Thriving business districts drive local economies and shape livable communities

Lively commercial hubs and bustling main streets are at the heart of livable communities of all sizes. They create jobs, generate tax revenue, supply goods and services, and help make places people want to live and visit.

Suburban cities across the county rely on their unique business districts, but can face challenges unlocking their full potential. Through the Business District Initiative, we offer suburban cities resources to help turn their valued activity centers into vibrant destinations.
Business District Initiative (BDI)

To invigorate business districts and main streets in suburban Hennepin County

Community impact

Research shows that places with high densities of local businesses have higher incomes, less poverty and greater talent and employee retention.

We’ve funded six projects in five cities, totaling $241,000 and benefiting 291 businesses.

Walkable business districts with independent local businesses return more than 1.5 times more of their revenue to the local economy, and create 2.5 times more jobs.

Who is eligible?

Suburban cities and development authorities

How does it work?

Total available funding: $200,000 per funding cycle
Max individual award: $50,000
Funds must be used within 12-24 months. Additional leveraged funds are not required but are considered during proposal evaluation.

What can be funded?

Business recruitment, district-wide marketing, wayfinding, technical assistance, financial or legal services, streetscape and façade improvements, business incubators, and more

Learn more and apply

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