

Committee Report

Community Development Committee



Committee meeting date: September 2, 2025

For the Metropolitan Council: September 10, 2025

Business Item: 2025-223

Funding Recommendations for 2025 Livable Communities Act Pre-Development and Policy and Program Grants

Proposed action

1. That the Metropolitan Council award four (4) Livable Communities Act Pre-Development Grants totaling \$1,000,000, as shown in Table 1 below.
2. That the Metropolitan Council award seven (7) Livable Communities Act Policy and Affordable Housing Program Grants totaling \$311,000, as shown in Table 2 below.

Table 1. Recommended Pre-Development Grant Projects and Funding Amounts

Applicant	Recommended Project	Award Amount
City of Brooklyn Center	5400 Block of Brooklyn Boulevard	\$152,500
City of Columbia Heights	800 53 rd Avenue NE	\$250,500
City of Roseville EDA	Oyate Ota Center	\$297,000
City of Saint Paul	The Lexington Deluxe	\$300,000

Table 2. Recommended Policy and Affordable Housing Program Development Grant Projects and Funding Amounts

Applicant	Recommended Project	Award Amount
City of Blaine*	Floodplain Policy & Program Development	\$50,000
City of Eden Prairie	Housing Analysis in Support of Zoning and Land Use Update	\$50,000
City of Edina	Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance Update	\$50,000
City of Golden Valley	Missing Middle Housing Study to Update Zoning and Policy	\$50,000
City of Hopkins*	Housing Assessment & LAHA Planning	\$50,000
City of New Brighton*	Housing Action Plan (LAHA)	\$39,000
City of Richfield HRA*	Housing Program Development (LAHA)	\$22,000

* Indicates project to be funded with HUD PRO Housing funds

Summary of Community Development Committee discussion/questions

Senior Planners Oliva Boerschinger and Marcus Martin presented the staff report to the Committee. The Committee asked about program support for emerging developers. Staff shared that the program was designed with emerging developers' needs in mind; and that there are several examples of this program benefiting emerging developers. Council Member Lee requested staff discuss the recommendation with the City of North Saint Paul. Staff affirmed that they had spoken with the City and that they hoped the project would be resubmitted for a future funding opportunity.

Motion by Council Member Carter, seconded by Council Member Lee. The Community Development Committee unanimously approved the recommendation at its meeting on September 2, 2025.

Business Item

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Funding Recommendations for 2025 Livable Communities Act Pre-Development and Policy and Program Grants

District(s), member(s): All
Policy/legal reference: Livable Communities Act (Minn. Stat. § 473.25)
Staff prepared/presented: Olivia Boerschinger, Livable Communities (651) 602-1327
Marcus Martin, Livable Communities (651) 602-1054
Division/department: Community Development / Regional Planning

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Background

The Livable Communities Act (LCA) advances Metropolitan Council policies by funding projects that connect jobs, transit, services, and housing in efficient and effective ways using the Livable Communities Demonstration Account (LCDA). The Council adopted the 2025 LCA Pre-Development and Policy guidelines and criteria as part of the Annual Livable Communities Act Fund Distribution Plan ([Business Item 2025-46](#)) on February 12, 2025.

In June 2024, the Met Council received its first grant through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Pathways to Removing Obstacles (PRO) Housing program, which included \$600,000 in funds to make subgrants to cities in the region for expanded housing programming, complementing the LCA Policy Development program. On July 21, 2025, the Council received five applications for Round Two of LCA Pre-Development funding, requesting \$1,274,500. The cities of Brooklyn Center, Columbia Heights, North Saint Paul, Saint Paul, and the Roseville Economic Development Authority (EDA) submitted applications. A staff evaluation concluded that all five Pre-Development applications met eligibility requirements.

On July 21, 2025, the Council received eight applications for the expanded Round Two of LCA Policy and (new) Affordable Housing Program Development funding, requesting \$372,000. The cities of Blaine, Brooklyn Center, Eden Prairie, Edina, Golden Valley, Hopkins, New Brighton, and the Richfield Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) submitted applications. A staff evaluation concluded that seven out of eight Policy and Program applications met eligibility requirements.

