Cuyahoga County Equity Commission Meeting

August 20, 2026, 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Cuyahoga County Administrative Building –Room 5-006

2079 East Ninth Street, 5th Floor

Cleveland, OH 44115

| Cuyahoga County Equity Commission | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Last Name** | **First Name** | **Agency** |
| Johnson | Vaughn | Development |
| Murray | Chris | Health and Human Services |
| Nemastil | Sarah | Human Resources |
| **Guests** | | |
| Ahsan | Nafeh | Development |
| Calovini | Daune | Communications |
| Coats | Tory | Village Capital Corporation |
| Kirk | Jamillah | Equity & Inclusion |
| Slayton | Shaunna | Equity & Inclusion |
| Triplett | Jeremiah | Village Capital Corporation |

I. Welcome

II. Call to Order (10:01 am) – Deputy Director Chris Murray
   a. Review & Approval of Minutes
      1. Motion to approve by Chris Murray, seconded by Sarah Nemastil and Vaughn Johnson. Unanimous approval.

III. Public Comment
   a. There was no public comment.

IV. Opening Remarks from Equity Commission Members
   a. Director Nemastil – Human Resources is continuing to work with its consultant to develop a countywide compensation philosophy and revise compensation policies in the handbook. Human Resources supervisors completed a four-part leadership series. The topics included leadership, accountability, organization, and effective feedback.
   b. Deputy Director Johnson – Introduced new fellow, Nafeh Ahsan. There is continued growth in the economic development lending pipeline. This includes increased participation by minority and women-owned developers. The Office of Small Business participated in a grant and loan funding event hosted by Congresswoman Shontel Brown at the East Cleveland Public Library. Also, The Office of Small Business continues to collaborate with Councilman Hauser's Small Business Spotlight Initiative. Since launching in May 2024, the Office of Small Business has served 1,500 businesses and facilitated approximately 10,000 hours of technical assistance through its capital partners.

c. Deputy Director Murray – This has been a challenging funding year. Despite that, HHS is proud to announce the completion of the renovation of the Norma Herr Women's Center. This was a partnership with EDEN, the YWCA, private and public sectors. This was a $30 million project and three-year construction project. Also, there will be additional developments. HHS would like to recognize the Office of Reentry for successfully completing its fourth annual employment and resource fair in partnership with the City of Cleveland. This event allowed individuals to connect with employers and other community resources.

V. Presenters
   a. Tory Coats and Jeremiah Triplett Sr.- Village Capital Corporation Power Point Attached
VI. Closing Remarks –
   a. Deputy Director Johnson is excited and impressed by all the work being done
   b. Thanks
VII. Adjourn (10:51am)

Next Meeting: November 19, 2026, at 10am

Recording found on YouTube: 2026.08.20 Cuyahoga County Equity Commission

# Village Capital Corporation

## Supporting Cuyahoga County Small Businesses

Address

11327 Shaker Blvd #500w, Cleveland,
OH 44104

Website

Village Capital

BACKGROUND

# Who We Are

We are a Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) and a Cleveland Neighborhood Progress (CNP) subsidiary.

## What We Do

Our mission is to invest in the revitalization of Cleveland's underrepresented communities.

## OurHistory

**1988**
Cleveland Neighborhood Progress is founded through joint partnership.

**1992**
VCC is founded as a revolving loan fund

**2002**
Village Capital Certified as a CDFI.

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# Our Impact

Nearly

**$100M**
In loans supported

**$1 Billon**
In total development costs (over 200 Projects)

**8,100**
Residential units preserved

**2 Million**
Square feet of commercial space preserved.



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# Our Team



**Dione Alexander,**
President



**Adam Trumbo,**
Vice President of Lending



**Doniella Ligon,**
Portfolio Manager



**JeremiahTriplett Sr.**
Manager of Small Business Assistance



**Tory Coats,**
Small Business Loan Underwriter

# Leveraging County Dollars

**Technical Assistance**

GrowU Services

Loan Reimbursement

Coaching/ Business Support Hours

**Access to Capital**

Building Community Wealth

Small Business Loan Solutions

Ecosystem Impact



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# About Grow U



GrowU is the client's University, where small business owners can expand their knowledge base and scale their businesses. At GrowU, we treat your business as our own.

