

COMMUNITY CATALYST CAPITAL GRANTS
FEBRUARY 6 INFORMATION SESSION

1) Can funds be used for food-related uses?

Funds can be requested for food-related uses provided the project and request meet the requirements outlined in the Guidelines and Application.

2) Would a farmers market be considered an eligible use of Grant funds?

Farmer's markets are permitted uses only if funds are being requested to support a permanent structure.

3) Are binders required?

Each hard copy submission must be submitted in its own binder. Applicants should submit a total of six (6) binders. Please refer to the Guidelines and Application for additional information.

4) How many originals are required?

Applicants should submit one (1) original and five (5) copies.

5) Can you apply for Community Catalyst Capital Funds if you were not approved for an Operating Grant?

Yes.

6) How long do you have to complete the project and spend the awarded money?

The Guidelines state that grant funds must be spent within 24 months of executing a funding agreement with DHCD.

7) Why is there a \$3 million project cap?

The Community Catalyst Grants program was appropriated a total of \$5 million, \$2 million was allocated to support operating costs, and \$3 million was allocated to support capital projects.

8) Why is there a minimum of three properties and how does that work with a \$3-million cap?

One of the goals of the Community Catalyst Grants program is to obtain visible results, encourage scale, and to demonstrate impact. The three property minimum will help achieve these results. The \$3 million total development cost cap is the maximum a project can cost. Applications can be submitted for projects whose total costs are less than \$3 million.

9) Are Community Catalyst Capital Grant funds only for housing projects?

Please refer to the list of eligible uses that are included in the Guidelines.

10) Do you need to have three properties if you want to build a community center?

Applications that propose converting fewer than three vacant properties for a non-residential use will be considered provided they meet the terms and conditions in the Guidelines and Application.

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11) Do properties have to be contiguous?

Properties do not have to contiguous to be submitted as part of an application.

12) Will funds be provided as a loan or a grant?

Following awards, DHCD will review each project and work with the awardee to make a final determination whether funds are provided as loans or grants.

13) Would a consolidated property qualify for funding?

Projects developed on a consolidated site would be eligible for funding provided the project meets the terms and conditions in the Guidelines and Applications.

14) What is meant by a “Stable Neighborhood”?

Stable Neighborhoods refer to classifications D-H in the 2017 Housing Market Typology.

Additional information about the Typology can be found at:

<https://planning.baltimorecity.gov/maps-data/housing-market-typology>

15) Can properties be located in different housing typologies?

Yes.

16) Do properties in receivership qualify as a City Property?

Properties in receivership are privately owned and are not considered city-owned property.

17) Can Low Income Housing Tax Credits be combined with the Community Catalyst Capital Grant?

A project's total development cost cannot exceed \$3 million to qualify for an award of Community Catalyst Capital Grant funds. Projects that are awarded an allocation of Low Income Housing Tax Credits typically have development costs that are greater than \$3 million.

18) Can you use City and non-City owned properties?

Projects can consist of both City and non-City owned properties.

19) Can projects that are part of a larger project be broken out and submitted?

Applications for distinct phases or parts of a larger project can be submitted for Community Catalyst Capital Grant Funds. The applicant must be able to demonstrate that the phase or project that is submitted has its own sources and uses.

20) Does the City reserve the right to pull a Credit History?

At its sole discretion DHCD may utilize public records to obtain information regarding an applicant's financial history as a condition of receiving an award of funds.

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21) Can an applicant apply for multiple projects?

Applicants can submit requests for multiple projects, but are required to rank projects in priority order.

22) Are fiscal sponsors required to rank projects if there are multiple requests for funds?

All applicants that request funds for multiple projects are required to rank projects in priority order.

23) Can you apply for Community Catalyst Capital Grant Funds if a project is underway?

Applicants can submit a request for funds for a project that is underway if that project has a funding gap.

24) Do you need two binders for separate applications?

If the application is for two separate projects that are not related, they should be submitted as separate applications and in separate binders.

25) Can acquisition of title be considered as part of the project?

Community Catalyst Capital Grant Funds can be used for acquisition as long as the properties are not owned by the City.

26) Can a HUD property managed by HABC qualify for funding?

This would not qualify as an eligible use for Community Catalyst Capital funds.

27) What qualifies as a City-owned property?

City-owned properties are those that are owned by the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore

28) Can you use Community Catalyst Grant funds for projects that are developed on City-owned land- for example, a vacant lot?

Applicants may submit a request for Capital Grant Funds to support the development of a project on City-owned land, provided that the request is not for acquisition and the project meets all other requirements outlined in the Guidelines and Application.

29) What does non-City property mean?

Non-city owned property means property that is not owned by the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore.

30) Does the project/property have to be located in Baltimore City?

Community Catalyst Capital Grant funds can only be spent on properties and projects located in Baltimore City. If a project is part of a multi-jurisdictional effort, Community Catalyst funds can only be spent on the portion of the project located in Baltimore City.

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31) Can funds be used for pre-development cost beyond acquisition?

Grant funds can be used for a variety of pre-development costs. Please refer to the Guidelines and Application for additional information.

