



Organization	City of Lakewood, Division of Building & Housing
Organization Type	Municipal Government
Address	12650 Detroit Avenue, Lakewood, OH 44107
Contact Person & Title	Christopher Parmalee Building Commissioner
Phone	216-529-6295
Email	Christopher.Parmalee@lakewoodoh.net
Federal Tax ID #	34-6001633
DUNS #	020629093
Project/Program Name	Project Pride Building Code Enforcement Program
Total FY26 Project Budget	\$65,000
FY26 CDBG Funding Request	\$65,000

**Lakewood Division of Building & Housing
Project Pride Code Enforcement Program**

CDBG Eligibility Criteria

The Lakewood Division of Building & Housing's *Project Pride Code Enforcement Program* satisfies the following eligibility criteria and is therefore suitable for CDBG funding consideration.

CDBG National Objective

Low-Moderate Income Area Benefit (LMA): An activity that is available to and benefits all residents in defined residential area where at least 51% of the residents are low-moderate income persons.

CDBG-Eligible Activity Category

Code Enforcement: Code enforcement in deteriorated/deteriorating and low-moderate income areas where such enforcement together with public/private improvements and services arrest the decline of the area. Eligible expenses include payment of salaries and overhead costs directly related to the enforcement of state and/or local building codes.

HUD-Designated Performance Objectives

Create Suitable Living Environments
Develop Decent Affordable Housing

HUD-Designated Performance Outcome

Sustainability

Funding Request

Lakewood's Division of Building & Housing requests \$65,000 in FY26 CDBG funding to implement a targeted Code Enforcement Program designed to preserve housing quality, prevent neighborhood decline, and maintain a safe, healthy living environment for Lakewood residents. CDBG funds support the work of 1.1 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Code Inspectors in the City's designated CDBG-eligible areas to ensure compliance with local building codes.

1. Introduction

Lakewood's Project Pride Building Code Enforcement Program, a strategic, proactive investment in housing quality and neighborhood stability, utilizes CDBG funds to support Division of Building & Housing staff dedicated to enforcing residential and commercial building codes in the City's HUD-designated low-moderate income and slum-blight areas.

Code enforcement is a critical front-line tool in preventing neighborhood decline. Code enforcement efforts maintain the character and appearance of individual neighborhoods and the community as a whole resulting in higher property values; the elimination of blight and deteriorating conditions; and safe, sanitary dwelling units and retail/mercantile occupancies.

By removing visible signs of deterioration, improving building safety, and encouraging private investment, the CDBG Building Code Enforcement Program preserves property values in Lakewood's neighborhoods; supports equitable community development by maintaining quality housing for all income levels; and complements other revitalization activities, including streetscape improvements, public safety programs, and housing rehabilitation investments.

Project Pride works hand in hand with the Division of Community Development's housing rehabilitation programs and a broad array of complementary, federally- and non-federally funded programs to preserve and improve Lakewood's aging residential and commercial building stock; enhance quality of life; arrest blight and eliminate deteriorating conditions; stimulate neighborhood revitalization, and strengthen property values.

Lakewood's proactive approach to code enforcement emphasizes both correcting current violations and working with residents and business owners to address emerging issues before they lead to unsafe living conditions, abandonment, or blight, protecting both residents and property values.

2. Statement of Need

Project Pride is critical to creating and maintaining safe, healthy, stable, vibrant, sustainable neighborhoods and strong commercial corridors capable of withstanding and overcoming the challenges posed by foreclosure, blight, and deterioration. Consistent, diligent residential and commercial building code inspection and enforcement are particularly important in Lakewood because approximately 60% of the City's housing was built prior to 1939 and the average age of its more than 750 retail storefronts exceeds 75 years.

While Lakewood's aging housing and commercial building stock undeniably contributes to the city's unique character, it also poses significant challenges and requires diligent oversight to ensure its long term viability. Without active monitoring and enforcement, small maintenance issues can escalate into structural hazards, lead-based paint risks, pest infestations, and other public health concerns. Proactive code enforcement addresses these issues before they require costly rehabilitation or lead to resident displacement.

Responsible property ownership and maintenance are at the heart of neighborhood stability. While owning property bestows important rights, it confers equally important responsibilities. While most owners meet their obligations – maintaining properties, complying with codes, and not causing harm to their occupants, neighbors, and communities – some do not. When property owners and landlords fail to maintain their buildings, lower-income tenants lacking other options must remain in substandard housing.

