

**PROPOSED**

**Year 42 Penn Hills CDBG Program**

**Introduction**

As an entitlement grantee community the Municipality of Penn Hills receives an annual federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) allocation from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The following is a summary of the proposed activities for Year 42 (2016). CDBG projects are approved by the Penn Hills Mayor and Council after a formal citizen participation process. The release of funds takes place in July following approval of the Action Plan and completion of environmental reviews by HUD. In 2016 Penn Hills will receive \$644,876.00 in CDBG funds. This combined with approximately \$45,000.00 in Program Income, funds received as homeowners pay off their rehab loans, brings us to a total budget of \$689,876.00. This is a welcome increase from last year's funding. Lower funding levels result in cuts to the budget or force us to hold off on projects until 2017. Subrecipients like the food pantries and the YMCA will be hit the hardest when the funds are reduced. The total given to subrecipients cannot exceed 15% of the total budget, so when the funding drops, subrecipient budgets must be reduced. The order of the projects below is placed in the same order as their prospective Penn Hills account numbers. They are not listed in order of importance. The following projects will begin immediately upon release of funding.

**Contingencies**

**\$ 10,000**

Program regulations allow for a portion of annual CD budgets to be set aside for contingencies and local options. These funds are used to supplement the remaining projects when necessary. They are also available to Council to fund a project during the program year should an unforeseen situation develop. HUD calls them unprogrammed funds, because they are not programmed for any particular activity. Whenever an activity goes over budget, Mayor and Council can authorize the transfer of funds from Contingencies to other activities with a budget amendment resolution.

**YMCA Scholarship Program**

**\$ 15,000**



The Penn Hills YMCA was founded in 1952 and has provided a variety of youth programs ever since. In 2005 it received a major renovation that allowed it to expand its programs to include a variety of programs for adults and seniors. The YMCA has become a focal point for the entire Penn Hills community. The YMCA Scholarship Program has been in operation for many years. The funds are used to assist low income families in the participation of YMCA

programs including day care in the summer and after school child care during the school year. None of the CDBG funds are used for recreation programs. Assistance is based upon the family size and household income. The projected YMCA allocation will be \$15,000 for 2016. The YMCA is located at 11817 Frankstown Road. The objective is to provide a suitable living environment and the outcome is affordability. Performance will be measured by the number of persons that have improved access to YMCA programs that they couldn't otherwise afford.

**LPCC Food Pantry**

**\$ 10,000**



This activity is similar to the Penn Hills Service Association and the Jefferson Manor Food Pantry. The Lincoln Park Community Center Inc. is a non-profit citizen based organization operating the Lincoln Park Community Center located at 7300 Ridgeview Avenue. For many years this building has housed a wide variety of community and family services including a senior room, a gymnasium, a head start program, a satellite library, meeting rooms, and many other activities. The food bank is one of these many services. A large amount of the Lincoln Park's pantry supply is purchased from the Greater Pittsburgh Food Bank. The budget will remain about the same for 2016. The objective is to provide a suitable living environment and the outcome is availability and accessibility. Performance will be measured by the number people that now have new access to food and other items that they couldn't otherwise afford.

**Jefferson Manor Food Pantry**

**\$ 9,000**

This activity provides funds for a food pantry to serve the residents of Jefferson Manor. The hi-rise units are operated by the Allegheny County Housing Authority, and all occupants are low-income. The residents receive rent subsidies and are eligible for food stamp programs but these are deemed to be insufficient. The food pantry supplements other welfare programs, and by virtue of its first floor location in the hi-rise provides a welcome convenience.



