

June 29, 2022

Patrick J. O'Donnell
Clerk of the Legislature
Room 2028
Nebraska State Capitol
P.O. Box 94604
Lincoln, NE 68509-4604

Dear Mr. O'Donnell,

Attached, please find the report submitted by the "North Omaha 'Turnback Tax' Grant Committee," in fulfillment of the annual reporting requirements outlined in Neb. Rev. Stat. §13-2610. This report includes: (i) A description of the projects that were funded during the most recently completed calendar year; (ii) A description of where such projects were located; (iii) A description of the outcomes of such projects; and (iv) A ten-year strategic plan.

Sincerely,

The North Omaha Turnback Tax Grant Committee

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*This document submitted electronically via Agency Submission Report form at
<https://nebraskalegislature.gov/agencies/index.php>*

**North Omaha Turnback Tax Grant
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2020-21 Award Summary

African American Empowerment Network - \$10,000 awarded to support the 2021 Christmas in the Village, an event celebrating arts and culture. 2401 Lake St., Ste. 110, Omaha, NE

C.W. Boxing Club - \$5,000 awarded to support the C.W. Historical Archives Project for archiving and historical preservation. 1510 Cass St., Omaha, NE

East African Development Association - \$5,000 awarded to support of violence reduction programming, in coordination with YouTurn. 4735 NW Radial Hwy, Omaha, NE

Freedomtainment - \$20,000 awarded to support Freedom Festival Juneteenth Parade, a cultural and historical Juneteenth celebration event with educational and entertainment components, in partnership with Omaha NAACP. 5829 Northampton Boulevard, Omaha, NE

Great Plains Black History Museum - \$23,300 awarded to support 2021 Community Exhibits and Presentations. 2221 North 24th Street, Omaha, NE

HALLINS Corporation - \$25,000 awarded to support Love of Art and Music Festival (LOVAM) 2021, a free event that provides entertainment, art, positive historic venues and vendors and small businesses from the North Omaha community. 5714 Fort St., Omaha, NE

Metro Area Youth Services (MAYS) - \$11,550 awarded to support "Hood to the Wood," which provides an opportunity for youth to learn to work together in adverse situations on a week-long outdoor adventure trip. 5020 Grand Ave, Omaha, NE

Mildred Brown MSC - \$10,000 awarded to support Omaha Star Newspaper Archival Project 1942-2020. PO Box 3393, Omaha, NE

Native Omaha Days Organizing Committee - \$15,000 awarded to support planning 2021 Native Omaha Days Festival dance event in coordination with Native Omahans Club, Inc. 2221 North 24th Street, Omaha, NE

