



University District sees critical reinvestment through Home Repair Program

Buffalo, NY - Thanks to a \$200,000 grant from the Federal Home Loan Bank of New York (FHLBNY) submitted by Evans Bank, the University District Community Development Association (UDCDA) has launched the UDCDA Home Repair Program. The program will target 20 owner-occupied homes for critical home repairs in the 14214, 14215, and 14216 zip codes of the City of Buffalo. The funding will allow the UDCDA to offer housing repairs such as replacing windows, doors, furnaces, and hot water tanks. The program will also leverage New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) funding to assist homeowners with weatherization and energy efficiency improvements and Community Development Block Grant funding from the City of Buffalo to assist with roof replacements.

With increasing amounts of investment happening across the City of Buffalo, maintaining and upgrading affordable housing can help ensure equitable access to the resulting economic opportunities. This is especially applicable in neighborhoods with transit access, walkable commercial strips, and major employment hubs like the University at Buffalo, Canisius College, and Erie County Medical Center. In some parts of the University District's service area, home values have increased nearly 7% over the past year. The rehabilitation program will be targeted to very low, low, and medium income households to help maintain diversity in the District's housing market.

A portion of the program will focus on elderly homeowners. With over 16% of residents in the target area over the age of 60, the program will assist residents who wish to age in place and remain active members of their communities. Currently, there is a list of 155 low income elderly homeowners waiting for repairs. "We have a lot of people who want to stay in this neighborhood who have been here for years. Thanks to the FHLBNY and Evans Bank, we can help these individuals continue to live healthy and comfortable lives in their own homes," said Roseann Scibilia, Executive Director of the UDCDA.

High utility bills can also disproportionately affect lower income households. Energy efficiency upgrades sponsored by NYSERDA will allow less money to be spent on utilities and more money to be spent locally. Money will also be kept local through the creation of construction and contracting jobs.

Funds will be available starting on 7/21/2015. To learn more about the program and eligibility guidelines please contact the UDCDA's Housing Administrative Assistant Gloria Bryant at 716-832-1010 x 207 or g.bryant@udcda.org or Housing Specialist Terri Gayles at 716-832-1010 x 208 or t.gayles@udcda.org. Individuals can also stop in to the UDCDA Housing Office located at 995 Kensington Avenue.

A number of existing UDCDA programs and activities will complement the Home Repair Program, including job training and educational services, homeowner maintenance workshops, and financial literacy. Additional community resources will also be made available to homeowners to aid in continued housing repairs, including free membership to the University Heights Tool Library.

The program will build on the positive momentum created by over 200 home repairs completed by the UDCDA in the past several years as well as 10 owner occupied rehabilitation projects completed by a partnership between Belmont Housing and the Buffalo Promise Neighborhood.

About the University District Community Development Association:

UDCDA is a full service agency that offers a wide array of human service programs to residents while also spearheading community development projects throughout the City's University and Delaware Districts. The UDCDA combines the strength of its human service programs, operated out of the Gloria J Parks Community Center, with housing redevelopment and community revitalization projects operated out of its Kensington Avenue office. To learn more visit the UDCDA online at www.udcda.org.

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