



The Times

Trenton neighborhood gets \$1 million boost

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TRENTON -- New Jersey Manufacturers Insurance Co. yesterday added \$1 million toward its ongoing commitment to spur Trenton redevelopment.

The money is for neighborhood revitalization, health and safety, home improvement, and social services, such as employment skills development, officials said.

NJM presented the check to the state Department of Community Affairs' Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit Program, which will disburse the funds to the East Trenton Collaborative, an umbrella organization for a number of nonprofit groups focused on the revitalization of East Trenton through housing, commercial development and social services.

The effort is led by CityWorks, and includes Habitat for Humanity-Trenton Area, HomeFront, Isles, and Martin House-Better Community Housing of Trenton.

NJM was praised for its contribution at a gathering of state and local officials yesterday.

"You're manufacturing hope in this community," said Trenton Mayor Douglas H. Palmer. He added that NJM remains "devoted to its roots," as it was established in Trenton in 1913. The company's base of operations now is in Ewing on Sullivan Way.

NJM's contributions toward the Trenton program now total \$2 million.

This year's allotment of \$1 million will be spent in several ways.

One project on the table is a plan for retail, housing and public space at the corner of North Clinton and North Olden avenues. An additional project involves establishing a satellite office of HomeFront, a social services provider, at 615 N. Clinton Ave.

The money also will help Habitat for Humanity develop ReStore, "a facility that will provide inexpensive building supplies to local residents and businesses for maintaining their properties," officials said; and Isles Healthy Homes program will receive help for testing older homes in the area for lead dust, indoor asthma triggers, and energy leakage, according to the state Department of Community Affairs.

The DCA uses corporate contributions to reimburse nonprofit organizations as they complete the projects outlined in neighborhood plans.

The DCA program offers businesses a 100 percent tax credit against various state taxes "for investing in the revitalization of low- and moderate-income neighborhoods in eligible municipalities," according to a statement.

These revitalization efforts are part of a bigger proposed project. The DCA recently approved the collaborative's vision for a makeover of six square blocks that straddle North Clinton and North Olden

avenues. The project could take years and could cost around \$125 million, said Tom Clark, executive director of CityWorks.

The DCA has distributed \$6.6 million in investment dollars to neighborhood redevelopment projects since creating the Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit Program in May 2004.

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