LIVABLE COMMUNITIES GRANT PROGRAM

2026 Notice of Funding Availability for Policy and Affordable Housing Program Development Projects

Updated August 2026

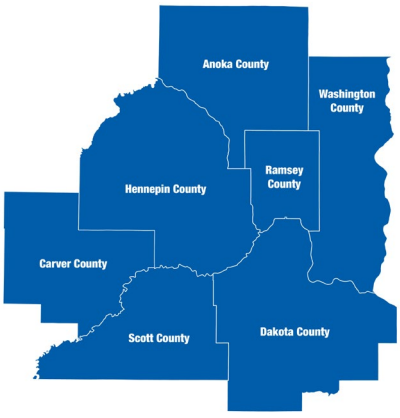


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The Metropolitan Council is the regional planning organization for the seven-county Twin Cities area. The Met Council operates the regional bus and rail system, collects and treats wastewater, coordinates regional water resources, plans and helps fund regional parks, and administers federal funds that provide housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income individuals and families. The 17-member Council board is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the governor.

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2026 Notice of Funding Availability

This 2026 Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) describes the Metropolitan Council's intentions to fund policy and affordable housing program development projects at various stages through the Livable Communities grant program in 2026. Specifically, this notice:

- Establishes the amount and type of funding available for the 2026 award year and the limits that apply to individual awards.
- Defines who is eligible to apply.
- Sets the schedule for application submittal, review, and award.
- Describes the criteria the Metropolitan Council will use in project selection.

The Livable Communities program also funds Small Area Planning and Development Projects.

Background and Purpose

In the 1995 session, the Minnesota Legislature enabled the Metropolitan Council Livable Communities Fund (Minn. Stat. §473.251). As a result, the Livable Communities grant program advances the regional development guide by increasing housing choice, improving safety, and helping ensure that residents can meet their needs in their community. The Livable Communities program helps local governments

- Set the conditions for development through policy development and small area planning
- Support development projects that add affordable housing, create community-centered commercial spaces, or clean up contaminated land.

Eligible Applicants

Applicants must be a city, township, county, or development authority (Minn. Stat. § 473.252, subd. 1) within the 7-county metropolitan area (Minn. Stat. § 473.121, subd. 2) that has enrolled in the Livable Communities program and is in good standing (Minn. Stat. § 473.254, subd. 1-4). Individuals or private and nonprofit organizations are not eligible applicants but are welcome to partner with an eligible applicant on projects.

Project Eligibility

To be eligible for a Livable Communities grant, the policy or affordable housing program development project must:

- Be applied in or for a Livable Communities participating city, and the city must be consistent with all comprehensive plan requirements.[1]
- Have a Livable Communities participating city, township, county, or development authority partner to sponsor the project, submit the application, and accept funds on behalf of the project.
- Meet at least one of the defined Outcomes in the Outcomes Score (see Evaluation Criteria below).
- Result in an enforceable policy, ordinance, or program that is presented for adoption by the grantee's regulatory body, such as the city council or housing and redevelopment authority board.
- Have a funding gap.

Available Funds

The Metropolitan Council has authorized up to $1,339,000 to be awarded for policy and affordable housing program development projects through the Livable Communities program in 2026. The Metropolitan Council is supplementing the Livable Communities funding with federal funding to make this grant opportunity available.

Application Due Dates

$539,000 will be allocated to the first-round funding opportunity, with applications due by **April 15, 2026**.

$800,000, plus any unawarded funds from the previous round, will be available for awards through the second-round funding opportunity, with applications due by **October 15, 2026**.

Award Limits and Eligible Activities

Requests are limited to $100,000 per application. Grant funds may be used for staff or consultant time directly related to the project.

[1] Projects located in cities that have a current comprehensive plan amendment under review that would make the city ineligible to apply or draw down funds under the Livable Communities program rules may not apply until the review is complete.

Review and Recommendation Process

Met Council staff will conduct a preliminary review of all proposals to ensure completeness and eligibility before applications are scored.

All applicants will receive an Outcome Score and a Quality Score, as defined below. The Outcome Score is automatically calculated based on applicant responses and verified by staff. The Quality Score is determined by staff subject matter experts. The sum of the two scores is the total project score.

Projects are recommended for funding in order of highest score until all funds are awarded. The Met Council may make partial awards

Application Requirements

A complete application includes:

- Documentation of local support for the project. Options include:
  - Letter from the Mayor
  - Letter from the City Administrator
  - Resolution of support (download sample text as a Word Doc)
- Sources and Uses Budget. The Livable Communities program will accept this in whatever format your project currently uses, as long as it clearly shows:
  - Sources, noting which have been secured and are pending or planned.
    - The pending Livable Communities grant request should be one of these sources
  - Uses.
  - A financial gap (pending Livable Communities award).

