



TOWER GROVE NEIGHBORHOODS
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION

2021 ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

“ Neighborhoods improve the exact same way that they decline—one property at a time. Once critical mass of positive or negative changes occurs, people outside of the neighborhood begin to consciously perceive that the neighborhood is getting better or getting worse.”

Alan Mallach, The Divided City



The above photos of 4102 Castleman Ave. from the '90s. In 2021, Tower Grove Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation (TGNCDC) celebrated its 40th anniversary of place-based community development work centered on building-by-building, block-by-block housing redevelopment. Staying focused on what we do well is the cornerstone of our success and self-sustainability efforts. While we still have some work to do, our historic service area is thriving, but many of our adjacent neighborhoods are declining. Years upon years of hard work is necessary to stop

the tide of abandonment and vacancy in neighborhoods that have suffered due to disinvestment, speculators, crime, and quality-of-life issues. TGNCDC is committed to using our dedicated capacity and experience to help our city continue to build back neighborhoods in ways that support a long recovery and existing residents and small businesses and drive more public and private investment as we have for four decades. We are small but mighty, and we hope you enjoy reading about what we accomplished in 2021.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEVELOPMENT PROGRESS 2

CROSSROADS SENIOR
LIVING AT BEVO MILL 3

SJHI PROJECTS 4

OTHER COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT NEWS 6

SPEED HUMPS 7

COMMUNITY
RESOURCE GUIDE 7

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT 8

RENTAL ASSISTANCE 9

MOVE TO
HOME OWNERSHIP 9

NUISANCE PROPERTIES
AND LAWSUITS 10

ARCH BY HOMESCREEN 12

LANDLORD &
REHABBER TRAINING 13

ENERGY PROJECTS 14

IN CONCLUSION 16

DEVELOPMENT PROGRESS

BAILEY'S RANGE - 4175 SHAW BLVD.

TGNCDC purchased the contaminated gas station at the St. Louis City tax sale in August 2013 and worked closely with the Missouri Department of Natural Resources and EEIRA to complete the cleanup for redevelopment. After long delays due to historic tax credit approval and the COVID-19 pandemic, David

Bailey is making good on his promise to bring a new burger bar to the Shaw neighborhood and to repurpose the long-vacant building into a neighborhood asset. Opening is set for April 1, 2022.



4175 Shaw Blvd. before



4175 Shaw Blvd. in progress

CROSSROADS SENIOR LIVING AT BEVO MILL

2021 was a year of significant progress and some disappointment regarding the proposed 80-unit senior housing project on donated land (thank you, Midwest Bank Centre) at 4900 Gravois Ave. in the Bevo Mill neighborhood. The site is directly across the street from the iconic Bevo Mill. TGNCDC brings value to the areas we serve by taking on projects that, without patience and subsidies, would never get built based on the market rents and construction costs. TGNCDC successfully obtained ownership of the development site, demolished the functionally obsolete building, and consolidated the property into one parcel.

We then completed environmental evaluation and soil compaction, passed the Section 106 review, completed tax abatement approval, and set the stage to break ground when financing is delivered. The most important accomplishment in 2021 was partnering with

Lutheran Senior Services (LSS) to collaborate on a HUD 202 application for funding, which resulted in a \$5 million award toward the construction and operation of the complex. The TGNCDC/LSS partnership was one of 30 applications awarded in the entire United States. The HUD 202 award and prospect of starting construction teased our optimism, but TGNCDC and LSS failed to obtain the necessary 4% LIHTC (Low Income Housing Tax Credits) from the November RFP from MHDC (Missouri Housing Development Commission).

Over the next month, we will look at any and every way possible to close the \$4 million funding gap and get the project started, with a last resort of applying again for federal and state LIHTC in the fall of 2022.



