

Neighborhood Resource Unit

City of Mt. Pleasant
Neighborhood Enhancement Program
March 12, 2024 – December 31, 2024

Mt. Pleasant
[meet here]

**Program Guidelines for the City of Mt. Pleasant
Neighborhood Enhancement Program
March 12, 2024 - December 31, 2024**

The City of Mt. Pleasant (City) has been awarded a \$50,000 Neighborhood Enhancement Program (NEP) grant through MSHDA. The purpose of this grant program is to stimulate and enhance neighborhood vitality through aesthetic improvements, improving property values as well as the safety and quality of life for our residents. The City has contributed \$50,000 to this program.

General Provisions

- Program Goal: The NEP's goal is to work with homeowners on exterior, permanent improvements such as front porch repair, minor landscaping, front walks and driveways, exterior windows, siding and roofing. Other modifications consistent with general neighborhood improvements will also be considered.

- Program Location and Funding:
 - North Eastern and North Central Neighborhoods (See attached map.)
 - MSHDA Grant \$50,000+ City of Mt. Pleasant \$50,000

- Fair Housing/Equal Opportunity/Non-Discrimination: The City will abide by the Fair Housing Act. The City does not discriminate in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy and gender identity), national origin, political affiliation, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, genetic information, age, membership in an employee organization, retaliation, parental status, military service, or other non-merit factor. The City does not, and shall not, discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in any of its activities or operations. These activities include, but are not limited to, hiring and termination of staff, selection of volunteers and vendors, and provision of services. We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our staff, volunteers, subcontractors, vendors, and clients.

- Program Contact: Doug Lobsinger, Fire Chief, Neighborhood Resource Coordinator, (989)779-5105.

- Conflict of Interest Statement: No City employee will administer this grant to immediate family, or shall act in preference of one candidate over another due to the nature of their relationship.

- Complaint Resolution:
If a homeowner is dissatisfied with a contractor's work, a formal complaint procedure must be followed.

1. Notification of Complaint: Homeowners and contractors will be informed of the complaint procedure when they are selected to participate in the program, or upon receipt of a written complaint.
2. Response Time: The program administrator will respond to an initial complaint within 15 working days of the date of the complaint.
3. Review Committee: The Housing Board of Appeals serves as the review committee. This board will hear all complaints that cannot be successfully resolved by the program administrator. The complainant may choose to make a presentation or submit a written description (including documentation) to the board for review.
4. Decision Notification: The City will notify the complainant in writing of the review committee's decision within 15 working days of the date of the hearing.

Referral to Dispute Resolution Services Required if Conflict not Satisfactorily Resolved:

Should the above-listed efforts fail to resolve all outstanding issues, the City will seek the services of the closest Dispute Resolution/Mediation Program. This process will involve the contractor and homeowner.

In the event that MSHDA is contacted directly by a complainant, he/she will be referred to the City for implementation of policy procedures. If all previously outlined steps have failed to resolve the complaint, the City may contact MSHDA in writing, detailing the complaint and verifying its compliance with the above listed steps. After all disputes have been resolved, reinstatement of the contractor will occur.

Program Administration:

The City of Mt. Pleasant will administer the NEP grant for the grant period March 12, 2024 to December 31, 2024. Files will be retained at least three years after issuance of the grant closeout letter by MSHDA. All records are confidential and personal information will not be released.

The City will accept and review NEP applications from residents of the City of Mt. Pleasant between March 12, 2024 and March 26, 2024. All complete applications, meeting the income requirements, will be considered based on the process noted in this guideline. Properties who were awarded funds in the past are not eligible.

Fraud Policy

Applications and Self-Certification forms are submitted for review, and a five-point scoring system is used to score the properties; based on a listed project scoring metric. A mandatory meeting for those homeowners whose properties are selected will take place, whereas the individuals will provide proof of income, along with any other paperwork needed.

The City has a strict password protected database where the documents will be stored, and the City will retain the records pertaining to the grant for three years after the closeout date. The Complaint Resolution Procedure is spelled out in the current 2024 Program Guidelines

Applicant Eligibility:

- Applicants must provide proof of current payment status on mortgage/land contract payments, taxes and insurance.
- Applicants must have a clear title to the home.
- Applicants must complete a self-certification form to determine eligibility for the program.
- The applicant must be the homeowner which has a household income at or below 120% of the area median income (see chart below).

Household Size	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Income Limits 120% AMI	\$ 60,120	\$ 68,640	\$ 77,280	\$ 85,800	\$ 92,760	\$ 99,600	\$106,440	\$113,280

Eligibility of Property:

- Single-family, owner-occupied homes which have all taxes paid, must be located within the specific geographic area.
- The home must need visible improvements to the front yard/front exterior.
- Architect-stamped plans may be required for supporting structures.
- The property must not have any code violations.