The projected budget will remain about the same for 2016. The Jefferson Manor Food Pantry is located at 201 Jefferson Road. Performance will be measured by the number of people that now have new access to food and other items that couldn't otherwise afford. Fundraisers for the Greater Pittsburgh Food Bank include the Empty Bowls Dinner. (left)

## WPHCA Beautification

\$ 22,000

This program has been operated for the many years by Western Penn Hills Community Action. Low-income youths are employed and put to work on various community projects including cleanup work, landscaping and litter removal. The employees are also provided with mentoring programs designed to broaden the work experience. Local non-profit organizations and the municipality's department directors are free to request that the WPHCA and the employees undertake specific projects in low-income areas. These could include graffiti removal, litter cleanup, or vegetation control. Recent discussion about the amount of litter in various locations and possible neighborhood projects has generated a request to spend more time on litter clean up and special projects than clearing vegetation from vacant lots in the coming year. Although the program operates out of the First Baptist Church in Penn Hills on Chadwick Street, this is a town wide program. The objective is to provide a suitable living environment and the outcome is sustainability. Performance will be measured by the number of people that now have new access to this program to provide a suitable living environment.



## Penn Hills Service Association

\$ 30,000

These funds are used to purchase food, clothing, and medical supplies for low-income families on a town-wide basis. Due to an increase in the number of families assisted, the Service Association has requested additional funding; however, as a result of the recent budget cuts from HUD, the funding will remain about the same for 2016. Demand for assistance is expected to increase as the economy continues to falter. The Penn Hills Service Association has been a subrecipient of Penn Hills Community Development Block Grant funds for many years. They are a well organized group of volunteers dedicated to helping the needy. They have provided food, clothing, and medical supplies to deserving families for many years. They supplement these CDBG funds with tag days and other fund raising efforts. Their headquarters is located at 2519 Main Street in the Universal Neighborhood but they serve residents from all parts of the community within their service area. They also purchase supplies for their families from the Greater Pittsburgh Food Bank. The objective is to provide a suitable living environment and the outcome is availability and accessibility. Performance will be measured by the number of people that now have improved access to food and other items that they couldn't otherwise afford.



**Penn Hills Service Association Roof**

**\$ 50,000**

The Penn Hills Service Association has been a subrecipient of Penn Hills Community Development Block Grant funds for many years. Their headquarters is located at 2519 Main Street in the Universal Neighborhood but they serve residents from all parts of the community within their service area. These funds will be used to replace the existing roof. The roof is leaking and causing interior damage to the structure and supplies. Several attempts to repair it have prolonged the life of the roof, but it needs to be replaced. The objective is to provide a suitable living environment and the outcome is availability and accessibility. Performance will be measured by the number of people that now have improved access to food and other items that they couldn't otherwise afford.

**Neighborhood Stabilization Team**

**\$ 3,000**



The Neighborhood Stabilization Team is a group of stakeholders that will work together to stabilize the neighborhood. We have had several meetings in at Laketon Methodist Church on Frankstown Road with members of the community, church and the Penn Hills CDC. Block Group 5232 has good housing stock and strong neighborhood assets. It is also a Low/Mod Block Group. This allows us to focus CDBG dollars in the area that might not otherwise be available to other parts of Penn Hills. Additional CDBG funding is already being directed to this area in the form of proposed sidewalk improvements and improvements to Bon Air Park. PNCIS from the University of Pittsburgh University Center for Social and Urban Research has worked closely with

various neighborhoods throughout the greater region to study foreclosures, at risk neighborhoods, property values, at risk banking practices, predatory lending and blight. We plan to use their assistance and guidance to study and develop a plan to stabilize this and other neighborhoods in Penn Hills. The area benefit will be improved access and availability of safe, decent, suitable and affordable housing. Combined with funding from other sources, mortgage assistance programs, street improvement, neighborhood watch , the formation of a civic association, could help to stabilize and improve this and many other neighborhoods in Penn Hills.

**Single Family Rehabilitation Program**

**\$35,000**

This program provides 0% and 6% loans to qualifying low-income homeowners. Repayment of loans provides an estimated \$45,000 of program income each year which is put back into the program. A matching grant of up to \$2,500.00 is available for accessible improvements. We offer this program to low and moderate income homeowners and encourage them to make necessary improvements to their homes. We assist homeowners in the



application and bidding process. We process applications, prepare bid specifications and monitor construction through the Municipality's Housing Coordinator. During the life of the CDBG program we have approved, carried out the work, and satisfied nearly 700 loans. There are currently 182 loans outstanding. The objective is to provide decent housing and the outcome is availability and accessibility. Performance will be measured by the number of families no longer living in substandard housing.

