

Home Preservation Grant Program - Program Review		
Current Procedure	Proposed Modification	Anticipated Benefits
<p>Prioritization and Home Assessment Procedure</p> <p>The Program Guidelines call for receipt of an interest form and Home Improvement Questionnaire from prospective applicants. After conducting windshield visual assessments, properties are ranked (A-E)* based on questionnaire responses and the visual assessment. Selected property owners are notified and applications transmitted, while the remaining non-selected properties remain in the interest pool for future re-evaluation and assessment.</p> <p>*Existing Property Conditions:</p> <p>A. Sound</p> <p>B. Minor</p> <p>C. Moderate</p> <p>D. Substantial</p> <p>E. Dilapidated</p>	<p>Amend the Program Guidelines to receive inquiries for placement on an interest list, and process applicants on a first-come first served basis upon exhausting the current interest list.</p>	<p>The current process appears to focus on exterior property conditions as a primary determinant for which properties will be selected for funding. This method potentially places applicants with interior health and safety deficiencies at a disadvantage for receiving funding.</p> <p>The current selection process may result in applicants with severe interior repair needs being held over for several funding cycles or potentially never being considered for funding, due to conditions that aren't apparent from exterior visual assessments.</p> <p>As a result of applicants being held over for multiple funding cycles, the viability of the interest list lessens over time; with some applicants losing interest and dropping out of the program, and others performing needed repairs with other resources.</p>

Home Preservation Grant Program - Program Review		
Current Procedure	Proposed Modification	Anticipated Benefits
<p>Eligible Repair Improvements</p> <p>The City's Program Guidelines provide that eligible repairs include, but are not limited to the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lead-based paint hazards. 2. Exterior accessibility modifications for elderly and disabled persons. 3. Minor repairs and/or replacement of exterior components including windows, doors, roof replacement, exterior and interior paint. 4. Minor repairs and/or replacement of interior plumbing, electrical, ceiling, and/or flooring. 5. Site improvements and utility connections. <p>The guidelines further provide that "electrical and plumbing work will be considered on a case by case basis with the approval of the Executive Director or Deputy Director in coordination with the Housing Manager, Community Development Coordinator and Housing Specialist.</p>	<p>Amend the Program Guidelines to reflect the inclusion of interior repairs based on meeting Housing Quality Standards and for health and safety related repairs, inclusive of mechanical (heating and air conditioning), electrical, and plumbing (such as water supply lines, waste lines, water heaters, kitchen and bath fixtures), termite and pest control, kitchen and bathroom cabinetry and countertops, interior paint, etc. In addition, cost effective energy conservation measures/repairs should also be incorporated into the eligible improvements listing.</p> <p>Delete the Program Guidelines requirement that categorizes electrical and plumbing work as work that requires approval on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>Amend the Program Guidelines to delete the requirement that: "Applicants must also ensure that units meet building codes: Uniform Building Code (ICBO)."</p>	<p>The Program Guidelines requires that all rehabilitated units must meet building code requirements and Housing Quality Standards (HQS). Conformance with this requirement would dictate that the entire property be inspected for potential HQS deficiencies.</p> <p>Given that over 60% of the housing in Commerce was constructed prior to 1960, there is the higher likelihood that major system work on plumbing and electrical systems and related fixtures, kitchen and bathroom cabinetry, and flooring may be required.</p> <p>These changes coupled with changes to the applicant prioritization method will assist in meeting the needs of low- and moderate-income households that are unable to fund needed repairs.</p> <p>Please refer to attached listing of sample eligible repair work scopes from other jurisdictions.</p>
<p>Project Funding Limit</p> <p>The Program Guidelines provide for grants in an amount not to exceed \$20,000.</p>	<p>Expand the grant funding limit from \$20,000 to \$25,000.</p>	<p>A review of the four (4) 2017-2018 and six (6) 2018-2019 funded transactions revealed that all 10 (ten) required waivers from the \$20,000 funding limit.</p> <p>While waivers will occasionally occur, when all projects for any given year require funding that exceeds program limits, a review of the program limits are warranted.</p> <p>Approval of a higher funding amount can assist in minimizing the issuance of funding limit waivers, or the reduction in work scope for projects that exceed the current \$20,000 funding limit.</p>

