

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®
Smart Growth Action Grant Application
2017 Level 3 Application

Purpose: To support local land use policy projects with multiple funding sources and multiple partners or to sustain a previously initiated effort that has proven fruitful enough to warrant further investment. Answers to application questions are expected to contain substantially greater detail than for a Level-2 grant. Such projects should lead to development guided by smart growth principles.

Please check the box of the application deadline for which you are applying.

<input type="checkbox"/> January 15	<input type="checkbox"/> February 15	<input type="checkbox"/> March 15	<input type="checkbox"/> April 15
<input type="checkbox"/> May 15	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> June 15	<input type="checkbox"/> July 15	<input type="checkbox"/> August 15
<input type="checkbox"/> September 15	<input type="checkbox"/> October 15		

(Note: Fields will expand as you type)

Date: 6/28/17

Amount requested (Max \$15,000): \$15,000

Association name: Berkshire REALTORS

Number of Members: 520

Address: 99 West, Suite 200

City/State/Zip: Pittsfield, MA 01201

Application Contact Information:

Name: Sandra J. Carroll

Phone: 413-442-8049

E-mail: Sandy@berkshirerealtors.org

Association AE Contact Information (if different from above):

Name: Sandra J. Carroll

Phone: 413-442-8049

E-mail: Sandy@berkshirerealtors.org

Please visit www.realtoractioncenter.com/sgrants to review the full list of grant regulations and funding criteria.

1. Dates of Activity, if Applicable: August 26, 2017

*Note: NAR will not consider applications for activities that have already taken place or that will occur before applications are reviewed and processed, which takes **approximately six weeks** from the submission deadline.*

2. Describe the land use/transportation/growth issue(s) with which your association is engaging. Why this issue is of concern to the association?

The Tyler Street neighborhood in Pittsfield Massachusetts sits adjacent to our downtown. Tyler Street is a financially and physically struggling neighborhood, with an under-functioning business district and a mixed-use area that is ripe for smart growth development.

It is the start of a very diverse neighborhood that needs help in combating commercial vacancy, low home ownership rates, and the best utilization of mixed-use buildings. It is anchored by Berkshire Health Systems, one of the region's largest employers, and the William Stanley Business Park, housing the soon-to-be completed Berkshire Innovation Center. General Dynamics Mission Systems, another large area employer is 1.5 miles from the neighborhood.

Revitalization of this area using smart growth principals would improve the housing stock, improve the commercial real estate market, provide for workforce housing, and generally elevate a section of our City that has fallen on hard times. There is an alignment of goals and vision for the area and exciting new opportunities on the horizon for large growth development. We are hoping that tackling smaller, street level issues will turn the vision of some into the reality for all.

3. Describe proposed activity. Be specific about the details how this event will be executed.

In 2014, the city of Pittsfield, through funding by the legislature in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, designated the Morningside / Tyler Street area as a "Transformative Development Initiative District. The TDI's goal is to complete an actionable plan for revitalization of the neighborhood, towards a shared vision of a thriving residential neighborhood linking major employers with stores and services within walking distance.

Through this initiative, they engaged Team Better Block to identify and collaborate with regional partners to create quick, inexpensive, high-impact changes that improve and revitalize underused properties and highlight the potential for creating great "Complete Streets".

Team Better Block creates a series of "quick win" projects using the "Better Block" approach that brings greater attention to developments prior to buildout, which in turn increases the potential for pre-leasing. The program will also work with developers to identify and test infrastructure improvements that can provide higher returns on their investments by increasing their project's overall attractiveness and tenant quality of life. Team Better Block also works with city governments to identify underperforming properties, and generate greater interest and reinvestment through community outreach.

The Team Better Block consultant will inventory all of the properties and then work with developers on the various hurdles in the way of redevelopment of certain properties. The experts will also look over all of the zoning regulations and suggest changes for what the region needs.

The consultant will work with the stakeholders preceding the event to teach both business development and neighborhood development skills, so that all participants are prepared to launch their respective pop-up business on event day. They will work to engage the community and prospective business leaders to participate in the event and develop a better understanding of the space available and the work needed and funding available to assume said space. They will spend a week working with volunteers to prepare the street, beautifying the area, improving the street space, creating gathering spots and ensuring the vacant space is made safe, both inside and outside with various city inspectors.

The Team Better Block consultants will procure sensing equipment, test, record and create a report on the experiment. There will be measurable outcomes and the TDI group will follow up after the event with the participants and incubate any commercial leads generated.

This grant will aide in helping three pop up businesses become permanent shops.

