

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

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 is appointed from the School City of Mishawaka School Board. Three members are appointed to a one-year term by the Mayor and two are appointed to one-year terms by the Common Council.

2020 Mishawaka Redevelopment Commission Members	
Gary O’Dell	President
Janet Whitfield-Hyduk	Vice President
Kris Ermeti	Secretary
Dr. Lindsey Jon Kintner	Member
William Pemberton	Non-Voting Member
Gary West	Member
Ken Prince	Executive Director
Rebecca Miller	Controller
Pat Hinkle	Attorney

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, 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.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

The City of Mishawaka Department of Community Development’s programs, staff and administrative costs are funded predominantly 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 2020 \$479,928 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.

The Community Development Department helps fund public agencies that provide services to Mishawaka residents. The following organizations were allocated a total of \$71,971.05 in CDBG funds in Program Year 2020.

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

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic all of the regular programs/ projects funded annually with CDBG Funds were stalled for most of program year 2020.

In April 2020, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Security Act (CARES Act) went into effect and City of Mishawaka was awarded \$282,298 CDBG-CV funds by the Department of Housing and Urban Development for public services to prevent, prepare, and respond to the challenges our community is facing due to the pandemic. The following organizations were allocated the \$282,298 to assist individuals and families residing in the City of Mishawaka Residents with Food, Supplies, Protective Equipment, Utility and Rent Assistance.

CDBG-CV Funds	
YWCA	\$27,861
Real Services Food Assistance	\$75,000
Real Services Rental/ Utilities	\$75,000
Boys and Girls Club Food/ Supplies	\$39,437
Mishawaka Food Pantry	\$15,000
Mishawaka Food Pantry – Rent Assistance	\$15,000
School City Food Assistance	\$35,000

An additional allocation of \$295,210 was awarded to The City of Mishawaka for the growing effects of COVID-19. As with all federal funding there is requirement statutes and regulations for the use of the funding. We anticipate that this funding will be allocated/programmed in early 2021.

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.

A majority of PY 2020 HOME funding will fund a project by South Bend Heritage Foundation which entails construction of 1 new multi-unit permanent supportive housing structure to assist 18-20 chronically homeless individuals.