4900 Gravois Ave. artist rendering

SJHI PROJECTS

ST. JOSEPH HOUSING INITIATIVE (SJHI)

In 2021, TGNCDC continued our partnership with SJHI to act as project manager and create affordable homes for sale. We have assisted in the development of seven homes and have two additional homes to complete in 2022 at 5032 Alabama Ave. and 4600 S. Grand Blvd. This is a fee-for-service model

that helps our organization financially. We have assisted SJHI with creating a successful track record as they grow their organization and look to ramp up their production with more in-house capacity. Here are a few examples of our joint projects:



3429 Itaska Ave. before



3429 Itaska Ave. after



Left to right: New owner Mike Tramble, TGNCDC Board President Janice Drake, and TGNCDC Board Vice President Jason Kempf



4651 Alaska Ave.



5015 Idaho Ave. before



5015 Idaho Ave. bathroom before



5015 Idaho Ave. bathroom after



5032 Alabama Ave. in progress



4600 S. Grand Blvd. in progress

OTHER COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT NEWS

We all make mistakes! Community development is cumulative. We have setbacks and restarts to get the work done. TGNCDC bought 3629 Hydraulic Ave. from a speculator (being kind) and added a roof; we then sold the property to a local developer with cash and experience. They did nothing for several years and then moved out of state. We bought the property back in August 2021 and will redevelop it into two affordable rental units in 2022.

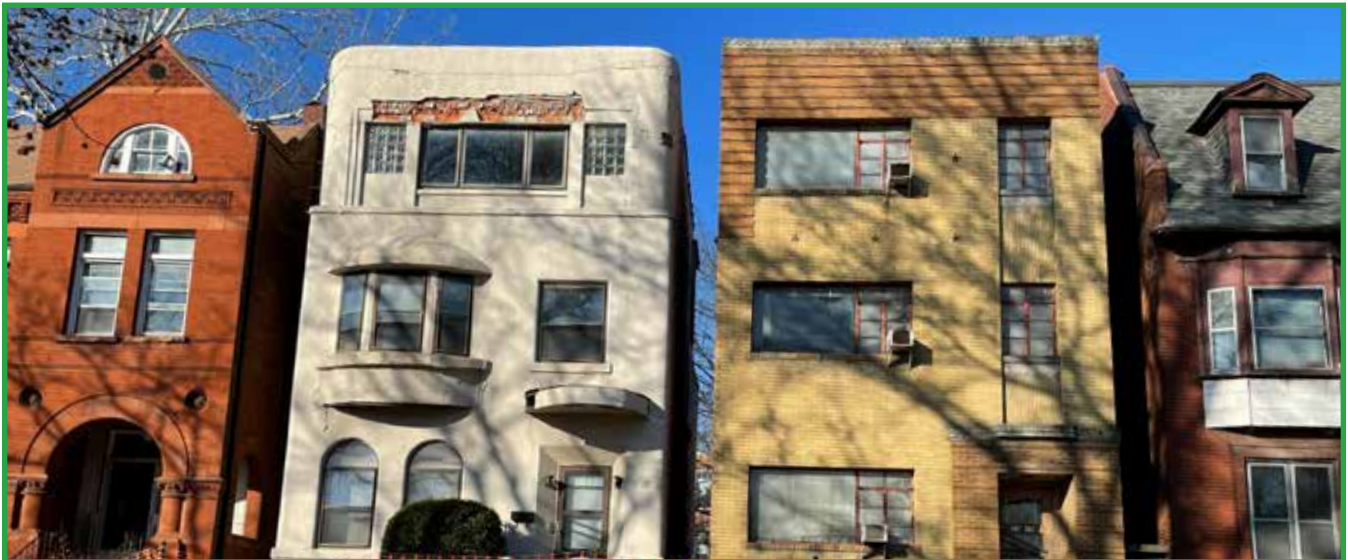


3629 Hydraulic Ave.

TGNCDC is monitoring redevelopment opportunities across South Saint Louis City and specifically at 4525 Flad Ave. with an investor who is working to gain control to redevelop. We also have 4153 Bingham St., 3634 Gravois Ave., 3456 S Grand Ave., 2817-2819 Kingshighway Blvd., 2933 S. Kingshighway Blvd., multiple locations on Brannon Ave., and 4603 Cleveland Ave., on our list to assist and consult for local political leaders and neighborhood association



