually.

This year, we have added an additional pilot program to our service model. Our three-year Academic Coaching pilot offers coaching and supportive services for young moms pursuing postsecondary degrees. Serves ~25 young moms annually.

Our ongoing Covid-19 response includes delivering monthly "essential supply kits" to participant doorsteps. Young moms are able to customize monthly kits via an online survey. Kits typically include diapers, wipes, formula, hygiene items, & PPE. During this formula shortage, New Moms is collecting donations of Enfamil formula.

Last year, 89% of families exited to permanent housing. 81% retained housing for 12 months or more (nationally, 60% of moms of all ages retain housing for 12+ months, post transitional housing exit). We placed 67 young moms into permanent employment. 47% retained employment for 12+ months (compared to a national 39% rate for programs primarily serving 18-24-year-olds; and despite widespread job loss due to Covid-19 exposure, daycare, and workplace closures). 69% of young moms increased their educational level by exit. 77% of young moms receiving 6+ months of parent coaching practiced positive parenting skills, as measured by the Life Skills Progression Scale. 92% of families met key health indicators around subsequent pregnancy rates, breastfeeding, child immunizations, and medical insurance. Our repeat pregnancy rate was 5% (compared to a national 20% rate for urban minority youth).

4. For your most recently ended fiscal year, provide the following:

| | |
|--|-------------|
| a. Total revenues | \$6,740,945 |
| b. Total expenses | \$5,946,620 |
| c. Included in total expenses, how much was for salaries/benefits? | \$3,436,821 |
| d. Total ending cash and liquid investments | \$3,840,529 |

5. Are there similar non-profit or private organization that perform essentially the same services as your agency? If so, please list them.

New Moms is the only Chicagoland agency focused exclusively on young moms and their children, which provides comprehensive services. Our Oak Park housing facility, Clare Place, is the only Permanent Supportive Housing program in the near western suburbs, serving the specific population of adolescent mothers and their children who are experiencing homelessness.

Collaboration & Community Partnerships

6. Do you have partners that you are collaborating with to support this program financially or in other ways? Name them and the support you will receive from them.

New Moms partners with over 100 area businesses, providers, and agencies, to ensure the needs of our participants are addressed. We have linkage and/or referral relationships with agencies including the Oak Park Public Health Department, CMHB, The Early Learning Collaboration, Sarah's Inn, Hepzibah, Beyond Hunger, Children's Clinic, Thrive, Family Focus, African American Foundation, Housing Forward, WIC, the Oak Park Library, RUSH, PCC Wellness, Lurie Children's Hospital, UIC Medical Center, and others. This is by no means an exhaustive listing of our partners, and we continually seek new partners to meet emerging needs.

Project Narrative:

7. Please describe or attach to this form a description of your proposed program.

New Moms seeks support of our ongoing Covid-19 response efforts. The communities we serve have been disproportionately impacted by Covid-19, in terms of case rates, mortality, and economic impacts. Our participants—young moms aged 24 and under, who are primarily single mothers—continue to face ongoing barriers at a disproportionate level. One childcare closure due to a Covid-19 exposure could result in several days of missed work or school—which often results in job loss, or causes moms to fall behind in school.

Our goal has always been to wrap around families—addressing their every need, so young moms can stabilize their family units and work toward lifelong self-sufficiency. During Covid-19, we have added additional supports, to ensure families have all they need to remain healthy and safe, while progressing toward their goals.

We seek a total of \$11,500 in supportive services for our Oak Park participants. This total includes: \$2,000 in supplies, which are distributed in monthly “essential supply kits,” including diapers, wipes, formula, hygiene items, and PPE.

\$3,500 in transportation—primarily gas, Lyft and PACE cards for participants, easing access to work, school, medical appointments, childcare, and parent support groups.

\$680 in employment/education assistance—including GED fees, application fees, books, & other fees.

\$5,320 for food for weekly parent support groups and house meetings (for 18 families who reside in our Oak Park housing facility).

Approach/Impact/Goals

8. How does the proposed initiative address immediate or delayed public health, economic or other community harms resulting from or exacerbated by the Covid-19 public health emergency?

The proposed initiative addresses immediate or delayed public health, economic, or other community harms resulting from or exacerbated by Covid-19, by allowing us to continue providing supports after most emergency funding sources have concluded.

We were pleased by the initial wave of support we received, in 2020 and 2021—but paired with inflation, a nationwide formula shortage, and the ongoing pandemic, we know that families are continuing to struggle and have high levels of stress around meeting basic needs for their families.

As single mothers, many of whom are in school or in first-time jobs, our participants continue to be disproportionately impacted by Covid-19. One childcare classroom closure can result in job loss or learning loss—and job loss can result in housing instability and food insecurity. Our essential supply kits are customized monthly by each participant family—allowing us to effectively respond to their needs, while checking in with each family monthly. Providing gas cards, rideshare credits, and Ventra passes ensure that families can access school, work, and important appointments. Providing meals during weekly parent support groups encourages attendance and addresses food insecurity, as they are given food to take home. In-person groups were suspended between March 2020-January 2022, and we are thrilled to have resumed them, as we know they are a critical environment in which young moms build social capital in the form of a supportive peer network, while learning critical life and parenting skills. The overall goals for this program are to reduce stress and provide basic needs, so families can focus on other goals that will lead to long-term housing, economic, and family stability.

9. Describe overall program goals

Agency-wide goals for New Moms include:

Education: 70% of moms will obtain a high school diploma/GED, or advance their educational level by exit.

Employment: A minimum 75 Job Training program participants will be placed into permanent employment during the program year. 50% will remain employed for at least one year.

Housing: 80% of moms will obtain stable housing. 80% will retain stable housing for at least one year

Health: 90% of families will meet key health indicators around subsequent pregnancy rates; low birth weight rates; breastfeeding initiation; child immunization rates; and family medical insurance.

Parenting: 80% of moms enrolled for a minimum of 6 months will practice positive parenting skills as measured by the Life Skills Progression Scale. 40% will demonstrate decreased levels of parental stress, as measured by the Parental Stress Scale.

Program Eligibility:

Strategic Goals

10. Can you describe a link with this proposed program and the Village Board's goals?

New Moms aligns with several of the Village Board's goals:

Our programs promote community affordability, by providing housing for families experiencing homelessness.

Our programs promote community safety, reducing crime and violence, by helping high-risk young families to rapidly stabilize.

We are committed to racial justice and equity for young families of color.

We seek funds for Covid-19 recovery.

Community Benefit

11. Describe the residents impacted (#, age) and over what duration; Is this program for low- moderate income recipients ?

New Moms serves young moms, aged 24 and under. We serve ~350 families annually (350 young moms and their ~500 children). 100% of families served are low-to-moderate income, and 97% are experiencing extreme poverty (200% or more below the federal poverty threshold). Most young families engage with New Moms for 12-36 months. Families may receive as little as 2 hours of service per week, or as much as 24/7 for families in our housing program.

Race Equity Impact

12. What racial/ethnic groups are currently most advantaged and most disadvantaged by the issues this proposal seeks to address?

Among New Moms' participants, 75% are Black; 22% Latina; 2% White; 1% Other. In our community, and as it relates to Covid-19, Black and Latina families are disproportionately disadvantaged.

13. What positive impacts on equality and inclusion, if any, could result from this proposal?

What racial/ethnic groups could benefit? Will it reduce disparities or discrimination?

This proposal seeks funding to provide essential supplies and supports for families of color. Providing supplies reduces economic burden & parental stress. Further, as the formula shortage persists, we know the families we serve are being disproportionately burdened. Providing essential supplies decreases stress for families, so young moms can focus on building skills and working toward housing stability, economic mobility, and family well-being—ultimately reducing disparity as young families stabilize for a lifetime.

Measures & Reporting

14. Do you have program success indicators and progress benchmarks (list them)

New Moms has the following agency-wide goals:

Education: 70% of moms will advance their educational level by exit.

Employment: A minimum 75 Job Training program participants will be placed into permanent employment during the program year. 50% will remain employed for at least one year.

Housing: 80% of moms will obtain stable housing. 80% will retain stable housing for at least one year

Health: 90% of families will meet key health indicators around subsequent pregnancy rates; low birth weight rates; breastfeeding initiation; child immunization rates; and family medical insurance.

Parenting: 80% of moms enrolled for a minimum of 6 months will practice positive parenting skills as measured by the Life Skills Progression Scale. 40% will demonstrate decreased levels of parental stress, as measured by the Parental Stress Scale.

15. How would you describe the impact to the community? How will these impacts be documented and evaluated that you are meeting the intended goals and community benefits? Please provide examples.

For this project, community impact will be measured via the number of essential supply kits distributed; the number of meals served; and the number of transit passes/gas cards distributed. The overall goal of this project is to reduce stress for young families, so young moms can focus on building skills and working toward housing stability, economic mobility, and family well-being.

Project Cost

16. Total Project cost: \$36,000

Total ARPA request: \$11,420

17. Provide timetable when funds will be spent

Funds will be spent between July of 2022-June of 2023.

18. Do you need all the grant funds in one distribution

We do not require all grant funds in one distribution.

Project Sustainability

19. Do you have a plan to keep this initiative in place once the one-time ARPA funds are used?

Please describe.

We are planning to continue delivering each of these supports until we are no longer able. We have always provided meals during parent support groups and house meetings. We have distributed transit passes and gas cards for several years, however, during Covid-19, we have increased the number we are offering. We added monthly essential supply kits during Covid-19, and we plan to continue delivering them until we are no longer able, as they provide significant relief for young families experiencing crisis.

Timetable:

20. Provide a comprehensive timeline to implement your proposed program and what is the duration of the program

All programs are ongoing.

Essential supply kits are delivered monthly.

Transit passes and gas cards are distributed monthly.

Parent support groups and house meetings occur weekly.

Other:

21. If you don't receive the funds, what are the impacts and will the program not occur in the future? What would be your plan to get this program running without ARPA assistance?

If we do not receive the funds, we will continue to provide these services to the extent that we are able.

We are committed to each of these supports, which reduce stress and create slack for young families.

However, as inflation pairs with supply chain issues, we know these resources will become more and more difficult to afford in the long term.

22. Can your program or a portion of your project wait until January 2023 to coincide with the anticipated next phase of community ARPA requests? What would be lost if this program waited until 2023? Do you have a plan to make up this loss?

Because our project is ongoing, we can wait until January 2023 to receive funding. We are relying on donations and some existing cash on hand in the meantime.

23. Are you requesting ARPA funding from other agencies for this program? Are you requesting ARPA funding from other agencies for other programs?

We are not requesting ARPA funding from other agencies for this program. However, we are requesting ARPA funding from other agencies for other programs. We also received some Covid-19 relief funding from Oak Park CDBG, which expires in June of 2022.

Village of Oak Park

ARPA Community Request Application

1. Project name (if you have more than one project, use a separate impact sheet for each):

Reimbursement of funding for PDOP's Capital Improvement Plan due to loss revenues

2. **Contact Person:** Jan Arnold, Executive Director
Email: jan.arnold@pdop.org

Agency Overview:

3. Please describe your agency and your organization's mission and/or operations

The Park District of Oak Park could be viewed as the largest public health institution in Oak Park as we provide and maintain 25 public park and facility spaces as well as provide recreational opportunities for the community. As a result, the Park District plays a large role in supporting physical and mental health in the community as well as providing space to build community.

While the Park District does collect tax revenue, a large part of its operations is supported by revenue generated from fees and charges for programs and services offered to the community. This revenue allows the Park District to deliver programs and services as well as support the District's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

The CIP is driven by our Park Master Plans and thus reflects our institution's goals of sustainability, social equity, and community engagement, and providing great value to residents. It is through continued investment in our CIP that we will continue to achieve our goals in these areas.

PDOP Mission: "In partnership with the community, we enrich lives by providing meaningful experiences through programs, parks, and facilities."

4. For your most recently ended fiscal year, provide the following:

- a. Total revenues - \$31,317,471.58*
- b. Total expenses - \$19,036,760.07
- c. Included in total expenses, how much was for salaries/benefits? - \$7,070,581.67
- d. Total ending cash and liquid investments - \$24,415,706.60*

*It's important to note that both of these figures include large cash inflows that are not part of normal operations. The District received \$2.5 million in donations from the Parks Foundation for the CRC, \$800,000 for a prepaid lease agreement with the Community Mental Health Board, and \$6,004,705.20 in debt proceeds all in 2021 (the District does not regularly issue debt). These figures make the revenue and cash balances look \$9.3 million higher than they normally would, and \$6 million of that will need to be repaid by the District in the future. Also note, that these numbers are unaudited and from Fiscal Year 2021. The District is asking for reimbursement for lost revenues in 2020 – where the District had budgeted for a surplus of \$100,000, and ended the year with a net loss of nearly \$450,000 – without making the \$2 million capital transfer.

5. Are there similar non-profit or private organization that perform essentially the same services as your agency? If so, please list them.

No, the Park District provides playgrounds and parks that are maintained for all individuals use at no charge. Playgrounds and parks provide spaces for families, neighbors and friends to gather to participate in activities that support both physical and mental health.

Additionally, as a government entity that focuses on public health, we provide multiple opportunities for members of the community to engage and improve their quality of life, not just those with means to pay, including outdoor fitness equipment and walking paths. The Park District also offer substantial scholarships and childcare discounts as well as a wide variety of free programs for residents.

Collaboration & Community Partnerships

6. Do you have partners that you are collaborating with to support this program financially or in other ways? Name them and the support you will receive from them.

We continuously seek the advice and collaboration of many community partners when working on Park Master plans. One of our most important partners in this aspect is West Suburban Special Recreation Association (WSSRA) who helps us to establish best practices around accessibility in our plans. We also work with social workers and interventionists at Oak Park Township in order to ensure that parks are welcoming and our staff utilizes best practices in non-police intervention and response. We also value our relationship with Plan It Green in building our sustainability goals.

Additionally, we rely heavily on grant fund from various partners for reaching our capital improvement goals. The State of Illinois provides grants through the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (OSLAD and PARC), which have both provided substantial support for park renovation and improvement while the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation (ICECF) continues to be a strong partner in meeting our clean energy goals. Each of these funding partners requires an agency funding commitment. Thus, the ARPA funds as part of our CIP, could be used to provide matching funds for future grant opportunities.

Lastly, we partner with the library to host events and provide the book bike in the parks, we partner with the township to assist with engagement of youth, we partner with D97 to use parks for recess and school activities, we partner with D200 to use park space for athletics and arts activities and we provide park spaces for community events such as Day In Our Village.

Project Narrative:

7. Please describe or attach to this form a description of your proposed program.

Covid resulted in massive closures of Park District facilities and programs. When we were able to reopen the programs, the size of the classes was reduced, leading to additional losses in program fees and facility use revenue. Prior to 2020 the Park District funded itself primarily by user fees. In 2020 the pandemic lowered revenues by \$6 million. 2021 was better, but user fees were still below pre-pandemic levels by \$2.5 million. In 2022 we have had \$24K in program cancellations subsequent to the recent vaccine mandate requirement.

In response to the revenue shortfalls, the Park District took several actions including laying off staff, postponing capital projects, and delaying operational purchases. We also did not make the annual transfer to our Capital Improvement Plan in 2020, which is our largest unmitigated loss due to the pandemic. Thus, our request.

Funding from the Park District's Capital Improvement Plan is used for facility upgrades, park renovations, fleet replacements, green initiatives, technology upgrades, and more. Not receiving these funds would delay the Park District's ability to move forward at the same pace for playground and park improvements at both Barrie and Anderson Park as well as delay investments to our sustainability efforts.

