

# **Appendix B:**

## **Public Comment**

FY 2012-2013 Action Plan



# Public Comment

Affiliation	Comments	Response
<p>4/12/2012 Gary Cobb Central City Concern FFOC Hearing</p>	<p><i>The complete Comments are on file, this is a summary.</i> Gary would like the Action Plan to call out specific services and programs by name to guarantee they will continue. The continuum of care is very important drug and alcohol treatment services are very important.</p>	<p>Staff will encourage using more specific language.</p>
<p>4/12/2012 Student Sarah C. FFOC Hearing</p>	<p><i>The complete Comments are on file, this is a summary.</i> Sarah C. would like to see more prevention services like rent assistance and eviction prevention, and education about these services, because not all homeless need drug and alcohol treatment.</p>	<p>Development of affordable housing, as well as rent assistance and eviction prevention are key Con Plan strategies. The City &amp; County both provide funding for 21.1 Info, our community's information and referral line and self-help website.</p>
<p>4/12/2012 Homeless Saul Cortes FFOC Hearing</p>	<p><i>The complete Comments are on file, this is a summary.</i> Saul Cortes said that there are usually set ways and set programs to help homeless people, such as prisoner reintegration. He said these kinds of programs don't fit everyone. Some people are just trying to get up and out of their situation.</p>	<p>Programs to assist people experiencing homelessness are within Priority 2. The jurisdictions in the Consortium have been investing in the 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness, which assumes that people experiencing homelessness are much like other people, except that they do not have places to call home. The goal of the plan is to end homelessness through a number of housing strategies.</p>
<p>4/12/2012 Gary Cobb Central City Concern FFOC Hearing</p>	<p><i>The complete Comments are on file, this is a summary.</i> The complete Comments are on file, this is a summary. Gary said he is confused about having so many plans (10 year plan, Strategic Plan, Con Plan, etc). He said the messaging seems to fit with that of Central City Concern but he would like to make sure there is a continuum of long-term care in whatever the ultimate plan is. Gary added he wants transitional housing language of the Strategic Plan to be included in the Con Plan.</p>	<p>Funding for transitional housing and drug-and alcohol-free housing is within Priority 2.</p>
<p>4/12/2012 Rachel Post Central City Concern FFOC Hearing</p>	<p><i>The complete Comments are on file, this is a summary.</i> Rachel said it is important to make an effort to align resources of the 10 year plan with the Con Plan. The Strategic Plan should align with the Con Plan. It is important to make sure the health issues align with health programs and services. We need to look at the continuum of care to prevent homelessness, such as addiction treatment and housing. Central City Concern offers a continuum of care. Housing is needed for people with permanent disabilities. Addiction services are significant for people trying to change their lifestyles. Programs like short-term rent assistance are also important. She said that Central City Concern has a high success rate of transitioning people from alcohol- and drug-free housing programs into permanent drug-free housing and lifestyles. A lot of these people find employment in the community. Rachel thinks there is a need for multiple housing options.</p>	<p>Jurisdictions are committed to aligning the 10-year plan with the Con Plan. Programs to assist people experiencing homelessness are within Priority 2. The jurisdictions are investing in a variety of housing &amp; service strategies.</p>
<p>4/12/2012 Sarah C. Student FFOC Hearing</p>	<p><i>The complete Comments are on file, this is a summary.</i> Sarah C. added that low-rent options for low-income people are important and added that she was sad to see more cuts to Tri-Met because of how important this service is to low-income residents.</p>	<p>The PHB Strategic Plan seeks out wholistic strategies to encourage affordable housing options at locations that make it convenient for low income households to access those amenities</p>

<p>4/12/2012 Claudia Long Right 2 Dream Too PDX Needs Hearing Bud Clark Commons</p>	<p><i>The complete Comments are on file, this is a summary.</i> Right 2 Dream Too opened October 10, 2011 on 4<sup>th</sup> and Burnside. It is a place where 30-40 homeless people can get uninterrupted sleep and can leave their belongings in their tents. But they are still sleeping outside. Claudia has physical disabilities and it is not good for her to be outside. She thinks the Con Plan does not have enough shelter for couples. It does not specify what "family" means. Does that include couples? Claudia supports the ESG amendment. She works with Cascadia for her health issues. She does not have income or a primary physician. Any help she can get is great.</p>	<p>PHB notes the support of a person currently experiencing homelessness for the planned ESG activities. PHB recognizes the need for additional housing resources for couples experiencing homelessness. Though HUD regulations prohibit use of this additional allocation of ESG for expansion of shelter capacity, couples experiencing homelessness may be eligible to receive rapid rehousing assistance funded through this allocation.</p>
<p>4/18/2012 Lynne Walker PDX Needs Hearing, Bud Clark Commons</p>	<p><i>The complete Comments are on file, this is a summary.</i> Lynn says she has been both housed and homeless in the past. She thinks semantics are important. The 10 Year Plan to "End" Homelessness might better be phrased The 10 Year Plan to "Understand and Address" Homelessness. This is a societal issue. Many homeless people have been housed in the past—there is a revolving door. Perhaps we have a lot of housing but a lot of people who cannot afford that housing. There is a shortage of places for poor people to sleep. Ending the free rail zone downtown will rip a hole in Trimet and people's access. Mental health and rent assistance are good but we also need a plan to help people get a good night's sleep in a healthy environment even if they do not yet have a lease or long-term solution.</p>	<p>Increasing access to and retention in permanent affordable housing for people currently experiencing homelessness is a primary goal of the use of this ESG allocation for rapid rehousing activities. Rapid rehousing assistance targeted to shelters will help to decrease length of shelter stays, thereby increasing access to existing shelters.</p>
<p>4/18/2012 Laura Kuperstein 211 and Housing Connections PDX Needs Hearing, Bud Clark Commons</p>	<p>Housing Connections connects people with community resources related to health and social services. This year, approximately 20,000 contacts were housing-related. That is 20 percent of all their contacts. They launched a new version of the program and received about 16,000 hits per month on their website. They have to tell people in need there are not enough resources in rent assistance and shelter. It is most challenging to send away low-income families. There are long and closed waiting lists, and options are shrinking. Landlords are more selective. Laura tries to work with other agencies to supply the best information to the public.</p>	<p>Increasing access to and retention in permanent affordable housing for people currently experiencing homelessness is a primary goal of the use of this ESG allocation for rapid rehousing activities. HUD regulations, including restrictions to Fair Market Rents and requirement of rental assistance agreements between property owners and ESG grantees may further challenge the effectiveness of ESG as a rapid rehousing tool during this period of low rental vacancy rates and rapidly increasing rents.</p>
<p>4/18/2012 Maxine Fitzpatrick PCRI Portland Needs Hearing</p>	<p><i>The complete Comments are on file, this is a summary.</i> Housing providers often think they have all the answers, but people who have experienced or are experiencing homelessness may have more relevant solutions. We should listen to them more often. We do have limited resources, but maybe always looking from a financial perspective is not the best way. We should better help those who we can really serve and help transition from homelessness—reduce the revolving door.</p>	<p>Opportunities like the Action Plan hearings, are just one way for individuals experiencing homelessness to share their ideas and solutions. As our community works to implement the changes outlined in the HEARTH Act, we will increasingly focus on reducing recidivism to homelessness.</p>
<p>4/18/2012 Chris Elison Right 2 Dream Too PoDX Needs Hearing, Bud Clark Commons</p>	<p><i>The complete Comments are on file, this is a summary.</i> Chris did not submit official testimony but did comment during the meeting. Right 2 Dream gets a lot of couples referred to them because they are one of the only places that takes couples. They try to set them up with resources and point them toward the missions. Sometimes it just takes a couple months to get back on their feet, find housing and find jobs. Some people who have been consistently homeless are turned away from services because of a criminal record. We need more immersive shelters for couples and women. We need temporary shelters for people who are newly homeless. It would be helpful to have 90-120 day shelters, not just winter shelters.</p>	<p>Jurisdictions fund a variety of longer-term shelter options for men and women, recognizing the need for additional housing resources for couples experiencing homelessness. Though HUD regulations prohibit use of this additional allocation of ESG for expansion of shelter capacity, couples experiencing homelessness may be eligible to receive rapid re-housing assistance funded through this allocation.</p>

<p>4/18/2012 Lynn Walker PDX Needs Hearing, Bud Clark Commons</p>	<p>She would like to see better clarity around the definition of "family." Adults taking care of an adult disabled child—is that a family? Are two adults a family?</p>	<p>While the HUD definition of "family" includes a parent/guardian with a minor child, adult households may be eligible to receive other types of federally-funded assistance.</p>
<p>4/18/2012 Lisa PDX Needs Hearing, Bud Clark Commons</p>	<p><i>The complete Comments are on file, this is a summary . When winter shelters close, women have nowhere to go. For women with no income, a 30 day shelter is not enough. They need time to raise rent deposits, etc. Also, there is very low vacancy in existing shelters.</i></p>	<p>Increasing access to and retention in permanent affordable housing for people currently experiencing homelessness is a primary goal of the use of this ESG allocation for rapid rehousing activities. Rapid rehousing assistance targeted to shelters will help to decrease length of shelter stays, thereby increasing access to existing shelters.</p>
<p>4/18/2012 Shannon Singleton PDX Needs Hearing, Bud Clark Commons</p>	<p><i>The complete Comments are on file, this is a summary. I would like some clarity on how we are identifying "vulnerable" in Priority 4. I would also like to see a coordinated entry system so there is no longer a "wrong" door.</i></p>	<p>Those most vulnerable to living on the streets include people in frail health, people with mental illnesses, and youth people. Jurisdictions are increasingly working toward coordinated entry. Our 211 Info line, is included in Priority 4.</p>
<p>4/18/2012 Unknown PDX Needs Hearing, Bud Clark Commons</p>	<p><i>The complete Comments are on file, this is a summary. Priority 1 should include Housing/shelter for couples. We still need to have some kind of shelter, whether it be a motel/hotel voucher to give people enough time to get into shelter.</i></p>	<p>Jurisdictions fund a variety of shelter options for men and women, families, DV and youth, while recognizing the need for additional housing resources for couples experiencing homelessness. Couples experiencing homelessness may be eligible to receive federally-funded assistance, including motel vouchers.</p>
<p>4/18/2012 Unknown PDX Needs Hearing, Bud Clark Commons</p>	<p><i>The complete Comments are on file, this is a summary. In Priority two, to prevent a person from being homeless after getting housing, they need help financially.</i></p>	<p>Jurisdictions remain committed to strategies in Priority 2, that include rent assistance for rapid re-housing and eviction prevention.</p>
<p>4/18/2012 Unknown PDX Needs Hearing, Bud Clark Commons</p>	<p><i>The complete Comments are on file, this is a summary . Education about homeownership is missing from Priority. I never owned a home and don't know how to get one.</i></p>	<p>PHB sponsors Portland Housing Center, NAYA, Hacienda to support first time homebuyers.</p>
<p>4/18/2012 Unknown PDX Needs Hearing, Bud Clark Commons</p>	<p><i>Hotel/motel voucher strategy should be included in Priority 4.</i></p>	<p>Jurisdictions fund a variety of shelter and short-term housing options for men and women, families, DV and youth, assistance, including motel vouchers.</p>
<p>3/30/2012 Deborah Imse MMHA Email</p>	<p><i>The complete Comments are on file, this is a summary . I am concerned about a memo from Moly Good that appears Under Section III of the 2011-2016 Consolidated Plan in the link to the Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing. The memo from Mr. Good is addressed to the PHB AI Stakeholder Committee Members and is presented as "the results of audit testing that we did in the City of Portland." In view of the fact that the Commissioner in charge of the Bureau that requested the audit found the audit tests unreliable: the letter should be removed from the plan.</i></p>	<p>After publishing the <i>2011 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Report</i> (Report), the Consortium discovered that the audit test results provided by the Fair Housing Council of Oregon were unreliable. Recommendations in the report were informed by multiple other sources of fair housing impediment information: complaint data from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries, Legal Aid Services of Oregon, Disability Rights Oregon, and the Fair Housing Council of Oregon; demographic and geographic data for the region; United States Census data; American Community Survey data; and extensive interviews with citizens, advocates, and housing experts. The Report is amended in part by the inclusion of this public comment.</p>