4525 Flad Ave.



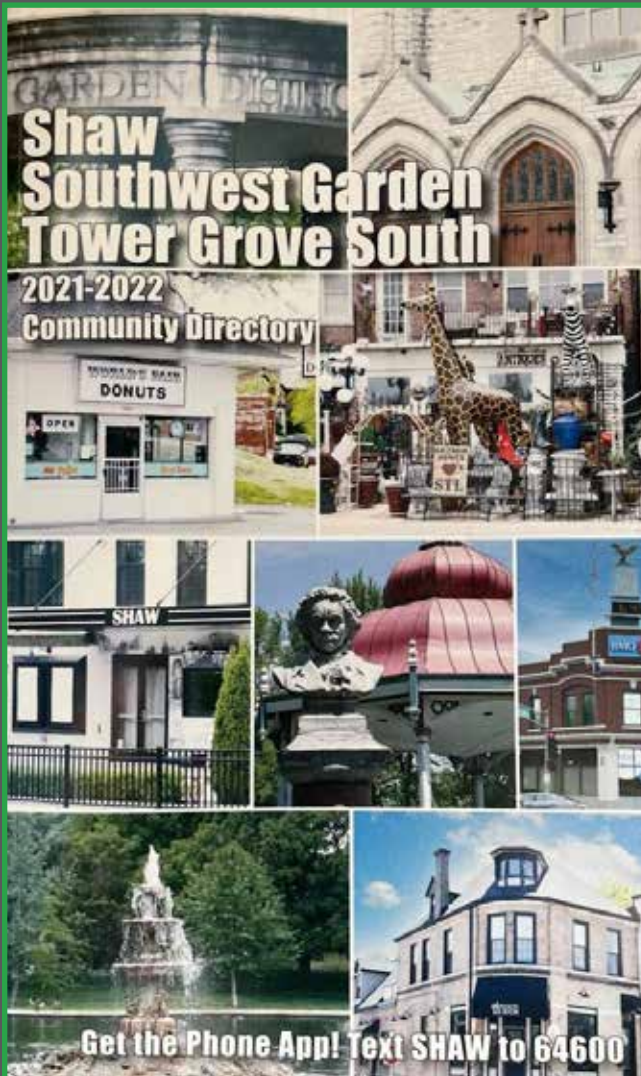
2817-2819 Kingshighway Blvd.

SPEED HUMPS

In November 2021, the long-awaited speed humps were finally installed in the 3600 and 3700 blocks of Bamberger, Chippewa, and Gravois. This one-way street has historically been used as a “raceway” cut-through

between Chippewa and Gravois, resulting in numerous accidents and property damage. We thank Alderwoman Green for hearing the residents’ voices and bringing this project to completion.

COMMUNITY RESOURCE GUIDE



2021 cover

TGNCDC created a new 2021 Community Resource Guide to highlight services available to the neighbors in our historic core service area. This included physically mailing the guides to 11,000 homes in the service area.



TGNCDC's ad

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

3800 GRAVOIS AVE.

We are excited to welcome two new operations into the commercial spaces at 3800-02 Gravois Ave. We purchased the longtime nuisance property in 2018 with the hopes of transforming it into a valued space for the neighborhood. The Popcorn Bar opened in November 2021 at 3802 Gravois

Ave. We are looking forward to the grand opening of a consignment furniture store run by local nonprofit, the James Jackson Home for Pregnant Teens, in early 2022. Both the Popcorn Bar and the nonprofit are minority-owned or minority-led. Make sure you stop by and check them out!



3800 Gravois Ave. before



3800 Gravois Ave. after



3800 Gravois Ave. interior after

RENTAL ASSISTANCE

Our mission to promote responsible development, affordable housing, and diverse character and vibrancy in our service area was put to the test over the last two years when the pandemic struck. Our goal became to ensure that all our tenants would be able to meet their human needs during this trying time. We wanted to offer support to other landlords on how to keep their tenants in place by providing resources and support for rental, utility, and food assistance.

We stayed connected with our tenants and encouraged them to shelter in place and build community within the buildings. We kept them informed by sending emails about city guidelines and how to stay safe. We supported tenants with creative ways to relieve stress, including backyard gardens, fire pits, and community spaces that helped tenants socialize safely.

Most of our tenants are low- to moderate-income, and many were employed in industries hit hard by the pandemic. We provided \$875 in grocery gift certificates to those who needed support, as well as resources that helped them apply for food stamps and food pantries.

