

2/16/2023

**Earmark Sponsor:** Rep. Chandra Dillara  
**Project/Event Name:** Mill Village Mixed-Use Campus  
**Amount:** \$600,000  
**Recipient Type:** Non-Profit  
**W-9 Form (Federal Tax ID Number):** ██████████  
**Point of Contact:** Dan Weidenbenner, Executive Director  
1186 Pendleton St, Greenville, SC 29611  
(864) 351-8865  
www.MillVillage.org

**Please provide a written summary and description for:**

**1.The activity, function or project for which earmark is intended**

Mill Village Ministries (MVM) began 10 years ago as a grassroots outreach organization. Since, it has grown into a vibrant and holistic community development coalition inspiring multi-generational change. MVM's four social enterprises (Mill Village Farms, Village Engage, Village Wrench, and Village Launch) have been housed in different locations across Greenville; the time has come to unite them under one roof at an anchor mixed-use campus in the West Greenville community located at 1186 Pendleton Street. The funds from this request will help purchase and redevelop a permanent hub for all of Mill Village Ministries' social enterprises.

**2.Public purpose served by the project**

This project will create a campus for Mill Village Ministries to significantly expand successful programs to grow minority businesses and create economic mobility for low-wealth families for generations. Specifically, this project will create a center for youth (ages 14-18) employment & workforce development training, healthy food distribution hub, a bicycle workshop, and a minority & women entrepreneurship training center.

**3.Project budget**

Project Costs:

Property Acquisition: \$2,500,000  
Sitework & Exterior Improvements: \$500,000  
Interior Improvements: \$350,000  
Contingency: \$150,000  
Total Project Cost: \$3,500,000

Project Income:

Capital Campaign Gifts & Pledges Already Secured: \$2,900,000  
SC Budget Appropriation Request: \$600,000  
Total Project Income: \$3,500,000

**4.Demonstrated community support and need:**

Greenville County has experienced exponential growth over the past ten years. However, that growth has not been equally enjoyed. On the contrary, this growth has displaced many low-income populations. In general, 15% of Greenvillians are experiencing poverty; in West Greenville specifically, where this project is located, 26% live in poverty (ACS, 2018). In a staggering statistic, Greenville ranks as the 24th worst county in the US (of 2,478 counties) for upward economic mobility (NSEM, 2018). Meanwhile, healthy food insecurity

unequally impacts minority populations. Neighborhood factors, such as limited transportation and access to healthy food, create major challenges for families wanting to make any lifestyle changes. In Greenville, the rate of food insecurity is even higher than the national rate (18%) and half of Greenville children qualify for free or reduced school meals. A United Way of Greenville County & Furman University Study also shows that 43% of households in West Greenville do not have a vehicle, compared to 6% regionally. Without reliable transportation, many community members are at the mercy of our inadequate public transportation system and are limited to opportunities within a short distance, inhibiting job opportunities and further exacerbating economic disparities between wealthy and low-income pockets of Greenville County. Meanwhile, women-owned businesses are growing twice as fast on average as all businesses across the country. Within that staggering statistic, women of color accounted for 89% of all new businesses opened every day over the year in 2019 (American Express, 2019 State of Women-Owned Businesses Report). However, women of color, particularly Black women, are furthest from the critical resources needed to succeed to build wealth and create economic development in our communities.

Mill Village Ministries recognizes the issues facing our community are complex and require a holistic, multi-pronged approach and solutions. Thus, we work in different avenues through our four social enterprises (Mill Village Farms, Village Engage, Village Launch & Village Wrench) to deliver programs that meet the unique needs of our community. Mill Village Farms is an urban farm and a healthy food distributor that provides workforce training and employment to youth while providing access to affordable healthy produce for all in Greenville county. We have successfully trained and employed over 500 youth in the community and have delivered over one million pounds of affordable fresh fruits and vegetables at accessible locations across Greenville County since 2018. Village Engage is a community organization that provides educational opportunities, dialogue, and direct action for members of the faith community to tackle systemic issues facing Greenville. Village Launch is an Entrepreneur Support Organization that provides educational services, mentorship, and market access for minority and women-owned start-ups. We have trained over 250 minority and women-owned businesses in our community and currently have a waiting list of over 80 entrepreneurs trying to participate in our 11-week business incubator program. Finally, Village Wrench is a bicycle shop that provides accessible sales and service, youth employment, and community education for all current and future bike riders. This funding would provide the remaining capital necessary to unite each of these enterprises under one roof to multiply impact and streamline operations. The total project cost is \$3.5M and we have already raised \$2.9M in the local community. We are requesting \$600,000 from SC Budget Appropriations to complete this project.

**5.Details of any state funds previously appropriated to the same entity for same or similar purpose:** None, not-applicable