In total, twelve out of thirteen applications received for both programs met eligibility requirements.

Rationale

Per the 2025 Fund Distribution Plan, the Council will offer two rounds of LCA Pre-Development funding in 2025 with up to \$2,000,000 available for the year. There is an award limit of \$300,000 per city per round. One million (\$1M) is available to be awarded in Round Two.

The 2025 Fund Distribution Plan also includes two rounds of Policy Development funding with up to \$200,000 available for the year. There is an award limit of \$50,000 per grant and each city may only submit one application per round. The Fund Distribution Plan also updated the scoring criteria for Policy grants to allow for alignment with the activities in the Council's FY23 HUD Pathways to Remove Obstacles to Housing (HUD PRO) grant award. After receiving no applications for Round One of the 2025 Policy Development grants due to a combination of application and comprehensive plan timing, the Council advertised Round 2 as an expanded opportunity (as described in the [June 2, 2025 Information Item](#)).

The expansion used the LCA application process to offer the \$200,000 allocated for LCA Policy Development Grants and up to \$600,000 from HUD PRO because the goals of the two programs are aligned. While the LCA Policy Development funds can only be used for policy development projects, the HUD PRO funds can be used for housing program development, which is a need that Council staff heard from cities, especially related to spending new Local Affordable Housing Aid (LAHA) funds. The expanded LCA Policy and Affordable Housing Program Development funding opportunity advertised \$800,000 in available funds.

As defined in the Fund Distribution Plan, any unawarded funds of the \$200,000 LCA Policy Development funding opportunity will be awarded to projects applying to the LCDA and Transit Oriented Development (TOD) funding opportunity later this fall. Any unawarded funds from the \$600,000 available HUD PRO-funded Program Development opportunity will be used for future HUD PRO activities consistent with the HUD-approved action plan.

Thrive lens analysis

Under the Thrive lens, LCA programs support:

- Projects that demonstrate efficient and effective use of public financial resources further the Thrive Stewardship Outcome.

- Projects that redevelop and increase density further the Thrive Prosperity outcome of “[e]ncouraging redevelopment and infill development across the region.”
- Projects that provide a mix of housing affordability levels further the Thrive Equity outcome of “[c]reating real choices in where we live, how we travel, and where we recreate for all residents, across race, ethnicity, economic means, and ability.”
- Projects that introduce more housing types and affordability levels in existing neighborhoods further the Thrive Livability outcome of “[p]roviding housing and transportation choices for a range of demographic characteristics and economic means.”

In February 2025, the Council adopted Imagine 2050, the new regional development guide. The 2026 LCA programs will be offered in alignment with that plan language. Because many regional goals are consistent across planning cycles, the grants recommended here are in alignment with both Imagine 2050 goals and Thrive MSP 2040 outcomes.

Funding

Funds are available in the Livable Communities authorized 2025 budget, which includes the HUD PRO Housing grant funds and Livable Communities reserve accounts, to award these grants. Reserves may need to be amended into a future annual budget to meet cashflow needs on Livable Communities multi-year grants.

Review Process

The Council issued an initial notice of funding availability in February 2025 after adopting the annual Livable Communities Fund Distribution Plan. Staff held informational webinars, distributed information about funding availability, and met with applicants to discuss the LCA processes, criteria, and the best program fit for their projects. Additional outreach, including in-person visits, individual emails, and newsletters, promoted the expanded Policy and Affordable Housing Program Development offerings for Round Two.

Thirteen applications were submitted, as shown in Table 3. Council staff conducted a preliminary review for completeness and eligibility, then used Council-approved criteria to evaluate each application in two areas: Project Outcomes and Project Process. All five of the submitted Pre-Development applications and seven of the eight Policy and Program Development applications were eligible for review out of the 13 applications. Council staff are recommending 11 applications for funding based on scores. The results of the evaluation are shown in Tables 3 through 5.