Evaluation Criteria

Outcome Score

Which of the following outcomes will your project help the city meet?

- ☐ Encourage more development or preservation of affordable housing, both rental and ownership
- ☐ Incentivize environmentally sustainable development and green infrastructure
- ☐ Mitigate or prevent future displacement of residents and businesses
- ☐ Increase housing choice through type, tenure, and/or accessibility

If your project meets one outcome, it will receive 16 points for the Outcome Score and is eligible to apply.

Quality Score

Applications will be assessed on how well they meet the Livable Communities program goals using the following questions and corresponding maximum possible scores.

- How will the proposed policy or program support housing stabilization, enabling residents to remain in their homes and communities? (5 pts max)

- 0-1 points (Limited or unclear description of housing stabilization approach): The application does not meaningfully describe housing stabilization in the context of the applicant's community or explain how the proposed policy or program would support residents' ability to remain in their homes and communities. Any references to stabilization are vague, indirect, or not clearly connected to the proposed policy or program.
- 2-3 points (Moderate and partially articulated description of housing stabilization approach): The application describes what housing stabilization means for the applicant's community and identifies ways the proposed policy or program is intended to support it, but the description lacks sufficient detail or clarity. The connection between the proposed policy or program mechanisms and how residents would be able to remain in their homes and communities is only partially explained.
- 4-5 points (Clear, intentional, and well-supported description of housing stabilization approach): The application clearly describes housing stabilization in the context of the applicant's community and explains how the proposed policy or program would intentionally support residents' ability to remain in their homes and communities. The response demonstrates a clear nexus between the policy or program approach and anticipated stabilization outcomes.

- How will the city prioritize racial equity when implementing the proposed policy or program? (5 pts max)
  - 0-1 points (Limited or unclear description of racial equity implementation approach): The application does not meaningfully identify racial equity priorities or explain how racial equity would be prioritized through implementation of the proposed policy or program. Any references to equity are vague, aspirational, or not clearly connected to policy implementation.
  - 2-3 points (Moderate and partially articulated description of racial equity implementation approach): The application identifies and describes racial equity priorities and any existing frameworks or structures related to the proposed policy or program, but the response lacks sufficient clarity or detail regarding how those priorities would be operationalized through policy or program implementation. The connection between stated priorities and implementation actions is only partially explained.

    For applicants without existing racial equity frameworks or structures, the response describes an initial or emerging approach to establishing racial equity priorities through the policy or program development and implementation process, but lacks specificity regarding actions, accountability, or anticipated outcomes.
  - 4-5 points (Clear, intentional, and well-supported description of racial equity implementation approach): The application clearly identifies racial equity priorities and any existing framework or structures and explains how those priorities would be intentionally prioritized through implementation of the proposed policy or program. The response describes specific, feasible implementation strategies

that demonstrate how racial equity considerations would guide decision-making, enforcement, or administration of the policy or program.

For applicants without existing racial equity frameworks or structures, the response clearly outlines intentional steps, approaches, and anticipated outcomes that the policy or program implementation process would use to establish, advance, and institutionalize racial equity priorities.

- Do you have a clearly defined work plan/scope? (2 pts if yes)
- What is the per capita net tax capacity of the city (See Appendix: Adjusted Per Capita Net Tax Capacity and Corresponding Livable Communities Point Value)? Of cities in the seven-county metropolitan region, if per capita net tax capacity falls within the:
    - Top 25%: 1 point
    - 50%-75% Percentile: 2 points
    - Below 50% Percentile: 3 points

Grant Terms and Grantee Expectations

Livable Communities policy and affordable housing program development grants are for a two-year period. If needed, the grantee may request a one-year extension. All grants are reimbursement-based. If a grantee does not have eligible expenses to utilize the full grant award or is unable to spend the full award before the end of the grant term, any unspent funds will be relinquished and made available for future Livable Communities programming through the Metropolitan Council.

If awarded a grant, grantees must continue to meet the following requirements through the grant term:

- Submit semi-annual reports on project progress and a final report at grant closeout.
    - Grant closeout requirements include submission of the Livable Communities-funded policy or affordable housing program documentation, including verification of its presentation for adoption before the grantee's governing body, such as City Council or Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) board.
- Notify the Met Council of any significant changes to the project in a timely manner.

If awarded a grant, the city in which the project is located (this may or may not be the same as the grantee) must continue to meet the Livable Communities program requirements, including:

- Have an adopted Fair Housing policy.
- Have a Comprehensive Plan that is consistent with Metropolitan Council Policy.
- Guide land at sufficient densities to enable the city to meet its forecasted affordable housing need. This is also known as the Metropolitan Council's Land Guided for Affordable Housing (LGAH) policy.
- Submit a Housing Action Plan annually through the Housing Policy and Production Survey.
- Spend its statutorily required Affordable and Lifecycle Housing Opportunity Amount (ALHOA).

