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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

City of Seat Pleasant Competes for Vital Funds Necessary for Upgrades to its Public Works Building in the Maryland General Assembly:

Seat Pleasant, MD – On Saturday March 10th Mayor Eugene W. Grant led a delegation to Annapolis from The City of Seat Pleasant: A City of Excellence, including: City Council President Kelly Porter, Councilman Johnie Higgs, City Administrator Vincent Jones, Public Works Director Johnny Thompson, and city resident Branden Warner to fight for vital funds for the city's 42 year old Public Works Building. This took place in the course of two back to back bond bill hearings this weekend, in the House of Delegates and in the State Senate, **House Bill 482/Senate Bill 54: Creation of State Debt – Prince George's County – City of Seat Pleasant Public Works Facility**. Since the city's incorporation in 1931 the Public Works Building has never had a single upgrade and at this point, is in need of crucial funds. "This building has never had an upgrade and my department is solely responsible for all snow removal, auto repair/machinery maintenance, and providing additional and important community services for the residents of Seat Pleasant," stated Johnny Thompson, Director of Public Works.

The City of Seat Pleasant is facing after 42 years a vital municipal building structure which has become completely unsafe. "Funding for this project will be directed towards stabilizing the Public Works Building's external elements, such as mold throughout the building's interior, a leaky roof structure, and siding which has fallen off," stated City Treasurer Robert Ashton.

"Our Public Works Facility was erected 21 years prior to the Prince George's County Property Standards Section was created which set up property standards governing public facilities. Our facility is not in total compliance with their regulations," stated Mayor Grant during his testimony and went on to point out, "We have attempted, over the years, to keep pace with the Prince George's County building and maintenance codes using some of the funds received from State Highway User fees and taxes generated from real estate assessments." However, the State Highway User Fees has been cut back 84% which equates to \$150,942 from the city's allocation four years ago (fiscal year 2009 \$179,955 and projected fiscal year 2013 \$29,013). Additionally, a decline in real state assessment of 28.6% will result in a loss in this revenue source of \$300,000 in fiscal year 2013 according to the Department of Assessment and Taxation. "This building is in a state of disrepair. In order to keep pace in the city's effort to meet Prince Georges County's Building and Maintenance Codes, these hearings and use of the funds are essential to maintaining the excellence of the City of Seat Pleasant," concluded Mayor Eugene W. Grant.

"This upgrade to our public works facility will offer a safe, descent, and sanitized place to work for the city's employees. This building is the extension of a cultural center for the City of Seat Pleasant. Senior's come here frequently for assistance with their automobiles and advice on how to take care of and maintain their properties.

Additionally, this upgrade is vital to keeping the line of communication open between the Department of Public Works and the residents we serve,” added Johnny Thompson, Director of Public Works.

Mayor Eugene W. Grant offered a compromise with the Maryland General Assembly: “It is estimated that the renovation project will cost \$550,000. The City of Seat Pleasant is requesting the state’s direct support of \$500,000. We understand that we are required to provide matching funds for our project which can be either “hard”, “soft” or a combination of both. Our “soft” match will be the assessed value of the property which is estimated at \$750,000 and our direct “hard match is \$50,000. Thus, for every \$5.00 that the state commits the City of Seat Pleasant will match it by \$8.00.”

Seat Pleasant: “A City of Excellence” is one of Maryland’s 157 municipalities with a population of 5,000 residents, 100 businesses, 13 houses of faith, and 20 non-profit organizations. The Seat Pleasant government has a mayor, seven member city council and 35 government employees operating a \$3.2 million dollar budget.

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