

City of Minneapolis
BUSINESS ASSOCIATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Request for Proposals

Proposals due by January 12, 2011



Introduction

The City of Minneapolis ("City") is seeking proposals for activities to strengthen local business organizations and help stabilize commercial areas, so that they contribute to the economic growth of their members and assist the City in attainment of its economic development objectives.

The City will contract with new and/or existing business associations to act in an advisory role to the Community Planning and Economic Department of the City (CPED). It is the intent of the program that the available funds are to be allocated to the business associations who show they have the capacity to effectively communicate with the business community and act as a partner with the City in promoting the business services that are available.

Those associations that desire to act as a liaison between the business community and the City will be considered for funding upon submission of a proposal agreeing to promote economic development within Minneapolis by carrying out the following activities:

1. Build a sense of business identity within their community.
2. Identify significant issues confronting their businesses, and detailing a plan to address those issues with specific results that can be measured and reported on.
3. Encourage businesses, industrial and commercial property owners to participate and become members and leaders in the association. Membership dues and/ or volunteer hours donated to the association should be recorded.
4. Hold regular open meetings and encourage all parties interested in any issue to attend and participate. Meeting minutes should be available to the public on the Association website.
5. Ensure that members are aware of the City programs available to them. At a minimum the association website must reference the City of Minneapolis business financing tools and provide an active link to the appropriate City of Minneapolis web page.
6. Report to City staff on issues faced by members doing business in Minneapolis and give feedback regarding City programs and projects.
7. Identify businesses or properties that need or may be eligible for City programs or projects.
8. Insure that there is a process for democratically electing, on an annual basis, a board or officers representing a fair cross-section of the business community.
9. Other activities as described in the association's goals or that will further the City's economic development objectives of job growth and tax base expansion.

Interaction between neighborhood and business associations is highly encouraged to best serve the community needs.

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Objectives

Healthy business districts play a crucial role in the vibrancy of Minneapolis and are critical to the overall health of the local economy. Each area is unique with its own set of opportunities and challenges and requires a customized approach. Through this Request for Proposals (RFP), the City's Business Association Assistance Program provides grants for a wide range of activities, with the overall goal of active communication between the City of Minneapolis and neighborhood businesses.

Eligible areas

The program is available throughout the City of Minneapolis.

Eligible activities

Activities are eligible if they support the economic vitality of an entire business district, not simply a single business. This program is intended to be flexible and support a variety of strategies with specific goals that can achieve measurable results. Eligible activities include, but are not limited to: retail recruitment efforts, marketing and branding campaigns, crime prevention campaigns, etc. Eligible budget line items may include soft costs: office supplies; newsletters; computer software; maintenance of data bases; promotional materials; independent contractors that directly relate to business association activities; bank charges; typing of agendas, minutes, and correspondence; accounting services; and other identified operational costs. All such disbursements must be approved by action of the business association's Board of Directors prior to payment.

Ineligible budget items include: undefined line items such as "miscellaneous" and "special projects;" food or drink for groups or individuals; printed business directories, costs of legal action against the City; penalties and interest charges, equipment hard costs and discounts to reduce membership dues.

If any capital expenditures are part of the proposal (e.g. banners, street furniture, or artwork), *evidence of long-term maintenance funding and permits from the appropriate City agencies must be provided.*

Activities not eligible for these funds include financing for real estate development, physical improvements to a single property, or loans to businesses. See the City's website (http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/cped/business_assistance.asp) for information on City assistance for commercial real estate development and business finance tools.

Eligible organizations

Eligible organizations include Business Associations whose membership is located within the City of Minneapolis and who have demonstrated capacity to perform the work outlined in the proposal. The City will recognize and fund only one business organization to represent a particular geographic area. The association should have members or staff who are devoted to business development activities, and experience managing contracts. If a consultant will do some of the work through a subcontract, identify that consultant and provide the consultants' qualifications.

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Proposal submission and deadline

Applicants must submit one bound or stapled copy and one electronic version of the proposal as follows. Proposals must be on standard 8 ½" by 11" paper. All supporting documentation must be on paper no larger than 11' by 17". Proposals and supporting documentation must be submitted in a sealed envelope labeled "Business Association Assistance Program Proposal." Faxed proposals will not be accepted. Submissions will not be returned.

Proposals shall be delivered to the City on or before:

Wednesday, January 12, 2011, 4:00 pm

To:

**Contract Services
Department of CPED
105 Fifth Avenue South, Suite 200
Minneapolis, MN 55401
Attn: Judy Moses**

Electronic versions should be emailed to judy.moses@ci.minneapolis.mn.us

Proposals received after the deadline will not be accepted. It is neither CPED's responsibility nor practice to acknowledge receipt of any proposal. It is the responder's responsibility to assure that a proposal is received in a timely manner. Please make sure your proposal is complete.

RFP Inquiries

Prospective responders should direct questions in writing to the department contact person:

Judy Moses
Community Planning and Economic Development
105 Fifth Avenue South, Suite 200
Minneapolis, MN 55407
Email: judy.moses@ci.minneapolis.mn.us
Fax: 612-673-5111

All questions are due no later than December 22, 2010. Questions will be answered in writing and posted on the CPED web site (www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/cped). The department contact cannot vary the terms of the RFP.

A pre-proposal meeting will be held on December 13, 2010 from 9:00 – 10:00 at the Crown Roller Mill located at 105 Fifth Ave. South, Suite 200. Attendance is not required but the meeting will provide an opportunity to ask questions about the proposal.

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Proposal Contents

Proposals must include the following:

A **cover page** that includes the following information:

- a. Applicant's name and mailing address
- b. Contact person's name, title, phone number, fax number, and e-mail address
- c. Signature of an individual authorized to sign on behalf of the proposing organization. If a partnership or team is proposing, an authorized signature is required from each entity.

