

City of Minneapolis  
Small Business Team

# **Street Vendor Entrepreneur Support Program 2026 Notice of Funding Availability**

## **I. Introduction**

The City of Minneapolis is seeking applications from local organizations to support prospective street food vendors in Minneapolis. The qualified organization will support prospective vendors in understanding the different regulatory and licensing pathways for food businesses. This includes assisting them in navigating the City's licensing process and identifying the training, certifications, and other requirements necessary to operate.

The City has allocated \$100,000 to be awarded through the Street Vendor Entrepreneur Support Program NOFA. The City may award a contract to one organization for the full amount or multiple organizations for smaller amounts.

## **II. Background**

In 2025, the Street Vendor Entrepreneur Support Program was launched within the Minneapolis Health Department to support individuals interested in operating food businesses while promoting compliance with public health and licensing requirements. Through this program, the City provided education, outreach, and technical assistance related to food safety regulations, licensing, and permitting requirements.

**The City seeks Contractor(s) to assist entrepreneurs who want to become licensed or permitted food vendors in Minneapolis. The Contractor(s) are responsible for community engagement to locate prospective vendors in a variety of settings throughout the city including in parks, commercial corridors, around lakes, etc. City departments may also refer prospective vendors to the Contractor(s).**

Many prospective vendors expressed interest in exploring economic opportunities in the food sector but need assistance understanding and navigating the licensing, certifications, and regulatory requirements needed to operate a food-related business.

**The City now seeks one or more Contractor(s) who can assist prospective vendors to:**

- A. Understand and navigate the various legal pathways available to sell food, including cottage food operations, seasonal food permits, food carts, and mobile food units.
- B. Understand the practical business requirements for food vendors, such as business registration, the cost of operations, potential for profit of various business models, etc.
- C. Provide guidance in following the public health requirements of the Food Code, including equipment requirements.
- D. Support applications for City licenses and permits, when applicable.

## **III. Program**

### **A. Eligible Applicants**

Eligible applicants include non-profit or for-profit organizations that have demonstrated capacity to perform the business consulting and training work. This includes staff (or consultants) with experience

providing business development assistance, and who have experience managing contracts. **Applicants should also:**

- Be able to serve diverse communities. Preference will be given to contractors that can communicate in both English and Spanish.
- Have knowledge of the Minnesota Food Code, Minneapolis Code of Ordinances, and City licensing requirements related to food businesses

#### **B. Eligible Activities**

The Contractor will provide the following services:

- Overall project management
- Outreach to recruit prospective clients
- Training covering:
  - Regulatory requirements to operate a food business, covering pathways for mobile and/or seasonal or event-based models
  - Basic food safety principles and requirements
  - Basic business requirements, such as Secretary of State registration
  - Practical considerations for starting and operating a food business, such as costs, and guidance on sourcing equipment
- Resource referrals for additional necessary services

Preferred additional services include:

- Individual coaching and advising for participants
- Provide participants access to commercial kitchen and/or mobile food equipment for training purposes during the program

#### **C. Ineligible Costs:**

City Funds cannot be used for:

- Purchase of equipment like food trucks, food carts, computers, telephones, vehicles, or similar capital expenditures
- Capital improvements or construction projects
- Payment of license or permit fees
- Lobbying expenses
- Clothing
- Liability insurance

## IV. Application submission and selection

### D. Anticipated Timeline

|                              |                             |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| NOFA release                 | Wednesday, October 14, 2026 |
| Pre-proposal virtual meeting | Monday, October 19, 2026    |
| Questions on NOFA due by     | Wednesday, October 21, 2026 |
| Proposals due by             | Wednesday, October 28, 2026 |
| Duration of contract         | 1 year                      |

### E. Pre-proposal Meeting

A pre-proposal conference will be held Monday, October 19, 2026, at 11:00 a.m. via Microsoft Teams. Attendance is recommended but not required. [Click here to join the meeting or call in \( audio only\)](#)

Dial in by phone

+1 612-276-6670,,462751879# United States, Minneapolis

Phone conference ID: 462 751 879#

### F. NOFA inquiries

Prospective applicants should direct questions by email to: [BTAP@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:BTAP@minneapolismn.gov)

All questions are due no later than, Wednesday, October 21, 2026 at 4:00 p.m. Questions and responses will be posted on the CPED web site (<https://www2.minneapolismn.gov/business-services/doing-business-with-the-city/community-planning-development-rfps/>).

