



CARVER COUNTY
COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT
AGENCY

**COMMUNITY GROWTH
PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE (CGPI)**

POLICY AND PROCEDURES GUIDE

2026

I. PROGRAM PURPOSE

The Community Growth Partnership Initiative Program (CGPI) was created and funded by the Carver County Community Development Agency (CDA) in January of 2016. The goals of the CGPI Program are to increase the tax base and improve the quality of life in Carver County through specific strategies:

Affordable Housing: The program is intended to promote the development of affordable workforce and supportive housing. The need for affordable housing continues to grow in Carver County and opportunities for affordable housing development are becoming increasingly difficult. Affordable housing provides benefits beyond the housing itself, such as assisting area workers and providing housing for our future workforce.

Community Development: The CGPI is intended to assist cities and townships with job creation and community enhancement. This strategy focuses on "Communities for a Lifetime" by supporting physical and economic improvements that expand the local tax base, create living-wage employment, and enhance the commercial vitality of city centers and neighborhoods.

Redevelopment: The program is intended to assist with cities' implementation of Redevelopment Plan goals. Redevelopment grants specifically target the transformation of blighted, contaminated, or under-utilized areas that do not maximize their potential economic value, can negatively impact the livability of a community, and can be expensive to remedy. These funds are designed to offset "extraordinary costs," such as demolition or soil remediation, that often prevent the private market from revitalizing difficult sites.

Technology Assistance: The CGPI program is intended to assist with economic development technology systems. This includes the implementation of systems such as data-driven software for site selection, digital marketing platforms to attract industry, and platforms that provide business intelligence for local economic growth.

II. DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply throughout the Community Growth Partnership Initiative (CGPI) Policy and Procedures Guide. These terms are provided to ensure clarity and consistency in program administration.

Activity – A specific task or component undertaken as part of a broader project. Activities contribute to the completion of a project but are not, by themselves, the full Project for which Redevelopment Project grant funds are requested.

Housing Affordability – "Affordable" is defined as: (a) rental – available to households at or below 60% of the area median income (AMI) as determined annually by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; (b) ownership – available to households at or below 80% of AMI.

Living Wage Jobs – Employment positions that pay a minimum of \$24.47 per hour.* These jobs support household stability and contribute to long-term economic growth within Carver County. *Data sourced from the Living Wage Institute via <https://livingwage.mit.edu> for the Minneapolis-St Paul-Bloomington, MN Metropolitan Statistical Area as of February 15, 2026.

Project – The primary development or redevelopment effort for which a Community Development grant is requested. A project may include multiple activities, but the project itself represents the overarching development goal.

Infill Development – Residential or non-residential development on vacant or underutilized parcels located within areas that are already developed. These sites often require additional planning or design considerations due to size, configuration, or access constraints.

Redevelopment Plan – A plan formally approved by a city or township governing body, as defined by Minnesota Statutes 469.002, Subdivision 16. A Redevelopment Plan must:

- Identify the area for redevelopment;
- Describe its relationship to local land-use objectives; and
- Provide general standards for development or redevelopment.

A citywide Comprehensive Plan does **not** qualify unless it includes a specifically identified and thoroughly documented redevelopment area.

III. GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

FUNDING AVAILABLE: Up to \$415,000 is available for CGPI grants in 2026. Funding is allocated among the three grant types as follows:

- **Pre-Development Grants:**
Up to **10%** of total program funds (maximum award: **\$10,000**).
- **Technology Assistance Grants:**
Up to **5%** of total program funds (maximum award: **\$1,500**).
- **Community Development Grants:**
Remaining funds available (maximum award: **\$100,000**).

Each city or township of Carver County is eligible to submit and receive one (1) Pre-Development grant, one (1) Technology Assistance grant, and one (1) Community Development grant per calendar year. Cities and townships must prioritize applications with only one application submitted per grant type in a funding year. This is a matching grant program. Please see later Sections for match requirements by grant type.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS: All cities and townships located within Carver County are eligible to apply for CGPI grants.

ACTIVITY COSTS AND ELIGIBILITY:

- Incurred Costs: Costs incurred prior to the award date are ineligible for reimbursement.
- Match Exception: Costs incurred prior to the award date may be applied toward the *required match* if they are directly related to the proposed project scope.

