



Michigan State Historic Preservation Office Resilient Lakeshore Heritage Grant Program Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Updated April 11, 2022

This document provides answers to common questions about the Michigan State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Resilient Lakeshore Heritage Grant Program and is intended to supplement the SHPO's grant manual available at <https://www.mipace.org/historic-preservation/programs-and-services/lakeshore-heritage-grant/>. If you would like further clarification or have a question that is not addressed, please contact Alan Higgins, SHPO CLG Coordinator, at HigginsS3@michigan.gov.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

When will applications be available?

The application round is anticipated to open June 1, 2022; they are due by September 1, 2022. Application questions and materials have been made available for review in advance of the application date. They are available on the program website at <https://www.mipace.org/historic-preservation/programs-and-services/lakeshore-heritage-grant/>.

How many rounds of funding will there be?

At this time, only one round of funding is anticipated.

Which communities are eligible for funding?

Eligible communities are those that:

- Have a population of less than 50,000 persons according to 2020 census data;
- Are located within ten (10) miles of a Great Lake; and
- Meet at least one of the three following criteria:
 - Participate in SHPO's [Certified Local Government \(CLG\) program](#);
 - Participate in the [Michigan Main Street \(MMS\) program](#)
 - Certified as a [Redevelopment Ready Community \(RRC\)](#).

A list of eligible communities can be found [here](#).

Who are eligible applicants?

The following entities in the above-identified communities are eligible to apply for grant funding:

- Local units of government (village, township, city, or county)
- Non-profit organizations
- Public entities

- Business owners (Michigan-based)
- Property owners who own an eligible property type

Can an organization apply for and administer a grant on behalf of a private property or business owner?

Yes, an organization (e.g., an economic development organization) can elect to sponsor a grant application on behalf of a private property or business owner. When an organization sponsors an application on behalf of another entity, the sponsor organization is the applicant and ultimately responsible for project administration and completion. The sponsor organization and project partner must have a signed agreement outlining their respective project responsibilities before the start of work.

Can an applicant apply for more than one project?

Yes, an applicant may apply for more than one project; however, applicants are strongly encouraged to submit only one application and to focus on making that application as strong as possible. Each application will be reviewed on its own merits.

Do grants require a local match?

All grants require a minimum 10% match. Applicants may elect to show additional match if desired to show local buy-in and support, which may be taken into consideration during project selection.

What are the minimum and maximum funding amounts?

The minimum request \$30,000, and the maximum request is \$100,000.

Do I have to have prior experience with a preservation project?

No, applicants do not have to have prior experience with a preservation or construction project to be eligible to apply.

Do projects require a certified grant administrator?

No, you do not have to have a certified grant administrator. If you have never worked on a grant project before, SHPO will help you navigate the process.

How many recipients will be awarded grants?

There is no set number of grant awards. The number of grant awards will depend on the number of eligible applications received, competitive scoring, and available funds.

How will projects be selected for award?

Applications are first reviewed for completeness and feasibility by SHPO program staff. Following, applications are competitively scored by an interdisciplinary review panel based on the identified selection criteria set forth in the grant manual available at <https://www.mplace.org/historic-preservation/programs-and-services/lakeshore-heritage-grant/>. Broadly speaking, projects will be

scored on clarity and appropriateness of their scope, budget, and timeline; project need; project impact; and project readiness and urgency.

If my project is selected for award, is it guaranteed that I will receive the full requested amount of grant funding?

SHPO may elect to offer full or partial grant awards based on the number of applications received, available funding, and scoring. If your project is selected, you will be notified of the anticipated grant amount. SHPO will request that you confirm your intent to accept the grant award offered or to notify us if you are not interested in the award, in which case we will move funds to another project.

When will we find out if we are awarded a grant?

Applicants will be notified of their status in fall 2022. Grant agreements are anticipated to be executed in fall/winter 2022.

How long will I have to complete a project?

All project work must be completed by September 30, 2024, which is a federally mandated deadline.

Will there be a NEPA/Section 106 review required?

Yes, because these are federal funds originating from the National Park Service, all projects must undergo a NEPA/Section 106 review prior to the start of work. SHPO will coordinate this process with NPS on behalf of the awardee.

