FY24 Emerging Business Districts Grants Program Information Session
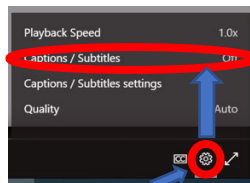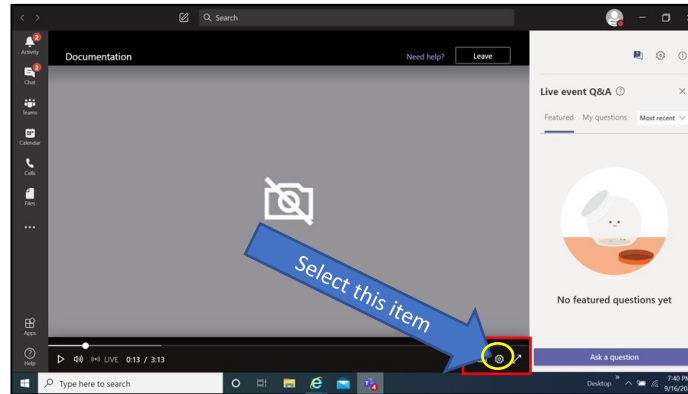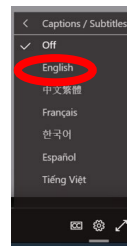
How you can view the multi-lingual closed captions

Select this item

When you select it a menu appears, choose **captions / subtitles**

You then select the language of choice

It will then display the language chosen

Disclaimer

The translations provided in this application use what is referred to as mechanical translation technology. Although this method of translation is very effective and provides a high rate of accuracy it is NOT 100% word for word accurate. Things that may affect it are the quality of the microphone used and potentially a person speaking that may have an accent.

FY24 Emerging Business Districts Grants Program Information Session

December 11, 2023

Prepared by Montgomery County Office of Grants Management

Welcome!

- This meeting will be recorded and posted for future viewing on the Office of Grants Management online application portal
- The slide deck will also be posted in the same location for your reference
- Online Application Platform Home Page: https://mcmdgrants.smapply.org
- Program Page:

  https://mcmdgrants.smapply.org/prog/fy24EBD

Information Session Agenda

- Provide an overview of the program
- Walk through the application platform
- Open up for participant questions (put your questions in the Q&A box)
- Any questions we cannot answer during the Information Session will be addressed and posted on the platform

FY24 Emerging Business Districts Grants Program

Program Goal: subsidize the formation of and provide support to nonprofit commercial district management entities to conduct place making, place management, branding, and economic development activities in a designated neighborhood.

Application Due Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 at 11:59 PM

FY24 Emerging Business Districts Grants Program

What is a Business Improvement District (BID)?

- Economic development entity that provides a geographically defined district with special services, such as maintenance, streetscape improvements, marketing, and public safety.

- These activities enhance—rather than replace—city services, and may range from safety and sanitation, to placemaking and branding, to business attraction and even real estate development.

- In Maryland, BIDs are authorized by state legislation and must be formed in accordance with the state's legislative requirements, the most crucial of which is to meet a threshold of property owner approval (more than 51% in Montgomery County).

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Characteristics of a BID

- BIDs serve as both a management structure and a dedicated funding source for property owners interested in these services, as a BID distinctively has the authority to legally compel a tax assessment on all properties located within its geographic boundaries.

- BIDs can function as nonprofit organizations, public-private partnerships, and city agencies in some cases.

- BIDs are typically led by boards that oversee a small staff to coordinate services within the BID.

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What is an Urban District Corporation (UDC)?

- Chapter 68A of the County Code creates urban districts in Bethesda, Silver Spring, Wheaton, and Friendship Heights as special taxing districts to ensure "prosperous, livable urban centers."

- Urban districts in Montgomery County are authorized to provide a specific cohort of services, including streetscape maintenance, creating public amenities, promoting district interests, holding special events, etc.

- The Code also allows for an *urban district corporation* to serve as the management authority for the district.

