



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Department of Community and Economic Development

NEIGHBORHOOD CATALYTIC CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROGRAM: EARLY ACTION

Due Date: **October 20, 2023 at 12PM ET**

Acceptance Email: communitydevelopment@cincinnati-oh.gov

I. **Early Action Funding Purpose**

The City of Cincinnati's Neighborhood Catalytic Capital Investment Program (NCCIP) provides early action funding to advance transformative neighborhood projects to the next phase of the development process or determine the economic viability of a project vision.

Applicants must demonstrate proposed pre-development or early action activities would result in progress toward a catalytic neighborhood project. Priority will be given to projects that require a substantial amount of investment in real estate development relative to the average real estate value within the surrounding neighborhood.

Resources will be further targeted to Strategic Investment Areas and Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Areas (See Section VI).

The maximum dollar request limit for the Early Action category of funds is \$100,000. The City of Cincinnati is seeking to fund as many catalytic early action projects as possible. Per City Ordinance 201-2023, the total amount of funds available for the 2023-2024 program year is \$500,000.

II. **Eligible & Ineligible Uses**

Eligible uses consist of pre-development and stabilization including, but not limited to, third-party market and feasibility studies, environmental assessments, design and engineering studies, preliminary construction cost verifications, and site and security capital improvements. **Applicant must have site control of proposed project site.**

Ineligible uses include staff salaries, developer fees, fundraising activities, property holding costs, and other similar activities. Costs incurred prior to an agreement with the City for use of awarded funding are also ineligible.

III. **Submission Requirements**

To achieve a uniform review process and a degree of comparability, proposals should contain the following information in the RFP response form provided:

a. **Applicant Information & Qualifications**

i. **Project Team:** Names and titles of key members of the project team, including as applicable: lead organization, owners, project partners, consultants, and contractors.

ii. **Applicant's Legal Structure:** Evidence of corporate status including, where applicable, Articles of Incorporation, or a partnership certificate and/or agreement, name and title of individuals/entities holding an ownership interest of 20% or more. For non-profit organizations a roster of the board members and key officers is required.

- iii. **Capacity & Experience:** Concise narrative describing Applicant Team's background, history, and project experience, including examples of comparable projects completed by the applicant, project team members, and/or committed partners.

b. Project Description

- i. **Scope of Work:** Narrative detailing the entire project to be completed with all funding sources and how the proposed use of funds enables project to reach next stage of development.
- ii. **Anticipated Timeline:** Applicant should list milestones for pre-development, due diligence, and implementation of proposed early action scope of work.
- iii. **Concept Site Plan:** If available, drawings showing preliminary ideas for building placement, parking layout, access drives, and landscaping as applicable.
- iv. **Community Support:** Proof of notification and/or letters support letters from community council and other stakeholders.

c. Early Action Budget

- i. **Sources & Uses:** List all sources of capital and expected uses in the proposed project.
- ii. **Funding Commitments:** Letter(s) addressed to the City of Cincinnati, Department of Community and Economic Development. Letter should include the name, title, company, address, and phone number of the individual providing the letter.

IV. Evaluation Criteria and Process:

Applications will be reviewed and scored by a review panel which includes five City staff members appointed by the City Manager, a representative from Homebase Cincinnati, and a representative from Invest in Neighborhoods. Applicants are encouraged to detail unique or creative aspects of their proposal which may result in advantages to the neighborhood and City if selected for award.

- a. **(20 points) Neighborhood Impact:** Meets goal(s) in neighborhood or community vision plan and addresses City of Cincinnati's Balanced Development Priorities (attached for reference).
- b. **(20 points) Benefit to Strategic Investment Areas:** Impacts Low/Mod job creation, Low/Mod area benefit or the removal of Slum and Blight.
- c. **(20 points) Community Support:** Demonstrates community support and has written confirmation from, but not limited to, community council, business association, community development corporation, and other stakeholders.
- d. **(10 points) Project Scope and Budget:** Clearly explains work needed to complete the project. Thorough and reasonable budget with line items verified through quotes and bids.
- e. **(10 points) Private Leverage:** Project budget demonstrates Applicant has identified and is actively seeking sources of funding to advance the project to the next stage of development. The amount of funding committed to the project is a strong consideration.
- f. **(10 points) Organization's Capacity:** Applicant's capacity to carry out the project (i.e., complete pre-development or early action activities and pursue additional sources of funding and financing).
- g. **(10 points) Completeness of Application:** All required information included along with applicable supporting documents verifying budgets, and financial commitments.