**Senior Aid Rehab**

**\$ 10,000**



Funds from this activity will be used to provide \$1,000.00 grants to low income senior citizens to assist them with upgrades to improve their quality of life. Typical Senior Aid Rehab activities include accessibility improvements such as grab bars and handrails, electrical upgrades including a new electrical service, and other lower cost items. For activities in excess of \$1,000.00 the applicant can receive the grant and simply pay the difference. Qualifying participants have

taken advantage of both the single family rehab program and the Senior Aid Rehab program. This activity has been in place for a number of years. The amount of participation may have been over estimated in the beginning so significant funds remain from previous years. The CDBG program will be taking over the Senior Service Center Handrail Program from the Senior Service Center. The objective is to provide decent housing and the outcome is availability and accessibility. Performance will be measured by the number of families no longer living in substandard housing.

**Senior Handrail Program**

**\$ 10,000**

Funds from this activity are used to provide grants to low income senior citizens to assist them with upgrades to improve their quality of life. The Senior Service Center operated a



successful handrail program for several years before handing it over to the Planning Department. This activity will enhance our already successful rehab programs and assist senior residents in making their homes safer. Funds from this activity were used to install handrails in 43 low income senior households. The objective is to provide decent housing and the outcome is availability and accessibility. Performance will be measured by the number of families no longer living in substandard housing.

## Townwide Demolition

**\$ 70,000**

In combination with rehabilitation program, the removal of unsafe and deteriorated structures is a very important part of the Municipality's effort to eliminate slums and blight. When owners of deteriorated structures cannot be located and successfully prosecuted, or when owners are low-income individuals that can't afford to remove the violation themselves, we will demolish the structure with CDBG funds. Specific guidelines are carried out to attempt to locate the owner or their heirs prior to bidding out the demolition. Once the property is demolished, a lien is placed on the property so future recovery of costs is possible. This program operates on a town wide basis. These funds can also be used to remove retaining walls, debris, and accessory structures as well as for the reestablishment of appropriate lawns or vegetation.



Penn Hills expends approximately \$50,000.00 per year on the demolition of 10 unsafe structures and will continue to do so at a similar pace. Although the structures are removed, Penn Hills does not own the land. We are removing a code violation and unsafe condition. Maintenance of the vacant lot is still the responsibility of the landowner. Many residents in the vicinity of these lots would like to see these vacant lots maintained as lawn. Although our specifications require that the contractor fine grade the property and rake to establish a surface suitable for mowing, Penn Hills does not have the resources to mow these lots and there is no ordinance that requires owners of vacant property to maintain it as lawn. In fact, the opposite is true. Land is to remain wooded until a development proposal is approved. As long as no development proposal or building permit is obtained, these sites may return to woodland. This activity qualifies under Removal of Slum and Blight. The objective is to provide a suitable living environment and the outcome is sustainability. Outcome performance is measured by the number of unsafe structures removed through this activity.

## Street Reconstruction

**\$ 130,876.00**



This program is designed to provide street reconstruction in low-income neighborhoods throughout the municipality. We have essentially caught up with deteriorated streets in eligible neighborhoods and can now pave on a standard cycle. Street reconstruction is intended to benefit the quality of life in these neighborhoods by improving the physical environment. These improvements add value to the homes in the area and hopefully encourage

home ownership, rehabilitation activity, and new construction. This is not a significant amount of funding when it comes to the cost of street reconstruction. This activity serves low-income areas town-wide. The Superintendent of Public Works and his staff have identified streets in need of reconstruction and prepared a list for the chart below. We also provide funding to the Public Works Department to utilize its own crew to mill and pave portions of Penn Hills local streets with its own equipment to extend the life of the street. The objective is to provide a suitable living environment and the outcome is sustainability. Performance for this activity will be measured by the number of people that no longer have access to only substandard streets as a result of the improvements.

