

Library

Mandan as one of their final beneficiaries.

“Since April 2021,” said Jodell Holliday, T-Mobile’s Senior Program Manager. “T-Mobile has awarded 25 Hometown Grants of up to \$50,000 to deserving small towns with project ideas. We get anywhere from 900 to 1,200 grants every quarter, so there’s a lot of reading that goes into every one. It’s a careful selection process, and everything we fund is an incredible project. This is no exception.”

During their pitch to T-Mobile, the MELC stated that they would use their funds to transform one of the PlayLab building’s rooms into a miniature library branch. In a public ceremony on Tuesday, March 31, T-Mobile met with MELC members to present them with a \$50,000 check to aid with its development. This will help fund construction and the purchase of new technology, adding more value to a place that already serves an important role in the area. This, MELC and T-Mobile note, will help create a community space akin to the library for those who may not be able to cross the railroad tracks separating them from its main building.

“The PlayLab’s reputation has been astounding so far,” said Bassingwaite. “We’re only running a few days a week, but over 300 kids have come in so far, and we’re excited to expand our services and hours. We want to make a place where parents can sit, relax, unplug, and spend meaningful time with their kids. All of the mess stays here, and that’s intriguing to a lot of people, too. With the library space, we’re hoping to serve the broader community that lives across the 3rd Street corridor, and give them easier access to all the services a library provides.”

“Children and li-

braries are near and dear to my heart,” said Holliday, “though I’m also not the only decision-maker. But this project definitely stood out, especially because it’s from North Dakota. We were excited to see the goal for this PlayLab: It isn’t just ‘let’s put some fixtures out and have fun’: The MMPL has a powerful vision for the branch project, and we’re happy to help it come to fruition.”

According to T-Mobile’s website, Mandan is not just the only ND town to earn one of the 25 prizes from the Hometown Grant, it is also the only community from North Dakota to have ever received one. This is due in part to the project itself, but also the tremendous outpour of support behind it, as people and organizations from all across the city came together to defend the idea.

“Part of the Hometown Grant includes submitting letters of recommendation,” said Holliday. “But MMPL got letters from both partners and the community. We do our due diligence and look up every bit of support behind these projects, and what we discovered was eye-opening. Everyone is passionate about this project, and now, so are we.”

“I think the response shows why it was such an easy application to choose,” said Mark Waschbusch, Senior Manager of T-Mobile North Dakota. “The people here are awesome- you can see it in their collaboration, the way they work with each other, and how appreciative and involved they’ve been with all of us knowing we’re here to aid them. I’ve even heard others reaching out to ask how else T-Mobile can support Mandan, and had some good preliminary talks about that.”

MMPL staff have already met with engineering teams, who

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are working to prepare the future branch’s unique shelves and buildout- but the project is expected to be completed in October. When complete, the final result will serve as a testament to three major things: MELC’s passion for teaching the youth, T-Mobile’s generous side, and how much of an impact grants can have on the present and future of our community.

“This is all about creating connections for the community,” said Bassingwaite. “Connections between parents and children, children and children, and adults and adults. We’re grateful to T-Mobile for supporting this opportunity, and more than excited to connect with anyone else who might want to contribute to what we’re doing.”

“As one of the local leaders here,” said Waschbusch, “I’m very excited to further our relationship with the Mandan community. From the rodeo to the parade, we love everything we do here, and can’t wait to do more.”

“T-Mobile’s giving arm stretches wide,” said Holliday. “That’s why I’m truly proud to work for them. It’s highly encouraged in our work culture to give back, especially when it comes to schools and communities. We don’t want to just see this project completed- we want to see it grow, and continue to grow, and keep impacting the lives of children and their parents all across Mandan. We’re looking down the path of something that starts here, but blossoms into something incredible for the community.”

More information on the Hometown Grant can be found on T-Mobile.com. Details about the MELC, as well as their current and future PlayLab opportunities, are available on the Mandan Little Learners website.

Mandan Police Department case report

Mandan police department cases for the week of March 30 through April 5.

March 30

Case No	Offense
26001080.....	drug/narcotic violations, drug equipment violations
26001082..	Driving with suspended license
26001083.....	found property

March 31

Case no.	offense
26001087	welfare check
26001088	motor vehicle accident
26001089	welfare check
26001090.....	drug/narcotic violations, expired registration, violation of drivers license restrictions
26001091..	commitment
26001092.....	motor vehicle accident, limitations on backing
26001096.....	all other larceny- theft
26001097.....	juvenile
26001098.....	disorderly conduct
26001099	aggravated assault, domestic dispute
26001100.....	domestic dispute

April 1

Case no.	offense
26001101..	Driving with suspended license
26001102.....	disorderly conduct
26001103.....	found property
26001105....	Pedestrians

26001106.....	drug equipment violations, failure to display current registration or tabs, disregard stop sign
26001107.....	failure to register as an offender against children
26001108.....	drug equipment violations, criminal warrants, open container, drove without license/license expired, tinted windows
26001110.	welfare check
26001112....	driving with revoked license, failure to display current registration
26001113.....	simple assault, shoplifting, runaway/attempt to locate, unruly child
26001114.	local warrant

April 2

Case no.	offense
26001115....	violation of drivers license restrictions, tinted windows
26001117.....	drove without liability insurance, failure to display current registration
26001118.....	driving with suspended license, traffic violation
26001120.....	suicidal subject
26001122.....	disorderly conduct
26001123.....	destruction/damage/vandalism of property/criminal mischief
26001125.....	driving

26001127.....	missing person/attempt to locate
26001128...	driving with suspended license
26001129.....	unlawful entry into a vehicle, destruction/damage/vandalism of property/criminal mischief, runaway/attempt to locate, MIP/MIC

April 3

Case no.	offense
26001130.....	domestic dispute
26001131	motor vehicle accident, care required
26001132.....	disorderly conduct
26001133.....	simple assault, detox
26001134....	driving with suspended license

April 4

26001135.....	domestic dispute
26001136.....	false information to PO- hindering LE, local warrant

April 5

Case no.	offense
26001137....	hit and run accident
26001138...	driving with revoked license, driving under the influence, speeding
26001139....	harassment

Total Cases: 45

Mobile Homes clean up underway in New Salem

By Richard Mendoza

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After a full calendar year spent fighting to remove the mobile homes sat at the vacant lot across the Arrowhead Inn, the city of New Salem is beginning to see efforts to remove the homes take place.

Of the seven mobile homes which have sat on the lot since January of 2025, two have been removed as of writing.

One home in rather good condition was reportedly purchased for several hundred dollars and taken away, while another was completely cleaned up after extensive damage to the exterior and interior, likely caused by strong winds and snow over the last several months.



photo | Richard Mendoza

FIVE OF THE SEVEN mobile homes still sit on the lot across the Arrowhead Inn. After April 10, the city of New Salem will assume control over the clean-up of the homes.

City auditor Melissa Davis stated Jay Mitchell, the owner of the mobile homes, had not reached out to the city regarding cleanup plans after signing the revised plea agreement. The agreement between the

city and Mitchell provided him with 45 days to remove the mobile homes on his own by April 10. After April 10, the city of New Salem would contract the work and assess the cost to the property.

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