

NEBRASKA

Municipality Infrastructure Aid Act Guidelines

State of Nebraska
Department of Economic Development

July, 2024

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NOTICE:

This guidance document is advisory in nature but is binding on the Department of Economic Development (“DED”) until amended. A guidance document does not include internal procedural documents that only affect the internal operations of DED and does not impose additional requirements or penalties on regulated parties or include confidential information or rules and regulations made in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act. If you believe that this guidance document imposes additional requirements or penalties on regulated parties, you may request a review of the document.

OVERVIEW & CONTACT INFORMATION

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The Municipality Infrastructure Aid Act is codified in Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 19-5701 to 19-5708.

Application Portal and Management System

To administer the Municipality Infrastructure Aid Act, DED uses a grants management system (“GMS”), AmpliFund. GMS User Guides, with instructions for accessing and using the system, along with other resources, are available on [DED's website](#) and on DED’s AmpliFund resource page, [AmpliFund Resources](#).

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The Municipality Infrastructure Aid Act creates a program to finance infrastructure improvements in cities of the first class, cities of the second class, and villages. Through grants of state aid, the goal of the Municipality Infrastructure Aid Program (“MIAP”) is to facilitate approved redevelopment plans under the Community Development Law, attract and support new business or business expansion, create additional high-quality jobs, increase business investment, and revitalize rural or other distressed areas of the state.

The Nebraska Department of Economic Development (“DED” or “Department”) will accept applications beginning on July 1, 2024. The application period will close on November 1, 2024. MIAP is a competitive application program. Submitting an application does not guarantee approval. The Department may award approximately \$4.4 million in grant funds under MIAP.

The application and these guidelines can be found at the Nebraska Department of Economic Development Incentives Program webpage:

<https://opportunity.nebraska.gov/programs/incentives/>.

1.1 GRANT SCHEDULE

GRANT SCHEDULE	
Application Open Date	July 1, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. CDT
Application Deadline	November 1, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. CDT
Anticipated Award Date	December 2024

Applications will be competitively evaluated after submission. DED shall have the sole discretion in evaluating applications for compliance with MIAP criteria.

1.2 TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

- **“Award Agreement”** shall mean a contract entered into between the Department and the Eligible Grantee after DED issues a “notice of approval.”
- **“Eligible Grantee”** shall mean a city of the first class, city of the second class, or village with a redevelopment plan approved under the Community Development Law.
- **“Project Schedule”** shall mean a timetable which organizes and sequences tasks, investment, and due dates to ensure the Eligible Project is undertaken and timely completed.

1.3 ELIGIBLE PROJECT

To be eligible, a proposed infrastructure improvement project must be part of an approved redevelopment plan under the Community Development Law. Infrastructure improvement projects include water systems, sewer systems, roads, bridges, and other site development activities. The application proposing the infrastructure improvement project must demonstrate:

- a. An infrastructure improvement project (e.g. water systems, sewer systems, roads, bridges, and other site development activities) that are part of an approved redevelopment plan under the Community Development Law.
- b. Eligible Grantee will contribute matching funds of at least twenty-five percent (25%) of the amount of the grant award requested.
- c. A cost-benefit analysis of the redevelopment plan that is approved under the Community Development Law.
- d. A project that:
 - i. Attracts and supports new business or business expansion.
 - ii. Provides sufficient infrastructure for the new business or business expansion.
 - iii. Creates additional jobs in or near the Eligible Grantee.
 - iv. Creates high-quality jobs in or near the Eligible Grantee.
 - v. Increases business investment in or near the Eligible Grantee.
 - vi. Revitalizes a rural or distressed area of the state.

A grant shall not be awarded to an Eligible Grantee if:

- a. The Eligible Grantee does not provide a positive cost-benefit analysis of the redevelopment plan approved under the Community Development Law.
- b. The Eligible Grantee does not provide matching funds of at least twenty-five percent (25%) of the amount of the grant.
- c. The proposed project is not an infrastructure project that is part of an approved redevelopment plan under the Community Development Law.