The Park District uses a best in class master planning process in order to establish and achieve our goals and drive investment within our CIP. Each park master plan is updated at least once every 10-years and involves extensive community feedback and engagement efforts. These efforts ensure that the master plans include the needs of all residents from the highly engaged park neighbors to the much more difficult to reach apartment dwellers several blocks away. Our engagement efforts include surveys and community meetings, which result in plan documents that staff and the board can use to allocate resources.

The Park District's CIP reflects the policies set by the board. Our sustainability plans encourage forward thinking approaches to green energy and water retention when planning and constructing parks and facilities for the future. Our equity policy has driven us to explore how systemic racism has affected park design and allocation of resources. Additionally, our ADA transition plan is a component of our planning process and provide direction each time we invest in a park or facility to ensure they become more accessible and inclusive for individuals with unique abilities.

Approach/Impact/Goals

8. How does the proposed initiative address immediate or delayed public health, economic or other community harms resulting from or exacerbated by the Covid-19 public health emergency?

Our parks have taken on a new level of significance during COVID. People have relied on our green space for social activities as well as relief from isolation and anxiety that the pandemic has brought. Our parks have seen heavier use than at any time in known history at the same time when our budget was significantly impacted due to programming cancellations and capacity constraints. ARPA funding will allow PDOP to continue to meet the needs of residents at a level that is comparable to a level that would have occurred if COVID had not happened.

The requested funding is to replace dollars that were not able to be earned and thus transferred into our Capital Improvement Fund due to facility shutdowns and/or class size reductions in 2020, 2021 and 2022 caused directly from Covid mitigations.

9. Describe overall program goals

Our goal is to continue to serve the parks and recreation needs of the community and to align our parks and facilities with values such as inclusion, sustainability, social equity, and affordability that are held by all members of the community. Investment in our Capital Improvement Plan is how PDOP reaches its goals in social equity, inclusion, sustainability, accessibility, and value offered to residents.

The Park District's Capital Improvement Plan is a five-year plan that allocates funds to our 25 parks and facilities to ensure the safety and functionality of our parks, facilities and fleet. Additionally, the funds are used to support sustainability projects to include installation of geothermal, solar, bioswales, etc.

Program Eligibility:

Strategic Goals

10. Can you describe a link with this proposed program and the Village Board's goals?

The Park District of Oak Park is governed by a board elected by the same residents as elect the Village Board. Each board's values reflect the community's values and as a result are strikingly similar.

Goal: Increase opportunities for community engagement - PDOP utilizes a best in class master planning process in order to evaluate the needs and benefit of any capital investment. The Capital Improvement Plan is how we adapt the parks to the needs identified during the master planning process.

Goal: Value Community Safety: Our master plans plan for resolution of any safety concerns in parks ensuring that issues such as lighting and line of sight issues are addressed. The Park District also work with the Oak Park Township to ensure that our park staff are trained in non-police intervention and response to issues whenever possible. We make every effort to ensure that park space is safe and welcoming for all residents.

Goal: Serve as a leader in racial equity. Park District of Oak Park approved an equity policy in 2019 and as a result our staff has been charged with building anti-racist learnings into park master plans. Staff have participated in CROAR training as well as held "Safe Talks" on racism and LatinX for all full-time PDOP staff.

Goal: Support Vibrant and Diverse Neighborhoods: There is no greater way to support vibrant and diverse neighborhoods than to support investment in local parks. These funds will directly help infrastructure recovery from the effects of COVID and prevent the impacts of COVID from creating lasting negative effects on our park system.

Goal: Invest in a Sustainable Future: The park district is fully committed to a sustainable future. Our board has committed to a wide variety of sustainability initiative. Recent projects in the CIP include passive house designed for the Carroll Center (only the second proven net zero building in Illinois), geothermal systems in Pleasant Home, solar panels on almost every available Park District roof, LED lighting inside and outside and a focus on pollinators and native plantings throughout our system. Future projects will include battery powered vehicles and chargers, additional solar panels, water retention features for supporting irrigation and designing building renovations as net-zero.

Lastly, the Village's goals of affordability and increased community engagement can in part be achieved when you provide community spaces such as parks, playgrounds and splash pads to engage with family, friends and neighbors for no fee.

Community Benefit

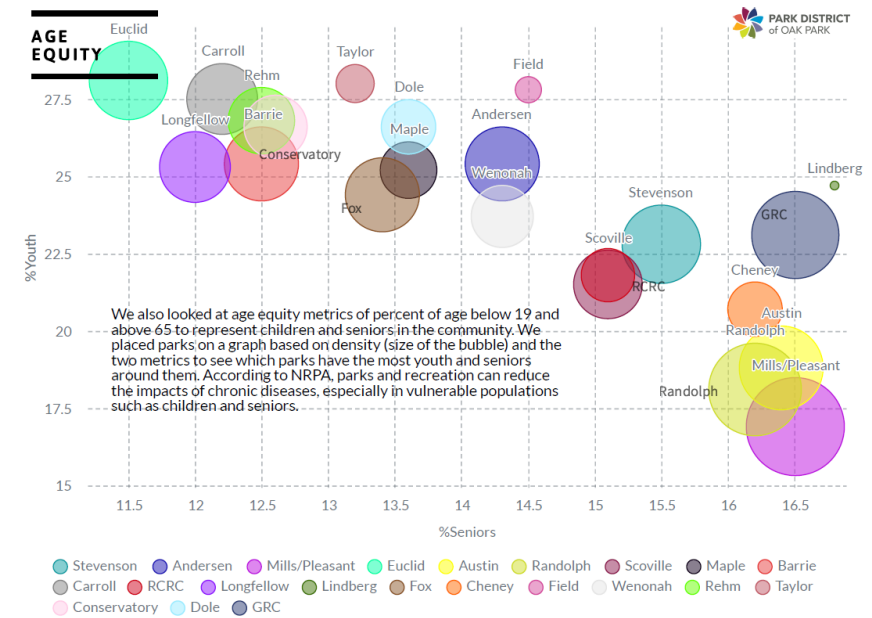
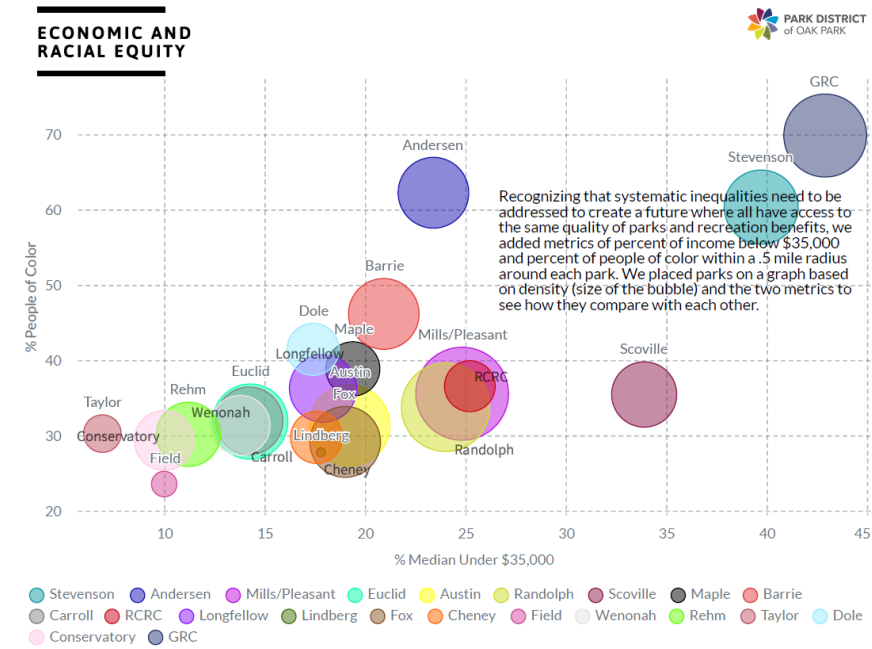
11. Describe the residents impacted (#, age) and over what duration; Is this program for low-moderate income recipients?

Playgrounds and parks are open 365 days a year and are available at no cost to the individuals using the space for exercise, family building, relaxation, etc. Two upcoming park improvement projects, Anderson and Barrie, happen to be neighborhoods serving a large portion of Oak Park's black and brown residents. Our research shows that lower income residents are less likely to travel in order to visit a park and thus the condition and amenities of their neighborhood park gains added importance.

Additionally, Oak Park has over 53,000 residents that are using our limited 83 acres. According to national standards for park space a population of 53,000 should have over 260 acres, hence the need to constantly invest in these properties due to the heavy use. Additionally, numerous individuals from surrounding communities also use are parks and playgrounds.

Race Equity Impact

12. What racial/ethnic groups are currently most advantaged and most disadvantaged by the issues this proposal seeks to address?



All ages, races and economic levels use the playgrounds, splash pads and parks in Oak Park and PDOP looks to support and serve all of its residents.

13. What positive impacts on equality and inclusion, if any, could result from this proposal? What racial/ethnic groups could benefit? Will it reduce disparities or discrimination?

Reference back to question 12 for the demographics of Oak Park residents by park location.

This funding will allow PDOP to continue the progress toward our park master plan implementation. Although it is difficult to quantify exactly which elements this money might fund, PDOP's work in anti-racist practices pre-dates the passing of an equity policy in 2019. Community engagement work has determined that systemic racism is evident in how fences and sidewalks are designed, where resources are located, and what activities are available. Our master plans include these learnings and when funding is available in the CIP the plans will become reality bringing our learnings and park improvements to engage and welcome the community.

Parks, playgrounds and splash pads are places where everyone can participate and there is no financial barrier. We look at playgrounds as a great representation of our community and our users come in all shapes, sizes and colors. Playgrounds are places where no one knows or cares if you live in a mansion or an apartment or if your parent is lawyer or a waiter. The Park District offers low-cost rentals of picnic shelter to support family gatherings and celebrations. Users of the parks in Oak Park are not limited to Oak Park residents. Our facilities attract residents from Chicago, Berwyn, Forrest Park, River Forest and more as they are clean, safe and enjoyable. Relationships are developed and community is built on playgrounds.

PDOP's Value of Inclusivity: "We will actively and intentionally value multiple layers of human characteristics and view such differences as strengths, while striving for equity among all identities to be able to be authentic, to feel safe and to be respected in our programs, parks and facilities."

Measures & Reporting

14. Do you have program success indicators and progress benchmarks (list them)

PDOP uses an online system to gather, analyze, and utilize various data points to guide our decision-making. MPower, our internal performance management system, provides an objective and quantifiable way to see success and identify areas for improvement. We meet quarterly to assess progress and when necessary adjust.

The Park District of Oak Park track our budget, strategic and comprehensive master plan goals via our online dashboard (<https://www.pdop.org/performance/>), which is available to our residents via our website.

Our capital investments are monitored using our annual park report cards. All parks and facilities are successful when the amenities are functioning and the space is clean and safe. Our park report card is updated annually with inspections throughout the year. The report card measures the functionality of the park based on water fountains, play equipment, trash, etc. and provides a letter grade. This information is utilized with determine where the Capital Improvement Funds are allocated.

15. How would you describe the impact to the community? How will these impacts be documented and evaluated that you are meeting the intended goals and community benefits? Please provide examples.

Quality parks increase community engagement as well as home values. Ensuring that the parks and playgrounds can be updated on a regular basis impact the community's quality of life. The mental and physical health of community members are both incredibly important to a vibrant and thriving community and parks/playgrounds play an essential role.

The receipt of the \$2m for our capital improvement plan will result in both the Andersen and Barrie Park having playground improvements at least one-year earlier than currently projected in the CIP due to the delay from lost revenue.

Project Cost

16.

Total Project cost: N/A. This request is not for a specific project it is to replace the fund from the CIP to support all the Park Districts capital needs.

Total ARPA request: \$2,000,000

17. Provide timetable when funds will be spent:

The funding will be spent between 2023-2024 for various capital needs including improvement projects to include Andersen and Barrie parks.

If funds are received, staff will update the Capital Improvement Plan and present to the board for approval. This plan will include renovation of Andersen Park in 2023 and Barrie Park in 2024 with work beginning immediately in order to reach these goals and maximize the benefit gained from the funds.

Once the board approves the updated CIP, staff will reach out to potential state and private funding partners to determine any relevant funding opportunities and grant cycles. These opportunities will drive decisions related to the scope and type of work that can be accomplished in these Master Plan Updates.

Once funding is secured, staff will retain necessary design expertise and will create design and bid specs for the project. Soon after, work will begin.

A full accounting of eligible capital expenses can be presented to the Village of Oak Park at the end of each fiscal year to meet any reporting requirements that the village has.

18. Do you need all the grant funds in one distribution?

No. PDOP could support a \$1m reimbursement in 2022 and another \$1m in 2023.

Project Sustainability

19. Do you have a plan to keep this initiative in place once the one-time ARPA funds are used? Please describe.

Yes, the Park District allocates a set amount of tax dollars to the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) each year as well as transfers funds from our program fees collected. It is the loss of program fees that has resulted in the \$2M shortfall in the Park District CIP. Once programming returns to normal levels, PDOP will again have the ability to transfer excess funds generated from program fees and normal funding levels will resume.

Timetable:

20. Provide a comprehensive timeline to implement your proposed program and what is the duration of the program

The funds will be added to the Park District's Capital Improvement Fund and allocated for capital needs per our five-year CIP. The CIP is reviewed annually in July and approved by the Park Board. If the \$2m is allocated to the Park District these funds will be calculated into the funds available for projects in 2023 and 2024, which would allow playground improvement to be accomplished at least one year earlier than currently scheduled and in line with previous plans, which were delayed due to lost revenue.

Andersen Playground Improvement: Planning 2022/Bidding 2023/ Construction 2023
Barrie Playground Improvement: Planning 2023/Bidding 2024/ Construction 2024

Other:

21.

If you don't receive the funds, what are the impacts and will the program not occur in the future?

Failure to receive these funds would set back planned master plan improvements at Anderson and Barrie as well as any subsequent projects. Master plan improvements account for a planned obsolescence of some park equipment, especially in playgrounds, so we will enter a period of deferred maintenance in our parks until we are able to find additional funding and cost-savings to get back on track. This means some equipment might break without an available replacement and some equipment might be decommissioned as it reaches the end of its useful life. We will also not be realizing our goals of social equity, green infrastructure, and carbon neutrality as soon as we had hoped.

What would be your plan to get this program running without ARPA assistance?

PDOP has a very strong track record in applying securing external grants. Most grant have a matching fund requirement, which is funded through our CIP. Hence, having a fully funded CIP is critical for seeking and securing grant funds to assist with the cost of capital improvements throughout our park system. As a result of the \$2m loss to the CIP, it will take years to rebuild the fund balance based on the current increase in wages and the inflation cost of goods. The playground and park improvements will be delayed for the amount of time that is required to assemble the funds necessary.

22.

Can your program or a portion of your project wait until January 2023 to coincide with the anticipated next phase of community ARPA requests? What would be lost if this program waited until 2023? Do you have a plan to make up this loss?

The requested funding can be paid to the Park District in two installments. One in 2022 for \$1m and the other \$1m in 2023. Knowing that the funds will be allocated to the Park District will allow the Park Board to plan accurately for these capital projects.

23.

Are you requesting ARPA funding from other agencies for this program? No, we are requesting lost revenue funding from the Village of Oak Park to support our capital improvement planning for the residents of Oak Park.

Are you requesting ARPA funding from other agencies for other programs? Yes, funding has been requested to support the CRC from the State of Illinois through a granting process.

