



1. **What is the Main Street Economic Revitalization Program (MSERP)**

This is a state-funded initiative through the Department of Employment & Economic Development (DEED) intended to provide grants for capital improvement projects in commercial corridors across the state.

Projects resulting in the development, redevelopment, renovation, or repair of buildings are eligible for funding under this program.

Funding is available to anyone who has plans to invest in an eligible project per the requirements listed below. Priority will be given to business owners or developers from underserved populations including Black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) individuals, LGBTQI individuals, women, veterans, individuals with disabilities, low-income individuals, and individuals living in rural communities.

2. **Who is administering the grant program locally?**

The Greater Mankato Growth, Inc. Foundation (GMG) applied for and received \$721,153.85 for the Greater Mankato Area. The foundation serves as the fiscal host of these funds and will subgrant funds to eligible recipients.

GMG will be working with Region Nine Development Commission, to successfully manage this program.

3. **What can a business receive as part of this grant program?**

Businesses can receive a grant for up to 30% of the total project cost. Eligible expenses include:

- Repair, or renovation of real property
- Building construction
- Landscaping and streetscaping
- Demolition and site preparation
- Predesign and design
- Engineering
- Non-publicly owned infrastructure
- Related site amenities

The following expenses are ineligible:

- The purchase of real estate or business operations
- Business operating expenses such as inventory, wages, or working capital

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Projects must be completed by June 30, 2026

An applicant should check with their local municipality for all permitting, zoning and ordinance requirements.

4. What is the maximum and minimum amount of funding that can be received under this program?

The maximum amount of funding available under this program is \$175,000.

The minimum amount of funding available under this program is \$1,500, which can be received by projects with a total cost of \$5,000 or more. \$100,000 has been reserved for projects requesting \$15,000 or less.

5. Who is eligible to apply for this grant program?

Business owners or developers with property located in Blue Earth or Nicollet County who have projects located within a 10-minute walking distance of in one of the three commercial corridors linked below and have plans to develop, redevelop, renovate, or make repairs to their property are eligible to apply. Projects that make an investment in preparation for a future project can apply to cover any of the eligible expenses listed above.

Individuals leasing space should work with their landlords for any potential application.

[MSERP - New Corridor Boundaries](#)

6. When can I apply for a grant under this program and when will funding be available?

Applications are due no later than June 1, 2025 at 11:59 PM.

7. What are examples of eligible projects?

The following are some examples to give you an idea of whether a project is eligible. Not all eligible projects will receive funding. Some types of projects that are not listed below may be eligible.

1. Development:
 - i. Building a new structure on previously vacant land.
 - ii. Adding additional space onto an existing structure.
2. Redevelopment:
 - i. Demolishing an existing structure and constructing something new
 - ii. Repurposing an existing structure to find a new use
3. Renovation
 - i. Making an improvement to a building façade (storefront)

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- ii. Remodeling the interior of a building
- iii. Remodeling a doorway or building a ramp to improve ADA compliant accessibility

4. Repair

- i. Repairing a leaking roof
- ii. Fixing broken windows or doors
- iii. Resolving a safety concern
- iv. Adding fire suppression/sprinklers
- v. Replacing a damaged HVAC system

8. **Who decides if my project will receive funding?**

A committee of community reviewers will review all projects and create recommendations for project funding. Region Nine Development Commission will use these recommendations to determine which projects receive funding and how much funding will be received.

9. **Where can I receive help with my application?**

The Small Business Development Center will be providing support to businesses seeking to apply to this program. You can sign up to receive support by going to www.MyMinnesotaBusiness.com application support is available in English, Spanish, and Somali.

10. **What should I consider as I complete my application?**

Grant applicants will be asked to show that their project accomplishes one or more of the following goals:

- 1. The project will retain existing jobs and/or create new jobs
- 2. The project will increase the property value of the structure or vacant site
- 3. The project will positively impact the community & residents beyond indicated economic measures. Applicants will be asked to highlight any elements of their project that positively impact members of the underserved populations listed above:
 - i. Examples include but are not limited to:
 - 1. Adding ADA accessibility
 - 2. Providing access to culturally appropriate spaces
 - 3. Improving community aesthetics & vitality
- 4. The project will positively impact other businesses in the corridor
 - i. Examples include but are not limited to:
 - 1. Project will be a supplier or customer of other businesses
 - 2. Project will increase traffic to surrounding businesses
 - 3. Project will raise property values of surrounding businesses

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11. What projects will receive priority?

