

Fresh Food Access Fund 2024 Program Guidelines

Background

The City of Milwaukee is seeking solutions to heighten access to fresh affordable high-quality food options for Milwaukee neighborhoods. The Fresh Food Access Fund (FFAF) is a grant program dedicated to the financial support of healthy food initiatives in underserved communities with limited food choices.

The [Milwaukee Fresh Food Access Report](#) (MFFAR) estimated that 1 out of 3 people in Milwaukee are more than 1 mile from a grocery store. The MFFAR also identified action items to address the lack of healthy fresh food. Among the recommendations: attract grocery stores to underserved neighborhoods; develop other retail outlets as sources of fresh food; increase the stock of fresh food in corner stores; increase the amount of locally grown food; improve transportation to grocery stores and farmer's markets, and improve nutrition education to increase the demand for healthy food. The FFAF is designed to facilitate efforts to enhance fresh food availability by assisting both for-profit businesses and registered not-for-profit organizations to implement food access projects.

The City of Milwaukee seeks proposals from organizations who have or plan to implement programs in the city of Milwaukee to enhance the access to fresh healthy food in our communities.

Goals

The Milwaukee Fresh Food Access Fund (FFAF) aims to financially support activities that increase the access of underserved communities to healthy food choices, partner with community organizations, businesses, and other government entities with a fresh food component, and address the issues identified in the [Milwaukee Fresh Food Access Report](#).

Eligible projects

The FFAF provides 1:1 matching grants to projects that advance one or more of the following strategies:

- 1) Attract grocery stores and mobile market stops to underserved neighborhoods
- 2) Develop other retail outlets in underserved neighborhoods as sources of fresh foods
- 3) Increase the stock of fresh foods in corner stores
- 4) Increase the amount of locally grown food that is available to Milwaukee consumers
- 5) Meet the fresh food needs of populations with special dietary requirements
- 6) Improve transportation to grocery stores and farmer's markets for individuals who live in underserved areas

Eligible uses of Fresh Food Access Fund grants

FFAF grants may only be used for capital expenditures related to the establishment, expansion, or improvement of a food-related business that increases access to fresh, healthy food for underserved residents. For example, the following could be considered eligible uses:

- Purchase of equipment to store and/or prepare healthy food
- Purchase of furniture, fixtures, and start-up inventory for a healthy food business
- Build-out of space to house or expand a food retail or production operation
- Purchase of vehicles to transport healthy food
- Improvements to the exterior and signage of a fresh food retail operation
- Construction or equipment activities related to community gardens
- Soft costs that are specifically necessary to carry out another eligible use of funds

Eligible applicants

Applications will be accepted from not-for-profit organizations with current 501(c)3 registration with the

US Internal Revenue Service, and for-profit businesses. Other types of entities may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Previous FFAF awardees with open FFAF grant awards are eligible to apply for funding through this application process. If awarded as a part of this process, previous FFAF awardees will not be able to request reimbursement until all previously-awarded projects are either completed or terminated.

Application information and evaluation

Grant applications must be completed and submitted, along with all required additional documents listed in the application, through the following link:

<https://fs27.formsite.com/nC8HPa/79sjn0mf1v/index>

FFAF applications will be evaluated by a review panel that includes staff from the City of Milwaukee as well as representatives of outside organizations with appropriate subject matter knowledge. Decisions of the review panel are final.

All grant applications and associated materials are due on **4:00 pm CDT on Monday, May 27, 2024**. Applications received after the deadline will not be considered. Staff will notify applicants of the final decisions. All applications and supporting materials will only be accepted through the link above.

If selected, applicants will be notified of grant selection by letter. Applicants that are selected for grant awards will be required to submit additional materials.

Grant terms

Grant applicants are required to provide a full budget for the proposed project, identifying the sources and uses of all funds. FFAF grants can cover up to 50% of the cash expenditure required to implement a project, up to a maximum of \$25,000. Awards of less than \$5,000 may be considered on a case-by-case basis. A cash match must be provided by the applicant to cover the expenses not paid by the grant. While a project may include in-kind donations of various kinds, only the cash expenditures involved in the project will be considered when calculating the amount of an FFAF grant or reimbursement. Total project costs must be at least twice the amount of the requested grant amount.

Grantees will be required to enter into a written grant agreement with the City of Milwaukee. The agreement will specify that the grant will be provided as reimbursement for paid expenses or direct payment to equipment vendors. The agreement will also specify documentation that the grantee must provide regarding grant expenditures. No upfront grant funds will be provided, and funding will only be provided as a single disbursement once the project has been completed or when the equipment purchase is intended to occur. Grant term will be approximately 12 months, with extensions considered on a case-by-case basis.

If City and State licenses are required to operate the proposed project, no payment will be made until the grantee presents evidence that these licenses have been issued. Licensed businesses that are not in good standing with the City of Milwaukee Health Department are ineligible to receive a grant. Businesses that hold or have applied for licenses to sell cigarettes, tobacco products, liquor, fermented malt beverages or wine, and derive a majority of their revenue from the sales of such products, are not eligible to apply for an FFAF grant. Exceptions may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Other Commercial Corridor Grants

FFAF applicants may apply for any Commercial Revitalization Grant offered through the City of Milwaukee's Commercial Corridor Team if they are eligible to do so. The standard evaluation process will be used when an FFAF applicant or awardee applies for Commercial Revitalization Grants.

Approval of an FFAF award does not guarantee approval of a supplementary Commercial Revitalization Grant. Likewise, applicants who are not awarded an FFAF grant may be eligible to apply for a Commercial Revitalization Grant.

More information on Commercial Revitalization Grants is available here:

<https://city.milwaukee.gov/DCD/BusinessToolbox>

Questions regarding the Commercial Revitalization Grants can be directed to

commercialcorridorgrants@milwaukee.gov or (414) 286-5842.

