

Critical Corridors Information Session

March 4, 2024

Housekeeping

- Introductions
- Program websites: Critical Corridors: ramseycounty.us/CriticalCorridors
- Webinar recording
- Press Q&A button below to ask questions
- Q&A will be compiled into an FAQ document

Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) Levy

- Funding source for:
 - Critical Corridors
 - Housing Development Solicitations
 - Emerging and Diverse Developers (EDD)
 - Site Assessment Grants
 - FirstHome Down Payment Assistance
 - First year of HRA levy programs was 2022
 - Eligibility for these programs limited to HRA area of operation
 - More info available at ramseycounty.us/HRA
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Ramsey County Economic Competitiveness and Inclusion Plan

A Holistic Plan

County Goals

1

Cultivate economic prosperity and invest in neighborhoods with concentrated financial poverty

2

Enhance access to opportunity and mobility for all residents and businesses

Strategies

1

Ensure place-based inclusion, create resilient and equitable communities

- Preserve and increase the supply of rental housing units for lowest-income residents
- Expand affordable homeownership opportunities and improve housing stability for communities that have experienced historic wealth extraction
- Foster inclusive economic development within county transit, economic, and cultural corridors
- Support communities in equitable site development



2

Foster economic competitiveness, innovation, and transformation

- Sustain and accelerate workforce recovery programs
- Develop pathways to entrepreneurship and Black, Latinx, Asian, and Indigenous business ownership
- Attract and grow high-wage industry and innovation: technology, advanced manufacturing, and life sciences
- Strengthen business retention and expansion infrastructure to support communities



Critical Corridors Overview

Program Goals

- Support redevelopment projects.
- Boost connectivity between transportation, housing and jobs.
- Create more compact, walkable environments.
- Enhance pedestrian access and safety in connection with redevelopment
- Support vibrant business districts

Programs

- **Planning**
- **Commercial Corridors Initiative**
- Development & Infrastructure

Selection Priorities

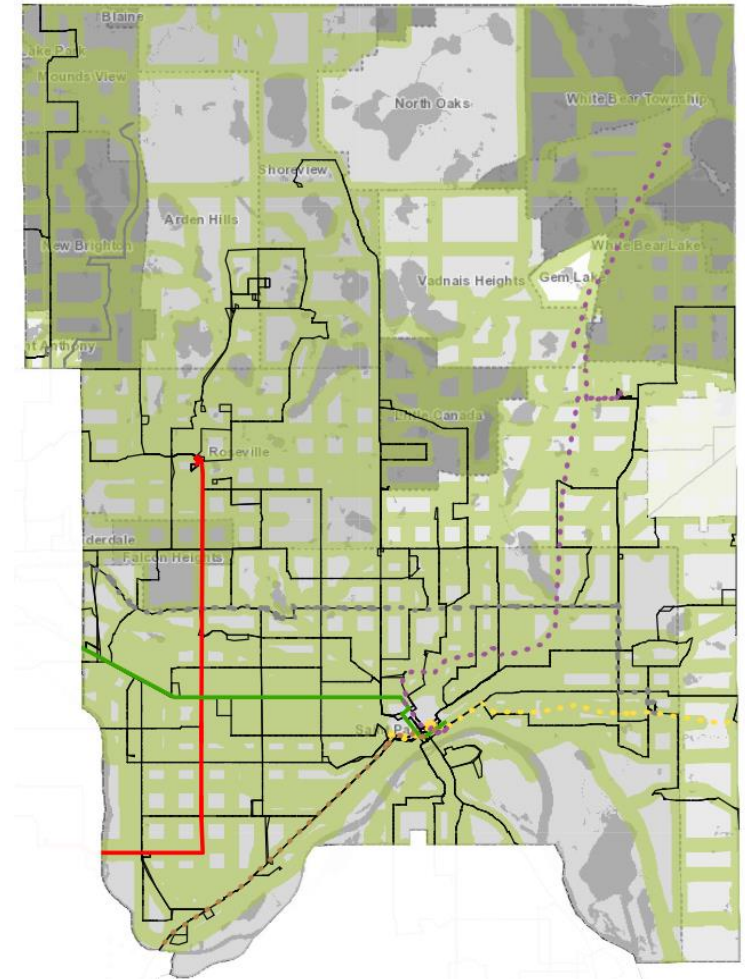
Redevelopment initiatives that:

- Intensify land use along key corridors, especially those that reduce space used for parking and improve access to transit.
- Facilitate the development of multifamily housing, such as zoning changes.
- Promote development activity in disinvested areas.
- Improve pedestrian or bicycle infrastructure.
- Propel nearby development without displacing current residents or small businesses.