CDBG STREETS YEAR 42					
Street	Termini	Length	Census Tract	Block Group	% Low Mod
Total					

**Sidewalk Improvements**

**\$ 85,000**

Public Transportation is a major concern not mentioned in the Analysis of Impediments but very important when discussing impediments to fair housing and accessibility. Recent cuts by the Pittsburgh Port Authority have greatly impacted low income residents in Penn Hills. Many areas of town with low/mod apartments have very poor service or no service at all. In response to this, we propose to provide accessible improvements such as the continuation and completion of sidewalks and accessible ramps that will assist low income residents in CDBG eligible areas such as the western portion of Frankstown Road. Completion of sidewalks along this and other major thoroughfares will require a considerable amount of funding and years to complete. The Municipal Engineer has assessed the existing sidewalks, gaps, and obstructions along Frankstown Road from Graham Boulevard to Bon Air Road. Specifications are being prepared and finalized. We hope to begin construction on the first phase in 2015/2016. This is a Public Facility Improvement under the Removal of Architectural Barriers. The installation of sidewalks in this area would be a benefit to many low income Penn Hills residents. The objective is to provide a suitable living environment and the outcome is sustainability. Performance for this activity will be measured by the number of people that will have access to new sidewalks as a result of the improvements.



## Senior Service Center Improvements

**\$ 10,000**



The Senior Service Center has requested funding for a variety of projects. The Center is located at 147 Jefferson Road in Penn Hills. Each project is given a level of priority by the Director of the Senior Service Center. First, upgrade the existing fire alarm system. The second item is the installation of a new generator. Future projects could include new windows, remodeling and renovation the restrooms in the basement, new deck for the emergency ramp and general painting and refinishing. These funds in addition to the balance from 2014 and 2015 should be sufficient to complete the above activities. The Penn Hills CDC recently installed raised garden beds at the Center. The Senior Service Center is located at 147 Jefferson Road. The objective is to provide a suitable living environment and the outcome is availability and accessibility. Performance in this activity will be measured by the number of people that no longer have access to only a substandard facility as a result of this improvement.

## William McKinley Improvements

**\$ 20,000**

This activity will fund ongoing improvements at the William McKinley Center. During the 2010/2011 program years we upgraded the electrical service to accommodate future heating and ventilation needs and installed a sump pump in the basement to remove moisture and improve air quality in the building. During the previous program year, we installed a new fire alarm system in the building, restored the fence surrounding the property, repaved the basketball court and installed new hoops and goals. In addition, we prepared specifications for Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards improvements to the exterior of the building. The \$20,000.00 proposed for 2016 will be used to install new accessible ramps and handrails at both the senior center and gym entrances to the building and provide access to the ball field. The proposed funding combined with funding from previous years should be sufficient to complete the project. The building



became eligible for funding as an area benefit following the 2000 Census. Previously only portions of the building that served senior citizens were eligible for CDBG funds. The objective is to provide a suitable living environment and the outcome is availability and accessibility. Performance will be measured by the number of people that no longer only have access to a substandard facility as a result of the improvement.

## Multi-Purpose Center Improvements

\$ 20,000

These funds will be used to make improvements to the Penn Hills Multi-Purpose Center at 2025 Lincoln Road. Funds from this activity will be used to make UFAS improvements to the building including. Accessible improvements will include exterior improvements to entrance doors sidewalk ramps, ball field ramp, and basketball courts. Interior improvements will include new stairwell treads and handrails, and improvements to the restrooms. The proposed funding combined with funding from previous years should be



sufficient to complete the project. Penn Hills owns this building and the Mayor and Council have expressed their commitment to this building and the improvements that have occurred there during the year. The objective is to provide a suitable living environment and the outcome is availability and accessibility. Performance will be measured by the number of people that no longer only have access to a substandard facility as a result of the improvement.

