

City of Minneapolis
Great Streets

NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS
DISTRICT PROGRAM



Business District Support (BDS) Request for Proposals (RFP)

Request

The City of Minneapolis Department of Community Planning and Economic Development (CPED) is seeking proposals in response to this competitive grant funding solicitation. Eligible proposals will be focused on initiatives and investments that enhance business district vitality, benefit existing businesses, diversify an area's client base, or increase the diversity of goods and services provided, particularly in communities where there are existing racial, ethnic, and economic disparities.

Why Support Business Districts

Healthy neighborhood business districts play a crucial role in the vibrancy of Minneapolis and are critical to the overall health of the local economy. Neighborhood businesses are at the core of urban living and contribute significantly to residents' quality of life. Residents visit them for daily goods and services, and they provide opportunities for small business and employment. These locations form community gathering places, and together the buildings and businesses provide an identity for the surrounding community. Often that identity is a cultural identity that supports the social networks of the community. The cultural identity of these districts and corridors are often cultivated by the people, businesses, and institutions that make up these destinations. Economic growth in these areas should not only mean an opportunity to attract new businesses and investment, but to be inclusive in a way that supports the identity of these places for years to come. These places bring vital energy and diversity to the city and region, and they should be supported.

Many business districts in Minneapolis face competitive challenges due to macroeconomic trends in retailing, real and perceived concerns over parking availability and public safety, and lack of information about local purchasing power and desired products and services. Each business district is unique with its own set of assets, opportunities, and challenges and requires a customized approach to revitalization. Through this RFP, the City's Great Streets Program solicits proposals for a wide range of activities with the overarching goal of strengthening neighborhood business districts and building sustainable mechanisms for ongoing vitality and investment.

Eligible Applicants

Eligible organizations include community development corporations, business associations, neighborhood organizations, cultural organizations, and other not-for-profit entities that have the demonstrated capacity to perform the proposed work or subcontract with an entity that does. Organizations lacking the experience and capacity are encouraged to submit a partnership proposal with an organization that does have capacity.

Eligible Areas

[Eligible commercial districts](#) are defined in the City's **current** comprehensive plan – [The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth](#). The eligible areas are commercial corridors, commercial nodes, activity centers, and LRT station areas and must be the focus of proposed activities. Proposals may be for an entire commercial district, multiple districts, or targeted segments of a district. Businesses outside the designated areas may benefit from the work and participate in activities that are focused on the eligible areas. The program does not support assistance to single businesses. The Great Streets program prioritizes City resources in areas with demonstrated need based on several measures of economic health and opportunity. Priority is given to applications in intervene and support areas.

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| INTERVENE | Weakest market areas Areas experiencing high crime, high vacancy, and/or low market values |
| SUPPORT | Below average market areas |
| MONITOR | Strongest market areas Areas experiencing low crime, low vacancy, and/or high market values |

Eligible Activities

Eligible activities include, but are not limited to, the following **DISTRICT-WIDE** strategies:

- Marketing and branding campaigns.
- Marketing events (e.g. night markets, tours, etc.).
- Programming that celebrates the rich, diverse character and identity of a business district.
- Capital expenditures for placemaking efforts when maintenance cost funding is in place. This includes public art and physical placemaking that enhances the pedestrian realm and reflects the area's history and cultures. Funded proposals must be consistent with Minneapolis Public Works requirements.
- Safety programming.
- Strategies to minimize the displacement of businesses.
- Strategies to fill vacant commercial properties.
- Business recruitment efforts (market studies¹, trade area analyses, pop-ups, outreach and referral of business prospects).
- Activities related to improving business relationships (e.g. collaborative social media marketing, district passports/games, networking opportunities).
- Technical assistance for organizations to improve their strategic thinking and planning for district vitality and their partnership building with cultural organizations.
- Funding for farmers' markets activities when tied directly to the vibrancy of business districts.
- Activities that connect entrepreneurs, specifically people of color, Indigenous people, immigrants, and women, to resources - including market information, talent, other support organizations, real estate options and capital.