The department contact person cannot vary the terms of the NOFA. The City reserves the right to modify this NOFA at any time prior to the application due date. An addendum will be posted on the CPED web site if the NOFA is modified.

### G. Proposal submission and deadline

The 2026 Street Vendor Entrepreneur Support Program application is attached as Exhibit A. All applications must be submitted with a completed application. Applications shall be delivered to the City on or before: Wednesday, October 28, 2026 at 4:00 p.m. Applications and supporting documentation must be submitted in PDF or Microsoft format (up to 10mb file), by email to [btap@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:btap@minneapolismn.gov) with the subject line "Street Vendor Entrepreneur Support Program."

Applications received after the deadline will not be accepted. It is neither CPED's responsibility nor practice to acknowledge receipt of any application. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that an application is received in a timely manner. Please make sure your application is complete. Incomplete applications may be rejected.

### H. Proposal review and selection process

Proposals will be reviewed by an evaluation team made up of City of Minneapolis staff. The evaluation of proposals will be based on the information requested in Exhibit A – Application Form, whether the

applicant and proposal meet all eligibility criteria and satisfy all NOFA requirements, and on the following criteria:

- The Contractor has clearly identified experience, expertise, and knowledge to successfully complete the work.
- The Contractor has clearly identified experience with project management and has tools in place to ensure program success.
- The Contractor provides a project plan and budget according to the needs of the community and this NOFA.
- Quality, thoroughness, and clarity of proposal.
- Project budget

The City may, in its sole discretion, expand or reduce the criteria upon which it bases its final decisions. At any time during the process, Small Business Team may elect to contact applicants with requests for clarification, an interview with a Contractor to aid in the selection process or request other items or information.

#### **I. Rejection of proposals**

The City does not promise to accept the lowest cost proposal and specifically reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all proposals
- Waive any formal proposal requirements
- Investigate the qualifications and experience of any vendor
- Reject any provisions in any proposal
- Obtain new proposals
- Negotiate the requested services and contract terms with any vendor
- Proceed to do the work otherwise
- 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 NOFA or the submitted proposal

Incomplete proposals, proposals not sufficiently detailed, or not in acceptable form may be returned for completion or may be rejected by the City.

#### **J. Contracting**

The contracting parties will be the City of Minneapolis, and the Contractors selected to provide the services as described herein. The selected proposal(s), along with the NOFA and any counter proposal(s) will be incorporated into a formal agreement(s) after negotiations. The Contractor's compensation rate will be defined through the contract negotiation process.

Any extension of the contract will be contingent upon the availability of funding and on Contractor performance during the initial year. Contract extension is at the sole option of the City.

**Contractor(s) must submit a regular progress report and invoice to the city. The report must include:**

- Written description of activities and associated cost per activity.
- Proof of vendor participation such as sign-in sheets, etc.
- Copies of receipts for reimbursable expenses and timesheets.

The invoice must include:

- Detailed accounting of how funds were spent
- Administrative costs (must be detailed in budget)

Expenses lacking proper documentation or public purpose and/or ineligible expenses will not be reimbursed to the Contractor.

**K. No Applicant Recourse**

The City shall not be responsible for any costs incurred by any applicant in connection with this NOFA. Applicants shall bear all costs associated with application preparation and submission, and any other activity associated with this NOFA. This NOFA does not commit the City to award a contract. Submission of an application shall neither obligate nor entitle any applicant to enter into a contract with the City.

**L. Data practices**

Data you provide in response to this NOFA is subject to the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act and may be available to the public. If you are submitting specific data which you believe meets the definition of trade secret data as defined in Minn. Stat. 13.37, please indicate this on the documents containing the data. The City may ask you to establish that the data meets all of the conditions set forth in Minn. Stat. 13.37, subdivision 1(b).

## EXHIBIT A

### Application form – Street Vendor Entrepreneur Support Program 2026 Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA)

| SECTION I – Cover page             |                                  |                                  |                                  |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Business/ Organization name        |                                  | Click or tap here to enter text. |                                  |
| Website                            |                                  | Click or tap here to enter text. |                                  |
| Primary Contact or Program Manager | Click or tap here to enter text. | Title                            | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Phone Number:                      | Click or tap here to enter text. | Email:                           | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Street Address                     | Click or tap here to enter text. |                                  |                                  |
| City/State:                        | Click or tap here to enter text. | Zip Code:                        | Click or tap here to enter text. |

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| Amount you are applying for: |  |
|------------------------------|--|

## Section II- Organization's experience (35 points)

A. Give a brief overview of organization's experience and work relevant to the program.

B. What is your organization's experience with community outreach and providing services to historically underserved communities such as immigrants, BIPOC, and/or low-income communities?