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

Which properties are eligible for grant funding?

In all instances, properties must meet the following criteria:

- Be located in an eligible community.
- Be a commercial, industrial, civic, educational, or community-oriented building. *Owner-occupied residential and religious properties are not eligible.* Multi-family and mixed-use properties that include residential units are eligible.
- Be located in a traditional downtown, along a prominent community corridor, or related area that contributes to the economic, social, and/or cultural vitality of the community.
- Be listed in the National Register of Historic Places, either individually or as a contributing property to a historic district **OR** be determined eligible for listing by SHPO and have property owner consent, in writing, to list the property before the end of the project **OR** be a property that is currently non-contributing to a National Register district but would become eligible as a result of the project.

Properties that are not currently listed in the National Register or identified as a contributing resource to a historic district must confirm their eligibility prior to submission of the grant application, and the property **must** be listed in the National Register by the end of the project. Costs associated with listing a property can be included in the grant request.

Who do I contact if I don't know if my property is listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places?

If you are unsure of the status of your property, please contact Alan Higgins, CLG Coordinator, at higginsS3@michigan.gov as soon as possible.

Can exceptions be made to the requirement that a property be listed in the National Register by the end of the project if it is not already listed?

No, this is a federal program requirement, and there will be no exceptions. If your property is not currently listed in the National Register either individually or as part of a historic district, the property owner must have the property listed before September 30, 2024. The costs associated with hiring a consultant to help with National Register documentation are eligible for grant funding and should be included in the request if needed.

What activities are eligible for grant funding?

Grant funds are for rehabilitation of historic properties (i.e., "bricks and mortar" projects). Rehabilitation is defined as the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features that convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values. Projects may include interior work, but all projects must include an exterior component. Examples of qualified projects include but are not limited to:

- Structural repairs and stabilization
- Roof (and related features) repair/replacement
- Masonry repair
- Wood siding and trim repair/replacement
- Window and door repair/replacement
- Storefront rehabilitation
- Replacement of documented but missing historic features
- Exterior and interior finishes and features
- Building system upgrades (e.g., HVAC, fire suppression, etc.)
- Painting (as part of a larger project)
- Accessibility improvements
- Energy efficient upgrades

Can grant funds be used for work that is already completed or in progress?

No, grant funds cannot be used for projects that have already been completed. Likewise, grant funds cannot be used for work that is already in progress. However, if you have a large project with multiple phases, you can use grant funding for a discrete phase of a project even if a previous phase has already been completed. For example, funds could be used for storefront rehabilitation even if masonry and window repair on the remainder of the building were completed as part of a previous phase.

Can grant funds be used for A/E or similar services?

Grant funds (no more than 20%) can be used for architect-engineering services necessary to prepare/finalized plans and specifications for the proposed project. They can also be used to retain the services of a consultant to complete National Register documentation for a property if it is not already listed in the National Register.

Are there project standards that we must follow?

All projects must comply with the [Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation](#). Generally speaking, the Standards promote a balance between repairs, alterations, and additions and preserving features that convey a property's historical, cultural, or architectural values. SHPO will work with you during the development/finalization of project plans to ensure compliance with the Standards. Applicants should include supporting documentation (e.g., façade studies, plans and specifications, renderings, etc.) with their applications so that SHPO has a general understanding of the proposed project.

PROJECT FUNDING

Are volunteers or donated services and materials eligible as match?

Yes, volunteers and donated services/materials are eligible as match. All volunteer services must be substantiated at the conclusion of the project by time sheets that show the actual hours worked, the rate of pay, and the specific duties performed. If volunteer time is being included as part of the grant application, the application must include a written justification of the volunteer rates used:

- If a volunteer is a professional (e.g., an architectural historian meeting 36 CFR 61 qualifications) and is performing duties corresponding to their profession, their normal rate of pay is acceptable as long as it does not exceed the allowable federal maximum.
- For all other volunteers, time is valued at \$26.93/hour, which is the value assigned to volunteer time in Michigan by the [Independent Sector](#) as of 2020.

Donated goods must be assessed at their fair market value, which must be supported by documentation from the entity providing the goods.

Are there certain activities that are not eligible for funding?