TYPES OF GRANTS: CGPI provides three distinct grant types:

- **Pre-Development Grants** – Early-stage planning and due diligence activities.
- **Technology Assistance Grants** – Economic development technology tools and systems.
- **Community Development Grants** – Redevelopment, affordable housing, and living wage job creation.

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES: Only activities listed in this section are eligible for CGPI funding.

Pre-Development grant funding supports activities that are directly related to a current or future project. This includes but is not limited to:

- **Planning & Feasibility Studies:**
Market analyses, small area plans, pro formas, site feasibility studies, TIF/abatement analyses.
- **Design & Architectural Services:**
Conceptual site plans, renderings, preliminary floor plans, design charrettes, community engagement.
- **Site Investigation & Environmental:**
Phase I & II assessments, hazardous materials surveys, geotechnical testing, boundary/topographic surveys.
- **Legal & Regulatory Activities:**
Zoning and land-use analysis, title work, legal descriptions, concept design, zoning studies.

Note: Pre-Development grants may fund activities required to create a Redevelopment Plan; therefore, a Redevelopment Plan is **not** required prior to application.

Technology Assistance grant funding is intended to assist cities and townships with economic development technology systems. Technology Assistance funding supports:

- Data-driven software for site selection.
- Digital marketing tools for business attraction.
- Systems that provide economic or business intelligence to support local development strategies.

Community Development grant funding supports the following activities necessary to prepare sites for redevelopment and implementation of an adopted Redevelopment Plan, produce affordable housing, and/or create living wage jobs:

- Property acquisition.
- Relocation payments.
- Demolition and clearance for site assemblage.
- Soil correction with extraordinary remediation costs.
- Historic preservation.
- Rehabilitation, expansion, or construction of facilities linked to living wage job creation.
- Affordable housing development (new construction, rehabilitation, adaptive reuse).
- Public infrastructure directly tied to the Redevelopment Plan (e.g., sidewalks, lighting, utilities, street improvements).

INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES: Grant funds cannot be used for:

- Public facilities or other activities that serve a general public purpose and fall under the existing responsibilities of cities and townships, including city halls, parks, and water treatment facilities.
- House moving.
- Regular maintenance activities i.e., landscaping, mowing, snow removal, routine repairs.
- Administration or general government expenses.

IV. PRE-DEVELOPMENT & TECHNOLOGY ASSISTANCE GRANTS

The application must meet the following threshold criteria to be considered for funding:

- ✓ The proposed activity must be an eligible grant activity for Pre-Development / Technology Assistance.
- ✓ Local support of the application as evidenced by an adopted resolution of the respective city or township council that includes the required Resolution Provisions (see sample resolution).
- ✓ Demonstrated support for affordable housing and the CDA's mission by the city or township, as shown through adoption of the required Resolution Provisions and a history of supporting affordable housing developments.
- ✓ A minimum leverage ratio of 1:1 is required, meaning each dollar of Pre-Development / Technology Assistance grant funding must be matched with at least one dollar from other sources. Applicants may use non-public funds to meet this match requirement.

- ✓ Submission of the completed application in accordance with *Section VIII - Grant Application Instructions*.

V. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

The application must meet the following threshold criteria to be considered for funding:

- ✓ The proposed activity must be an eligible grant activity for Community Development.
- ✓ Local support of the application as evidenced by an adopted resolution of the respective city or township council that includes the required Resolution Provisions (see sample resolution).
- ✓ A minimum leverage ratio of 2:1 is required, meaning each dollar of Community Development grant funding must be matched with at least two dollars from other sources. Applicants may use non-public funds to meet this match requirement.
- ✓ Demonstration of the project's public purpose and financial need that other funding sources cannot fill.
- ✓ Proof of commitment to Project by property owner must be included a letter of support or copy of the purchase agreement.
- ✓ Demonstrated support for affordable housing and the CDA's mission by the city or township, as shown through adoption of the required Resolution Provisions and a history of supporting affordable housing developments.
- ✓ Submission of the completed application in accordance with *Section VIII – Grant Application Instructions*.