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- Both Business Improvement Districts and Urban District Corporations are created through the adoption of a local law.

- Presently, there is one Urban District Corporation (Bethesda) and no Business Improvement Districts in Montgomery County.

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For more information about BIDs and UDCs, see:

• Office of Legislative Oversight Report 2015-7: Case Studies of Local Business and Community Districts

• Prince George's County Business Improvement District Toolkit

• Code of Maryland, Economic Development, § 12-601 through § 12-612

• Montgomery County Code Section 68A. Montgomery County Urban Districts

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The phases of the BID/UDC formation process:
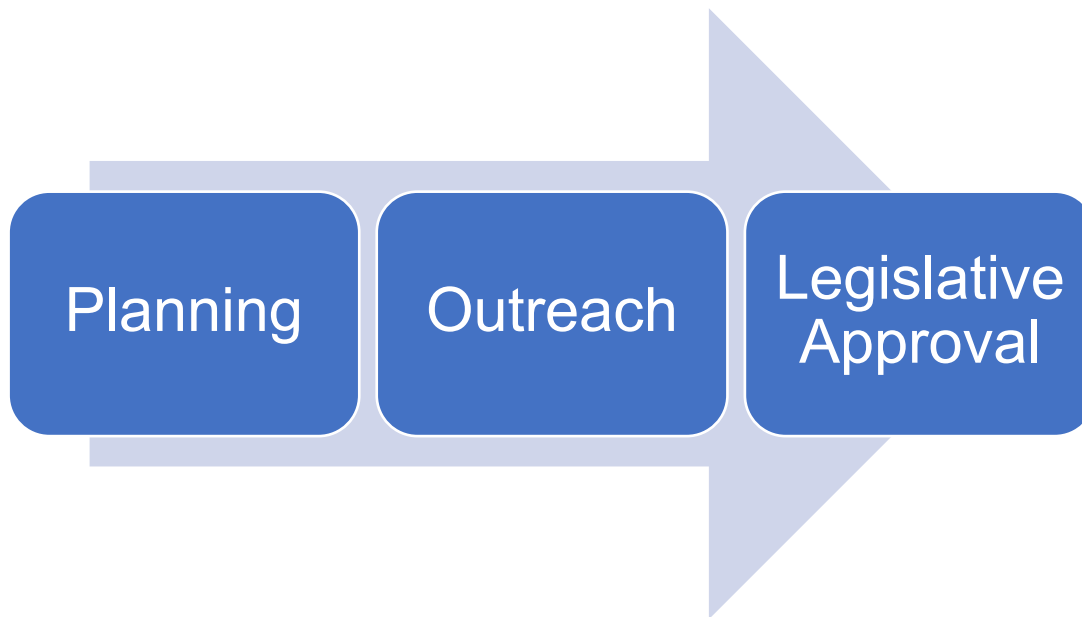
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Target Populations:

Direct: organizations already working towards becoming a BID or a UDC

Indirect: businesses, organizations, and residents of Montgomery County benefitting from their work.

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Funding Priorities:

- Efforts towards becoming an independent business district
- Broad-based community support for the commercial district revitalization process, with strong support from both the public and private sectors or a plan for obtaining the needed community support
- Vision and mission statements relevant to community condition and equity principles
- Clear and measurable milestones
- Cultural proficiency
- Inclusivity of the LGBTQIA+ community members
- Application of a racial equity lens

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Eligibility:

- 501(c)3 or 501(c)6 tax-exempt status (or a collaboration with another organization that has this status)
- In Good Standing with SDAT
- Proposed activity must be in MoCo or be exclusively for MoCo residents
- If current awardee or contract holder, be up-to-date on all reporting and show progress towards achieving goals
- 1 application per applicant

FY24 Emerging Business Districts Grants Program

Eligibility con't:

- Proposed expenses must be for a new activity, expansion of existing activities, or a combination of both. County funding cannot be used to supplant other funding for already planned activities

- Organizations that were funded under this program last year are eligible to apply. If submitting a multi-year application, please note that FY23 counts as Year 1. As such, they may submit applications that request funding for up to two more years.