ARPA FUNDING REQUEST

The North Avenue District, Inc. and Oak Park Area Arts Council (OPAAC) thank the Village of Oak Park for the opportunity to submit this request for funding to catalyze economic revitalization of our business district with public art. This will be a tangible, one-time investment that implements the Village Board goal of North Avenue economic development, as well as its goals of sustainability, racial equality, and community engagement. Because this public art investment will stimulate recovery from the impacts of the pandemic by the most diverse business district in Oak Park, it qualifies for ARPA funding as well.

The North Avenue District has been working since 2013 to revitalize North Avenue between Austin and Harlem. (See attached factsheet.) Our North Art Bridge public art project is one of several initiatives we are pursuing to implement Urban Land Institute (ULI) recommendations for our district¹, funded by a technical assistance grant from the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP). We thank CMAP for providing the census data cited in this funding request and attached to this document. We appreciate CMAP’s continued support for our efforts to implement the ULI plan.

1. Project name: North Art Bridge

2. Total Project cost: \$103,100 **Total ARPA request:** \$103,100

3. Cost Distribution: Provide a concise timetable on when you need the ARPA funds and when you will spend the grant funds.

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| May 2023 | \$50,000 for 50% deposits to artists on June 1 |
| July 2023 | \$50,000 for final 50% payments to artists as they complete their murals, August 1-October 1 |
| 2024 (months TBD) | \$2,300 for website development and related expenses. \$800 for celebration of project completion (attendance ~100) |

4. Describe the timeframe when the program will start and what is the duration of the program.

The project will begin as soon as we’re notified that we’ll be receiving ARPA funding. It will end sometime in 2024. Timing is somewhat uncertain due to the expected participation of Chicago’s 29th Ward.² We anticipate that an inter-governmental agreement will be required. We’re uncertain how much time will be necessary for an IGA to be drafted and executed. Once an IGA is in place, we don’t

¹ Urban Land Institute, *Revitalization Strategies for the North Avenue Corridor, Oak Park and Chicago, IL*, December 2018. Page 16.

https://ulidigitalmarketing.blob.core.windows.net/ulidcnc/2019/05/NorthAv_FinalReport_reduced.pdf

² It is unknown whether Chris Taliaferro will remain 29th Ward alderman after the February 2023 election, with a possible runoff election in April. Should he be defeated, it is unknown whether his successor will support our project financially. However, no serious opponent has yet emerged, and any successor should be motivated to fund the project because constituents in Galewood will want to see public art similar to the Oak Park side of North Avenue.

know exactly when funds from Chicago will be disbursed. We plan on community voting for Chicago-side mural options once applications are received, but after a January community visioning session. (Both Oak Park and Chicago residents and business/property owners will be invited to participate in both.) For these reasons, only the Oak Park portion of the project is shown in the timeline below.

Note: OPAAC will add project murals to its Art Walk website as they're completed. ArtWalk is a self-guided tour of all the Village's Public art murals and sculptures. The ArtWalk will also have a home on the OPAAC website.

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| November 2022 | Draft contract language with building owners, based on OPAAC agreements previously approved by VOP. Begin executing agreements with building owners. |
| December 2022 | Continue executing agreements with building owners. Prepare artist application form, based on other forms used by OPAAC |
| January 2023 | Community visioning session |
| March 2023 | Call for artists issued, incorporating both visioning session results and North Art Bridge guidelines (attached) |
| April 2023 | Draft contracts with artists (prepared using OPAAC contract language previously approved by VOP) |
| May 2023 | Applications due. OPAAC evaluation of applications. Building owner approval of OPAAC selections. All building owner agreements in place. |
| June 2023 | Selected and other artists notified. Contracts executed. Checks prepared. Initial 50% deposit checks to artists. Work begins on murals. |
| August-September, 2023 | Murals completed. Final 50% checks to artists. |
| October-November, 2023 | Project publicity by OPAAC, VOP, and The North Avenue District |
| 2024 (months TBD) | North Art Bridge website introduced. Completed project celebration. |

5. How does the proposed initiative address immediate or delayed public health, economic or other community harms resulting from or exacerbated by the Covid-19 public health emergency?

The community harm is primarily economic. Like many local business districts, the commercial area that forms Oak Park’s northern border has been seriously impacted by the pandemic. Businesses have closed—especially restaurants and stores. Many of those still open are hanging on by a shoestring. Vacancies of all kinds have increased. Vacant properties generally are less well-maintained than those occupied, as are their parkways. This, in turn, has had a negative impact on quality of life for those living near our district or on North Avenue itself, as well as those working or doing business there.

The North Avenue District’s North Art Bridge project seeks to revitalize our district by:

- Motivating drivers to stop or slow down and notice what the district has to offer
- Encouraging foot traffic with a district that is more attractive, interesting, and pedestrian-friendly³

ARPA funding for our North Art Bridge project will generate transformational positive momentum for our district’s recovery. It will provide a major boost toward a critical mass of public art, with positive impact like what has occurred in Pilsen, Wicker Park, and elsewhere.

An ARPA-funded, earmarked allocation of \$103,100 to the Oak Park Area Arts Council will be enough to pay for four murals or three murals on walls and several in windows, as well as a project website and celebration that will bring attention to them. Oak Park’s funding will put us in an excellent position to receive similar funding from the 29th Ward and the City of Chicago. Alderman Taliaferro has indicated willingness to match VOP’s allocation with money allotted to the 29th Ward. He agrees that OPAAC should oversee the project on both sides of North Avenue.

We anticipate that the new murals will inspire other artists and property owners to add some murals of their own.⁴ Together with the public art made possible with the ARPA grant, this will put us well on our way toward the critical mass we’re aiming for.

In addition to supporting our district’s business and property owners, this project will provide much-needed income to artists, most of whom are barely getting by.

6. Describe the residents impacted (#, age) and over what duration; Is this program solely for low-moderate income recipients?

This project will impact all who live on North Avenue from Austin to Harlem, as well as those living to the immediate east of our district. This includes approximately 14,000 people residing on North Avenue and within four blocks to the south or north (Division to Armitage), with 61% below the age of 50. It also includes the approximately 8,000 persons who live from Central Avenue to Austin between Division and Armitage, with 68% younger than 50.⁵

³ We also want public art to unite our district--both sides of North Avenue from Austin to Harlem--as well as the communities to the north and south in Chicago and Oak Park. (See attached goals and artistic guidelines.) We anticipate community involvement through a visioning session and voting on some of the mural design options.

⁴ This already has happened in response to the window murals in the North/Harlem strip mall and 6645 W. North.
⁵

| Population | Harlem - Austin | | Austin - Central | |
|--------------------|-----------------|-----|------------------|-----|
| 0 to 4 years old | 853 | 6% | 430 | 5% |
| 5 to 19 years old | 2,765 | 19% | 1,625 | 21% |
| 20 to 34 years old | 2,375 | 16% | 1,931 | 25% |
| 35 to 49 years old | 2,944 | 20% | 1,349 | 17% |

Low/moderate income residents will be among those who benefit. About 22% of those living in our district or within four blocks south/north have household incomes below \$50,000. The same is true for about 34% of those living directly east, Central to Austin, between Division and Armitage.⁶

The impact on the quality of life of all residents will be permanent.

7. What racial/ethnic groups are currently most advantaged and most disadvantaged by the issues this proposal seeks to address?

No one is advantaged by the underperformance of our district, to the best of our knowledge. Those most disadvantaged are those least able to access other commercial areas: those without access to a car or unable to drive. Some people can afford to own a car and choose not to do so, of course. But most of those without cars can't afford one. While this is primarily a function of income/assets, we are aware of the intersection of economic disadvantage and race. In other words, people of color are less likely to own a car.⁷ Inability to drive a car is mainly a function of age/disability, however.

8. What positive impacts on equality and inclusion, if any, could result from this proposal? What racial/ethnic groups could benefit? Will it reduce disparities or discrimination?

Everyone working, doing business, or living in/near our district will benefit from this project. All will be touched by the positive impact of public art and a more vibrant commercial area on quality of life.

The beneficiaries certainly will include racial/ethnic minorities. Our commercial district is one of the most diverse in the metro area. Some 56% of its ground floor/storefront businesses are owned by people of color. About half of these are Black owned, with about a quarter owned by Asians or Latinos, respectively. The residents of the areas to the north, south and east of our district are also racially/

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|--------|------|-------|------|
| 50 to 64 years old | 3,567 | 24% | 1,267 | 16% |
| 65 to 74 years old | 1,503 | 10% | 802 | 10% |
| 75 to 84 years old | 491 | 3% | 332 | 4% |
| 85 years old or older | 232 | 2% | 111 | 1% |
| TOTAL | 14,730 | 100% | 7,847 | 100% |

Sources: US Census 2020 decennial population count. American Community Survey (5-year sample) estimates for age
See attached census data spreadsheets

⁶ See attached spreadsheet 2020 census data, North Avenue District.

⁷ National Equity Atlas. https://nationalequityatlas.org/indicators/Car_access#/

ethnically diverse, and economically diverse as well.⁸ To the extent that the project catalyzes improved business revenues and commercial/residential property values, it will help reduce economic disparities.

North Art Bridge is an inclusive project that seeks to bring Oak Parkers and Chicagoans of all racial/ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds together through public art. Our first window murals did this literally. They were designed and painted by St. Giles School students who live in both communities. (Like the North Avenue District, St. Giles Parish spans north Oak Park and Chicago's Galewood neighborhood.)⁹ Our second mural series was designed with inclusivity in mind for the front windows of LifeSpan, a counseling practice owned by an inter-racial couple.¹⁰ And we plan to bring everyone together in a visioning session that will guide our call to artists, and to vote on some Chicago-side options for the murals.

9. Do you have partners that you are collaborating with to support this program financially or in other ways? Name them and the support you will receive from them.

This application is, of course, a collaboration between the Oak Park Area Arts Council and The North Avenue District, Inc. OPAAC will be the fiscal agent for the project and supervise all its arts-related aspects. The District will supervise matters related to property owners/commercial tenants of buildings where the murals will be located. We will work together on community outreach.

Assuming a Chicago-side funding match, we will collaborate with Galewood Neighbors, Inc. to plan and implement voting on mural options by residents of both Oak Park and Chicago.

10. Do you have program success indicators and progress benchmarks (list them)

Additional public art catalyzed/inspired by the project
Good/positive community participation
Improved property maintenance
Improved property values on North Avenue and the 1200 blocks
Improved public perceptions of the district
Increased pedestrian traffic
More business from those driving through our district on the way to somewhere else
Reduced commercial vacancies

⁸ Urban Land Institute, *Revitalization Strategies*, pages 4 and 5.

https://ulidigitalmarketing.blob.core.windows.net/ulidcnc/2019/05/NorthAv_FinalReport_reduced.pdf

⁹<https://www.oakpark.com/2021/11/16/a-mural-designed-to-heal-divides-unveiled-on-north-ave/>

¹⁰ <https://www.oakpark.com/2022/09/06/new-north-avenue-mural-aims-to-heal>

11. How would you describe the impact to the community? How will these impacts be documented and evaluated that you are meeting the intended goals and community benefits? Please provide examples.

As mentioned, we expect the project to stimulate progress toward economic revitalization. Some of this progress can be documented/evaluated quantitatively. Before/after assessed valuations can be analyzed. Before/after windshield surveys and summaries of commercial properties listed for rent by services like CoStar and LoopNet can help assess the impact on vacancies. We also can count the number of businesses opening and closing in the six months before and after all the project's public art is in place using business licenses and other sources. Better property maintenance can be estimated by a before/after windshield survey of problem properties and parkways. But the evaluation should keep in mind that our project will not be the only causative factor here. Overall economic trends such as rising/falling interest rates, inflation, or recession can have a major impact on our district. Trends can be documented, but the extent to which they are attributable to our project will have to be estimated.

Conversations with business/property owners can give us a sense of changes in public perceptions, pedestrian traffic and business from commuters and others driving through our district. We also can evaluate public perceptions by way of social media comments. (Quantitative documentation here would require surveys and other studies which are beyond the scope of this application.)

We can assess public involvement and inclusion by participation in the visioning session and voting on murals, as well as growth in The North Avenue District's Facebook community page membership and circulation of its free e-newsletter.

12. Can you describe a link with this proposed program and the Village Board's Goals?

There are several links between the North Art Bridge project and Board goals. First and foremost, it will partially implement the focus on North Avenue corridor investment in VOP's five-year Capital Improvement Plan—the second action item in the Board's goal of Vibrant, Diverse Neighborhoods.

North Art Bridge will advance the Sustainable Future goal by improving pedestrian-friendliness and therefore motivating more people to walk to/through our district rather than driving.

As mentioned, our project will support the goal of Racial Equality by providing more convenient, viable shopping and dining for those who can't afford a car. It will help improve revenue and property values for minority-owned businesses and 1200 block residences. North Art Bridge will also increase inclusivity through public art, as it already has done.

Finally, the project will increase opportunities for community engagement with a visioning session and voting on mural options—the fourth action item under Community Affordability.

13. Do you have a plan to keep this initiative in place once the funds are used? Please describe.

The North Art Bridge project was initiated before we applied for ARPA funding, and it will continue after the funds are used. We'll add more window art installations where we are able to identify agreeable property owners/commercial tenants and artists willing to create/display their work in return for visibility and reimbursement of costs.

In addition, we'll try to find other funding sources for more expensive public art including wall murals and sculpture.

14. If you don't receive the funds, what are the impacts and will the program not occur in the future? What would be your plan to get this program running without ARPA assistance?

If we don't receive the funds, we will not achieve a critical mass of public art soon enough—if at all—to help our district recover from the economic impact of the pandemic and to provide the other benefits identified in this application.

As mentioned above, we'll continue adding low-cost window art installations to the extent possible. This is a slow process because we are unable to pay the artists. And, as mentioned, we'll keep looking for other funding. So far, we have not been able to identify other sources of support for a project of the proposed scope.¹¹

15. Are there similar non-profit or private organization that perform essentially the same services as your agency? If so, please list them.

To our knowledge, there no organizations performing essentially the same services to/for our district.

16. For your most recently ended fiscal year, provide the following: D.N.A.

17. Can your program or a portion of your project wait until January 2023 to coincide with the anticipated next phase of community ARPA requests? What would be lost if this program waited until 2023? Do you have a plan to make up this loss? D.N.A.

CONCLUSION

Thank you for your consideration of this application. The proposed one-time investment in public art will have a transformational positive economic impact on Oak Park's most diverse commercial area as it struggles to recover from the pandemic's effects. It qualifies for ARPA funding and will advance Board

¹¹ For example, the State's Illinois Arts Council Agency has no programs for which The North Avenue District qualifies. <https://arts.illinois.gov/grants-programs>

goals of North Avenue economic development, sustainability, racial equality, and community engagement. The Oak Park Area Arts Council and The North Avenue District are fully capable of undertaking this project and making it a success. Our application therefore fully merits your favorable decision.

POSTSCRIPT ON FUNDING OPTIONS

Previously, there was hesitation to make this ARPA allocation because there were so many other deserving ARPA funding requests, while public art on North Avenue might possibly be funded by the State of Illinois as part of a streetscape project.

We sympathize with the desire to fund as many worthy projects as feasible, but we respectfully wish to make the Village aware of the following.

