



Date posted: October 28, 2026
Proposals due: December 11, 2026



Business District Support (BDS) *Including 38th Street THRIVE Funding* Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA)

For reasonable accommodations or alternative formats please contact Judy Moses in Business Development at 612-673-5283 or judy.moses@minneapolismn.gov. People who are deaf or hard of hearing can use a relay service to call 311 at 612-673-3000. Para ayuda, llame al 311. Rau kev pab, hu 311. Hadii aad caawimaad u baahantahay, wac 311.

Introduction

The City of Minneapolis Department of Community Planning and Economic Development (CPED) is offering grant funding through a competitive process. We are looking for proposals that strengthen neighborhood business districts by supporting existing businesses, attracting new customers, or increasing the variety of goods and services available, especially in areas with economic gaps.

Healthy neighborhood business districts make Minneapolis stronger. Local businesses are part of daily life, offering goods, services, jobs, and opportunities for business ownership. They are also gathering places that help shape a community's identity, often reflecting its culture.

Economic growth should bring in new investment and protect the unique identity of these districts for the future. These areas bring energy and diversity to the city, and it's important to support them.

Funding

Funding for the BDS program comes from an annual budget allocation to the Great Streets program, which is also used to fund the Façade Improvement Matching Grant program. The 2027 budget allocation is expected to be adopted by City Council in December. BDS award amounts will be made based on total funding available, considering the façade grant program administrator contracts awarded, and on proposals meeting the program scoring criteria outlined in the section below titled “How Proposals Will Be Scored.”

In addition, the BDS program funding for this round includes a one-time budget allocation of \$100,000 for Great Streets Business District Support activities for projects in the 38th Street THRIVE Cultural District.

This funding is intended to support district-wide activities that advance this Cultural District's economic vitality, strengthen its identity, attract customers, support neighborhood-serving businesses, and implement activities consistent with the district's strategic development goals.

Applicants seeking this funding must identify the 38th Street THRIVE Cultural District opportunity in their application and demonstrate how the proposed project will directly benefit the district.

Applicants may apply for the general BDS opportunity, the 38th Street THRIVE Cultural District opportunity if eligible, or both, if the proposed activities and service areas meet the applicable requirements.

Applicants must clearly identify the funding opportunity or opportunities for which they are applying. For an organization receiving one award or awards through both opportunities, the total of its BDS awards may not exceed \$50,000.

Who Can Apply

Only nonprofit organizations can apply. This includes:

- Business associations
- Community development corporations
- Cultural or arts organizations
- Neighborhood organizations
- Other nonprofit organizations that have the demonstrated ability to perform the proposed work or subcontract with an organization that does.

Organizations lacking experience or capacity are encouraged to submit proposals in partnership with an organization that does.

Eligible Areas

For the general BDS funding, proposed activities must be focused in eligible Great Streets areas as shown on the [Great Streets Eligible Areas Map](#).

Areas marked in blue (Eligible), orange (Priority) or purple (Cultural District) are allowed.

For the 38th Street THRIVE funding, proposed activities must be focused in the Cultural District boundaries:

- North: 36th Street
- South: 40th Street
- West: Nicollet Avenue
- East: Bloomington Avenue

See the corresponding [purple](#) area on the online Cultural Districts map for details.

Grant Contract Details

If your proposal is selected, you will sign a **performance-based contract** with the City. Together, we will write a **Scope of Services** based on your proposal.

- Work can begin after execution of a grant agreement with the City and the provision of required insurance.
- You will be paid **after** you submit invoices and proof of your work (such as marketing materials, reports, event summaries, or photos).
- Your proposal may become part of the legal contract, so only includes activities your organization is fully committed to doing.
- Projects must be finished by **February 28, 2028**.
- There is no minimum grant amount. The **maximum grant is \$50,000**.

Eligible Activities

Your proposal should focus on **promoting, advertising, improving, or developing entire business districts**, not just individual businesses. Examples include:

- Attracting new businesses or customers
- Filling empty storefronts
- Helping prevent business displacement
- Building partnerships between businesses, residents, and organizations
- Supporting long-term marketing or branding campaigns
- Reducing disruptions during road construction

- Strengthening the ability of organizations to plan for business district growth
- Cultural or art projects that support economic growth
- Events or programming that celebrate the area's cultural identity and attract local visitors and tourists to the area
- Public art or placemaking projects that involve the community and improve public spaces to encourage local visitors and tourists to visit the area
 - Funded proposals must be consistent with Minneapolis Public Works requirements. Learn more about the City's [right-of-way permit requirements](#). Information about City requirements for public art on City property: [public art requirements for City property](#).

We are especially interested in projects that:

- Support **emerging** businesses
- Focus on communities with economic disparities
- Take place in **City-designated Cultural Districts**

Grants should fund **specific activities**, not become part of your organization's regular annual budget.

Ineligible Activities

These activities **cannot** be funded by this program:

- Real estate development, property improvements, or business loans (other City programs support this)
- Direct technical help for individual businesses (covered by Business Technical Assistance Program [\[B-TAP\]](#))
- Arts or cultural activities already funded by the City's [Arts & Cultural Affairs](#) department in 2027
- General operating expenses (although staff time spent on the specific proposed activity(ies) may be included)
- Political, religious or lobbying activities
- Gift cards or cash incentives
- Free items given away to individuals (e.g., gifts, gift bags, prizes, swag, donations)
- Food and beverage expenses

How Proposals Will Be Scored

Your proposal will be reviewed by a team of City staff and partners based on the scoring criteria listed below. Staff will review to make sure the proposals are eligible and meet all proposal requirements outlined in this NOFA. Staff will make a recommendation to the City Council for funding.

The maximum score a proposal can receive is 40 points. Scores are based on:

- **Service Area (up to 10 points)**
 - Cultural District (purple areas on the [Great Streets map](#)): 10 points
 - Priority Eligible Area (orange areas): 5 points
 - Eligible Area (blue areas): 0 points
- **Need, Outcomes & Impact (up to 15 points)**
- **Organizational Capacity & Partnerships (up to 10 points)**
- **Budget & Leverage (up to 5 points)**

The City reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or parts of proposals and to negotiate modifications to proposals or specific components of the scope of work within a proposal to create scopes of lesser or greater magnitude.

How to Submit a Proposal

Send your **Proposal Form (fillable PDF)** and **Budget (Excel file)** by email to **Judy.Moses@minneapolismn.gov** no later than **Friday, December 11, 2026, at 4:00 p.m.**

Late proposals will not be accepted. You will receive a confirmation email within 24 hours or by 4:30 p.m. on December 11, 2026.

Questions

Email all questions to **Judy.Moses@minneapolismn.gov** by **November 13, 2026**. Answers will be posted online on **November 20, 2026**.

Timeline

NOFA Issued	October 28, 2026
Deadline for Written Questions	November 13, 2026
Q&A Posted Online	November 20, 2026
Submission Deadline	December 11, 2026, at 4:00 pm
Proposal Review and Evaluation	December- January
Recommendation to City Council	January 2027
Contract Dates (may vary)	March 1, 2027 – February 28, 2028

Grant Contract Requirements

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. **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:
 - 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
 - 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.
4. **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.
5. **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.

6. **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.
7. **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.