Yes, certain activities cannot be funded as part of the grant program. Since the grants are provided for through federal funds, all grants must comply with standards for funding allowability. If you have questions about whether certain activities can be funded, please contact SHPO.

Common items that **cannot** be funded under the program include but are not limited to:

- Property acquisition
- New construction/additions
- Relocation
- Development projects for church-owned properties
- Total reconstruction of demolished resources (some specific features may be eligible for funding if historical documentation is provided)
- Landscaping in relation to site improvements for parking lots, sidewalks, paving, etc.
- Mitigation activities as a condition for obtaining a federal permit, license, or funding.
- Historical markers and commemorative plaques
- Archaeological salvage
- Ongoing public education efforts such as operation of a house museum
- Archival and collections management
- Operating or overhead support

Can this funding be combined with other federal grant funding?

Generally speaking, funding from this program cannot be combined with other federal funds. The only exception is that program funds can be combined with Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding.

How are grant funds distributed to awardees?

All grant funds are paid on an **EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT** basis only, meaning that grant recipients must first pay all vendors, contractors, and personnel as part of project completion. The applicant must have funds available for expenditure amounting to 100% of the project cost at the time of a grant application submittal. The awardee will be reimbursed for eligible expenses at 50% project completion (upon request), with the remainder held until successful completion of the total grant project.

What do I need to submit to receive reimbursement for the project?

For 50% reimbursement, you must submit an interim progress report and reimbursement request. For final reimbursement at the completion of the project, you must submit a completion report and reimbursement request that describes the results of the project and documents project expenses, including invoices and proof of payment. All work also must be reviewed and approved by SHPO prior to reimbursement.

How long does it take to get reimbursed once I submit the necessary paperwork?

Reimbursement may take up to 30 days following SHPO's review and approval of a submitted reimbursement request.

How will I receive my reimbursement?

Reimbursement is paid as an Electronically Funds Transfers (ETF) through SIGMA, the State of Michigan's financial payment system. Instead of mailing a check for payment of your invoices, SHPO will electronically transfer the payment to your bank account. This will benefit your cash flow by getting funds into your bank account faster and avoid problems with lost or stolen checks and postal disruptions. The awardee must be a registered vendor in SIGMA to receive payment.

To register as a vendor or update bank account information in SIGMA, please visit the SIGMA Vendor Self-Service (VSS) System at <https://sigma.michigan.gov/webapp/PRDVSS2X1/AltSelfService>.

PREPARING AND SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION**Do I need to notify SHPO if I intend to submit a grant application?**

Applicants are not required to notify SHPO before submitting an application. However, applicants may elect to discuss their project with SHPO prior to applying for a grant. SHPO can provide guidance and identify any preliminary concerns or issues.

SHPO is also available to review preliminary materials in advance of the grant deadline. SHPO will review the draft application for omissions and provide feedback on any concerns with the scope of work. If you wish to have SHPO provide preliminary feedback on your application, it must be submitted by July 18, 2022.

Are there parts of the application process that might take more time than expected to complete?

Yes, supporting documentation is extremely important for the application and may take some time to collect, especially financial information, estimates from consultants/contractors for the proposed work, and signed resolutions/certifications. Proposals prepared at the last minute often lack the details associated with a strong application or are missing required information that then results in the application not being scored competitively. Get started early in the grant application process to begin collecting necessary information well in advance of the application deadline.

How do I determine how much money to request?

As part of the scoring process, the review committee reviews the proposed project budget for appropriateness. It is important to make sure that you have allocated an appropriate budget for your project. Once you are awarded a grant, you cannot change the dollar amount available to complete a project. Underfunding a project makes it difficult to complete a project.

SHPO cannot tell you how much to request for your project. However, we **strongly encourage** you to send a summary scope of work to several qualified contractors/consultants and request ballpark estimates for the project to help determine accurate costs. You should include the estimates as supporting documentation with your application. This helps reviewers understand the requested funding associated with your project.

Do I have to include a draft work schedule?

All applications must include a draft work schedule that demonstrates the feasibility of the proposed project, including all major components. This draft schedule will become an attachment to the grant agreement. Note, however, that SHPO understands things may change between the time an application is made and a project gets started. SHPO will work with awardees to update the work schedule, as appropriate, following project award. In all instances, all project work must be completed by September 30, 2024.

