LIVABLE COMMUNITIES GRANT PROGRAMS

LIVABLE COMMUNITIES DEMONSTRATION ACCOUNT (LCDA) DEVELOPMENT

The Livable Communities Demonstration Account (LCDA) provides funding for projects that increase access to housing, jobs, services and transit in an effort to support more equitable, livable communities in the region.

Funding

Available Funding: $10 million

Award Limit: No more than 40% of funds to Minneapolis and Saint Paul, if applications from other cities/counties exceed 60%

Application Limit: Three per city

Grant Term: Three years (up to two year extension possible)

Key Dates

Application Due: August 11, 2025 at 3PM

Funding Decision: Fall 2025

Eligibility Requirements

- All affordable housing must be affordable for a minimum of 15 years.
- Rental housing must be affordable to households living on 60% of the Area Median Income (AMI) or less.
- Homeownership opportunties must be affordable to households living on 80% of AMI or less.

Eligible and Ineligble Costs

- Design and engineering fees for eligible activities can be up to 10% of the total award amount.
- Site acquisition is only eligible for affordable housing units or for jobs projects that improve access for low-income residents.
- Support for activties that are eligible only for affordable housing units will be prorated to percentage of affordable units in project
- Holding costs can be up to 5% of the requested site acquisition support or $100,000, whichever is less

Environmental Sustainability

Eligble Costs

- Infiltration swales or tanks
- Landscaping that is an integrated part of the stormwater management system
- Pervious pavement
- Green roofs
- Geothermal heat pumps
- Fuel cells and wind turbines
- Project specific or district-wide stormwater management, heating/cooling management, and waste management systems
- EV charging infrastructure or installation costs
- Photovoltaic cells

Ineligible Costs

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Eligible and Ineligible Costs Table Continued

Project Site

Eligble Costs

- Public space that is open to the general public. Elements can include, but are not limited to:
  - lighting
  - landscaping
  - seating and furnishings
  - sidewalks and paths
  - wayfinding elements
  - public restrooms (does not include Sewer Availability Charges (SAC))
- Public art design process to create an intentionally designed piece of public art which contributes to the identity or sense of place of the development project and/or surrounding neighborhood. The design process should include an artist or arts organization.
- Public art features, including but not limited to murals, mosaics, and sculptures, which contribute to the identity or sense of place of the development project and/or surrounding neighborhood. To be considered public art, it must be led and fabricated by a professional artist and/or art organization.
- Playgrounds or outdoor recreational areas intended to serve residents of affordable housing developments
- Public community gardens or community gardens at affordable housing developments
- Demolition and removal of existing structures.
- Grading and soil correction to prepare a site for construction
- Outdoor resident amenity spaces for affordable housing projects
- General landscaping elements for affordable housing or economic opportunity projects
- Construction costs for affordable housing or economic opportunity projects

Ineligible Costs

- City or neighborhood parks
- Parks, playgrounds, or areas that are primarily for the use of the development project's tenants or residents of market rate residential buildings
- Demolition, abatement, cleanup, removal, hauling or disposal of contaminated materials or debris (this is eligible in the Tax Base Revitalization (TBRA) program)
- Cleanup, removal, hauling or disposal of contaminated soil or debris (this is eligible in the TBRA program)

Improved Connections

Eligible Costs

- New streets or street extensions only for local public streets
- Public sidewalks, trails, or bike infrastructure that enhance the pedestrian environment and connect the project to nearby uses and amenities
- Site-integrated transit shelters (work with MetroTransit early if including a transit shelter)
- Bike facilities that are open to the public or are in affordable housing buildings or economic opportunity projects
- Extensions or modifications of local public utilities that directly serve the development project
- Publicly available portion of shared-use parking
- Enhanced broadband connections for affordable housing projects
- Universal design elements to improve accessible connections to and within the project site
- Landscaping to improve the experience for people walking, biking, or rolling to/through the site

Ineligible Costs

- County road improvements
- Private sidewalks, amenities or amenity spaces specifically serving market rate residential development projects
- Surface parking and parking without a shared public component
- Expansion or extension of local public utilities not directly related to the development project
- Transit infrastructure or capital investments e.g., transit stations, station platforms, and park-and- ride facilities.
- Regional parks or trails and trails that would otherwise be included within a city's capital improvement budget
- Trail, sidewalk, or road connections that do not directly connect to or support the project site.