What are Critical Corridors?

- Major transportation, economic, and cultural corridors
- Cities provided feedback on corridors to include
- Critical Corridors are areas that:
 - Serve as community hubs for housing, jobs, services, and amenities
 - Provide access to daily activities and destinations
 - Provide opportunities for wealth creation, economic inclusion, innovation and transformation



2024 Critical Corridors Solicitations

- Spring 2024: Planning and Commercial Corridor Initiative
 - Solicitations open: Wednesday, March 6
 - Solicitations close: Wednesday, April 3
 - Award decisions: May/June
 - Fall 2024: Development & Infrastructure
 - Solicitation opens: September
 - Award decisions: November
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Critical Corridors Planning Program

Planning Program

**previously "Pre-Development Planning"*

Program Purpose:

- Assists local communities in planning for equitable redevelopment and public realm improvements along transit, economic, and cultural corridors.
- Facilitates pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access
- Connects residents to housing, jobs and destinations while furthering environmental, public health, racial equity and economic prosperity goals.



Planning Program

Eligible Applicants: cities, housing/economic development/port authorities, watershed districts, park districts, other public agencies and community-based nonprofits

Maximum Grant Request: \$50,000

Timing: Activities must be completed by 6/30/2025. Activities completed prior to award are not eligible for reimbursement.



Planning Program - Eligible Activities

- Land use plans: small area/corridor/station area plans.
- Redevelopment feasibility studies or concept plans.
- Market analyses, including “Missing Middle” housing analysis.
- Infrastructure planning and conceptual designs, such as:
 - Pedestrian and bike connections.
 - Public realm improvements.
 - Walking-oriented development.
 - Safe Routes to Transit plans.
 - Sustainable infrastructure plans such as district energy or stormwater systems.
- Land use/zoning studies that align with program priorities, such as:
 - Parking studies with the goal of reducing parking minimums.
 - Studies that encourage land use intensification within transit corridors.
- Equitable development policy or plan development.



Planning Program – Ineligible Activities

- Organization staff time.
- Capital costs and equipment.
- Road-centric planning activities.
- General/routine infrastructure planning.
- Traffic or parking studies without parking reduction goals.
- Site plans.
- Other soft costs not listed in eligible activities.



Planning Program – Previous Awards

- City of Falcon Heights: corridor study to identify potential redevelopment sites along Larpenteur and Snelling
- City of New Brighton: parking study with the goal of reducing parking minimums to encourage development
- City of Mounds View: redevelopment concept plan for shopping center
- Creative Enterprise Zone: redevelopment feasibility analysis and creation of cooperative ownership model for small businesses
- City of Roseville: pedestrian improvement study related to redevelopment project at County Road B-Snelling Ave
- Indigenous Roots: East 7th Street Cultural Corridor Plan



Critical Corridors Commercial Corridor Initiative

Commercial Corridor Initiative

Program Purpose:

Strengthens suburban small business districts by supporting thriving main streets and investing in pathways to entrepreneurship for racially and ethnically diverse communities



Commercial Corridor Initiative

Eligible Applicants:

- Suburban Ramsey County entities
- Including cities, associated development authorities, business coalitions, chambers of commerce and nonprofits.

Maximum Grant Request: \$50,000

Timing: Activities funded by this program must be completed by 6/30/2025. Activities completed prior to award are not eligible for reimbursement.



Commercial Corridor Initiative – Eligible Activities

- Business recruitment activities.
- Establishment of small-business incubators.
- District-wide planning and design.
- District-wide marketing, branding, and promotion initiatives.
- Design and implementation of wayfinding, signage, street furniture or other public realm enhancements.
- Technical assistance related to business activities, including:
 - Special service district or business-association establishment.
 - Design and implementation of wayfinding, signage, street furniture or other public realm enhancements
 - Building facade improvements.

For other projects that support business districts, please reach out to staff to see if it meets program objectives.



Commercial Corridor Initiative – Ineligible Activities

- Organization staff time.
- Parking lot improvements.
- Activities for sites without public frontage.
- Activities that benefit a single business.
- Administration, overhead, and business operations support.
- Events.