<p>5/3/2012 Bobby Weinstock NW Pilot Project Email</p>	<p><i>The complete Comments are on file, this is a summary.</i> Top priority should be increasing the supply of affordable rental housing. The shortage of units for households below 30 percent MFI is 11,000. PHB could partner with a large nonprofit housing provider and buy down the rents in existing apartment buildings. The building owner would be provided public funds to reduce the rent when a moderate rent unit becomes vacant. The building owner would partner with a social service agency to refer applicant to the rent-reduced unit and provide ongoing services. The applicant would have to meet the owner's screening criteria. This may be a more cost-effective way than new construction of creating additional affordable units and targeting these units to the very poor. It would certainly support the effort to end homelessness in our community.</p>	<p>The PHB Strategic Plan places a clear priority on low- income rental housing. Strategies such as buying down rents in existing buildings can be explored.</p>
<p>3/27/2012 Larry Southall Letter</p>	<p><i>The complete Comments are on file, this is a summary.</i> I am concerned about a memo from Mioloy Good that appears Under Section III of the 2011-2016 Consolidated Plan in the link to the Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing. The memo from Mr. Good is addressed to the PHB AI Stakeholder Committee Members and is presented as "the results of audit testing that we did in the City of Portland." In view of the fact that the Commissioner in charge of the Bureau that requested the audit found the audit tests unreliable: the letter should be removed from the plan.</p>	<p>After publishing the <i>2011 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Report</i> (Report), the Consortium discovered that the audit test results provided by the Fair Housing Council of Oregon were unreliable. Recommendations in the report were informed by multiple other sources of fair housing impediment information: complaint data from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries, Legal Aid Services of Oregon, Disability Rights Oregon, and the Fair Housing Council of Oregon; demographic and geographic data for the region; United States Census data; American Community Survey data; and extensive interviews with citizens, advocates, and housing experts. The Report is amended in part by the inclusion of this public comment.</p>

Below table submitted by Bobby Weinstock as public comment.

**Comparison of Renter Households and Availability of Units,  
City of Portland, 2000**

<b>Income Range</b>	<b>Renter Households (all sizes)</b>	<b>Rental units available</b>	<b>Percent of Occupants within Income Range</b>	<b>Percent of Need met by Existing Stock</b>	<b>Surplus / Shortage Units</b>
<b>0 - 30% of Median</b>	23,337	11,760	62%	50%	-11,577
<b>30 - 50% of Median</b>	17,150	29,935	48%	175%	12,785
<b>50 - 80% of Median</b>	24,430	47,786	58%	196%	23,356
<b>Greater than 80% of Median</b>	33,887	9,493	Not Available	28%	-24,394
<b>Total</b>	<b>98,804</b>	<b>98,974</b>			<b>170</b>

Source: 2000 CHAS Data

**Comparison of Renter Households and Availability of Units,  
Multnomah County, 2000**

<b>Income Range</b>	<b>Renter Households (all sizes)</b>	<b>Rental units available</b>	<b>Percent of Occupants within Income Range</b>	<b>Percent of Need met by Existing Stock</b>	<b>Surplus / Shortage Units</b>
<b>0 - 30% of Median</b>	26,956	13,050	61%	48%	-13,906
<b>30 - 50% of Median</b>	20,443	34,470	48%	169%	14,027
<b>50 - 80% of Median</b>	29,201	59,070	59%	202%	29,869
<b>Greater than 80% of Median</b>	40,529	10,720	Not Available	26%	-29,809
<b>Total</b>	<b>117,129</b>	<b>117,310</b>			<b>181</b>

Source: 2000 CHAS Data

Bureau of Housing and Community Development

**Public Comments**  
**City of Gresham**  
**Consolidated Plan 2011-2016 Amendment**  
**4/3/2012**

Honorable Mayor and City Councilors,

**I am writing to express reservations about the City's application to create a Section 108 Loan Pool.**

This action could be helpful if the loan pool is used to provide gap financing for projects such as Human Solution's Rockwood Multi-Service Center, which the City did in 2009. I am hesitant about future projects, especially since the City's application lists only example projects and not real projects for the community to review. The City's concurrent application for a separate Section 108 loan application to build a Children's Fountain raises further questions about whether potential loan pool projects will really meet the community's needs and justify the risk to the City's future CDBG allocations and the City's General Fund.

**I am most concerned about the need to pledge our CDBG allocations to repay these loans and the potential impact on our dwindling General Fund if future CDBG allocations decrease so much that they're not sufficient to cover the required payments.** Gresham's CDBG allocations have been generally declining, and the slight increase we received this year is due to increased poverty in Gresham as documented by the census. I understand from staff that most other jurisdictions had their allocations cut this year. For example, Portland lost half of its allocation, or approximately \$2 million. Given the federal government's overall cuts to domestic programs, any loan payments taken from our CDBG allocations will only compound the negative impact on the programs those allocations are supposed to support. With Gresham's increased poverty, these allocations are needed more than ever, and it is misguided to redirect them.

For the record, Gresham's CDBG allocation for the last few years are as follows:

FY 05/06	\$1,010,783
FY 06/07	\$905,755
FY 07/08	\$903,182
FY 08/09	\$871,146
FY 09/10	\$885,411
FY 10/11	\$959,393
FY 11/12	\$800,918
FY 12/13	\$867,201

I understand that staff hopes to arrange other sources to repay these potential loans, but as our experience shows with the Center for the Arts Foundation's inability to repay \$340,000 of the \$1.5 million the City loaned it for the Arts Plaza, we should evaluate worst-case scenarios. Given the current economy and Oregon's broken tax structure, I question how these potential loans will be repaid. We cannot afford to make the repayments from our dwindling General Fund if our future CDBG allocations

decrease so much that they're not sufficient to cover the required payments. Furthermore, the principal repayment schedule in the loan application shows a disturbing balloon payment in the final year: the gradually increasing principal repayments jump from \$98,000 in 2031 to \$278,000 in 2032.

**Before proceeding with this loan application, I urge the Council to have the promised community conversation about funding city obligations. I also urge the Council to create a very public process to evaluate potential projects before the City applies for Section 108 loans on their behalf.** Just having review by the Community Development and Housing Subcommittee is insufficient. That subcommittee was very concerned about the lack of notice for the current two Section 108 applications.

Thank you for your consideration.

Carol Rulla  
5162 SE 28th Dr.  
Gresham, OR 97080  
4/3/2012

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April 3, 2012  
City of Gresham  
Urban Design & Planning  
Attn: Louise Dix  
Community Revitalization Program Coordinator  
1333 NW Eastman Pkwy  
Gresham OR 97030

Dear Louise,  
My home is within of the original City of Gresham land plat. My family has a strong interest in seeing Downtown Gresham develop in ways that are beneficial to ourselves and our friends and neighbors; many of whom work nearby. Convenience is especially important for my young children who can easily walk or bicycle to the Skate Park, Main Park, the library, shops or the Arts Plaza. I'm also a business owner in Rockwood and an active proponent of urban renewal in West Gresham.

Recently I received a two-page letter titled "FIVE YEAR FY 2011-1016 CONSOLIDATED PLAN AMENDMENT / AMENDMENT TO THE ONE YEAR ACTION PLAN 2011-1011". My voice is perhaps not alone in saying that this document has led to a very frustrating and time-consuming search for relevant information. Although I appreciate Staff work in this area and the urgent needs of Historic Downtown Gresham, ***at this point in time, I believe the information available is insufficient for making any concrete decisions. Further study is indicated, and I offer the detail below in support of this conclusion.***

**Basic Accounting Concerns:**

Operating Costs -

-- How does City of Gresham break down its Parks & Recreation maintenance budget on an asset-by-asset basis?

Section 108 Loan Repayment Schemes -

-- In both cases, why are Sec. 108 loan interest payments excluded from the repayment schedules?

-- How will the 20th year balloon payments for these loans be financed?

--Who pays if Gresham's CDBG allocations shrink below a sustainable level?

Center for the Arts Plaza -

-- Is there a Master Plan outlining the Downtown Center for the Arts Plaza and fountain?

**Specific to the Children's Fountain: How can affected owners and renters become more involved?**

How many downtown properties are rentals? How many are owner-occupied businesses or homes? How many are investment properties? **I'd really like to see, and I think HUD as well, how the local community commits to projects like the Downtown Fountain.** Citing two possible models: Business owners in Portland pay a nominal monthly assessment to support the Portland Streetcar in the Pearl District and South Waterfront. This special assessment helps pay off the original bond and also supports operating costs. In Beaverton's fountain example, the project was supported by a library bond because the fountain is across the street from Beaverton's library.

**Strong concerns about accuracy of data supporting "slum and blight"**

Data provided to me appears to derive almost entirely from a study conducted prior to 2010 for the purpose of establishing a Downtown Storefront Improvement Zone. According to Resolution #3007, 38.1% (61 of 160 properties in the Downtown Storefront Improvement Area) are "blighted". More specifically, 52 buildings had deteriorating physical exteriors; twelve are experiencing chronic vacancies; and one is experiencing a steep decline in property value. **In terms of the indicators of blight... how relevant are the degrees of the physical deterioration, the vacancy rates, the declines of property value?** I note one recent sale [611 NE Powell Blvd.] that appears to have realized a 250% increase in actual value since 2006. Even if that sale is discounted, region-wide assessed values are declining at alarming rates. Is the Downtown area's decline noteworthy given that context?

