



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**Marshall Heights Community Development Organization and the Ward 7 Business Partnership
Awarded the Pennsylvania Avenue East Main Streets Grant**

Washington, D.C.- The Marshall Heights Community Development Organization (MHCDO) in partnership with the Ward 7 Business Partnership has been awarded the Fiscal Year (FY)21 DC Main Streets Grant by the D.C. Department of Small and Local Business Development (DSLBD). Together, MHCDO and the Ward 7 Business Partnership will implement the Pennsylvania Avenue East Main Streets Program and deliver commercial revitalization services for businesses located along the Pennsylvania Avenue, S.E. corridor from the John Philip Sousa Bridge to Southern Avenue, S.E.

DC Main Streets is a comprehensive program that promotes the revitalization of business corridors in the District of Columbia. Created in 2002 through the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Main Streets serves as the citywide coordinating program that provides services and funding for the 26 Main Streets found in the District of Columbia. Main Streets' mission is to support the traditional retail corridors in the District. DC Main Streets is a Main Street America™ Coordinating Program. As a Main Street America™ Coordinating Program, DC Main Streets helps to lead a powerful, grassroots network consisting of over 40 Coordinating Programs and over 1,200 neighborhoods and communities across the country committed to creating high-quality places and to building stronger communities through preservation-based economic development.

“As the preeminent longstanding Ward 7 community-based organization focused on economic development, MHCDO is excited about the award and partnership with Ward 7 Business Partnership (W7BP). Managing the PAEMS provides MHCDO and W7BP another tool in the toolbox to positively impact businesses along the corridor. By combining our resources and capabilities, MHCDO and W7BP

can create synergies and economies of scale to impact not just PAEMS but the greater Ward 7 business community. COVID-19 has had a disproportionate impact on minority-owned businesses, it is good to see DC Government allocating much needed resources to this vital corridor” said Babatunde Oloyede, CEO and President of Marshall Heights Community Development Organization.

When asked to share why this designation was an important one, Deborah Jones of the Ward 7 Business Partnership responded “Finally, an opportunity to give some real attention to a DC business corridor that has struggled through hardship and attempted to reinvent itself many times over the years. We look forward to providing business retention assistance and neighborhood revitalization programming to businesses located in what should be one of the showcase corridors on our side of the river. Through this DC government approved and supported collaboration, our partnering organizations are committed to improving the business mix resulting in our Penn Ave East professionals and retailers profitably offering more of the quality products and services the Ward 7 community needs and deserves.”

On July 23, 2020, the D.C. Council held the Second Vote of the Fiscal Year 2021 Local Budget Act of 2020 (Bill 23-761). The Bill passed 13-0. Included in that Bill were two initiatives championed by Ward 7 Councilmember Vincent Gray, \$200,000 for a Pennsylvania Avenue East Main Street Program and \$250,000 to update the Small Area Plan for Pennsylvania Avenue East.

“Pennsylvania Avenue is one of the most famous streets in America. The Pennsylvania Avenue East Main Street will provide us with the opportunity to turn Pennsylvania Avenue East into an equally famous corridor, providing business opportunities to the many deserving Ward 7 residents” said Ward 7 Councilmember Vincent C. Gray.

For more information about Marshall Heights Community Development Organization, please visit www.mhcdo.org. For more information about the Ward 7 Business Partnership, please visit www.wardseven.com.

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