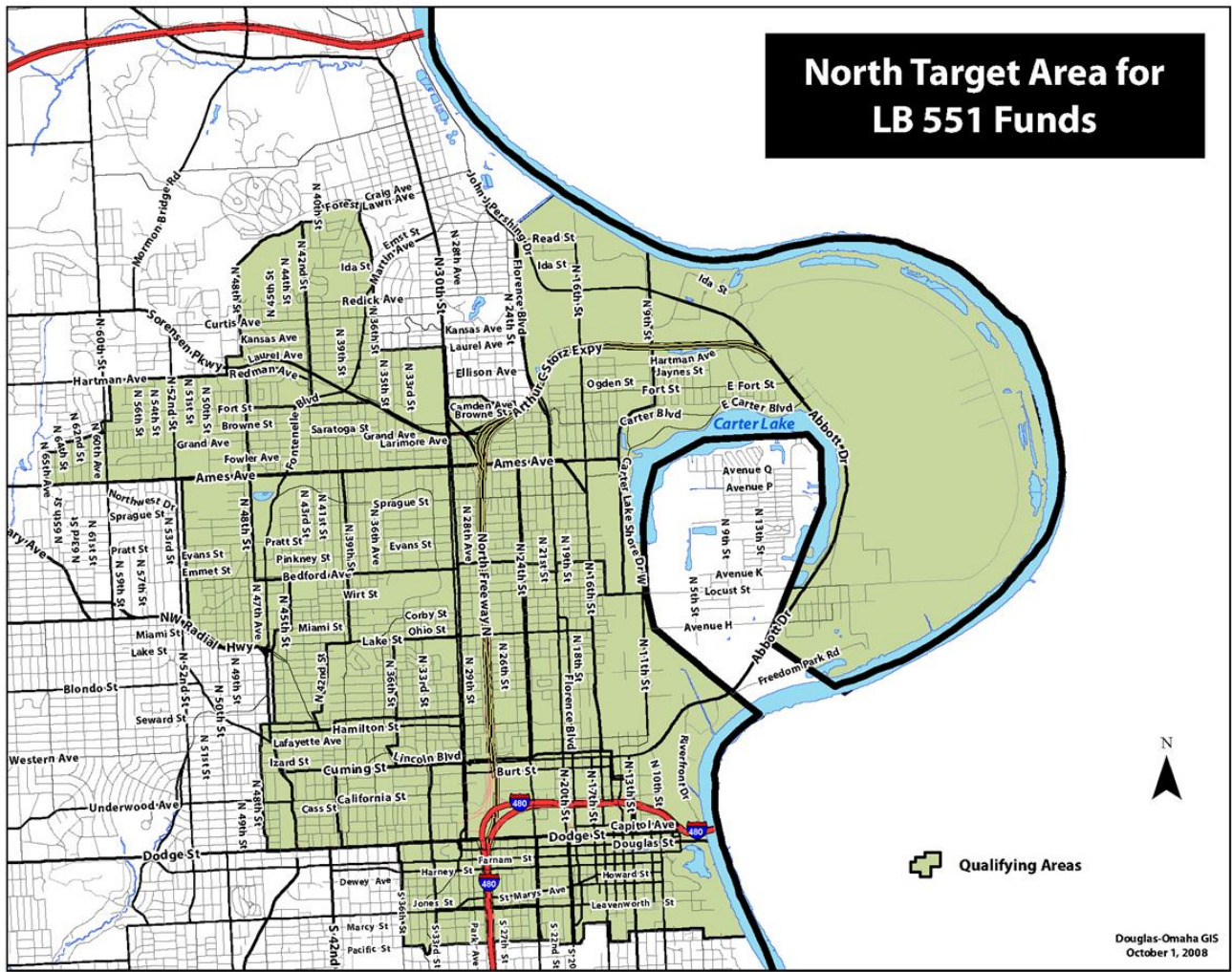
North 24th St BID Association - \$40,000 in support of the Love's Jazz Facilities Maintenance, Management, & Marketing Project. Funds will be used to revive Love's as an Art and Culture venue to serve the North Omaha community. PO Box 11943, Omaha, NE

Police Athletics for Community Engagement (PACE) – \$10,000 awarded to support of the 2021 North Baseball Program at Miller Park and Kountze Park. PO Box 24251, Omaha, NE

Union for Contemporary Art - \$31,000 awarded to support Undesign the Redline and for Performing Arts and Exhibitions. 2423 North 24th Street, Omaha, NE

Note: Addresses listed are that of applicant organization, not necessarily where project activities took place. Funds are distributed to areas with a high concentration of poverty and recipients eligible for funding complete projects in the target area highlighted in the attached map on page 3.

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2020-21 Award Final Reports

Final reports submitted by 2020-21 grant recipients are available electronically via the following link:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1euQvyTtxkXkUbel7UirsC0vSKsgDtB8j?usp=sharing>

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Committee Strategic Plan

I. Purpose

Nebraska’s Convention Center Facility Financing Assistance Act provides that ten percent of the collected tax funds “turned back” to the City of Omaha from the State of Nebraska shall be equally distributed to areas with a high concentration of poverty. An “area with a high concentration of poverty,” is defined as an area within the corporate limits of a city of the metropolitan class consisting of one or more contiguous census tracts, as determined by the most recent federal decennial census, which contain a percentage of persons below the poverty line of greater than thirty percent, and all census tracts contiguous to such tract or tracts, as determined by the most recent federal decennial census. Census data designates two distinct geographic areas in Omaha that meet this definition: “North” and “South” regions, respectively. Per statute, each area shall establish a development fund and form a committee which shall identify and research potential projects to be completed in the target area and make final determinations on the use of the funds received for such projects. This document pertains specifically to the practices and strategies of the Turnback Tax Grant Committee serving the region in North Omaha.

Nebraska’s Convention Center Facility Financing Assistance Act further provides that funds shall be used for three purposes: to 1) showcase important historical aspects of an area with a high concentration of poverty, 2) assist with the reduction of street and gang violence in such areas, or 3) assist with small business and entrepreneurship growth in such areas.