Table 3. Application Summary

Grant Category	Submitted Applications	Applications Eligible for Review	Applications Meeting Minimum Score	Applications Recommended for Funding
LCA Pre-Development Round Two	5	5	4	4
LCA Policy and Program Development Round Two	8	7	7	7



Table 4. Pre-Development Scoring Summary

Applicant	Project	Score	Amount Requested	Amount Recommended
City of Roseville EDA	Oyate Ota Center	24	\$297,000	\$297,000
City of Brooklyn Center	5400 Block of Brooklyn Boulevard	23.5	\$152,500	\$152,500
City of Saint Paul	The Lexington Deluxe	20.5	\$300,000	\$300,000
City of Columbia Heights	800 53 rd Avenue NE	20	\$300,000	\$250,500
City of North Saint Paul	Nature Pointe Townhouse	10.5	\$225,000	\$0
		TOTAL	\$1,274,500	\$1,000,000
		Total Available	\$1,000,000	
		Total Remaining	\$0	



Table 5. Policy and Program Development Scoring Summary

Applicant	Project	Score	Amount Requested	Amount Recommended	Funding Source
City of Hopkins	Housing Assessment & LAHA Planning	56	\$50,000	\$50,000	HUD PRO
City of Richfield HRA	Housing Program Development (LAHA)	54.5	\$22,000	\$22,000	HUD PRO
City of Blaine	Floodplain Policy & Program Development	53	\$50,000	\$50,000	HUD PRO
City of New Brighton	Housing Action Plan (LAHA)	47	\$39,000	\$39,000	HUD PRO
City of Eden Prairie	Housing Analysis in Support of Zoning and Land Use Update	40.5	\$50,000	\$50,000	LCA
City of Edina	Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance Update	40.5	\$50,000	\$50,000	LCA
City of Golden Valley	Missing Middle Housing Study to Update Zoning & Policy	40.5	\$50,000	\$50,000	LCA
TOTAL			\$311,000	\$311,000	
Total Recommended from LCA				\$150,000	
Total Recommended from HUD PRO				\$161,000	
Total Remaining from LCA				\$50,000	
Total Remaining from HUD PRO				\$439,000	

As noted above, the \$50,000 in unawarded funds from the LCA Policy Development funding opportunity will be awarded to projects through the LCDA and Transit Oriented Development (TOD) funding opportunity later this fall. The \$439,000 in unawarded HUD PRO funds will be used for future HUD PRO activities.

Projects Not Eligible for Review

Morty's Bark and Brew

Applicant: City of Brooklyn Center

Determination: The project did not include eligible activities

Rationale: The activities and deliverables in the application did not meet eligibility requirements for the development of a policy, ordinance, or affordable housing program that would further LCA and Imagine 2050 goals.

Projects Not Recommended for Funding

A summary of the applications not recommended for funding awards, including rationale, is below:

Nature Pointe Townhouse

Applicant: City of North Saint Paul

Determination: Did not meet the minimum required score

Rationale: The application lacked specificity about the target affordability tier, demonstrating



community needs and benefits, and the community engagement process.

Projects Recommended for Funding

A summary of each of the recommended funding awards is on the following pages.



Livable Communities Project Summary

Grant # SG
Type: LCA Pre-Development
Applicant: City of Brooklyn Center
Project Name: 5400 Block of Brooklyn Boulevard
Project Location: 5401 Brooklyn Boulevard, Brooklyn Center
Council District: 8 - Anjuli Cameron

Project Detail	
Project Overview	The proposed project will create up to 11 energy-efficient, affordable ¹ for-sale townhomes on a currently vacant site that was acquired by the city in 2016/2017 as part of the Brooklyn Boulevard Corridor realignment.
Previous LCA Funding	\$0
Use of Funds	
Recommended Award Amount	Uses
\$152,500	<p>Condition Assessments: Geotechnical study</p> <p>Impact Studies: Travel Demand Management Plan</p> <p>Financial Studies: Market Study, Appraisal, and Pro-Forma development</p> <p>Site or Building Design: Site Plan, Fit Plan, Architectural, and Mechanical/Electrical/Plumbing (MEP) Designs</p> <p>Sustainability/Climate Action Design: Energy Modeling</p> <p>Community Engagement: Community engagement sessions</p> <p>Project Management or Development Navigation: Developer staff time (0.2FTE)</p>



¹ Homeownership opportunities are considered affordable if they are affordable to households earning 80% of the area median income. In 2025, that's an annual income of \$104,200 or sales price of \$306,500.