Federal Funding Requirements

Most Policy and Affordable Housing Program Development grants will be federally funded through an award from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and will be subject to federal subrecipient requirements. Interested applicants may request a copy of the grant agreement template in advance. Federal subrecipient entities will be reported to HUD and must remain in compliance with federal requirements. Preliminary applicant requirements for federal funding eligibility include:

- Have an active SAM.gov registration.
- Contracting must be done in a federally compliant manner and documented. Here is a resource about federal subrecipient procurement requirements and a reference about small purchase thresholds that may be helpful.

Funding Schedule

Date	Milestone
February 11, 2026	Council authorization of FY2026 Livable Communities funding
Early March	Round 1 application window opens
March 16, 2026 (approx.)	Responses to additional questions asked by potential applicants will be published online under "Funding Availability"
April 1, 2026 (approx.)	Responses to additional questions asked by potential applicants will be published online under "Funding Availability"
April 15, 2026	Round 1 Livable Communities applications due
Late Spring-Early Summer	Staff evaluate applications
July (anticipated)	Council considers action to award Round 1 grants
Early September	Round 2 application window opens
September 16, 2026 (approx.)	Responses to additional questions asked by potential applicants will be published online under "Funding Availability"
October 1, 2026 (approx.)	Responses to additional questions asked by potential applicants will be published online under "Funding Availability"
October 15, 2026	Round 2 Livable Communities applications due
Late Fall-Early Winter	Staff evaluate applications
December 2026-January 2027 (anticipated)	Council considers action to award Round 2 grants

Program Evaluation

The Metropolitan Council will review the overall impact of funded projects and the efficacy of the Council's program and application process with a focus on continual improvements.

Contact

We encourage project teams to reach out to a Livable Communities Program Coordinator early. You can schedule time with a Program Coordinator online or reach out directly:

- Olivia Boerschinger, Program Coordinator, Olivia.Boerschinger@MetC.State.MN.US

Appendix: Adjusted Per Capita Net Tax Capacity and Corresponding Livable Communities Point Value

Municipality	2024 Adjusted Net Tax Capacity Per Capita (based on 2024 pop.)	2026 Livable Communities Point Value
Afton	$3,602	1
Andover	$1,842	3
Anoka	$1,551	3
Apple Valley	$1,766	3
Arden Hills	$2,275	2
Bayport	$1,657	3
Baytown Township	$3,810	1
Belle Plaine	$1,548	3
Belle Plaine Township	$3,606	1
Benton Township	$3,615	1
Bethel	$1,477	3
Birchwood Village	$2,911	2
Blaine	$1,864	3
Blakeley Township	$4,506	1
Bloomington	$2,352	2
Brooklyn Center	$1,344	3
Brooklyn Park	$1,685	3
Burnsville	$1,896	3
Camden Township	$2,944	2
Carver	$1,753	3
Castle Rock Township	$3,518	1
Cedar Lake Township	$2,952	2
Centerville	$2,195	2
Champlin	$1,711	3
Chanhassen	$2,884	2
Chaska	$1,994	3

Municipality	2024 Adjusted Net Tax Capacity Per Capita (based on 2024 pop.)	2026 Livable Communities Point Value
Circle Pines	$1,493	3
Coates	$2,929	2
Cologne	$1,662	3
Columbia Heights	$1,321	3
Columbus	$2,846	2
Coon Rapids	$1,669	3
Corcoran	$2,628	2
Cottage Grove	$1,735	3
Credit River	$3,371	1
Crystal	$1,545	3
Dahlgren Township	$3,596	1
Dayton (Hennepin part vs Wright Cnty part)	$2,363	2
Deephaven	$7,098	1
Dellwood	$5,216	1
Denmark Township	$3,957	1
Douglas Township	$3,578	1
Eagan	$2,260	2
East Bethel	$1,823	3
Eden Prairie	$2,563	2
Edina	$3,757	1
Elko New Market	$1,594	3
Empire	$2,147	2
Eureka Township	$3,291	1
Excelsior	$4,581	1
Falcon Heights	$1,462	3
Farmington	$1,582	3
Forest Lake	$1,976	3
Fridley	$1,736	3

