



**Hennepin County**  
**Housing and Redevelopment Authority**  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415  
www.hennepin.us

## **Spring 2015 RFP for Transit-oriented Development Program Funding**

**Responses due by Thursday, February 26, 2015 at 4:30PM**

### **Background**

Hennepin County Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HCHRA) is making up to \$2.2 million available to support transit-oriented development (TOD).

Projects that reflect the geographic balance of Hennepin County and its transitways, that have a high likelihood of commencing construction in 2015, and are likely to spur additional TOD in their respective locations are highly encouraged to apply for funds.

TOD promotes a mixture of housing, retail, services, workplaces and open space within walking distance of transit to maximize use of the transit system. By directing compact development to existing developed areas well-served by transit, TOD reduces public infrastructure costs over time and preserves regional open space. Pedestrian- and bike-friendly TOD has numerous public benefits including decreased congestion, a greater range of housing options, fewer emissions, and improved public health by creating walkable neighborhoods that promote physical activity. TOD real estate projects feature reduced parking, increased density, and building orientation toward transit and the pedestrian environment. TOD lowers combined housing and transportation costs by reducing the need to drive and own cars for commuting and daily trips, and promotes economic opportunity by linking residents with employment and service destinations.

### **Funding Availability**

Up to \$2,200,000 is available to fund transit-oriented development projects and supportive infrastructure in 2015. HCHRA reserves the right to offer either grants or loans to approved applicants. Projects seeking long-term deferred loans should consider application to other programs, such as the Affordable Housing Incentive Fund, if appropriate. If grant funds are recommended, funds are typically provided on a reimbursement basis for actual costs as approved in the grant application and subsequent negotiated work programs and contracts. TOD Program funds are intended to supplement existing private and public resources in support of TOD. There is no minimum or maximum award amount. Prior awards have ranged from \$25,000 to \$1,000,000.

### **Requirements**

All projects must comply with the following:

1. Complete application and provide all required attachments;
2. The project must be located within ½ mile of existing or planned transitway stations (light rail, bus rapid transit, arterial bus rapid transit, commuter rail – see Note 1), be within a Transit Improvement Area (TIA) designated by Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), within ¼ mile of an express bus, or within ½ mile of a local bus service that has frequent service during the daytime (every 15 minutes);

3. The project must be located within a municipally-designated Redevelopment Area, or the municipality must express its intent to establish a Redevelopment Area, if applicable;
4. The municipality in which the project is located must agree to enter into a multi-jurisdictional agreement with the HCHRA for any project receiving a grant, if applicable;
5. Funded activities must be completed by December 31, 2017;
6. Applicants and awardees must be either a for-profit, non-profit, government entity, or redevelopment authority; and,
7. Funded activities must be located within Hennepin County and comply with the eligible activities list.

### **Program Criteria**

Selection criteria include, but are not limited to:

1. The place as a transit-oriented community and the project's impact on that orientation, such as:
  - a. Likelihood of catalyzing development, stimulating private investment and enhancing the tax base;
  - b. The level and effectiveness of job creation;
  - c. The degree that the project makes the place more transit-oriented, either physically (ie. Level of density, removal of surface parking lots adjacent sidewalks, new crosswalks, added bus shelters, etc.) or programmatically (ie. Additional services such as grocery stores, daycares, etc.), OR the degree to which the existing area is already supportive of transit users, either physically or programmatically;
  - d. The likelihood that the project will generate transit ridership;
  - e. The degree to the that the project makes it easier to walk or bike to nearby transit;
  - f. The degree to which the project is fulfilling an identified area need or plan, such as affordable housing, retail space, public amenities, job-base, etc.;
  - g. For site acquisition without a specific development project ready to proceed, the level of threat that the property will be redeveloped as non-TOD, the likelihood that the development outcome will support transit, and/or the public benefit of having the applicant acquire the property without a specified development plan;
  - h. For public infrastructure projects, the degree to which the project will support TOD in the vicinity of the improvements;
2. The project design and components, such as:
  - a. The degree to which the project creates a pedestrian-engaging environment and building;
  - b. The degree to which the project uses TOD design principles, such as reduced parking ratios and design, higher densities, building orientation, etc.;
  - c. For projects including affordable housing, the degree that the project aligns with the Affordable Housing Incentive Fund;
  - d. Whether the project's bike parking ratios equal or exceed the standards identified in the proposed Hennepin County Bicycle Plan Parking Standards ([link](#));
  - e. For projects without specified design, the process and/or assurances that the design will support TOD, transit access and users, bikers, and walkers.
3. The public subsidy justification, such as:

- a. Identification and priority of the public purpose;
  - b. The need of the award amount and type;
4. The readiness, such as:
- a. The likelihood that the project moves forward and completes the eligible activities within the award period;
  - b. The impact of an award at this point in the project's development process.