Design & Community Engagement

Eligible Costs

- Design workshops and community engagement activities that center those least represented and most impact by historic racial inequities (including but not limited to compensation for consultants leading work, participants, advisory committee members, childcare, food for engagement events*)
- Design and engineering fees for grant eligible activities (up to 10% of the total award)

  * Food costs should be within Council limits and prioritize Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) or DBE qualifying vendors when possible

Ineligible Costs

- Architectural and engineering fees related to the general site or building or not related directly to grant-funded elements specifically listed as "eligible"
- Traditional public meetings or other engagement activities required by law

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Eligible and Ineligible Costs Table Continued

Acquisition for Affordable Housing and Economic Opportunity

Eligible Costs

- Site acquisition for affordable housing projects or projects focused on bringing economic opportunity to areas where residents live on low incomes. Acquisition costs are only eligible for sites acquired 12 months before the application is due or after the date of award
- Holding costs up to 5% of the awarded acquisition amount or $100,000, whichever is less.
- Eligible holding costs include property maintenance, insurance, and interest.

Ineligible Costs

- Acquisition costs for sites purchased more than 12 months before the application due date
- Acquisition for market rate housing or jobs not in areas where residents live on low incomes
- Sites purchased from a project partner who will gain financially from the purchase
- Site assembly for lands to be used for transit infrastructure.

Preservation and/or Rehab for Affordable Housing or Economic Opportunity

Eligible Costs

- Exterior improvements to bring the building to code or improve energy efficiency of the building. Examples include window replacement, roof replacement, exterior finishing replacement (brick siding, etc.), or mechanical system replacement (Savings from energy efficiency should be passed on to the residents or tenants/occupants of commercial buildings)
- Improvements to interior of affordable units or commercial building to bring building to code, increase energy efficiency, and improve the quality of life of current or future residents. Examples include low flow plumbing fixtures or energy savings appliances.
- Improvements to indoor communal spaces. Examples include improvements to community gathering rooms, fitness centers, and areas in which supportive services are offered.
- Improvements to building grounds and outdoor community gathering spaces. Examples include landscaping, playgrounds, greenspace, and community gardens.

  Affordable and market rate units should be identical and evenly distributed throughout the building(s)

Ineligible Costs

- Legal fees associated with preservation
- Upgrades to market rate units
- Relocation costs

LCDA Scoring Table

While we recognize there are different types of inequities based on identity and circumstance, Livable Communities Act (LCA) is focused on addressing racial inequity in the region given race is the largest predictor of inequitable outcomes in jobs, housing, and other LCA goals. Projects addressing racial equity will be prioritized in scoring. Projects addressing other inequities will earn points towards how they address those inequities but will not receive full points unless they also consider the intersection of racial inequity.

	Scoring Criteria	Points	Evaluation Considerations	Examples to Achieve Points
Housing	Build or preserve affordable housing, priority for projects that serve residents who have barriers finding safe, affordable housing, have the deepest affordability, and/or include supportive services or other needed services	**8**	• Will the project meet the needs of a specific population who has challenges finding safe, affordable housing? • Will the project expand housing choices in the census tract, relative to housing choices in the city overall? • Will the project include housing units affordable to households living on 30% of the Area Median Income (AMI) or less? • Will supportive services be provided for residents?	• Create a type of housing that is for populations with the least housing choices. Examples include units with more bedrooms for families, universally designed units, studio or micro-units, units that include social services, or units that serve a specific population (e.g., units for people leaving incarceration, units for people escaping domestic violence, units for people with developmental disabilities) • Create a type of housing that is less represented in the project area than the city, using either project profile data or a locally identified housing need. Considerations could include housing tenure (rental vs. ownership), affordability, or population served (people living with disabilities, senior etc.) • Add or preserve deeply affordable units (affordable to households living on 30% of AMI or below) • Add or preserve affordable housing • Include supportive services for residents as part of the development project or through a partnership with an external provider
	Build new affordable housing that helps the City meet their share of the region's need for affordable housing at affordability levels needed most; **OR** Preserve and rehabilitate affordable housing, prioritizing cities at highest risk of losing Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH) and/or with more housing cost burdened households		• If new construction, how well do the affordability limits correspond to the City's allocation of affordable housing need? • If preservation, how well do the affordability limits correspond to the City's residents that are experiencing housing cost burden (paying more than 30% of a household's gross income toward housing)? • Is the project creating or preserving affordable housing in an area known to have lost or are expected to lose existing affordable housing within the next year?	• If new construction, help meet the city's need for future affordable housing at needed levels of affordability based on housing need listed on the Project Data Profile **OR** • If preservation, help preserve affordable housing at affordability levels that are needed most. Preservation is needed most in areas with more cost-burdened residents. Cost-burdened population is listed in the Project Data Profile • Create or preserve affordable housing in an area where affordable housing is at risk. More points when housing lost/anticipated to be lost is in the project area versus city-wide

