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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

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May 17, 2024

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
H-307, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
1036 Longworth HOB  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro,

I am requesting \$2.5 million for the City of Cocoa to assist with the redevelopment of the former Dr. Joe Lee Smith Community Center building, which is located in the Diamond Square Community of the City. I'm proud of the work of the City in creating the Diamond Square Redevelopment Area (DSRA) to rejuvenate the Diamond Square area. The City now seeks to redevelop the currently vacant former Dr. Joe Lee Community Center to provide much needed services to this neighborhood. In order to bring these services into the community, the building needs essential renovations to bring it up to code.

The entity to receive funding for this project is City of Cocoa, Florida, located at 65 Stone St., Cocoa, Florida 32922.

Diamond Square Community is a low-to-moderate income neighborhood. The residents are diverse: 53% Black, 28% White, and 19% Other. Improving educational attainment is an important objective for the community: 20% have no diploma, 35% are high school graduates, and 45% have some college or a degree. The neighborhood median household income is \$38,542 compared to the national median income of \$74,580. Twenty-four percent of households meet the definition of poverty.

The City of Cocoa and DSRA are working creatively to ensure that services to lift the well-being of the Diamond Square neighborhood will reach the people. The City of Cocoa and DSRA have secured community partners, including the Bezos Academy, to provide services such as free childcare to an underserved portion of the Cocoa community. The partners have committed to providing the retrofit needed for the interior spaces that will service their clients, but the City of Cocoa is looking for assistance for the renovations needed to bring the building up to code. Financial assistance is critical for new roofing, doors, windows, and finishes and to bring mechanical, fire protection, and electric systems up to current standards.

The project will improve the quality of life in the Diamond Square neighborhood by giving residents educational and job training opportunities. A planned partnership with the Bezos Academy would bring a Montessori School to the neighborhood.

The project is an appropriate use of Federal funds because it contributes to community development and toward lifting a neighborhood out of poverty toward vitality and prosperity.

The project has a Federal nexus because the funding provided is for the purposes authorized by Title 1 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, P.L. 93-383 as amended, 42 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.

I certify that I have no financial interest in this project, and neither does anyone in my immediate family.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bill Posey". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Bill Posey  
Member of Congress