



Planning & Development Department

St. Louis County

COMMUNITY PLANNING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

St. Louis County has created a *Community Planning Assistance Program* to help eligible communities conduct and adopt new or substantially updated comprehensive or community plans. As part of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, funds for assistance grants are allocated to the county by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Program Allocation: up to \$50,000 per selected application in 2009 with a total of \$200,000 available.

Eligible Applicants: must be a city in St. Louis County otherwise eligible to receive St. Louis County CDBG funds. The applicant must also have statutory authority to conduct planning, zoning, and subdivision regulation within its jurisdiction. This generally eliminates townships applying on their own, however, collaborations between townships and neighboring eligible cities may be considered.

Eligible Activities:

- Plan development and approval

Eligible Expenses:

- Direct citizen participation activities related costs
- Plan development (local unit of government or contracted professional services)

Program Requirements:

- Community Planning Assistance funds may cover up to 75 percent of the total project cost
- At least 12 percent of the total project cost must come from the applicant's general fund
- Project must comply with all federal and state requirements, including CDBG regulations

Application Process: Applications will be accepted immediately and funds will be distributed to projects on a first-come, first-served basis. An application and guide are available from community development division staff or through the department's website:

www.co-st-louis.mn.us/planning

Contact

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County Roles & Responsibilities: St. Louis County has a vested interest in the success of local planning efforts. Through grant oversight and administration, the county will help grantees succeed. In addition, the county will:

- Provide relevant geospatial and other data
- Provide technical assistance in preparing and releasing Requests for Proposals and contract documents
- Develop and distribute resources on planning and development best practices

Applicant Roles & Responsibilities: Successful applicants, along with consultants contracted by them, must agree to meet a number of process and content requirements to be eligible for reimbursement:

Process: A meaningful set of opportunities for public involvement must be part of the process to develop funded plans. At a minimum, this must include at least two widely promoted public meetings that provide opportunities for citizens to help craft vision, goals, objectives, policies, and actions, and review and recommend changes to draft plans before adoption. Public hearing and all other requirements of MN Statutes 462 must also be met.

Content: Plans must include a vision for the future of the community along with clear sets of goals, objectives, policies, and actions related to and designed to achieve the vision. In addition, plans must include the following elements: an inventory and analysis of current conditions and trends (economic, social, physical, and housing); current and future land use; community facilities; parks, trails, and open space; housing, transportation, infrastructure and utilities, economic development, and plan implementation (including a process for review and update).

More information on required and recommended plan elements can be found in the application guide.

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