



Toledo City Council
District Improvement Grant
2018 Application

West Oak Walk Business Association

Applicant - Community Group or Organization

Kathy Carey – President WOW Business Association

Project Contact Person

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Sylvania Avenue Decorative Lighting

Project Name

West Sylvania Avenue, from approximately Douglas to Secor on the north side of the roadway.

Project Location

\$ 115,320

Grant Request

\$ 115,320

Total Project Budget

1. Brief Description of the Project.

West Oak Walk Business Association would like to place 11 decorative light posts on the north side of Sylvania Avenue between Douglas and Secor to enhance the quaintness of the business district, and add a high level of LED lighting for aesthetics and security for 30 additional lights. The decorative lights will be lower to the ground than existing street lights, to allow the business association to decorate during seasonal times. The lights would be in addition to the current light inventory, but would be more energy efficient and would be the first decorative lights in the area.

2. Purpose and Need – State the goals and objectives of the proposed project. Identify the problems or needs which will be addressed. Identify the population that will benefit from this improvement.

The purpose of the request is enhance the aesthetics of a bustling, local business district by paying for decorative lighting along a stretch of Sylvania Avenue to build upon the success of one of Toledo's most-resilient stretches of small businesses remaining. It likely is one of the most resilient in the state offering a diversity of businesses.

The one mile stretch of Sylvania Avenue from Douglas west to Secor remains one of Toledo's most-viable, small, locally-owned business districts.

In 2013, this was identified as Strategic Planning Project 15 with the goal of enhancing this corridor since it was identified as a, "walkable community." Such a designation connotes viable businesses with strong enough residents to the north and south of Sylvania Avenue to support those businesses.

The area is anchored by St. Anne's Mercy Hospital to the west, and the recently renovated DeVeaux Village Shopping Center on the east with such family-friendly restaurants as Backyard BBQ and El Camino Real. In 2013 (the last major study of this corridor), home prices averaged \$61,322 (15% higher than the median home price for the city). The corridor links I-475 to Toledo's only shopping mall. In 2009, a First Energy grant helped improve the facades of several businesses in that corridor. In 2014, large city planters were placed in 14 locations which the WOW Business Association maintains with seasonal foliage.

The area is on the Safe Routes to School Travel Plan to include recently constructed DeVeaux Elementary School. With each of these enhancements, the area has reaped major dividends including an increase in leasing rent and a decrease in vacant space. Local businesses such as Thistle and Thorn, Craig's Keyboards, and the recently purchased Orchard Inn provide a quaint destination for nearby residents and other commuters looking to, "buy local." Dave Zawiecki started his first Zavotski Meats in the corridor. He now has a second location in south Toledo.

Toledo's only medical cannabis distribution business was awarded to an investor who will set up his business in the corridor. Forte Music School is undertaking an expansion of their parking lot to accommodate the increase in business. And for the third consecutive

year, the WOW Business Association will be holding its Fall Festival in a five block stretch of Sylvania Ave.

The festival was initiated by WOW, organized by WOW, and paid for in part by WOW and outside grants that WOW solicited.

3. Project Location – Describe in detail the location of the proposed project. Identify the property owner and provide, as an attachment, proof of the owner's permission to complete the proposed project.

Eleven decorative light poles will be erected on the north side of Sylvania Avenue in an area between Douglas and Secor.

Additionally, 30 energy eating sodium lights will be replaced with LED lighting within the same boundaries but on both the north and south sides of Sylvania Ave. for a brighter business district.

4. Support and Sustainability – Identify plans for securing additional funding if needed to complete this project. Also identify plans to secure ongoing support and maintenance for this project.

The WOW Business Association will pay for electricity supplied to the lights through their current assessments. The maintenance will be conducted by First Energy in the same manner as current street lighting is maintained. The costs will be assessed to the property owners as is currently the case. Legislation is being coordinated with Engineering to update assessments to residents.

5. Organizational Background - Provide a brief background and history of the community group or organization applying for the grant. Include when and how it was established, its mission or purpose, accomplishments to date and a listing of all current programs and services.

Councilman Waniewski's vision, when elected to Toledo City Council, was to take an already vibrant business district and give it a facelift; something that can advance with a changing shopping demographic. Initial meetings in 2010 brought a few businesses together and, as the word spread, so did the interest.

With the growing interest, a separate business association was established called West Oak Walk (WOW). Immediately, the local business owners became engaged in ways to improve business, and it started with "curb appeal." Working with Councilman

Waniewski, efforts were always advanced to provide better aesthetics to the high volume traffic passing their stores. Soon there were business contests for best-decorated store front, and street festivals with entertainment in the fall. WOW recently completed its third fall street festival supported by the businesses. The corridor remains a viable artery in the city, and providing a bit of a facelift that will benefit the public for years to come while reducing energy costs to the businesses assessed is truly a win-win for everyone.

6. Organizational Structure – Provide a list of board members, principal staff, directors, trustees, or key decision makers inside your community group or organization.

The West Oak Walk Business Association is a nonprofit established approximately four years ago (2014) for the purpose of promoting local businesses along a mile stretch of Sylvania Ave. from Douglas Rd. to Secor Rd.

Kathy Carrie (Kathy's Confections) is president
Craig Whitaker (Craig's Keyboards) is secretary/treasurer