C. Does your organization have staff fluent in languages other than English? If so, in what language(s)? Does your organization have experience working with interpreters?

D. Professional References: List one or two references from projects similar in size and scope. Our team may contact these references.

|                |                                  |          |                                  |
|----------------|----------------------------------|----------|----------------------------------|
| Contact person | Click or tap here to enter text. | Business | Click or tap here to enter text. |
|----------------|----------------------------------|----------|----------------------------------|

|               |                                  |        |                                  |
|---------------|----------------------------------|--------|----------------------------------|
| Phone Number: | Click or tap here to enter text. | Email: | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Description:  | Click or tap here to enter text. |        |                                  |

|                |                                  |          |                                  |
|----------------|----------------------------------|----------|----------------------------------|
| Contact person | Click or tap here to enter text. | Business | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Phone Number:  | Click or tap here to enter text. | Email:   | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Description:   | Click or tap here to enter text. |          |                                  |

### Section III – Food Safety Knowledge (15 points)

The project requires the contractor to assist vendors in understanding and navigating the various legal pathways available to sell food

A. If you will be subcontracting, describe how the subcontractor will assist prospective vendors in understanding food safety requirements, licensing requirements, and applicable training and certification pathways.

B. If you have staff who will provide food business pathway navigation services, provide their name and role. State here if you are waiting to hire someone for this position if the contract is awarded to your organization.

C. Briefly describe the individual's experience assisting prospective food vendors in navigating licensing, permitting, certification, and regulatory requirements.

a. Provide an overview of their relevant education. Be sure to include degrees, certifications, REHS, and experience related to food businesses, or other related fields.

## Section IV— Project Plan (40 points)

Provide details on how you will accomplish the program and an approximate project timeline. You may add additional steps if needed. Please write your proposed project plan for the anticipated project dates of 2026 to 2027

- Provide details on how you will accomplish the program and an approximate project timeline.

### Section V— Project Budget (10 points)

Please include a draft budget for how the amount of money you request will be used to complete the program. Your budget should reflect the completion of items noted in the program.

- A. Use of the suggested template below is optional. If you choose to use your own format, please ensure it includes sufficient detail, including individual line items for each type of expense, calculations for requested amounts, and separate line items for each personnel cost.
- B. You should include a budget narrative to ensure that your budget includes the necessary amount of detail.
- C. Administrative fees cannot exceed 15%.

| Project plan:                                                                                    |              |                                                                                             |                                                          |                        |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Briefly explain the expected costs for items and services you will need to complete the project. |              |                                                                                             |                                                          |                        |
| Service or item                                                                                  | Timeline     | Description                                                                                 | Deliverable                                              | Budget                 |
| 1-1 outreach and coaching (example)                                                              | May 17, 2026 | In-person outreach at XXX location where XXX people were approached (detailed explanations) | XXX signed up, see attached list (detailed explanations) | ###hr. * 4 hours = ### |
|                                                                                                  |              |                                                                                             |                                                          |                        |
|                                                                                                  |              |                                                                                             |                                                          |                        |
|                                                                                                  |              |                                                                                             |                                                          |                        |
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|                                                                                                  |              |                                                                                             |                                                          |                        |

| Administrative costs:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Administrative costs are defined as “costs that represent the expenses of doing business that are not easily identified with a particular grant, contract, project, function or activity but are necessary for the general operation of the organization and the conduct of activities it performs.” Examples of such expenses include accounting, administrative costs, and costs to operate and maintain facilities, not to exceed 15% of overall budget, unless you have an approved federal rate that is higher. |

| Service or item                                | Description                                                                                                             | Budget                 |
|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| (example)                                      | Applicants must clearly define or itemize anticipated costs under this budget item. A lump sum amount will be rejected. | 15% of invoiced amount |
|                                                |                                                                                                                         |                        |
|                                                |                                                                                                                         |                        |
|                                                |                                                                                                                         |                        |
|                                                |                                                                                                                         |                        |
|                                                |                                                                                                                         |                        |
| <b>Budget total (not to exceed \$100,000):</b> |                                                                                                                         |                        |
| Enter all amounts into the appropriate row.    |                                                                                                                         |                        |
| Project plan                                   |                                                                                                                         | \$                     |
| Administrative costs                           |                                                                                                                         | \$                     |
| Project total                                  |                                                                                                                         | \$                     |

Is there any other information you would like to provide relevant to this application?