- It's our experience that streetscape funding is no sure thing. Only one-third of the streetscape planned for our district was constructed in 2007 before the financial crisis and the indictment of an alderman brought everything to a halt. A few years later, we thought we had our streetscape funded again. Then came the State budget impasse of 2015 to 2018. Not until 2021 was there another State allocation for our streetscape. Now the Illinois House is reallocating and rewriting Rep. Lilly's capital budget allocation. Who's to say that this funding won't be frozen or reallocated once again?
- Even assuming that our streetscape allocation survives, it is unclear whether the funds can be used for public art.
- Even assuming that the State funding can be used for public art, it would be a long time before any money can be disbursed. (Beyond a single meeting, virtually nothing happened to implement the streetscape project in 2022, for example.) We need the public art boost for economic recovery **now**.
- Finally, we believe public art funding for our district should not be considered as a matter of either/or—Village or State. We'll need financial support from the Village, the City, the State and private sources to achieve fully the transformational impact we're aiming for. Take a drive or a walk-through Pilsen and you'll understand what we mean.

THE NORTH ART BRIDGE PROJECT: GOALS AND ARTISTIC GUIDELINES

Goals

The North Art Bridge Project seeks public art to unite through our district--both sides of North Avenue from Austin to Harlem--as well as the communities to the north and south in Chicago and Oak Park.

The project also seeks to revitalize our district by:

- Motivating drivers to stop or slow down and notice what the district has to offer
- Encouraging foot traffic by making our district more attractive, interesting, and pedestrian-friendly

Artistic Guidelines

We're looking for public art that:

- Gladdens the heart
- Catches the eye
- Can be seen/appreciated from the roadway (No entirely text-based compositions unless the letters are used just to make patterns. Use of words as part of a composition is fine.)
- Unites rather than potentially dividing us (Controversary, graphic nudity, and politics should be avoided. Abstracted nudity, like the figures in *Dance* by Matisse, is fine.)
- Reflects our diversity (of age, ethnicity, gender and race) if human figures are depicted. (Therefore, no exclusive focus on people from a specific group. However, abstracted/generic human figures of the same color are fine, like those shown in *Music* by Matisse.)

The North Avenue District at-a-glance

Founded in 2013 as North Avenue Zoning and Development Advisory Committee (NAZDAC).
Incorporated as The North Avenue District, Inc. in 2016.

- Purpose: Promoting the revitalization of the North Avenue corridor between Austin and Harlem.
- Independent not-for-profit corporation. As a tax-exempt charitable organization, all donations are tax deductible. Directors are stakeholders--Chicago and Oak Park businesspeople, property owners and residents—who work, live, or own a business/property in the district or its adjacent neighborhoods.
- Politically neutral. No candidate endorsements.

Tax-deductible donations

By credit card:

https://checkout.square.site/merchant/MLE5A5AHZK8FH/checkout/NK4YXNSRZT7UW2YTKJPRNYN3?fbclid=IwAR0OH4FHjApZ6fhOeZBag6MV5uc8f_jKOxfISHi4L3_1-PGAWzENIT4giTo

Or mail checks to: The North Avenue District, Inc., 6901 W. North Avenue, Suite 1R, Oak Park, IL 60302

Mission Statement

It shall be the mission of The North Avenue District to work toward a North Avenue from Austin to Harlem Avenues that provides a safe, inviting place to live, work, do business, shop, dine and walk. To accomplish this, The District will plan for and advance North Avenue’s revitalization and will also address concerns regarding its underperformance. To be effective in doing so, we will not endorse or support candidates for elective office.

We will:

- Promote existing quality businesses,
- Help recruit new businesses and residential development that will revitalize the district and reflect the character and quality of the adjoining neighborhoods,
- Work with state and local government officials in Chicago and Oak Park to plan, recruit and address concerns regarding safety, economic development and other quality of life issues, and
- Listen to, inform and educate the community--businesses, property owners, employees and residents about projects and other matters affecting the District.

Some things we’ve done:

- With 29th Ward/Oak Park support, won a grant from the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) for a District revitalization plan. Worked with Sen. Harmon, Rep. Lilly, 29th Ward and Oak Park to obtain IDOT-funding for a North Ave. transportation study to improve safety, pedestrian-friendliness and general mobility.

- Provided testimony/information that helped: liberalize zoning to facilitate residential/business development in the District and make it easier to park; tighten state regulation of pawnshops; provide local oversight of retail cannabis sales.
- Provided Plan Commission/ZBA testimony/statements in support of seven proposed real estate projects. All were subsequently approved.
- Brought a beautiful mosaic mural to the west wall of Wonder Works Children's Museum.
- Successfully fought: two illegal nightclubs, massage parlor prostitution, cash-for-gold stores.

Some things we're doing:

- Publishing District update e-newsletter; run Facebook community group
- Supporting District businesses via our newsletter and social media, including our Spend \$10, Win \$100 promotion and ongoing information on available grants and loans.
- Bringing the arts to the District (murals, pop-up galleries/studios in vacant storefronts, etc.).

Board members:

- Judith Alexander, Chair. Retired as Director of Sales and Marketing for internet publisher Beacon Research. Member, OPRF Chamber Board and IL State Treasurer's Women's Advisory Council.
- Eric Davis. Cook County Deputy Director of Capital Planning. Commissioner, Oak Park Township.
- Christian Harris, Treasurer. Owns North Ave. business MaidPro Oak Park. Board member, Oak Park Public Library and Young Professionals Board of Housing Opportunity and Maintenance for the Elderly (HOME).
- Angel Humphrey. Owns North Ave. businesses Touch by an Angel Child Development Center, Chicago, and Glamour Spa and Celebrations, Oak Park.
- Gretchen Kenagy. Owns GPK Consulting. Consults for Electronic Resources & Libraries. Freelance medical writer. Previously, Senior Research Associate, American Medical Association.
- Earl Manning. Cook County Director of Capital Planning. Previously, executive at the Chicago Dept. of Buildings. Galewood apartment building owner. Christy Smith-Hall, Major Gift Officer, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary
- Michael Woods. Retired as City of Chicago's Managing Deputy Commissioner, Dept. of Environment. Galewood Economic Development Committee member.

Selected press coverage:

<https://www.oakpark.com/News/Articles/12-23-2019/Advocating-for-Roosevelt-Road/> (bottom paragraphs)

<http://www.oakpark.com/News/Articles/10-24-2017/North-Avenue-gets-noticed>

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/oak-park/news/ct-oak-north-avenue-grant-tl-1026-20171023-story.html>

<http://www.oakpark.com/News/Articles/11-7-2017/Don't-forget-North-Avenue's-strengths/>

Memberships: Austin Coming Together (ACT); OPRF Chamber of Commerce

For more information:

Email info@n-ave.com .

Join our Facebook community group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/107435609823334/>.

Subscribe to our e-newsletter: <http://eepurl.com/doTuD9>.

Follow us on Twitter: @DistrictNorthAv

North boundary: Armitage
 South boundary: Division

Harlem - Austin Austin - Central

| | | Harlem - Austin | Austin - Central |
|----------------|--|-----------------|------------------|
| Sum_Pop_Total | Total Population | 13,875 | 7,602 |
| sum_HISP | Total Hispanic or Latino | 2,468 | 2,020 |
| Sum_P_W_NH | White, Not Hispanic | 5,498 | 84 |
| Sum_P_B_NH | Black, Not Hispanic | 4,824 | 5,352 |
| Sum_P_AIAN_NH | American Indian and Alaska Native, Not Hispanic | 13 | 9 |
| Sum_P_ASIAN_NH | Asian, Not Hispanic | 414 | 18 |
| Sum_P_HPI_NH | Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, Not Hispanic | 2 | - |
| Sum_P_OTH_NH | Some Other Race, Not Hispanic | 42 | 17 |
| Sum_P_2plus_NH | Population of two or more races, Not Hispanic | 614 | 102 |
| Sum_P_GQ | Total Group Quarters Population | 55 | - |
| Sum_P_IGQ | Total Institutionalized Group Quarters Population | 51 | - |
| Sum_P_NIGQ | Total Non-Institutionalized Group Quarters Populator | 4 | - |
| Sum_P_HH | Total Housing Units | 13,820 | 7,602 |
| Sum_HU_Total | Total Occupied Housing Units | 5,203 | 2,820 |
| Sum_HU_Occ | Total Vacant Housing Units | 4,981 | 2,585 |
| Sum_HU_Vac | Total Population in Households | 222 | 235 |
| hu_pctVac | Housing Units Percent Vacant | 4.3% | 8.3% |
| hhSize_est | Estimated Average Household Size | 2.77 | 2.94 |

Source:

2020 Census Redistricting Data (P.L. 94-171) Summary Files
 Block-level data summarized to study areas from the tables:
 P1 Race
 P2 Hispanic or Latino, and not Hispanic or Latino by Race
 P5 Group Quarters Population by Major Group Quarters Type
 H1 Occupancy Status (Housing)

Village of Oak Park
ARPA Community Request Application
West Cook YMCA

- 1. Project name (if you have more than one project, use a separate impact sheet for each):**
Community Integrated Health Program
- 2. Contact Person:** Phillip Jimenez, President and CEO **Email:** phillip@westcookymca.org

Agency Overview:

3. Please describe your agency and your organization’s mission and/or operations

The West Cook YMCA is uniquely prepared to provide this program in Oak Park. The West Cook YMCA is dedicated to developing the spirit, mind, and body of all persons through quality leadership, programs, and services, in cooperation with community groups for the common good. Since our YMCA began taking shape in 1902, our dedication to spirit, mind and body has never wavered. In 2018, the West Cook YMCA celebrated 115 years of service to youth and families in Oak Park, River Forest, Forest Park, and several other surrounding areas. Our YMCA continues to enhance the quality of life in our communities with mission-based programs that meet the needs of today’s youth, families, adults, and seniors. We encourage, teach, and demonstrate the YMCA character values of caring, honest, respect and responsibility in all programs.

Over the course of the past six years, the WCY has intentionally transformed its programming aimed at disrupting health inequity and to address the social determinants of health within our communities. The WCY has taken a very intentional, multi-phased approach in developing our capacity to address the health needs of the communities that we serve by conducting critical research on the health needs of our community, selecting evidenced-based health interventions, recruiting, and training qualified staff and developing critical health infrastructure including certifications.

The West Cook YMCA is guided by our strategic plan which was informed by community stakeholder sessions, member surveys, research and evaluation using local and national data reports including community needs assessments and child opportunity index. Our Y is represented at local organizations’ strategic planning so that the Y can be a part of the systemic solution in addressing critical social issues that our communities face. Through our strategic plan and conversations with community leadership, we can develop programs that best support the communities we serve. We always start by asking, “how can the Y best serve your community?”

It is through the research and reviewing of community needs assessments by local community leaders and state health data, we can identify risk factors in each of the ten communities we serve. It is through this due diligence, the Y, along with our partners, has identified the need for programs that support people who struggle with weight loss, hypertension, and diabetes.

The West Cook YMCA is uniquely positioned to offer programs to support these needs such as Weight Loss Program, Diabetes Prevention Program, and Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring. Our programs go through a rigorous evidence-based process through Y-USA, which includes research,

pilots, and scaling to local Ys. Over the past several years, we have become certified in these evidenced-based health intervention programs with the support of Y-USA. In addition, we have been diligently developing clinical linkages, recruitment strategies for community health programs, strategies to reach priority populations, and building infrastructure for bi-directional communications allowing healthcare providers to prescribe the Y's evidenced-based programs through electronic health care records. In addition, we have just established our role as a Medicare fully licensed and working on Medicaid certification.

As part of our strategic plan, we have highlighted the importance of expanding our reach to address health disparities. In partnership with local health providers, such as the West Suburban Medical Center, Rush Hospital, and Loyola Medicine we have instituted several evidence-based programs which are targeted to address chronic disease. Examples of these programs including the Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP); the Weight Loss Program and the Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring program. We have also reoriented our recruiting and training processes to ensure that our staff is well equipped to provide this programming.

From a community-integrated health perspective, we have developed critical infrastructure to support these initiatives including the development of a Management Services Organization (MSO) at Y-USA, and critical certifications from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).

As an organization, we are also undergoing two processes developed by Y-USA: the "Equitable Community Agenda" to become a more multi-cultural, anti-racist organization and a "Creating for Tomorrow: Program, Service, and Business Model Innovation Road Map." The Equitable Community Agenda shares how Ys can become a more multi-cultural, anti-racist organizations in understanding community led solutions and partnerships, breaking the cycles of poverty of young people, increase access to healthy food, increase access to whole person health and mental health care, developing equity centers, and volunteer and staff leadership representative of community. Through this process we address stronger equitable policies, practices, and procedures in our operations, program innovation, collaborations, resource mobilization, and brand and visibility towards the advancement in organizational anti-racism and multiculturalism through transparent data and benchmarking and being accountable to the communities we serve.

The road map is based on 4 design principles: Equity: practicing self-awareness through the examination of our own identity, values, emotions, bias, and assumptions to develop an understanding of how those influence our contribution to the design process. We also intentionally explore existing systems, shaped by established policies, practices, and procedures which perpetuate inequities; Empathy: empathizing and learning directly from the people we are designing for to gain deep understanding of their experiences, emotions, and motivations to ensure proposed solutions meet their needs; Learn: we accept that failure is inevitable and that with failure comes wisdom and success because when we fail, we intentionally take the valuable opportunity to learn from it and apply new insights; Share: we share what we learn as the best solutions are developed when we collaborate with others.

Through these approaches, the Y seeks to develop a Community Integrated Health program that is reflective of the communities and individuals we serve through community-led partnerships that address the systemic change needed to address health equity.

4. For your most recently ended fiscal year, provide the following:

- a. Total revenues- \$3,648,469
- b. Total expenses- \$3,110,788
- c. Included in total expenses, how much was for salaries/benefits? \$1,568,323
- d. Total ending cash and liquid investments \$681,031

5. Are there similar non-profit or private organization that perform essentially the same services as your agency? If so, please list them.

No, there are no similar non-profit or private organizations. The approach is proposing a customized solution explicitly for Village of Oak Park residents and partners, focused on integrated interventions and infrastructure which doesn't currently exist in the Village of Oak Park. The interventions that exist in the area are currently disjointed and not integrated.

Collaboration & Community Partnerships

6. Do you have partners that you are collaborating with to support this program financially or in other ways? Name them and the support you will receive from them.

- Loyola Medicine President & CEO Mr. Shawn Vincent - Will provide referrals for the program. Letter of Support enclosed
- Glenna Temple – Dominican University - Will provide support in terms of educators for the program. Letter of Support enclosed
- Dino Rumoro – Rush OP Hospital- Will provide referrals for the program. Letter of Support enclosed
- Sites/Locations (To be determined)
- Health navigation/other referrals (Community based organizations to be determined)

Project Narrative:

7. Please describe or attach to this form a description of your proposed program.

Through this initiative, the West Cook YMCA will improve health and well-being by:

- **Establishing a Community Health Portal integrated with a Universal App:** This portal and app will be accessible to all Village of Oak Park residents to increase access to critical chronic disease programming. Community Health Portal will be integrated with Universal App. The proposed platform would provide a secure and scalable way to execute various community health programs. We expect approximately 3,500 individuals annually to access the portal.

