



Housing and Redevelopment Authority

Agenda

15 West Kellogg Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55102
651-266-9200

June 4, 2024 - 10 a.m.

Council Chambers - Courthouse Room 300

ROLL CALL

1. **Agenda of June 4, 2024 is Presented for Approval** [2024-206](#)

Sponsors: County Manager's Office

Approve the agenda of June 4, 2024.

2. **Minutes from May 21, 2024 are Presented for Approval** [2024-205](#)

Sponsors: County Manager's Office

Approve the May 21, 2024 Minutes.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

3. **Spring 2024 Obligation of Housing and Redevelopment Authority Levy Toward Critical Corridors** [2024-188](#)

Sponsors: Community & Economic Development

1. Approve recommended projects and funding amounts totaling \$156,500 for Critical Corridors projects.
2. Authorize the County Manager to enter into the necessary grant, loan or other agreements and execute amendments to these agreements in a manner consistent with federal, state and local regulations and requirements, in a form approved by the County Attorney's Office.

ADJOURNMENT



Housing and Redevelopment Authority

Request for Board Action

15 West Kellogg Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55102
651-266-9200

Item Number: 2024-206

Meeting Date: 6/4/2024

Sponsor: County Manager's Office

Title

Agenda of June 4, 2024 is Presented for Approval

Recommendation

Approve the agenda of June 4, 2024.



Housing and Redevelopment Authority

Request for Board Action

15 West Kellogg Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55102
651-266-9200

Item Number: 2024-205

Meeting Date: 6/4/2024

Sponsor: County Manager's Office

Title

Minutes from May 21, 2024 are Presented for Approval

Recommendation

Approve the May 21, 2024 Minutes.

Attachments

1. May 21, 2024 Minutes



Housing and Redevelopment Authority

Minutes

15 West Kellogg Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55102
651-266-9200

May 21, 2024 - 10 a.m.

Council Chambers - Courthouse Room 300

The Ramsey County Housing and Redevelopment Authority met in regular session at 9:24 a.m. with the following members present: Frethem, McGuire, Reinhardt, and Chair Xiong. Commissioner Martinson and Ortega were absent. Also present were Johanna Berg County Manager.

ROLL CALL

Present: Frethem, McGuire, Moran, Reinhardt, and Xiong
Absent: Martinson, and Ortega

1. Agenda of May 21, 2024 is Presented for Approval [2024-185](#)

Sponsors: County Manager's Office

Approve the agenda of May 21, 2024.

Motion by Reinhardt, seconded by McGuire. Motion passed.

Aye: Frethem, McGuire, Moran, Reinhardt, and Xiong

Absent: Martinson, and Ortega

2. Minutes from May 14, 2024 are Presented for Approval [2024-186](#)

Sponsors: County Manager's Office

Approve the May 14, 2024 Minutes.

Motion by Frethem, seconded by Reinhardt. Motion passed.

Aye: Frethem, McGuire, Moran, Reinhardt, and Xiong

Absent: Martinson, and Ortega

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

3. Obligation of Housing and Redevelopment Authority Levy for 2024 Housing Development Projects [2024-165](#)

Sponsors: Community & Economic Development

1. Approve the obligation of Housing and Redevelopment Authority levy for recommended projects and funding amounts for the preservation and construction of affordable housing in the amount of \$4,600,000.
2. Authorize the County Manager to enter into the necessary loan or other agreements and execute amendments to loan or other agreements in a manner consistent with local regulations and requirements, in form approved by the County Attorney's Office.

Motion by Frethem, seconded by McGuire. Motion passed.

Aye: Frethem, McGuire, Moran, Reinhardt, and Xiong

Absent: Martinson, and Ortega

Resolution: [B2024-095](#)

4. Obligation of Housing and Redevelopment Authority Levy for Wealth Generation Initiatives [2024-168](#)

Sponsors: Community & Economic Development

1. Approve the obligation of Housing and Redevelopment Authority levy towards wealth creation initiatives, including the First Home down payment assistance program in the amount of \$2,350,000.
2. Authorize the County Manager to enter into the necessary loans or other agreements and execute amendments to loans or other agreements in a manner consistent with local regulations and requirements, in a form approved by the County Attorney's Office.

Motion by Reinhardt, seconded by Frethem. Motion passed.

