

HENNEPIN COUNTY  
MINNESOTA

Solicitation for Grant Applications from municipalities and related  
local government agencies in Hennepin County

## 2023 Hennepin Planning Grants

**Application period opens: September 7, 2023**

**Applications due 3:00p.m., October 5, 2023**



## 2023 Hennepin Planning Grants Guidelines

Administered by Hennepin County's Housing and Economic Development (HED) Department, the Hennepin Planning Grants (HPG) program supports land use planning efforts to create a more human-centered and resilient built environment. Land use development patterns and associated infrastructure and the resulting travel behavior have a significant relationship to greenhouse gas emissions, public health indicators, racial disparities, and economic resiliency. Transforming existing corridors and small areas from segregated-use, auto-oriented areas to more compact, walkable environments requires intentional visioning and clear planning direction.

The Hennepin Planning Grants Program goals are to:

- Transition single-use, auto-oriented areas into compact redevelopment patterns, integrating a mix of uses in a walkable environment
- Expand economic opportunities and housing choices
- Promote equitable development, community wealth building and economic inclusion
- Improve connectivity between destinations (home, jobs, educational opportunities, commercial, recreation) via walking, biking, or transit
- Reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) and greenhouse gas emissions
- Improve community resilience to impacts of climate change

### Eligible Activities

The Hennepin Planning Grants program supports land use planning and development-related projects that are at a small geographic scale, rather than city-wide plans, including:

- Small area plans
- Station area plans
- Master plans
- Public realm plans
- Redevelopment feasibility / market analyses of a defined redevelopment area
- Green infrastructure or district system planning, such as energy and stormwater
- Other types of plans and studies advancing program goals may be considered.

**Ineligible** activities include:

- Local government staff time
- Reimbursements to consultants who function as a planner for a local government
- Capital costs and equipment
- Highway or roadway-oriented transportation plans
- General sewer, water, or utility infrastructure planning
- Traffic or parking studies

## Eligible Applicants

Municipal governments, economic development/housing and redevelopment/port authorities, park districts, watershed districts, and other public agencies within Hennepin County

## Program Approach

For 2023, applicants will identify their most pressing land use challenge(s) related to one of the above listed HPG program goals. Applicants should address:

- Why this is a challenge of interest to their agency/community?
- What is the goal or desired change? Think broadly about potential total impact, not just a specific item such as “new sidewalks on a street to address walkability.”
- What supporting, adjacent, or related work or conversations have taken place relevant to the identified challenge; has there been a community conversation, guidance from stakeholder groups, policymaker direction, staff initiatives, or complementary investments?

Selected applicants (“grantees”) will be matched with a consultant based on the challenges(s) identified by the grantee and their goals, and the consultant’s experience and approach.

Hennepin County Housing and Economic Development will select consultants via a separate request for proposal process to provide Hennepin Planning Grant services. Consultants that demonstrate expertise, high-quality work addressing HPG goals, and experience providing the types of plans listed above will be selected to create a roster of approved HPG consultants. Hennepin County will contract directly with consultants for the scope of work covered by the Hennepin County award, and grantees will contract directly with the Hennepin County selected consultant for their portion of the scope of work. A preference will be to match consultants with projects in communities where they have not previously worked to foster new ideas and approaches to the challenges identified by grantees.

Consultants will work closely with the selected grantees to understand the challenge, need, and goals identified in their application, any adjacent or related issues or concerns, stakeholders, history, and potential impacts of possible solutions. Grantees will receive plans providing varying strategies and solutions to the identified issue from which the grantee can choose from for adoption and implementation.

## Funding

Hennepin County will contract directly with consultants for the scope of work covered by the Hennepin County award, and grantees will contract directly with the selected consultant for their portion of the scope of work. A monetary (not in-kind) match is expected from applicants, based on population under the local authority’s jurisdiction:

Population	County Award (max)	City Match	Total Project Cost
Greater than 40,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$100,000
15,000 to 40,000	\$50,000	\$17,500	\$67,500
Fewer than 15,000	\$50,000	\$5,000	\$55,000

- Consideration will be given if financial constraints affect ability to meet this match. Please detail any challenges in your application.
- Project scopes are expected to take place in an approximately four-month timeframe.
- Projects must be completed by December 31, 2024.

Maximum County funding per project is \$50,000. A total of approximately \$200,000 is available across the Business District Initiative and Hennepin Planning Grants program.

### **Application Process**

Applications are due by **3:00 p.m. October 5, 2024**, via the Hennepin County Supplier Portal.

The application packet must include the following items:

- Hennepin Planning Grants application
- Map(s) of project area(s)
- Letters or resolution of support (recommended)

Funding recommendations and consultant assignments are anticipated in November. Awards are not final until approved by the Hennepin County Housing and Redevelopment Authority.

Potential applicants are strongly encouraged to review projects with Ryan Kelley prior to application submittal. County staff will be available to provide technical assistance to applicants prior to submitting their applications, but not later than September 26. Email: Ryan Kelley, [ryan.kelley@hennepin.us](mailto:ryan.kelley@hennepin.us)

## **Application Evaluation**

HPG application evaluators will look for the following:

- Clear statement of the challenge/issue and how the planning project might help address it, consideration of causes and impacts, and the applicant's willingness to support change on this problem, and/or track record of prior related or complementary efforts
- Clearly identified target area (please attach a map and images to give context of area)
- Demonstrated understanding of stakeholders impacted by the problem and their potential role in solutions
- Collaborative approach to developing strategies with County, consultants, and other identified stakeholders
- Explanation about why County resources are needed and how they will be critical to impacting change on the identified challenge

Communities of color, low-income, and under-resourced communities are often most negatively impacted by the challenges faced by communities. As such, solutions to the challenges identified in HPG applications that specifically address racial and economic equity and historic disinvestment are encouraged.

Applications will be reviewed by a committee consisting of Hennepin County Housing and Economic Development staff and additional reviewers as deemed necessary to thoroughly evaluate applications.

## **Contracting and Reporting**

Hennepin County will contract directly with consultants for the portion of the proposed work covered under the award. Grantees will contract directly with the identified consultants for the proportion of the work covered by their match.

Hennepin County requires all awarded projects to include a final report summarizing the process, outcomes, and impacts of the completed work and a memorandum, upon request, detailing feedback on how to improve the HPG program and application process.

Hennepin County is obligated to follow the Minnesota Data Practices Act, which means that applications will likely be public data after the evaluation and selection process. A statement identifying data as copyrighted or otherwise protected does not prevent public access to the data contained in the response if such data does not qualify as trade secret data.

Hennepin County is not obligated to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of an application. Hennepin County reserves the right to accept or reject any or all applications received, to accept or reject any late applications, to request additional information as deemed necessary to review any application, to negotiate with all qualified proposers, to use any or all proposer ideas and/or approaches presented, or to cancel this application process, if it is in the best interest of Hennepin County to do so.

Receiving funds through this program does not guarantee that future capital funding will be made available.