The core platform features will include:

- Highly secure and scalable platform.
- Seamless integration with Universal App
- Manage locations
- Manage Programs
- Manage classes class schedule & rosters
- Manage and track the progress of programs per village.
- Track village level programs and analytics
- Seamless Integration with external system for data exchange

- **Providing Evidence-Based Chronic Disease Programs.** As the program expands to full implementation it will be executed across all three Oak Park 3 zip codes with a maximum of 3 to 5 locations and we are expecting to conduct over 45 sessions per quarter. The programs will include:
 - **Diabetes Prevention Program.** The Diabetes Prevention program is a one- year program with 26 sessions. The program includes participants that are at risk for diabetes. Participants participate in a small group environment in community settings. Participants learn about healthier eating and increasing physical activity to reduce their risk for diabetes. The goal is to reduce body weight by 5-7%, increase physical activity by 150 minutes a week.
 - **Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring Program:** The Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring Program, which Ys across the country offer, helps Americans living with hypertension prevent heart disease and strokes. The four-month program focuses on regulated home self-monitoring of one’s blood pressure using proper measuring techniques, individualized support and nutrition education for better blood pressure management. With the support from a trained Healthy Heart Ambassador, participants:
 - Measure and record their blood pressure at least two times per month
 - Attend two personalized consultations per month
 - Attend monthly nutrition education seminars
 - **Weight loss:**
 - Participants will meet 1 hour per week for 12 consecutive weeks
 - Participants will weigh-in, track their food and physical activity, and create SMART goals each week.
 - Participants will participate in weekly discussion topics including creating a supportive environment, goal setting, balanced eating, physical activity, positive psychology, and sustainability.
 - Participants will be invited to be engaged in activities offered at the Y that support their weight loss goals every week.

Approach/Impact/Goals

8. How does the proposed initiative address immediate or delayed public health, economic or other community harms resulting from or exacerbated by the Covid-19 public health emergency?

Chronic disease continues to be a significant issue in our community. According to the most recent IPlan¹, diabetes was one of the top health concerns. Thirty-one percent of adults in the Loyola-Gottlieb service area report having high blood pressure or hypertension. However, the actual rates can be much higher. Self-reported rates of diagnosis with chronic conditions are typically underestimates of the overall disease burden. In fact, we know that approximately one-fourth of diabetes cases are undiagnosed.

¹ <https://www.loyolamedicine.org/assets/documents/2022-lumc-dei-community-health-needs-assessment.pdf>

During the pandemic, many individuals put off addressing many of these critical chronic health needs. In addition, the Covid-19 pandemic amplified many chronic health conditions due to the lack of physical activity that occurred. As a result, the impact of chronic disease has increased. The proposed initiative responds to many of these increase health risks and public health impacts by strengthening the linkages between traditional healthcare and community-based prevention strategies to help individuals prevent, delay, or live better with chronic conditions.

9. Describe overall program goals

The overall program goals are to:

- Increase life expectancy
- Increase access to care
- Lower health care costs
- Conduct critical health need assessments and referrals
- Prevent and address chronic disease
- Reduce the effects of some social determinants of health
- Close the gap in healthcare through greater health equity

Program Eligibility:

Strategic Goals

10. Can you describe a link with this proposed program and the Village Board’s goals?

The proposed initiative aligns with the Access to Care priority area within the Village of Oak Park’s Community Health plan. Within this priority area, the initiative will accomplish the following goals:

- Goal #1. The initiative aligns with Goal #1 to ensure access to care at the right time, location and setting for different populations. The proposal will increase access points for health care and information through in person and virtual education opportunities on chronic health conditions. It will also increase the availability of critical chronic disease education and reduce barriers to care by providing more mobile services.
- Goal #2. The initiative also meets the second goal, by connecting community members to comprehensive care to address social determinants of health. It will accomplish this by providing more coordination and integration with health care providers.
- Goal #3. The proposed program also aligns with the third goal of developing a trusted health care workforce that reflects the community. We will partner with Dominican University to establish a pipeline for lifestyle coaches and other critical staff that reflect the community.

Community Benefit

11. Describe the residents impacted (#, age) and over what duration; Is this program for low-moderate income recipients?

Once the program model is operating at its fullest capacity, the targeted residents will be a minimum of 500 to a maximum of 800 residents with chronic disease (i.e. diabetes, pre-diabetes, and hypertension) that will participate in the programming. In addition, we estimate there will be a minimum of 3,500 residents that will gain access to the Community Health Portal integrated with a Universal App which will provide the opportunity for increased community health information and navigational supports. The program will specifically target low-moderate income recipients, but accessible to any qualifying Village of Oak Park Resident.

Race Equity Impact

12. What racial/ethnic groups are currently most advantaged and most disadvantaged by the issues this proposal seeks to address?

When we use the term “health equity” in our work, we are referring to efforts to ensure access to quality health care, preventive services, quality food, health-promoting environments and resources, and quality living conditions. Access to these social determinants of health is important to individuals, families, and whole communities. When they are lacking, one’s health and even longevity are often negatively affected. In fact, because of the uneven distribution of these health-promoting assets, someone’s zip code can be a better predictor of life expectancy than their genetic code.

We recognized that there are many health disparities, or differences in the incidence and prevalence of health conditions and health status between groups based on race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, gender, diverse abilities/disabilities, geographic location, or any combination of these. The term “disparity” implies differences between individuals and population groups. The term “inequity” refers to differences that are unnecessary and avoidable and are also considered unfair and unjust (e.g., individuals in community B suffer higher rates of asthma, obesity and chronic illness than individuals in community A because of a lack of fresh produce, lack of places for physical activity, and higher levels of air pollution).

Without new evidence-based programs to address chronic diseases, health disparities, and the health-related concerns of an aging population, many preventable diseases and conditions could dramatically limit or even stop the life expectancy gains that have been achieved in the U.S. over the past several decades. In fact, some experts believe that if chronic diseases are not reduced, children born today will be the first generation in 200 years to live shorter lives than their parents. That is why we develop and deliver thoroughly tested programs that give people the knowledge and support to make healthier choices and prevent or manage chronic diseases.

13. What positive impacts on equality and inclusion, if any, could result from this proposal? What racial/ethnic groups could benefit? Will it reduce disparities or discrimination?

Advancing health equity means to ensure everyone has opportunities to attain their full health potential and no one is disadvantaged from achieving this potential because of his or her social position or other socially determined circumstances. The Y utilizes a four-pillar approach to health equity work: Principles, Programs, Partnerships and Policy. Ys that work within all four pillars will likely see the greatest levels of success bridging gaps in health equity. As a result of this initiative, we will be serving individuals with the greatest health disparities. We will work closely with the Y-USA and the Village of Oak Park to establish protocols to ensure that our programming is addressing health disparities in our programming. In addition, we will work with the Y-USA to establish training and protocols to ensure that our team is culturally competent and addressing the unique needs of the individuals that we serve in our programs.

Measures & Reporting

14. Do you have program success indicators and progress benchmarks (list them)

- Once the program is fully operational, we estimate that between 3,500 to 5,000 will access the Community Health Portal integrated and Universal App which will provide the opportunity for increased community health information and navigational supports.
- An estimated 500 to 800 participants accessing the evidence- based programs.

Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring Program:

- Reduction in blood pressure
- Better blood pressure management
- Increased awareness of triggers that elevate blood pressure
- Enhanced knowledge to develop healthier eating habits

Diabetes and Prediabetes Program:

- Reduce body weight by 5-7%
- Increase physical activity to 150 minutes per week

Weight Loss Program:

- Participants will meet 1 hour per week for 12 consecutive weeks
- Participants will weigh-in, track their food and physical activity, and create SMART goals each week.
- Participants will participate in weekly discussion topics that include creating a supportive environment, goal setting, balanced eating, physical activity, positive psychology and sustainability.
- Participants will be invited to be engaged in activities offered at the Y that support their weight loss goals every week.

15. How would you describe the impact to the community? How will these impacts be documented and evaluated that you are meeting the intended goals and community benefits? Please provide examples.

The proposed program will provide a critical investment in the reduction of chronic disease in our community. The proposed program will target and serve the Oak Park population that is at risk for hypertension, obesity and/or diabetes. Over time, it will help improve health outcomes and reduce the cost of care in our area. The impact to the community will be improved results in program participants using the metrics above. In addition, the overall results for improved health results in the three targeted zip codes - 60301, 60302 and 60304 will be tracked through the community's needs assessment planning process. The program that we are proposing is the fruition of many years of planning efforts that we have done with our community.

The West Cook YMCA has a long history of engaging the community in our health planning efforts. The West Cook YMCA is guided by our strategic plan which was informed by community stakeholder sessions, member surveys, research and evaluation using local and national data reports including community needs assessments and child opportunity index. Our Y is represented at local organizations' strategic planning so that the Y can be a part of the systemic solution in addressing critical social issues that our communities face. Through our strategic plan and conversations with community leadership, we can develop programs that best support the communities we serve. We always start by asking, "how can the Y best serve your community?"

It is through the research and reviewing of community needs assessments by local community leaders and state health data, that we identify risk factors in the communities we serve. And by sitting at tables for collaborations with partners, the Y will continue to garner information and insights on how the Y can best support community leaders as they address reducing inequities and the social determinants of health. It is through this due diligence, the Y, along with our partners, has identified that the need for programs that support people who struggle with weight loss, hypertension, and diabetes. The West Cook YMCA is uniquely positioned to offer programs to support these needs such as the Weight Loss Program, Diabetes Prevention Program, and Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring. Our programs go through a rigorous evidence-based process through Y-USA, which includes research, pilots, and scaling to local Ys. We will continue this process, as we move forward, to monitor trends and facilitate programming that meets the greatest needs of our community. We look forward to the opportunity to partner with the Village of Oak Park in taking these programs to the next level to serve the greatest chronic health care needs after the Covid pandemic.

In addition to the health and cost benefits, the program will also address health equity by providing access to care for our most vulnerable residents. The Community Health Portal will increase access within the community. Through critical partnerships with local community organizations and the Village of Oak Park Health Department, the Health Portal and App will effectively expand the reach of their services by providing online access to critical information. After the initial investment of the Community Portal and App, this platform will be a central location for referrals and can be used to connect Oak Park residents with critical services in our area.

From an economic standpoint, the proposed program will provide employment opportunities for local residents. In addition, the program will also benefit local organizations that the West Cook YMCA partners with to provide the programming (i.e. local non-profits, healthcare providers, churches, etc.) The proposed program also has the potential to be scalable in other communities that we serve.

Project Cost

16. Total Project cost: \$5,800,000 _____
Total ARPA request: \$2,600,000 _____

17. Provide timetable when funds will be spent: 2023-2026

18. Do you need all the grant funds in one distribution: We preferred one distribution, but receptive to discussions in which the funds could be distributed in two payments 70% upon approval of the project and the remaining 30% later to be determined.

Project Sustainability

19. Do you have a plan to keep this initiative in place once the one-time ARPA funds are used? Please describe.

Yes, the plan is in place to continue the initiative with the existing partners by increasing referrals into the program and through funding through private sources including healthcare

insurance providers. The Village of Oak Park’s initial investment will focus on developing the infrastructure to support the program, including the new Community Health Portal and associated App, staffing systems for referrals, and the initial programming. Over the first four years of the initiative, we will establish additional partnerships with local healthcare providers and other community partners to establish a strong referral base for the programming. As we build up our infrastructure, we will diversify funding sources to include additional payor sources, including health insurance providers. The West Cook YMCA has already established critical infrastructure with Medicare and Medicaid, which will be expanded to other health insurance providers.

Timetable:

20. Provide a comprehensive timeline to implement your proposed program and what is the duration of the program

Quarter 4, 2022- Proposal to the Village of Oak Park

Quarter 1, 2023-

- Build out infrastructure to support the initiative
- Hiring and training begins
- Begin set up of Community Health Portal and App
- Identification of sites and finalization of agreements for use of space

Quarter 2, 2023-

- Pilot sites begin
- Testing of Community Health Portal and App

Quarter 3, 2023- Launch of full program

Quarter 4, 2023-2026

- Deployment of program broadened
- Continued engagement of additional funding sources outside of the Village of Oak Park for programming

2027-beyond - Continued expansion of programming

Other:

21. If you don’t receive the funds, what are the impacts, and will the program not occur in the future? What would be your plan to get this program running without ARPA assistance?

If we don’t receive the funds, we will be unable to deploy at the scale that we have proposed. Instead, the initiative will likely be established at another Village or established at a much smaller scale in partnership with our existing partners.

22. Can your program or a portion of your project wait until January 2023 to coincide with the anticipated next phase of community ARPA requests? What would be lost if this program waited until 2023? Do you have a plan to make up this loss?

The project is anticipated to begin in January of 2023.

23. Are you requesting ARPA funding from other agencies for this program?

No, we are not requesting for ARPA funds from other sources.

Rush Oak Park Hospital

520 South Maple Avenue
Oak Park, IL 60304-1097

Tel: 708.660.6660
Fax: 708.660.6658
dino_rumoro@rush.edu
www.roph.org



Dino P. Rumoro, DO, MPH, FACEP
President and Chief Executive Officer

Oct 10, 2022

Mr. Phillip Jimenez
West Cook YMCA
255 S. Marion Street
Oak Park, IL 60302

Dear Phillip,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a letter of support for your request to the Village of Oak Park for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding. I am pleased to extend my strong support for your proposal.

The West Cook YMCA improves the health and well-being of individuals and families living in Oak Park through critical chronic disease programming. Your proposal will continue these efforts by broadening the reach with our community through the establishment of a Community Health Portal integrated with a Universal App. In addition, the expansion of evidence-based health intervention programs will provide critical support to individuals with chronic health needs in Oak Park.

Rush Oak Park Hospital is pleased to partner with the West Cook YMCA by assisting in referring appropriate patients into the programs. I hope that your grant request receives a favorable reply.

Please feel free to reach out if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dino P. Rumoro, DO, MPH, FACEP".

Dino P. Rumoro, DO, MPH, FACEP
President and Chief Executive Officer



LOYOLA
MEDICINE

Shawn P. Vincent
President and Chief Executive Officer

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October 19, 2022

Mr. Phillip Jimenez
West Cook YMCA
255 S. Marion Street
Oak Park, IL 60302

Dear Phillip,

I am writing to express my strong support for your grant proposal to the Village of Oak Park for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding. The work outlined in your proposal will provide critical assistance to area residents by reducing risk factors for chronic disease in the community. The Y's multi-faceted approach leads to a sustainable behavioral change for individuals that participate. I am pleased to provide our strong support.

Loyola Medicine is a strong partner and advocate of your evidence-based chronic disease programs demonstrated by our partnering to deliver these programs since 2016. Our continued partnership with the West Cook YMCA has greatly impacted the health and wellness of the joint communities that we serve. We would welcome the opportunity to extend this partnership as part of the proposed Community Integrated Health initiative that is proposed to the Village of Oak Park.

I hope that your grant request receives a favorable reply. Please feel free to reach out if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Shawn P. Vincent
President & CEO
Loyola Medicine/St. Joseph Health System
Trinity Health Illinois/Indiana



Oct 17, 2022

Mr. Phillip Jimenez
West Cook YMCA
255 S. Marion Street
Oak Park, IL 60302

Dear Phillip:

I am writing to express my strong support of your proposal to Village of Oak Park for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding. We welcome the opportunity to partner with the West Cook YMCA on this exciting initiative.

We know that during the pandemic, many individuals put off critical chronic health needs. As a result, the impact of chronic disease has increased. Your initiative responds to these risk factors by strengthening the linkage between traditional healthcare and community-based prevention strategies. These types of partnerships are critical for individuals to prevent, delay, or live better with chronic conditions.

The Community Integrated Health initiative will provide an excellent opportunity for Dominican University students to further their careers by serving in critical roles within the program. We welcome the opportunity to partner and hope that this request receives a favorable reply. Please feel free to reach out if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Glenna G. Temple".

