



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
**EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF
HOUSING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**
ONE ASHBURTON PLACE, ROOM 2101
BOSTON, MA 02108

CHARLES D. BAKER
GOVERNOR

KARYN E. POLITO
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

JAY ASH
SECRETARY

TELEPHONE
(617) 788-3610

FACSIMILE
(617) 788-3605

www.mass.gov/eohed

2018 URBAN AGENDA GRANT PROGRAM
Request for Proposals & Guidelines

The Baker-Polito Administration is pleased to announce the availability of funds for a 2018 round of the Urban Agenda Grant Program. The program is seeking proposals, from eligible communities, for initiatives that entail community-driven responses to community-defined economic opportunities, and that build leadership, collaboration, and capacity at the local level.

The Commonwealth's Urban Agenda is focused on promoting economic vitality and cultivating safer, stronger urban neighborhoods across Massachusetts. The Baker-Polito Administration recognizes that urban centers face unique economic and quality of life challenges, and that the path to success lies in tapping into the unique local assets that they already possess, rather than in one-size-fits-all directives from government.

The grant is intended to help urban communities as they unlock economic opportunities through collective impact and shared accountability. Specifically, it will support projects that are based on collaborative work models to achieve economic progress, which are particularly promising, as highlighted in research by the Federal Reserve Bank Boston and the Working Cities Challenge:

"Small cities in Massachusetts and across New England possess unique assets and face a unique set of challenges. ...Notwithstanding these challenges, research on small cities conducted by the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston has found that eight cities out of a peer group of 26 nationwide have been able to either maintain or recover much of their economic stability, as measured by income, reduced poverty rates, population, and economic vitality. Several factors drove the rebound of these "resurgent" cities: collaborative leadership, the role of anchor institutions, investment in infrastructure, and extension of benefits to the community as a whole. *Of these, collaborative leadership – the ability to work together across sectors over a sustained period with a comprehensive vision – was most crucial.* The findings are strikingly similar to those of the Living Cities Integration Initiative, deployed in five larger cities with substantial inner-city populations. Both sets of findings elevate the importance of collaborative leadership in creating systems-level changes that will enable small cities to reach their full potential as places to live, work, and raise a family."

[From Working Cities Challenge website: <https://www.bostonfed.org/workingcities/about/research.htm>]

The program is administered by the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development, and offers flexible grant funding to support creative local partnerships. The program is for neighborhoods across Massachusetts that have developed partnerships that leverage existing economic assets, target specific workforce populations, define their economic development and quality of life goals, and deliver on those goals.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Maximum Award	\$100,000
Total Grant Funds Available	\$500,000
Grant use	General operating support for innovative and collaborative community economic development project
Project Duration	Six (6) – Twelve (12) Months starting January 2018 <i>Timeline should be at least 6 months (Jan-Jun 2018) but no more than 12 months (Jan-Dec 2018).</i>
Project focus examples	Targeted workforce development Innovative vocational education activities Main Street and small business supports Mentorship for adult and/or youth entrepreneurs Development and training support for women-, veteran-, and/or minority-owned businesses
Eligible communities	Gateway Cities, urban centers, and MAPC-defined inner core cities with median household incomes below 90 percent of the state average income. (53 communities have been determined as eligible. See list below)
Eligible lead applicant	Municipality or a Community-Based Organization
Eligible project partners	Municipality, Community-Based Organizations, Schools, Local Businesses, Chambers of Commerce, Private Sector Partners, Neighborhood Associations, etc.
Review criteria	Clarity of Vision - Alignment with Community Goals Strength of Community Partnerships Defined Target Population and Economic Need Demonstrated Significance of Economic Opportunity Proven Track Record Capacity to Execute and Succeed
Application Opens	November 20, 2017
Bidder's Conference Call	November 27, 2017
Application deadline	December 22, 2017
Awards Announced / Contracts	Mid-January 2018
Anticipated Contract Start	January 2018 – <i>Exact timeline and funding schedule to be negotiated during contracting phase.</i>

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

The purpose of this program is to support community economic development that is grounded in collaboration and local leadership development. Priority will be given to communities that have proven track records in economic, housing, and/or workforce development.

For purposes of the application, either a municipality or a community-based organization may be the lead applicant. However, the participation and support of the other is required in either case. Application must include a letter of support from the CEO of both the host municipality and its main community organization partner.

Urban communities that meet certain household income benchmarks (median household income less than 90 percent of the state's average income) are eligible to apply. HED has designed the grant program to serve both Gateway and non-Gateway cities, of varying sizes.