V. Timeline:

- **Release of RFP**

August 18, 2023

- **Application Close** October 20, 2023
- **Award Announcements (Estimated)** November 8, 2023

VI. Strategic Investment Areas

A Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (NRSA) is a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) grantee-designated area targeted for revitalization reviewed and approved by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

NRSA (Strategy Area)	CDBG Local Target Areas
Beekman Corridor NRSA	Avondale
Bond Hill NRSA	Bond Hill
Camp Washington NRSA	Camp Washington
East End NRSA	Carthage
Evanston-Walnut Hills NRSA	Corryville
Kennedy Heights NRSA	CUF
Linwood NRSA	East End
Madisonville NRSA	East Price Hill
Mount Airy NRSA	East Westwood
OTR-West End NRSA	English Woods
Pendleton NRSA	Evanston
Price Hill NRSA	Kennedy Heights
Riverside-Sedamsville NRSA	Linwood
Roselawn NRSA	Lower Price Hill
Upper Mill Creek NRSA	Madisonville
Uptown NRSA	Millvale
Westwood NRSA	Mount Airy
	Mount Auburn
	North Fairmount
	Northside
	Over-the-Rhine
	Pendleton
	Riverside
	Roselawn
	Sedamsville
	South Cumminsville
	South Fairmount
	Spring Grove Village
	Villages at Roll Hill
	Walnut Hills
	West End
	West Price Hill
	Westwood
	Winton Hills

VII. Conditions of Award

Upon an award of City funds, the City and recommended awardee(s) would negotiate a funding agreement for disbursement of City funds towards the awarded project(s). The funding agreement(s) will outline the terms and conditions for disbursement of funding.

VIII. Post Award Procedures

As part of the City's effort to ensure that viable projects are provided the resources to proceed and resources are not held back for projects that are no longer viable, the City expects continued progress in producing required documents and responding to City staff on project details to ensure that the City has the information necessary to have contracts drafted, mutually negotiated and executed so the project proceeds in a timely manner. The City may set specific timelines for delivery of documents or information regarding the project that must be met by the awardee, or the award of funds may be withdrawn. If the awardee fails to respond to the request by the City or fails to meet established deadlines for delivery set by the City staff, the City may rescind the funding award for failure to demonstrate that the project remains viable to proceed.

Following awards, projects may need to seek minimal alterations to their original proposals due to unforeseen circumstances. Minimal alterations may be approved by City staff. Substantial alterations are not permitted and are the basis for rescinding an award. Applicants may consult with City staff to delineate a minimal versus a substantial alteration.

IX. Procurement Handbook for Developers

If awarded funding, projects may be subject to the following City of Cincinnati procurement requirements:

- Meet & Confer
- Selection of Subcontractors
- Debarred Contractor Search
- S/M/WBE Goals
- Prevailing Wage
- Wage Enforcement
- Living Wage
- Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)
- Preconstruction Meeting

For more information on any of these requirements, applicants should consult the City's [Procurement Handbook for Developers & Subrecipients](#)

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Are for-profit, not-for-profit, hybrid, and sole proprietorships equally eligible?

Yes.

2. Do early action funds affect project eligibility for other funding?

Early Action awards do not affect future eligibility for other City funding.

3. Where can I find contact information for community, business association, and/or community development corporation?

- [Community Councils](#)
- [Community Development Corporations](#)
- [Neighborhood Business Associations](#)

4. How can I demonstrate the proposed project would not be financially feasible if limited to real estate tax incentives or other available DCED programs?

- a. Applicants can include a summary of their financial feasibility analysis of the project (e.g., debt capacity and eligibility for other types of funding).
- b. Typical real estate financial assistance programs offered by the City include partial property tax abatements, gap financing, and forgivable loans. Entities seeking general assistance for a real estate development or business lending/economic development project may complete a [Financial Assistance Application](#).
- c. Please refer to Choosency.com for a listing of incentive and funding programs currently available for real estate, neighborhood, and business development projects and eligibility requirements.
 - <https://choosency.com/real-estate-development/>
 - <https://choosency.com/neighborhood-services/>
 - <https://choosency.com/small-business/>