**To better understand the nature of Gresham's slum and blight it would be useful to review and update the list of affected properties on file with the Urban Design & Planning Department.**

**The importance of boundaries --**

The Rockwood / West Gresham Urban Renewal Area was designed in an oddly elongated hour-glass shape to allow blighted areas of West Gresham to benefit from tax increment financing potentially available from northwest Gresham's untapped industrial sites. In a similar vein, boundaries for the Downtown Storefront Improvement Program site seem drawn to highlight the really distressed areas of 'Historic Downtown Gresham'. The purpose of this irregular shape would be to ensure needy properties can receive storefront grants and other properties would be excluded. **Storefront Improvement Program boundaries may misrepresent the area of need or use for the Children's Fountain: The area benefiting from the proposed fountain is much broader and includes existing parks and performing properties -- some within two blocks of the proposed fountain site. The area of benefit also includes a number of poorly performing properties and potential fountain users who should have a say in the proceedings.**

**Is this really free money?** How are CDBG projects introduced to residents in various parts of Gresham? Those living and working outside of the Downtown area might not realize **CDGB funds tapped for projects like the Children's Fountain will no longer be available to pay for sidewalks, crosswalks and other city infrastructure. Many parts of Gresham lack these safety-enhancing amenities.** For example, people in Downtown Gresham might not realize that children are standing in the middle of 181st

Avenue --a five-lane boulevard-- waiting for a break in traffic to cross to the supermarket or bus stop in an area where the nearest crosswalk is over a thousand feet away. Or that residents of established neighborhoods and a newly constructed apartment complex at 202nd and Division have to walk over 700 feet on a narrow, unimproved dirt path fronting City property to get from the MAX Station to their homes.

**Entitled Communities -- Understanding purchasing power, density & equity --**

Everyone agrees that a fun, seasonal amenity will benefit families and boost local economies in many ways. Please consider the chart below as a starting point to give some indication about communities' ability to pay for and benefit from amenities within their jurisdictions. **The City of Gresham really needs to make a clearer case about how and where CDBG funding mechanisms are appropriate, and what effect individual projects will have on future CDBG allocations.**

**Fountains, Density and Poverty<sup>1</sup> -**

Census Tract #	Area Described	Population	Households	% in Poverty	Density (persons/Sq.Mi.)	Area ( Sq. Miles)
100.01	Downtown Gresham	5,629	2,591	22.5	5,057.5	1.11
96.06	Rockwood	5,251	1,893	38.8	11,037.2	0.48
98.06	Vance Park	4,562	1,542	34.1	4,482.6	1.02
51	Jamison Square	7,926	5,843	26.7	18,466/6	0.43
311	Beaverton Park	2,629	1,177	19.1	7,596.4	0.35
202	Lake Oswego	6193	3032	8.2	2,817.0	2.20

How many of the areas described above have or need amenities purchased with CDBG / Sect. 108 Loan Pool Funds?

Respectfully,  
 John M. Bildsoe  
 P.O. Box 1172  
 Gresham, OR 97030  
 4/3/2012

<sup>1</sup> 2000 & 2010 Comparison Profiles, Mult. County Census Tracts by Population Research Center, Portland State Univ. [http://pdx.edu/sites/www.pdx.edu.prc/files/Multnomah\\_CT2000.pdf](http://pdx.edu/sites/www.pdx.edu.prc/files/Multnomah_CT2000.pdf)  
 Census Data Show Portland's High-Poverty Pockets Michael Burnham, Institute of Metropolitan Studies, Portland State Univ, December 2010  
<http://mkn.research.pdx.edu/2010/12/acs-data/>

**Public Comments**  
**City of Gresham**  
**Consolidated Plan and Action Plan Amendments**  
**April 3, 2012**

Great idea! Fountains are used across the world to draw in people/families/communities during warmer times of the year. The fountain may also draw more people to shop in downtown Gresham. My vote is a yes for the fountain for the city of Gresham.

Vincent W. Oretger  
1735 SE Dogwood Way  
Gresham, Oregon 97080.  
3/4/2012

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This is a fantastic idea! They have one in downtown Olympia, WA and it is such a positive (free) place for Children and families to go to during the summer time to socialize and cool off.

Lindsay Shuffstall  
3/5/2012 on Facebook

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There are many undeveloped spaces that are designated as parks in Gresham, land that should be developed as neighborhood parks to pull neighborhoods together and places for our children to play. An example is the land and space between Williams Road and Kane that has been there for over 15 years, designated as a park, but totally grown up in blackberries, that would be a wonderful park if a few dollars were spent. The neighborhood has agreed to maintain it in the past if it were developed. The fountain would also need to be maintained and how much is this cost?? Probably no one has even considered this. But it would be the first thing mentioned as a reason not to build a park. I don't understand why a fountain is needed for children to look at. The money could be used for much needier purposes and I am sure the funds could be designated for other purposes

Sincerely,

Robert S Hurley.  
3/20/2012

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I am appalled that the City of Gresham is seeking to borrow money to build a children's fountain that will waste water, become a safety hazard and increase the risk of disease and injury to the people who are using it. The city doesn't have enough money to spend on services that meet the needs for providing police and fire support, to maintain streets and sidewalks that would reduce the blight and decay in the city. Why doesn't the city do more to increase the ability for more business to come to the Gresham

area? Why isn't the city looking at ways to refurbish the schools in our community, some of them are in very poor condition?

Once again government continues to waste taxpayers hard-earned money, continues to seek ways of taxing the citizens of Gresham without weighing all the costs.

When will we ever learn to be wise stewards of the resources we have rather than continuing to seek money for projects that don't promote well-being for the good of all of our community?

Elizabeth Peters  
4191 SE 22nd Drive  
Gresham, Or 97080  
503-310-1578  
3/26/2012

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After reading the materials provided under the "read more" tab I am struggling to get my head around how a "Childrens Fountain" in downtown Gresham would even begin to qualify for this money?

With the economy just starting to improve and the City struggling to provide existing services, how are you planning to pay for the maintenance of this "Fountain"?

Please put these funds to use in a better, more appropriate way to improve our community. We can't even get sidewalks on 1st Street but you want to use funds for a fountain in downtown? In my opinion priorities need to be re-evaluated.

Patti Klein  
Landuse Chair  
Powell Valley Neighborhood Association  
3/30/2012

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I would like to voice my thoughts and some about the proposed fountain.

1. In a time when all of our budgets are being squeezed and cut, where does the city of Gresham find the ability to pay for such a project? It is a loan, not a grant.
2. I don't believe downtown Gresham is an area that is a "slum and blight" area that needs funds taken from more needy areas. Homes for the underprivileged would be a better idea than a seasonal fun spot for 1.5 million.
3. What budget does the yearly maintenance come from. Will the city have the funds to always maintain it without charging the citizens for this fountain or the downtown core???
4. Will the parents of these children really take their wet children into the local downtown stores thus bringing more income to the downtown area? I know that I would not bother to do that. I would want to get home and get them dry.

Thanks for your time and effort in this decision. With these questions I would vote, if given the chance, to not build it but to use any funds in a way that helps more citizens

Sincerely,

Kim May.

Gresham Citizen

3/27/2012

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**Date:** Sat, 31 Mar 2012 10:38:37 -0700

**From:** Ken Stine <ken.stine56@gmail.com>

**To:** Susanjoy.Baskoro@GreshamOregon.gov, Teresa.Hall@GreshamOregon.gov

**Subject:** NO on Children's Fountain!

Dear Honorable Mayor and City Councilors,

For the record, I oppose adding to the 2012-2013 Work Plan a \$1.5 million loan application for a kid's fountain in the downtown Gresham Plaza. I believe construction of such a fountain would be premature: the wrong project, at the wrong time, at the wrong place, without giving the community an ample opportunity to express its opinions.

I do not believe that our staff has had sufficient time to adequately do its homework. There has been almost no opportunity for public discourse about this costly and highly visible project. Most importantly, we do not know the answers to a great many vital questions that need answers:

- What evidence exists that such a fountain will reverse the direction of the so-called "blighted" downtown area?
- What effect will such a fountain have on our long-range planning for a true Performing Arts Center that will bring visitors (and their money) to Gresham?
- What evidence is there that a fountain will encourage new businesses to locate downtown, or whether or not it will increase the foot-traffic to existing businesses and by how much?
- Do existing businesses even want a fountain, or perhaps they would prefer an alternative?
- Will it really become a destination attraction?
- Will the fountain really benefit our children and their families, or just make us feel good?
- What possible use will such a fountain be during the winter months?
- Who is going to pay and how much for the fountain maintenance? Can we possibly be serious about diverting CDGB funds to service the loan or maintenance costs?
- Will the fountain be maintained on a year-round basis, or only during the summer? Who will do this maintenance?
- Is downtown the best location for a kid's fountain? Would it not better serve the community where there are kids. e.g., somewhere in the Rockwood redevelopment area.
- How will such a fountain impact on the enhancement of the Gresham brand, also on the 2012-2013 Work Plan?

It has already been said that construction of the fountain will be done at no cost to Gresham residents because CDGB grant money will be used. Really? Must I remind you that grant money comes from the Federal or State government, to whom we do pay taxes.

Until we have answers to these and many other questions, I believe the Council would be acting hastily in making such an important decision. Gresham residents need a chance to debate if a fountain located downtown is in the long-term best interests of Gresham.

Respectfully submitted,

Ken Stine

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Voice Mail message  
3/30/2012

Hello, Mr. Fancher,

My name is Susan Aiger and I am a citizen here in the City of Gresham. And I saw several days ago about a project that you guys are considering; the children's fountain that's going to cost over a million dollars to do. And I just want you to know that when my husband and I saw that come up on the news, we were appalled. It's the wrong project at the wrong time and far too much money. I live right down here on 205<sup>th</sup> and Stark and the City hasn't even done anything to our roads for 30 years. I am just disgusted that the City would consider paying that kind of money and borrow it from the federal government and then it would cost another \$25,000 a year to maintain it which we all know that that would be far more expensive to maintain it. And in a city like this, look outside today, you are not going to use it in the winter time.

So I am voicing my opinion for my husband and I that we are disgusted that the City at this time, when there are so many other needs, would even consider doing a project of this kind. So if you wanted to call me and speak to us further, my number is 503-666-5521. But I hope that my displeasure in voicing my opinion will go down on record that we are definitely against this. Thank you.

