

Lorna Peterson
1088 Delaware Ave 7C
Buffalo NY 14209-1616
lorna.peterson2401@gmail.com; 716-886-1973
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American Rescue Plan
City of Buffalo
City Hall
65 Niagara Square
Buffalo, NY 14202
Subject: Loads of Love—Brandi Barrett

Dear American Rescue Plan Review Committee Members:

Brandi Barrett has the background, expertise, grit, and finesse to successfully fulfill the objectives as detailed in her Loads of Love laundry proposal. I write this confidently as I have known and worked with Brandi for approximately three years on diverse community activities. As a member of Fruit Belt/McCarley Gardens Housing Task Force and the Fruit Belt Community Land Trust (FBCLT), I have worked with Brandi on the following:

- Historic preservation and educating Fruit Belt residents on preservation's specific, economic values. We successfully developed and held a Facebook Live event, August 2020, with Preservation Buffalo Niagara (PBN) and FBCLT. From this activity, a stronger support for appropriate, historic reuse of 204 High Street and redevelopment of 206, 208 High Street, was built by the various Fruit Belt community organizations. Through the coalition building with Fruit Belt/McCarley, Fruit Belt Advisory, and Fruit Belt Homeowners and Tenant Council, 204 High Street and Brandi Barrett, along with notable others, attracted the attention of Douglas Jemal, who brought his considerable resources to a controversial preservation project. An important architectural piece of Buffalo history was successfully saved for future use and enjoyment.
- Writing and receiving [a Lundenfeld Beatification Grant](#) for the 147 [Lemon Street](#) Garden. This project required interacting with City Hall, the City Parks Department, neighborhood groups, and collaborators Gardens Buffalo Niagara-East Side Garden Walk, Grassroots Gardens of WNY, UB Surgical Department, and Urban Roots. Brandi Barrett is truly a collaborative worker who meets deadlines, comes with and executes good ideas, is task oriented, and responsible.

I have been so impressed with Brandi's managerial and interpersonal communication skills, plus her love for her community, that I nominated her for the [PBN Mary Talbert Award for Emerging Preservation Leader](#) which she won in May 2022.

Brandi is a graduate of the Community Based Real Estate Development Training (CBREDT) Program, a program developed by Empire State Development (ESD) and the University at Buffalo Regional Institute (UBRI). She so impressed her mentor, the respected community developer Stephen Karnath, that he recruited and hired her in November 2021 to

serve as the Commercial District Program Manager for Broadway Fillmore Neighborhood Housing Services.

I am a former librarian and later, a library science professor, now retired for seven years. In forty years of my profession, besides teaching and research, I have worked on many teams, committees, and review boards. From this experience, I quickly learned who the real workers are, who has the perseverance to see a project through, who approaches solutions to problems from an ethical stance, and who I would be willing to work with again on anything at any time. I can say firmly using those criteria, Brandi Barrett is one such person. She would use the support and resources of the American Rescue Plan wisely to advance the mission and goals for a sustainable and equitable Buffalo, especially for its for too long disinvested East Side. Just the name of her project tells you who she is at her core—she is Loads of Love and would shepherd her project through on time, on budget, providing a practical, basic need for the community. I truly hope her project is selected. She can do it. And the City of Buffalo is in desperate need of her leadership, vision, project, and intelligence.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lorna Peterson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Lorna Peterson, MLS, PhD

Member, Fruit Belt/McCarley Housing Task Force; member FBCLT