Priority will be given to the following project types:

1. Projects that develop or redevelop vacant land or blighted buildings
2. Projects that resolve a health or safety risk
3. Projects that are located in areas that meet the objectives of a strategic plan adopted by a public body
4. Projects submitted by applicants from underrepresented communities.

12. I am located just outside of the boundaries, can I apply?

As all corridors are impacted by the land surrounding the corridors, projects located within a 10-minute walk from an established corridor as estimated by Google Maps will be eligible.

13. My business lost money during COVID-19, the recent flooding, or another recent event. Can I apply for funds to cover those expenses under this program?

This program cannot cover lost revenue or other operating expenses; however, any construction costs tied to those events can count towards matching funds.

14. My project has already started, can I apply for funds under this program?

This program cannot fund projects that will happen without these dollars; however, it can fund enhancements to an initial project. Up to 50% of dollars spent prior to the grant award can count towards the matching funds required under this program.

15. My project will not be completed by June 30, 2026, can I still apply?

Work receiving funding under this program must be completed by June 30, 2026. If your project is multi-phase, please only submit a grant request for the phase(s) of your project that will be completed prior to June 30, 2026.

16. I am leasing a space, can I apply for funds under this program?

If your business is leasing a space, you should work with your landlord to determine if eligible work can be performed on your business. Grant funds will be awarded to the party responsible for paying for any eligible work.

17. What can be used for the matching funds?

Personal capital, loans, private grants, and local government funding can all be used towards the matching requirement. A small amount of the matching funds (no more than 33% of the grant award) can come from state or federal sources.

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For example: A \$100,000 project could receive \$30,000 and must provide a \$70,000 match. At least \$60,000 must come from sources that are not derived from state or federal funds. No more than \$10,000 can come from other state or federal programs.

The purchase of real estate or business operations or business operating expenses, such as inventory, wages, or working capital cannot be used as matching funds.

18. Should I still complete the matching fund worksheet if I haven't secured my matching funds?

Yes, the matching fund worksheet should be included in the application and should include all matching funds that have already been identified. Even if no matching funds have been secured, the matching fund worksheet should be included and should reflect that. Please use the space available in the worksheet and in the grant application narrative to describe the plan to identify matching funds.

19. I have two projects on one property, can I apply for grants for both of them?

Yes; however, should the total grant award exceed \$200,000 for both projects combined, prevailing wage may apply. Please communicate with Greater Mankato Growth if you will be submitting two grants for one property.

20. Is equipment an eligible project expense?

This response comes directly from the State of Minnesota Department of Employment & Economic Development:

Equipment is not eligible unless it falls under the definition of a capital improvement. For equipment to qualify as a capital improvement it has to be a tangible fixed asset of a capital nature and purchased and installed upon initial acquisition and construction of a building, expansion or major remodeling and necessary for the intended purpose of the facility.

Examples of equipment that meets this definition could include walk-in coolers, kitchen ranges and ovens, vent hoods, security equipment, restroom equipment, etc.

Equipment that is not installed in facility such as furniture, computers, etc are not considered capital improvements to the facility itself. In other words if a piece of equipment can be picked up and moved out the facility and be quickly converted to cash it's not eligible.

Examples of equipment that does not meet the definition of capital improvement could include things like tables, chairs, tablets, computers, utensils, office supplies, printers, etc.

21. Can I apply for funds for housing development?

In general projects receiving funding under this program must be commercial in nature. Single-family or low-density multi-family housing cannot be funded unless as a component of a mixed-use. This Program is supported, in part, by the State of Minnesota through a grant from the Department of Employment and Economic Development



development. Exceptions can be made for high-density multi-family projects where a dense urban environment creates exceptional costs for development.

22. I have additional questions not addressed here, who can I ask?

If you have additional questions, please contact Greater Mankato Growth at grants@greatermankato.com.