VI. SCORING CRITERIA (125-POINT TOTAL SCALE)

Community Development applications meeting eligibility criteria will be evaluated based on the following:

Category	Max Points	Detail
Priority Funding Status	25	Cities or Townships that have not received CGPI funding in the last two (2) funding cycles (2024 & 2025).
Housing Affordability	25	<p>10 pt = 25% of project (min of 5 units) meeting affordable housing limits</p> <p>15 pt = 50% of project (min of 5 units) meeting affordable housing limits</p> <p>20 pt = 75% of project (min of 5 units) meeting affordable housing limits</p> <p>25 pt = 100% of project (min of 5 units) meeting affordable housing limits</p>
Economic Benefit	25	<p>10 pt = Project will create 1-5 living wage jobs (FT or PT) and/ or will have a 25% impact on property taxes.</p> <p>15 pt = Project will create 6-10 living wage jobs (FT or PT) and/ or will have a 50% impact on property taxes.</p> <p>20 pt = Project will create 11-25 living wage jobs (FT or PT) and/ or will have a 75% impact on property taxes.</p> <p>25 pt = Project will create 25+ living wage jobs (FT or PT) and/ or will have a 100+% impact on property taxes.</p>
Leverage & Financial Need	15	<p>5 pt = meets required match (2:1).</p> <p>10 pt = 1.5 times required match (3:1).</p> <p>15 pt = more than two times the required match (3.1+:1).</p>
Removal of Blight	15	<p>10 pt = Project includes demo and cleanup of blighted properties and/or properties with obsolete structures.</p> <p>15 pt = Project is part of an approved redevelopment plan that includes demo and cleanup of blighted properties and/or properties with obsolete structures with partial funding committed to this activity.</p>
Readiness to Proceed	10	<p>5 pt = financing commitments for 25%-50% of total project cost.</p> <p>10 pt = financing commitments for 50.1%+ of total project cost.</p>
Environmental Improvement	10	10 pt = Project clean ups, prevents and protects from environmental hazards.
TOTAL	125	

VII. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

PROPERTY ACQUISITION AND RELOCATION

Property acquisition may be undertaken by a public, private, or non-profit entity as part of a redevelopment project. In all instances, the CDA will provide grant funds to the city/township as grantee, which in turn, can provide those funds to another acquiring entity if necessary. The corresponding grant agreement will specify conditions whereby the acquiring entity will have no recourse to the CDA in matters related to the acquisition of real property.

If federal funds are used in whole or in part for a project, including property acquisition, clearance and/or construction, all provisions of 49 CFR 24.101 (the Uniform Relocation Act or URA) must be followed. With all funding sources, the cost of property acquisition must be based on a determination of fair market value as derived from an independent appraisal and/or county assessed value. If the final acquisition price exceeds the appraised value, the grant funds requested must be less than this value with the additional cost being paid by other funds.

Minnesota Statutes 117.50 et. seq. and related case law also requires that in all acquisitions undertaken by an acquiring entity without federal participation, the authority must provide relocation assistance as a cost of acquisition. Additionally, the Minnesota Supreme Court held that an authority may be responsible for certain relocation costs when a private developer acquires the property if the activities of the authority and the developer are so intertwined to produce a joint acquisition of the project.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

CDA's mission is to provide affordable housing opportunities and foster community and economic development. To receive Community Growth Partnership Initiative Program grant funds, the applicant must cultivate the CDA's mission. If an applicant's project is unrelated to or does not possess any amount of affordable housing, the project will not be funded. The project must be either a Tax Credit Development or receiving some other type of funding that requires income and/or rent restrictions (affordability compliance) with a federal, state, or local agency. If the project is a rental project, the owner must be willing to accept Tenant Based Rental Assistance (Housing Choice Voucher/other tenant based rental assistance). Compliance reporting required by the federal, state, or local agency will also need to be submitted to the CDA annually.

FINANCIAL NEED

As noted previously, leverage of other funding sources is required for a CGPI grant. In addition to identifying leverage, the applicant shall also explain how they have exhausted other resources.

FAIR HOUSING

The Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in all housing related transactions based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, familial status, and disability. Projects shall comply with all federal laws, executive orders, and implementing rules and regulations. Projects shall also comply with Minnesota law and local city/township ordinances.

