

MEMORANDUM



TO: MAYOR FISCHER AND CITY COUNCIL
FROM: CORTNEY HANSON, CITY CLERK
SUBJECT: A MORE RESPONSIVE GOVERNMENT 2024 GRANT PROGRAM
DATE: SEPTEMBER 19, 2024

In August of this year, the Institute for Responsive Government announced a grant program titled, "A More Responsive Government 2024 Grant Program." This grant program is open elections offices in a small number of states: Colorado, Delaware, Minnesota, New Mexico, Nevada, Washington D.C., and Michigan. These states were selected because of significant revisions made to election laws by the legislatures within those states in the past three years that made elections "...more responsive and user-friendly for voters and election administrators."

This grant comes at a time when elections offices all over Michigan are feeling the financial pressure caused by revisions to Michigan Election Law such as 9 days of early voting, early tabulation, and the permanent (absent voter) ballot list. These revisions to law have brought with them increases in training time, supplies, overtime for full-time employees, and postage. While the City of Novi fully funds and supports elections every year, these additional funds would make a big difference.

Grant award amounts are based exclusively upon the 2022 Citizen Voting Age Population of the local election office's jurisdiction, as measured by the U.S. Census Bureau. Since Novi's population falls within the 25,000-49,999 range, **Novi is eligible for \$30,000.** The grant application was minimal, and the guidelines for spending the grant funding are broad:

- Expenditures must be incurred June 1, 2024 to May 31, 2025
- Expenditures must be "...for the nonpartisan public purpose of planning and operationalizing secure, efficient, and accessible election administration."
- Examples of eligible expenditures include, but are not limited to: additional voting equipment; improvements to polling locations to increase accessibility; electronic poll book laptops; wages for temporary election personnel
- After the grant period ends, the City Clerk will provide a report to the Institute for Responsive Government itemizing the expenditures

In the grant application, the City Clerk listed some of the expected expenditures that would be covered by the grant funding. This list (although it is not a complete list at this time) includes:

- New, secure ballot drop box
- Wages for additional temporary election personnel

- Replacement poll booths for polling locations
- Test decks to test election equipment
- Miscellaneous supplies for precincts

The recommended approval of the grant will be place on the upcoming September 30, 2024 Agenda.