## Our Purpose

GrowU aims to provide small business owners in northeast Ohio with customized coaching, technical assistance, access to our network partners, and flexible and affordable capital to help them stabilize, grow, and/ or scale.

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# GrowU Evolution

## 2021

- After CNP's five-year strategic plan is enacted, **Village Capital** begins working on an initiative to provide technical business support in Cleveland's disadvantaged communities- GrowU.

## 2022

- VCC awarded two grants to support the program: Huntington Bank $50K and Cuyahoga County Department of Development $ 500K; creates Manager of Small Business Assistance Job Profile, and hiresJ. Triplett Sr., as MSBA.

## 2023

MSBA onboarding, primarily involving learning about the service needs and gaps within the small business support community; completed program design; MSBA administers the GrowU program based on the program design; access to capital was the primary focus of the MSBA.

## 2024

- Program shifts from an access to capital perspective to an access to services perspective; conducted a program analysis to identify data trends needed to ensure the program met the needs of small businesses and refined it based on the data, lessons learned, and desired program outcomes. New CCDD grant $320k.

## 2025

- Post program evaluation, added refined processes, and added new services – Professionally paid accounting and marketing services.

**About the Program**

# GrowU Services

- Business Development & Planning
- Financial Fitness & Readiness
- Strategic Marketing & Advertising
- Access to Capital
- Access to Networks (B2SP & B2B)

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# Data Metrics from the 2024-2026 Grant Period: $320,000 in County Funds

**$216K Loans Reimbursed**

Used to support over $700k in small business loans & access to capital

Loans ranged from $60K to $200K

- Commercial Real Estate, Dry Cleaners, Day Care Center, Residential Contractors, Restaurants (All transformational Projects)
- 90% to minority business

**$104K Technical Assistance Hours Reimbursed**

Supported over 1500 Technical Assistance Hours

8 Businesses & Entrepreneurs (68/12 split)

- 95% minority businesses

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# Technical Assistance Impact Story: Jones Protective Services (JPS)

- **Journey began in March 2025**
- **Coachable, consistent, eager to learn & grow**

| Goals | Technical Assistance | Impact |
|---|---|---|
| • Acquiring New Contracts<br>• Increase hiring<br>• Obtain Patrol Vehicle | • 70 hours of total assistance<br>• Sales & prospect coaching<br>• Negotiation tactics<br>• Updates Business Plan<br>• Quick Books Training<br>• Marketing Assistance | • Improved financials<br>• Refresh brand<br>• Increase contract value<br>• Hired 1 part-time guard<br>• Won several retail security subcontract bids<br>• Earned over $100k for 1st time<br>• Certified armed security<br>• Selected to Goldman Sacs 10k Small Businesses<br>• Loan ready |

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# Access to Capital

- **Mission Driven Lending**

  **Building Community Wealth**

  **Advancing Access for Minority, Women-Owned and Underrepresented Businesses**



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# Small Business Loan Solutions

- Working Capital
- Equipment Financing
- Leasehold Improvements
- Contract Funding
- Real Estate Financing
- Property Acquisition
- Rehabilitation & Renovation



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# Access to Capital Impact Stories

- **Mustard Seed Development-** Contractors Line of Credit
- **Kingdom Academy Child Care Center-** Working Capital Line of Credit and Renovation Loan

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# Mustard Seed Development













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# Kingdom Academy Child Care Center







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# What's Next?

- First Suburb Outreach
- Cuyahoga East Chamber of Commerce
- GrowU Academies

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# Q&A

**Any Questions?**

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# Thank You!


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**Small Business Loan Officer**

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