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Wayne County Land Bank announces Senior Porch Project

Will help improve access and mobility for senior citizens in Highland Park

HIGHLAND PARK – Wayne County Land Bank, with funding partners Michigan State Housing and Development Agency (MSHDA) and Flagstar Bank, has begun accepting applications for its Highland Park Senior Porch Project.

The project offers free front-porch repairs and ramp construction for qualified senior citizens throughout Highland Park. A qualified senior must be a homeowner in Highland Park on a fixed income, meet certain income requirements, and be current on taxes.

Applications can be picked up at locations across Highland Park, including the City Hall Building (12050 Woodward Ave), Faith Tabernacle Church (16548 Hamilton), and Nandi's Knowledge Café (71 Oakman Blvd.), as well as from the office of County Commissioner Martha G. Scott. The Detroit Area Agency on Aging can also provide applications to recipients of the Meals on Wheels program in Highland Park. "We are thrilled to begin this project," said Daniel Rosenbaum, the Land Bank's executive director.

"It directly advances our core mission in Highland Park—to stabilize neighborhoods by rehabbing homes and keeping residents in the community. This project accomplishes both: through fixing blighted and dangerous front porches, we can help Highland Park residents, especially those with mobility limitations, remain in their homes for years to come."

Senior citizens comprise 17 percent of the population of Highland Park, while 21 percent of owner-occupied households in the city are headed by someone aged 65 or older, according to Census data. The Land Bank has secured funding to help about 10-20 residents this year. However, the Land Bank hopes that the successes and smiles on residents' faces will allow it to find a sustainable funding source and renew the program in 2020.

"After speaking with residents in the community, it's clear that there is a tremendous need for this project," said Rosenbaum. "Our goal is to continue seeking funding for 2020 and beyond, allowing the Land Bank to operate the project as long as new applicants keep coming forward."

The Wayne County Land Bank has returned almost 300 properties in Highland Park to productive use since 2016. In addition to the Senior Porch Project, the Land Bank also spearheads several other initiatives to rehabilitate depressed properties in Wayne County, including the Compliance Program, Side Lot Program, Nuisance Abatement Program, and Quiet Title Program.

For more information about the Wayne County Land Bank, please visit www.WayneCountyLandBank.com or contact the Land Bank at wclbinquiries@waynecounty.com.