Aye: Frethem, McGuire, Moran, Reinhardt, and Xiong

Absent: Martinson, and Ortega

Resolution: [B2024-096](#)

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Xiong declared the meeting adjourned at 9:28 a.m.

Request for Board Action

Item Number: 2024-188

Meeting Date: 6/4/2024

Sponsor: Community & Economic Development

Title

Spring 2024 Obligation of Housing and Redevelopment Authority Levy Toward Critical Corridors

Recommendation

1. Approve recommended projects and funding amounts totaling \$156,500 for Critical Corridors projects.
2. Authorize the County Manager to enter into the necessary grant, loan or other agreements and execute amendments to these agreements in a manner consistent with federal, state and local regulations and requirements, in a form approved by the County Attorney's Office.

Background and Rationale

Ramsey County has a need for place-based investments that support identified goals around affordable housing, economic development, and community reinvestment. Ramsey County's Economic Competitiveness and Inclusion (ECI) Plan prioritizes investments in place-based inclusion as necessary to create resilient and equitable communities. Countywide, there is a need for tens of thousands of new units of affordable housing, and hundreds more minority business enterprises are needed in order to match the US business ownership rate. Cities and communities are also looking for support to enact policies and plans that drive equitable development tailored to their community.

The Critical Corridors programs were created in 2022 to enact three key strategies from the Economic Competitiveness & Inclusion Plan that address these needs: (1) fostering inclusive economic development - including affordable housing -- within county transit, economic, and cultural corridors; (2) developing pathways to entrepreneurship and business ownership in racially and ethnically diverse communities; and (3) supporting communities in equitable site development.

To obligate HRA levy funds, Community & Economic Development (CED) staff opened the Planning (previously called "Pre-Development Planning") and the Commercial Corridor Initiative Critical Corridors solicitations on March 6, 2024. These annual spring solicitations closed on April 3, 2024. The solicitations were publicized on the Ramsey County website, in the CED newsletter, on social media, and through direct outreach to partner organizations and cities. An informational webinar open to the public was held by CED staff on March 4, 2024. At the close of the solicitations, 6 applications were eligible and reviewed by interdepartmental evaluation teams.

Staff recommend that the HRA obligate \$156,500 of the 2024 HRA levy to further strategies in the ECI Plan related to redevelopment activities through the Critical Corridors programs.

The following projects are recommended for HRA levy funding through the Spring 2024 Critical Corridors Solicitations. Additional information on each project and geographic distribution of funds can be found in the attachment, Critical Corridors Funding Recommendations Spring 2024.

Planning

Rice Street Corridor, District 6 Planning Council	\$50,000
Little Mekong Market Sustainable Stormwater Management, Asian Economic Development Association	\$50,000
City Center Northeast Quadrant Small Area Plan, City of Vadnais Heights	\$25,000

Commercial Corridor Initiative

Foundations of Belonging: Building Community Spirit and Connection in Little Canada, City of Little Canada	\$31,500
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Critical Corridors Spring 2024 Recommendations **\$156,500****County Goals (Check those advanced by Action)**

Well-being Prosperity Opportunity Accountability

Racial Equity Impact

HRA levy funds are invested in projects that aim to reduce racial disparities related to housing and economic development opportunities, in alignment with strategies from the Economic Competitiveness & Inclusion Plan. The recommended projects represent significant place-based investments in racially and ethnically diverse communities with intentional provisions to mitigate displacement pressures.

Community Participation Level and Impact

CED implemented a robust community engagement process in the creation of the Economic Competitiveness & Inclusion Plan and the approval of the HRA levy. This included engagement with residents, businesses, community organizations, other governmental agencies, elected officials, and local municipalities. Community was informed about the competitive solicitations, one step towards the implementation of the community-driven Economic Competitiveness & Inclusion Plan.

Inform Consult Involve Collaborate Empower

Fiscal Impact

In 2024, approximately \$11,061,000 is available for housing and redevelopment projects under the HRA levy. Of this amount, \$6,350,000 has already been obligated to projects and programs through previous board actions. As a result of the actions in this RBA, \$156,500 of HRA levy funds will be obligated to the Critical Corridors redevelopment projects. This leaves approximately \$4,554,500 in HRA levy funds to be obligated through solicitations later in 2024.