Municipality	2024 Adjusted Net Tax Capacity Per Capita (based on 2024 pop.)	2026 Livable Communities Point Value
Gem Lake	$3,548	1
Golden Valley	$2,918	2
Grant	$3,357	1
Greenfield	$2,940	2
Greenvale Township	$3,590	1
Greenwood	$10,676	1
Grey Cloud Island Township	$2,425	2
Ham Lake	$2,261	2
Hamburg	$1,289	3
Hampton	$1,430	3
Hampton Township	$4,244	1
Hancock Township	$3,658	1
Hastings	$1,576	3
Helena Township	$3,008	2
Hilltop	$1,277	3
Hollywood Township	$2,918	2
Hopkins	$1,903	3
Hugo	$2,012	3
Independence	$3,598	1
Inver Grove Heights	$1,977	3
Jackson Township	$2,081	3
Jordan	$1,480	3
Lake Elmo	$2,722	2
Lake St. Croix Beach	$1,801	3
Lakeland	$2,291	2
Lakeland Shores	$2,852	2
Laketown Township	$2,604	2
Lakeville	$2,105	2

Municipality	2024 Adjusted Net Tax Capacity Per Capita (based on 2024 pop.)	2026 Livable Communities Point Value
Landfall	$3,074	2
Lauderdale	$1,593	3
Lexington	$1,362	3
Lilydale	$3,238	2
Lino Lakes	$1,894	3
Linwood Township	$1,859	3
Little Canada	$1,772	3
Long Lake	$2,935	2
Loretto	$1,763	3
Louisville Township	$3,711	1
Mahtomedi	$2,318	2
Maple Grove	$2,345	2
Maple Plain	$1,929	3
Maplewood	$1,648	3
Marine on St. Croix	$3,524	1
Marshan Township	$3,550	1
May Township	$3,781	1
Mayer	$1,432	3
Medicine Lake	$5,336	1
Medina	$4,443	1
Mendota	$3,465	1
Mendota Heights	$3,193	2
Miesville	$2,437	2
Minneapolis	$1,832	3
Minnetonka	$2,897	2
Minnetonka Beach	$13,888	1
Minnetrista	$3,998	1
Mound	$2,658	2

Municipality	2024 Adjusted Net Tax Capacity Per Capita (based on 2024 pop.)	2026 Livable Communities Point Value
Mounds View	$1,500	3
New Brighton	$1,677	3
New Germany	$1,360	3
New Hope	$1,661	3
New Market Township	$3,258	2
New Trier	$1,533	3
Newport	$1,848	3
Nininger Township	$2,755	2
North Oaks	$4,293	1
North St. Paul	$1,330	3
Norwood Young America	$1,404	3
Nowthen	$2,214	2
Oak Grove	$2,041	3
Oak Park Heights	$2,975	2
Oakdale	$1,706	3
Orono	$7,302	1
Osseo	$1,637	3
Pine Springs	$2,559	2
Plymouth	$2,663	2
Prior Lake	$2,361	2
Ramsey	$1,755	3
Randolph	$1,558	3
Randolph Township	$3,957	1
Ravenna Township	$2,098	2
Richfield	$1,506	3
Robbinsdale	$1,375	3
Rogers	$2,813	2
Rosemount	$2,005	3

Municipality	2024 Adjusted Net Tax Capacity Per Capita (based on 2024 pop.)	2026 Livable Communities Point Value
Roseville	$2,220	2
San Francisco Township	$3,503	1
Sand Creek Township	$3,245	2
Savage	$1,972	3
Scandia	$2,881	2
Sciota Township	$3,258	2
Shakopee	$2,238	2
Shoreview	$1,988	3
Shorewood (Hennepin part)	$4,301	1
South St. Paul	$1,558	3
Spring Lake Park	$1,506	3
Spring Lake Township	$3,345	1
Spring Park	$3,194	2
St. Anthony	$1,509	3
St. Bonifacius	$1,741	3
St. Francis	$1,444	3
St. Lawrence Township	$3,215	2
St. Louis Park	$2,249	2
St. Marys Point	$4,014	1
St. Paul	$1,436	3
St. Paul Park	$1,904	3
Stillwater	$2,082	3
Stillwater Township	$3,574	1
Sunfish Lake	$6,283	1
Tonka Bay	$7,928	1
Vadnais Heights	$2,205	2
Vermillion	$1,759	3
Vermillion Township	$3,181	2

Municipality	2024 Adjusted Net Tax Capacity Per Capita (based on 2024 pop.)	2026 Livable Communities Point Value
Victoria	$2,544	2
Waconia	$2,092	2
Waconia Township	$3,729	1
Waterford Township	$3,167	2
Watertown	$1,424	3
Watertown Township	$3,754	1
Wayzata	$7,972	1
West Lakeland Township	$2,972	2
West St. Paul	$1,552	3
White Bear Lake	$1,962	3
White Bear Township	$2,283	2
Willernie	$1,683	3
Woodbury	$2,157	2
Woodland	$18,774	1
Young America Township	$3,466	1



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