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**The Mulberry Avenue Reconstruction Project was just one of several Capital Projects which were able to be planned and constructed through local and outside funding sources over the last three years.**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**November 27, 2017**

## **MUSCATINE HAD GOOD YEAR FOR GRANTS, CONTRIBUTIONS**

*\$11.1 million received in grants, contributions, and outside funding during FY16-17*

**MUSCATINE, Iowa** – The citizens of Muscatine benefited from the hard work of City of Muscatine staff during fiscal year 2016-2017 as \$11.1 million worth of grants and outside funding were sought out, applied for, and received, a 149 percent increase over fiscal year 2015-2016 (\$7.4 million).

“Every year is different,” Nancy Lueck, City of Muscatine finance director, said. “Some years there is a lot of money available that we can pursue while in other years there is very little.”

The benefit to the citizens of Muscatine is two-fold. First, the grants enable the various city departments to repair infrastructure or continue programs that might otherwise be suspended or discontinued. Secondly, the grants help keep the city within the budget and that has allowed the city tax rate to remain unchanged.

“Having knowledgeable staff who can seek out and apply for funding allows the city to make the best use of available funds without having to raise rates,” Gregg Mandsager, city administrator, said. “We have that staff and I am proud that they are as invested in the success of our community as I am.”

Successful grant writing involves following the directions of the organization that is making the grant available, focusing the reader’s attention with specific language, and using persuasive

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arguments for the organization to fund the proposal. Following the directions is critical to all good grant writing since most organizations may not read past any departure from those directions.

“Being able to tell your story well in the format they want is also important,” Andrew Fangman, city planner, said.

Most grants do not fund 100 percent of a project so finding a match is another key ingredient in grant writing.

“Different organizations have different requirements which must be met,” Fangman said. “Some grants can be written in 90 minutes while others can take days.”

Successful grant writing begins with planning and that includes what the project is, how it is to be funded, and what public and/or private partnerships (matches) are available. Grant writing does not end with the submission as the pursuit of the grant may include changing the parameters of the application to meet the needs of the grant maker.

Fangman referenced the Community Attractions and Transportation (CAT) grant that the city was awarded this year. That grant application involved four projects with lots of moving parts that had to be addressed in the presentation to the Enhance Iowa Board. The application itself was nearly two inches thick when first presented. Through a series of meetings with the Enhance Iowa Board, that application changed to meet the wants and needs of the board before finally being accepted.

While grants are one supplemental funding source, another is contributions that may come from individuals, businesses, foundations, and trusts.

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The Muscatine Art Center and the Musser Public Library are two entities that have benefitted from grants and contributions over the last three years. The Art Center recently underwent an extensive renovation that was funded almost entirely from contributions and grants (totaling close to \$1 million) while also receiving grants to continue their educational programs and exhibits.

“The type of facility we are and the collections we have would not be possible without all the community support,” Melanie Alexander, director of the Muscatine Art Center, said. “There are grants we receive on a routine basis including ones that help pay for the staff, staff we would not have without those grants, and staff we definitely need to provide the best customer experience.”

Alexander said that several grants including ones from the Friends of the Muscatine Art Center, Muscatine Art Center Support Fund through the Community Foundation, and the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs/Cultural Leadership Partner Operational Support go into helping fund the additional staff needed at the Art Center.

“Then you have the projects such as the new HVAC system and improvements to the visitor experience,” Alexander said.

Alexander also said that the grants do not take into account the contributions of all the families who have donated their collections to the center.

“Without those collections we would not be a museum,” Alexander said.

The cultural aspect of life in Muscatine is not the only aspect that is affected by successful grant writing. The Muscatine Police Department received \$345,278.87 in grants and contributions

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during fiscal year 2016-17 including a \$41,565.00 contribution from Kent Corporation to purchase new equipment for the Special Response Team.

The Muscatine Municipal Airport as also benefitted over the last few years from Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) grants as well as a variety of state grants. A total of \$4.39 million of outside funding has been used or is being used by the airport including a \$3.76 million FAA grant for the runway reconstruction.

The list of Capital Projects that received substantial outside funding in FY16-17 include \$1.5 million for Mulberry Avenue, \$1.52 million for the Musser Public Library and HNI Community Center, \$769,220 for the railroad Quiet Zone project, and \$785,768.67 for various airport projects.

The \$11.1 million of outside funding received during FY16-17 surpassed the \$7.41 million in FY15-16 and the \$4.81 million in FY14-15. The city did receive \$13 million in the transfer of jurisdiction funds for Business 61 in 2014 with that money becoming a major part of the Mississippi Drive Reconstruction Project and the future Grandview Avenue Reconstruction Project.

Not included in these numbers were several previously awarded grants that have been expended or are scheduled to be used. The Kent Stein to Deep Lakes Park Trail received \$849,502 through an IDOT federal grant, a State Recreational Trail Grant, and a contribution from Musco. A \$1.2 million IDOT federal grant was used for the Mulberry Avenue Project, a state REAP grant of \$125,000 was used to rebuild the long boat docks at the municipal boat harbor, and an \$80,000 state LIFTS grant was used to help fund the multi-modal port study.

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Whether it is ongoing expenses or special projects, the City of Muscatine staff continues to seek out and apply for grants and contributions that continue to make Muscatine a great place to live, work, and raise a family.

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