	Scoring Criteria	Points	Evaluation Considerations	Examples to Achieve Points
Housing	Further equity outcomes in housing access*	3*	• Who is primarily being served through the housing portion of the project? • How is the project helping to reduce disparities in housing? • How is the development designed to meet specific and future needs of the future residents? • How is the project supporting community building or maintaining existing community relationships? • How has the design, programming, and services planning been responsive to the needs of future residents?	• Set at least 20% of the units' rent at the small area market fair value and accept Housing Choice Vouchers • Go beyond the Fair Housing Marking plan as defined by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) • Be in a city with policies that protect tenants (e.g., right of first refusal, no crime free drug free lease addendum requirements, notice of sale policies) • Have a property manager, if known, with equitable screening practices and eviction/non-renewal records • Affordable and market rate units are indistinguishable in mixed-income buildings • Include income averaging or preserve affordable housing units in an area where displacement is likely so residents can stay in their chosen communities • Provide programming so residents can build relationships with one another • Include community gathering space for residents • Provide services or partner with service providers, for example healthcare or social work services
Economic Opportunity	Create or preserve permanent jobs **OR** create workforce development/training opportunities; (priority for projects with full-time, living wage jobs)	8	• Will the future development project create or preserve living wage jobs (jobs that earn $59,500/year or more)? • Will the project create training or workforce development opportunities that will prepare participants for full-time, long-term employment that will pay a living wage and offer benefits?	• Living wage jobs paying $59,500 annually created/preserved relative to other applications, especially if existing project area jobs pay lower wages than average jobs in the city or in the region • Create training opportunities that will support participants getting full-time, long-term jobs in the future
	Create economic opportunity in healthcare, technology or environmental sustainability fields; advance strategic city job growth priorities; and/or create or preserve industrial jobs with access to regional transit systems		• Will the project create new jobs or training programs in healthcare, technology or environmental sectors? • Will the project create jobs or training programs that meet a specific city economic development or workforce development policy? • Is the project creating or preserving industrial jobs near transit, highways, rail freight facilities, airports, or ports?	• Identify new jobs or job training programs in technology, environmental, or healthcare sectors • Identify new jobs or job training programs in an industry sector prioritized by the city

* Indicates an equity scoring criteria

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LCDA Development Scoring Table continued

	Scoring Criteria	Points	Evaluation Considerations	Examples to Achieve Points
Economic Opportunity	Further equity outcomes in access to economic opportunity*	3*	• Will the jobs and/or training opportunities be accessible and available to underrepresented or underemployed people? • Is the business model going to support wealth building for residents from communities who have experienced historic wealth extraction?	• Create living wage jobs and/or training opportunities in areas with more unemployment compared to the city or the region • Jobs are targeted toward specific populations (e.g., under/unemployed, people leaving incarceration, people with development disabilities) • Project creates wealth building opportunities for communities who have experienced historic wealth extraction • Jobs/employers that support upward mobility (e.g. trainings, mentorship programs, promotional tracks, career pathways) • Commercial space that provides support for incubation and/or entrepreneurship • Workforce development programs to support more employment options in the future • Business is owned by residents who typically experience the most economic hardship such as new immigrants or residents who identify as Black, Indigenous, or People of Color