Limitations:

- Payment will be restricted to the scope of work agreed to between the owner, MSHDA, and City staff. Any additional improvements will be made at the owner's expense.
- Whenever possible, the City will require durable and sustainable construction materials, which have the lowest environmental impact as possible.
- Grant funds cannot be used for individual items like mailboxes, fountains, decorative landscape lighting, etc.

Levels of Assistance:

- Each eligible homeowner awarded a grant will receive a minimum of \$1,000 and a maximum of \$15,000 for agreed-upon improvements.
- Any MSHDA funding \$10,000 or higher will require a homeowner to:
 - Have a lien placed on the property. This will be in the form of a five-year 100% forgivable lien. The lien must be recorded and after the five-year period is over, the balance will be forgiven.
- Any project using MSHDA funding of \$9,999 or less, as well as City funding, increasing the project cost to \$10,000 or above, will require the homeowner to make a \$250 contribution, or file a lien.

Application Process:

- The City will make the application for the Neighborhood Enhancement Project available to all city residents within the two neighborhoods outlined in the attached map and will be published on the City's website, blog, and social media sites.
- The administrator will review each application and accept or deny based on how the proposed scope of work aligns with the goals of the grant.
- Applications will be accepted and awarded through a selection process and adjusted to meet the requirements of this grant until all grant money has been utilized.
- Applications will be accepted between March 12, 2024 and March 26, 2024.

Applicant Selection:

- Applicants meeting eligibility requirements will be entered into a pool.
- Applications will be evaluated based on how the project scores against the established metrics (see attachment).
- The applicant must agree to periodic inspections of the project.
- The applicant must be willing to allow a free energy audit to be performed on their home.
- The applicant must agree to photographs of the project (before, during and after) for publication on the City's website.
- The homeowner must be willing to keep the yard clean and free of debris before, during and after project completion.
- The homeowner must be willing to participate in contractor selection, pre-construction meetings, and be available for periodic communication.
- There shall be no change in ownership prior to the final disbursement of the awarded grant. If a change in ownership occurs prior to the final disbursement, the recipient will no longer be eligible for the grant dollars and any further work will be at the cost of the homeowner.
- The final will meet the goals of the grant and best utilize existing funds.

Contractor Solicitation:

For any projects that require a contractor, the following process will be followed:

1. Procurement: All products needed for renovations will be purchased by the contractor. A minimum of two written quotes/cost estimates must be obtained.
2. Contractor verification of eligibility: All contractors engaged in work totaling \$600 or more in labor/materials must be licensed by the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA). The contractor must not be named on the state disbarment list. If, based on the work being performed, a contractor is not required, the individual completing the work must be knowledgeable, experienced, capable, and assume full responsibility and oversight of their work.

3. The City and the homeowner will review all bids prior to the project being awarded. The City will notify the contractor by phone within 24 hours of the award of the bid. Bids will be awarded based on the scope of the work and lowest cost. Preference may be given to the homeowner's contractor of choice as long as the bid is within 10% of the lowest bid.
4. All bids and contractors will be approved by MSHDA prior to the authorization to begin work.
5. Any change orders must be approved and authorized by the City and by MSHDA prior to executing the change.
6. The Contractor must secure all required permits and authorize inspections in a timely manner. Permit costs will be factored into the grant amount.
7. Extensions to complete projects must be approved and authorized by the City. All work must be completed by December 20, 2024. No extensions will be considered after that date.

Project Scoring Metrics

1. Housing Age (preference for older buildings)
 - 1 pts - >25 years
 - 2 pts - >30 years
 - 3 pts - >50 years
 - 4 pts - >75 years
 - 5 pts - >100 years

2. Housing condition (preference for buildings with worst condition)
 - 1 pts – Good shape
 - 2 pts - Fair
 - 3 pts - Poor
 - 4 pts – Very poor
 - 5 pts – Emergent

3. Energy efficiency improvements
 - 1 pts – Not much improvement
 - 2 pts – Some improvement
 - 3 pts – Substantial improvement

4. Improvements support IPMC compliance
 - 1 pts - Not so much
 - 2 pts – 50 % Compliance
 - 3 pts – 75% Compliance
 - 4 pts - 85% Compliance
 - 5 pts - Complete Compliance

5. Improvements create Neighborhood improvements
 - 1 pts – No improvement
 - 2 pts – Little improvement
 - 3 pts – Considerable improvement
 - 4 pts – Good improvement
 - 5 pts – Substantial improvement

