

**WATCH
MUSK
EGON**

**2018-19 NEIGHBORHOOD
EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM**

*A NEIGHBORHOOD ACTION PLAN ADOPTED BY
THE MUSKEGON CITY COMMISSION:*

PURPOSE

Strong and active neighborhoods are a key component of a successful and vibrant Muskegon. Our neighborhoods help drive quality of life, as they can help provide activities that engage residents, improve living conditions, provide social opportunities, and positively affect crime. Accordingly, this program is designed to empower neighborhood groups to become more active as a means to access city funds to invest in the quality of life activities that they believe will improve their neighborhood.

PROPOSED PROGRAMMING

Active neighborhood associations will be eligible to receive funds from the City of Muskegon in three ways: Neighborhood Grants, Enhanced Neighborhood Grants, and Earned Neighborhood Grants.

Neighborhood Grants

All active neighborhood associations are eligible to receive a \$1,500 Neighborhood Grant annually. An active neighborhood association is defined as a neighborhood association that accomplishes **all** of the following in a given year:

1. Holds at least two general membership meetings per year.
2. Holds at least two additional board meetings per year.
3. Has a board member in attendance of at least 6 Neighborhoods of Muskegon (NAM) meetings each calendar year.
4. Prepares and delivers at least two neighborhood association newsletters per year.
5. Actively participates in the City's designated National Night Out event by hosting a National Night Out activity within the boundaries of the neighborhood.
6. Holds at least two community dumpster day events within the boundaries of the neighborhood.

*These Neighborhood Grant Dollars are available upon receipt of **completed application** and must be spent on community-related purchases or activities. These funds may not be rolled over from year-to-year.*

Enhanced Neighborhood Grants

All active neighborhood associations are also eligible to receive up to \$3,000 in Enhanced Neighborhood Grants annually. To be eligible for the Enhanced Neighborhood Grant, the neighborhood association must undertake a fundraising campaign (raising at least \$250 of private donations for the neighborhood association), and undertake a number of the following events/activities in a given year:

1. Create a neighborhood Facebook Page and actively maintain the page with neighborhood events, activities, and news.
2. Submit two articles on topics of importance to the neighborhood to the Community and Neighborhood Services Department for use in the city's annual newsletter.
3. Hold one family-related event during the months of June or July

4. Hold one family-related event during the months of September or October
5. Hold one family-related event during the months of March, April or May
6. Expend \$250 and invest 50 volunteer hours in maintenance/repairs/beautification of a community park
7. Undertake a community beautification project (not-park-related).
8. Sponsor a youth recreation activity that reaches/involves at least 50 Muskegon youths collectively. Examples include coaching, sponsoring, or organizing little league teams, soccer teams, football teams, water-safety related events, etc.
9. Volunteer to paint 15 or more fire hydrants in your neighborhood (city to provide paint, brushes, etc.).
10. Undertake at least 40 volunteer hours at the Muskegon Farmers Market.
11. Graduate at least one member from Muskegon Citizen Police Academy.
12. Implement a neighborhood beautification program that acknowledges efforts by property owners to beautify their property, with at least one owner highlighted in each neighborhood association newsletter.
13. Implement a neighborhood beautification program that acknowledges efforts by renters to beautify the neighborhood, with at least one renter highlighted in each neighborhood association newsletter.
14. Implement a neighborhood beautification program that acknowledges efforts by business owners/operators to beautify the neighborhood, with at least one business owner/operator highlighted in each neighborhood association newsletter.
***12-14 can be used to acknowledge snow removal efforts and maintenance of neighbors.*
15. Demonstrate that one neighborhood members is actively serving on at least one City Board or Commission, or is actively serving on the NAM Annual Picnic planning committee.