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Dear Mayor, Councilors and Mr. Fancher:

As a citizen of Gresham, I am voicing my objection to the city filing a \$1.5 million HUD loan request for a children's water fountain. My concerns and questions are as follows:

**1) Why was there so little public notice and/or discussion on this project? (A notification letter was sent to me as a Neighborhood Association officer and was titled "Five Year FY 2011-2016 Consolidated Plan Amendment/Amendment to The One Year Action Plan 2011-2012". The Children's Fountain loan was on the back of the page hiding at the bottom. It does not appear other notice was given to residents).**

**2) Is the city willing to go forward with the loan application even after members of their own CDBG subcommittee expressed reservations and posed many questions and concerns regarding the wisdom of this project?** I attended the CDBG subcommittee meeting March 15, 2012, where Mr. Fancher presented this project. Committee members did not appear too warm to the idea and it did

**not appear they had received the report until that evening.** Some of the questions committee members asked were as follows:

\*Why is a Children's Fountain a priority when there are so many other matters in the City that need attention?

\*Had downtown businesses been contacted and what was their input?

\*Doesn't this seem frivolous especially in our difficult economy?

\*How is the loan to be repaid?

\*Isn't this an unusual project for a HUD loan?

\*What are the projected yearly maintenance costs and how can that be accomplished and/or justified considering there are not enough city workers to maintain what we already have?

\*How did the City come to the conclusion this would aid downtown businesses, decrease blight and assist economically?

\*Would parents likely be wandering into downtown businesses with wet kids? Wouldn't it be more likely they would just load them up in the car and go home?

**3) Is the Children's Fountain project a reasonable use of staff time and resources with the pressing and serious issues facing our City?**

**4) How can the city of Gresham justify application for this loan and the subsequent risk?**

**The city extended a loan to the Center for the Arts Foundation in 2008. Reportedly, the Foundation ceased repayment in 2010 (?), leaving taxpayers on the hook.** If this area is still economically depressed and blight ridden, shouldn't we have started to see a turnaround since the addition of the Plaza? Taxpayers should not have to assume any further risk from their pockets whether it is Federal or local tax money.

**5) If the purpose of this \$1.5 million HUD loan is to revitalize downtown Gresham, why wouldn't a "year round" project be drafted?** Downtown Gresham already has a lot of activities and events that draw people during the summer months. \$1.5 million is a large sum and a water fountain would be seasonal at best.

**6) Why hasn't the City embraced and supported citizens who have invested time and money to jump start projects they feel would benefit the community and draw people to our city - projects that likely could also be eligible for HUD loans?** I specifically refer to two recent examples - Ms. Mitchell who worked for at least two years to get a dog park in Gresham and Mr. Hucke who has been working on a BMX track/site for over a year.

**7) Are all our councilors aware there are undeveloped lands in our neighborhoods that have had a "City park" designation for 10-20 years and residents are still waiting to have those promises fulfilled? There are also developed city parks needing improvements. Wouldn't any of these qualify for HUD loans? And, if so, why wouldn't they move to the front of the line (instead of the Children's Fountain) after all these years?**

Sincerely,  
S. M. Ruonala  
4619 SE 5th  
Gresham, OR 97080  
4/2/2012

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We are writing in strong opposition to the City of Gresham's proposed action to develop a Children's Fountain in Gresham's downtown area.

The City states it intends to apply for a Section 108 Guaranteed Loan through HUD in the amount of \$1.5 million dollars to aid in the elimination of "slum and blight" in downtown Gresham.

This whole issue of applying for a loan for a Children's Fountain raises several concerns to the citizens of Gresham, such as:

1 - When the City's budget is being severely cut due to the economy, borrowing \$1.5 million seems ludicrous at best. And what about the maintenance costs? It is estimated to cost approximately \$25,000 annually to maintain the fountain from the City's general fund for maintenance. What else will be cut to handle this expenditure? Will our utility bills be increased to cover the maintenance? The City's maintenance department is already stretched to the maximum with cuts that have occurred in the last few years.

2 - Will the City's taxpayers have to make the loan payments if the Federal Government cuts our CDBG money in the future?

3 - Won't this take away future CDBG grant money to pay back the loan? We believe this grant money is currently used for affordable housing and infrastructure in blight areas now. If the money is taken away from that to pay back the loan, where will that money come from in the future for affordable housing and infrastructure?

4 - Claiming that the City of Gresham's downtown area has "slum and blight" to qualify for the loan is just not right and verges on being a hyperbole. Gresham has a great downtown area where you can feel comfortable to walk around and enjoy yourself. There are many shops to browse through as well as cafes and restaurants. "Slum and blight" - we think not!

Respectfully,

Dick and Kathi Schneider  
3943 SE 30th  
Gresham, OR 97080  
503-961-4104  
4/2/2012

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Please submit this as testimony at the council meeting

Re: Fountain in the Arts Plaza

There is no cost to the city for this. All will be paid with Federal Funds. Gresham needs to GROW UP and learn that one must "spend money to make money". By bringing FAMILIES to the downtown, businesses will feel and see the impact and will GROW. Just as Hospitals cater to women (maternity and peds) to bring families in, Mothers and kids will bring business. Gresham has little for families- One has to go to Portland for indoor play areas. There is NOTHING HERE for families in the rainy season. We need businesses that cater to kids and families to realize we have over 100K people and can service more. One will begat another. The fountain will bring in other businesses that are for families and hopefully an indoor park as well- and more people will come downtown. If we show businesses that families are here then they will come too.

It is ridiculous for people not to understand this will cost NOTHING for the city EXCEPT potential businesses to move to downtown.

We used to live in the Pearl District. After the fountain was built people came from all over the state!! More businesses came to service these folks and the area is BUSTLING!! It has become its own downtown. Gresham- GROW UP and LEARN. This is a no-brainer. PLEASE do not stop this project.

Nancy Seebert  
250 NE 5<sup>th</sup> St  
Gresham 98030  
4/2/2012

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On the surface, a children's fountain in the Arts Plaza is a good idea, but considering the state of the City's finances and the local community in general, it is not a prudent or appropriate use of funds. This is especially true as needed community service budgets are cut. The yearly maintenance costs alone make the project an extravagant venture, particularly when cuts to Parks and Recreation have been significant over the past several years and the City struggles simply to maintain existing parks. It is a mistake to compare Gresham's proposed fountain with the fountain in Jamison Square in Portland; Gresham is not and never will be comparable to the Pearl District.

While bringing people to downtown Gresham is a worthwhile goal, this is a seasonal fountain that is located on the edge of the downtown area. In better economic times it may be a plausible idea if the City wants to build up the area around the Arts Plaza; but it will do little, if anything, to bring people to the rest of downtown. Instead, first focus more on Main Street and the core Historic Downtown area which is the heart and soul of downtown Gresham. Every effort should be made to motivate and help property owners and shop/restaurant keepers to clean up their store fronts. Paint and power wash the properties that need it, pull the weeds growing out of sidewalks and along building foundations, and maintain attractive planters and benches. Scraggly planters and weedy, overgrown beds are an eyesore in the heart of historic downtown Gresham. A few years ago, one shop owner couldn't get the City to repair the bench in front of his store. The City said they didn't have the funds to do maintenance so the bench was removed.

Intensified effort should be made to attract new and exciting shops and restaurants. Intensified effort should be focused on re-purposing the old Hick's Department Store. For now, make our historic Downtown a destination and then move to the outer edges of downtown.

Mike and Kathy Henton  
2129 SE Douglas Place  
Gresham, OR 97080

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Honorable Mayor and City Councilors,

**I am writing to express reservations about the City's application to create a Section 108 Loan Pool.**

This action could be helpful if the loan pool is used to provide gap financing for projects such as Human Solution's Rockwood Multi-Service Center, which the City did in 2009. I am hesitant about future projects, especially since the City's application lists only example projects and not real projects for the community to review. The City's concurrent application for a separate Section 108 loan application to build a Children's Fountain raises further questions about whether potential loan pool projects will really meet the community's needs and justify the risk to the City's future CDBG allocations and the City's General Fund.

**I am most concerned about the need to pledge our CDBG allocations to repay these loans and the potential impact on our dwindling General Fund if future CDBG allocations decrease so much that they're not sufficient to cover the required payments.** Gresham's CDBG allocations have been generally declining, and the slight increase we received this year is due to increased poverty in Gresham

as documented by the census. I understand from staff that most other jurisdictions had their allocations cut this year. For example, Portland lost half of its allocation, or approximately \$2 million. Given the federal government's overall cuts to domestic programs, any loan payments taken from our CDBG allocations will only compound the negative impact on the programs those allocations are supposed to support. With Gresham's increased poverty, these allocations are needed more than ever, and it is misguided to redirect them.

For the record, Gresham's CDBG allocation for the last few years are as follows:

FY 05/06	\$1,010,783
FY 06/07	\$905,755
FY 07/08	\$903,182
FY 08/09	\$871,146
FY 09/10	\$885,411
FY 10/11	\$959,393
FY 11/12	\$800,918
FY 12/13	\$867,201

I understand that staff hopes to arrange other sources to repay these potential loans, but as our experience shows with the Center for the Arts Foundation's inability to repay \$340,000 of the \$1.5 million the City loaned it for the Arts Plaza, we should evaluate worst-case scenarios. Given the current economy and Oregon's broken tax structure, I question how these potential loans will be repaid. We cannot afford to make the repayments from our dwindling General Fund if our future CDBG allocations decrease so much that they're not sufficient to cover the required payments. Furthermore, the principal repayment schedule in the loan application shows a disturbing balloon payment in the final year: the gradually increasing principal repayments jump from \$98,000 in 2031 to \$278,000 in 2032.

**Before proceeding with this loan application, I urge the Council to have the promised community conversation about funding city obligations. I also urge the Council to create a very public process to evaluate potential projects before the City applies for Section 108 loans on their behalf.** Just having review by the Community Development and Housing Subcommittee is insufficient. That subcommittee was very concerned about the lack of notice for the current two Section 108 applications.

Thank you for your consideration.

Carol Rulla  
5162 SE 28th Dr.  
Gresham, OR 97080  
4/3/2012

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Please forward the following comments to the City Council in reference to borrowing for construction of the Children's Fountain.

Regards,  
Marc Thornsbury  
16213 NE San Rafael Dr.  
Gresham, OR 97230

Dear Mayor Bemis

I note in Saturday's Oregonian Newspaper where the city wants to borrow 1.5 million to put up a fountain. Please be aware that I am opposed to this project.

Our neighborhood streets are in very poor condition and in need of major repair. For instance my street (N.E. 25th between Cleveland and Liberty) is in such poor shape that it cannot be sealed. It must be completely torn up and repaved. I am sure there are many more streets in the same or worse condition.

We do not have enough officers on our police force, thatt in my opinion, can adequately provide protection to the citizens of this city. To cite an example, we are a city of over 100,000 with a force of only 62 officers. Portland has almost 200 officers per 100,000.

I am sure with the budget shortfalls, leaving us with inadequate police protection, and streets that can't be repaired, borrowing 1.5 million to build a fountain that will only benefit a small portion of citizens is wasteful spending.