1.4 MATCH REQUIREMENT

An Eligible Grantee must provide matching funds of at least twenty-five percent (25%) of the amount of the grant. **Costs charged to the grant must be incurred after the effective date of the Award Agreement**; this includes match and grant-funded costs. In other words, neither the local match nor the items listed for grant assistance may include amounts already expended prior to signing the Award Agreement. Any expenses incurred prior to the Award Agreement are **not** eligible as match but may demonstrate project readiness and local support. Matching funds may not be derived from any other State of Nebraska grant program.

CHAPTER 2: APPLICATION, REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESS

2.1 FILING INSTRUCTIONS

Application Form: Application forms and supporting documentation must be in writing and filed electronically with DED using the Grants Management System (GMS) AmpliFund. Eligible Grantees are encouraged to review these Guidelines prior to filling out the application for a list of documents and information required to successfully complete the application.

To successfully apply, Eligible Grantees will need to complete all required fields and sections of the application. Eligible Grantees may view the application at the program webpage:

<https://opportunity.nebraska.gov/programs/incentives>

Applications will have the following sections:

- a. Opportunity Details
 - Provides an overview of the program, basic requirements, and DED contact information.
- b. Project Information
 - Applicants will input a primary contact for the application and award.
- c. Forms and Document Uploads
 - Applicants will answer specific questions about the program and upload documents in support of the application.
- d. Budget
 - Applicants will provide a proposed budget divided into categories and line items. If the application is approved, expenses will be tracked against the line items provided in the application.
- e. Implementation Plan
 - Applicants will need to provide information related to the implementation plan in the GMS.

To apply, an Eligible Grantee should follow the “Apply Now” link on the DED Municipality Infrastructure Aid Project webpage, create a user profile in the AmpliFund application portal, and complete the application. The user profile allows for saving a partially completed application after the application opens.

Questions and Assistance: Questions regarding the application process should be sent to:

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531-245-4542

Individuals who are hearing and/or speech impaired and have a TTY, may contact DED through the Statewide Relay System by calling (711) INSTATE (800) 833-7352 (TTY) or (800) 833-0920 (voice). The relay operator should be asked to call NDED at (800) 426-6505 or (402) 471-3111. Additional information can be found at the Nebraska Relay website <http://www.nebraskarelay.com/>.

Nebraska Relay offers Spanish relay service for our Spanish-speaking customers. Spanish-to-Spanish (711) or 1-888-272-5528/ Spanish-to-English (711) or 1-877-564-3503. Nebraska le ofrece el servicio de relevo a nuestros clientes en español. Los consumidores de TTY pueden escribir por máquina en español y las conversaciones serán retransmitidas en español y inglés.

2.1.1 Required Documentation

To be considered for a grant, an Eligible Grantee is required to provide the following documentation in support of its application:

- a. Documentation that the proposed infrastructure improvement project is part of a redevelopment plan approved under the Community Development Law, including:
 - i. The redevelopment plan and any amendments thereto,
 - ii. A map demarcating the redevelopment area,
 - iii. A map demarcating the location of the proposed infrastructure improvement project within the redevelopment area,
 - iv. The written findings of the governing body approving the redevelopment plan,
- b. Documentation (e.g. impact studies, economic analyses, etc.) which demonstrate how the proposed infrastructure improvement project would attract and support any new business or business expansion,
- c. Documentation demonstrating how the proposed infrastructure improvement project would provide infrastructure that is sufficient for new business or business expansion,
- d. The cost-benefit analysis of the redevelopment plan approved under the Community Development Law; and
- e. Documentation demonstrating how the new business or business expansion would provide the following:
 - i. The creation of additional jobs in or near the Eligible Grantee,
 - ii. The creation of high-quality jobs in or near the Eligible Grantee,
 - iii. Increased business investment in or near the Eligible Grantee, and
 - iv. Revitalization of rural and other distressed areas of the state.
- f. Documentation of matching funds up to 25% of the requested grant amount.
- g. Documentation of the proposed project's cost and Project Schedule.

All documents submitted in support of the application must be in PDF format and should include the name of the Eligible Grantee.