Glenna G. Temple, PhD
President



Village of Oak Park ARPA Community Request Application

1. Project name (if you have more than one project, use a separate impact sheet for each):

Wonder Works Children's Museum: Reinforce and Revitalize Wonder Works' Community-Centered Education

- Objective 1: Capacity: Supporting the Museum Staff to Carry Us Forward
- Objective 2: Capital: A Strong Building for a Strong Foundation
- Objective 3: Programming: Establishing and Growing Community-Centered Programs
- Objective 4: Marketing: Spread the Word and Make Early Childhood Education Accessible to All

2. Contact Person: Email:

Deborah Clair, Executive Director, dclari@wonder-works.org

Lauren Reed, Grants Manager, Lauren@wonder-works.org

Agency Overview:

3. Please describe your agency and your organization's mission and/or operations

Wonder Works Children's Museum delivers a huge impact for the youngest members of our community. We have served as a community changer and early childhood learning hub in our current 6,400 sq ft facility since 2003. We are guided by our mission to spark curiosity and creativity in ALL young children through positive, play-based, learning experiences. We achieve this mission by welcoming children ages 0-8 and their families into our seven interactive exhibits to explore the arts, math, music, science, and literacy through activities that are aligned with Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards. Our goal is to offer experiences that schools and individual families often do not have the luxury to provide; we supplement a child's learning with our museum-quality exhibits, plentiful materials, and innovative play-based curriculum that inspire children to learn through hands-on, self-directed play and enhance their understanding of the world. Most importantly, we instill a lifelong love of learning in every child (young and old!) that walks through our doors.

Exemplified by our commitment to inclusivity, accessibility, and experiential learning, Wonder Works Children's Museum is dedicated to the youngest members of our community. We provide critical, early positive play experiences and support young children's cognitive, social-emotional, and physical development through various offerings. General museum admission is open 5 days per week, welcoming everyone from regulars with museum memberships to out of town visitors to friends of members with guest passes. In these sessions, a rotating curriculum developed by our Programming and Education Manager is implemented daily, covering a variety of subjects such as art, science, literacy, social-emotional learning, and more. Additionally, 10-15 special programs are hosted throughout the year, covering a variety of themed topics that give young people a hands-on and in-depth experience as their curiosity takes over. For example, during Box Works (part of our Works series), visitors of all ages completely transform the museum into a maze of box forts, sculptures, and cardboard inventions as they practice executive functioning, fine motor skills, and foundational engineering concepts in an encouraging environment. Field trips and private play sessions are customizable for groups with specific needs, such as sensory-friendly activities, specific curriculum content, and family celebrations. We bring programming to nearby festivals and farmers markets with local outreach events designed to increase accessibility and reach a wider audience. Further expanding our reach, we have offered community



classes and continuing education sessions to share our early childhood expertise with groups such as parents of picky eaters and teachers seeking to receive Gateway Credits for professional development. Teen volunteers have gained service experience at the museum by helping at special events or using their talents to benefit the museum, such as the Eagle Scouts group that built elevated beds for our garden exhibit. Accessible to the public at any hour, our The Children's Garden exhibit provides an interactive experience for passersby who engage all senses as they explore our native plant and vegetable collection. With over 2 decades of successful programming, Wonder Works Children's Museum is a staple in Oak Park and a state-wide leader in early childhood education.

4. For your most recently ended fiscal year, provide the following:

- a. Total revenues :** \$470,825
- b. Total expenses :** \$263,119
- c. Included in total expenses, how much was for salaries/benefits? :** \$143,368
- d. Total ending cash and liquid investments :** Change in net assets: \$207,706.

5. Are there similar non-profit or private organization that perform essentially the same services as your agency? If so, please list them.

There are a limited number of children's museums in Illinois, such as Chicago Children's Museum, Children's Museum in Oak Lawn, and Kohl Children's Museum. However, Wonder Works Children's Museum is the only organization of its kind in Oak Park.

Collaboration & Community Partnerships

6. Do you have partners that you are collaborating with to support this program financially or in other ways? Name them and the support you will receive from them.

The Wonder Works Community Partner Program (CPP) seeks to play a small part in addressing the barriers faced by historically under-resourced groups. The CPP, founded in 2015, confronts the opportunity gap by increasing museum access for families with low incomes and ensuring that the Wonder Works experience is diverse for all. We provide numerous opportunities for families who participate in the Community Partner Program to receive a high-quality museum experience: participants have access to annual family memberships, free single admission passes, special event passes, field trips, and At-Home Activity Kits.

Potential participants are referred to us through one of our partner organizations or via visiting the museum with Museums4All or an EBT/LINK card. The CPP is effective because of our intentional collaboration with our partner organizations. Wonder Works seeks out organizations who already serve families with low incomes in our area and whose goals align with our own. We work with our partners to supplement the services their families already receive with our educational offerings, providing a cohesive net of support for families in need. Historically, Wonder Works has worked with as many as 18 organizations at varying levels of involvement, serving hundreds of families with low incomes. After many of our organizations reduced their capacity due to COVID-19, we are steadily regrowing the program, focusing on our current 9 partners:

- The Oak Park branch of the **Easterseals** is an organization dedicated to early intervention, inclusive child care, medical rehabilitation, autism services for young children and their families.

ARPA Community Request:
Reinforce and Revitalize Wonder Works' Community-Centered Education



- The **Collaboration for Early Childhood** forges relationships with individuals in the community and organizations to support them.
- **New Moms (Austin & Oak Park)** changes the future for young moms in the Chicagoland area experiencing poverty and homelessness.
- **Beyond Hunger's** mission is harnessing the power of communities to end hunger.
- **Welcome to Fatherhood** is a non-profit organization that hosts gatherings of new and seasoned fathers to support their parenting journeys.
- **Kingz Kidz Academy** is a daycare center that serves children from 6 weeks to 6 years old in our area
- **Family Focus Cicero** provides life-enrichment services ranging from mentoring to educational classes to support children from the prenatal stage and throughout their childhood.
- **Friends of the Children, Chicago** is a national organization that pairs children with paid, professional mentors who empower them to build life skills and make healthy choices.
- **Life Changing Community Outreach** provides year-round programming for Austin residents ranging from housing to meals to summer camps

Increased funding from the Donley Foundation as well as new funding from the Illinois Department of Human Services has moved the CPP into a phase of development and expansion led by Executive Director Deborah Clair with members of the Leadership Management Team. Knowing that barriers extend beyond the cost of admission, we are currently exploring the possibility of transportation vouchers and additional outreach events via Wonder Wheels, a portable museum curriculum, as options to increase equitable access. While our communities are diverse, equity is not yet a reality. The CPP makes educational experiences at Wonder Works accessible for ALL children who need them regardless of race, income or ability. One program participant said, “thank you for the opportunity to bring my child for her to experience equality. Here we do not feel different than others.”

We have also been recent recipients of a general operating grant from the Oak Park Area Arts Council (OPAAC). A strong partner in the community, the OPAAC has seen us grow and evolve over the years. With their support post-COVID, we have been able to open our North Avenue Art Room five days per week.

In addition to partners through our Community Partner Program, Wonder Works will join forces beginning in 2023 with the Collaboration for Early Childhood as a Family Engagement Hub, hosting parent leadership training, monthly parent workshops, and professional development sessions for early learning professionals. This partnership is supported by a generous grant from Birth to Five Illinois.

Project Narrative:

7. Please describe or attach to this form a description of your proposed program.

Reinforce and Revitalize Wonder Works' Community-Centered Education

Wonder Works Children's Museum was critically impacted by the pandemic. As a relatively small museum, the impact of lost admission revenue from 15 Months of closure was devastating for our operations. Then, for months after our reopening in June 2021, we were only able to accommodate 24%



of our usual visitor numbers per session, severely cutting our museum admissions and program revenue to a quarter of what we expected. On top of the lost revenue, the pandemic forced us to reroute our funding to the immediate needs of PPE, developing safety protocol, and reopening. Though progress has been made, Wonder Works is still in an acute phase of dealing with pandemic fallout. Building back towards our normal capacity has been a slow and often challenging process. Even once capacity limits eased, many of our families were hesitant and slow to return to in person activities because vaccines were not available to young children until June of 2022. Wonder Works was also impacted by staffing shortages; our small team of Play Specialists was the appropriate size to manage our play sessions, but left no room for error when it came to accommodating personal schedules and regular time off requests in addition to last minute Covid exposures. Additionally, our volunteer program saw the impact of the pandemic. A once vibrant corp of volunteers has been severely affected by periods of extended lockdowns and exacerbated health concerns, making volunteers hesitant to re-engage. The decline in volunteering has been felt not only at Wonder Works but across the industry at several museums. Our volunteer program is vital and an extended source of support to our small staff. The program is slowly recovering from the impact of COVID but our once bustling program will need to be rebuilt. Along with building the capacity of our staff, and rebuilding our volunteer program Wonder Works will be able to continue providing robust programming for the growing number of little guests and their families.

If Wonder Works was hurt by the pandemic, it is nothing compared to the negative impacts on those we serve: children in crucial stages of development, and especially youth from low-income families and those in under-resourced areas. Wonder Works understands the importance of providing in-person, COVID-safe experiential learning opportunities to help children regain lost time after challenging years of isolation. As a leader in early childhood education with over two decades of experience in Oak Park, Wonder Works Children's Museum will play a critical role in helping young people and their families overcome the effects of the pandemic.

We are asking for support to help us reach four objectives which will both **reinforce** existing Wonder Works structures to help us get past the challenges of the pandemic, and **revitalize** our programming to build new capacity which will help Wonder Works thrive after the one-time ARPA funds are utilized.

- Objective 1: Capacity: Supporting the Museum Staff to Carry Us Forward
- Objective 2: Capital: A Strong Building for a Strong Foundation
- Objective 3: Programming: Establishing and Growing Community-Centered Programs
- Objective 4: Marketing: Spread the Word and Make Early Childhood Education Accessible to All

Objective 1: Capacity: Supporting the Museum Staff to Carry Us Forward

A strong staff team is imperative to the success of our museum. Our staff are the guides who lead children on their educational journey, providing the safe structure in which children can have the freedom to explore and learn. A mix of "on the floor" staff who interact directly with museum visitors and "behind the scenes" support staff is necessary to keep our museum running smoothly. Additionally, high-quality training for all of our staff helps us unify all team members so we can provide the best experience possible for our visitors.

Wonder Works has identified four critical staff positions in need of support.

1. The Visitor Experience Manager is the face of the museum. Kylee Borden leads a team of



- 5-10 Play Specialists as they teach our curriculum and interact with visitors on the floor. She manages the check-in process and visitor data necessary to evaluate the museum. An invaluable asset to the museum, Kylie translates the structure provided by our Program and Education Manager into tangible lessons experienced by our visitors.
2. The Marketing Director, Vanessa Druckman, has played a key role in returning our attendance numbers to pre-pandemic levels. Her newsletters, social media, and website work inform the public of Wonder Works programming and help us identify supporters.
 3. The Grants Manager, a new role as of 2021, has been critical in the management of federal relief funds and new funding opportunities. Lauren Reed's role is to secure stable funding sources which will eventually replace the immediately necessary relief funds which help the museum move past the initial impact of the pandemic, which we are still feeling acutely.
 4. The Volunteer Coordinator, a new role that will need to be created in 2023, will serve as a liaison for the museum and our community. This position will recruit and engage volunteers, facilitate onboarding and training, and build a sustainable volunteer program that is needed to have the additional support to ensure our museum continues to push forward after COVID.

Objective 1 Impact: How does the proposed initiative address immediate or delayed public health, economic or other community harms resulting from or exacerbated by the Covid-19 public health emergency?

A recent study from The Journal of Early Childhood Research about play in various youth-centered settings found that children's museums play a specific and important role in social emotional learning. Whereas children in playgrounds experienced more positive social effects, visitors of children's museums had more negative encounters with their peers. Far from being a point against museums, the study shows how important it is for children to have a safe place to practice the emotional regulation necessary for managing conflict. The myriad of loose parts in the museum and the exhibits which encourage collaboration invariably lead to disagreements. These moments offer potential for children to learn how to regulate their emotions and manage conflict, but only if they are guided properly. Training is therefore imperative so staff can successfully guide children through these critical moments. "Findings related to the relatively high instances of negative social affect in museum settings reinforce the importance of professional development that builds skills among museum educators and facilitators 'on the floor' in recognizing developmentally appropriate social-emotional skills for young children."¹ This research highlights the need for funds to support the salaries of our museum staff as well as high-quality training to ensure that they are able to lead children through the social challenges exacerbated by the pandemic.

Objective 1 Goals: Describe overall program goals

For this objective, our goals are to:

- Support existing staff positions (Grant Manager, Marketing Director, Visitor Experience Manager, 2 Senior Play Specialists, 5 Play Specialists)
- Hire additional staff positions (Volunteer Coordinator)
- Continue to grow our volunteer team

¹ Luke, J. J., Brenkert, S., & Rivera, N. (2022). Preschoolers' social emotional learning in children's museums and community playgrounds. *Journal of Early Childhood Research*, 20(2), 229–241. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1476718X211059913>

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Reinforce and Revitalize Wonder Works' Community-Centered Education



- Provide 3-5 training sessions per year for museum staff
- Grow our visitorship and museum capacity back to pre-COVID numbers

These objectives will keep the museum centered around our mission as we rebuild our capacity to a level where our program revenue and dependable grant support can financially sustain our museum.

| Resource | Cost of Resource | Cost Breakdown | Duration of Resource | Positive Impact |
|--|------------------|--|----------------------|---|
| Visitor Experience Manager salary | \$88,508.74 | One FTE - \$23.98/Hour at 40 Hours/Week (2023) One FTE - \$26.13/Hour at 40 Hours/Week (2024) Pay rate includes COLA | 2 years | Lead front-facing museum operations, support the Play Specialists as they guide visitors through our curriculum |
| Grants Manager salary | \$41,461.00 | \$38.15/Hour - 40 Hours /Month (2023) \$41.58/Hour - 40 Hours /Month (2024) | 2 years | Secure long-term funding to replace short term relief grant funding |
| Marketing and Communication Manager salary | \$35,538.36 | \$21.80/Hour - 60 Hours/Month (2023) \$23.76/Hour - 60 Hours/Month (2024) | 2 years | Help Wonder Works attendance return to pre-pandemic levels by coordinating all marketing activities and initiatives |
| Volunteer Coordinator | \$45,562.00 | One PTE - \$21.80/ Hour at 20 Hours/Week (2023) One PTE - \$23.76/ Hour at 20 Hours/Week (2024) | 2 years | Increase community engagement and relieve burden on our small museum staff team |
| Sr. Play Specialists | \$141,787 | Two (2) PTE - \$18, 53/ Hour at 20 Hours/Week (2023) Two (2) PTE - \$20.20/ Hour at 20 Hours/Week (2024) | 2 years | Implement Wonder Works curriculum, guiding children through play-based learning experiences |
| Play Specialists | \$207,919 | Five (5) PTE - \$15.81/Hour at 20 Hours/ Week (2023) Five (5) PTE - \$17.23/Hour at 20 Hours/ Week (2024) | 2 years 2023/2024 | Implement Wonder Works curriculum, guiding children through play-based learning experiences |
| All Staff Professional Development | \$7,789 | 2023 Symposium for Early Childhood- \$45/person. 15 people. \$675 total. Association for Children's Museums conference: Interactivity 2023- 3 staff members. \$5139 total. \$710 per person for registration fees. \$2130 \$127 per night per person. \$1143 \$400 for travel per person. \$1200 \$74 per day per person for per diems in New Orleans. \$666 CPR training- \$60/person. 15 people. \$900 total. Communication/presentation training- \$400 total. Workplace Safety Training- \$45/person. 15 people. \$675 total. | 1 year | Unify our staff team and provide critical training so that we can execute our museum mission and keep visitors safe |
| TOTAL REQUEST: | \$568,564.28 | | | |

Objective 2: Capital: A Strong Building for a Strong Foundation

Because of the immediacy of needs brought up during the pandemic, Wonder Works has been forced to table many important building projects which are necessary to make the building both safe and environmentally friendly. Replacement of the doors and windows would enhance the safety and security of our visitors. Our windows are at least 50 years old and have sustained the midwestern winters and over time have seen their fair share of use. Replacing our windows will remove safety hazards of being painted shut or being too outdated to open. Having new doors and windows throughout the museum would also ensure that we will save energy and improve the museum's energy efficiency. This will assist us with utility bills and lessen our environmental impact. Additionally, updating the windows and doors will significantly enhance and modernize the look of the building therefore adding to the beautification of the North Avenue Business District corridor.

