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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Important Announcement Regarding the 2023 Civic and Community Center Financing Fund (CCCFF) Application Cycle**

**November 29, 2022 (LINCOLN, NEB.)** – The Nebraska Department of Economic Development (DED) is announcing important information pertaining to the 2023 application cycle of the Civic and Community Center Financing Fund (CCCFF) program.

During the 2022 Legislative Session, Nebraska statute was amended to include tribal governments as eligible applicants under the CCCFF program. This forthcoming 2023 application cycle will be the first to include tribal governments as eligible entities, adding eligibility and flexibility under this competitive, annual program.

“DED is excited to make available this flagship state program for community development to our tribal government partners,” shared Director Tony Goins. “A proven tool for community enrichment in our Nebraska municipalities, Civic and Community Center Financing Fund now becomes an instrument for our Nebraska tribal governments to promote economic opportunity and a higher quality of life.”

Based on projections, the available aid in the upcoming CCCFF application cycle is expected to near pre-pandemic levels. CCCFF is funded by turnback taxes collected from arenas and convention centers; and revenues to the Fund are steadily increasing. Therefore, maximum amounts awardable to recipients during the 2023 cycle are projected to correspond with “Grant Maximum Schedule B.” Note that if deemed necessary, DED reserves the option to reduce maximum award amounts to meet budgetary requirements, at which time an announcement will be made.

**Grant Maximum Schedule B**

Municipality Population	Amount
100,000-299,999	\$3,375,000
40,000-99,999	\$1,687,000
20,000-39,999	\$1,125,000
10,000-19,999	\$900,000
Less than 10,000	\$562,000
<b>All Tribal Governments</b>	<b>\$3,375,000</b>

The CCCFF Application & Program Guidelines reflect the changes announced in this release. Detailed information can also be found in the accompanying *Fact Sheet and FAQ* (attached to this email), which applicants are encouraged to review. These and other program materials are published and available under the Program Resources section of the [CCCFF webpage](#).

This announcement has no impact on already-awarded CCCFF projects.

For questions, contact Jenny B. Mason at [jenny.mason@nebraska.gov](mailto:jenny.mason@nebraska.gov).

**Civic and Community Center Financing Fund**  
**2023 Application Cycle**  
**Fact Sheet & FAQ**

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**Program Summary**

Since 2004, the Nebraska Department of Economic Development (DED) has administered Civic and Community Center Financing Fund (CCCFF) grants on a competitive basis to municipalities. During the 2022 Legislative Session, Nebraska statute was amended to include eligibility to tribal governments under the program. This forthcoming 2023 application cycle will be the first to include tribal governments as eligible entities, adding eligibility and flexibility under the annual program.

CCCFF is designed to foster quality of life in Nebraska communities by supporting impactful planning and capital construction projects. Eligible projects involve community facilities such as libraries, recreation and wellness centers, gathering spaces, convention centers, town squares and cultural centers.

Applications for CCCFF are competitive. The scoring criteria is set in statute. For the criteria and discussion, refer to the Application & Program Guidelines available on the [CCCFF webpage](#) under Program Resources.

**2023 Application Cycle to use Grant Maximum Schedule B**

Based on current projections, the amount of aid expected to be available for award during the application cycle starting January 2023 will be near pre-pandemic levels. CCCFF is funded by turnback taxes collected from arenas and convention centers. Due to the enduring impact of COVID-19 on arena and convention center business, less funding was available for awards in the two prior application cycles.

Moreover, due to steady economic recovery over the last year, maximum awards during the 2023 cycle are tentatively projected to correspond with “Grant Maximum Schedule B.” Note that if deemed necessary, DED reserves the option to further reduce maximum award amounts to meet budgetary requirements, at which time an announcement will be made.

<b>Grant Maximum Schedule B</b>	
<b>Municipality Population</b>	<b>Amount</b>
100,000-299,999	\$3,375,000
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<b>All Tribal Governments</b>	<b>\$3,375,000</b>

The Department also wishes to highlight that actual CCCFF dollars available for award in 2023 are expected to be near the amount the Department is legislatively authorized to award for that time period; annual CCCFF availability is based on a projection of CCCFF funds generated through turnback taxes, and COVID-19 resulted in actual tax receipts being significantly lower than what was projected. CCCFF awards are announced in early spring.

## CCCFF Project Extension Requests

Since mid-2020, several communities awarded in past CCCFF program years have expressed project delays related to COVID-19 (e.g., the inability to secure matching funds due to the decreased availability of general funds, a lack of contractors to complete the work within the original timeframe, increased costs of supplies and/or construction, etc.).