32) Can you use Grant Funds to replace funds already invested in a project?

Grant Funds can be used to repay funds that are being provided to a project as a loan, but cannot be used to replace funds that have been used to pay costs prior to the date of submission of an application.

33) Can funds be used for construction purposes?

Construction costs are an eligible use of funds.

34) Are funds reimbursable for sub-contractors?

Funds may be used to pay costs for sub-contractors provided those costs are included in the approved budget that is part of an executed funding agreement and have not been incurred at the time an application is submitted.

35) Can funds be used to cover a General Contractor's fee?

Yes.

36) Can funds be used for park development or development of green space?

Applications will be considered for parks and green space provided the request meets the terms and conditions outlined in the Guidelines and Application.

37) What is the interest rate on loans?

Loan terms, including interest rates, will be determined following notification of an award on an individual basis as part of underwriting a specific project.

38) If the award announcement is in June 2019, when are the Grant Funds distributed?

Funds will be made available following execution of a funding agreement with the City and in accordance with the terms of that agreement.

39) Regarding "...activities available for affordable housing trust funds may not qualify..." what does that mean?

Please refer to the updated guidelines posted on DHCD's website regarding the Affordable Housing Trust fund. Additional information regarding the Affordable Housing Trust Fund can be found at: <http://ca.baltimorecity.gov/codes/01%20-%20Charter.pdf>

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40. If an activity is eligible for funding through Affordable Housing Trust Funds and is underway, is that activity eligible for Community Catalyst Capital funds?

Please refer to the updated guidelines posted on DHCD's website regarding the Affordable Housing Trust fund.

41. Can funds be used for Market rate properties?

Market rate projects that meet the criteria outlined in the Guidelines are eligible uses for Grant funds.

42. What is the definition of a "small project"?

For the purposes of the Community Catalyst Capital Grants program, small projects are considered those whose total development costs do not exceed \$3 million.

43. Can you clarify page 4 of the Guidelines that states 45 percent of funds are available for established organizations. What is the 55 percent for?

The Community Catalyst Grants Program is intended to leverage assets and support community-led organizations in historically disinvested communities. The Guidelines state that at least 55 percent of the available Grant funds will be awarded for projects or to organizations located in neighborhoods classified as "Emerging" and that no more than 45 percent of available funds will be awarded to projects or organizations located in neighborhoods classified as "Established." Additional information regarding "Emerging" and "Established" classifications can be found in the Guidelines.

44. If you are an established organization are you excluded from working in disinvested neighborhoods?

Established organizations are eligible to submit applications for projects located in disinvested communities provided they meet the terms in the Guidelines and Application.

45. If a project's total costs exceed \$3 million can an application be submitted for a portion that is less than \$3 million?

Applicants can be submitted for a portion of a project whose total development costs exceeds \$3 million provided that the portion submitted is a discrete phase or component of that project.

46. If you are currently receiving City Funds for a project, are you eligible to request Community Catalyst Capital Grant funds?

Yes.

47. What follow up is required after funds are awarded?

Applicants will receive written notification of an award. Applicants will then meet with DHCD staff to review their projects and prepare final budgets and scopes of work that will become part of a funding agreement.

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48. How many Grants will be funded?

There is not a pre-determined number of awards that will be made.

49. Can you use funds for Share Baltimore projects?

DHCD is unable to respond to questions regarding specific projects or applicants.

50. Do you need six binders for each site?

The Guidelines and Application state that six hard copies are required for each application. If an application includes multiple properties that are part of the same project only one application and six hard copy submissions need to be submitted.

51. Is the entire award amount awarded in June 2019?

DHCD intends to award all of the Community Catalyst Capital Grant funds in June.

52. Would a vacant building that is redeveloped as a Homeowner Center be an eligible use of funds?

DHCD is unable to answer questions regarding the feasibility of specific projects.

53. On page 7 referencing Developer fees, can a project exceed the 5 percent in developer fees?

Developer fees can exceed 5 percent; however 5 percent is the maximum that can be requested from Community Catalyst Capital Grant funds. At its sole discretion, DHCD reserves the right to consider total development fees as part of its review and evaluation process.

54. Can the City recommend to an applicant a suggested/targeted request dollar amount?

The maximum amount of Community Catalyst Capital Grant Funds that can be requested is 30 percent of a project's total development costs, which cannot exceed \$3 million.

55. If a project's funding sources includes federal funds, are the Community Catalyst Capital Grant (CCG) funds also subject to Federal requirements?

In the event a project that is awarded Community Catalyst Capital Grant funds also includes federal funds, the CCG funds are subject to all federal requirements.

56. Can funds be used to hire staff?

Community Catalyst Capital Grant funds can be requested for staff provided that the application demonstrates that the position is necessary to implement a specific capital project.

53. Can the funds be used for an existing full-time worker if they are working on CCG Capital funded project work part time?

Community Catalyst Capital Grant funds can be requested for the percentage of time an existing staff member allocates to a specific capital project.

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54. Can funds be used for demolition and/or remediation?

