



## CITY OF IOWA CITY

410 East Washington Street  
Iowa City, Iowa 52240-1826  
(319) 356-5000  
(319) 356-5009 FAX  
[www.icgov.org](http://www.icgov.org)

December 24, 2008

Dear Jumpstart Applicant:

Here is an update on what is happening with the flood recovery programs and HMGP buyout:

### **Jumpstart State**

The City received 124 applications for \$686,000 in Jumpstart State funds. These funds were allocated based on the City's priorities used for the City's owner-occupied housing rehabilitation program and explained in the staff memo dated October 6, 2008 available online at [www.icgov.org/recovery](http://www.icgov.org/recovery). There are no income qualifications for state funds. To date, we have committed Jumpstart state funds to 21 households. Twelve households have or will receive funds for housing repair, six for interim mortgage assistance and three have requested down payment assistance. If all 21 households spend the committed funds, then all of the \$686,000 in Jumpstart State funds will be expended.

### **Jumpstart Federal/CDBG**

There are currently 46 households that are income-eligible to receive Jumpstart Federal (CDBG) assistance and we feel confident that each of those eligible households will receive assistance from the \$1.2 million available for Iowa City. We are in the process of verifying financial and other information required under federal regulations for the first 28 applicants. We will continue to contact and send verification forms and move through that part of the process so that all of the documentation and paperwork are in place prior to committing funds. Under the newly named "Jumpstart Express", homes that were built before 1978 will be able to receive up to \$24,999 in hard project costs without undergoing the lead abatement process. Please note that each home will have to be under contract with a professional contractor before payment and/or reimbursement can be provided. Some homes are also subject to an environmental review process. For more information regarding these restrictions, please contact City staff.

### **Overall Progress**

Many residents, as well as City staff, are frustrated with the time delays to get the funds out to those in need. As these programs are state and federal programs, the City must follow certain requirements that may add time to getting the funds distributed. This process has also been exacerbated by changes in program rules along the way. The City believes that many of the recent changes are positive and will assist the City in distributing federal funds out to local households faster than anticipated. Some of the requirements that add to this delay include income and asset verification forms (for the federal program), disability verification forms completed by a physician, contract documentation for work to be done or reimbursed if eligible, environmental reviews, adherence to basic lead-based paint safety guidelines, and an application to the Iowa Department of Economic Development for duplication of benefits analysis. We are working to get the money distributed as quickly as possible. Your continued patience is greatly appreciated.

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### **HMGP Buyout**

The HMGP application will be submitted to FEMA in early January. FEMA anticipates that their review will take 2-3 months upon the City submitting the application. We anticipate approval and a signed agreement with FEMA in late spring/early summer. Upon confirmation that the City receives the HMGP award, we will be working with homeowners to acquire their properties. As a reminder, only those properties both substantially damaged and those where the home (structure) is in the 100 year flood plain qualified under the HMGP standards. Based on our most recent communication with the 57 eligible households, 40 have indicated that they are interested in the buyout. This program is completely voluntary and homeowners are able to refuse the buyout up until the day the City buys the property. For more information about the HMGP buyout process, please contact David Purdy at 319.356.5489 or at david-purdy@iowa-city.org.

### **Mitigation**

The long term mitigation strategies for the flood impacted neighborhoods will be influenced by the outcome of the HMGP buyout program. As we have stated previously, we need to know which homes will actually be bought out and removed before we can determine what our mitigation strategy alternatives will look like. In addition to the buyout, some of the possible solutions are temporary flood barrier systems, permanent flood walls, wet-proofing homes by elevating mechanical and electrical structures, purchasing flood insurance and installing backflow valves on storm sewers with staging for temporary pumps which will reduce street flooding.

The City Public Works Department is coordinating the development of flood mitigation strategy alternatives with two private consultants, Stanley Engineering and Sasaki & Associates. Sasaki is also working with Cedar Rapids and the University, and we are hopeful they can provide a fresh perspective on our possible strategies. Please be assured that no decisions will be made until we have received input from residents and property owners in the flood-affected neighborhoods. This will occur after the first of the year, and involve neighborhood meetings, information on the website, and direct mailing if necessary.

Please continue to go to [www.icgov.org/recovery](http://www.icgov.org/recovery) for updates on the flood recovery programs or [www.icgov.org/buyout](http://www.icgov.org/buyout) for updates on the HMGP buyout program. If you have any questions or are unable to access the City's website for any of the documents mentioned, please contact me at 319.356.5479 or email at nasseem-moradi@iowa-city.org.

Nasseem Moradi  
Flood Recovery