To request a contract extension, the municipality must be current on its semi-annual reporting, then should submit a request in AmpliFund that identifies each of the following:

1. The nature of the request as either a six- or 12-month extension.
2. The reason for the request.
3. A revised estimated completion date.
4. Any other pertinent information related to the request.

Only the Recipient Grant Manager should submit the request for an extension. Instructions for completing the request are available on the AmpliFund Support webpage ([Civic & Community Center Financing Fund \(CCCFF\) – DED Grants Help Center \(zendesk.com\)](#)). Requests should not be submitted until (1) a revised project completion date has been determined and (2) the original contract end date is approaching within 90 days.

## Questions and Answers Regarding this November 2022 Announcement

### I. **What impact does this announcement have on existing awards made prior to the 2023 cycle?**

There will be no impact on existing awards. The addition of tribal governments as an eligible applicant increases the flexibility and impact of the program for 2023 and future funding cycles.

From time to time and informed by forecasted revenues, the Department must make adjustments to application cycles. For example, in 2021, the Department announced a change to the program's grant maximum schedule, triggered by a statutory threshold; the reduction of which was attributed to the enduring economic impact of COVID-19. DED is committed to ensuring existing awards are not reduced due to a lack of available funds for new awards.

**II. Why are these changes necessary?**

During the 2022 Legislative Session, Nebraska statute was amended to include eligibility to tribal governments under the program via LB800. This forthcoming 2023 application cycle will be the first to include tribal governments as eligible entities, adding eligibility and flexibility under the annual program.

Moreover, the CCCFF program is funded through turnback taxes associated with the large arena and convention centers in Omaha, Lincoln and Ralston. A large number of events scheduled in 2020 and 2021 were cancelled or postponed due to COVID-19, resulting in a significant reduction to the revenues in the Fund. This setback impacted revenue forecasts for the two subsequent fiscal years (FY21-22 and FY22-23). Thus, the 2021 CCCFF application cycle was limited to preliminary planning studies due to 2020’s projected impact on the Fund’s future receipts. The balance of the fund for the 2022 CCCFF application cycle, per statute, triggered use of Grant Maximum Schedule A. Grant Maximum Schedule B (below) may only be utilized upon the balance of the Fund reaching \$3.75 million and until the balance of the Fund falls below \$1.5 million. Based on current projections on the Fund’s future receipts, the Fund’s balance (excluding already obligated awards) is likely to rise above the statutory threshold of \$3.75 million necessary to use Schedule B for the upcoming 2023 application cycle. If deemed necessary to meet budgetary requirements, the Department reserves the option to further reduce maximum award amounts.

<b>Grant Maximum Schedule B</b>	
Municipality Population	Amount
100,000-299,999	\$3,375,000
40,000-99,999	\$1,687,000
20,000-39,999	\$1,125,000
10,000-19,999	\$900,000
Less than 10,000	\$562,000
All Tribal Governments	\$3,375,000

**.III. If my community applies for a CCCFF grant in 2023, what is the maximum grant amount?**

Planning grants are available for a minimum request of \$3,000 and a maximum of \$15,000. Planning grants are reserved for planning activities *only*.

Capital Construction grants will be available in accordance with Grant Maximum Schedule B (shown earlier in this document) unless the Department exercises its right to set a lower maximum amount to meet budgetary requirements.

Refer to the Application & Program Guidelines.

**IV. Is it possible the forecast for the upcoming 2023 cycle will change?**

If and when forecasted revenues change, the Department reserves the option to announce further changes to upcoming application cycles.

**V. Is the 2023 cycle expected to be competitive?**

Yes. This program is consistently competitive. Grant requests invariably exceed funds available. Each cycle, the review committee issues a recommendation of the top-scoring applications to the Department Director, or the Director's designee, for final approval. To meet fiscal responsibilities, the Department reserves the right to establish the maximum-awarded amount of funds in any given year.

**VI. What about Creative Districts?**

Creative Districts are not expected to have any impact on the 2023 application cycle. During the 2022 legislative session, LB927 incorporated the use of Creative Districts for fiscal year 2023-2024. This corresponds with the 2024 CCCFF application cycle. Contact Nebraska Arts Council for more information about Creative Districts.

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**I. What is the State doing to keep the program solvent moving forward? Has a lack of revenue to the Fund occurred before?**

No CCCFF awards were made in 2006-2007 and 2011-2012, attributable to a Fund balance that could not support both new awards and a sufficient balance to cover the obligated, unspent awarded amount. Additional interruption occurred in 2014, when the program authorizing statutes were significantly altered, with subsequent increases to the legislative allocation. The Department makes every attempt to award every dollar of available aid via the annual application cycle.