Eligible Municipalities			
Amesbury	Fitchburg	Methuen	Somerville
Amherst	Framingham	Milford	Southbridge
Attleboro	Gardner	New Bedford	Springfield
Barnstable	Gloucester	Newburyport	Taunton
Beverly	Greenfield	North Adams	Waltham
Boston	Haverhill	Northampton	Webster
Brockton	Holyoke	Norwood	West Springfield
Cambridge	Lawrence	Peabody	Westfield
Chelsea	Leominster	Pittsfield	Winthrop
Chicopee	Lowell	Provincetown	Woburn
Clinton	Lynn	Quincy	Worcester
Easthampton	Malden	Revere	
Everett	Marlborough	Salem	
Fall River	Medford	Somerset	

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS AND REVIEW CRITERIA

The program will consider applications from communities that have established coalitions and/or collaborations that have a track record of working together on addressing community challenges. A community may only submit one application to the program. However, in cities with populations exceeding 150,000, applications will be accepted from clearly defined geographical neighborhoods, enabling more than one application from those cities.

Examples of projects that might receive highly favorable reviews, include: a community commercial kitchen training at-risk residents for culinary careers in a region with a growing hospitality sector; business training and entrepreneurial supports for women-, minority- and veteran-owned businesses in response to new local business opportunities; a maker space that engages youth in mechanical processes in response to the community's desire to activate underutilized spaces; projects that respond to families seeking financial literacy and asset building support; and housing pre-development activities that engages neighbors in helping to address the reuse of a blighted property. *These are only illustrative examples.*

Applicants must base their project proposals on locally significant economic opportunities. The key is that the project be in direct response to a community identified need.

Specifically, grant applications will be reviewed and scored (100 points max.) on the following criteria:

Vision and Goals (10 points)

- Clear articulation of the vision and goals of the project.
- Description of the neighborhood, economic, and social context in which proposed programs will operate, in order to place the work within a broader urban framework.
- Consistency with host community's larger strategic vision and aspirations.

Community Collaboration and Partnerships (20 points)

- Description of existing community coalition or collaboration with thoughtful assembling of partners; strong partnerships include residents, local leaders, non-profits, businesses, and/or other public and private sector partners.
- Demonstration of direct community and institutional support,
- Innovation of the collaboration: leveraging existing strengths and developing new local capacity and leadership

Target Population (10 points)

- Description of the target population (and neighborhood) that will benefit from project.
- Articulation of the identified needs of the population that the project will address.

Economic Opportunity – Project Plan (40 points)

- Description of the economic opportunity that will be leveraged by this project.
- Demonstration of how members of target population have been engaged in the project.
- Demonstration of how the project as a responds to the opportunity.
- Specific outline of the project activities and anticipated outcomes; how will the project support and benefit the target population.

Track Record (10 points)

- Evidence of the applicant's experience in community economic development
- Evidence of the partnership's history, experience, and past successes.

Capacity to Succeed (10 points)

- Clear and appropriate project timeline outlining key activities and benchmarks.
- Detailed budget, including total project budget, allocation of the requested grant funds, reasonable overhead costs, and inclusion of funds from other sources.
- While other funds are not required, proposals that include other committed investments will be more competitive.

APPLICATION PROCESS, FORMS, AND GUIDANCE

1. Applications materials are available online at www.mass.gov/hed.
2. EOHED staff will be unable to answer any individual questions while the application period is open. Questions must be emailed to EOHEDgrants@state.ma.us. They will be aggregated and responses will be posted on the EOHED webpage.
3. EOHED will host one conference call for prospective applicants. **The call will take place on November 27th, from 12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m.** EOHED will post conference call details on its webpage. Participation is not required. No registration needed.
4. **Proposals are due by 5:00 PM on December 22, 2017.**
5. A completed proposal packet must be submitted to EOHED by the deadline via email to EOHEDgrants@state.ma.us. Fax copies of the application will not be accepted.
6. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that their application is received on time by EOHED. All applications will be logged as to date and time received and kept on file as public record. Late submissions will not be considered.
7. EOHED reserves the right to request additional information from the applicant or external sources as may be necessary in order to complete the application review.

The following pages comprise the application forms required for this grant program. A complete proposal packet includes the following components:

- **Cover Page** (1 page)
- **Proposal Narrative** (not to exceed 6 pages), and
- **Budget Form** (1 page)
- **Lead Support Letters** (one letter each from Municipality and Community Organization.)

All sections must be completed per the instructions. **Complete packet must be submitted as one document (MSWord or PDF)** and filename should include City/Town name.

Other Attachments may be submitted to support the application. These must be in a separate document (as one PDF). Additional attachments could include support letters from community partners that will be actively involved in the project, such as agencies, businesses, and/or elected officials. In all cases, the letters should reference the role that the writer will be playing in the project.

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