## LPCC Improvements

\$ 20,000

This activity will fund ongoing improvements at the Lincoln Park Community Center located at 7300 Ridgeview Avenue. In March of 2009 a Report on the Code Inspection and Evaluation of the building was completed to identify areas that are in need of attention. The Municipal Engineer performed the review and completed a detailed report. During the program year the Municipal Engineer prepared specs to upgrade the electrical service to accommodate future heating and ventilation needs. The work will be completed in 2016. The estimated cost of these improvements is in excess of \$150,000.00. The proposed funding combined with funding from previous years should be sufficient to complete the project. Future



improvements will include accessible improvements and could include the installation of an elevator. The rear of the building would be ideal for a neighborhood garden space. The objective is to provide a suitable living environment and the outcome is availability and accessibility. Performance will be measured by the number of people that no longer have access to only a substandard facility as a result of the improvement.

### Senior Service Center Vehicles

**\$ 10,000.00**

The Penn Hills Senior Service Center delivers 225 home delivered meals to home bound seniors five days per week. The meals are delivered by volunteers with vehicles provided by the Senior Center. This activity will be utilized to pay the lease/purchase of two new vehicles for home delivered meals. We purchased two vehicles in 2015. Mayor and Council are obligated to provide funding for the entire length of the lease. Funds from this activity will be used to make the second payment in of a five year lease/purchase agreement. The Planning Department can foresee this activity continuing into the future to fund additional vehicles as the vehicles get older and the lease/purchase agreements expire. The purchase of vehicles for the Senior Service Center is eligible as a public service activity. The objective is to provide a suitable living environment and the outcome is availability and accessibility. Performance will be measured by the number of households assisted with improved access to home delivered meals.



### Accessible Building Improvements

**\$ 50,000**



These funds will be used to provide accessible improvements and remove architectural barriers from municipal buildings. This activity is in response to a recent monitoring visit from HUD where various barriers to access municipal buildings were pointed out. These funds will be use to make accessible improvements at the Lincoln Park Community Center, William McKinley Center, Mutli-Purpose Center, Municipal Building and other public facilities. These improvements could include the installation of an elevator to something as simple as a new threshold to provide an accessible route and meet the Americans with Disabilities Act. The municipality is in the process of building a new municipal complex; as a result, these funds will primarily be used to make improvements in other buildings besides the Municipal Building. The objective is to provide a suitable living environment and the outcome is availability and accessibility. Performance will be measured by the number of people that no longer have access to a substandard facility as a result of the improvement.