Sincerely,

Richard Barnekoff  
1221 N.E. 25th St  
Gresham, OR 97030  
503-667-5962  
4/3/2012

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Honorable Mayor and City Councilors,

**I am writing to oppose the use of a Section 108 loan to build a Children's Fountain and especially the use of CDBG funds to repay the loan.** While I appreciate that the Council is trying to bring a Children's Fountain to Gresham, this is not the time to do so when we have so many other pressing needs in our city. Since learning about this loan application, other neighborhood leaders and I have had many conversations with citizens from across Gresham, and there is **a universal feeling that building such a fountain now and with these funds is a mistake.**

**It is questionable that a Children's Fountain "will have a significant impact on visitors to the area thereby increasing demand at surrounding business and retail uses"**[p.5 of application]. A Children's Fountain is seasonal, and with our relatively cool summers, it will not necessarily be a draw throughout the summer. The claim that "500 people per day (15,000 per month)" [p.3 of the application] will be attracted to Downtown Gresham because of the fountain seems very high and is surely not a year-round daily/monthly average (although the application does not make this clear). In the case studies, staff reported that Beavertown's children's fountain can draw up to 300 at one time on warm days, which staff tells me translates to 1,000-2,000 people per warm day (not year-round). Because Beaverton's fountain abuts its public library and a public park, its daily average will be much higher than

Gresham's since our Arts Plaza is mainly surrounded by vacant properties and outside of the developed part of Downtown. Even if Gresham's fountain would draw 500 people per summer day to Downtown, what percentage of those will patronize downtown businesses, especially with wet little kids in tow? How does this compare to the number of daily visitors Downtown Gresham currently gets in the summer? **I believe there are better ways to spend \$1.5 million to support and attract year-round visitors to Downtown Gresham.**

**Where is the evidence for the claim that "property values and redevelopment activity received an instant boost from the announcement of the park project and have continued upward" [p.7 of the application]?** Is this a comment about Chicago's 24.5-acre Millennium Park, or about Gresham's Children's Fountain? The application is not clear. If it is about Millennium Park, where is the evidence that this statement applies to Gresham's Children's Fountain? If it is about Gresham, what is this "boost"? I have heard nothing in the news or from city press releases about it. In fact, there has been very little publicity about the Children's Fountain and especially about this loan application. Also, why is there no analysis in the loan application of any boost to Downtown from the 2008 investment of \$2.3 million in the Arts Plaza [p.3 of the application]? Has there been any documented redevelopment in Downtown from the construction of the plaza and the summer programs that have been held there the last few years?

**Where is the community support for building a Children's Fountain now?** Other than it being in the 2012 Council Work Plan and some mentions from Mayor Bemis, I have not heard of anyone calling for the construction of a Children's Fountain at this time. There is nothing on the Center for the Arts Foundation website ([www.gcfta.org](http://www.gcfta.org)). As I understand it, their Board has taken no official position on this loan application. Gresham's Community Development and Housing Subcommittee (CDHS) did not get a presentation on the Children's Fountain or this loan application until their March 15, 2012, meeting (less than 3 weeks before the public hearing). The CDHS had many questions about the advisability of this proposal and chose not to take a position on the issue at that meeting or at their subsequent March 22 meeting. Furthermore, staff did not even contact downtown groups about this proposal until after the March 15 CDHS meeting. Why would the City not find out from downtown businesses whether they support this funding strategy until two weeks before the public hearing on this loan application? I have worked hard in the last two weeks to bring this loan application to the public's attention. From the comments I've heard, citizens are opposed to the proposal. They question the need for the fountain and the premise that it will bring sufficient development to Downtown to offset the risk of borrowing money to pay for it and especially the use CDBG funds to repay the loan.

**I oppose the use of our CDBG allocations to repay this loan and the possible use of our dwindling General Fund if future CDBG allocations decrease so much that they're not sufficient to cover the required payments.** As I stated in my comments on the concurrent application to create a Section 108 loan pool, Gresham's CDBG allocations have been generally declining, and the slight increase we received this year is due to increased poverty in Gresham as documented by the census. I understand from staff that most other jurisdictions had their allocations cut this year. For example, Portland lost half of its allocation, or approximately \$2 million. Given the federal government's overall cuts to domestic programs, any loan payments taken from our CDBG allocations will only compound the negative impact on the programs

those allocations are supposed to support. With Gresham's increased poverty, these allocations are needed more than ever, and it is misguided to redirect them.

For the record, Gresham's CDBG allocation for the last few years are as follows:

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FY 10/11	\$959,393
FY 11/12	\$800,918
FY 12/13	\$867,201

**It is unwise to commit \$110,000 per year from our declining CDBG appropriations to pay for a Children's Fountain.** Note, this \$110,000 annual payment includes principal and interest. It is not included in the loan application as only principal is listed in the repayment schedule. As there was in the concurrent Section 108 loan pool application, there is a balloon payment in the last principal repayment for this loan application: it's a slight balloon payment, going from \$107,000 in 2031 to \$139,000 in 2032 [*p.10 of the application*].

**Finally, the loan application fails to address how the City will fund maintenance for the Children's Fountain.** Mayor Bemis, you eloquently laid out the city's need for more funding in your recent State of the City address and stated that you were worried about the City being able to pay for "the guy on the lawn mower". What will we have to give up to pay at least \$25,000 per year for specialized water employees to maintain a Children's Fountain? Does this annual maintenance estimate include repairs for vandalism or other contingencies? How can we propose to build and maintain this fountain and, at the same time, tell citizens that we have a revenue problem and must cut more core services?

**I urge the Council to stop this loan application for a Children's Fountain and instead have the promised community conversation about funding city obligations.**

Thank you for your consideration.

Carol Rulla  
5162 SE 28th Dr.  
Gresham, OR 97080  
4/3/2012

April 3, 2012

Mayor Bemis and City Council Members

Please add my name, Mike McKeel, in support of the Children's Fountain at the Center for the Arts Plaza. I believe strongly that a city such as Gresham needs to do things that set it apart and provide a true sense of community to its citizens. The fun and laughter that will happen with the fountain, available to all in the city center, helps greatly to offset the hardships of the worst economic times in our memory.

Even in difficult times, it is important for a city to lead the way in making its community a good place to live. There are always needs and things to be done, that will get done in time. However, it is valuable to do those as well that enrich our lives and add to the beauty and quality of city life....which this Children's Fountain will do.

There innumerable reasons, a case to be made, and always will be, to not do something. Upon occasion a city has the opportunity to do something wonderful and unexpected that adds to its enduring character. This is one of them and I give my full support.

Dr. Michael McKeel  
108 NE 2<sup>nd</sup> Street  
Gresham OR 97030



Empowering  
Families

Strengthening  
Communities

Rebuilding  
Hope

To: Louise Dix  
Community Revitalization Program Coordinator  
City of Gresham, Urban Design and Planning  
1333 NW Eastman Parkway, Gresham, Oregon 97030

From: Jean DeMaster  
Executive Director  
Human Solutions  
124 NE 181<sup>st</sup>  
Gresham, Oregon 97230

Date: 4/3/12  
Time: 4:15 pm

RE: Support for Strengthening the Community Development Block Grant Program,

Programs funded through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program are huge assets to low-income neighborhoods---especially those neighborhoods experiencing high levels of poverty, significant plight, and ongoing deterioration. Human Solutions is a non-profit, housing, and social services agency serving people in East Portland, Gresham and East Multnomah County, Oregon. This area contains some of the neighborhoods with the highest levels of poverty in Multnomah County.

For the low-income and homeless people served by Human Solutions, the CDBG program funds safety net services. CDBG funds are used to house homeless families---protecting children from trauma and helping their parents to attain and retain employment. CDBG funds also help to protect high risk households from being evicted from their apartments---protecting them from becoming homeless. Perhaps the most shocking single fact about poverty and homelessness is that the poorest Americans and those at most risk for homelessness are the youngest Americans: children. In some areas of the Rockwood Neighborhood, it is estimated that up to 40% of the children live in families whose incomes are below the poverty level. These children face the hunger, cold, fear and uncertainty on a regular basis. Human Solutions understands that homeless and low-income parents want to be able to provide for themselves and their children. The

**humansolutions.org**

Portland Office 12350 SE Powell Blvd, Portland, OR 97236

Phone 503.548.0200

Fax 503.548.0299

Gresham Office 501 NE Hood Ave. Suite 310. Gresham. OR 97030

Phone 503.405.7875

Fax 503.405.7934

April 3, 2012  
City of Gresham  
Urban Design & Planning  
Attn: Louise Dix  
Community Revitalization Program Coordinator  
1333 NW Eastman Pkwy  
Gresham OR 97030

Dear Louise,

My home is within of the original City of Gresham land plat. My family has a strong interest in seeing Downtown Gresham develop in ways that are beneficial to ourselves and our friends and neighbors; many of whom work nearby. Convenience is especially important for my young children who can easily walk or bicycle to the Skate Park, Main Park, the library, shops or the Arts Plaza. I'm also a business owner in Rockwood and an active proponent of urban renewal in West Gresham.

Recently I received a two-page letter titled "FIVE YEAR FY 2011-1016 CONSOLIDATED PLAN AMENDMENT / AMENDMENT TO THE ONE YEAR ACTION PLAN 2011-1011". My voice is perhaps not alone in saying that this document has led to a very frustrating and time-consuming search for relevant information. Although I appreciate Staff work in this area and the urgent needs of Historic Downtown Gresham, ***at this point in time, I believe the information available is insufficient for making any concrete decisions. Further study is indicated, and I offer the detail below in support of this conclusion.***

**Basic Accounting Concerns:**

Operating Costs -

-- How does City of Gresham break down its Parks & Recreation maintenance budget on an asset-by-asset basis?

Section 108 Loan Repayment Schemes -

-- In both cases, why are Sec. 108 loan interest payments excluded from the repayment schedules?

-- How will the 20th year balloon payments for these loans be financed?

--Who pays if Gresham's CDBG allocations shrink below a sustainable level?

Center for the Arts Plaza -

-- Is there a Master Plan outlining the Downtown Center for the Arts Plaza and fountain?

**Specific to the Children's Fountain: How can affected owners and renters become more involved?**

How many downtown properties are rentals? How many are owner-occupied businesses or homes?

How many are investment properties? ***I'd really like to see, and I think HUD as well, how the local***

***community commits to projects like the Downtown Fountain.*** Citing two possible models: Business owners in Portland pay a nominal monthly assessment to support the Portland Streetcar in the Pearl District and South Waterfront. This special assessment helps pay off the original bond and also supports operating costs. In Beaverton's fountain example, the project was supported by a library bond because the fountain is across the street from Beaverton's library.