As of December 2021, \$129,925 has been funded for rental assistance. We worked with Prosperity Connection and RedDough to provide \$32,100 for rental assistance; financial support that was made possible through MERAP (Missouri Emergency Rental Arrears Program) and SAFHR (State Assistance for Housing Relief) totaled \$97,825. As the pandemic continues, we will continue to support our tenants in need of rental assistance.

MOVE TO HOME OWNERSHIP

In 2021 we congratulated two of our longtime tenants who became first-time homeowners! One of our goals for our rental portfolio is to provide safe, well-maintained, affordable units that allow our tenants to save for their futures and dreams, whatever they may be. Both tenants have dreamed of becoming

homeowners, and we are so proud to have helped them reach their goals. We are also overjoyed that they both bought in the city, near the apartments they were renting, choosing to invest in the city and continue building their lives and community here.

“ I went through the process of buying a house. TGNCDC was more than patient during this rough transition. They also referred me to electricians and contractors that I felt I would need, being a first-time home buyer. It was in no small part due to TGNCDC that I was able to get the house. They never once raised my rent. The money I would have spent on the trajectory that my previous rental company was charging equates to a large part of my down payment.” —Tenant, 3600 Bamberger Ave.

NUISANCE PROPERTIES AND LAWSUITS

TGNODC continues our partnership with Legal Services of Eastern Missouri (LSEM) to address long-standing nuisance properties with lawsuits to initiate action by the absentee owners. The success rate is undeniable, and this tool is the future of vacancy abatement and

redevelopment. We're thankful to Peter Hoffman, Rachel Waterman, and the entire LSEM organization for their commitment to stronger neighborhoods and holding people accountable for their actions. Here are a few of the projects we worked on with them in 2021:



4129 Potomac Ave.



4063 Potomac Ave. (to be renovated in 2022)



3231 Alfred Ave. (demolished)



3920 DeTonty Ave.

Public Nuisance & Code Enforcement

Nuisance. Unreasonable, unusual or unnatural use of one's property so that it substantially impairs the right of another to peacefully enjoy their property.

Municipal Prosecution. Compliance oriented includes building codes (exterior/interior), illegal occupancies, permitting, etc.

Process. Complaint Received, Initial Inspection, Notice of Violation and Period to Abate, Court Referral. Quasi-criminal in nature. Can include fines up to \$500 per violation and ninety days imprisonment. City may issue stop work order or also abate violation itself and impose lien.

Rights of Entry. Official may enter when necessary to inspect/enforce code with reasonable belief that violations exist. Authorized to enter at a reasonable time and provide credentials to occupant. Reasonable efforts made to locate owner/person in control. Emergency powers more broad.