* Indicates an equity scoring criteria

	Scoring Criteria	Points	Evaluation Considerations	Examples to Achieve Points
Compact, Connected Development	Increase density or intensity of land use in the project area; **OR** Preserve an existing building that newly activates or preserves activity in the area.		• Is the project maximizing the potential density and activity of the site? • Is the preservation or rehab maintaining existing density and/or activity on the site?	• More units per acre or higher job intensity than currently exists in the project area/on the project site • Project densities and Floor Area Ratios (FARs) that maximize the local regulatory requirements • Project is bringing a new use to an existing building or site that has been vacant or underutilized • Rehab or preservation project is intentional about maintaining existing high levels of intensity and activity
	Make it easier and more comfortable for people to access their daily needs and desired amenities; **OR** Preserve existing connections to transportation options if project is preservation or rehab	8	• Will the project enhance or improve transit/transportation connections between complementary uses (e.g., connecting housing and grocery stores)? • If the project is a preservation/rehab project, how are uses being maintained to continue to meet residents' needs? • Is the project team being intentional in creating connections between the project and nearby greenspaces?	• Bring new uses to the project area that encourage activity at and around the project • Add uses that are easily accessible parts of a daily or weekly routine (e.g., grocery store and housing near a daycare) • Understand what needs are important for residents and preserve connections to continue to meet those needs • Preserve or introduce affordable housing wihtin 1/4 mile of a park, trail or other greenpsace • Site design connecting to greenspace with wayfinding encouraging use of the greenspace, trails, and/or transit networks • Connect to walking, biking, or transit networks around the project site • Include plantings, lighting, or other furnishings to create a more pleasant experience moving to and through the project site • Greenspace or recreation area(s) that can be used by all residents or visitors, considering age, ability, and recreation/gathering preference

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	Scoring Criteria	Points	Evaluation Considerations	Examples to Achieve Points
Compact, Connected Development Continued	Further equity outcomes in access to services and amenities*	**3***	• How is the project better connecting residents in divested areas with needed and/or desired services and amenities? • How is the project including the needs of people who will spend time in and around the project? • How is the project increasing access to parks or greenspaces for residents who have historically faced barriers to access?	• Access to services and amenities through transit or other forms of transportation, including walking, biking, or rolling • The project introduces services and/or amenities that are most wanted by residents experiencing disparities • Improved transit, walking or rolling amenities or infrastructure, especially if there are more households than average nearby who rely on transit for commuting compared to the city or the region • Consider the sensory experience of a range of people, particularly neurodivergent residents or visitors (e.g. inlcuding specific sensory areas for people with Autism Spectrum Disorder) • Include culturally relevant public art, landscaping, and wayfinding • The project provides physical improvements and/or programming for more residents of color to feel safe, welcomed, catered to, and comfortable using nearby local and regional parks (e.g. trail connections, wayfinding, culturally relevant events etc.)

Indicates an equity scoring criteria

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	Scoring Criteria	Points	Evaluation Considerations	Examples to Achieve Points
Environment and Livability	Minimize greenhouse gas emissions		• Does the project understand and mitigate its impact on greenhouse gas emissions?	• Reduce the need to rely on a car (e.g., provide car sharing, reduced parking, enhanced bike/pedestrian infrastructure) • Maximize energy efficiency (e.g., implement SB2030, LEED, 2020 MN Overlay & Guide to the 2015 Green Communities Criteria, Xcel Energy Multifamily Energy Efficiency Program, or other widely recognized energy efficiency program principles). • Integrate renewable energy, reduce material waste during construction and in building operations, relative to its location in the region and its potential impact on greenhouse gas emissions.
	Conserve natural resources, include or address resilience needs and/or advance climate adaptation and mitigation strategies.	8	• Does the project conserve and protect natural resources such as water, vegetation, and wildlife? • Does the project minimize/disconnect impervious surfaces? • Are greenspace areas naturalized to the native environment? • Will greenspace maintenance minimize/eliminate the use of fertilizers/chemicals? • Does the project preserve or include portions of an existing building? • Is the project using sustainable building materials?	• Project conserves natural resources where possible • Greenspace areas include native plantings or other elements that bring it closer to its natural state. • Project considers and mitigates impacts on air, water, soil, vegetation and wildlife. • Use pervious parking and other paving materials • Project or site includes the adaptive reuse of an existing building structure or reuses building materials • Site is designed to minimize impact on natural resources • The project includes district-wide approaches to environmental sustainability (e.g.,stormwater management, heating and cooling)