Last Previous Action

On May 21, 2024, the Ramsey County Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) approved the Spring Housing Development project obligations of \$4,600,000 (Resolution H2024-006).

On November 28, 2023, the Ramsey County HRA approved the Fall Critical Corridors Development & Infrastructure program allocations of \$1,392,158 (Resolution H2023-014).

On June 6, 2023, the Ramsey County HRA approved the Spring Critical Corridors Pre-Development Planning and Commercial Corridor Initiative program allocations of \$161,900 (Resolution H2023-007).

Attachments

1. Critical Corridors Funding Recommendations Spring 2024

Critical Corridors Funding Recommendations Spring 2024

The Critical Corridors programs are some of the 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. 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 spring Critical Corridors solicitations, six eligible applications for funding assistance were received, totaling \$281,500 in requests. A team of reviewers evaluated applications and made funding recommendations. Reviewers included representatives from Community & Economic Development, Public Works & Multi-Modal Planning, Workforce Solutions, Public Health and external reviewers from the Metropolitan Council.

Approximately \$200,000 in funding is available through these Critical Corridors solicitations, and these recommendations comprise a total of \$156,500 in funding to four projects. Approximately \$1.5 million in Critical Corridors funding is expected to be available for allocation through the fall 2024 Development & Infrastructure solicitation.

Program	Funding Recommendations
Planning	\$125,000
Commercial Corridor Initiative	\$31,500
Critical Corridors Total	\$156,500

Planning

Rice Street Redevelopment Framework Plan

Applicant: District 6 Planning Council

Location: Rice Street, Saint Paul (Orange Avenue West to West Sycamore Street)

Funding Recommendation: \$50,000

The District 6 Planning Council (North End Neighborhood Organization) is developing a Rice Street Redevelopment Framework to guide equitable Transit-Oriented Development opportunities and targeted economic development activities along the corridor. This framework is anticipated to include: identification of priority redevelopment properties and small business assets; review and refinement of existing land use policies within the study area; development of design guidance for subject properties; outline of clear development processes; compilation of strategies to mitigate displacement due to gentrification; and identification of tools and resources to promote a resilient business ecosystem.

Little Mekong Market Sustainable Stormwater Management Plan

Applicant: Asian Economic Development Association

Location: 422 University Ave W, Saint Paul

Funding Recommendation: \$50,000

Asian Economic Development Association (AEDA) is developing a sustainable stormwater infrastructure plan for the Little Mekong Market project located in St. Paul’s Little Mekong business and cultural district. This 1.21-acre site has a multi-phase plan for a mixed-use development project

consisting of Southeast Asian-themed commercial and multifamily affordable housing with outdoor green space for art and cultural programming. The stormwater infrastructure plan needed for this project will help address drainage issues, stormwater storage and infiltration needs to ensure long-term viability of the district, promote sustainability and enhance community resilience.

City Center Northeast Quadrant Small Area Plan

Applicant: City of Vadnais Heights

Location: 3781 Labore Road, Vadnais Heights (Northeast quadrant of the Interstate 35E/County Road E interchange)

Funding Recommendation: \$25,000

The City of Vadnais Heights is creating a small area plan for a 44-acre site of under-utilized land within the northeast quadrant of the Interstate 35E/County Road E interchange. This is an important redevelopment site for the city based on the findings of a complementary plan, the County Road E Corridor Action Plan. The city has faced past challenges of inadequate funding to support this small area plan that will strategically analyze existing conditions and identify the redevelopment opportunities and constraints for the site.

Commercial Corridor Initiative

Foundations of Belonging: Building Community Spirit and Connection in Little Canada

Applicant: City of Little Canada

Location: Rice Street, Little Canada (Country Drive to County Road B East)

Funding Recommendation: \$31,500

The City of Little Canada is developing an initiative to improve the sense of place and community identity of the city by installing banners and wayfinding signage along Rice Street, a vital economic corridor within the city that has over 70 businesses, including retail, restaurants, offices, industrial, and many service industries. This installation will serve as a visual representation of the city's character to foster a stronger sense of community identity while stimulating economic growth and vitality in the area with the aim of attracting tourism and the establishment of new businesses. The banners and wayfinding signage are also meant to provide ease of navigation for pedestrians, cyclists and transit users to nearby services and amenities as well as promote residents to choose active modes of transportation and reduce car trips.