Objective 2 Impact: How does the proposed initiative address immediate or delayed public health, economic or other community harms resulting from or exacerbated by the Covid-19 public health emergency?

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Reinforce and Revitalize Wonder Works' Community-Centered Education



The importance of a safe place to learn and play cannot be overstated. During the pandemic, children lacked safe spaces where they could gather which has had detrimental effects on their social emotional learning. Investing in the safety and longevity of our building will create stability for our organization and, therefore, the children who come through our doors.

Objective 2 Goals: Describe overall program goals

- Work with contractors to secure bids and complete renovation of windows and doors
- Replace windows and doors by May 2024
- Increase the environmental sustainability of our building with more efficient doors and windows, decreasing negative effects on the environment

| Resource | Cost of Resource | Cost Breakdown | Duration of Resource | Positive Impact |
|----------------------------------|------------------|---|---|---|
| Replacement of Windows and Doors | \$73,385.00 | Initial quote by Certified Window:\$56,450.00. Adjusted 10% per year for inflation. | Construction would be completed by May 2024 | Environmental sustainability, lowering utility costs, added value to our building, and beautifying the North Avenue business corridor by enhancing the outside look of the building |

Objective 3: Programming: Establishing and Growing Community-Centered Programs

Wonder Works has over two decades of experience in providing high-quality early-childhood education to Oak Park and beyond. We do this through regular visits to our museum where we have rotating exhibits, as well as special programs that occur throughout the year and community outreach. With funding from ARPA, Wonder Works will sustain existing programs and create new outreach programs. This support will give us the time to rebuild our admissions to pre-pandemic levels so that the programs can become self-sustaining; ARPA funds will help us bridge that gap as we continue to rebuild our capacity.

Museum Programming

Wonder Works seeks funding to support our Works series, Pop Up Programs, and Guest Presenter series. Our Works series is a perfect example of how we make our love and excitement for learning accessible to all. Spanning a variety of STEAM topics, these multi-day immersive events give young people a hands-on and in-depth experience in the museum as their curiosity takes over. For example, during Box Works, (which was piloted in October 2021), visitors of all ages completely transformed the museum into a maze of box forts, houses, and cardboard inventions during the 5-day takeover event. With specialized tools and support from Play Specialists, children sawed, connected, taped, built, and transformed everyday cardboard boxes into their very own creations. Having free reign

ARPA Community Request:
Reinforce and Revitalize Wonder Works' Community-Centered Education



to make messes, mistakes, and adjustments, children were able to tap into their full artistic potential and produced a castle with a drawbridge, a car wash, a sushi shop, a pirate ship, forts of all kinds, and many long tunnel mazes. The importance of this supported freedom cannot be understated. Trial-and-error experimentation and tinkering are foundations for future engineers and problem-solvers of all kinds! Box Works 2021 received excellent feedback from the 208 children who attended the event. Funding for the Works series will allow us to host 3-5 events annually such as Dino Works, Bubble Works, and Gear Works. Our Pop Up Programs are another arm of our curriculum implementation. Through programs like Toddler Time, Budding Botanists, Wiggles and Giggles, and Thinkers and Tinkerers, we explore specific topics in a developmentally appropriate way for our youngest learners. The Guest Presenter series is a new initiative where we will bring in local visual artists, musicians, dancers, and more in order to make art programs accessible to everyone in Oak Park. ARPA funds will help us purchase the materials and create the curriculum necessary for all of these programs.

Outreach Programming

Wonder Works also seeks funding to expand our outreach programming so that we can remove barriers to accessibility. We will achieve this with Wonder Wheels. Our mobile outreach programming will bring our play-based pedagogies into the community, making high-quality learning accessible to all, particularly those from low-income households with limited access to supplemental education. Developed with innovative curriculum and materials, staffed by knowledgeable and personable educators, Wonder Wheels brings Wonder Works magic directly to young learners.

Rotating and customizable outreach programming themes will mirror our 7 museum exhibits and special programs. For example, a performance-art-themed program would incorporate costumes, props, stories, and prompts from our Lights, Camera, Action exhibit. An engineering-themed program would mirror our Build It exhibit and feature Rigamajig® pieces and a suggested problem to encourage collaboration as children build STEM competencies. The intentional relationship to our museum exhibits offers important continuity; a child showing interest in directing scenes at our performance-art program can deepen their exploration by visiting the corresponding museum exhibit. Utilizing 2021 programming, Wonder Works has a head start on curriculum and materials for multiple program themes: the existing curriculum for Dino Works, Bubble Works, Bright Day Big Blocks, and S.T.E.M. programs would require minimal adjustments to adapt them for Wonder Wheels.

Objective 3 Impact: How does the proposed initiative address immediate or delayed public health, economic or other community harms resulting from or exacerbated by the Covid-19 public health emergency?

While the pandemic has negatively impacted everyone, families from marginalized communities and those with low incomes have been disproportionately affected and continue to feel deeper negative impacts from COVID. We know that many families are still struggling to find the time, transportation, and funds needed to provide their children with supplemental educational experiences. Wonder Works will address these harms by bringing our programs directly to families in need. Wonder Wheels programming would positively impact intended audiences via two outreach models: Play-On-The-Go and Facilitated Play. Play-On-The-Go brings Wonder Wheels programming to libraries, community centers, block festivals, farmer's markets, and more in a booth-style outreach. Families can approach and engage in the activities together. In this model, multi-generational learning is central. For example, at our engineering program, a toddler might manipulate Rigamajig pieces (developing pre-writing coordination) with the help of a parent while their older sibling uses a pulley piece to move an item (developing executive

ARPA Community Request:
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functioning and problem-solving) with prompting from a staff member. Play-On-The-Go allows us to reach community members and grow our museum audience, distributing discount museum passes as needed. In the Facilitated Play model, Wonder Wheels programming would go to daycare facilities and after-school programs to lead groups through organized activities. The staff sets the stage and provides a prompt, balancing instruction with open-ended facilitation.

Objective 3 Goals: Describe overall program goals

- Host 3-5 Works series events each year, engaging new audiences with specific educational themes
- Sustain our Pop Up Program series, replacing consumable materials and curriculum
- Bring Wonder Works' celebrated education models directly to the community through Wonder Wheels mobile outreach programs
 - Identify connections with community members and organizations for whom we will provide free museum access via our Community Partner Program
 - Bridge the achievement gap, providing high-quality supplemental learning to all
- Offer diverse internal and outreach programming that achieves our mission to spark curiosity and creativity in all young children through positive play-based learning experiences.
- Facilitate multi-generational and multi- cultural play between families and bring strangers together through the joy of learning

| Resource | Cost of Resource | Cost Breakdown | Duration of Resource | Positive Impact |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|--|----------------------|---|
| Works series program materials | \$18,000.00 | Supplies and curriculum for Dino Works, Tinker Works, Gear Works, and Box Works. \$9,000 per year | 2 years | Increase museum attendance and highlight specific STEM topics |
| Pop Up Program materials | \$2,400.00 | Supplies and curriculum for Toddler Time, Budding Botanists, Wiggles and Giggles, Thinkers and Tinkerers. \$1,700 per year | 2 years | Provide toddler specific programming for our youngest visitors |
| Guest Presenter Series | \$8,000.00 | \$1000 stipend per performer. 4 per year. | 2 years | Expose children to local artists, musicians, dancers |
| Wonder Wheels Program Carts | \$16,200.00 | Programm supplies and cart purchase, \$8,100 per year | 2 years | Increase accessibility to museum programming and play materials |
| TOTAL REQUEST: | \$44,600.00 | | | |



Objective 4: Marketing: Spread the Word and Make Early Childhood Education Accessible to All

As we return from the pandemic, marketing is of the utmost importance to inform Oak Park of our programming. With ARPA funding we will launch a marketing campaign that will reach further into the community than we would ever be able to go. This will include launching a wide scale social media campaign using all social media outlets to help. We will continue to build out our website, increasing functionality so that visitors can purchase tickets and memberships online as well as reserve the museum for parties. We will also advertise special events to increase accessibility. For example, we will advertise a series of Free days that will allow community members in at no cost. We will also offer Sensory Friendly days to allow play-based opportunities available for ALL children. The first Wonder Works for Everyone will take place at 9am on November 20th.

Museum signs help adult caregivers understand the lessons being learned in each of our exhibits. We will use ARPA funds to develop signs that identify learning targets and discussion prompts for caregivers to help them further support their child’s experience at the museum.

Objective 3 Impact: How does the proposed initiative address immediate or delayed public health, economic or other community harms resulting from or exacerbated by the Covid-19 public health emergency?

One of the most significant challenges of the pandemic on our museum operations has been the negative impact of having to suddenly reallocate our fund to cover the urgent needs of the pandemic, including PPE, safety upgrades, and maintaining the fixed costs of our building during our forced closure. This, coupled with the loss of program revenue, has caused significant economic harm to our organization. Unfortunately, our marketing budget was one of the first things to be cut. ARPA support for our marketing budget will allow us to re-engage our audiences and rebuild our capacity to generate revenue from our programs.

Objective 4 Goals: Describe overall program goals

- Support existing marketing budget needs
- Launch 1-2 new advertising campaigns in 2023
- Increase awareness of Wonder Works programs

| Resource | Cost of Resource | Cost Breakdown | Duration of Resource | Positive Impact |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|--|----------------------|--|
| Museum Signage | \$4,400.00 | Museum Signage, \$2,000 per year | 2 years | Educate caregivers on Wonder Works curriculum, encouraging them to participate in their child's learning |
| Advertisement | \$25,356.00 | Advertisement (Kidlist, Oak Park Park District, Social Media, Chicago Parent, WednesdayJournal, Bus Bench Ad | 2 years | Inform the public of Wonder Works events and increase museum visitorship |
| Customer Relationship Management | \$2,400.00 | Constant Contact Subscription | 2 years | Inform the public of Wonder Works events and increase museum visitorship |
| TOTAL REQUEST: | \$32,156.00 | | | |



8. How does the proposed initiative address immediate or delayed public health, economic or other community harms resulting from or exacerbated by the Covid-19 public health emergency?

Described under each objective heading in the project narrative above.

9. Describe overall program goals

Described under each objective heading in the project narrative above.

Program Eligibility:

Strategic Goals

10. Can you describe a link with this proposed program and the Village Board's goals?

Objective 1: The objective to support staff positions and provide high quality training aligns with the Village Board goals of:

- *Communicate & Collaborate with colleagues and community partners:* our trainings will rely on the expertise of our local colleagues and partners, ensuring that the skills learned from the trainings reflect the voices and histories of our community.
- *We aim to Build Trust:* By investing in the stability of our staff positions and training, we are creating trust within the Wonder Works team which will be felt by the young learners who visit our museum.
- *We are Fiscally Responsible with our public resources:* investment in staff positions will help us increase our museum capacity and bridge the gap until we can return to pre-COVID visitor numbers.

Objective 2: The objective to support the capital improvement of replacing our doors and windows aligns with the Village Board goals of:

- *The Village of Oak Park will invest in a Sustainable Future:* our 50 year old windows and doors are currently not environmentally friendly. Their replacement will significantly decrease our negative impacts to the environment via high energy output due to heating and cooling costs.
- *Focus on COVID recovery that includes infrastructure & business recovery efforts:* replacement of our windows and doors has been a critical project that has long been put on the back burner. This project will be an investment in the longevity of our museum building, allowing us to focus on our mission of making early childhood education available to all.
- *Focus on corridor investment in five-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) 2a. North Avenue:* Wonder Works is a staple of North Avenue. With over two decades of history, we are an important and active member of the North Avenue community.
- *We are Fiscally Responsible with our public resources:* the replacement of the windows and doors will help us lower utility costs.

Objective 3: The objective to support and grow our early childhood programming aligns with the Village Board goals of:



- *We are Community-Centered in our thinking:* we develop programs and curriculum by seeking feedback from our visitors, local educators, and early childhood university programs. These programs reflect the needs of our community.
- *Increase opportunities for community engagement:* Our volunteer programs provide ample opportunities for the greater community to engage with our organization
- *Report on status of community gardens and pollinator gardens in our Village:* our community garden provides a free accessible green space to passerby at all times.

Objective 4: The objective to support our marketing aligns with the Village Board goals of:

- *Increase opportunities for community engagement:* marketing is necessary for community engagement. Many of our visitors have expressed that they were not aware that our museum had reopened. Support of our marketing efforts will allow us to increase visibility and help us return to pre-COVID visitor numbers.
- *Focus on COVID recovery that includes infrastructure & business recovery efforts:* Marketing is a critical component of our business recovery from COVID.

Community Benefit

11. Describe the residents impacted (#, age) and over what duration; Is this program for low moderate income recipients ?

Wonder Works focuses on ages birth to 8, though we also provide opportunities for individuals to remain involved once they grow older. Many older siblings come with their families to the museum and enjoy multi-generational play with their families. Pre-teens through adults volunteer at our museum as well.

We reach low and moderate income residents through our Community Partner Program. Potential participants are referred to us through one of our partner organizations or via visiting the museum with Museums4All or an EBT/LINK card.

Race Equity Impact

12. What racial/ethnic groups are currently most advantaged and most disadvantaged by the issues this proposal seeks to address?

According to 2021 data from the Collaboration for Early Childhood, Oak Park and River Forest—our top 3 zip codes— are home to 3,800 children aged five and under and 645 young children challenged by poverty. Oak Park School District 97, which has 8 local elementary schools, found in 2021 that ELA test scores are 34% higher for White students than Black students and Math test scores are 40% higher for White students than Black students. This unacceptable disparity starkly shows one effect of the inequity ever-prevalent in our society. Another symptom of underlying inequity is seen in the lack of accessible, safe outdoor spaces which are proven to have physical and mental health benefits critical to healthy development. In a recent interview with the Children and Nature Network, health equity expert Dr. Hanaa Hamdi states, “in the same communities where we see lack of affordable and safe shelter, access to healthy food, clean water and fresh air to breathe, we also see lack of access to safe parks and other



green infrastructure.”² We recognize, therefore, the need to make our outdoor spaces available to CPP participants and passerby alike. While certainly no replacement for systemic change, the Wonder Works Community Partner Program seeks to play a small part in making educational experiences accessible for the families for whom those experiences have been repeatedly denied. One program participant said, “thank you for the opportunity to bring my child for her to experience equality. Here we do not feel different than others.”