CPED is particularly interested in receiving proposals that include the following:

- Activities with written descriptions tying their impact to the organization's goals and one or more of the [100 policies](#) in the City's 2018 **draft** comprehensive plan - [Minneapolis 2040](#).
- Activities focused in communities where there are existing racial, ethnic, and economic disparities.
- Investments in and promotions of arts, creative, and cultural districts.
- Activities led by local ethnic, racial, and cultural organizations that protect the racial diversity and uplift the cultural identity of districts where a significant portion of the population is comprised of people of color, Indigenous people, or immigrant communities.

It is not the intention of the BDS program to fund an annual line item in an organization's budget, but rather to fund activities that respond to the changing needs, economic conditions, and character of each business district. If you have a question about whether or not the activity you would like to propose is eligible, contact Rebecca Parrell, 612-673-5018, rebecca.parrell@minneapolismn.gov.

Ineligible Activities

- General operations expenses are not eligible for the program. However, staff time associated with a proposed activity is an eligible use.
- Financing commercial real estate development projects, physical improvements to a single property, or loans to businesses are not eligible activities, as the City offers such assistance through [other programs](#).
- Technical assistance to businesses is ineligible for this RFP because the City supports technical assistance to businesses through the [Business Technical Assistance Program \(B-TAP\)](#).

¹ Before submitting a proposal for market research, contact Rebecca Parrell (612-673-5018) to discuss what reports and market data are already available to Minneapolis organizations.

Grant Contracts

Grant contracts awarded through this RFP are performance-based contracts. After the proposals are received and reviewed in the competitive solicitation process and grants are awarded by the Minneapolis City Council, City staff, in collaboration with the selected organizations, develop a Scope of Services based on the contents of the proposal. Contract payments are made by the City based on invoices and documented deliverables submitted by the organizations.

If your proposal is awarded a contract, the contents of your proposal, and any clarification to the contents, may be incorporated by reference into the contract with the City. Only include activities in your proposal that your organization is committed to doing through a contract with the City. Applicants should be able to complete the activities within one year of executing a contract with the City. Contracts typically run from June 1 to June 1. Individual contracts will not exceed \$50,000. There is no minimum contract amount.

Proposal Submission

Applicants must email the Proposal Form and a Budget **as an Excel file** to rebecca.parrell@minneapolismn.gov **by Thursday, February 28, 2019 at 4:00 p.m.** Proposals will not be accepted after the deadline. The City will acknowledge receipt of proposals by emailing the contacts listed with a courtesy email within 24 hours of receiving the proposal or by 4:30 p.m. on February 23. It is the responder's responsibility to ensure they submit their proposal on time.

Evaluation Criteria

A committee of City staff and outside partners in commercial district revitalization will review proposals by considering the following criteria and make a recommendation to the City Council for funding. The maximum score a proposal can receive is 40 points.

- Priority Areas
 - *Intervene Areas 10 points, Support Areas 5 points, Monitor Areas 0 points*
- Proven Need / Clear Outcomes / Significant Impact
 - *10 points max*
- Capacity of Organization or Connection to Engaged Partners / Readiness
 - *10 points max*
- Best Practices Examples / Innovative Ideas
 - *5 points max*
- Amount of Leverage / Reasonableness of Budget
 - *5 points max*

In addition to these criteria, the City will consider the distribution of investments across eligible areas citywide. The City may, in its sole discretion, expand or reduce the criteria upon which it bases its final decisions regarding selection of which business district support activities to fund.

RFP Inquiries

Prospective responders should direct questions **in writing** to the department contact person, Rebecca Parrell, at rebecca.parrell@minneapolismn.gov. All questions are due no later than Wednesday, February 6, 2019. Questions will be answered in writing and posted on the "Economic Development" tab on the [CPED RFP website](#) on Friday, February 8, 2019. The department contact cannot vary the terms of the RFP.

Timeline

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| RFP Issued | Thursday, January 24, 2019 |
| Deadline for Written Questions | Wednesday, February 6 |
| Q&A Posted Online | Friday, February 8 |
| Submission Deadline | Thursday, February 28 by 4:00 p.m. |
| Proposal Review and Evaluation | March |
| Recommendation to City Council CD&RS Committee | Tuesday, April 23 |
| Contracting | May |
| Contract Dates (may vary) | June 1, 2019 - June 1, 2020 |

City Contract Requirements

All grant recipients will be required to attend a pre-grant award breakfast meeting in May 2019. Grantees will also be required to participate in one best practices workshop during the contract period.