Please provide narrative that addresses the following:

1. A **description of the activities** anticipated for the Business Association in 2011 that clearly articulates how the association will further the City's objectives for this RFP outlined in the activities listed on page one of this document. Please explain how the proposed activities support the business district and strengthen the local businesses. Describe the communications strategy and why the methods are best suited for your membership.
2. A **description of the geographic area** served by the organization.
3. An **identification of the organizations leadership and any staff or consultants** that will be involved in the activities, including a description of the roles they will play.
4. A **description of the public benefits, specific expected outcomes, and deliverables** that will result from the activities, e.g., the projected increase in membership, the number of businesses that attend your workshops, a new retail anchor recruited, a marketing campaign planned or launched, data on increased sales or reduction in crime, etc.
5. An **annual budget** including the total cost of the activities, funds requested from the Business Association Assistance (BAAP) program, staff hours or consultant time and billing rate, other anticipated expenses, and funds or staff resources from other sources (e.g. business association dues, foundations, the Neighborhood Revitalization Program, private donors).

If funds from another source are committed, provide a letter from the funder indicating the amount of funding provided, the expected deliverables, and any restrictions on the funding.

If a BAAP grant was received in the past, describe how this proposal differs from the previous scope of work. If the proposed activities are a continuation of that work or advance another component of a larger project, program, or strategy, please explain how this activity fits within the larger context.

6. Any **other information** that would help City staff understand and evaluate the proposal.

Your proposal must include an executed "Consent for Release of Response Data" form (Exhibit A), included in this RFP document. Proposals that do not include an executed "Consent for Release of Response Data" form shall be considered incomplete which will be grounds for rejection of the entire proposal.

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The contents of the proposal and any clarification to the contents submitted by the successful proposer may become part of the contractual obligation and be incorporated by reference into the contract between the proposer and the City.

Evaluation criteria

The criteria for evaluating proposals will be subjective, with priority given to the association work plan that proposes the most effective forms communication and economic development for the dollars requested. The past performance of business associations that have received prior years funding through the Business Association Assistance Program will be considered in the evaluation of current proposals from such groups.

In reviewing potential Business Association Assistance Program contracts, the review team will consider the following criteria. The maximum score a proposal can receive is 100.

1. Does the organization have the experience and capacity to effectively serve as a liaison between the business community and the City? (up to 25 pts)
2. Do the City funds leverage other resources (membership fees, neighborhood association contributions, foundation grants, in-kind donations)? Leveraged funds are those that are committed to the specific activity that is the subject of this proposal (up to 20 pts)
3. Impact and visibility - Would the activity directly strengthen the economic vitality of the business district? (up to 20 pts)
4. Does the organization identify a clear plan to communicate with the business community and City staff? (up to 25 pts)
5. Can this project be replicated in other areas? Are there "best practices" or "lessons learned" that will be transferrable? (up to 10 pts)

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

Review and selection process

A committee of City staff will review proposals received by the due date of Wednesday, January 12, 2011 and will submit all proposals with a summary recommendation to the Director of the Department of Community Planning and Economic Development for the final decision on which associations shall receive funding.

The City reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or parts of proposals, negotiate modifications to an entire proposal or specific components of the scope of work within a proposal to create a project of lesser or greater magnitude than described in this RFP or the submitted proposal.

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Anticipated timeline

Submission deadline for proposals:	January 12, 2011
Staff evaluation of proposals:	Jan./Feb., 2011
Recommendation for funding:	February, 2011
Contracting:	Feb./Mar. 2011

City Contracting Requirements

Business associations approved for funding by the Director of Community Planning and Economic Development will enter into an annual contractual relationship with the City following approval. The contract will include three exhibits:

Exhibit A, the program guidelines

Exhibit B, the business association objectives and budget.

Exhibit C, a map of the geographic area the association will represent.

The contract will obligate the group to provide the services described in their proposal and the City to provide timely and accurate information to the association to enable it to carry out its responsibilities.

Groups receiving funding must have on file with this Program, a true and correct copy of their Association Articles of Incorporation, Association Bylaws and a copy of their Minnesota Secretary of State Certificate of Good Standing for the current year prior to receiving funds.

The Community Planning and Economic Development Department will work with funded groups to ensure contract compliance by maintaining regular interaction and by conducting a formal performance evaluation following the funding year. Groups receiving \$300,000 or more in federal funds in any one calendar year are required to submit to the City, an independent audit conducted by a CPA every two years. Results of the monitoring will be included in the recommendations to the Director on funding for the next year.

City requirements vary depending on the type of assistance being provided. The following list may not be exhaustive.

- 1. Data Practices** – The recipient must agree to comply with the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act and all other applicable state and federal laws relating to data privacy or confidentiality and hold the City, its officers and employees harmless from any claims resulting from the recipient's unlawful disclosure or use of data protected under state and federal laws.
- 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.

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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** – The recipient must agree to be bound by the City's Code of Ethics, Minneapolis Code of Ordinances.
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 acts or omissions, including breach of specific contractual duties of the recipient or the recipient's independent contractors, agents, employees or officers.

EXHIBITS

- A. Form of Consent for Release of Response Data

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EXHIBIT A
Form of Consent for Release of Response Data

_____, 2011
City of Minneapolis
Department of Community Planning and Economic Development
105 5th Avenue S.
Minneapolis, MN 55401

Re: _____ Request for Proposals Consent for Release of Response Data

_____, on behalf of _____,
hereby consents to the release of its proposal in response to the Business Association
Assistance Program Request for Proposals and waives any claims it may have under Minnesota
Statutes Section 13.08 against the City of Minneapolis for making such information public.

By _____
Its _____