2.2 APPLICATION REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESS

Completed applications will be competitively evaluated after submission. Filing an application does not guarantee approval. If additional documentation is required, DED will notify the applicant and the applicant will have an opportunity to provide additional information. DED shall have the sole discretion in evaluating applications for compliance with MIAP criteria. Applications are evaluated by a Department review committee. A consensus decision is reached in determining whether an application satisfies all requisite MIAP criteria. If an application is approved, the review committee will also consider the following factors when determining the amount of grant funds to award: the cost of the proposed project, the necessity of the proposed project to attract and support any new business or business expansion, the creation of additional jobs in or near the Eligible Grantee upon completion of the proposed project, the creation of high-quality jobs in or near the Eligible Grantee upon completion of the proposed project, the level of increased business investment in or near the Eligible Grantee upon completion of the proposed project, and the revitalization of rural or other distressed areas of the state upon completion of the proposed project.

CHAPTER 3: AWARD MANAGEMENT

3.1 AWARD NOTIFICATION AND ACCOUNT SETUP

3.1.1 Notification

DED will issue a written notice of approval to successful Eligible Grantees or a written notice of denial to unsuccessful Eligible Grantees. A notice of denial will identify the basis for the denial. A notice of approval is followed by an Award Agreement typically within 30-45 days. An authorized signatory for the Eligible Grantee must sign the Award Agreement. DED shall execute the Award Agreement after it is signed by the Eligible Grantee. Award Agreements are transmitted and signatures are obtained via DocuSign. Once all parties have signed the Award Agreement, the Eligible Grantee will be required to provide the State of Nebraska W-9 and ACH Enrollment [Form](#) (via AmpliFund).

3.1.2 Account Setup

Following a notice of approval, an Eligible Grantee will receive a GMS-generated email from AmpliFund Administrator, “no-reply@gotomygrants.com”, with instructions on how to access the award. This email is sent to the primary contact as identified in the application. Successful Eligible Grantees should check their spam or junk mail folder as email settings may direct this system-generated email there. If the primary contact’s information is no longer valid, the links in the email are expired, or the email is not received within thirty days of the notice of approval, an Eligible Grantee should contact the Department’s MIAP Manager.

3.1.3 Identify Program Manager

Once an Eligible Grantee's primary contact sets up the user account, the option to add other users to help manage the grant becomes available, as does the ability to be assigned or assign tasks to complete various steps of grant implementation (e.g., sign Award Agreement, submit completed

ACH form, submit payment request, etc.). An Eligible Grantee will identify a grant manager. This person will receive notifications (“tasks”) requiring action for implementation of the grant.

NOTE: The application portal is distinct from the award management side of the GMS. The URL used to apply is different from the URL used to manage the matching funds program.

An Eligible Grantee’s grant manager is the primary point of contact for all grant-related matters. All DED and GMS automated emails are directed to the grant manager.

3.2 MONTHLY PROGRESS REPORTS, REIMBURSEMENT REQUESTS, AND ELIGIBLE COSTS

Eligible Grantees will be required to submit monthly progress reports to the Department throughout the contract term specified in the Award Agreement. The monthly report shall demonstrate the ongoing progress towards developing the approved infrastructure project. The monthly progress reports must be submitted through the GMS in the form and manner required by the Department. The monthly progress reports will be used to: (i) verify the Eligible Grantee’s match contribution, (ii) verify eligible costs of developing the approved infrastructure project for purposes of determining reimbursement amounts, and (iii) verifying project progress and successful completion.

Before DED releases MIAP grant dollars, the Eligible Grantee must demonstrate through its monthly reports that Eligible Grantee has expended its requisite twenty-five percent (25%) match on developing the approved infrastructure project. Eligible Grantee must upload sufficient verifiable source documentation to the monthly progress reports to allow the Department to confirm that Eligible Grantee has satisfied the match obligation. The expenses cited by Eligible Grantee as fulfilling its matching funds contribution must have been incurred after the date on which the Award Agreement is fully executed by the Eligible Grantee and the Department.

MIAP grant funds are disbursed on a reimbursement basis. Accordingly, Eligible Grantee must first demonstrate its expenditure of funds towards developing the approved infrastructure project. The funds which the Eligible Grantee cites to be reimbursed by the MIAP grant must be separate and apart from the funds previously cited by the Eligible Grantee as its matching funds contribution. Eligible Grantee must upload sufficient verifiable source documentation to the monthly progress report to allow the Department to confirm the eligible costs incurred in developing the approved infrastructure project.

