

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

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Community Investment Initiative (CII)

What types of projects does the Community Investment Initiative (CII) support?

The CII supports capital costs for projects that benefit businesses, business districts, and communities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 and that advance long-term economic recovery through two general types of projects that:

- Provide long-term affordable commercial space or ownership opportunities to multiple businesses
- Assist negatively impacted non-profit organizations providing job training, entrepreneurship development, or youth training services to these areas

Who can apply?

Eligible applicants include:

- Cities or their economic/housing/development authority
- For-profit and non-profit developers, community development corporations, non-profit organizations engaged in commercial development
- 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(19) non-profits that provide entrepreneur support resources, job training, youth career training or youth entrepreneurship opportunities, and/or create jobs as part of their expansion

Ineligible applicants include educational institutions such as public or private primary or secondary schools, institutions of higher education; day care providers; parks and recreation departments or agencies; public libraries; nonprofits that earn revenue like a business; and fitness or sports facilities.

What are eligible uses of CII funding?

Eligible projects can use CII funding for acquisition, capital costs related to rehab, renovation, or expansion.

General administration and soft costs are ineligible

If a project received ARPA funding from another unit of government (e.g., city, state), is it eligible to receive funds from Hennepin County?

Hennepin County is not aware of any limits on multiple sources of ARPA funds and will not exclude projects that have secured other ARPA funds. Other funders may have restrictions on sources of funds and matching dollars, which applicants must confirm.

Can the same organization apply for grants for multiple projects?

Yes. Applicants are encouraged to apply for funding for as many projects as meet program guidelines.

Are previously incurred costs eligible for reimbursement?

Costs incurred prior to the awarding of funds are not eligible for reimbursement. Applicants that have initiated eligible projects are encouraged to apply for funding to support future activities. For example, a developer that acquired a vacant parcel in 2021 cannot be reimbursed for those costs, but it could apply for a grant to support new construction activities in 2022 or 2023.

How do I apply?

Applications will only be accepted through the [Hennepin County Supplier Portal](#).

When will applications open?

The Request for Applications (RFA) is anticipated to open March 24, 2022. Once the application opens, download application materials from Supplier Portal

When are applications due?

Applications must be submitted by **3:00 pm on Thursday, May 26, 2022**, via the [Hennepin County Supplier Portal](#)

How much funding is available?

A total of up to \$10,000,000 is available. Awards will be made in the form of a grant and are anticipated to range from \$300,000 to \$950,000 for individual projects.

When will funding awards be announced?

Funding awards are anticipated to be announced in August or September 2022.

What is the award term?

Approved costs must be incurred within 24 months of award date; deadline for reimbursement request is December 1, 2024.

How will projects be evaluated?

Projects will be evaluated to the extent they demonstrate the following:

- Capacity and readiness to complete projects within 24 months of award; funds must be expended by December 31, 2024
- A financial gap and need for CII resources to proceed and that leverages other funding
- Advance goals and objectives of CII (see [CII program page](#) for guidelines to be posted in late March)
- Provide meaningful support to businesses and communities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, including benefit to:
 - Multiple local businesses
 - Communities with historic disinvestment and disadvantaged business owners
 - Low-income communities, including qualified census tracts (see the US Housing and Urban Development (HUD) webpage for areas within Hennepin County defined as qualified census tracts by HUD: [2021 and 2022 Small DDAs and QCTs | HUD USER](#))

What should I do if I have additional project-specific questions?

Applicants are strongly encouraged to reach out to Ryan Kelley by emailing ryan@kelley@hennepin.us to discuss potential projects or applications by April 22, 2022.

How can I receive updates on the program?

Potential applicants are encouraged to sign up for the Hennepin County Economic Development newsletter at <https://www.hennepin.us/economic-development/programs/Community-Investment-Initiative>.

Transit Oriented Development (TOD)

What types of projects does the Hennepin County TOD program support?

Eligible TOD projects include:

- New development, redevelopment, or the rehabilitation/renovation of vacant commercial/retail/office/industrial buildings
- Commercial/retail/manufacturing (jobs projects), mixed-use, housing
 - Priority projects are jobs-producing projects, and those that include wealth-building opportunities for small business owners, commercial affordability, and/or jobs and community ownership opportunities in low-income communities.
- Comprehensive public infrastructure investments, related to improving walkability & development potential in select situations, e.g. – new streets to improve intersection density and create better development parcels; street reconstruction and associated infrastructure such as sidewalks; district stormwater or energy systems
 - Standalone activities such as just landscaping, or lighting are not eligible
- Strategic site acquisition in select situations

Who can apply?

Eligible applicants include:

- For-profit developer
- Nonprofit developer or organization
- City, county, or housing/development/port authority

Where can a project be located?

The project must be located within a municipally designated Redevelopment Area, or the municipality must express its intent to establish a Redevelopment Area at time of application. The Redevelopment Area must be established before an award agreement will be signed.

The project must also be located in Hennepin County within a [TOD Eligible Area as shown on this map](#).