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	Scoring Criteria	Points	Evaluation Considerations	Examples to Achieve Points
Environment and Livability	Further equity outcomes in environmental impact and resilience*	3*	• Is the project team prioritizing sites that have the most to gain, from an equity standpoint, for redevelopment? • Does the project team understand environmental issues in the project area and how the project will impact those issues? • Has the project and its team developed building or site solutions with residents, workers, or organizations in the area related to climate change and/or past envrionemental harms?	• The project is focused on mitigating negative environmental impacts in areas where residents have been disproportionally affected by past environmental harms • The project team has worked with nearby businesses or organizations to learn more about environmental issues like runoff • Reduce green house gases and conserve natural resources in areas where that has not been prioritized or in areas that have experienced past environmental harms • The project addresses resilience issues relevant to its site and context (i.e. manages flooding in an area at risk of flood, includes a Resilience Hub for the community, residents have an emergency management plan)
Subtotal Outcomes		**44**		

How: Proposed Project Process

	Scoring Criteria	Points	Evaluation Considerations	Examples to Achieve Points
Process	The project reflects the culture and needs of the community it is intending to serve*	**8***	• Who will benefit from the project, now and in the future? • How will public engagement plans include those historically left out of community engagement (e.g., communities of color, first generation immigrants, non-English speaking residents, persons with disabilities) and give those participants power in the process? • How is the plan responding to community demographics in the area? • How is the project team understanding development history of the project area and previous engagement work that has been done? • Does the project team have a direct connection to the project area, or the community being served by the project?	• A description of how engagement will include agency and power for those most impacted by inequities. • Plans to pay underrepresented communities for their time and expertise • The project team has researched and considered outcomes of previous engagement activities in the project area and is using that to inform current and/or future engagement • Engagement strategies are developed after taking historical development context into consideration and understanding the relationship between residents and new development/re-development as well as government institutions • The project team included culturally relevant and responsive planning and design to best meet the needs of future residents (e.g., what community space is included, what art is included, etc.) • A direct connection between demographic makeup of the project area and the lived experience of project team-members (in a meaningful and appropriate way) or their experience responding to the needs of that or similar communities. • A direct connection between the population intended to be served (e.g., persons with disabilities, persons experiencing homelessness) and the personal or work experience of project team members • Culturally specific community gathering spaces with the goal of strengthening cultural ties and honoring cultural history • Support economic stability and/or stronger social connections (e.g., providing food or other basic needs, mutual aid support, community-oriented programming) • Provide easier access to culturally appropriate healthy food, improve opportunities for active transportation, design to support mental health (e.g., intentional inclusion of greenspace, culturally responsive design, available services)

Indicates an equity scoring criteria

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	Scoring Criteria	Points	Evaluation Considerations	Examples to Achieve Points
Process Continued	The City is taking steps toward addressing inequities at the local level, especially efforts to implement equitable development practices*	**3***	• Has the city taken steps to define and understand local disparities? • Has the city adopted policies that are intended to mitigate disparities and/ or create more equitable development outcomes? • Is the city taking tangible actions to integrate equitable development practices?	• The city identified or is in the process of identifying existing city-level disparities (e.g., housing, employment, wages). • The city is identifying measurable outcomes around disparities in order to track progress and be accountable • The city has adopted policies, like a disadvantaged business enterprise (DBE) policy, racial equity action plan, inclusionary zoning, environmental sustainability building standards, or workforce programs that prioritize equitable development outcomes. • The city participates in Government Alliance on Racial Equity (GARE), has an equity, human rights or similar commission or advisory committee that informs local decisions, or other municipal efforts to address inequities
Subtotal Process	**11**			
Total Possible Points	**55**			
Applications must score at least 33 of the total available 55 points and 12 of the available 23 equity points (marked with an *) to be eligible for funding				

* Indicates an equity scoring criteria

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