### **Eligible Activities**

Eligible uses of funds must demonstrate a public purpose, and may include project components that are oriented to the transit stop(s) identified in the project (such as public plazas, pedestrian-scale lighting, bus shelters, bike racks, and other enhanced features of a development project); components that are a necessary cost of a transit oriented development project (such as demolition, utility relocation, or other extraordinary project costs); and/or public realm improvements to a transit-oriented development area (such as municipal investments in infrastructure or public realm enhancements). More specifically, eligible uses include:

1. Installation of public infrastructure improvements, including pedestrian and bicycle facilities that improve pedestrian, bicyclist, and transit rider safety and ease of use;
2. Clearing acquired property and installation of streets, utilities, and site improvements for uses in accordance with the redevelopment project;
3. Acquisition of real property for the purpose of optimal TOD and by removing, preventing or reducing blight, blighting factors or the causes of blight.

Examples of eligible uses of funds from past TOD Program awards include:

- Public plaza with pedestrian lighting, bike racks and bus shelter adjacent to a commercial development located adjacent to a high-frequency transit stop;
- Site acquisition for redevelopment;
- Utility upgrades and streetscaping in a redevelopment area along a transit corridor;
- Demolition, utility relocation, and lighting for a high density, mixed-use development near an LRT station.

### **RFP Process**

Applicants must submit one electronic copy (on disc or USB drive), one original, and two complete copies of the application to the address listed below. Dropbox and other file sharing websites are unable to be utilized. Hard copies must be letter-sized, unbound, with only paper or binder clips attached. Tabloid-sized pages are acceptable for attachments if folded to letter size. Double sided documents are preferred. Direct any questions and submit applications by **February 26, 2015 at 4:30 p.m.** to:

Thatcher Imboden, TOD Program Manager  
Hennepin County Community Works  
701 Fourth Avenue South, Suite 400  
Minneapolis, MN 55415  
direct - 612-348-4191; email [thatcher.imboden@hennepin.us](mailto:thatcher.imboden@hennepin.us)

### Application Forms:

Applicants must choose one of the following three applications to complete, based upon whichever application is a best-fit for their proposed project:

- Funding Application for Real Estate Development Projects (Standard Application) – this application should be used by projects that are in conjunction with a real estate development project, even if some of the funds requested are for public infrastructure, such as sidewalks. Applicants proposing subsidized, affordable housing projects should NOT fill out this application.
- AHIF/HOME TOD Addendum – this application should be used by projects that are in conjunction with a subsidized, affordable housing project, even if some of the funds requested are for public infrastructure, such as sidewalks. This application MUST accompany an AHIF/HOME application.
- Funding Application for Infrastructure Projects – this application should only be used by those seeking to build public infrastructure that is not in direct connection with a real estate development project, such as: the creation of public roads, sidewalks, bike trails, sewers and other infrastructure that is aimed to support transit-oriented development

Potential applicants are strongly encouraged to review projects with Mr. Imboden prior to submittal. A selection committee including HCHRA staff and additional contributors, as needed, will review applications and may request additional information from applicants. Applicants proposing affordable, subsidized housing are coordinated with the AHIF/HOME RFP. The HCHRA may elect to allocate funding to Hennepin County projects that meet TOD Program criteria. Staff anticipates presenting funding recommendations to the HCHRA Board in May or June 2015. Funds are anticipated to be available for eligible expenditures incurred after final contracts are executed, shortly after the May or June Board action.

Under Minnesota law, data submitted by a business to a government entity in response to a request for proposal are private or nonpublic until the responses are opened. Once the responses are opened, the name of the proposer becomes public. All other data in a proposer's response to a request for proposal are private or nonpublic data until completion of the evaluation process. Completion of the evaluation process means that the government entity has completed negotiating the contract with the selected proposer. After a government entity has completed the evaluation process, all remaining data submitted by all proposers are public with the exception of trade secret data as defined and classified in Minnesota Statute Section 13.37. A statement by a proposer that data are 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.

This request for proposals does not commit Hennepin County or the HCHRA to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal for this application. Hennepin County and the HCHRA reserve the right to accept or reject any or all applications received, to accept or reject any late applications, to rescind the request for proposals, 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 in part or in its entirety this request for proposals, if it is in the best interest of Hennepin County and the HCHRA to do so. Hennepin County and the HCHRA may require the entities selected to participate in negotiations to submit any fiscal, technical, or other revisions of their proposals that may result from negotiations.

## Notes

1. Existing and planned transitways within Hennepin County eligible under this RFP include:
  - a. Blue Line light rail (formerly Hiawatha)
  - b. Green Line light rail (formerly Central)
  - c. Green line extension light rail (Southwest)
  - d. Blue line extension light rail (Bottineau)
  - e. Red line bus rapid transit (Cedar Avenue)
  - f. Orange line bus rapid transit (35W)
  - g. Northstar commuter rail
  - h. A-Line arterial BRT
  - i. Penn Avenue North arterial BRT
  - j. Chicago-Fremont arterial BRT
  - k. Midtown Greenway arterial BRT