Commercial Corridor Initiative – Previous Awards

- Rice & Larpenteur Alliance: business façade improvement subgrants and installation of wayfinding/signage
- City of New Brighton: installation of signage along Old Highway 8
- Twin Cities North Chamber of Commerce: Welcome Back to Lexington Avenue business promotion campaign
- City of Mounds View: Mounds View Boulevard design theme
- City of Mounds View: business façade improvement subgrants



Application and Evaluation Process

Application Process

- Review program guidelines: ramseycounty.us/CriticalCorridors
- Applications accepted through ZoomGrants
 - www.zoomgrants.com/zgf/CriticalCorridors
- Pre-application meetings: highly encouraged
 - Email carmel.sanjuan@ramseycounty.us to schedule a time
- Key dates
 - Solicitation open: Wed, March 6, 2024
 - Solicitation close: Wed, April 3, 2024
 - Award decisions: May 2024

 **Critical Corridors Planning**



2024 Program Guidelines

Ramsey County's Critical Corridors Planning program, funded through the [Housing Redevelopment Authority](#), assists local communities in planning for equitable redevelopment and public realm improvements along transit, economic, and cultural corridors. This program aims to facilitate pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access to connect residents to housing, jobs and destinations while furthering environmental, public health, racial equity and economic prosperity goals.

Selection Priorities

- Redevelopment projects that:
- Intensify land use along key corridors, especially those that reduce space used for parking and improve access to transit.
 - Facilitate the development of multifamily housing, such as zoning changes.
 - Promote development activity in disinvested areas.
 - Improve pedestrian or bicycle infrastructure.
 - Propel nearby development without displacing current residents or small businesses.

Eligible Activities

Projects need to be located in a Critical Corridor. Refer to the [Critical Corridors Map](#) for definitions and information on transit and activity centers.

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 - o Studies that encourage land use intensification within transit corridors.
- Equitable development policy or plan development.

Eligible Applicants

Cities, housing/economic development/port authorities, watershed districts, park districts, other public agencies and community-based nonprofit organizations in Ramsey County.

Ineligible Activities

- Organization start time.
- Capital costs and equipment.
- Road-centric planning activities.
- General/routine infrastructure planning.
- Traffic or parking studies without parking reduction goals.
- Site plans.
- Other soft costs not listed in eligible activities.

Funding

- Total funding available: approximately \$100,000.
- Maximum anticipated award: \$50,000 per project.
- Activities funded by this program must be completed by June 30, 2025.
- Funds are available on a reimbursement basis.
- Activities completed prior to award are not eligible for reimbursement.
- Match is not required but may be considered.

2024 Planning Program Guidelines

 **Critical Corridors Commercial Corridor Initiative**



2024 Program Guidelines

Ramsey County's Commercial Corridor Initiative program, funded through the [Housing Redevelopment Authority](#), strengthens suburban small business districts by supporting thriving main streets and investing in pathways to entrepreneurship for racially and ethnically diverse communities.

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2024 Commercial Corridor Initiative Program Guidelines

Application – Required Materials

Application Questions (in ZoomGrants)

Critical Corridors Project Information (attachment)

1. Project Schedule.
2. Cost Estimates.
3. Deliverables.
4. Outcomes.

Application Attachments – Additional Materials

1. Map of proposed project site or area.
2. Letters of community support.
3. Local government resolution of support.
4. Other relevant supporting documentation.

Staff may request additional information as needed during the evaluation process.

Evaluation

1. Project Outcomes & Opportunity
2. Placemaking & Transit-Oriented Development/Public Realm
3. Community Engagement & Racial Equity
4. Capacity & Readiness
5. Overall Application

Parity in overall Housing Redevelopment Authority levy funding between Saint Paul and suburban cities is also considered.

Application Timeline



Other CED Solicitations

Currently Open

- Housing Development Solicitation
 - Application period: February 2-March 16, 2024
 - ramseycounty.us/housinginvestments
- CDBG Public Services and Housing Programs Solicitation
 - February 15, 2024-March 15, 2024
 - ramseycounty.us/cdbg
- Site Assessment Grant (SAG)
 - Rolling application period
 - ramseycounty.us/SAG

Opening Soon

- Environmental Response Fund (ERF)
 - Application period: March 15-May 1, 2024
 - ramseycounty.us/ERF

Thank you!

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ramseycounty.us/CriticalCorridors