



June 15, 2020

Erick Shambarger, Director
Environmental Collaboration Office
City of Milwaukee
200 E. Wells Street, Room 603
Milwaukee, WI 53202

RE: Letter of Commitment – SEJCA/COVID EPA Grant

Dear Mr. Shambarger,

Walnut Way Conservation Corp. wishes to express its participation in and sincere support of the City of Milwaukee's State Environmental Justice Cooperative Agreement Program/COVID-19 grant project. This project addresses needs of Milwaukee's Lindsay Heights community related to and exacerbated by COVID-19, while concurrently increasing residents' knowledge about mitigating COVID risk and maintaining a healthy home.

With community-based partners, the City of Milwaukee Environmental Collaboration Office (ECO) proposes the *Healthy People, Homes and Neighborhoods* campaign to conduct outreach and education in underserved communities in Milwaukee. The largely African American Lindsay Heights neighborhood served by Walnut Way on Milwaukee's north side would be a key partner. The project includes Mobile Resource Teams to conduct street-level outreach using carts to distribute COVID-19 and environmental resources, as well as developing both a Healthy Homes Resource Guide and an ECO Neighborhoods Toolkit. Partner organizations will also present culturally-competent Safer at Home Skill-Building Workshops.

Walnut Way commits to serve as an engaged subgrantee partner and steering committee member. Walnut Way will devote staff and expertise to each of the project components described above. Walnut Way Conservation Corp. is a nonprofit organization founded in 2000 by Lindsay Heights residents in a renovated, formerly infamous drug house to reclaim and redevelop the economic health and vitality of their community. In the years since, Walnut Way has implemented a series of innovative programs addressing the neighborhood's most pressing economic, environmental, and health issues. We have united neighbors in collective action, planted orchards and gardens in vacant lots, and cultivated a spirit of enterprise. Developed by over 200 residents and partners, the Lindsay Heights Quality of Life plan sets our vision and guides our work in health and wellness, economic prosperity, and environmental stewardship. Today, we produce several hundred pounds of fruit from our orchards each year. Walnut Way's Environmental Stewardship programming includes a summer teen leadership internship program, urban agriculture and farmer's market, and linkage with Green Jobs including landscaping.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss this project and our commitment if you have questions. I can be reached at antonio@walnutway.org. Thank you for this partnership opportunity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Antonio Butts". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "A" and "B".

Antonio Butts
Executive Director