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Eligible Expenses: operating costs defined as costs that support ongoing expenditures associated with projects. Illustrative operating expenses include but are not limited to:

- Administrative expenses to fund a Program Manager and support staff
- Community or business outreach
- Any expense incurred in the process of determining which commercial district management entity would be most beneficial for the corridor
- Implementation of neighborhood economic development activities
- Neighborhood place making and place management

FY24 Emerging Business Districts Grants Program

Ineligible Expenses:

- Capital expenses defined as expenses that are $5,000 or more one-time costs for the purchase of a fixed asset. For example, procurement of a car, property, remodeling a property, building an addition to a community center etc.

- Any purchase or activity which has already been made outside the grant award period of performance

- Purchases or activities unnecessary to accomplish grant purposes

- Prior obligations of and/or, debts, fines, and penalties imposed on the Grantee

- Lobbying

- To supplant (replace) funds from other grant sources

FY24 Emerging Business Districts Grants Program

Award Information	
Total Funds	$450,000
Anticipated number of awards	1-3
Award Size	$100,000 - $300,000
Period of Performance	Up to 12 months
Multi-Year Awards	Up to 3 years
Anticipated Grant Agreement Start Date	Depends on when award decisions are made and fiscal years of awardees
Anticipated Types of Awards	Cost reimbursable

Submission Guidelines

- Submissions must come through the County's SM Apply online application portal at https://mcmdgrants.smapply.org

- All applications must be fully submitted online by **Wednesday, December 20, 2023 at 11:59 PM**

- Applicants requesting an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodation should contact the Office of Grants Management to discuss alternative submission options.

Application Tasks

- **Applicant Information (Reusable) Task:** Organization contact info and supporting documents (data fields and uploads)

- **Applicant Background (Reusable) Task:** Organization size and leadership demographics (*data collected will never be seen by Review Committees or used for awarding*)

- **Project Strategy Narrative Task:** Project data & narrative (1 page limit, PDF upload)

- **Project Budget Task:** Project cost details (No page limit, MS Excel upload); Budget Narrative/Justification Task: Brief explanation of the Project Budget (1 page limit, PDF upload)

- **Project Staffing Plan:** assigned staff, qualifications, and required Level of Effort (1 page limit, PDF upload)

- **Project Work Plan/Timeline:** Implementation schedule (1 page limit per year, PDF upload)

- **Performance Plan:** Outline of metrics and outcomes to be achieved (1 page limit each, PDF upload)

- **Optional Supporting Documents to be Uploaded Task:** Optional additional uploads (no limit, PDF uploads)

Full Task requirements and guidance on the **FY24 Emerging Business Districts Grants Program Page**

Recorded Task Trainings

OGM has provided additional trainings specific to each Task focused on more detailed explanations of the Task, optional templates, and past Review Committee feedback on what they felt was useful. **The PowerPoint slides from these trainings are available on the MCG Grants Portal home page.**

Training Topic	Link to Recording/ PowerPoint slides
Applicant Information and Applicant Background Reusable Tasks	View Session 1 Recording View Session 1 Slides
Project Strategy and Project Work Plan/Timeline Tasks	View Session 2 Recording View Session 2 Slides
Project Budget, Project Budget Narrative/Justification, and Project Staffing Plan Tasks	View Session 3 Recording View Session 3 Slides
Performance Plan and Performance History Task	View Session 4 Recording View Session 4 Slides

Preparations

- **Register and create a profile on the online application platform** for each team member who will be working on your application.

- **Verify that your organization is registered with the Maryland State Department of Assessment and Taxation (SDAT).** Click **here** to go to the SDAT Business Express site to confirm. Even if your organization is registered in another jurisdiction, you must be registered with SDAT for Montgomery County to finalize an award with your organization.