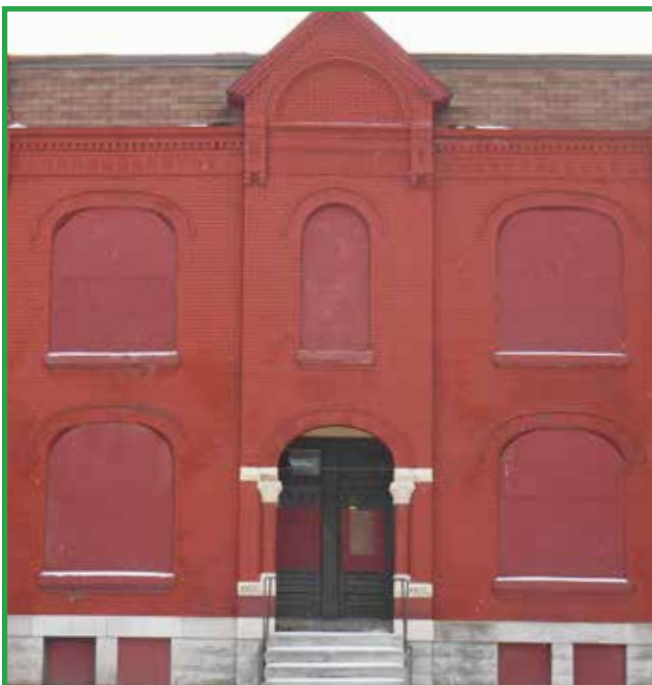
Peter Hoffman of LSEM



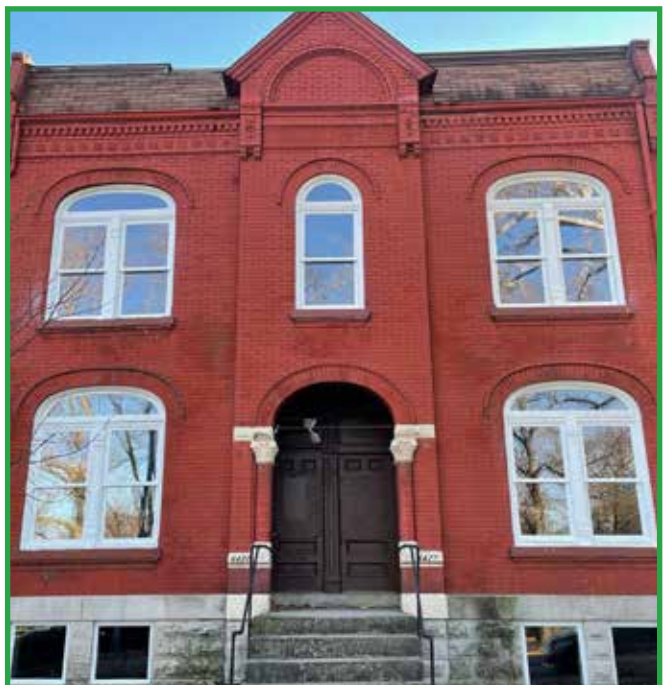
3964 Parker Ave. living room before



3964 Parker Ave. living room before



4420-22 Arsenal St. before



4420-22 Arsenal St. after

ARCH BY HOMESCREEN

The beginning of 2021 saw the completion and launch of ARCH by HomeScreen: At-Risk Renters' Connection to Housing. Created through CARES Act funding, the goal of ARCH was to help renters affected by the COVID-19 pandemic find safe, stable housing. **A huge thanks to Employment Connection for sponsoring the application/administering the award for this funding.** We collaborated with multiple nonprofit organizations, including Employment Connection, Salvation Army, Urban League, and St. Patrick Center. Over nine months, we onboarded 99 landlords and generated over 115 leads for housing. We processed 80 applications, and 33 of those applications were approved for housing. We spoke with one of the first landlords who approved an ARCH applicant in April. The landlord, a police officer, was happy to have a platform that allowed her to house someone being released from incarceration and give him a safe place to call home. She reported on-time payments and overall satisfaction with his tenancy over the past eight months.

As an additional service within ARCH, we launched the Pre-Screening Application in June. The Pre-Screening Application allows nonprofit organizations like Mission: St. Louis,

Gateway Housing First, and Places for People to obtain a national criminal background check and national eviction data for their clients before the full apartment application process takes place. We processed 75 Pre-Screening Applications in the second half of 2021. This prescreening application is a less expensive product and great for background checking for not for profits with employment services and volunteer services.

In August, we began the process of integrating HomeScreen with MRI, a property management software platform that serves over 16 million units worldwide. With the help of the Enliven Group, we completed the integration in October, making HomeScreen available to the 6,500 American MRI clients. In order to market our services to MRI users, we completed the Partner Certification Process in December. We plan to market the certified partnership through a press release in early 2022.

Throughout the year we processed 2,642 total applications, 262 of which opted into Prosperity Connection's financial services. Our average processing time was 3 days, down from four days, six hours in 2020. We registered 185 new landlords and processed 280 applications for our new clients.



LANDLORD & REHABBER TRAINING

Landlord and Rehabber Training is facilitated in collaboration with North Newstead Association and the Saint Louis Vacancy Collaborative. This year, we had 476 attendees at nine virtual trainings and received 380 requests for the training session recordings. Twenty-one professionals presented at the seminars.

Topics included:

- Best Practices to Avoid Eviction
- Avoiding Liability: Legal Obligations to Your Tenant, Neighbors, and the Community
- In-Depth Lease Review
- Property Management Services and Software
- Acquiring LRA & Tax Sale Property
- Rental Property Improvements That Reap Rewards
- Finding the Right Sized Project & Running the Numbers
- Asking for Money & Preparing Your Pitch
- Missouri and Federal Tax Credits

This activity was funded by a HUD Community Development Block Grant via the St. Louis Community Development Administration.

