

November 13, 2020

David Schumacher, Director
Office of Financial Management
302 Sid Snyder Ave SW STE 300
Olympia, WA 98504



RE: Asberry Home

Dear Mr. Schumacher:

On behalf of the Tacoma City Association of Colored Women's Clubs, Inc. (Tacoma CWC), I hereby seek your consideration of our request for acquisition funding to purchase the Asberry Home. This letter explains the historic and cultural significance of acquiring the Asberry Home to the women of the Tacoma CWC, and to the larger Black community of Hilltop, Tacoma.

Dr. Nettie J. Asberry was born on July 15, 1865, in Leavenworth, Kansas. After completing a Ph. D. in music from the University of Kansas, she lived in Seattle for several years and later settled in Tacoma in 1893. Dr. Asberry is considered the first black woman in the United States to be awarded a Ph.D. Her legacy in Tacoma is irrevocably tied to the Asberry Home, located at 1219 South 13th St.

It was in the Asberry Home that Dr. Asberry taught music and Black history to youth. It was from this home that the Hilltop response to the flu pandemic of 1918 was coordinated. It was in this home that Dr. Asberry founded our organization, the Tacoma CWC, and the first NAACP chapter west of the Rockies; and, it was in this home that the Black community gathered to address civil rights for Black people during the first half of the 20th century.

The Asberry Home is now 130 years old, almost as old as the Black community on Hilltop itself. Dr. Asberry and her husband Henry purchased the home in 1903 and lived in it until their deaths. Henry died in 1939 and Dr. Asberry in 1968. She was 103 years young at her death, having lived long enough to see Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. assassinated.

Currently, the Asberry home is owned by a Seattle investor. We have a path forward if we can secure the funds to purchase the 2 parcels he owns (the parcel with the Asberry Home and the parcel directly adjacent to the north). The owner is only willing to sell both parcels together.

The Tacoma CWC believes that the Asberry Home should be owned, restored and managed by our organization. Our vision includes full restoration of Dr. Asberry's music room, a Black history library for youth on the Hilltop, and a renovated space for an African American museum, with flexible event and meeting space. The adjacent parcel to the north holds interest as well. It can be developed to support the Hilltop community through affordable housing, community programming, culturally-relevant non-profit services, or all three.

The benefits of this project are significant. The Hilltop is in a time of extreme change: Black displacement is increasing. Gentrification and a lack of affordable housing is on the rise, and Black home and business

ownership are dwindling. Acquisition of the Asberry Home by the Tacoma CWC is both a symbolic and tangible act of reclamation and self-determination for the Black community. It is likewise an opportunity for the Governor's Office to advance urban historic preservation of Black-centric sites. With state funding, the Asberry Home has a better opportunity for inclusion on the Tacoma Historic Landmark Registry, and potentially on the National Historic Registry.

Tacoma CWC anticipates the purchase of both parcels for **\$892,000**. This covers the purchase price, acquisition, hard and soft costs to ensure that the CWC has site control to protect this community asset. We have no non-state funding sources committed to acquisition but have many partners and supporters committed to helping fund the restoration and planning as we move ahead. The Tacoma CWC plans to partner with local organizations and supporters to explore options for future restoration, development, and responsible relocation of current residents.

Funding schedule:

Date	Planned Action
November 2020	Funding request submitted to OFM
December 2020	Purchase and sale agreement negotiations with property owner begin – <u>with contingencies on state funding</u> .
Q1 2021	Renter relocation plan and site development concept solidified; pro bono grant and assessment work committed.
May/June 2021	Confirm legislative funding; proceed with buy-and-hold if necessary.
Q4 2021	State funding contract for purchased or takeout of the buy-and-hold.
Q1 2022	Restoration planning and fundraising begin.

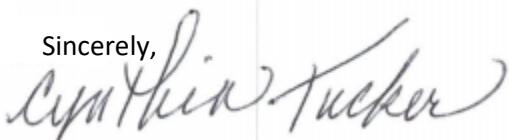
Tacoma CWC Contacts:

Cynthia Tucker, President
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253-843-0323

Carol C. Mitchell, Executive Board member
carol7084@comcast.net
253-297-0525

Our partners and supporters are listed as signatories below. Our sincere hope is that you are willing to join us as we endeavor to reclaim our history and restore this important cultural site in Tacoma's Hilltop. We appreciate your consideration and are available, along with our partners, to answer any questions you have.

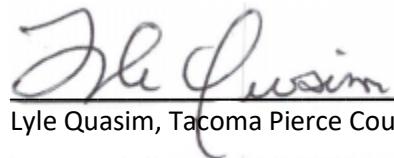
Sincerely,



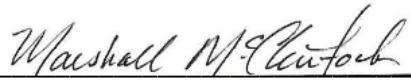
Cynthia Tucker, President
Tacoma City Association of Colored Women's Clubs, Inc.

In regards to the acquisition and restoration of the Asberry Home by Tacoma CWC

We the undersigned offer our support:



Lyle Quasim, Tacoma Pierce County Black Collective



Marshall McClintock, Historic Tacoma



Chris Moore, Washington Trust for Historic Preservation



Reuben McKnight, City of Tacoma Historic Preservation