4. How will the activity further smart growth-related land use public policies/development in your community? Please review the 10 Smart Growth Principles at the end of this application and describe how your project supports one or more of these principles.

- The plan seeks to promote more mixed-use development, densification and walkability through the creation of a 40R overlay district. The vision of this new district overlap will be apparent in the Team Better Block buildout of vacant space throughout the street.
- Cleaning up the vacant spaces and repairing street level commercial space will create a safer, more walkable neighborhood. The inclusion of smart design will create community hubs to serve as meeting centers. There will be efforts to address the limited access to walking or biking routes in the flow of the newly designed streetscape.
- The plan is to showcase vacant spaces with higher density pop-up storefronts that balance the types of businesses to improve neighborhood vitality, walkability and sense of place.
- Through the test project, we hope to see this “pass-through” street slow traffic normally racing by, to better promote commerce and improve livability and walkability.
- The entire process has engaged community and stakeholders to collaborate on the project and bring a shared sense of investment in the revitalization efforts.
- When the TDI Better Block is complete, the city will embark on an engineering design study to focused on streetscape improvements including lighting for the north side of the street

5. Is this project part of a larger long-term effort aimed at shaping your community's land use?

Yes, the City of Pittsfield, the Tyler Street Transformative Development Initiative (TDI) district has been working for 2 years in the area. The focus this year is on activation of vacant and underutilized spaces, which the Better Block process has helped initiate.

6. Describe the general roadmap to achieving the long-term outcomes, if known and/or applicable.

The community is already programming the downtown and remodeling of several buildings is under way. This grant will motivate the enhancement of the street as a public space. The grants to pop up shops will motivate permanent activation of the storefronts. The training to residents will prepare them for revitalization. <https://tinyurl.com/tylersttdi> (PDF that explains the TDI work and goals for Tyler Street)

7. Describe your association's prior smart growth efforts, if applicable.

Our association has only taken an educational role, both internally and externally, before now. Our REACT (community Service) Chair served as an initial organizer of the event. We are excited to see a project of this caliber include the Realtors in such an innovative way, where our assets can be maximized for the betterment of the community.

8. Describe any non-public policy outcomes/benefits of project, including those to the REALTOR® association and its members?

It will help bring visibility to both commercial and residential properties in the district. It will also provide us with needed seed capital to keep some of the momentum created by the Better Block going both for both commercial and residential properties. A healthier neighborhood makes for better housing, which creates new housing options for the workforce that is struggling to find clean, safe affordable rental and owned space in a vibrant neighborhood.

9. To what degree/how will members be involved in the activity?

We have a had a small group of REALTOR leadership working with MassDevelopment, Team Better Block and the Tyler Street Business Group in the plan. We have two committee chairs poised to lead their group in participating in the project.... REACT, our Real Estate Agent's Chairtable Taskforce will recruit and coordinate Realtor volunteers to work on the street beautification and cleanup the week prior to the event. We would also like to support the efforts of the Tyler Street Business Group's work on getting bus shelters, bus stops, and cans on the street to provide functional infrastructure to the street and help with wayfinding and beautification of the street. Our Government Affairs Committee is prepared to advocate for the 40R zoning overlay district. A third workgroup of members will transform a vacant building into a Real Estate Hub for the day of the event, creating an inviting space for attendees, showcasing homes and businesses for sale or lease, arranging tours of the area, including before and after tours, and showcasing the actual fixed up commercial space where we will create our pop-up office. The association staff is prepared to provide coordination of the Realtor engagement and design and marketing of the properties in the area for the event. Staff will also create marketing materials and announcements to the general membership and utilize our social media consumer outreach channels to promote the event.

10. What other parties will be engaged in this activity (other REALTOR® associations, nonprofits and/or government entities) and their roles?

MassDevelopment (statewide real estate financial service) that administers the funding for the TDI has been engaged to create the master plan and engaged Team Better Block to demonstrate how the area could rapidly be transformed into a more walkable place with activated storefronts.

The Tyler Street Business Group was formed in 2014, and now represents more than 30 businesses. Mostly notably, the group runs the annual Discover Tyler Street Fair, successfully advocated for the City Council to examine new lighting needs, create a new walking loop to generate foot traffic and decorate with lights for the holidays. They signed onto the TDI district as its lead partner and is an integral part of the Better Block research, organization and planning.