2021 LANDLORD & REHABBER TRAINING

The 2021 Landlord & Rehabber Training is a Northside-Southside Collaboration between North Newstead Association, The Vacancy Collaborative, and Tower Grove Neighborhoods CDC.

This FREE training is open to all landlords, rehabbers, property managers, developers, and interested parties.

Zoom is ADA compliant with exceptions. If you need special accommodations, please contact dana@towergrovecdc.org

2021 SCHEDULE

We are meeting virtually on the 4th Tuesday of the month, 6:30 to 8:30 pm, on Zoom.

JAN 26	Best Practices to Avoid Eviction	JUN 22	Rental Property Improvements That Reap Rewards
FEB 23	Avoiding Liability	JUL 27	Finding the Right Sized Project and Running the Numbers
MAR 23	In-depth Lease Review	AUG 24	Asking for Money and Preparing Your Pitch
APR 27	Property Management Services and Software	SEP 28	Missouri and Federal Tax Credits
MAY 25	Acquiring LRA and Tax Sale Property		

Registration is required. Invitations to register are sent by email. Join our email/mail list: <https://tinyurl.com/landlords-rehabbers>

Learn more at towergrovecdc.org/landlord-training

This activity is funded by a HUD Community Development Block grant via the St. Louis Community Development Administration.

Tenant Screening Service available for all areas! Visit MyHomeScreen.org or call 314-865-5530

Logos: North Newstead Association, St. Louis Vacancy Collaborative, Tower Grove Neighborhoods CDC, HomeScreen Verification & Screening

2021 Flier

The Lease Agreement

- A real estate contract designed to bind a landlord and tenant to certain terms and conditions during the renting of a subject property
- Must contain the cost of rent, the causes for termination, the lease term, and the responsibilities of both parties
- Occupancy limits defined
- Provides for the collection of late fees
- Provides for Attorney fee reimbursement, which is not available under the common law or by statute
- A landlord can't make changes to the terms of the lease without seeking approval from the tenant beforehand

LASHLY & BAER, P.C.
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

Participants visible in the Zoom grid:

- Christopher Bed...
- Dana Gray
- Lily Murphy
- Adam Drake
- Constance
- LINDA HENRY
- Denis shine
- DeWayne Sti...
- Tara Aubuch...
- Amanda White

Landlord Training Lease Agreement Presentation March 2021

ENERGY PROJECTS

TGNCDC is committed to making all rental properties more energy efficient, especially our own portfolio. We invested in energy-efficiency improvements at (2) four-family buildings, utilizing Ameren's Income Eligible Rebate program, co-delivered with Spire. We worked with Ameren's program implementer,

ICAST, for audits and rebates and provided feedback on program delivery to the utilities at the Missouri Energy Efficiency Advisory Collaborative – Low Income Work Group. Grants from the U.S. Bank Foundation helped make the projects possible.

3606-08 BAMBERGER AVE.

Installed:

- (26) Energy Star-rated windows
- (4) 15.5 SEER central A/C units
- (4) 96% efficient gas furnaces
- Programmable thermostats
- LED light bulbs
- Shower and faucet aerators

Total cost = \$41,096.30

Rebate = \$10,015.68

U.S. Bank Foundation contribution = \$25,000

Projected annual electric savings = \$635

Projected annual natural gas savings = \$1,340



3169-71 ALFRED AVE.

Installed:

- (36) Energy Star-rated windows
- (2) 96% efficient gas furnaces
- Programmable thermostats
- LED light bulbs
- Shower and faucet aerators
- (4) Energy Star gas water heaters, to be installed

