



SFY 2025 City of Brooklyn Park - Direct Appropriation

Annual Progress Report

12/12/2025

Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development
Employment and Training Programs Division

332 Minnesota Street, Suite E200
St. Paul, MN 55101

Kay Tracy

Kay.Tracy@state.mn.us

mn.gov/deed

As requested by Minnesota Statute 3.197: This report cost approximately \$149 to prepare, including staff time, printing and mailing expenses.

Upon request, this material will be made available in an alternative format such as large print, Braille or audio recording. Printed on recycled paper.

Contents

- Contents 3
- Introduction..... 4
- Overview of Program and Goals..... 4
- Participant Data..... 5
- Expenditure Data..... 7
- Stories of Impact..... 7

Introduction

The Minnesota State Legislature appropriated \$1,000,000 in State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2025 to the City of Brooklyn Park. ([Minnesota Session Laws – 2024, Chapter 120, S.F. 5289, Article 1, Section 2, Subdivision 3\(u\)](#)) This appropriation was for the Brooklyn Park Small Business Center and for the city to expand the workforce development programming of Brooklyn Park and Brooklyn Center through workforce development programs serving primarily underrepresented populations, including such programs as BrookLynk, Career Pathways, Youth Entrepreneurship, and Community Partnership. The enacted legislation permits the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) to retain five percent of these funds for administration and monitoring, making the total grant amount available equal to \$950,000. This is a onetime appropriation and is available until June 30, 2027.

Overview of Program and Goals

The goal of the appropriation has two components. One, to enhance **workforce development** programs provided to youth and young adults living in Brooklyn Park and Brooklyn Center. The second to support the operations of the City's **Small Business Center**.

Workforce Development - Over the past nine years BrookLynk, the City of Brooklyn Park and Brooklyn Center's shared workforce development division has initiated, designed, scaled and operated successful workforce development programs consisting of work readiness training, paid summer internships, dedicated employer partners, adult career pathways programming, and a Youth Entrepreneurship Program (YEP). BrookLynk focuses on building 21st century skills and networks that span different industries and integrates the use of labor market data into employer recruitment and trainings to support informed education and career planning. BrookLynk prepares youth and adults for careers and makes the connections necessary for our participants to land jobs. Program staff provide internship support and career coaching and planning, with the goal of providing individualized support to a growing number of youth interns, adults, and alumni. BrookLynk has become a resource to business partners for talent recruitment. In the coming program years BrookLynk anticipates serving more than 500 youth ages 14-24 annually.

Small Business Center - The Brooklyn Park Small Business Center (BPSBC) aims to create a multicultural collaborative environment that nurtures creativity and innovation, empowering local entrepreneurs to develop their small businesses and contribute to inclusive economic growth. With its vision, to be a thriving, and supportive community where local entrepreneurs can elevate their businesses and support one another in a collaborative environment, offering resources and community support for small business growth. The BPSBC provides affordability with memberships and event spaces priced below market rates, and flexibility with spaces and programs that adapt to the evolving needs of the local small business community. The center also focuses on wealth building by providing resources to help small businesses grow, enabling entrepreneurs to build personal and family wealth. As an economic resource hub, the BPSBC strives to be recognized as the go-to place for accessing small business resources and support in the City of Brooklyn Park.

Participant Data

The participant demographic, activity, and outcome data included in this report reflects the total from the start of the grant contract on August 10, 2024 through September 30, 2025. Final performance data will be available after the grant concludes, on June 30, 2027.

Total Participants Served 406

Demographic Data		Total	Percentage
Gender	Female	202	49.8%
	Male	200	49.3%
	Other	3	0.7%
	Prefer not to answer	1	0.2%

Demographic Data		Total	Percentage
Age	14 – 15	62	15.2%
	16 – 17	191	47.0%
	18 - 19	94	23.2%
	20 - 21	40	9.9%
	22 - 24	19	4.7%

Demographic Data		Total	Percentage
Ethnicity /Race	Hispanic/Latino	37	9.1%
	American Indian or Alaska Native	5	1.2%
	Asian/Pacific Islander	73	17.9%
	Black or African American	259	63.8%
	White	16	3.9%
	Multi-race	11	2.7%
	Other or Not Available	9	2.2%

Demographic Data		Total	Percentage
Education Level	8 th Grade and Under	4	0.9%
	9 th to 12 th Grade	292	71.9%
	Not Enrolled in High School and No Diploma/GED	10	2.5%
	Some Post-Secondary/College Coursework	61	15.0%
	Completed College Degree or Program	6	1.5%
	High School graduate or equivalent	21	5.2%