Can you provide an example application?

Because every project (and thus every project application) will be different based on the individual needs and goals of the applicant, we do not have an example application. If you have questions about the type of information to include in certain sections of the application, please see the program manual for guidance. If you need additional assistance, please contact SHPO as soon as possible.

Do I need to have letters of support with my application?

No, letters of support are not required. However, an applicant may elect to include letters of support from the local community, economic development authority, elected officials, historic district commission, or others to show community buy-in and help demonstrate the potential benefit of the project to community stakeholders. Letters of support should be included with the application. Do not send letters of support separate from the application.

What if I have more attachments than the application form allows?

We request that you combine each type of attachment into a single PDF to the extent possible. If you cannot combine files or have issues uploading attachments, please contact SHPO as soon as possible to make arrangements for alternative submission of attachments.

Will applicants be able to edit their applications or address questions after they are reviewed?

No. Applicants should not assume that they will have the opportunity to edit their materials or address questions after applications are scored by the review panel. Applicants are encouraged to submit as strong of an application as possible and to provide all required materials as part of the original submission. SHPO retains sole discretion as to whether deficiencies may be addressed later.

PROJECT COMPLETION

What are the responsibilities of the project manager?

The project manager is the person authorized to represent the subgrant recipient/project sponsor in the administration of the project. The project manager is responsible for overseeing the timely completion of project work. The project manager is also SHPO's day-to-day contact for all project correspondence. While the project manager must be a capable and reliable person with knowledge of the project, there are no academic or professional requirements for this position; they do not need to have a historic preservation background. SHPO is available to help make sure the project manager knows what is expected and to navigate the process. Example responsibilities of the project manager include, for example:

- Coordinating the grant agreement and related documentation with SHPO
- Initiating the procurement process and coordinating contractor contracts
- Providing timely assistance to the consultant/contractor and SHPO
- Preparing and submitting brief quarterly progress reports
- Preparing and submitting reimbursement requests

What are the obligations regarding local approvals, permits, etc.?

Awardees have sole responsibility for ensuring they have received all appropriate local approvals before starting work on their projects. This includes any applicable permits and authorizations. If your property is in a locally designated historic district, this also includes receiving a Certificate of Appropriateness from the local historic district commission.

What obligations does an awardee have for contractor selection?

Grant recipients must secure the services of contractors/consultants through a competitive process, even if local procurement procedures do not require competitive selection. At a minimum, grantees are required to demonstrate to SHPO that they have solicited quotes or proposals from multiple contractors/consultants qualified to complete the project, either directly or through postings to applicable websites, newspapers, etc. Detailed instructions for contractor selection are described in the grant manual at <https://www.miplace.org/historic-preservation/programs-and-services/lakeshore-heritage-grant/>.

How long does an awardee have to complete a project?

Projects are anticipated to start in fall/winter 2022, but the start date is dependent upon execution of a grant agreement; **all work must be complete by September 30, 2024, a federally mandated deadline**. This timeline is inclusive of time necessary to solicit bids and execute contracts with consultants/contractors after the grant award. Grant recipients are strongly encouraged to act with expediency for such tasks to allow for as much time as possible for project completion.

What happens if my project changes, I need additional funds, or I do not anticipate using all of the funds allocated to the project?

Grants are provided explicitly for the specific purpose and budget stated in your application, which should be based on a thorough assessment of project needs and potential costs. Changes to the project scope and/or budget can only be made with SHPO approval. If you have a need to modify the project or budget, you must contact SHPO as soon as possible to discuss your situation.

What happens if I cannot finish the project?

Grants are provided through the Historic Preservation Fund, overseen by the National Park Service, and **must** be expended by a certain deadline or the awardee risks the loss of grant funds. Grant extensions are not possible.

It is rare that a project cannot be completed once awarded. However, it is important that you communicate with SHPO early and often, particularly if potential issues are identified. We will work with you to determine the best path forward to complete the project in a satisfactory and timely manner. If we cannot reach an agreement, we may have to terminate your project and redirect your grant award to another applicant.