Livable Communities Project Summary

Grant # SG
Type: LCA Pre-Development
Applicant: City of Columbia Heights
Project Name: 800 53rd Avenue NE
Project Location: 800 53rd Ave NE, Columbia Heights
Council District: 2 - Reva Chamblis

Project Detail	
Project Overview	The proposed project is Phase I of an activation of a 12-acre former corporate campus and is expected to create 248 apartments affordable to households earning 60% of the area median income (or \$79,440 in 2025) in two six-story buildings.
Previous LCA Funding	\$0
Use of Funds	
Recommended Award Amount	Uses
\$250,500	<p>Conditions Assessments: Geotechnical Study, Land Survey</p> <p>Financial Studies: Market Study</p> <p>Site or Building Design: Architectural Design, Engineering plans, and Stormwater Management Design</p> <p>Sustainability/Climate Action Design: Photovoltaic design assessing the potential for on-site solar energy generation.</p>



Livable Communities Project Summary

Grant # SG
Type: LCA Pre-Development
Applicant: Roseville EDA
Project Name: Oyate Ota Center
Project Location: 965 Larpenteur Ave W, Roseville
Council District: 10 - Peter Lindstrom

Project Detail	
Project Overview	The proposed project is a renovation of a 36,000-square-foot former church building into a multi-agency anchor that co-locates three Native American/Indigenous-led organizations American Indian Family Center (AIFC), Interfaith Action’s Department of Indian Work (DIW), and the Montessori American Indian Childcare.
Previous LCA Funding	\$0
Use of Funds	
Recommended Award Amount	Uses
\$297,000	<p>Condition Assessments: Geotechnical and additional soil testing for landscaping gardening</p> <p>Financial Studies: Pro-Forma (including construction cost estimates, and modeling development operations costs)</p> <p>Site or Building Design: Site Planning, Construction phasing, Architectural design and space planning (including a Universal Accessibility study), Engineering, Construction, and Landscaping plans</p> <p>Sustainability/Climate Action Design: Energy and sustainable building designs (including potential for use of solar and high-efficiency HVAC and, an energy audit and studying use of passive energy), green infrastructure study</p> <p>Other: Interpretive messaging</p> <p>Project Management, Development Navigation and/or Community Engagement: Facilitation of Board of Governors, staff, and partner meetings, and collaboration with community leaders and members.</p>



Livable Communities Project Summary

Grant # SG
Type: LCA Pre-Development
Applicant: City of Saint Paul
Project Name: The Lexington Deluxe
Project Location: 576 Lexington Parkway N. St. Paul
Council District: 14 - Toni Carter

Project Detail	
Project Overview	The proposed project would create 31 new affordable apartments that are affordable to households living on 30% to 80% of the area median income (\$39,700 to \$104,200 in 2025).
Previous LCA Funding	\$0
Use of Funds	
Recommended Award Amount	Uses
\$300,000	<p>Financial Studies: Market Study, and Development Proforma</p> <p>Site or Building Design: Architectural design, Mechanical/Engineering/Plumbing (MEP), Landscape, and Stormwater designs</p> <p>Project Management or Development Navigation: Development process navigation consulting</p>



Livable Communities Project Summary

Grant # SG
Type: Policy and Program Development (HUD PRO)
Applicant: City of Blaine
Project Name: Floodplain Policy & Program Development
Location: N/A
Council District: 10 - Peter Lindstrom

Project Detail	
Project Overview	<p>The city proposes an update and replacement of the existing floodplain ordinance (to meet MN DNR and FEMA requirements) and development of a program to promote voluntary floodproofing of existing housing within the floodplain.</p> <p>The program design will be sensitive to the unique needs of manufactured homes on land lease lots and include educational materials that promote participation from a diverse group of residents, including those with limited English language skills.</p>
Use of Funds	
Recommended Award Amount	Uses
\$50,000	Consultant and staff time
Deliverables	Drafted ordinance and policy guides for the administration of the floodplain ordinance, including two flood warning plans. Ordinance and policy guides presented to City Council for approval