What are eligible uses of TOD funds?

Uses must demonstrate a public purpose and have a demonstrated need for County funds and can include projects located within the public realm. For a full description of eligible uses, please review [2022-TOD-Guidelines-final-PDF.pdf \(hennepin.us\)](#).

How do I apply?

Applications will only be accepted through the online grant program accessed on the [Hennepin County TOD webpage](#). The application is a web-based form, and all required attachments will be uploaded to the same system. To apply, you must first register at the application website.

When will applications open?

The Request for Proposals (RFP) is anticipated to open March 24, 2022.

When are applications due?

Completed applications and required attachments must be submitted **by 3:00pm on Thursday, April 21, 2022**. Application must be submitted via online system which will be posted on the [Hennepin County TOD webpage](#).

How much funding is available?

Approximately \$2,200,000 is available for award in 2022 through the Hennepin County Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HCHRA). The program is highly competitive and regularly oversubscribed. Only approved activities that occur after the date of TOD award are eligible for reimbursement.

When will funding awards be announced?

Funding awards are anticipated to be announced in July 2022.

What is the award term?

Funded activities must be completed by December 31, 2024.

How will projects be evaluated?

The most competitive projects will best demonstrate the following:

- Intensify and diversify land use, contribute to more walkable area and increased transit use
- Provide opportunities for local small business development, community services, affordable commercial space
- Employ site and building construction strategies addressing climate resilience
- Advance TOD design principles – contribute to high-quality pedestrian environment
- Financial gap or need for TOD funds
- Readiness to proceed

What should I do if I have additional project-specific questions?

Please direct questions to Ryan Kelley, Hennepin County TOD Manager, at: ryan.kelley@hennepin.us by April 8. Potential applicants are strongly encouraged to discuss their project with Mr. Kelley prior to submittal.

TOD Predevelopment Assistance

What types of predevelopment assistance is available?

Examples of predevelopment assistance available include:

- Financial feasibility analysis/pro forma development
- Developing preliminary architectural concepts and fit plans
- Preliminary cost estimating
- Entitlement
- Acquisition due diligence

How is the assistance provided?

Predevelopment will be provided via selected third-party firms with expertise in the predevelopment service areas listed above. Hennepin County will contract with these firms and agreed upon services will be provided at no cost to selected eligible developers.

Who can express interest in predevelopment assistance?

New or emerging for-profit or non-profit local developers (based in Minnesota) that meet all the following criteria:

- Limited experience (two or fewer projects completed), seeking to grow capacity
- Actively pursuing commercial, mixed-use, or multifamily real estate development on one or more sites in eligible transit-oriented communities in Hennepin County
- Have some degree of site control and/or other forms of investment in the proposed project

- Lacking sufficient capital to support predevelopment activities and in need of predevelopment technical assistance

Is any match required?

Developers must be able to commit 20% of the amount requested to complete the desired pre-development activities. For example, a minimum of \$2,000 is required to access \$10,000 in predevelopment assistance; \$6,000 is required to access \$30,000.

Who is ineligible for predevelopment assistance?

Established developers who have completed more than two projects either by entity or beneficial ownership are not eligible for this assistance. Other ineligible requests include:

- Single-asset entities (such as a limited liability company, or LLC) affiliated with an experienced, and/or large-scale developer
- Emerging developers who are based outside the region and/or state
- Predevelopment activities already completed

How do I apply?

Expressions of interest are required, and a form will be available on the [Hennepin County TOD Predevelopment website](#) starting April 21, 2022.

When will the Expression of Interest form be available?

The Expression of Interest form will be posted, and submissions will be accepted on the [Hennepin County TOD Predevelopment website](#) beginning at noon on April 21, 2022, through 3 pm on June 9, 2022.

Predevelopment assistance will be awarded to eligible developers on a first-come, first-served basis. The final

When are Expression of Interest forms due?

The final date and time to submit an Expression of Interest form is 3 pm on June 9, 2022.

What happens after I submit an expression of interest?

Upon completion of the expression of interest form, you will receive an email confirmation that the form has been received. You will then be contacted by a Hennepin County team member within five business days identifying next steps. You may be asked to provide additional documentation to verify the information and provide more detail.

How much funding is available?

A total value of up to \$200,000 in predevelopment assistance is expected to be available.

Eligible developers can request:

- Up to \$30,000 in value for projects with site control
- Up to \$10,000 in value for projects without site control

To access up to \$30,000, eligible developers must have a signed purchase agreement by August 2022.

The value awarded per eligible request will be determined by the HCHRA. Amount of predevelopment funding provided by other public or private sources, such as the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) or City of Minneapolis, may affect the amount provided to ensure there is no duplication of funding from other sources.

When will funds be awarded?

A decision by the HCHRA whether to proceed with predevelopment assistance is anticipated in July 2022. Funds will be awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis to eligible developers who expressed interest.

What is the award term?

Predevelopment services must be completed and invoiced to the HCHRA by December 31, 2022.