**Strong concerns about accuracy of data supporting “slum and blight”**

Data provided to me appears to derive almost entirely from a study conducted prior to 2010 for the purpose of establishing a Downtown Storefront Improvement Zone.

According to Resolution #3007, 38.1% (61 of 160 properties in the Downtown Storefront Improvement Area) are "blighted". More specifically, 52 buildings had deteriorating physical exteriors; twelve are experiencing chronic vacancies; and one is experiencing a steep decline in property value. **In terms of the indicators of blight... how relevant are the degrees of the physical deterioration, the vacancy rates, the declines of property value?** I note one recent sale [611 NE Powell Blvd.] that appears to have realized a 250% increase in actual value since 2006. Even if that sale is discounted, region-wide assessed values are declining at alarming rates. Is the Downtown area’s decline noteworthy given that context?

**To better understand the nature of Gresham’s slum and blight it would be useful to review and update the list of affected properties on file with the Urban Design & Planning Department.**

**The importance of boundaries --**

The Rockwood / West Gresham Urban Renewal Area was designed in an oddly elongated hour-glass shape to allow blighted areas of West Gresham to benefit from tax increment financing potentially available from northwest Gresham’s untapped industrial sites. In a similar vein, boundaries for the Downtown Storefront Improvement Program site seem drawn to highlight the really distressed areas of 'Historic Downtown Gresham'. The purpose of this irregular shape would be to ensure needy properties can receive storefront grants and other properties would be excluded. **Storefront Improvement Program boundaries may misrepresent the area of need or use for the Children’s Fountain: The area benefiting from the proposed fountain is much broader and includes existing parks and performing properties -- some within two blocks of the proposed fountain site. The area of benefit also includes a number of poorly performing properties and potential fountain users who should have a say in the proceedings.**

**Is this really free money?** How are CDBG projects introduced to residents in various parts of Gresham? Those living and working outside of the Downtown area might not realize **CDGB funds tapped for projects like the Children’s Fountain will no longer be available to pay for sidewalks, crosswalks and other city infrastructure. Many parts of Gresham lack these safety-enhancing amenities.** For example, people in Downtown Gresham might not realize that children are standing in the middle of 181st Avenue --a five-lane boulevard-- waiting for a break in traffic to cross to the supermarket or bus stop in an area where the nearest crosswalk is over a thousand feet away. Or that residents of established neighborhoods and a newly constructed apartment complex at 202nd and Division have to walk over 700 feet on a narrow, unimproved dirt path fronting City property to get from the MAX Station to their homes.

**Entitled Communities -- Understanding purchasing power, density & equity --**

Everyone agrees that a fun, seasonal amenity will benefit families and boost local economies in many ways. Please consider the chart below as a starting point to give some indication about communities’ ability to pay for and benefit from amenities within their jurisdictions. **The City of Gresham really needs to make a clearer case about how and where CDBG funding mechanisms are appropriate, and what effect individual projects will have on future CDBG allocations.**

**Fountains, Density and Poverty<sup>1</sup> -**

Census Tract #	Area Described	Population	Households	% in Poverty	Density (persons/Sq.Mi.)	Area ( Sq. Miles)
100.01	Downtown Gresham	5,629	2,591	22.5	5,057.5	1.11
96.06	Rockwood	5,251	1,893	38.8	11,037.2	0.48
98.06	Vance Park	4,562	1,542	34.1	4,482.6	1.02
51	Jamison Square	7,926	5,843	26.7	18,466/6	0.43
311	Beaverton Park	2,629	1,177	19.1	7,596.4	0.35
202	Lake Oswego	6193	3032	8.2	2,817.0	2.20

How many of the areas described above have or need amenities purchased with CDBG / Sect. 108 Loan Pool Funds?

Respectfully,  
 John M. Bildsoe  
 PO Box 1172  
 Gresham OR 97030

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<sup>1</sup> 2000 & 2010 Comparison Profiles, Mult. County Census Tracts by Population Research Center, Portland State Univ. [http://pdx.edu/sites/www.pdx.edu.prc/files/Multnomah\\_CT2000.pdf](http://pdx.edu/sites/www.pdx.edu.prc/files/Multnomah_CT2000.pdf)  
 Census Data Show Portland's High-Poverty Pockets *Michael Burnham*, Institute of Metropolitan Studies, Portland State Univ, December 2010  
<http://mkn.research.pdx.edu/2010/12/acs-data/>



## CITY OF GRESHAM

### Urban Design & Planning

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April 17, 2012

Dear Mrs. Aiger,

Thank you for your comments and questions regarding the City of Gresham's proposed application for Section 108 loan funding for the design and construction of The Children's Fountain in downtown Gresham. Your comments were forwarded to members of the Gresham City Council prior to the April 3<sup>rd</sup> public hearing on this project, where the Council unanimously voted to proceed with the loan application. I have attached an overview of the project that answers some of your questions, and here are some additional points on The Children's Fountain project for your use and consideration:

- The Children's Fountain is a unique project with regard to its degree of multi-objectivity. Not only is it an economic catalyst with the potential to pay dividends year-after-year, but it also fills a much-needed parks and recreation need *and* is located in the central hub of the city to benefit the highest number of citizens, in a location easily accessible to all by public transportation.
- Staff researched similar projects in the region and nationally. Combined with other economic development activities, we heard time and time again, from business leaders, municipal staff, and neighborhood leaders, that interactive fountains such as this are a good way to bring visitors downtown and to spur economic growth.
- Applying for grant funding is a way for the City to leverage additional funding to supplement our limited resources and to pursue a unique opportunity that addresses both recreational and economic development needs. To qualify for Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funding a project must meet strict criteria, which most projects in Gresham would not be able to demonstrate.
- The anticipated maintenance cost for The Children's Fountain is approximately \$25,000 per year, or roughly 1% of the City's parks maintenance budget.
- The Children's Fountain has always been a planned component of the Arts Plaza – the critical draw intended to turn the plaza from a "space" into a "destination." Research shows a fountain would attract more people downtown and provide a better plaza experience for visitors, "activating" the wider area. Leaving the fountain element of the plaza undeveloped would mean forfeiting the full economic

benefits that an “activated” plaza space could provide to the City. By contrast, building it as part of a final phase would fully realize the community’s initial investment in the plaza itself.

- Planning and design of the plaza incorporated public input throughout the process.  
The Children’s Fountain component has been an item on the Council Work Plan for the past two years. Additional public outreach included meetings with civic groups such as the Historic Downtown Business Association, Gresham Downtown Development Association, and others.
- In this difficult economy, public economic development and catalyst projects such as this are needed to help spur private investment. This in turn will increase property values and associated tax revenues, helping to fund other vital City services.
- Should the loan be awarded by HUD, there are numerous options for loan repayment. Initially, the City would use a portion of its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) allocation to repay the loan. Specifically, a portion of funding within the “Public Infrastructure” category of CDBG would be used rather than affecting the other categories. The City Council will ultimately determine the most appropriate loan payback tool for the organization.

Thank you again and please let me know if you have any further questions or would like additional information.

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## CITY OF GRESHAM

Urban Design & Planning  
1333 N.W. Eastman Parkway  
Gresham, Oregon 97030-3825

April 17, 2012

Richard Barnekoff  
1221 NE 25<sup>th</sup> Street  
Gresham, OR 97030

Dear Mr. Barnekoff,

Thank you for your comments and questions regarding the City of Gresham's proposed application for Section 108 loan funding for the design and construction of The Children's Fountain in downtown Gresham. Your comments were forwarded to members of the Gresham City Council prior to the April 3<sup>rd</sup> public hearing on this project, where the Council unanimously voted to proceed with the loan application. I have attached an overview of the project that answers some of your questions, and here are some additional points on The Children's Fountain project for your use and consideration:

- The proposed loan payback for this project comes 100% from federal grant funding. Applying for grant funding is a way for the City to supplement our limited resources and to pursue a unique opportunity that addresses both recreational and economic development needs.
- To qualify for this particular source of federal grant funding (Housing and Urban Development), a project must meet strict criteria, which most services and projects in Gresham would not be able to demonstrate. We cannot use this funding source to pay for standard street repair, police, or fire services.
- The Children's Fountain is a unique project with regard to its degree of multi-objectivity. Not only is it an economic catalyst with the potential to pay dividends year-after-year, but it also fills a much-needed parks and recreation need *and* is located in the central hub of the city to benefit the highest number of citizens, in a location easily accessible to all by public transportation.
- Staff researched similar projects in the region and nationally. Combined with other economic development activities, we heard time and time again, from business leaders, municipal staff, and neighborhood leaders, that interactive fountains such as this are a good way to bring visitors downtown and to spur economic growth.
- The anticipated maintenance cost for The Children's Fountain is approximately

\$25,000 per year, or roughly 1% of the City's parks maintenance budget.

- The Children's Fountain has always been a planned component of the Arts Plaza – the critical draw intended to turn the plaza from a “space” into a “destination.” Research shows a fountain would attract more people downtown and provide a better plaza experience for visitors, “activating” the wider area. Leaving the fountain element of the plaza undeveloped would mean forfeiting the full economic benefits that an “activated” plaza space could provide to the City. By contrast, building it as part of a final phase would fully realize the community's initial investment in the plaza itself.
- Planning and design of the plaza incorporated public input throughout the process. The Children's Fountain component has been an item on the Council Work Plan for the past two years. Additional public outreach included meetings with civic groups such as the Historic Downtown Business Association, Gresham Downtown Development Association, and others.
- In this difficult economy, public economic development and catalyst projects such as this are needed to help spur private investment. This in turn will increase property values and associated tax revenues, helping to fund other vital City services.
- Should the loan be awarded by HUD, there are numerous options for loan repayment. Initially, the City would use a portion of its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) allocation to repay the loan. Specifically, a portion of funding within the “Public Infrastructure” category of CDBG would be used rather than affecting the other categories. The City Council will ultimately determine the most appropriate loan payback tool for the organization.

Thank you again and please let me know if you have any further questions or would like additional information.

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## CITY OF GRESHAM

### Urban Design & Planning

1333 N.W. Eastman Parkway  
Gresham, Oregon 97030-3825

April 17, 2012

John M. Bildsoe  
PO Box 1172  
Gresham, OR 97030

Dear Mr. Bildsoe,

Thank you for your comments and questions regarding the City of Gresham's proposed application for Section 108 loan funding for the design and construction of The Children's Fountain in downtown Gresham. Your comments were forwarded to members of the Gresham City Council prior to the April 3<sup>rd</sup> public hearing on this project, where as you know, the Council unanimously voted to proceed with the loan application. Also as you know, many of the questions and points that you raised were discussed at the public hearing. City staff would be happy to sit down with you at your convenience to discuss any of these matters further, to answer any outstanding questions you may have, or to gather additional information. A few key points to consider:

- The Children's Fountain is a unique project with regard to its degree of multi-objectivity. Not only is it an economic catalyst with the potential to pay dividends year-after-year, but it also fills a much-needed parks and recreation need *and* is located in the central hub of the city to benefit the highest number of citizens, in a location easily accessible to all by public transportation.
- Staff researched similar projects in the region and nationally. Combined with other economic development activities, we heard time and time again, from business leaders, municipal staff, and neighborhood leaders, that interactive fountains such as this are a good way to bring visitors downtown and to spur economic growth.
- Applying for grant funding is a way for the City to leverage additional funding to supplement our limited resources and to pursue a unique opportunity that addresses both recreational and economic development needs. To qualify for Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funding a project must meet strict criteria, which most projects in Gresham would not be able to demonstrate.
- The anticipated maintenance cost for The Children's Fountain is approximately \$25,000 per year, or roughly 1% of the City's parks maintenance budget.

