

Informational Meeting- Questions Received

On Wednesday February 16th, 2022 Ramsey County staff hosted an information meeting regarding the Inclusive Housing Development Solicitation and the Public Services and Infrastructure Solicitation. The following questions were received during the meeting and over email from potential applicants. To comply with federal solicitation requirements all questions must be shared publicly to create an even playing field for potential applicants. Ramsey County staff cannot discuss specific projects while the solicitation is open. Ramsey County staff may make an addendum to this document if questions are received.

- 1. Is the consolidated application available to projects within the city of St. Paul or only in suburban Ramsey County projects?**
 - a. Projects in the City of Saint Paul and Ramsey County can apply to the Inclusive Housing Development Solicitation. Not every funding source is available within the City of Saint Paul. Please see the Solicitation Notice to learn more about which funding sources are available.
- 2. What about if I homestead (owner occupied) a multifamily property, 5-plex? Owner lives in one of the units and they want to request rehabilitation funds for the remaining 4-units.**
 - a. Since the project has more than 4 units it would be considered a “multi-family” project and would apply as such. Rehab funds could be used for the four rental units, but not for the owner-occupied unit.
If the project is located in the City of Saint Paul, the applicant may want to consider the Saint Paul Rental Rehab Program: <https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/planning-and-economic-development/housing/rental-rehab-loan-program>
- 3. Is Ramsey County hoping to distribute a certain % of ARPA to St. Paul vs suburban projects?**
 - a. Ramsey County is committed to funding projects across the entire county and expects to fund projects in both suburban Ramsey County and the City of Saint Paul. There is not a percentage goal for geographic distribution with ARPA funding, however, with HRA funding we aim to fund an equal amount of suburban and city projects over time.
- 4. What is the maximum award per project?**
 - a. There is not a maximum award per project.
- 5. Can you articulate specific timeframes for ARPA resources, when do they have to be committed? When do they need to be expended?**
 - a. All ARPA funding needs to be obligated by 2024 and spent by 2026.
- 6. What types of projects are eligible?**
 - a. Preservation and new construction projects are eligible. Owner-occupied or rental housing are eligible. Permanent supportive housing projects are also eligible. Shelters and transitional housing in suburban Ramsey County should apply through the Public Services and Infrastructure solicitation.

- 7. We run a program that helps low-income homeowners update the exteriors of their homes, is this an eligible activity?**
 - a. Applicants that manage programs for single family homeowners should apply in the Public Services and Infrastructure Solicitation under the “other” category rather than the Inclusive Housing Development Solicitation. This could include rehab providers and weatherization providers.
- 8. Do you have specific guidance for the “financial analysis/underwriting report” or is the multifamily workbook sufficient?**
 - a. Please write a description to explain what your numbers are based on to justify your overall financing request. An example would be to explain why your vacancy rate is higher than average or why you need more money for maintenance reserves.
- 9. Do you have specific scope/requirements for the market feasibility analysis/plan?**
 - a. We do not have a specific scope, but a market study is required for some federal sources available in suburban Ramsey County. Please review the requirements related to CDBG and HOME.
- 10. Is a “rent roll” sufficient for “tenant data for an acquisition/rehab deal?”**
 - a. Rent roll that includes tenant income is sufficient.
- 11. Is an appraisal required for preservation/acquisition/rehab deals?**
 - a. Yes, otherwise a market valuation of the building is fine.
- 12. Is an investment funding pool for the acquisition and preservation affordable housing an eligible activity?**
 - a. To be an eligible activity the project needs to be associated with a specific location. A request for an investment into a fund would not be an eligible activity for this solicitation.
- 13. Are services eligible?**
 - a. Services are not eligible in the Inclusive Housing Development Solicitation. A limited amount of service dollars is available in suburban Ramsey County through the Public Services and Infrastructure Solicitation.
- 14. Is the market analysis needed by the deadline?**
 - a. No, but if awarded funding a market analysis may be required later. The market analysis is a requirement of some funding sources.
- 15. Can you use the multifamily workbook for single-family applications?**
 - a. The Multifamily Workbook is design for multifamily projects and may not be a good fit for single-family projects. Single family applicants can use a form that they are familiar with or tweak the multifamily workbook to their liking.
- 16. Are these available funds all ARPA? Has your team determined that these funds can be structured as a forgivable loan rather than a grant?**

- a. No, there are multiple funding sources available. Please see the solicitation notice. And yes, Ramsey County has determined that ARPA funds can be structured as a forgivable loan.