Grant Selection Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated by a committee. Evaluation will rate the following factors (100 points total):

- The applicant's plans for measuring impact (10 points)
- The degree of the project's expected impact with regards to improving access to fresh food options (10 points)
- The level of need experienced by the community or neighborhood that is expected to benefit from the project (10 points)
- The experience of the applicant in addressing issues relating to food insecurity and food access (15 points)
- The nature and design of the project, and the likelihood that the project will successfully implement one or more strategies specifically identified in the Fresh Food Access Fund (25 points)
- Financial feasibility of the project – the ability to leverage additional funds and the level of financial need. (30 points - applicants are encouraged to include documentation of any funds that are made available for or pledged to the project)

Respond to this Notice

To respond to this Notice, complete the FFAF Application, and submit required additional documents listed in the application. The application must be completed electronically through the following link: <https://fs27.formsite.com/nC8HPa/79sjn0mf1v/index>

All grant applications and associated materials are due on **4:00 pm CDT on Monday, May 27, 2024**.

Applications received after the deadline will not be considered. Staff will notify applicants with the final decisions. All applications and supporting materials will only be accepted through the link above. Upon request, reasonable accommodations may be provided as needed.

Questions about this Notice

Questions and requests for clarification must be directed to FFAFgrant@milwaukee.gov. All questions must be received in writing no later than **4pm on May 10, 2024**. Unless otherwise stated, responses to all questions and any further information will be posted by **4pm on May 15, 2024** to www.milwaukee.gov/ffaf.

Applicants are responsible for keeping informed of the information, clarification, and answers to questions as they are posted. All such clarifications, updates, and revisions will be incorporated into the rules of the program as they may be posted to www.milwaukee.gov/ffaf.

Information Session

An optional information session is anticipated to be held virtually on **May 8, 2024 at noon**.

Attendees are encouraged to register for the meeting in advance and test their system capabilities to ensure they can access the virtual meeting. The following link will allow interested participants to register for the webinar: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/6841337708615785310>

Expected Timeline

The dates below are approximate and subject to change.

- Applications made available: April 24, 2024
- Information session: May 8, 2024, 12pm
- Question submission due date (send questions to FFAFgrant@milwaukee.gov): May 10, 2024, 4pm
- Responses to questions posted as an addendum on <http://www.milwaukee.gov/ffaf>: May 15, 2024, 4pm
- Applications due to City of Milwaukee: May 27, 2024
- Funding awards finalized: June 14, 2024
- Contracts made available to grantees: June 30, 2024
- Period of performance for grantees: June 30, 2025

General Requirements

1. Any organization and/or personnel that participated in any fashion, in the creation, evaluation, or selection of the FFAF grant may not apply.

2. Award of Grants – The FFAF grant committee will evaluate proposals. All proposals will be evaluated against the evaluation factors stated in this document. No information will be available to any applicant regarding the status of his/her response. However, DCD reserves the right to enter into discussion with applicants for purposes of clarification or further information. DCD reserves the right to not award or disburse any of the grant funds, applying for this fund program does not guarantee any applicant to be awarded.

3. Notification -- After the grant recipients are selected, all parties that submitted a proposal will receive a written acknowledgment of their proposals. DCD will not reimburse firms for any expenses associated with the submission of proposals.

4. Miscellaneous - DCD reserves the right to waive informalities in any proposals, reject any or all proposals in whole or in part, with or without cause, and to accept those proposals which in its judgment best meets its needs.

5. Equal Employment Opportunity - The Applicant agrees that there will not be discrimination as to race, sex, sexual orientation, religion, color, age, creed, or national origin in regard to obligation, work, and services performed under the terms of any contract ensuing from this notice. Applicant must agree to comply with Executive Order No. 11246, entitled "Equal Employment Opportunity" and as amended by Executive Order No. 11375, as supplemented by the Department of Labor Regulations (41 CFR, Part 60).

6. Indemnification - The Applicant agrees that it will indemnify, save and hold harmless DCD and the City of Milwaukee, their officers, employees, or agents, from and against all claims, demands, actions, damages, loss, costs, liabilities, expenses, judgments, and litigation costs, including reasonable attorney's fees, photocopying expenses and expert witness fees, recovered from or asserted against DCD or the City of Milwaukee on account of injury or damage to person or property or breach of contract to the extent that such damage, injury, or breach may be incident to, arising out of, or be caused, either directly or proximately, wholly or in part, by an act or omission, negligence or misconduct on the part of the Applicant or any of

its agents, servants, employees or subcontractors.

DCD shall tender the defense of any claim or action at law or in equity, arising out of or otherwise related to an act or omission, negligence, misconduct, or breach of contract on the part of the Applicant or any of its agents, servants, employees or subcontractors, to the Applicant or its insurer and, upon such tender, it shall be the duty of the Applicant and its insurer to defend such claim or action without cost or expense to DCD.

7. Wisconsin Public Records Law - Both parties understand that the City of Milwaukee is bound by the Wisconsin Public Records Law, and as such, all of the terms of this Agreement are subject to and conditioned on the provisions of Wis. Stat. 19.21, et seq. The Applicant acknowledges that it is obligated to assist DCD in retaining and producing records that are subject to Wisconsin Public Records Law, and that the failure to do so shall constitute a material breach of this Agreement, and that the Applicant must defend and hold DCD harmless from liability under that law. Except as otherwise authorized, those records shall be maintained for a period of seven years after receipt of final payment under this Agreement.

8. Receipt of Proposals - Proposals received prior to the time of opening will be secure. The officer whose duty it is to open them will decide when the specified time has arrived, and no proposal received thereafter will be considered.