- **If your organization is not in Good Standing with SDAT, take the necessary steps to get back into Good Standing.** SDAT will advise what steps are required. Montgomery County cannot finalize an award with you or organization if you are not in Good Standing. Your application for a grant could be disqualified if you are not in Good Standing.

- **Register with the Montgomery County Central Vendor Registration System (CVRS)** by clicking **here**. If you or your organization receives an award from the County then you will need to be registered with CVRS to receive payments.

Review Process

- Montgomery County Government will convene a review panel made up of qualified employees, and possibly the broader community, selected for their experiences in the grant program's subject area, grants administration, and/or project management.

- The panel members will review and score applicant proposals based on the criteria and priorities established in the NOFO.

- Final decisions will be made based on the scores, reconciliation of funding across categories, and other factors such as applicants past performance on previous County awards.

Scoring – Confidence Rating

A. **Project Goals and Grant Program Priorities (1-3 Rating; weighted at 15/100 points)** – The proposed project results are consistent with the FY24 Emerging Business Districts Grants Program goals and funding priorities

B. **Sound Fiscal Management and Budget (1-3 Rating; weighted at 20/100 points)** – costs are eligible, reasonable, realistic and align with the proposed approach

C. **Organizational Capability and Programmatic Capacity (1-3 Rating; weighted at 20/100 points)** – Applicant provides evidence of capacity to implement the proposed project

Scoring – Confidence Rating

D. Performance Plan (1-3 Rating; weighted at 25/100 points) – appropriate alignment with the proposed approach; clearly defined milestones and ways to measure success

E. Soundness of the Overall Proposal (1-3 Rating; weighted at 15/100 points) – proposal is feasible and viable

Award Notification

- Award notification letters are expected to be released roughly 4-6 weeks after the application deadline via email.

- For successful applicants, the award agreement will contain funding restrictions; programmatic, administrative, and policy requirements; reporting documents including total budget along with the amount of grant funding for the program; and payment terms.

Review Committee Feedback: the Six Cs

1. **Concise -** Be concise, when possible. Review Committee Members (RCM) have difficulty absorbing information from long narratives.

2. **Concrete** – Be specific and direct in **_how_** your proposed project will achieve its stated goals. RCMs often see gaps in how a project will work.

3. **Clarity** – RCMs prefer that you include the question you are answering or add sub-headings for clarity. Application task uploads should also include the title of the application task, organization name and project title as headers.

4. **Connection -** All elements of your application should show a clear connection with the grant priorities and scoring criteria, as outlined in the NOFO.

5. **Consistent -** All elements of your application should be consistent with each other. RCMs often note a lack of consistency between budget and narratives.

6. **Cite -** Feel free to refence other application sections/Tasks (i.e. budget or staff plan) in your narratives. Specifically cite the application Task name so the RCM can go directly there. Hyperlinks to external sources (i.e. news article, research paper, your website, etc…) can be helpful too. Overall, no need to repeat information that is in other places in your application or external source.

General Recommendations

- Read and Follow Instructions!

- Feel free to use graphics, charts, tables, maps, project workflows, and other non-narrative tools to clarify or enhance your proposal.

- Develop, coordinate, and finalize your application offline and then upload all materials into the application.

- Uploads in pdf format are preferred (except the Program Budget, MS Excel please) but other formats are also welcome. **The application platform has difficulty reading Mac formatted documents** (i.e. Pages, Numbers, and Key Note) so these should be submitted as PDFs or converted to MS Office formats.

Resources

The following resources are/will be posted on the [application page](#):

- Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)
- Link to a recording of the Information Session
- Information Session slide deck
- 5 Steps to Preparing for Montgomery County Grants hand out
- Links to General Application Training Videos and Slide Decks
- OGM Answers to Information Session and Frequently Asked Questions

Further Questions?

Montgomery County Office of Grants Management

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OGM online grants application platform for information, updates,
and to apply for County Grants (OGM website coming soon)
https://mcmdgrants.smapply.org