



**TO:** CRA Board of Directors

**FROM:** Lee Feldman, ICMA-CM, City Manager

**DATE:** May 7, 2013

**TITLE:** Funding Request - Flagler Village Community Garden

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**Recommendation**

It is recommended that the CRA Board authorize a grant of \$30,000 from Northwest-Progresso-Flagler Heights (NPF) Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) funds be provided to the Flagler Village Community Garden, Inc. (FVCG) to support Phase I of the construction of a community garden in the Flagler Village neighborhood and find that the contribution is consistent with NPF CRA redevelopment plan.

**Background**

The Flagler Village Community Garden, Inc. is a community-based, not-for-profit organization established in September 2012. According to the information provided by the organization, the Flagler Village Community Garden was created to promote urban gardening for education, food production, and beautification. A project business plan for the Flagler Village Community Garden has been prepared by the organization and is attached for your information as Exhibit 1.

The total project budget provided outlines an overall capital construction of \$110,750. The project is anticipated to be constructed in three phases, for an average cost of about \$37,000 per phase. Phase I is projected to cost \$36,355. FVCG anticipates that the funding for phase two and three of the project will be secured through community contributions that will consist of memberships and sponsorships. However, the organization has not discounted the opportunity to apply for grants and other funding opportunities that may be available as future phases are constructed. The business plan assumes that all monies available to the organization after construction is completed will be used for on-going maintenance and expenses. The annual cost associated with maintenance and expenses are expected to range from \$5,400 in year 1 to \$7,865 in year 3.

The Flagler Village Community Garden will be constructed on property owned by the First Evangelical Lutheran Church of Fort Lauderdale. A ten-year lease between the Flagler Village Community Garden sponsor and the church has been negotiated to construct the improvements. A copy of the proposed lease between Flagler Village

Community Garden, Inc. and the First Evangelical Lutheran Church of Fort Lauderdale is attached as Exhibit 2.

### **CRA Advisory Board Discussion**

The Northwest-Progresso-Flagler Heights CRA Advisory Board discussed the Flagler Garden funding request at their advisory board meetings on January 23<sup>rd</sup>, February 27<sup>th</sup> and March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2013. At the March 26, 2013 meeting, CRA staff recommended a capital grant of 50% of the Phase I project costs or \$18,177.50. The CRA Advisory Board recommended a contribution of \$5,000 to assist with the development of the first phase of the project.

The CRA Advisory Board concerns centered around two issues. First, some members were concerned about the lease between Flagler Village Community Garden, Inc. and the First Evangelical Lutheran Church of Fort Lauderdale. Some advisory board members were concerned that issues such as parking and access were not addressed satisfactorily in the lease. Second, several advisory board members were concerned about the lack of experience they had in reviewing capital project funding requests that were not associated with an infrastructure improvement, a streetscape improvement or public space enhancement connected with a large-scale development project such as the Alexan at Flagler Village, Northwest Gardens I or the Sistrunk Streetscape Enhancements. During their discussion, several advisory board members suggested that community-driven initiatives be funded through a new program that would address creative ideas that are consistent with the goals of the redevelopment program and have indirect impact on tax increment revenue. In response to the concerns of the CRA Advisory Board, staff has submitted a Community Investment Program (CIP) application for the FY 2014 to establish a Community-Driven Initiative Program using NPF CRA funds.

After further review of the funding request, staff recommends that the CRA increase the grant for Phase I to \$30,000 for the Flagler Village Community Garden project. By assisting more aggressively in the first phase of the project the FVCG project sponsors will have more time to secure more memberships, sponsorships and grants for phases II and III. Funding would be disbursed after evidence of the remaining funds (\$6,355) for construction is verified, and an executed construction contract is provided, and proper insurance has been secured. Project funding is proposed to be released in two disbursements – at 50% and 100% of project completion.

### **Consistency with Redevelopment Plan**

The creation of a community garden or an urban farming initiative is not specifically identified in the 2001 NPF CRA redevelopment plan. However, page 46 of the 2001 redevelopment plan specifically references the need for the NPF CRA to encourage enhancements that impact and benefit the neighborhoods. In Section D on page 46 the redevelopment plan suggests that the plan "...will assist in providing public amenities and incentives as inducements to stimulate private development to upgrade and replace incompatible land uses and blighting conditions currently affecting the area". The community garden project will be a privately sponsored public amenity that will be an

attraction for additional capital investment in the area. A copy of page 46 from the redevelopment plan is attached for your review as Exhibit 3.

**Resource Impact:**

Funding is available in DSD060603, in Sub-object 3299 – Other Services. Funding availability in FD106 – DSD060603 is contingent upon a funding transfer from FD347. The funding transfer is scheduled for approval with the consolidated budget amendments on June 4, 2013.

**FUNDS AVAILABLE**

FUND	SUB FUND	FUND NAME	INDEX #	INDEX NAME	SUB OBJECT #	SUB OBJECT NAME	AMOUNT
106	01	Fort Lauderdale CRA	DSD060603	Fort Lauderdale CRA	3299	Other Services	\$30,000
<b>TOTAL</b>							<u>\$30,000</u>

Attachments:

Exhibit 1 – Flagler Garden Business Plan

Exhibit 2 – Lease Agreement between FVCG and the First Evangelical Lutheran Church

Exhibit 3 – Page 46 of 2001 NPF CRA Redevelopment Plan

Prepared by: Alfred G. Battle, Jr., Economic & Community Reinvestment Manager

Department Director: Greg Brewton, Sustainable Development