



To: Mayor and City Council
From: Wendy Jean-Buhrer
Date: March 21, 2024
Subject: The Jewel State of Michigan/Federal Grant

More information has been publicized about the State and Federal grant that was submitted in December for The Jewel property. Below is the link to the 123 page document:

<https://www.michigan.gov/egle/-/media/Project/Websites/egle/Documents/Offices/OCE/Michigan-PCAP.pdf?rev=60ecee9532f4373a22043205a901a06>

This document highlights the State's priorities. Unfortunately, converting commercial land to park land is not one of them. The State also made Low Income and Disadvantaged Communities (LIDACs) a priority for funding. The City only has two areas with this designation, one near The Jewel and one near Physicians Park. The grant could still be applied for under the State's Plan, but it would need to be under the list of measures presented on page 61-62 of the document.

Some options still exist for the purchase and/or grant submissions of The Jewel:

- ☞ Apply for the State's priorities more directly with placing energy deployment for City buildings, which would qualify under 1 and 5 on page 61 of the plan. The City would also have to focus on how the energy savings would benefit the LIDACs in the community. An example of this would be: The City only needs 1 megawatt of electricity to run the 1301 Bush Creek water plant. The City could place a solar farm on the back section of The Jewel – 77.7 acres less the wetlands or undevelopable land. In my opinion, the State is looking for high impact projects which require 250 acres or more. One (1) megawatt needs 5-10 acres. We may be able to store energy and/or send to other buildings or sell back to Consumers. This would definitely reduce water rates, but to all residents and not just LIDACs.
- ☞ Apply for the Michigan DNR Land Acquisition Grant in April 2025. This would require a 50% match for land acquisition, which would be \$1 million. The City could finance

the purchase, but there is no identifiable revenue source for this. This is assuming the developer does not move forward with development by next year.

- ③ Place on the ballot a question to Grand Blanc residents if they would want a millage for the acquisition and/or development of The Jewel. If yes, proceed with the full ballot asking for 1 mill, this would generate approximately \$283,000 which could be used to for the purposes previously stated. Again, this is assuming the Developer does not move forward with development by the millage is approved.
- ③ Finally, allow the Developer to develop the land, including sale to another developer.