Both demolition and environmental remediation are permitted uses of Community Catalyst Capital Grant funds.

57. How far back can a match go for a multi-unit project?

Community Catalyst Capital Grant funds can be requested for up to 30 percent of a project's total development cost. Funds that have been previously awarded and committed will be considered part of the applicant's leverage effective as of the date a funding agreement is executed.

58. Are in-kind matches permitted?

In-kind services do not qualify as part of the leveraging requirements for Community Catalyst Capital Grant funds.

59. Does the Grant consider collaborative projects?

The Community Catalyst Grant program encourages collaboration. Please refer to the Guidelines and Application for additional information.

60. Does the entire grant amount have to be spent within 24 months?

Community Catalyst Grant Awards must be spent within 24 months of executing a funding agreement with DHCD.

61. What are the repercussions if an award recipient defaults on any of the terms of the agreement?

Applicants who default on their funding agreement may be required to repay funds and could be prohibited from receiving additional awards of Community Catalyst and/or other City funds.

62. If an established applicant is partnering with an emerging organization, would that be considered an established or emerging?

Applicants self-select whether they are applying as an emerging or established organization based on the criteria provided in the Guidelines and Application. As part of the review process, the Review Panel can recommend modifying a classification.

63. Can you be considered an established organization if you are working in a disadvantaged area?

Please refer to the Guidelines and Application for the definitions of "Established" and "Emerging." "Established" organizations can submit applications for projects in emerging communities but must be able to demonstrate they meet the requirements outlined in the Guidelines and Application.

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64. Will a list of attendees be made available?

The attendees for the February 6th information session are posted on DHCD's website:
<https://dhcd.baltimorecity.gov/nd/community-catalyst-grants>

65. If you have an approved contract of sale, is a project exempt from site visits?

At its sole discretion, DHCD reserves the right to make site visits as part of the application and award process.

66. Can you use funds for pre development of City properties?

Funds can be requested for pre-development costs associated with the redevelopment of City-owned properties provided the request does not include acquisition and the applicant has evidence of site control.

67. Does the City have rights to an organization's pre-development products?

The Guidelines state that in the event an award is made for pre-development costs and the project does not move forward, DHCD has rights to all work product funded with Community Catalyst Grant funds.

68. Will extra points be awarded for partnering with other organizations?

Bonus points are not part of the scoring. For additional information, please refer to the Guidelines and Application.

69. Are you required to have multiple bids for construction contractors?

Applicants will be required to demonstrate that they have or will use a competitive process to obtain construction bids.

70. Does the City get involved in the Contractor bid process?

At its sole discretion, DHCD reserves the right to review and approve the bidding process and bids for projects that receive an award of Community Catalyst Grant funds.

71. What is the rationale for evaluating applications based on 260 points instead of 100?

At its sole discretion, DHCD has the ability to determine how applications are scored and evaluated. Community Catalyst Capital Grant Applications are evaluated on a total possible score of 260 points in order to assign points that reflect the significance of the question being asked.

72. Is it an automatic disqualifier if you decide not to own the property because you are uncertain when the funds will be granted?

Applicants are required to document when they will obtain site control as a condition of receiving an award of funds.

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73. What should an applicant do if the property of interest is no longer available once funds are awarded?

Applicants that receive an award of funds for properties that are no longer available at the time award letters are issued will no longer be eligible to enter into a funding agreement with the City. In the event a funding agreement has been executed, and the applicant is unable to gain site control, they will be required to return unspent funds to the City.

74. Does the application have to be double-sided when submitted?

Hard copy submissions can be single or double-sided.

75. Can you apply for funds if your projects includes more than three properties?

Yes.

76. If projects are linked, can they be included as one submission?

Applicants may submit multiple projects as part of the same application as one hard copy submission and in one binder, but are required to rank projects in priority order.

77. Is the review panel the same as the operating panel?

DHCD will convene a review panel with expertise in capital projects that, at its sole discretion, may include members who also participated on the Review Panel for the Community Catalyst Operating Grants.

78. Does the Grant fund kitchen equipment if your project includes a kitchen or a café?

Community Catalyst Capital Grant funds can be used for kitchen equipment provided the use meets the criteria outlined in the Guidelines and Application.

79. How can I get help with Drop Box?

Please contact Felicia Harris at Felicia.Harris@baltimorecity.gov if you require assistance with submitting your electronic application or with using the Drop Box link provided in the Guidelines and Application.

80. What is FF&E?

FF&E is Furnishing, Fixtures, and Equipment

81. Can applicants ask specific questions regarding submission or the project?

Questions are limited to clarification of the Guidelines or Application. DHCD is unable to answer questions regarding specific projects.

82. Will there be another round of funding in FY 19?

Future Community Catalyst Capital Grant funds are subject to appropriation.

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83. What is the page limit?

Page limits are provided for each question and can be found in the Application.

84. What types of budgets do you need to submit?

Required budgets can be found on the Community Catalyst Grants webpage. All applicants are required to submit the Summary Budget, Project Budget, and Funding Sources. Applicants may need to submit additional forms depending on the project that is being submitted.