Demographic Data		Total	Percentage
Other Demographics	Limited English Proficient	30	7.4%
	Receiving Public Assistance	114	28.1%
	Foster Youth (or aged out of foster care)	12	2.9%
	With a Disability	45	11.1%
	HS Dropout	3	0.7%
	Offender (previous criminal/juvenile justice involvement)	15	3.7%
	Pregnant or Parenting	6	1.5%
	Basic Skills Deficient	35	8.6%
	Homeless or Runaway	7	1.7%
	Not Employed at Program Enrollment	265	65.3%
	Veteran	0	0.0%
	Low-Income Youth	132	32.5%

Program Services and Activities Data		Total	Percentage
Received Education, Employment Preparation, or Skills Training		406	100.0%
Received Work-Based Learning or Work Experience		46	11.3%
Received Internship or Apprenticeship Activities		154	37.9%
Received Community Involvement and Leadership Development Activities		3	0.7%
Received Career Exploration, Guidance and/or Planning Activities		406	100.0%
Received Mentoring Activities		217	53.4%
Received Support Services		210	51.7%
Received Case Management, Guidance, Counseling Services		217	53.4%

General Performance and Outcome Data		Total	Percentage
Attained Work Readiness Goals or Educational Goals		201	49.5%
Obtained High School Diploma or GED		21	5.2%
Remained in School or Drop Out Returned to School		114	28.0%
Obtained a Safety Certificate; specify: OSHA		55	13.5%
Enrolled in Post-Secondary Education		16	3.9%
Entered Part-Time Employment		30	7.4%
Average Wage at Part-Time Employment		\$15.99	-
Entered Full-Time Employment		10	2.4%
Average Wage at Full-Time Employment		\$21.50	-
Entered Military		0	0.0%
Entered Job Search and Unemployed		45	11.1%
Completed Program Objective		406	100.0%

Participant Satisfaction Data	Total	Percentage (of responses)
Number of participants rating experience as “Excellent”	238	60.2%
Number of participants rating experience as “Very Good”	140	35.5%
Number of participants rating experience as “Average”	15	3.8%
Number of participants rating experience as “Below Average”	2	0.5%
Number of participants rating experience as “Poor”	0	0.0%
Total Number of Surveys Completed	395	100.0%

Expenditure Data

The grant contract started on August 10, 2024 and runs through June 30, 2027. Expenditures through September 30, 2025, by cost category, are reported below.

Budget Category	Approved Budget	Expenditures (through Sept 2025)
Administration (up to 10% allowed)	\$95,000	\$20,623.95
Support Services	\$10,000	\$6,000.00
Direct Customer Training	\$180,000	\$13,200.00
Contracted Services	\$507,500	\$130,250.00
Participant Wages and Fringe Benefits	\$80,000	\$25,577.64
Direct Services	\$77,500	\$33,138.38
Total	\$950,000	\$228,789.97

Stories of Impact

Youth Entrepreneurship Program – Launching a Dream into Reality - In early 2025, a passionate and determined participant joined the Youth Entrepreneurship Program with a dream to create a culturally focused service that would uplift and connect her community. Over twelve weeks, she transformed her idea into a registered business through dedication, mentorship, and the support of BrookLynk staff.

Through the program, she learned how to build a business plan, manage finances, and apply for startup funding. Her mentor guided her in refining her concept and helped her develop marketing materials and professional business cards. She gained confidence through public speaking and presentation coaching and excelled in the program’s Shark Tank-style pitch event, earning the top microgrant award to launch her business.

The program connected her to local networks and provided hands-on experience through an internship with a small business owner, where she applied what she learned in real-world settings. She continues to promote her business at community events in Brooklyn Park and Brooklyn Center and is planning her next phase of growth. Beyond launching a business, she gained financial independence, mentorship, and the confidence to pursue her goals. Her success reflects how investment in entrepreneurship can create opportunity not only for individuals but for their families and communities.

Summer Internship Program – Growth through Leadership and Mentorship – A.V. is a participant who completed her second BrookLynk internship with the City of Brooklyn Park’s Recreation and Parks Department. Her role involved planning and leading pop-up art activities for children and families at city events. At the start of the summer, A.V. and her supervisor recognized that this leadership role would stretch her beyond her comfort zone. With support and guidance, she began taking more initiative, sharing her ideas, and leading activities with confidence. As the summer progressed, she organized art projects for large community events such as Gus Macker and the Arts and Business Expo.

A.V. developed practical skills in event planning, material management, and community engagement while learning how to adapt her ideas for diverse audiences. More importantly, she grew as a communicator, leader, and creative thinker. Through mentorship and her own perseverance, she turned uncertainty into confidence and built skills that will serve her in any future role.