Change to MSHDA Neighborhood Enhancement Program helps support communities impacted by COVID-19

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LANSING – The Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) will give current Neighborhood Enhancement Program (NEP) grantees an opportunity to use awarded funds to fight COVID-19 in their communities.

MSHDA recently heard from several current grantees of NEP funding about the impact COVID-19 is having on their communities. This prompted MSHDA to amend program guidelines so grantees could alter their funding proposals to better reflect current community needs.

“Since our program is designed to directly fund activities that promote neighborhood stabilization and enhancement, we wanted to give organizations an opportunity to repurpose funds in a way that better suits their neighborhoods,” said Tonya Young, manager for MSHDA’s housing initiatives. “The funds from the NEP grants can now be used for community initiatives that help areas hurt by the pandemic, or to enhance the community in other ways.”

Typically, NEP grants provide funding for projects focused on neighborhood public amenity enhancements or beautification that are impactful to the neighborhood and residents’ quality of life. This can include upgrades to parks or other community areas, housing improvements for residents, the creation of green spaces, and more.

“MSHDA has already been in contact with organization leaders who have applied for NEP grants. We’re working directly with them to help amend their proposals, if necessary, toward community initiatives that address recovery from the pandemic,” Young said.

Organizations that choose to amend their proposals can split up funds based on their direct COVID-19 needs, giving them flexibility to tackle their originally proposed projects. The amended proposals must demonstrate some sort of justifiable need, like through documented revenue loss due to the pandemic. For instance, an organization can amend their project to include securing the necessary funding toward keeping their staff on payroll.

Additionally, although details are still being finalized, organizations that amend their proposals now will be given extra priority for the next NEP funding opportunity in 2021. If an organization chooses not to amend its original project, it will still receive funds and will be given an extension to September 2021 to finish the proposed project.

*For more information on the Neighborhood Enhancement Program please visit **MSHDA's website**. To learn more about the state's COVID-19 response plan, please visit **michigan.gov/coronavirus**.*

About MSHDA

The **Michigan State Housing Development Authority** (MSHDA), established in 1966, provides financial and technical assistance through public and private partnerships to create and preserve safe and decent affordable housing, engage in community economic development activities, develop vibrant cities, towns and villages, and address homeless issues.

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