

Downtown Streetscapes

The Downtown Streetscapes grant program is designed to incentivize investment in downtown areas by promoting safe and attractive environments for residents, shoppers, workers and visitors.

Contact: Whitney Ridlon, 218-735-3004, Whitney.Ridlon@state.mn.us

Eligible Applicants: Nonprofits, cities, townships or tribal units of government including informal grassroots groups that partner with a nonprofit or city to act as a fiscal sponsor within the agency's service area. Multi-organization collaboration is welcome.

Eligible Projects: Highly visible and creative projects that improve the downtown or business corridor.

Ineligible Projects: Examples include existing deficits, deferred maintenance, community festivals or events. Projects that directly serve a for profit business.

Funding: The Downtown Streetscapes grant program is funded at \$200,000 for FY2020. The grant awards range up to \$50,000. The agency provides a 1:1 match per project. In-kind (materials/labor) may constitute up to 25% of the local match. Pre-approval of the in-kind match is required in writing before application is submitted to the agency. Projects must begin within six months from grant award and completed within 12 months of grant award.

Evaluation Criteria (100 points)

1. **Job creation. (5 points)**
 - Describe job creation or retention, if any that will result from this project. (Minnesota Statute 298.22 subd. 13)
2. **Visibility of project. (30 points)**
3. **Community support for proposed project(s) including letters of support by local government, business community, downtown area businesses, and downtown revitalization group or youth/student program participation. (30 points)**
4. **How project enhances the economic vitality of the downtown or business corridor area. (10 points)**
5. **Alignment with strategic or comprehensive plan. If the project aligns with the community's comprehensive plan that portion of the plan should be highlighted and uploaded. (10 points)**
6. **Program funding has not been awarded in the past two fiscal years. (10 point)**
7. **Project serves an underserved community/population. (5 points)**
 - Minority.
 - Geography.
 - Economic status.

Application Process and Review

A pre-application meeting with the grant administrator is required. Applications are accepted August 1 through August 30, 2019. Full applications are provided for eligible projects. All eligible applications received during this time period will be reviewed and scored according to the evaluation criteria. Grants are awarded to the most competitive applications. Applications submitted after August 30, 2019 through the end of the agency's fiscal year (June 30, 2020) may be awarded on a rolling basis subject to meeting minimum scoring criteria and subject to the availability of remaining program funds.

A project presentation may be required by applicant.

Applications are reviewed by a team and evaluated and scored on an individual basis. Grant program administrators do not score applications for their respective program.

Project funding is subject to the Commissioner's final approval. Project must meet objectives, priorities and policies established by the Commissioner.

Notify grant program administrator of any changes to application after final submittal.

Application Checklist

- Project narrative:**
 - Narrative must address the evaluation criteria.
- A map identifying the project area and specific project locations within the project area.**
- Letter(s) of support for proposed project.**
- Evidence of the agency's pre-approval of proposed in-kind funding.**
- For nonprofit organizations, copies of financial document(s) as indicated below:**

Grant Amount Requested	Annual Income of Organization	Document to Upload with Application
Under \$25,000	Any	Most recently filed IRS Form 990
\$25,000 and up	Under \$750,000	Most recently filed IRS Form 990 <i>and</i> recent Board Reviewed Financial Statements
\$25,000 and up	Over \$750,000	Most recently filed IRS Form 990 <i>and</i> most recent Financial Statements audited by a Certified Public Accountant

- Resolution authorizing applicant to apply for and accept funds.**
- IRS Form W-9 – Request for Taxpayer ID Number and Certification – to be completed by applicant.**
- Other documentation to support the application.**

Additional Information

- The agency reserves the right to require signage/logo acknowledging financial assistance from the Department of Iron Range Resources & Rehabilitation. Details are outlined in grant agreement.
- Awarded projects must meet Minnesota Prevailing Wage Statutes as stated in the grant agreement.
- Project information is subject to Minnesota Data Practices Act, Minnesota Statute Chapter 13.
- A progress report is required if grant period exceeds 12 months.
- A site visit may be conducted by an authorized representative of the agency.
- A final report is required before final payment including photographs of project, job creation/retention and matching funds.
- Highly visible and community supported projects will be more competitive.
- In kind services must be provided by an approved vendor or entity.
- Acquisition costs are eligible up to 10% of agency grant award.