- The Children’s Fountain has always been a planned component of the Arts Plaza – the critical draw intended to turn the plaza from a “space” into a “destination.” Research shows a fountain would attract more people downtown and provide a better plaza experience for visitors, “activating” the wider area. Leaving the fountain element of the plaza undeveloped would mean forfeiting the full economic benefits that an “activated” plaza space could provide to the City. By contrast, building it as part of a final phase would fully realize the community’s initial investment in the plaza itself.
- Planning and design of the plaza incorporated public input throughout the process. The Children’s Fountain component has been an item on the Council Work Plan for the past two years. Additional public outreach included meetings with civic groups such as the Historic Downtown Business Association, Gresham Downtown Development Association, and others.
- In this difficult economy, public economic development and catalyst projects such as this are needed to help spur private investment. This in turn will increase property values and associated tax revenues, helping to fund other vital City services.
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Thank you again and please let me know if you have any further questions or would like additional information.

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## CITY OF GRESHAM

### Urban Design & Planning

1333 N.W. Eastman Parkway  
Gresham, Oregon 97030-3825

April 17, 2012

Mike and Kathy Henton  
2129 SE Douglas Place  
Gresham, OR 97080

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Henton,

Thank you for your comments and questions regarding the City of Gresham's proposed application for Section 108 loan funding for the design and construction of The Children's Fountain in downtown Gresham. Your comments were forwarded to members of the Gresham City Council prior to the April 3<sup>rd</sup> public hearing on this project, where as you know, the Council unanimously voted to proceed with the loan application. Also as you know, many of the questions and points that you raised were discussed at the public hearing. City staff would be happy to sit down with you at your convenience to discuss any of these matters further, to answer any outstanding questions you may have, or to gather additional information. A few key points to consider:

- The Children's Fountain is a unique project with regard to its degree of multi-objectivity. Not only is it an economic catalyst with the potential to pay dividends year-after-year, but it also fills a much-needed parks and recreation need *and* is located in the central hub of the city to benefit the highest number of citizens, in a location easily accessible to all by public transportation.
- Staff researched similar projects in the region and nationally. Combined with other economic development activities, we heard time and time again, from business leaders, municipal staff, and neighborhood leaders, that interactive fountains such as this are a good way to bring visitors downtown and to spur economic growth.
- Applying for grant funding is a way for the City to leverage additional funding to supplement our limited resources and to pursue a unique opportunity that addresses both recreational and economic development needs. To qualify for Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funding a project must meet strict criteria, which most projects in Gresham would not be able to demonstrate.
- The anticipated maintenance cost for The Children's Fountain is approximately \$25,000 per year, or roughly 1% of the City's parks maintenance budget.

- The City does currently have programs to incent businesses to locate here, including the Business License Incentive Program and the Garage to Storefront Incentive Program. The primary purposes of The Children’s Fountain is to draw more people downtown, increasing business activity and helping to spur development and private investment in Gresham’s core.
- The Children’s Fountain has always been a planned component of the Arts Plaza – the critical draw intended to turn the plaza from a “space” into a “destination.” Research shows a fountain would attract more people downtown and provide a better plaza experience for visitors, “activating” the wider area. Leaving the fountain element of the plaza undeveloped would mean forfeiting the full economic benefits that an “activated” plaza space could provide to the City. By contrast, building it as part of a final phase would fully realize the community’s initial investment in the plaza itself.
- Planning and design of the plaza incorporated public input throughout the process. The Children’s Fountain component has been an item on the Council Work Plan for the past two years. Additional public outreach included meetings with civic groups such as the Historic Downtown Business Association, Gresham Downtown Development Association, and others.
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Thank you again and please let me know if you have any further questions or would like additional information.

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## CITY OF GRESHAM

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April 17, 2012

Dear Mr. Hurley,

Thank you for your comments and questions regarding the City of Gresham's proposed application for Section 108 loan funding for the design and construction of The Children's Fountain in downtown Gresham. Your comments were forwarded to members of the Gresham City Council prior to the April 3<sup>rd</sup> public hearing on this project, where the Council unanimously voted to proceed with the loan application. I have attached an overview of the project that answers some of your questions, and here are some additional points on The Children's Fountain project for your use and consideration:

- You are correct that there are park lands in Gresham that have not yet been developed. The City of Gresham parks budget has been significantly reduced in the past few years. Applying for grant funding is a way for the City to leverage additional funding to supplement our limited resources and to pursue a unique opportunity that addresses both recreational and economic development needs. To qualify for Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funding a project must meet strict criteria, which most neighborhood park projects in Gresham would not be able to demonstrate.
- The anticipated maintenance cost for The Children's Fountain is approximately \$25,000 per year, or roughly 1% of the City's parks maintenance budget.
- Staff researched similar projects in the region and nationally. Combined with other economic development activities, we heard time and time again, from business leaders, municipal staff, and neighborhood leaders, that interactive fountains such as this are a good way to bring visitors downtown and to spur economic growth.
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- The Children's Fountain has always been a planned component of the Arts Plaza – the critical draw intended to turn the plaza from a “space” into a “destination.”

Research shows a fountain would attract more people downtown and provide a better plaza experience for visitors, “activating” the wider area. Leaving the fountain element of the plaza undeveloped would mean forfeiting the full economic benefits that an “activated” plaza space could provide to the City. By contrast, building it as part of a final phase would fully realize the community’s initial investment in the plaza itself.

- Planning and design of the plaza incorporated public input throughout the process. The Children’s Fountain component has been an item on the Council Work Plan for the past two years. Additional public outreach included meetings with civic groups such as the Historic Downtown Business Association, Gresham Downtown Development Association, and others.
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Thank you again and please let me know if you have any further questions or would like additional information.

*Louise Dix*  
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## CITY OF GRESHAM

### Urban Design & Planning

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April 17, 2012

Dear Mrs. Klein,

Thank you for your comments and questions regarding the City of Gresham's proposed application for Section 108 loan funding for the design and construction of The Children's Fountain in downtown Gresham. Your comments were forwarded to members of the Gresham City Council prior to the April 3<sup>rd</sup> public hearing on this project, where the Council unanimously voted to proceed with the loan application. I have attached an overview of the project that answers some of your questions, and here are some additional points on The Children's Fountain project for your use and consideration:

- The Children's Fountain is a unique project with regard to its degree of multi-objectivity. Not only is it an economic catalyst with the potential to pay dividends year-after-year, but it also fills a much-needed parks and recreation need *and* is located in the central hub of the city to benefit the highest number of citizens, in a location easily accessible to all by public transportation.
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benefits that an “activated” plaza space could provide to the City. By contrast, building it as part of a final phase would fully realize the community’s initial investment in the plaza itself.

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Thank you again and please let me know if you have any further questions or would like additional information.

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## CITY OF GRESHAM

Urban Design & Planning  
1333 N.W. Eastman Parkway  
Gresham, Oregon 97030-3825

April 17, 2012

Dear Mrs. May,

Thank you for your comments and questions regarding the City of Gresham's proposed application for Section 108 loan funding for the design and construction of The Children's Fountain in downtown Gresham. Your comments were forwarded to members of the Gresham City Council prior to the April 3<sup>rd</sup> public hearing on this project, where the Council unanimously voted to proceed with the loan application. I have attached an overview of the project that answers some of your questions, and here are some additional points on The Children's Fountain project for your use and consideration:

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benefits that an “activated” plaza space could provide to the City. By contrast, building it as part of a final phase would fully realize the community’s initial investment in the plaza itself.

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Thank you again and please let me know if you have any further questions or would like additional information.

*Louise Dix*  
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April 17, 2012

Dr. Michael McKeel  
108 NE 2<sup>nd</sup> Street  
Gresham, OR 97030

Dear Dr. McKeel,

Thank you for your comments regarding the City of Gresham's proposed application for Section 108 loan funding for the design and construction of The Children's Fountain in downtown Gresham. Your comments were forwarded to members of the Gresham City Council prior to the April 3<sup>rd</sup> public hearing on this project, where the Council unanimously voted to proceed with the loan application. I have attached an overview of the project that provides some additional points on The Children's Fountain project for your use.

Thank you again and please let me know if you have any questions or would like additional information.

*Louise Dix*  
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April 17, 2012

Vincent W. Oretger  
1735 SE Dogwood Way  
Gresham, OR 97080

Dear Mr. Oretger,

Thank you for your comments regarding the City of Gresham's proposed application for Section 108 loan funding for the design and construction of The Children's Fountain in downtown Gresham. Your comments were forwarded to members of the Gresham City Council prior to the April 3<sup>rd</sup> public hearing on this project, where the Council unanimously voted to proceed with the loan application. I have attached an overview of the project that provides some additional points on The Children's Fountain project for your use.

Thank you again and please let me know if you have any questions or would like additional information.

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## CITY OF GRESHAM

Urban Design & Planning  
1333 N.W. Eastman Parkway  
Gresham, Oregon 97030-3825

April 17, 2012

Elizabeth Peters  
4191 SE 22<sup>nd</sup> Drive  
Gresham, OR 97080

Dear Mrs. Peters,

Thank you for your comments and questions regarding the City of Gresham's proposed application for Section 108 loan funding for the design and construction of The Children's Fountain in downtown Gresham. Your comments were forwarded to members of the Gresham City Council prior to the April 3<sup>rd</sup> public hearing on this project, where the Council unanimously voted to proceed with the loan application. I have attached an overview of the project that answers some of your questions, and here are some additional points on The Children's Fountain project for your use and consideration:

- The Children's Fountain will be designed as a recirculating system to minimize water loss. The fountain will also include an ultraviolet water treatment system to ensure the health and safety of its users. As a contact fountain or "splash pad", the fountain does not have a standing pool of water, further increasing safety.
- The City does currently have programs to incent businesses to locate here, including the Business License Incentive Program and the Garage to Storefront Incentive Program. The primary purposes of The Children's Fountain is to draw more people downtown, increasing business activity and helping to spur development and private investment in Gresham's core.
- Applying for grant funding is a way for the City to supplement our limited resources and to pursue a unique opportunity that addresses both recreational and economic development needs. To qualify for Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funding a project must meet strict criteria, which most projects and services (such as Police or Fire) do not meet.
- Staff researched similar projects in the region and nationally. Combined with other economic development activities, we heard time and time again, from business leaders, municipal staff, and neighborhood leaders, that interactive fountains such as this are a good way to bring visitors downtown and to spur economic growth.

