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SOUTH SIDE SLOPES RECEIVES \$100K TO EVALUATE, REPAIR PUBLIC STEPS

Allegheny County grant will strengthen network of vital infrastructure

Pittsburgh, PA—On June 20, 2014, the South Side Slopes Neighborhood Association (SSSNA) was awarded \$100,000 from Allegheny County's Community Infrastructure and Tourism Fund for the rehabilitation of public steps in the neighborhood. The grant will allow the SSSNA to complete an engineering study of the neighborhood's stairways, prioritize repairs, and rehabilitate some sets of steps. The South Side Slopes has 68 sets of public steps, the most of any neighborhood in Pittsburgh.

"The steps are the bones of the Slopes," said Brian Oswald, association President. "They connect the thousands of residents in the Slopes to the East Carson business district, to bus lines, and to the parks throughout the neighborhood. Life would be a lot harder in the Slopes without these steps."

Oswald added, "Walkable neighborhoods are highly coveted, across the country. Keeping our walking infrastructure in good repair means our neighborhood will hold and grow its value. This grant is good for our neighbors, good for business, and good for the city."

Over the last few years, the SSSNA has secured hundreds of thousands of dollars in private and municipal grants for improvements to the public steps. Volunteers have spent countless hours painting handrails, cutting back overgrowth, and picking up litter along the stairways. Proof that the community values these steps is given each year during StepTrek, a self-guided tour of the neighborhood that attracts around one thousand participants. StepTrek 2014 is scheduled for Saturday October 4

All studies and funded repairs are planned to be completed by June 2016.

The South Side Slopes Neighborhood Association works to "maintain, foster and improve the quality of life, safety and unity of our Slopes neighborhood."

The Community Infrastructure and Tourism Fund provides "financial assistance to entities to facilitate economic development through infrastructure assistance, stabilize or correct existing infrastructure problems, or plan and prepare sites and buildings for future use."

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