## General Program Administration

**\$ 70,000**

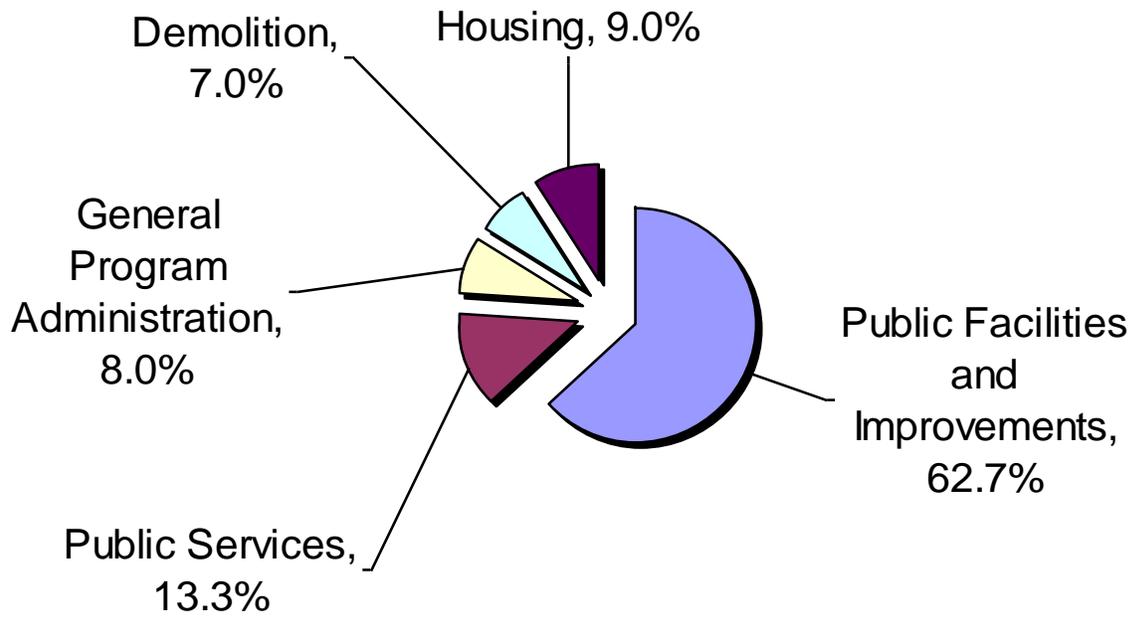
General Program Administration (GPA) is used for consulting costs, legal fees, advertising, computer hardware and software, office supplies, salaries, and other administrative costs incurred by the Planning Department in its operation of the CDBG Program. Other incidental costs may be charged to this account including training, travel expenses, and many other special needs related to the administration of the program. Although we are permitted to use up to 20% of the CDBG expenditures for administration, Penn Hills prides itself on routinely using less than 10% of the funds for administrative expenses. This means that more of the Penn Hills CDBG funds are used to accomplish the goals of the CDBG program which is the benefit to low income people.

## Conclusion

The Penn Hills Department of Planning and Economic Development are assigned the primary responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of the Penn Hills Community Development Block Grant Program. The staff maintains an ongoing relationship with both subrecipients and HUD representatives and maintains project records. Each year with the help of consultants we prepare the Action plan to apply for funding and prepare the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) to report on the year's expenditures and performance. Both of these documents are available in the Planning Department. Citizen comments and inquiries are encouraged and welcome. Write the Penn Hills Dept of Planning and Economic Development at 12245 Frankstown Road, Penn Hills, Pa. 15235, call 412-798-2126, or contact us online at [www.pennhills.org](http://www.pennhills.org).

Citizens should be aware that the Community Development Block Grant Program has an obligation to meet federal regulations. Program activities are designed to primarily benefit low and moderate-income persons. The budget below will be adopted by Mayor and Council in January and forwarded to HUD for their review and approval. There are always possibilities for either amendments to the plan or other programs which may be available to meet your needs. The budget is based on anticipated funding amounts. This could be changed at any time during the application process. We will know the exact amount as the year progresses. For more information, please contact us at your convenience.





**PROPOSED  
YEAR 42 CD PROJECTS**

<u>PROJECT</u>	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>PUBLIC SERVICES</u>
Contingencies	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 0
YMCA Scholarship Program	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
LPCC Food Pantry	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00
Jefferson Manor Food Pantry	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00
WPHCA	\$ 22,000.00	\$ 22,000.00
Penn Hills Services Association	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 30,000.00
Penn Hills Service Association Roof	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 0
PH Neighborhood Stabilization Team	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 0
Single Family Rehab	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 0
Senior Aid Rehab	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 0
SSC Handrail Program	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 0
Town Wide Demolition	\$ 70,000.00	\$ 0
Street Reconstruction	\$ 130,876.00	\$ 0
Sidewalk Improvements	\$ 85,000.00	\$ 0
Senior Service Center Improvements	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 0
WM McKinley Upgrades	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 0
Multi-Purpose Center Improvements	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 0
LPCC Improvements	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 0
Accessible Building Improvements	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 0
General Program Administration	\$ 70,000.00	\$ 0
Senior Service Center Vehicles	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$689,876.00</b>	<b>\$96,000.00</b>

The total for Public Service expenditures cannot exceed 15% of the total CD expenditures for the program year. The above budget is approximately 15 % Public Services.