

Housing— West University area plans for park; hopes to put city funds to better use

By LORRAINE NELSON
Of the Emerald

The highest density, lowest-average income per household area in the city of Eugene will undergo some changes during the next three years.

The West University Neighbors should have no problems spending the more than \$50,000 they have been given for the 1979-80 fiscal year.

The funds mark the beginning of the area's three-year Neighborhood Improvement Program. From July 1979 through July 1982, a major portion of Eugene Community Development Committee Block Grant funds will be channeled into the West University Neighborhood to improve the liveability between Kincaid and Willamette Streets and 19th and 11th Avenues.

The Neighborhood Advisory Group and the Neighborhood Improvement team have the task of submitting a proposal to the Community Development Committee for the division of Block Grant funds among improvement projects.

CDC funds, under the direction of the 1974 Community Development Act, are to be used primarily to develop urban communities for low- and mid-income people.

In 1975, only 79 units were owner-occupied out of a total of 2,672 units, tax assessor's records show.

Lannom says neighbors will expect the worker to assess the needs of the neighborhood, and to organize block meetings and a blockwatch program. The worker will be paid \$10,000.

The worker will also establish programs to try to find other sources of funding, perhaps money from the residents themselves, Lannom says.

In addition, the worker will address the transiency problem of the area, a major obstacle to the success of many projects.

Approximately 50 percent of the area is zoned medium- and high-density (RP, R-3, R-4 zoning) and figures from the city show that in 1975, students made up 64 percent of the neighborhood population.

Lannom says the problem is to make a stable community out of a transient neighborhood.

The neighbors will address that problem and others in the three years of the Neighborhood Improvement Program. They will assess the needs of the business and educational institutions within the area, and the density of housing.

taled more than \$1 million.

Just how much this money will change the face of the neighborhood is not known.

The neighbors may face a problem there as only about three percent of the residences in the

in 1976, the lowest in the city.

The median-family income, based on the 1970 census, was \$5,279 and a median income for the students and the elderly in the area was listed at \$1,776.

Harold Lannom, a member of the Neighborhood Advisory Group, says the area is a prime target for CDC funds. To improve the area, NAG will recommend to the CDC that the city allocate \$24,000 to continue the development of the neighborhood's first park; \$2,500 for a pedestrian lighting study; \$14,000 for an Outreach Worker; \$7,500 for house moving and \$3,500 for Crime Prevention.

Construction on the neighborhood park, located on 14th Avenue between Hilyard and Patterson Streets, began this fall.

Soter landscaping Co. of Portland is in charge of the basic contracting work. Park architect, Jerome Diethelm, who heads the landscape architecture department at the University, has one of

his classes working on developing the park.

The Neighbors would like to have much of the park built by the area's residents and neighborhood volunteers will get their chance to pitch in next spring.

The site for the park was acquired by the city at a cost of \$60,000. Development of the park is expected to cost \$50,000.

CDC money cannot be used to fund projects that increase the city's budget or put an additional burden on the city's maintenance crew. However, Lannom says, the neighborhood residents feel additional lighting is required in the area for safety.

Lannom says a pedestrian lighting study could explore the possibility of the city working with residents to install small "sidewalk" lights on private land. He says the city could pay for the installment and work out some compensation for residents who would pay maintenance and electric bills.



The West University area will receive about 70 percent of the available CDC funds between July 1979 and July 1982. CDC Block Grant funds for 1978-79 to

neighborhood are owner-occupied.

City figures show that the average income per household in the West University area was \$5,293

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