

Critical Corridors Funding Recommendations Fall 2024

The Critical Corridors programs are Community & Economic Development (CED) department programs funded by the Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) levy. There are three programs under the umbrella of Critical Corridors, and each program grants awards annually. The spring solicitations are for two programs, Planning (previously called “Pre-Development Planning”) and Commercial Corridor Initiative, and the fall solicitation is for one program, Development & Infrastructure.

In the fall Development & Infrastructure solicitation, fifteen applications for funding assistance were eligible totaling \$6,495,823 in requests. One application was deemed ineligible after review. An interdepartmental review team evaluated applications and included representatives from Community & Economic Development, Public Works and external reviewers from the Metropolitan Council and Baker Tilly.

Approximately \$1.6 million in funding is available through this Development & Infrastructure solicitation. These recommendations comprise a total of \$1,604,305 in funding to five projects.

Development & Infrastructure

Arcade Apartments

Applicant: Reuter Walton Development
Location: 3400 Arcade Street
City: Vadnais Heights
County Commissioner District: 1
Funding Recommendation: \$250,000

Reuter Walton is developing 58 units of rental affordable housing, serving households from 30% to 60% area median income (AMI), on a city-owned vacant lot in Vadnais Heights. The site was identified by the city as a priority redevelopment site situated near a Metro Transit Park & Ride and a new sidewalk system leading to grocery stores and retail establishments. This award will help fund the site preparation, stormwater management and geotechnical soil correction of the site.

Connecting Rice Street: Closing the Gap

Applicant: City of Little Canada
Location: Sidewalk along 2490 to 2640 Rice Street
City: Little Canada
County Commissioner District: 2
Funding Recommendation: \$250,000

The City of Little of Canada is constructing 1,625 feet of sidewalk along the eastern portion of Rice Street to fill in gaps and improve connectivity in pedestrian infrastructure. Rice Street is the city’s primary commercial corridor and is the hub for essential services, including the city’s only grocery store, pharmacies, clinics and multiple retail establishments. Completing the sidewalk will provide safer and more reliable pedestrian access for residents living in a nearby 183-unit manufactured home park and future 160-unit multifamily development along Rice Street. This award will help fund the needed sidewalk project.

GloryVille

Applicant: Gloria Wong
Location: 1570 White Bear Avenue North
City: Saint Paul
County Commissioner District: 6
Funding Recommendation: \$500,000

Gloria Wong is redeveloping a vacant parcel in the Greater East Side Neighborhood of Saint Paul into a mixed-use development with 87 units of affordable rental housing, serving households from 30% to 60% AMI. It will also have 25,000 square feet of ground-floor commercial space for a grocery store and other retail spaces. The site is adjacent to a bus stop for routes 64 and 80, and the developer plans to construct an integrated bus shelter for this stop. This award will help fund site preparation and clearing, public realm improvements and stormwater management of the site.

Hamm's Brewery: East End Apartments

Applicant: JB Vang Partners, Inc.
Location: 694 Minnehaha Avenue East
City: Saint Paul
County Commissioner District: 5
Funding Recommendation: \$500,000

JB Vang is redeveloping the historic Hamm's Brewery in the Dayton's-Bluff neighborhood of Saint Paul. The East End Apartments project phase consists of converting the surface parking lot portion of the site into 120 units of affordable housing, serving households from 30% to 60% AMI. This site is located two blocks from two major commercial corridors on the East Side, Payne Avenue and Arcade Street, with multiple access points for transit along those corridors. The redevelopment of this site is part of the Phalen Corridor Development Strategy. This award will help fund the site preparation and stormwater management of the site.

Plaza del Sol

Applicant: Latino Economic Development Center
Location: 990 Payne Avenue
City: Saint Paul
County Commissioner District: 3
Funding Recommendation: \$104,305

The Latino Economic Development Center is rehabilitating Plaza del Sol, a former Latino mini-mall that will house food and retail businesses, a commissary kitchen, office space and event center in the Payne-Phalen neighborhood of Saint Paul. They received \$182,658 in Critical Corridors funding previously for the patio and extended sidewalk dining space, but since then, an unanticipated cost of constructing a new storm sewer connection arose due to the existing pipe being too small for current conditions. This award will help fund the needed utility connection.