

Department of Community Development

The City of Mishawaka's Department of Community Development works to create vibrant neighborhoods and communities through revitalization and redevelopment efforts. At the core of this mission is the goal of providing every resident of our community access to a decent, safe, suitable and affordable living environment. The Department works to achieve this goal by:

- Investing in neighborhood public improvements such as streets, curbs, sidewalks
- Seeking opportunities to partner with local organizations to leverage resources to create homeownership opportunities for low-moderate income families
- Reducing blight and clearing unsafe structures
- Assisting individuals and families with support through public services

Staff

The Department of Community Development is currently staffed by three full-time employees.

Roger Shields has served as the Construction Manager for the department since 1997 and has played a vital role in the department's programs such as spot blight demolition, Summer of Service, and Student Weekend. Roger also assists Code Enforcement with Weight and Measures activities as needed.

Marilyn Nelums-Jones, Program Coordinator, has been in her position since August of 2011, and handles coordination of the Summer of Service Program, Monitor Sub recipients, and serves as a clerk to the Redevelopment Commission.

Laura Viramontes, Grant Manager, who has been in her position since May of 2012, administers the use of funds and programs funded by the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME grants. She handled the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) grant. She also performs bookkeeper tasks.

Community Development Department staff facilitates and manages redevelopment and revitalization programs. They work with City officials and other City departments to implement the development activities approved by the Mayor, Common Council, and Redevelopment Commission.

In addition to the work done by the Community Development Department, the Mishawaka Housing Authority operates public housing in Mishawaka as well as not for profit housing designed to address the housing needs of low and moderate-income people. Housing agencies offer other services to residents in the communities, such as legal help, employment training, youth activities, fair housing counseling and homeownership counseling.

Redevelopment Commission

The Redevelopment Commission serves as the governing body for the Department of Community Development. The Commission is made up of five voting members and one non-voting member who are each appointed to a one-year term by the Mayor and Common Council. Jim Pingel served as President for the Redevelopment Commission until October 2019 he resigned from the position and Gary O'Dell served as interim President until 2020 elections.

2019 Mishawaka Redevelopment Commission Members	
Jim Pingel / Gary O'Dell	President
Janet Whitfield-Hyduk	Vice President
Kris Ermeti	Secretary
Dr. Lindsey Jon Kintner	Member
William Pemberton	Member
Gary West	Member
Robert Beutter	Attorney

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

The City of Mishawaka Department of Community Development's programs, staff and administrative costs are funded by grants from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

As a CDBG entitlement community, the City of Mishawaka receives annual grants from HUD to provide decent housing, a suitable living environment and expanded economic opportunities for low to moderate income residents. In 2019, \$465,290 in federal funds were allocated to focus on those directives, and we responded with the following programs: Spot Blight Elimination; Summer of Service, Owner-Occupied Home Rehabilitation; Public Infrastructure Improvements; and Public Service Agency funding.

A portion of CDBG funding was utilized for Public Infrastructure to continue with curb, sidewalk, drive approaches, and ADA ramp replacement. Three income eligible homeowners were assisted with the owner-occupied repair program known as the Summer of Service Program. The City continues to support and provide funding for public service organizations to help sustain a suitable living environment for Mishawaka residents.

The City of Mishawaka continued to partner with Habitat for Humanity for a phase 2 of the Jimmy Carter Build Project. This partnership will assist additional income eligible first-time homebuyers to achieve their dream of owning their own home.

The City continues to support the Mishawaka Food Pantry which assists households by delivering food assistance, clothing, household items and other miscellaneous assistance. Many clients assisted are under-employed or unemployed and are not aware of other types of aid available to them. The food pantry is often a first step to find other services and assistance.

Overall, the Community Development Department helps fund public agencies that provide services to Mishawaka residents. The following organizations were allocated a total of \$71,391.71 in CDBG funds in Program Year 2019:

CDBG Public Agency Funding 2019	
YWCA Domestic Violence Program	\$12,652
REAL Services Adult Guardianship Program	\$10,000
Boys and Girls Club	\$20,000
Mishawaka Food Pantry	\$20,000
United Way Kindergarten Program	\$8,739

Home Investment Partnership (HOME)

HUD provides Home Investment Partnership (HOME) grants to local governments specifically to create affordable housing. The City of Mishawaka participates in the St. Joseph County Housing Consortium along with the City of South Bend and the unincorporated areas of St. Joseph County. The St. Joseph County Housing Consortium receives the allocation of Home Funding. In 2019 Habitat was awarded funding from the Consortium for the construction of properties in the Jimmy Carter Project as part of Phase 2. The new homes provide affordable housing for low to moderate income families.

A majority of HOME funding that is projected for this program year will fund a project proposed by South Bend Heritage Foundation which entails construction of 1 new multi-unit permanent supportive housing structure to assist 18-20 chronically homeless individuals.



Student Weekend

The Summer of Service Student Weekend encourages youth volunteers to connect with the community, beautify the city, and touch the lives of Mishawaka residents.



In the 2019 summer students worked on City beautification projects such as placing mulch, brush removal, and weed removal clean up. Students also worked on the municipal lot on the corner of Third and Mill. The lot is shared with County Services, the St. Joseph Church, and the downtown area.

Summer of Service Program

The 2019 Summer of Service project was a success. The City of Mishawaka Redevelopment Department partnered with volunteers to perform scraping, painting, replacement of siding and light repairs to income eligible applicants in the City of Mishawaka. The properties addressed in program year 2019 were all Code Enforcement referrals and the homeowners meet eligibility criteria.



548 W. Fourth St. – The homeowner had violations because the aluminum siding was faded from sun and weather exposure. The home was power washed to remove the dirt and faded dull paint, then painted. The property now meets code standards and violations were removed.



319 W. 7th St. – The homeowner had violations because the aluminum siding was faded from sun and weather exposure. The windows, casings, sills, sashes, jambs, and troughs were in need of scraping and rotten brick molding on the bottom of the windows needed replacement. The exterior of the home was power-washed and painted as well as the windows, casings, sills, sashes and jambs. The overhead garage door was inoperable and was replaced by the Summer of Service program as well. The house now meets code standards.



1834 Peace Rose Lane – The garage door was broken and had been secured by an outside repair company but was inoperable. The Summer of Service program replaced the door. The garage now meets code standards.