17. Can you use CDBG and HOME funds countywide?

- a. No, these funding sources are not to be used within the City of St. Paul. The City of Saint Paul has their own allocation of HOME and CDBG grants that can be used within the city limits.

18. If I submitted an application to the November 2021 ARPA Solicitation should I re-submit or do you still have our application? Should we re-submit if we have updated numbers?

- a. Please re-submit if you have updated numbers.

19. Will a scoresheet similar to tax credit allocation be provided?

- a. No, you will not be self-scoring your application. Please see the solicitation notice to see how Ramsey County staff will score applications.

20. What about projects that provide youth employment?

- a. This is not an application requirement. However, it may add to an application in alignment with Ramsey County strategic priorities, one of the scoring criteria.

21. Is there funding set aside for minority developers?

- a. No, there is not funding set aside for minority developers and this is not an application requirement. However, it may add to an application in alignment with Ramsey County strategic priorities, one of the scoring criteria.

22. Do you fund Predevelopment?

- a. No, but if you need money for environmental study, we could direct you to the County's ERF. Other funders like Metropolitan Council also fund predevelopment studies.

23. How much money is committed to this solicitation?

- a. This will be an application-driven process since not all funding has to be obligated through this process. There is not a minimum or maximum amount of funding that will be committed to this solicitation. Please see the solicitation notice for types of available funding.

24. Does the renovation of existing affordable housing within the City of St. Paul, meet Ramsey County requirements under either solicitation presented?

- a. Yes, the rehabilitation/preservation/renovation of existing affordable housing within the City of Saint Paul is an eligible use in the Inclusive Housing Development Solicitation.

25. Will there be addendums to the FAQ as questions are asked and answered?

- a. Yes, Ramsey County can update the document as additional questions are received.

26. Is there a guidebook for the Inclusive Housing Development solicitation?

- a. Please see the solicitation notice for more information.

- 27. I have an account in ZoomGrants but cannot find information about the various items requested for the Including Housing solicitation. Nor can I find the attachments A, B & C or a link to the workbook, can you help me find them?**
- Documents are available for download in the “Library” feature. Press “Show Library” to see available documents. The documents then download in a pop-up browser. To upload completed documents scroll down and press the “Documents” tab.
- 28. I am looking for information about those things that say “if applicable” or details about Market feasibility analysis/plan etc. What am I missing?**
- Each project may have different required documents. The market study is required for some HUD funding. Depending on the funding source that is awarded to your project, staff may require that you complete the market study. If you have already completed a market study for your project, please turn that in.
- 29. Can you say specifically how you used the information you gathered from the community, including youth, in putting together this Request for Proposal (RFP)?**
- One of the scoring categories as described in the Solicitation Notice is the “Alignment with Strategic and Selection Priorities.” Applicants will need to review the Economic Competitiveness and Inclusion Plan, the Equitable Development Framework and the Engagement Report. Ramsey County staff will score based on alignment with the recommendations in the Engagement Report.

Public Infrastructure and Services Questions

- 1. Supportive services, used only for homeless youth and adults? Are CDBG funds only available in suburban Ramsey County?**
 - For CDBG, funding can be used for a multitude of public services programs, including but not limited to homeless youth and adults. CDBG funding from this solicitation is only available for projects and programs that are in or will primarily serve suburban Ramsey County residents/clientele. The City of St. Paul has CDBG funding that they use to serve City of St. Paul residents/clientele.

An organization can be located outside of suburban Ramsey County, but the service that is requesting CDBG funding must primarily serve low-to-moderate income (LMI) households (70% or more must be LMI), with a majority of those receiving services being suburban Ramsey County clientele.
- 2. Projects/programs that want to see if they are in a low-to-moderate income area (LMA) can enter their project/program address to see if it qualifies as a LMA:**
<https://hud.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=ffd0597e8af24f88b501b7e7f326bedd>
- 3. HUD income guidelines for those at or below 80% of the area median income (AMI) can be found here:** https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il/il2021/select_geography.odn

-Choose the state and the county to get to Ramsey County limits.