Law enforcement officials and social scientists understand the important relationship between crime, blight, and code enforcement. Under the rubric of the “broken window theory,” social scientists have documented the opportunistic nature of crime, showing that vacant properties and dilapidated buildings become magnets for this activity. Code enforcement is a valuable place-based approach to addressing neighborhood hot spots.

Moreover, Project Pride is critical to the ongoing success of Lakewood's *Housing Forward Initiative*. Launched in 2012, Housing Forward is the City's long-term housing improvement strategy aimed at preparing and preserving homes for future generations. It involves a systematic tri-annual exterior survey of all one- two-, and three- family homes to assess compliance with property maintenance codes (scored on a 1 to 4 scale) and to target enforcement and assistance efforts accordingly. Over the past 13 years, *Housing Forward* paired with proactive and compassionate code enforcement, has substantially improved the city's housing quality, stimulated property value growth, enhanced housing options, and contributed to community vitality.

3. Primary Goals & Objectives

- preserve the City's aging affordable housing and commercial building stock;
- maintain the character and appearance of Lakewood's neighborhoods and commercial corridors;
- promote strong, safe, stable, healthy neighborhoods and commercial districts that support, retain, and attract businesses and create jobs;
- maintain property values and foster community pride;
- identify and arrest early signs of blight and deterioration before they become nuisances;
- reverse the negative impact of vacancy and abandonment and restore distressed areas;
- connect residents to home maintenance and improvement resources;
- complement and strengthen long-term community revitalization initiatives;
- ensure safer, more sanitary dwelling units for the city's property owners and renters;
- engage property owners in problem-solving and ongoing maintenance;
- eliminate health and safety hazards before they threaten residents or result in displacement;
- leverage housing rehabilitation programs to achieve long-term code compliance and property stability.

4. Staffing

Code Inspectors serve as the City's critical first line of defense against blight by ensuring violations are cited, responsibly addressed, and effectively managed. They play a variety of important roles in the community including problem solvers, communicators, mediators, researchers, and teachers educating the community about code requirements and standards to prevent violations from occurring, re-occurring, or worsening.

When violations are cited, Project Pride inspectors often refer home and business owners to the Division of Community Development, LakewoodAlive, and other community partners to access the resources, guidance, and information they need to correct violations and comply with the City's building codes.

Project Pride supports a pro-rated share (equivalent to 1.10 full-time employees) of the annual salary, benefits, overhead, and supervisory costs associated with conducting residential and commercial code inspections in the city's HUD-designated low-moderate income and slum-blight areas.

5. Target Population

While Project Pride benefits all Lakewood residents by helping to maintain the character, appearance, health, and safety of the community as a whole, it directly and profoundly impacts the more than 21,000 residents living in Lakewood's CDBG-eligible low-moderate income block groups and businesses located in the city's Commercial Improvement Target Area (CITA).

6. Geographic Service Areas

CDBG-Eligible Low-Moderate Income Block Groups

Project Pride-funded B&H staff conduct residential code compliance inspections in the CDBG-eligible Block Groups indicated in the chart below.

Census Tract	Block Group	Low-Mod Population	Total Population	Low-Mod Percentage
197300	1	535	595	89.9%
160603	1	615	755	81.5%
160604	3	645	855	75.4%
197300	2	1110	1505	73.8%
197300	3	1000	1385	72.2%
161900	3	420	625	67.2%
160603	2	490	740	66.2%
161600	2	670	1035	64.7%
160602	3	620	970	63.9%
160602	1	635	1005	63.2%
160500	2	735	1235	59.5%
160500	3	905	1550	58.4%
161200	3	380	690	55.1%
161300	1	820	1435	57.1%
161400	4	815	1490	54.7%
160400	1	460	850	54.1%
161500	3	710	1350	52.6%
160200	1	555	1060	52.4%
160604	1	780	1545	50.5%
161400	3	255	505	50.5%
Total		13,155	21,180	62.11%

Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey

HUD-designated Commercial Improvement Target Areas

Project Pride-funded B & H staff conduct commercial code compliance inspections in the City's HUD-designated Commercial Improvement Target Areas comprised on Detroit Avenue, Madison Avenue, West 117th Street and Berea Road.

7. Prior Year Accomplishments

In 2024, the Division of Building & Housing:

- processed 1,430 code enforcement cases, 683 (47%) of which were located in Lakewood's HUD-designated LMAs;
- issued 2,446 permits, 694 (28%) of which were located in Lakewood's HUD-designated LMAs.