- The Children’s Fountain is a unique project with regard to its degree of multi-objectivity. Not only is it is an economic catalyst with the potential to pay dividends year-after-year, but it also fills a much-needed parks and recreation need *and* is located in the central hub of the city to benefit the highest number of citizens, in a location easily accessible to all by public transportation.
- The Children’s Fountain has always been a planned component of the Arts Plaza – the critical draw intended to turn the plaza from a “space” into a “destination.” Research shows a fountain would attract more people downtown and provide a better plaza experience for visitors, “activating” the wider area. Leaving the fountain element of the plaza undeveloped would mean forfeiting the full economic benefits that an “activated” plaza space could provide to the City. By contrast, building it as part of a final phase would fully realize the community’s initial investment in the plaza itself.
- Planning and design of the plaza incorporated public input throughout the process. The Children’s Fountain component has been an item on the Council Work Plan for the past two years. Additional public outreach included meetings with civic groups such as the Historic Downtown Business Association, Gresham Downtown Development Association, and others.
- In this difficult economy, public economic development and catalyst projects such as this are needed to help spur private investment. This in turn will increase property values and associated tax revenues, helping to fund other vital City services.
- Should the loan be awarded by HUD, there are numerous options for loan repayment. Initially, the City would use a portion of its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) allocation to repay the loan. Specifically, a portion of funding within the “Public Infrastructure” category of CDBG would be used rather than affecting the other categories. The City Council will ultimately determine the most appropriate loan payback tool for the organization.

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## CITY OF GRESHAM

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April 17, 2012

Carol Rulla  
5162 SE 28<sup>th</sup> Drive  
Gresham, OR 97080

Dear Mrs. Rulla,

Thank you for your comments and questions regarding the City of Gresham's proposed application for Section 108 loan funding for the design and construction of The Children's Fountain in downtown Gresham. Your comments were forwarded to members of the Gresham City Council prior to the April 3<sup>rd</sup> public hearing on this project, where as you know, the Council unanimously voted to proceed with the loan application. Also as you know, many of the questions and points that you raised were discussed at the public hearing. City staff would be happy to sit down with you at your convenience to discuss any of these matters further, to answer any outstanding questions you may have, or to gather additional information. A few key points to consider:

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- The Children’s Fountain has always been a planned component of the Arts Plaza – the critical draw intended to turn the plaza from a “space” into a “destination.” Research shows a fountain would attract more people downtown and provide a better plaza experience for visitors, “activating” the wider area. Leaving the fountain element of the plaza undeveloped would mean forfeiting the full economic benefits that an “activated” plaza space could provide to the City. By contrast, building it as part of a final phase would fully realize the community’s initial investment in the plaza itself.
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## CITY OF GRESHAM

Urban Design & Planning  
1333 N.W. Eastman Parkway  
Gresham, Oregon 97030-3825

April 17, 2012

Nancy Seebert  
250 NE 5<sup>th</sup> St.  
Gresham, OR 97030

Dear Mrs. Seebert,

Thank you for your comments regarding the City of Gresham's proposed application for Section 108 loan funding for the design and construction of The Children's Fountain in downtown Gresham. Your comments were forwarded to members of the Gresham City Council prior to the April 3<sup>rd</sup> public hearing on this project, where the Council unanimously voted to proceed with the loan application. I have attached an overview of the project that provides some additional points on The Children's Fountain project for your use.

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## CITY OF GRESHAM

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1333 N.W. Eastman Parkway  
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April 17, 2012

Dick and Kathi Schneider  
3943 SE 30<sup>th</sup>  
Gresham, OR 97080

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Schneider,

Thank you for your comments and questions regarding the City of Gresham's proposed application for Section 108 loan funding for the design and construction of The Children's Fountain in downtown Gresham. Your comments were forwarded to members of the Gresham City Council prior to the April 3<sup>rd</sup> public hearing on this project, where the Council unanimously voted to proceed with the loan application. I have attached an overview of the project that answers some of your questions, and here are some additional points on The Children's Fountain project for your use and consideration:

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April 17, 2012

Dear Mr. Stine,

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April 17, 2012

Marc Thornsby  
16213 NE San Rafael Dr.  
Gresham, OR 97230

Dear Mr. Thornsby,

Thank you for your comments regarding the City of Gresham's proposed application for Section 108 loan funding for the design and construction of The Children's Fountain in downtown Gresham. Your comments were forwarded to members of the Gresham City Council prior to the April 3<sup>rd</sup> public hearing on this project, where the Council unanimously voted to proceed with the loan application. I have attached an overview of the project, and here are some additional points on The Children's Fountain project for your use and consideration:

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<b>Name/Affiliation</b>	<b>City of Gresham Public Hearing- May 1, 2012</b>	<b>Staff Response</b>
Erika Silver, Deputy Director, Human Solutions	Ms. Silver discussed the tenant-based rental assistance program. She said this program is preventing 125 households or 325 people from homelessness many of which are children. This program receives 317 calls a month from Gresham residents needing assistance. She read a letter from a senior citizen who benefited from this program during the winter months. She said 85 percent of people helped by this program are still housed one year later.	Rent assistance programs are covered under Priority Two: Homelessness prevention. We have increased funding for tenant based rental assistance in 2012/2013 due to increased need.
Dody Simmons, Living Solutions Client	Ms. Simmons, recovering alcoholic, said one year ago she was homeless living in a woman's shelter for four months. She has been clean and sober for over one year. She has a job and is able to support herself. She has been able to do this because Living Solutions helped her during her recovery period. The housing is the most conducive part of her recovery. She is safe and doesn't worry and struggle because of the rental assistance. She has been given a chance to become a production citizen. Once she got her job, Living Solutions helped her with the purchase of decent clothing and a bus pass so she can work.	Living Solutions is funded under City of Gresham Priority Seven: Economic Opportunities. The Living Solutions program received nearly full funding in 2012/2013.
Natalie Arreola, EI Programa Hispano, Catholic Charities	Natalie Arreola, Domestic Violence advocate for EI Programa Hispano said her program serves domestic violence survivors and help them begin a new life without violence and free from abuse. They are the only 24-hour Spanish-speaking facility that provides access to food, rent and utility assistance, referrals to health and dental care, mental health advocacy and many other benefits to help families with basic care needs. The goal is to help clients become self-sufficient productive members of the community. During FY 2011-12 this program has served 5,022 low-income Gresham Latinos. She thanked Council for their support.	EI Programa Hispano received full funding under the Public Services category for 2012/2013.

<p>Jean DeMaster, Executive Director, Human Solutions</p>	<p>See letter (attached below this spreadsheet)</p>	<p>The Living Solutions program is addressed on Priority Seven: Economic Opportunities. Living Solutions was nearly fully funded in 2012/2013.</p>
<p>Brenda Jose, Director, Unlimited Choices</p>	<p>Ms. Jose said for 17 years the community counted on Unlimited Choices to live with safety and dignity in their homes. They were successful in adding ramps to homes and completing bathroom modifications, electrical, plumbing and structural work for seniors, special needs and children within the community. She is thankful and pleased that the City has proposed renewed funding for this program.</p>	<p>Mend-A-Home and Adapt-A Home both received funding in 2012/2013.</p>
<p>Angelica Jimenez, Living Solutions Client</p>	<p>Ms. Jimenez discussed her relationship with Living Solutions. She was homeless when she first heard about Living Solutions. They provided housing and support through a family advocate who helped her build a resume and practice interviews and finding a job. She was able to secure a job with Human Solutions as the Energy Scheduler and works full time. She and her four children live in Section 8 Housing. Living Solutions helped her with transportation and clothing for her children clothing. She thanked the Council for supporting this program.</p>	<p>Living Solutions received continued funding in 2012/2013.</p>
<p>Jim Staley, Proud Ground Client, Gresham homeowner</p>	<p>Mr. Staley, special needs man, spoke through his interpreter and said he was able to find a great home in the quiet neighborhood through Proud Ground. He feels more independent owning his own home.</p>	<p>Homeownership is Priority Three. Proud Ground has additional funds from previous years to use for helping low and moderate income persons purchase homes in Gresham</p>
<p>Natalie Mitchel, Proud Ground Client, Gresham homeowner</p>	<p>Natalie Mitchel said she is purchasing her first home in Gresham through the Proud Ground Buyer Initiative Grant program. She is engaged in the community as a board member at a woman's shelter. She is a single mother who put herself through college to earn a master degree in social work. Because of Proud Ground she is leaving behind the unstable life of renting and moving into a home that she was able to choose.</p>	<p>Homeownership is Priority Three. See above.</p>

<p>Reyna Ramos, El Programa Hispano Client</p>	<p>Ms. Ramos, recipient of El Programa Hispano funds said she has received much help from this program. She received energy assistance and food. She thanked the Council for their help.</p>	<p>El Programa Hispano is in Year Two of Public Services funding and received full funding in 2012/2013.</p>
<p>Kristin Madden, Proud Ground client, Gresham homeowner</p>	<p>Kristin Madden a single mother of two boys with autism said last year she purchased a home through Proud Ground. She is from a long line of generational poverty. Her biggest goal was to change this for her children. She is the first home buyer in at least four generations. She has broken the cycle of poverty. This support may seem minor to some but it is major to my children and me. Thank you so much for your support.</p>	<p>Homeownership is Priority Three. Proud Ground has funding from previous year's funding cycle to help provide additional homeownership.</p>
<p>Jesse Beason, Executive Director, Proud Ground</p>	<p>Mr. Beason said that since 1999 they have served more than 150 families to fulfill their dream of homeownership. Seven of those families have been or shortly will be Gresham home owners. The city's investment means that families will have a stable place to build a better future. Whether it is the chance to send their children to the same schools or to become more involved in the community these homeowners have committed to do so. This investment extends beyond these seven families as this program ensures that homes like Kristin's will be affordable forever. Gresham will always have seven opportunities for generations to come for hard working families that are priced out of the housing market. He appreciates that Gresham is making the kinds of investments that leverage dollars today to ensure a brighter future for tomorrow. On behalf of the board and staff at Proud Ground he thanked Council for the honor of serving Gresham citizens. On behalf of the current and future home buyers he thanked Council for making the American dream accessible to all.</p>	<p>Homeownership is Priority Three. Proud Ground has funds from a previous year's funding cycle to aid in the purchase of a home in Gresham for its low and moderate income clients.</p>