Livable Communities Project Summary

Grant # SG
Type: Policy and Program Development (LCA)
Applicant: City of Eden Prairie
Project Name: Housing Analysis in Support of Zoning and Land Use Update
Location: N/A
Council District: 3 – Tyrone Carter

Project Detail	
Project Overview	The city will conduct an analysis of existing and potential future housing stock to support recommendations and adjustments to housing and land use policies and programs.
Use of Funds	
Recommended Award Amount	Uses
\$50,000	Consultant time
Deliverables	Policy presented to City Council for approval



Livable Communities Project Summary

Grant # SG
Type: Policy and Program Development (LCA)
Applicant: City of Edina
Project Name: Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance Update
Location: N/A
Council District: 5 – John Pacheco Jr.

Project Detail	
Project Overview	The city will complete an update to the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance based on recommendations from the 2024 Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance Audit report. The update will better align the zoning and subdivision ordinances with the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan, incorporate goals from the City’s Climate Action Plan, including increasing opportunities for affordable housing and supporting a wider variety of housing types.
Use of Funds	
Recommended Award Amount	Uses
\$50,000	Consultant time
Deliverables	Ordinance presented to City Council for approval



Livable Communities Project Summary

Grant # SG
Type: Policy and Program Development (LCA)
Applicant: City of Golden Valley
Project Name: Missing Middle Housing Study to Update Zoning & Policy
Location: N/A
Council District: 8 – Anjuli Cameron

Project Detail	
Project Overview	The project supports the creation of local missing-middle housing solutions/tools that can be implemented to align with local housing goals and increase the range of housing types in the community. Policy recommendations intend to improve the effectiveness of existing programs such as the Home Ownership Program for Equity (HOPE).
Use of Funds	
Recommended Award Amount	Uses
\$50,000	Consultant time
Deliverables	Policy and ordinance(s) presented to City Council for approval



Livable Communities Project Summary

Grant # SG
Type: Policy and Program Development (HUD PRO)
Applicant: City of Hopkins
Project Name: Housing Assessment & LAHA Planning
Location: N/A
Council District: 8 – Anjuli Cameron

Project Detail	
Project Overview	The City intends to complete a local housing needs assessment, including review of existing and emerging affordable housing funding sources (namely, LAHA and MN Housing’s AHTF Matching grant) to determine and prioritize local use of funding available. The project includes a review of local zoning and land use regulations, to identify barriers to affordable housing development or preservation, providing recommendations for future ordinance updates or program changes.
Use of Funds	
Recommended Award Amount	Uses
\$50,000	Consultant time
Deliverable	Strategic funding plan (LAHA and AHTF spending priorities)



Livable Communities Project Summary

Grant # SG
Type: Policy and Program Development (HUD PRO)
Applicant: City of New Brighton
Project Name: Housing Action Plan (LAHA)
Location: N/A
Council District: 2- Reva Chamblis

Project Detail	
Project Overview	The project will create a Housing Action Plan, which will include development of three new housing polices or programs for local city council consideration, including the development of a policy or strategy to guide the use of LAHA funds.
Use of Funds	
Recommended Award Amount	Uses
\$39,000	Consultant time
Deliverables	Policy and/or program(s) presented to City Council for approval



Livable Communities Project Summary

Grant # SG
Type: Policy and Program Development (HUD PRO)
Applicant: City of Richfield HRA
Project Name: Housing Program Development (LAHA)
Location: N/A
Council District: 5 – John Pacheco Jr.

Project Detail	
Project Overview	This project will create at least one new program primarily focused on supporting low-income homeowners with critical home maintenance needs using LAHA funds, directly implemented by the HRA or in partnership with another organization.
Use of Funds	
Recommended Award Amount	Uses
\$22,000	Staff time
Deliverables	Policy and program(s) presented to HRA for approval