**13. What positive impacts on equality and inclusion, if any, could result from this proposal?
What racial/ethnic groups could benefit? Will it reduce disparities or discrimination?**

It is well researched that forming friendships across cultures, income levels, and backgrounds has a positive impact on a child’s empathetic understanding of the world. This work begins in infancy and continues throughout a young person’s development, highlighting the importance of forming diverse relationships during early childhood. According to the intergroup contact hypothesis, “contact between individuals from different racial groups can be effective in reducing prejudice, in particular, when contact is: among groups of equal status, based on common goals, based on cooperation rather than competition, and supported by external authorities.”³ Wonder Works is specifically designed to foster cooperation and enjoyable interactions between all of our visitors, spanning diverse backgrounds. For example, in our daily Wiggles and Giggles programming in June 2022, museum visitors were gathered to sit side by side and work together to create a cacophonous rainstorm using various instruments. In this interaction, all children were given equally important roles, they worked towards the common goal of making a rainstorm, and were guided by museum staff. Joyful collaborative experiences like these quickly turn strangers into friends and guide children towards forming positive relationships across racial and economic groups.

Measures & Reporting

14. Do you have program success indicators and progress benchmarks (list them)

Progress towards our museum’s success is measured with three primary reporting tools: visitor impression surveys, visitor engagement observational surveys, and quantitative analysis of visitor metrics. These tools will help us identify general feelings towards our programming from our visitors, particularly the adult caregivers. Additionally, a critical method for evaluating the effectiveness of our curriculum is conversations between staff and young learners themselves. In early childhood education, educator and employee evaluations and personal narratives are some of the most informative ways of capturing the effectiveness of a lesson. The understanding of the complex systems occurring in each of our museum exhibits may be difficult to capture comprehensively with surveys, but can be evaluated through observation of our visitors over time. This type of progress tracking requires the development of relationships between our Play Specialists and the children that visit our museum. Wonder Works has always regarded these types of observations as our best indicators of success.

Perhaps the most quantifiable metric of our success is our visitor numbers themselves. We carefully track the number of visits as well as unique visitors and consider repeat visits to be an indicator

²<https://www.childrenandnature.org/resources/investments-in-nature-are-a-win-win-for-communities-re-covering-from-covid-19-qa-with-dr-hanaa-hamdi/>

³ Crystal, David S et al. “It is Who You Know That Counts: Intergroup Contact and Judgments about Race-Based Exclusion.” *The British journal of developmental psychology* vol. 26,1 (2008): 51-70. doi:10.1348/026151007X198910



of successful programming. This data is monitored by our Visitor Experience Supervisor and Leadership Management Team.

15. How would you describe the impact to the community? How will these impacts be documented and evaluated that you are meeting the intended goals and community benefits? Please provide examples.

Wonder Works has over two decades of experience as a leader in early childhood education. Our impact is seen in the number of young visitors who come through our doors and the number of individuals who find ways to keep Wonder Works in their lives after their children age out. Julianne Nery visited the museum for years when she was a new parent: "I learned early on how important experiences at the museum were to their learning and social development. It allowed me also to socialize with other parents, because I knew I had to learn so much about parenting." Her passion for the museum led her to serving on the Wonder Works Board of Directors and most recently, giving back as Board President. Julianne's 16 year involvement exemplifies a lifelong connection to Wonder Works, built on her family's love of the museum. She is just one example of a community member who saw the positive impact Wonder Works has on the community.

One of our goals is to increase the number of visitor surveys and impressions that we collect on a regular basis. Quotes from adult caregivers help us capture genuine feedback so that we can assess progress towards our impact goals. For example, when our Play Specialists ask caregivers to take photos of museum visitors, they also ask for the caregiver to describe their child's experience in the museum. Collecting these quotes helps us paint a picture of the community benefits of our museum in a much more vibrant way than visitor numbers.

Project Cost

16. Total Project cost: Total ARPA request: \$718,705.28

17. Provide timetable when funds will be spent

Please see the budget charts under each objective in the project proposal narrative for a cost breakdown of each spending category. All funds will be spent over the course of 2 years.

18. Do you need all the grant funds in one distribution

Ideally, Wonder Works would like to receive the funds in one grant distribution. Previous state relief grants that were distributed as a refund posed the challenge of having to advance money and wait for the funds to be deposited into our account. As a small organization, it poses a significant burden on us to advance such large sums of money and it removes a financial safety net for our museum.

Project Sustainability

19. Do you have a plan to keep this initiative in place once the one-time ARPA funds are used? Please describe.

The admission revenue losses caused by the pandemic have been catastrophic for Wonder Works. Our museum would not have been able to survive had it not been for emergency federal relief funds. As the pandemic enters a new phase, these funding sources have begun to dry up,

ARPA Community Request:
Reinforce and Revitalize Wonder Works' Community-Centered Education



posing a difficult challenge because our admissions revenue has not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels. However, our trajectory has shown consistent increases since our reopening. Museum attendance will continue to improve as more children become vaccinated and families feel safer about in person programming. Our budget projections for 2022 and 2023 reflect the additional revenue that will be generated from our return to pre-pandemic levels of operation.

In 2021, Wonder Works hired a Grants Manager. This role was previously filled by past Executive Directors and board members and was therefore often an afterthought. We expect that as Covid relief funds continue to dissipate, the Grant Manager will shift attention to securing foundation and corporate support, areas that have not been fully explored by the museum. From our relationship with other children's museums, we know that with time and effort, we will be able to build relationships within Oak Park and beyond that will replace the immediate support from relief funds.

Our project proposal contains not only the immediate and urgent need to fund staff positions and programs which lack their usual revenue funding streams, but also one-time building renovations that will help us build greater capacity. A strong building is the foundation to our work and allows us to focus on programming which will increase our revenue streams. Just like the addition of the Grant Manager has enabled the Executive Director to focus on revenue generation, the replacement of our windows and doors is necessary to help us increase our stable long-term admission revenue streams.

Timetable:

20. Provide a comprehensive timeline to implement your proposed program and what is the duration of the program

Objective 1:

The objective to support staff positions and provide high quality training will occur for the entire 2 year grant period. The search for a Volunteer Coordinator position will occur in 2023, as soon as funding is available. Training opportunities will occur throughout the year and will be set up as funding is received. Two upcoming conference dates are set: The Early Childhood Symposium will occur on February 25th, 2023 and the Association for Children's Museum's Interactivity 2023 will occur April 26th-28th, 2023.

Objective 2:

The objective to support the capital improvement of replacing our doors and windows will occur before May 2024. The museum must temporarily close for this work to occur.

ARPA Community Request:
Reinforce and Revitalize Wonder Works' Community-Centered Education



Objective 3:

The objective to support and grow our early childhood programming will occur for the entire 2 year grant period. Our Works series, Pop Up Programs, and the Guest Presenter series will occur evenly spaced throughout the year. Though the timing of these programs is still being established, below is a tentative calendar for 2023.

| JANUARY | | APRIL | | JULY | | OCTOBER | |
|----------|---|---------|--|-----------|---|----------|------------------------------------|
| 4 | Member Night | 1 - 2 | Dino Works | 8 | Member Night | 1 | Adaptive Play Time |
| 12-15 | Community Week | 1-7 | NAEYC Week of the Young Child | 15-16 | Bubble Works | 9 | Indigenous Peoples Day |
| 16 | Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service | 13 - 17 | Bug Week | 23 | Sensory Play Day | 12 - 16 | Animal Week |
| 27 | National Lego Day | 22 | Earth Day | | | 22 | Wondereen & Boo |
| 29 | Sensory Play Day | 23 | Sensory Play Day | | | | |
| | | 28 | Arbor Day | | | | |
| FEBRUARY | | MAY | | AUGUST | | NOVEMBER | |
| 11 | Valentine's Day Sock Hop | 4 - 8 | <i>IN PROGRESS</i> Ocean/Mermaid/Shark Works | 1 - 17 | Art Room Take Over: Unusual Medium | 5 | Member Night |
| 16 - 27 | Art Room Take Over Artist Spotlight | 14 | Mother's Day | 17 - 21 | Transportation Week | 9 - 13 | Maker Week |
| 24 | Wonderivia | 19 | Member Night | | | 19 | International Family Volunteer Day |
| | | 22 | National Scavenger Hunt Day | | | | |
| | | 25 | National Paper Airplane Day | | | | |
| MARCH | | JUNE | | SEPTEMBER | | DECEMBER | |
| 2 | Read Across America Day | 1 - 17 | Art Room Take Over: Communal Project | 7 - 11 | <i>IN PROGRESS</i> Q4 Revenue Works Event | 7 - 11 | Winter Fest |
| 2 - 6 | Art Room Take Over Cont. Artist Spotlight Cont. | 4 | A Day in Our Village | 16 | National Playdoh Day | 31 | Noon Years Eve |
| 20 | Very Hungry Caterpillar Day | 18 | Father's Day | 17 | National Dance Day | | |
| 28 - 31 | Dino Works | 19 | Juneteenth | | | | |
| | | 22 - 26 | Space Week | | | | |

The Wonder Wheels program curriculum will be developed as soon as funding is available. Our goal is to begin implementing this programming in January 2023.

Objective 4:

The objective to support our marketing will occur for the entire 2 year grant period. Our marketing director will continue to release weekly newsletters and regularly update our website. We will invest in new advertising methods in mid 2023 when grant funds are available.



Other:

21. If you don't receive the funds, what are the impacts and will the program not occur in the future? What would be your plan to get this program running without ARPA assistance?

Wonder Works relies heavily on admission and events for its sustaining revenue. In 2019, museum admissions constituted 63% of the year's total revenue, with an additional 20% coming from other programs and special events. This is Wonder Works' challenge; the immediate loss of our most stable revenue stream and its slow return has put the museum in the critical place of relying on temporary support as we rebuild to the pre-pandemic level of stability which we maintained successfully for over 20 years. It is likely that the objectives above will not be met within the next 2 years without funding from the ARPA.

22. Can your program or a portion of your project wait until January 2023 to coincide with the anticipated next phase of community ARPA requests? What would be lost if this program waited until 2023? Do you have a plan to make up this loss?

We would like to begin these projects as soon as possible, but if necessary, we could wait until January 2023.

23. Are you requesting ARPA funding from other agencies for this program? Are you requesting ARPA funding from other agencies for other programs?

We received \$10,000 from the Oak Park Area Arts Council. We are not at this time requesting ARPA funding from other agencies.

| Wonder Works Children's Museum | | | | |
|---|------------------|--|---|---|
| ARPA Community Request Budget: | | | | |
| Reinforce and Revitalize Wonder Works' Community-Centered Education | | | | |
| Objective 1: Capacity: Supporting the Museum Staff to Carry Us Forward | | | | |
| Resource | Cost of Resource | Cost Breakdown | Duration of Resource | Positive Impact |
| Visitor Experience Manager salary | \$88,508.74 | One FTE - \$23.98/Hour at 40 Hours/Week (2023) One FTE - \$26.13/Hour at 40 Hours/Week (2024) Pay rate includes COLA | 2 years | Lead front-facing museum operations, support the Play Specialists as they guide visitors through our curriculum |
| Grants Manager salary | \$41,461.00 | \$38.15/Hour - 40 Hours /Month (2023) \$41.58/Hour - 40 Hours /Month (2024) | 2 years | Secure long-term funding to replace short term relief grant funding |
| Marketing and Communication Manager salary | \$35,538.36 | \$21.80/Hour - 60 Hours/Month (2023) \$23.76/Hour - 60 Hours/Month (2024) | 2 years | Help Wonder Works attendance return to pre-pandemic levels by coordinating all marketing activities and initiatives |
| Volunteer Coordinator | \$45,562.00 | One PTE - \$21.80/ Hour at 20 Hours/Week (2023) One PTE - \$23.76/ Hour at 20 Hours/Week (2024) | 2 years | Increase community engagement and relieve burden on our small museum staff team |
| Sr. Play Specialists | \$141,787 | Two (2) PTE - \$18.53/ Hour at 20 Hours/Week (2023) Two (2) PTE - \$20.20/ Hour at 20 Hours/Week (2024) | 2 years | Implement Wonder Works curriculum, guiding children through play-based learning experiences |
| Play Specialists | \$207,919 | Five (5) PTE - \$15.81/Hour at 20 Hours/ Week (2023) Five (5) PTE - \$17.23/Hour at 20 Hours/ Week (2024) | 2 years 2023/2024 | Implement Wonder Works curriculum, guiding children through play-based learning experiences |
| All Staff Professional Development | \$7,789 | 2023 Symposium for Early Childhood- \$45/person. 15 people. \$675 total. Association for Children's Museums conference: Interactivity 2023- 3 staff members. \$5139 total. \$710 per person for registration fees. \$2130 \$127 per night per person. \$1143 \$400 for travel per person. \$1200 \$74 per day per person for per diems in New Orleans. \$666 CPR training- \$60/person. 15 people. \$900 total. Communication/presentation training- \$400 total. Workplace Safety Training- \$45/person. 15 people. \$675 total. | 1 year | Unify our staff team and provide critical training to execute our museum mission and keep visitors safe |
| TOTAL REQUEST: | \$568,564.28 | | | |
| Objective 2: Capital: A Strong Building for a Strong Foundation | | | | |
| Resource | Cost of Resource | Cost Breakdown | Duration of Resource | Positive Impact |
| Replacement of Windows and Doors | \$73,385.00 | Initial quote by Certified Window:\$56,450.00. Adjusted 10% per year for inflation. | Construction would be completed by May 2024 | Environmental sustainability, lowering utility costs, added value to our building, and beautifying the North Avenue business corridor by enhancing the outside look of the building |
| TOTAL REQUEST: | \$73,385.00 | | | |
| Objective 3: Programming: Establishing and Growing Community-Centered Programs | | | | |

| Resource | Cost of Resource | Cost Breakdown | Duration of Resource | Positive Impact |
|--|---------------------|--|----------------------|--|
| Works series program materials | \$18,000.00 | Supplies and curriculum for Dino Works, Tinker Works, Gear Works, and Box Works. \$9,000 per year | 2 years | Increase museum attendance and highlight specific STEM topics |
| Pop Up Program materials | \$2,400.00 | Supplies and curriculum for Toddler Time, Budding Botanists, Wiggles and Giggles, Thinkers and Tinkerers. \$1,700 per year | 2 years | Provide toddler specific programming for our youngest visitors |
| Guest Presenter Series | \$8,000.00 | \$1000 stipend per performer. 4 per year. | 2 years | Expose children to local artists, musicians, dancers |
| Wonder Wheels Program Carts | \$16,200.00 | Programm supplies and cart purchase, \$8,100 per year | 2 years | Increase accessibility to museum programming and play materials to all children |
| TOTAL REQUEST: | \$44,600.00 | | | |
| <u>Objective 4: Marketing: Spread the Word and Make Early Childhood Education Accessible to All</u> | | | | |
| Resource | Cost of Resource | Cost Breakdown | Duration of Resource | Positive Impact |
| Museum Signage | \$4,400.00 | Museum Signage, \$2,000 per year | 2 years | Educate caregivers on Wonder Works curriculum, encouraging them to participate in their child's learning |
| Advertisement | \$25,356.00 | Advertisement (Kidlist, Oak Park Park District, Social Media, Chicago Parent, WednesdayJournal, Bus Bench Ad | 2 years | Inform the public of Wonder Works events and increase museum visitorship |
| Customer Relationship Management | \$2,400.00 | Constant Contact Subscription | 2 years | Inform the public of Wonder Works events and increase museum visitorship |
| TOTAL REQUEST: | \$32,156.00 | | | |
| TOTAL ARPA REQUEST: | \$718,705.28 | | | |