

## 2021 Smart Growth Grant - Level 3 Application

**Status:** Completed

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**Submitted By:** hmorris@nar.realtor

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**Does the proposed activity adhere to the stated requirement?** Yes

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**Association:** MIDLAND BOARD OF REALTORS® INC

**Association ID:** 4860

**Address 1:** 2514 Louanna St

**Address 2:**

**City:** Midland

**State:** MI

**Zip:** 48640

**Association AE First Name (if different from above):**

**Association AE Last Name (if different from above):**

**Association AE Contact Email (if different from above):**

**1. Type of Initiative - Check only 1:** Land Use Study/Report

**2. Describe the initiative in detail.:** The work by Urban3 is proposed to be a part of the ongoing City Modern master planning work that the City of Midland has begun this year. Critical to sound long-term master planning is understanding how the overall model of the community is functioning. Local governments, and other public institutions, survive on property tax revenue and other revenues to provide the public services back to the community. With just about every service, there is a cost connection back to the geographic service area. For example, the amount of lane miles a city has in streets directly determines how much ongoing costs the city has to maintain and repair those streets. The work Urban3 does is remarkable as it begins to show how it's all connected by answering many questions around this such as 1) where in the city is there a net surplus of revenues over costs versus 2) where in the city is there a deficient when costs are compared to revenues. Once these questions are understood, it is anticipated that public policy changes will result to support new development in the future that is more sustainable and better contributors to the overall model. The work also supports development of housing types that have stronger market demand and are more affordable. The result is a stronger real estate market and long-term viability of the neighborhoods and districts.

**3. Amount Requested (Max \$10,000):** \$10,000

**4. Date(s) of initiative, if applicable, or completion date of initiative (how long will it take to complete). Application must be submitted at least 20 days prior to the date of the scheduled activity.:** Hopefully by the end of 2021.

**5. What will the grant funding be spent on (i.e. consultant, printing, venue rental, etc):** Consultant to perform the fiscal analysis of Midland's land use including value per acre, jobs per acre, and infrastructure liabilities.

**Attach a Copy of the Budget**

**6. How will gap funding (difference between grant amount approved and total project budget) be provided for (list all revenue sources)?:** The total cost of the consultant is approximately \$45,000. The City of Midland will cover the remaining costs above what our grant covers. Local foundations and community groups have also been approached for support.

**7. Describe the land use/transportation/growth issue(s) that will be impacted by this Initiative:** : A community's land-use regulations control what is built and where. Certain types of land-use regulations create a more financially sustainable and stable revenue flow of property and sales tax to the city. This study is the first step figuring out the City of Midland's baseline which will then tell us what type of development we need more of and less of in order to reach a more sustainable state. The City anticipates that the work of Urban3 will lead to changes in land use, zoning, building codes, and development patterns. It should reinforce the notion that not all growth is good growth. The City wants smart growth that builds local wealth and community prosperity. We anticipate that placemaking efforts will coalesce around this study to further support objectives and goals laid out in the master plan.

**8. Why is this issue of concern to your Association?** : The core mission of the association is to support the business of our members. By helping to create a more fiscally-balanced land-use pattern, the business of the members, both commercial and residential, will become more stable. Stability is attractive to both prospective businesses and residents and so Midland, it is hoped, will become a more desirable place to locate.

**9. Review the [10 Smart Growth Principles](#). How Does this initiative support one or more of these principles?** Prior research of this sort has demonstrated that certain land-use configurations produce public-sector revenue streams that are more stable and sustainable than other configurations. To that end, the research will help guide us to a city which will most likely have a: mix of land uses, compact building design, a range of housing opportunities, walkable neighborhoods, open space and farmland, direct development towards existing communities, a variety of transportation choices, and community and stakeholder collaboration (that last bit is what the Midland REALTORS(r) will be doing.

**10. Describe the initiative's policy outcomes as well as any benefits to the growth and development of the community.:** We anticipate that the research will provide policy recommendations that will effectively be a roadmap to adjustments to our land-use regulations as part of the master planning process. Advocating for these policy adjustments will become our workplan/implementation plan. The benefits of this effort are a more sustainable and secure balance sheet for our local government. This will support community improvements which, in turn will attract growth. Midland is currently short over 1,000 affordable units of housing. Additionally, many corporations have refrained from relocating employees to Midland from other locations due to the housing shortage and other amenities.

**11. List any community partners involved in this initiative? Describe their roles. Who is leading the initiative — your association/board or a partner?:** The primary partner is the City of Midland Planning Department. They are the lead. We are engaging as a supportive business in the community that sees long-term value in this effort. The real value of REALTOR(r) engagement will come when the recommendations of the study need a voice to get them implemented. In addition, the city is approaching Midland Home Builders Association, area landlords, area property developers, and other individuals interested in sustainable community development. The REALTOR® network is of particular interest to the city because of the key role we play within the property development/market ecosystem within the city. The Midland Housing Task Force is also a key player in the development of the master plan. This group comprised of Realtors, developers, foundations, government, and housing assistance agencies has the goal of adding additional housing and amenities in Midland to address the housing shortage.

**12. How will your Association and its members be engaged in this initiative such as volunteering, planning, fundraising, etc.?:** While there may be a role for the REALTORS(s) during the study to provide guidance about Midland's land use, the real value and engagement will come when it is time to act on the recommendations. Several Realtors are involved in the Housing Task Force. Additionally, the City will continue to consult realtors as the City Modern master plan is being developed.

**13. How will this initiative impact or support your Association's advocacy goals as well as how it will benefit your association and its members?:** Broadly speaking, our advocacy goal is to create a better business environment for our members. To that end, supporting a study that explores the public revenue stream of the existing land use paradigm of our city provides us with knowledge of existing conditions and will provide guidance on how to make it better. As this will feed into the master plan process, we hope that the resulting document will be better equipped to serve Midland into the coming decades.

**14. Describe, or attach, the plan of action for the use of the outcomes of the funded activity, i.e., study, report, set of recommendations, in your advocacy efforts.** : The study is just the first step in the process of ensuring a sustainable land-use paradigm for the city. The resulting policy recommendations based on the analysis will form the basis of our advocacy message in supporting the creation of the master plan. A defined development pattern that is clear to all is a good way to attract growth.

## **Attach plan of action**

**15. Do you have anything else to add regarding this initiative?:** Only that we are really looking forward to this; we think it will be really eye-opening for the city and the residents.

**Will the grant be funding a project in a rural community within your association's jurisdiction? Note that the Rural Housing Service defines "rural" as areas with less than 30,000 population and rural in character.:** No

**If the applicant is a local REALTOR® association, the state association must be notified of your application. Have you contacted your state association?:** Yes

**If this funding request is approved, do you give NAR permission to share your application with others (either directly or on realtorparty.com) as an example of a successful application?:** Yes