REIMBURSEMENT

The Community Development grant program works on a reimbursement basis. To be reimbursed, documentation must be submitted showing the criteria that have been met. For example, if scoring is received in growth or retention of Living Wage Jobs, documentation must be submitted to support the number listed in the application.

CDA will also consider whether an Applicant successfully used any previously awarded CGPI funds. In its comments to the CDA Board, staff will include the Applicant's past use of CGPI funds (if any), whether the Applicant utilized all awarded funds, if the 18-month time frame was met, and if funds were returned to the CDA.

VIII. GRANT APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS & REVIEW PROCESS

This section outlines the submission requirements, deadlines, and procedures for all CGPI grant applications. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that all materials are complete and submitted in accordance with these instructions. Incomplete applications will not be accepted.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must prepare and submit a complete application package, which includes:

1. The appropriate CGPI program application (Pre-Development, Technology Assistance, or Community Development).
2. All required attachments and supporting documentation.
3. A city or township council resolution that includes the required Resolution Provisions.

SUBMISSION METHODS

Applications may be submitted:

- By email to: melodieb@carvercda.org
- By mail or in person to: Carver County CDA
Attn: Community Development Department
705 North Walnut Street
Chaska, MN 55318

Applicants submitting early will receive an **email confirmation** within 24 hours. If confirmation is not received, applicants should promptly notify the CDA.

APPLICATION DUE DATE

Pre-Development and Technology Assistance grants are accepted on a pipeline basis. The Pre-Development / Technology Assistance grant application must be received three (3) weeks in advance of the next regularly scheduled Board of Commissioners meeting. If applications are not received three (3) weeks prior, they will be placed on the following meeting's agenda.

Community Development grants are awarded on a competitive basis. The 2026 schedule is:

- **Applications Available:** March 23, 2026
- **Applications Due:** April 30, 2026, by 4:00pm
- **Evaluation Period:** May 1 – May 15, 2026
- **CDA Board Tentative Approval:** May 21, 2026

No Community Development applications or supplemental materials will be accepted after the deadline unless specifically requested by the CDA. CDA retains the right to reject any application in whole or in part. Applicants are encouraged to consult with CDA staff prior to submission. Questions may be directed to: **Melodie Bridgeman** at (952) 556-2778 or melodieb@carvercda.org.

SELECTION

CGPI grant applications are evaluated through a structured review process designed to ensure fairness, transparency, and alignment with program goals. Applications that meet all threshold and eligibility requirements will proceed to formal review and scoring. Competitive applications will be reviewed by up to two (2) CDA staff, and up to two (2) individuals qualified by CDA with no direct affiliation with any potential applicants.

Applications meeting the eligibility criteria will be scored, ranked and a recommendation will be submitted to the CDA Board of Commissioners for consideration for approval. The Board reviews recommendations and determines whether to approve, deny, or modify a grant award. If approved, CDA will enter into a grant agreement with the city/township.

IX. GRANT AGREEMENT

Once a project is approved by the CDA Board of Commissioners, the CDA will enter into a Grant Agreement with the awarded city or township. The Grant Agreement outlines the terms, conditions, timelines, and reporting requirements associated with the use of CGPI funds. CDA staff will work directly with the grantee to prepare and execute the Grant Agreement. The Agreement must be fully executed before any project costs are eligible for reimbursement.

TERMS OF AGREEMENT

All grant funds must be spent within **18 months** of the Grant Agreement date. Waivers and extensions to any provision in the agreement requested by the grantee may be considered on a case-by-case basis depending on the merits of the request. Grant recipients may request one 12-month extension to be reviewed for administrative approval for those projects that are making substantial progress towards completion. **Projects that are not underway within 18 months from the award date are not eligible for an extension.**

REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURES & REPORTING

Grant funds are paid on a **reimbursement basis**. To receive reimbursement, the grantee must submit:

1. Reimbursement Request Form
2. Documentation verifying that activities and expenses including match documentation (i.e., invoices, payment, contracts, etc.) have been completed in accordance with the Grant Agreement; and
3. Supporting evidence for any performance metrics that were part of the scoring criteria (e.g., job creation, property tax impact, affordable units).

Grantees need to submit semi-annual progress reports to CDA. Reports will consist of the progress of the project and will be due each **May 31st** and **November 30th** during the grant term.