In calculating fund projections, the Department is able to better administer the program, supporting potential applicants and existing recipients in the process. A decision to fund only planning activities in 2021 helped to ensure that existing obligations (i.e., awards) did not exceed available funds while awarding planning grants to communities likely to seek a construction grant in a future cycle. Legislative, fiscal, or otherwise, the Department issues an announcement prior to the start of an application cycle regarding any changes to the program so that potential applicants can plan accordingly.

**II. My community applied for and received a Planning grant in 2021 or 2022, when can we apply for another grant?**

Under CCCFF, a municipality may receive only one grant of each type (Planning or Capital Construction) during any two-year period; this is statutory. For example, if Anytown was awarded a Planning grant in 2022, it would not be eligible for another Planning grant until 2024. However, if Anytown was awarded a Planning grant in 2022, it would be eligible for a Capital Construction grant in 2023.

**III. My community applied for and received a Capital Construction grant in 2021; when can we apply for another grant?**

Under CCCFF, a municipality may receive only one grant of each type (Planning or Capital Construction) during any two-year period; this is statutory. For example, if Anytown is awarded a Capital Construction grant in 2023, it will not be eligible for another Capital Construction grant until 2025, but it would be eligible for a Planning grant in 2024.

**IV. What types of facilities are eligible?**

A wide variety of facilities are eligible for grants, including libraries, recreation and wellness centers, public gathering spaces, convention centers, town squares, cultural centers, etc. For additional program details and definitions, see the CCCFF Application & Program Guidelines.

**V. In 2021, our community received a grant and, due to unforeseen project delays, we do not expect we will be able to complete the project by our contract end date in March 2023. How can my community request a contract extension for the CCCFF contract?**

Since mid-2020, several communities awarded in prior CCCFF years have expressed project delays related to COVID-19 (e.g., the inability to secure matching funds due to the decreased availability of general funds, a lack of contractors to complete the work within the original timeframe, increased costs of supplies and/or construction, etc.). To request a contract extension, the municipality must be current on its semi-annual reporting, then should submit a request in AmpliFund that identifies each of the following:

1. The nature of the request as either a six- or 12-month extension.
2. The reason for the request.
3. A revised estimated completion date.
4. Any other pertinent information related to the request.

Only the Recipient Grant Manager should submit the extension request. Instructions for completing the request are available on the DED Grant Help Center webpage

at <https://dednebraska.zendesk.com/hc/en-us> by clicking on “Community” and selecting the appropriate CCCFF option. Extension requests should not be submitted until a revised project completion date has been determined and the original contract end date is approaching within 90 days.

**VI. Are unincorporated communities eligible to apply for CCCFF?**

Per the authorizing statutes, eligible applicants are defined as cities and villages, and tribal governments.

**VII. Are there procurement standards required by CCCFF?**

CCCFF is a state program. The authorizing statute is silent on procurement standards; however, applicants must follow state and any locally adopted procurement standards and procedures. Potential applicants and recipients should review the Guidelines and Award Management section of the Application & Program Guidelines on the CCCFF webpage (direct link available earlier in this document).

**VIII. Are there any public notice or public hearing requirements for CCCFF?**

CCCFF is a state program. The authorizing statute is silent on public notices and hearings; however, applicants must follow any state and locally adopted policies and procedures. In practice, and as supported by numerous research studies, public participation and engagement yields better project planning and improved project outcomes.

**IX. Where can I find the CCCFF Application and Program Guidelines?**

CCCFF Application & Program Guidelines are available on the CCCFF webpage at <https://opportunity.nebraska.gov/cccff>. Applicants and recipients should review this document as it includes information about eligibility requirements and how to apply for funding and how to implement an awarded project, including information about DED’s grant management system, funding agreement, initial advance, reporting, reimbursement, and closeout requirements.

Supplemental to the CCCFF Application & Program Guidelines, AmpliFund User Guides provide “how-to” instructions for navigating and operating the Department’s grant management system, AmpliFund. Refer to the Application & Program Guidelines for further discussion.

Applicants and recipients seeking help with AmpliFund should refer to the DED Grant Help Center webpage at <https://dednebraska.zendesk.com/hc/en-us>. Once awarded, recipients can find specific information about CCCFF by clicking on “Community” and selecting the



appropriate CCCFF option. AmpliFund Support maintains regular office hours to support applicants and recipients with AmpliFund concerns. Refer to the Help Center webpage (linked above) for more information.