The North Omaha Turnback Tax Grant Committee’s strategic plan documents the Committee’s practices, responsibilities, and planning to support its statutory charges and honor the purposes of the funds distributed in eligible areas in the community of North Omaha.

II. Roles and Responsibilities

The North Omaha Turnback Tax Grant Committee is responsible for soliciting, reviewing, and awarding grant applications and reports on an annual basis. Statute dictates the Committee’s membership to consist of four voting members and one non-voting member:

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A. The member of the city council whose district includes a majority of the census tracts which each contain a percentage of persons below the poverty line of greater than thirty percent.

Councilmember Juanita Johnson, representative of District 2, has filled this appointment since her election to the City Council in 2021.

B. The commissioner of the county whose district includes a majority of the census tracts which each contain a percentage of persons below the poverty line of greater than thirty percent.

Douglas County Commissioner Chris Rodgers, representative of District 3, has filled this appointment since his election to the County Board of Commissioners in 2005.

C. Two residents of the area with high concentration of poverty, appointed by the aforementioned two members of the committee, shall be appointed for four year terms.

Resident Committee Members were solicited in September 2021 and applications were accepted through October 12. Candidates were interviewed by committee members in a public meeting held on November 1, 2021. Ernest White and Rodney Johnson were selected to serve as resident members and public notice of the appointments was made November 12, 2021.

D. The member of the Legislature whose district includes a majority of the census tracts which each contain a percentage of persons below the poverty line of greater than thirty percent.

Senator Terrell McKinney, representative of District 11, fills this nonvoting committee appointment.

Each member attends meetings of the North Omaha Turnback Tax Committee and participates in the review of grant applications, reports, and the development of other documents and forms, as needed, in coordination with staff.

III. Historical Approach

Generally, the North Omaha Turnback Tax Committee prepares a grant application document to be released to the public in early fall, in conjunction with hosting a public hearing to solicit project ideas from the public. After applications have been received, committee members individually receive copies of each application for review and then gather to make the final determination regarding the annual distribution of funding to such projects. Applicants are notified about their award status in winter and

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then staff process award payments for recipients. Recipients submit interim and final reports regarding their funded projects. Unique factors, including limitations to public gatherings during the COVID-19 pandemic and the appointment of new members, have, on occasion, impacted the timeline of these annual activities. Application documents have historically been submitted to the Committee in paper form and copies are divided and distributed in paper form to each committee member, while two sets of copies are retained for staff purposes.

IV. 2022 – 2023 Approach

The committee has tentatively targeted September 7, 2022 to release the annual grant application and hold a public hearing. The public will be made aware of the meeting and application availability via notice in *The Daily Record*, posted notices on the City and Douglas County websites, and an email to recipients from the previous cycle. This hearing may be made available for virtual participation by members of the public.

Applications will be accepted until October 5, 2022 (tentatively). During that time, the application will be available online via the City and Douglas County websites.

Once the application period closes, the committee will review applications individually before publicly meeting on or about November 30, 2022 to review and make the final determination regarding the annual distribution of funding. This meeting will also be publicly noticed via *The Daily Record*, and the City and Douglas County websites and may be made available for virtual participation by members of the public.

After the final meeting, applicants will be contacted regarding the outcome of their application and official notice of award is anticipated to be issued the week of December 19, 2022. Recipient award amounts and applicant documentation will be provided to the City of Omaha's Finance Department for the preparation of award checks.

Additionally, this upcoming cycle the Committee is considering shifting the application process to an online format. Exploration of potential options is ongoing and the Committee is weighing considerations, including accessibility for prospective applicants, streamlined administrative activities, and reduction of waste.

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V. Strategic Goals

The Committee shall solicit project ideas from the public and shall hold a public hearing in the area with a high concentration of poverty. The committee shall research potential projects and make the final determination regarding the annual distribution of funding to such projects. The Committee shall distribute appropriated funds in areas with a high concentration of poverty to showcase important historical aspects of such areas, to assist with the reduction of street and gang violence in such areas, and to assist with small business and entrepreneurship growth in such areas and shall observe statutorily dictated proportions of said funding distribution. The Committee shall ensure awards meet community needs by reviewing reports and maintaining regular communications with recipients and shall annually review recipients to determine whether consecutive funding limit has been reached and whether project is eligible for continued funding based on the statutory criteria. Additionally, the Committee shall conduct an annual review of any amendments to the Convention Center Facility Financing Assistance Act and Committee members shall be (re)elected and (re)appointed in the following years, according to their election cycle and term limits.