



# CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS AGENDA ACTION REQUEST

**DATE:** March 5, 2024

**TO:** Mark Washington, City Manager

**COMMITTEE:** Community Development Committee  
**LIAISON:** Mary Kate Berens, Deputy City Manager

**FROM:** Connie M. Bohatch, Senior Managing Director of Community Services  
Community Development Department

**SUBJECT:** **Resolution authorizing a Memorandum of Agreement with the Michigan State Historic Preservation Officer, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission, and the Wyoming Housing Commission for the Leonard Apartments project**

Attached is a resolution authorizing execution of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) among the City, the Michigan State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), the Grand Rapids Housing Commission (GRHC), and the Wyoming Housing Commission (WHC) for the Leonard Apartments project. Execution of the MOA and implementation of its terms evidences that the local parties have taken into account the effects of the project on historic properties and have afforded the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, located in Washington, DC, an opportunity to comment.

The GRHC and the WHC have reserved Section 8 Project-Based Vouchers (PBVs) for the Leonard Apartments project to be located at 851 Leonard Street, NW. The Leonard Apartments project involves demolition of the former Van't Hof Funeral Home building constructed in 1931, along with its additions and garage, and construction of a four-story building containing 55 affordable rental units for seniors. The project will be owned by the Leonard Apartments Limited Dividend Housing Association LLC and the developer is Genesis Nonprofit Housing Corporation.

Per U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) environmental review procedures at 24 CFR Part 58, the City is responsible for ensuring project compliance with the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and its implementing regulations at 36 CFR Part 800. The City assumes this role as it is the unit of general local government within which the project is located that exercises land use responsibility. The City, the GRHC, and the WHC consulted with the SHPO, and it was determined the proposed undertaking will have an adverse effect on the former Van't Hof Funeral Home which appears to meet the criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The parties have conferred and reached agreement on specific stipulations to be implemented that take into account the effect of

the project on historic resources. Actions to be taken include engaging a historic preservation consultant meeting Professional Qualification Standards (36 CFR Part 61) in architectural history to record existing conditions and create a permanent record of the affected property and to conduct a survey of existing pre-World War II funeral homes in Grand Rapids. Additionally, a historical photographic display of the former Van't Hof Funeral Home will be created and displayed within the Leonard Apartments building.

As required, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation was notified of the adverse effect determination and chose not to participate in the MOA consultation. Genesis Nonprofit Housing Corporation is a concurring party to the agreement.

The MOA outlines steps to be taken if archaeological artifacts or any items falling under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) are found during construction. Genesis Nonprofit Housing Corporation shall be responsible for all financial costs involved in fulfilling the terms of the MOA. If the Leonard Apartments Limited Dividend Housing Association LLC fails to carry out any of the stipulations outlined in the MOA, the GRHC and the WHC shall withhold issuance of the PBVs until such time the stipulations are met.

**Prepared by Ben Grostic, Contract Administrator**

Your COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE recommends the adoption of the following resolution approving execution of a Memorandum of Agreement among the City, the Michigan State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), the Grand Rapids Housing Commission, and the Wyoming Housing Commission for the Leonard Apartments project.

RESOLVED:

1. That a Memorandum of Agreement among the City, the Michigan State Historic Preservation Officer, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission, and the Wyoming Housing Commission for compliance with 36 CFR Part 800 for the Leonard Apartments project is hereby approved; and
2. That the Mayor is authorized to execute said Agreement and other related documents in a form approved by the City Attorney.

  
CORRECT IN FORM  
DEPARTMENT OF LAW