

# PIMLICO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY



February 28, 2019

Mayor Catherine Pugh  
City Hall  
100 N. Holliday Street  
Baltimore, MD 21202

Re: FY20 Pimlico Area Local Impact Aid

Dear Mayor Pugh:

As Chair of the Pimlico Community Development Authority (PCDA), I hereby submit PCDA's recommendations regarding the City's proposed spending plan for FY 2020 Video Lottery Terminal (Slots) Revenue, released on January 16, 2019.

PCDA considered all public input to develop these recommendations. Public meetings were held on January 16 and February 5 to review the draft FY20 spending plan and to receive verbal feedback from interested stakeholders. Stakeholders were also invited to submit written comments. A PCDA work session was held on February 21, 2019, to review public feedback on the spending plan. All written comments received were posted on PCDA's website.

The PCDA meetings were very well attended and there were 15 written comments received from all Pimlico Local Impact Eligible Areas. Stakeholders generally provided comments on the following topics: trash and lack of City services, homeowner support, beautification, development support and incentives, and neighborhood initiative competitive grants.

PCDA members largely support the spending plan as written, but we do have a few recommendations as detailed below.

## **Park Heights Master Plan Area**

PCDA generally supports the recommendations in the spending plan as consistent with the Park Heights Master Plan. We recommend the following changes to the Park Heights section of the spending plan:

- **Street and Alley Cleaning – Department of Public Works.** Based on a large number of comments regarding trash, PCDA recommends including funding of \$100,000 for street and alley cleaning. This will complement the efforts being funded for Northern Parkway and extend south into the Park Heights Master Plan area. Complaints regarding trash were most vocal about side streets and from residents in the neighborhoods surrounding the Racetrack.

- **Development Support (Major Redevelopment Area or other major projects).** Housing and Community Development (HCD) indicated to PCDA that they have sufficient funds for Major Redevelopment Area Demolition without the \$620,000 allocated for this purpose in the Draft Spending Plan. They requested that these funds be re-allocated for Development Support. PCDA recommends that \$520,000 from "Demolition" be reallocated to "Development Support" and the other \$100,000 from "Demolition" be reallocated to street and alley cleaning (see above).

The additional funds for Development Support are needed for extensive infrastructure development within the major redevelopment area, including but not limited to realigning roadways and updating utilities. With this change, the new total for Development Support would be approximately \$1.6 million.

There were numerous requests from stakeholders to use this funding in support of various development projects within the community. PCDA recommends that the Final Spending Plan and future Draft Spending Plans include an explanation of HCD's decision making process regarding priorities for this funding and a list of the specific projects that will be funded.

In addition to the above-recommended changes to the spending plan, we offer the following suggestions:

- **Responsive City Services – Mayor's Office of Neighborhoods.** Many of the concerns we heard were about dumping, trash, and litter in the Park Heights Master Plan area. Based on this feedback, we recommend a staff person from the Mayor's Office of Neighborhoods attend all future PCDA meetings and be available to note and address concerns from neighborhood residents and community associations. Further, we hope you will encourage agencies to be more responsive to 311 requests in this priority area in a more thorough and timely manner.
- **Neighborhood Initiative Competitive Grants** - In reviewing many of the comments received regarding the spending plan, we think the Neighborhood Initiative Competitive Grants provide an opportunity for many of the project sponsors to submit proposals for funding. These requests should be vetted through a full competitive application process. We further recommend that the Planning Department continue following-up with these organizations to let them know how to apply for these funds.
- **Homeowner and Block Projects** – The Neighborhood Initiative Competitive Grants provide an opportunity for community organizations to apply for funds, however, many of the concerns we heard referenced the need to support individual property owners and/or individual blocks. These residents are those who have remained committed to Park Heights and want to see it thrive again but are in need of financial assistance to improve their house and/or their block. They are asking for the City to invest in them as long-time homeowners and not just in new development. For the most part, they do not have either interest or capacity to develop a neighborhood grant; they just want a simple process to be able to access funds for improvements to their home or block. PCDA recommends that the City work to identify an intermediary to develop a program that will offer this type of support to homeowners and fund this in a future spending plan.

### **One Mile Radius Area**

In the One Mile Radius, PCDA generally agrees with the projects and priorities as set out in the proposed spending plan and recommends community organizations continue working with city agencies and apply

for competitive grants when applicable. PCDA thanks the Mayor for re-examining the formula for the distribution of funding in the One Mile Radius area based on need to ensure equitable outcomes. PCDA did receive feedback to expand community grant opportunities in Coldspring Newtown. PCDA recommends that the final spending plan include the following item:

- **Priority project for future years:**
  - **Coldspring Newtown – Neighborhood Initiative Competitive Grants.** PCDA recommends including funding for neighborhood initiative competitive grants in FY2021 and FY2022, assuming that the Mercantile building will be sold by then. Coldspring Newtown organizations currently do not receive funding for competitive community grants and community organizations are excited to have the opportunity to implement priority projects and events in their neighborhoods. Community projects could include a wide array of community initiatives, which demonstrate significant impact to address neighborhood needs such as beautification efforts, local arts initiatives, and capacity building for community associations.

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

Sincerely,



Laurie Peinberg  
Chair, Pimlico Community Development Authority

cc: Mr. Pete Hammen, Chief Operations Officer