Estimated total cost = \$25,227

Estimated rebate = \$6,848

U.S. Bank Foundation contribution = \$30,000

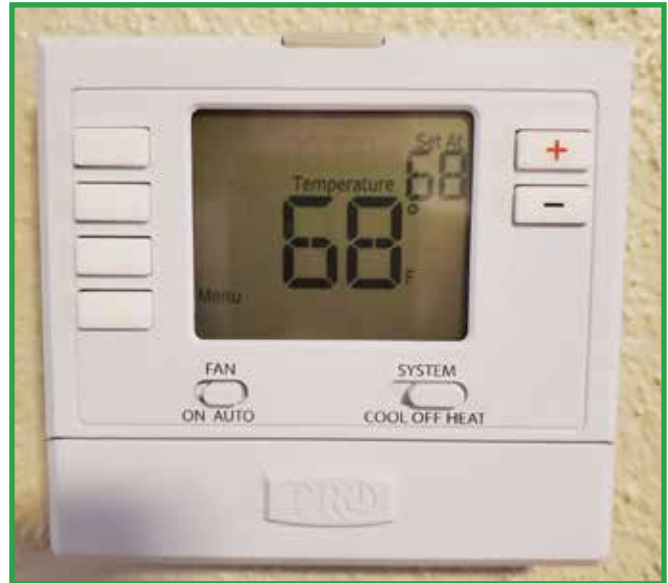
Projected annual electric savings = \$765

Projected annual natural gas savings = \$914



ENERGY GRANT INITIATIVES

TGNCDC logged more than 800 hours advocating for healthy, energy-efficient, affordable housing, in collaboration with Renew Missouri, National Housing Trust, Elevate, Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance, Idleburg Consultants, Natural Resources Defense Council, Consumers Council of Missouri, People's Community Action Corporation, Metropolitan Congregations United, Homes for All St. Louis, Generate Health St. Louis, St. Louis Regional Response Team, US Green Building Council, Building Energy Exchange, Sierra Club, Empower Missouri, EarthWays Center of the Missouri Botanical Garden, Legal Services of Eastern Missouri, Metropolitan St. Louis Equal Housing & Opportunity Council, Community Builders Network, Missouri Veterans Endeavor, and others.



3171 Alfred Ave. new thermostat



3969 Alfred Ave. new furnance



3171 Alfred Ave. new furnace

IN CONCLUSION

Community development corporations (CDCs) were created in the late '70s and early '80s as a result of urban renewal initiatives by the federal government. Early in the program's history, St. Louis City had 34 CDCs and over \$35 million in funding from community block grants, all of which was allocated by ward, with aldermanic support, directly to organizations that worked on the ground and in neighborhoods. Today, we have less than \$17 million in funding (think about that with inflation), and all nonprofits working in community development can apply and be funded. This is the way it should be. However, the lower funding levels and increased competition have completely changed how CDCs operate. With less than 5% of our budget from CDA CDGB funds, we are challenged to create diverse ways of being funded while still working to stabilize St. Louis City neighborhoods, develop affordable housing, reduce vacancies, and generally make neighborhoods places where people want to invest, live, open a business, and visit. Hopefully more dedicated funding opportunities will present themselves to continue the work. Otherwise, the already diminished CDC infrastructure will continue to fracture and only the strongest will survive. We hope our annual report shows the community that we are doing our part in many different ways. The new normal isn't just about COVID-19; it's about how resources get invested into neighborhoods to improve St. Louis City.

Thank you to our dedicated Board of Directors: Janice Drake, Jason Kempf, Jillian Guenther, Raymond Flojo, Denise Evans, Colleen Hafner, Blake Hamilton, Jeffrey McGee, Vihar Sheth, and Jim Zirngibl.

Thank you to our many friends in city government who appreciate and support our endeavors; our engaged and active residents and local business owners; our local/national banking lenders and sponsors; and our hard-working city employees.

Thank you to all the banks and stakeholders who donated to our work in 2021 including 10,000+ donations from Equifax, PNC Bank, Enterprise Bank, First Bank TIAA Bank, and O6 Environmental.

Last, I also want to recognize our passionate staff including Kristan Nickels, Asset Manager; Dana Gray, Community Outreach Coordinator; Ella Gross, HomeScreen Tenant Screening Manager; Adam Drake, HomeScreen Landlord Support Specialist; and Nisveta Fejzic, HomeScreen Application Specialist, all of whom contributed significantly to this report.

On to 2022!



Sean Spencer
Executive Director, TGNCDC





2337 S. Kingshighway Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63110
PH 314.865.5530 **FAX** 314.865.2540 **WEB** www.towergrovecdc.org
TGNCDC is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation.