To be regarded as an eligible cost, for purposes of documenting either an Eligible Grantee’s match requirement or reimbursement requests, the cost cited and documented in the monthly progress reports must: (i) be directly related to the development of the approved infrastructure project cited in Eligible Grantee’s application, (ii) be a necessary, reasonable, and customary cost in furtherance of developing the approved infrastructure project, and (iii) have been incurred within the contract term specified by the Award Agreement.

Upon the Department’s review and approval of the monthly progress reports, DED will notify the Eligible Grantee when: (i) the Eligible Grantee has satisfied its match obligation and (ii) been approved for reimbursement of expenses with MIAP grant funds. Once Eligible Grantee has been approved for reimbursement of expenses, the Eligible Grantee may submit a reimbursement payment request to DED through the GMS. Reimbursement payment requests must be in the form and manner required by DED. Upon DED’s approval of a reimbursement payment request, the Department will disburse MIAP grant funds up to the amount specified in the Award Agreement. MIAP grant funds are transferred electronically to the account designated by the Eligible Grantee on the State of Nebraska ACH Enrollment Form. If an email address was provided on the State of Nebraska ACH Enrollment Form, it will be notified once the payment has been processed. Once the Eligible Grantee’s monthly progress reports demonstrate that the Eligible Grantee has satisfied its match requirement and is eligible for reimbursements, MIAP grant funds may be issued to the Eligible Grantee in multiple stages at any time during the contract term of the Award Agreement.

3.3 CLOSEOUT AND RECOUPMENT

3.3.1 Closeout

An Eligible Grantee initiates the closeout process by submitting a final monthly progress report and marking all tasks complete in the GMS. Detailed instructions for the GMS closeout process are available in the user guides located on the DED website. DED shall review the Eligible Grantee’s final monthly progress report and closeout request. If DED approves the final progress report and closeout request, the Department will issue a notice of closeout.

3.3.2 Recoupment of MIAP Grant Funds

To the extent it is discovered that MIAP grant funds were disbursed to an Eligible Grantee in error; that an Eligible Grantee’s application or monthly progress reports contained material omissions, errors, or misrepresentations; or an Eligible Grantee failed to comply with the terms of the Award Agreement—including but not limited to failure to diligently undertake and timely complete the approved project, failure to timely submit monthly progress reports, failure to timely submit the final monthly progress report and closeout request—DED shall have the ability to terminate the Award Agreement and/or recoup all MIAP grant funds disbursed to the Eligible Grantee. The Department will issue a written notice of any determination to terminate the Award Agreement and/or recoupment of MIAP grant funds.

4.0 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE USING THE GMS

To administer this program, the DED uses a Grants Management System (GMS), AmpliFund. Applications will be submitted, and awards will be managed through the GMS.

4.1 DED HELP PORTAL

User guides about DED’s specific business processes for accessing and using the GMS to apply and facilitate the grant are available on DED’s website, <http://opportunity.nebraska.gov/amplifund/>. The help portal is organized by topic. You can enter key words into the search bar to find specific articles.

4.1.1 Application User Guides

For instructions on registering to apply, please see User Management (<https://dednebraska.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/categories/7865709789851-User-Management>).

For instructions on applying through the GMS, please see How to Apply (<https://dednebraska.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/categories/7542920001051-How-to-Apply>).

4.1.2 Award User Guides

For initial instructions on managing your award, please see Getting Started with your Award (<https://dednebraska.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/categories/7865773985307-Getting-Started-with-yourAward>). Other post-award user guides can be found by topic, such as Payment Requests or Amendments.

4.2 GMS HELP PORTAL

For user guides about using AmpliFund, please visit <https://ne-amplifund.zendesk.com> . This help portal will help you learn how to use the system, navigate the system, and more.

4.3 CUSTOMER SUPPORT

If you need help using the GMS to apply or manage you award, you can reach out to customer support in three different ways:

1. Call toll-free 1 (844) 735-0239
 - a. Available from 7:00am-7:00pm CDT
2. Online chat on [DED's website](#)
 - a. Available from 8:00am-4:00pm CDT
3. Email support@ne-amplifund.zendesk.coM