Home Preservation Grant Program - Program Review		
Current Procedure	Proposed Modification	Anticipated Benefits
<p>Contractor Agreement – Construction Period</p> <p>The Program Guidelines and contractor agreement provide a 120 day period for the completion of required repairs, and 30 days for any required environmental abatement.</p>	<p>Amend the Program Guidelines to provide for a maximum 60 day construction period, and adjust the contractor agreement to reflect 30 to 60 day construction periods dependent on the scope of work being performed. These recommended periods would be inclusive of the environmental remediation, provided that the remediation work was included into a single contractor agreement under the oversight of the general contractor.</p>	<p>Prolonged allowable construction periods tend to wear on homeowners, as they deal with the ongoing intrusions into their day-to-day life. It also allows contractors to potentially delay completion of the job, thereby raising homeowner concerns due to extended days of absence from, or inactivity on the work site.</p> <p>Reduced construction periods contribute to the City's ability to meet the annual federal expenditure deadlines.</p> <p>Given a \$20,000- \$25,000 funding limit per project, a 30 day construction period should be sufficient in most instances according to industry standards.</p>
<p>Program Procedures</p> <p>The Program Procedures do not include the filing of a Notice of Completion with the LA County Recorder's Office upon completion of each individual Home Preservation Grant Program project.</p>	<p>File a signed Notice of Completion following the completion of each individual Home Preservation Grant Program project.</p>	<p>Filing a Notice of Completion with the county recorder's office after work is completed reduced the amount of time a contractor, subcontractor, laborer, or materials supplier has to record a claim. Homeowners have 15 days from the date of completion to do so.</p> <p>Specifically, this notice reduces the amount of time a contractor has to record a mechanics lien from 90 to 60 days, and reduces the time a subcontractor or materials supplier has to record a mechanics lien from 90 days to 30 days.</p>

Neighborhood Fix-Up Grant Program - Program Review		
Current Procedure	Proposed Modification	Anticipated Benefits
Applicant Processing Procedures– Lottery The Program Guidelines and Procedures call for applicant submission of a program application and eligibility documentation which supports residency and income eligibility at the 120% AMI standard. Qualified applicants are then selected for funding under a televised lottery system, which initiates the review and approval process.	Amend the Program Guidelines to eliminate the lottery system for selection of applicants for funding, and implement a first-come first-served processing protocol.	Participation rates have receded since the re-instatement of the program. As a result of receiving fewer applications, funding is available for all eligible applicants, and the need to conduct a lottery creates unnecessary delays in applicant processing.
Applicant Processing Procedures – Property Eligibility and Income Determination The Program Guidelines specify that eligible properties consist of single-family residential and multi-family properties located within the City of Commerce boundaries. The Program Guidelines require source income documentation for all household members 18 and over.	Amend the Program Guidelines to specify that eligible properties include single-family residential properties and multi-family properties, limited to a maximum of four (4) units, located within the City of Commerce boundaries. Amend the Program Guidelines to eliminate the source income documentation and instead allow participants to self-certify the household's annual income.	Limiting the property eligibility to one-to-four unit properties will focus funding resources on locations where they can have the greatest impact. Self-Certification will provide for increased interest in the program.
Eligible Reimbursements– Permits The Program Guidelines require that while the cost of materials are reimbursable, any permits required for approved rehabilitation activities must be obtained by the grant recipient at their own expense.	Amend the Program Guidelines to add the payment of building or other required permits as an eligible reimbursable expense for City approved rehabilitation.	The addition of permits as an eligible reimbursement item will not increase the total funding provided to an eligible applicant, and may serve as an encouragement to perform more substantive exterior repairs (with potential owner funding provided).
Reimbursement Processing The program as implemented provides that grant recipients can only request reimbursement for allowable repairs selected on the original application. Reimbursement is a one-time process that must be completed within six (6) months of the Award Approval Letter. The two (2) year waiting period to reapply for the program would begin once the reimbursement process is completed.	Amend the Program Guidelines to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Allow for some staff flexibility in approving amendments to the repairs to be performed. 2. Extend the reimbursement submission deadline from 6 months to no more than 1 1/2 year. The 2-year re-application period would remain unchanged	The election to allow limited amendment of the approved repairs will allow the program to accommodate changes in applicant needs and priorities, without incurring any substantial addition cost burdens. Extending the reimbursement period to one and half year will provide an ample timeframe to complete the agreed upon repairs, without subjecting the applicant to the 2-year re-application period due to expiration of the 6 month reimbursement period.