Additional City requirements vary. The following list **is not** exhaustive.

1. **Data Practices** – Grantee agrees to comply with the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (the “Act”) and all other applicable state and federal laws relating to data privacy or confidentiality. The Grantee and any of Grantee’s sub-grantees or sub-contractors retained to provide services under this Contract shall comply with the Act and be subject to penalty for non-compliance as though they were a governmental entity. The Grantee will immediately report to the City any requests from third parties for information relating to this Agreement. The City agrees to promptly respond to inquiries from the Grantee concerning data requests. The Grantee agrees to hold the City, its officers, and employees harmless from any claims resulting from the Grantee’s unlawful disclosure or use of data protected under state and federal laws, regardless of the limits of insurance coverage.
2. **Intellectual Property** – The recipient must agree to provide the City with the right to royalty-free, non-exclusive license to reproduce, publish or otherwise use and to authorize others to use any intellectual property created using the grant funds. Work covered by this provision shall include inventions, improvements, discoveries, databases, computer programs, reports, notes, studies, photographs, negatives, designs, drawings, electronic files, specifications, materials, tapes or other media.
3. **Billboard Advertising** – Through Ordinance 109.470, City and City-derived funds are prohibited from use to pay for billboard advertising as a part of a City project or undertaking.
4. **Conflict of Interest/Code of Ethics** – Grantee covenants that it presently has no interest and shall not acquire any interest, direct or indirect, which would conflict in any manner or degree with the performance of services required under this Agreement. The Grantee further covenants that in the performance of this Agreement no person having such an interest shall be employed by the Grantee hereunder. The City acknowledges that Grantee, as part of its nonprofit community and economic development mission, will purchase buildings to be renovated and leased to a variety of businesses. Grantee understands that using proceeds of the grant for the benefit of a property in which Grantee has a financial interest is considered a conflict of interest, unless:
 - o Any technical assistance shall be made available to all businesses in the community who meet Program requirements through a fair, open and competitive process, as approved by CPED staff; and
 - o The assistance provided does not relate to improvements that directly benefit Grantee’s building, e.g. assistance regarding building improvements such as window replacement would not be acceptable; assistance for marketing or procurement would not be a conflict.
5. **Hold Harmless** – The recipient shall agree to defend, indemnify and hold the City harmless from any and all claims or lawsuits that may arise from the recipient’s activities under the provisions of the Contract, that are attributable to the negligent acts or omissions, including breach of specific contractual duties of the recipient or the recipient’s independent contractors, agents, employees or officers.
6. **Insurance** - Prior to starting the services described herein, Grantee shall provide evidence of and continually maintain throughout the term of this Agreement, workers’ compensation insurance in accordance with

statutory requirements. The Grantee shall also provide evidence of and continually maintain: (i) commercial general liability insurance which shall include contractual liability coverage, (ii) automobile insurance for any vehicles owned by the Grantee, and (iii) hired/non-owned automobile insurance (if Grantee or Grantee's independent contractors will be driving automobiles while performing services under this Agreement) in amounts sufficient to indemnify the City, but in no event less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence with aggregate coverage of \$1,000,000. Said insurance policy(ies) shall name the City as an additional insured. Grantee shall immediately forward to the City any notices it receives of cancellation or revocation of the foregoing policies.

7. **Compliance with the Law** – Grantee agrees to abide by the requirements and regulations of The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Minnesota Human Rights Act (Minn. Stat. C.363A), the Minneapolis Civil Rights Ordinance (Ch. 139), and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. These laws deal with discrimination based on race, gender, disability, religion and with sexual harassment. In the event the Grantee has questions concerning these requirements, the City agrees to promptly supply all necessary clarifications. Violation of any of the above laws can lead to termination of this Contract.
8. **Advances** - Organizations awarded contracts may elect to receive an advance of up to 10% of the total contract amount. The advance will be tied to specific contract deliverables and the organization will be required to demonstrate successful completion of the deliverable(s) tied to the advance.