City of Pittsfield is involved in not only naming Tyler Street as a TDI, but also involved in the examination of a new 40R zoning overlay district in the Tyler Street area to allow for more mixed use. The city is also involved through the Morningside Neighborhood Initiative, created initially by concerned residents of the neighborhood and eventually working with the City of Pittsfield's Department of Community Development to address the issues impacting the community.

The Berkshire Dream Center is involved in many aspects of the development and revitalization of Tyler Street and in this project. In 2011, they moved into an anchor location on the street (the former St.

Mary's Church) and began their work on Adopt A Block. This is the foundational outreach of the Berkshire Dream Center, one that serves people where they are via a mobile food pantry and services. Adopt A Block cleans up the streets, adopts neighborhoods, and visits people every other Saturday, among other things.

11. How are you measuring the success of this activity in both the short term and long term. When do you expect the long-term land use public policy outcomes to be known, if applicable?

Success will be measured both quantitatively and qualitatively. We anticipate working with Team Better Block to execute portions of this project and they have a time tested methodology for gathering metrics. The outcomes will be known before 2018.

12. Is there anything else you would like the review panel to know about this project?

<https://tinyurl.com/tylersttdi> (PDF that explains the TDI work and goals for Tyler Street)
www.tylerstreetpittsfield.com/TDI (website with blog updates on the process)
www.teambetterblock.com/pittsfield (website explaining the Team Better Block initiative)
<https://www.berkshireinnovationcenter.com> (website showing a new business venture in the area)

13. Provide a line-item budget (revenues & expenses) for this activity.

Please provide your budget in the framework below. Note that the categories listed are only suggestive, not exhaustive; please adjust/insert as necessary. NAR will not consider applications without budget information. Funds may not be used for REALTOR® association staff time or for expenditures already made. Revenues and Expenditures should net zero. In-kind/non-cash contributions to the effort may be explained in the Budget Notes section below the table.

REVENUE	
Smart Growth Grant (enter requested amount)	\$ 15,000
Contribution from your association (do not include staff-time or in-kind donations)	\$ 1,500
Contribution from other REALTOR® association(s)	\$
Contribution from non-REALTOR® collaborating partners	\$
Admission fee/tickets	\$
Other (specify):	\$ state grant
Other (specify):	\$
Total Revenue	\$

EXPENDITURES	
Venue rental	\$
Catering/refreshments	\$ 200
Marketing	\$ 500
Speaker fees	\$
Speaker expenses (travel, lodging, meals)	\$ 2500
Printing (training manuals, handouts, etc.)	\$ 1,000
Other (such as consultant, specify role in Budget Notes below):	\$ 12,300
Total Expenditures	\$ 16,500

Budget Notes (including discussion of association staff time committed to implement project and any other in-kind/non-cash donations to the project by the Realtors® and or project partners):

Consultant will procure sensing equipment, test, record and create a report from street experiment. There are additional funds to be contributed locally for our REACT beautification efforts.

14. If the applicant is a local REALTOR® association, the state association must be notified of your application. Please indicate the name, title and contact information of the state association staff that was notified.

Robert N. Authier, CAE, RCE, EPro
Chief Executive Officer
Massachusetts Association of REALTORS®
1400 Main Street, Waltham, MA 02451
office 781-839-5504 fax 781-839-5554

15. State and local REALTOR® associations shall only use resources provided by the NAR REALTOR® Party Program within their association's territorial jurisdictions as set by NAR.

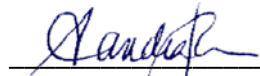
Does the proposed activity adhere to the stated requirement? Yes ☒ No ☐

If you answered, no, contact Hugh Morris at 202-383-1278 or hmorris@realtors.org before submitting this application.

16. If this funding request is approved, do you give NAR permission to share your application with others (either directly or on Realtor Action Center) as an example of a successful application?

Yes ☒ No ☐

Name/Signature of Association Executive Officer



Note: E-mailing the application negates the need for the AE's signature and date provided AE is CCed on the e-mail).

Please direct questions to:

Hugh Morris
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®
500 New Jersey Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20001
202-383-1278 / hmorris@realtors.org

E-mail completed applications to hmorris@realtors.org

Smart Growth Principles

Based on the experience of communities around the nation that have used smart growth approaches to create and maintain great neighborhoods, the Smart Growth Network developed a set of ten basic principles:

1. Mix land uses
2. Take advantage of compact building design
3. Create a range of housing opportunities and choices
4. Create walkable neighborhoods
5. Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place
6. Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas
7. Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities
8. Provide a variety of transportation choices
9. Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost effective
10. Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions

For details about any of these categories, please visit: <http://www.smartgrowth.org/why.php>