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|---|---------|
| Successfully undertaking up to three events/activities: | \$750 |
| Successfully undertaking four or more events/activities: | \$1,250 |
| Successfully undertaking seven or more events/activities: | \$2,000 |
| Successfully undertaking ten of more events/activities: | \$3,000 |

*These Enhanced Neighborhood Grant Dollars are available upon receipt of **completed application** and must be spent on community-related purchases or activities. These funds may not be rolled over from year-to-year.*

Earned Neighborhood Grants

All active neighborhood associations are eligible to earn neighborhood grants by volunteering to undertake certain beautification activities in the City of Muskegon, as follows:

1. Adopt-A-Lot Program. The city has more than 300 publicly-owned orphan parcels of land spread throughout our neighborhoods. These pieces of property are generally maintained by the city on a three-week mowing schedule. In an effort to beautify our neighborhoods and raise the maintenance standards, an Adopt-A-Lot Program was

established in 2015. The program is being extended to active neighborhoods as follows:

- a. There is no limit to the amount of lots that a neighborhood is eligible to adopt, nor is there a requirement that the adopted lots be located within the adopting neighborhood's geographic boundaries. In the event that adoption requests exceed available lots, adoptions will be equalized throughout the requesting neighborhoods.
 - b. Lots must be adopted by April 1 of each calendar year.
 - c. Lots must be mowed throughout the mowing season (May-September) and be in compliance with local ordinances that call for a 6 inch maximum grass height.
 - d. Trash must be removed from the lots weekly.
 - e. Fallen Leaves must be removed from the lots by November 30 of each year.
 - f. A standard lot is between 30 and 60 feet in width. Lots with a width in excess of 60 feet will be compensated as multiple lots.
 - g. A statement of commitment must be signed for each neighborhood adopting lots.
 - h. The City will contribute \$250 to the neighborhood for each lot adopted and successfully maintained, with payments disbursed as follows:
 - i. The first payment (\$100 for each adopted lot) will be made during the city's first billing cycle in the month of June.
 - ii. The second payment (\$75 for each adopted lot) will be made during the city's first billing cycle in the month of September.
 - iii. The second payment (\$75 for each adopted lot) will be made during the city's first billing cycle in the month of December.
 - iv. Payments will not be made in the event code enforcement activities are undertaken by the City's Code Enforcement Department.
 - v. Repayment may be required in the event that lots are not kept up to the city's code enforcement standard.
2. Fundraising Match. The City will provide \$500 in matching dollars to any active neighborhood association that successfully raises more than \$1,500 of non-city funds for youth-related neighborhood activities. These matching dollars are only available to neighborhoods that have met the requirements to receive at least \$2,000 in Enhanced Neighborhood Grants.
 3. Specialized youth-related activities, such as day camps and field trip programs that have a great impact on more than one neighborhood may be eligible for up to \$2,000 in funding.

- a. Funding for such activities cannot exceed 50% of the total program cost.
 - b. Day camp events must attract an average of 50 youth per day and operate at least four days per week for at least 12 hours per week, and the program must last at least six consecutive weeks.
 - c. Field Trip events must attract at least 50 youth per event. There is no requirement that field trip events be held at a particular location, but special consideration will be given to field trip events that partner with the following Muskegon-based events/facilities:
 - i. Lakehawks, Lumberjacks, Ironmen, or Risers sports teams
 - ii. Muskegon Museum of Art
 - iii. Muskegon Farmers Market
 - iv. Muskegon Public Library
 - v. Muskegon Heritage Museum
 - vi. Lakeshore Museum Center
 - vii. LST 393 Museum
 - viii. Silversides Museum
 - ix. Muskegon Winter Sports Complex
4. Other beautification-related activities may be incentivized by the city on a case-by-case basis, depending on funding availability.

These Earned Neighborhood Grant Dollars must be spent on community-related purchases or activities. They may be rolled over from year-to-year as the neighborhood association saves funds for planned neighborhood needs/activities. Unless otherwise indicated above, these grants funds will be released upon successful completion of the approved activity.

BUDGET

| Activity | Number | Value | Budget |
|-----------------------------|---------------|--------------|------------------|
| Neighborhood Grants | 15 | \$1500 | \$22,500 |
| Enhanced Grants | 15 | \$2500 | \$37,500 |
| Earned Grants | | | \$40,000 |
| Total Program Budget | | | \$100,000 |