

**Lanesboro EDA Board Meeting
Meeting Agenda
Thursday, August 6, 2026 at 10:45 a.m.
Lanesboro Community Center Meeting Room**

However, due to potential technical issues, full functionality is not guaranteed*

Meeting ID: 865 2073 5787 Passcode: 219643

Call to Order/Roll Call

Members: Tom Pursell Linda Tacke Mindy Albrecht-Benson
 Kathryn Wade Michael Boho
Staff: Darla Taylor Mitchell Walbridge Michelle Marotzke

A. Agenda Approval

Motion _____ **Second** _____

B. Public Comments

C. Consent Agenda

- a. Minutes of the Special Meeting, June 11, 2026
- b. Minutes of the L.E.A.N. Sub-Committee, May 28, 2026
- c. Minutes of the L.E.A.N. Sub-Committee, June 25, 2026
- d. June and July EDA Financials

Motion _____ **Second** _____

Department Reports

- A. EDA Director Report
B. City Council/City Administration
C. Chamber of Commerce
D. School Board

Revolving Loan Fund

- A. Available Funds
- B. Loans in repayment
- C. Pending applications
- D. USDA On-Site Review

Continued Business

- A. SMIF Rural Entrepreneurial Venture Program Update
- B. Fillmore County Rural Child Care Innovation Program Update
- C. Empowering Small Minnesota Cities Update
- D. EDA Director Update
- E. Vacant Building Ordinance

New Business

- ### A. SMIF Small Town Grant Matching Funds Request

Motion	Second
--------	--------

Next Meeting: Thursday, September 3, 2026, at 10:45 a.m.

Adjourn Regular Meeting

**Lanesboro Economic Development Authority
Special Meeting Minutes
Thursday, June 11, 2026 – 10:45 a.m.
City Council Meeting Chambers**

Present Members:

☒ Mindy Albrecht-Benson ☒ Michael Boho ☒ Tom Pursell (*remote*) ☒ Linda Tacke
☐ Kathryn Wade

Staff:

☒ Mitchell Walbridge (*remote*) ☐ Darla Taylor ☒ Michelle Marotzke

Guests: Joe Goetzke

Call to Order: Member Albrecht-Benson called the regular meeting to order at 10:46 a.m.

- A. **Agenda Approval:** Member Tacke entered a motion to approve the agenda; Member Boho seconded the motion. Roll call taken and motion carried with all in favor.
- B. **Public Comments:** No public comments were shared.
- C. **Consent Agenda:**
 - a. Minutes of the Regular Meeting, May 7, 2026
 - b. Minutes of the L.E.A.N. Sub-Committee, April 23, 2026
 - c. May EDA Financials

Member Tacke entered a motion to approve the agenda; Member Boho seconded the motion. Roll call taken and motion carried with all in favor.

Department Reports

A. EDA Director Report:

- a. Director Marotzke shared information about the EDAM Conference, including the TigerPath program that Hutchinson has built. She also added that the SMIF Economic Development grant will open soon and that the City of Preston is planning to apply for the USDA Rural Business Development Grant to support two more cohorts of Bluff Country Business Academy.

B. City Council/City Administration: Administrator Walbridge shared that the city is 0/2 on state funding requests for the wastewater treatment plan project. However, he is still hoping for a favorable outcome of federal funding requests and will know sometime between July and September.

C. Chamber of Commerce: Executive Director Joe Goetzke shared an update about Chamber activities.

- a. The season is in full swing and the Rhubarb Festival was a hit with over 50,000 views on the Chamber's Facebook page.
- b. There are lots of videos on the Facebook page that are getting tens of thousands of views, thanks to a lot of fun activities happening in the community.
- c. The Chamber posts a weekly flyer with events and that has been received well.

D. School Board: School board member Sarah Peterson was not available for an update.

Revolving Loan Fund

A. Available Funds: If the proposed loan to Village Depot is approved, there will be approximately \$18,000 available between the two RLF funds.

B. Loans in Repayment: Presented in the financials. All accounts are current except for Sparrow Valley Properties (January through May due) and Driftless Trading Post (May and June due).

- C. **Pending Applications:** Marotzke presented the proposal for Village Depot. This loan would provide \$10,000 to assist with roof repairs to the building. The terms are 2% for 5 years. Collateral will be in the form of a mortgage on 117 Parkway Avenue North. After discussion, a motion to approve as presented was made by Member Boho; Member Tacke seconded the motion. Roll call was taken and motion carried with all in favor. This will be presented to the City Council at its July 6, 2026, meeting.

Continued Business

- A. **SMIF Rural Entrepreneurial Venture Program Update:** The program is being changed by SMIF to be more peer-oriented. Marotzke will follow-up with Mary Athey at SMIF for details.
- B. **Fillmore County Rural Child Care Innovation Program:** Marotzke shared that the provider appreciation on May 7th was well attended and the Town Hall on July 28, 2026, is open to anyone wishing to attend. There are four surveys available on the EDA webpage.

New Business

- A. **EDA Director Vacancy:** Marotzke shared that she has been appointed the Interim City Administrator for Preston and will need to step down from the EDA Director position. She shared updates to the Job Description and Position Packet that she and Administrator Walbridge agreed on. Changes mostly related to enhancing the partnership between Lanesboro and Preston. Member Tacke recommended that the timeline be pushed out two weeks, so Marotzke will share that with the Preston City Council who has final authority. Member Albrecht-Benson entered a motion to approve the Job Description and Position Packet; Member Boho seconded the motion. Roll Call was taken and motion carried with all in favor.

Marotzke requested that the Board appoint two people as hiring representatives. In the past, Chair Wade and Administrator Walbridge served in this capacity. Member Boho entered a motion to appoint Chair Wade and Administrator Walbridge to the hiring committee; Member Tacke seconded the motion. Roll Call was taken and motion carried with all in favor.

- B. **Highway 250 Advisory Group:** Marotzke shared the creation of the Highway 250 Advisory Group as a part of the L.E.A.N. sub-committee. This is intended to be a “bottom-up” group with three working groups that will work on the topics of navigation, communication, and financial needs for the upcoming Highway 250 construction project. The working groups will be led by a L.E.A.N. sub-committee member and will have the ability to bring local business owners/residents to the working group, then bring ideas to the EDA Director and/or the City Administrator. The general business community can do projects and promotions on their own, as the city’s role is to support them rather than tell them what to do for their business success. Member Tacke entered a motion to ratify the creation of the Highway 250 Advisory Group through the L.E.A.N. sub-committee; Member Albrecht-Benson seconded the motion. Roll Call was taken and motion carried with all in favor.
- C. **Vacant Building Ordinance:** The vacant building ordinance has been brought up in the past. Marotzke presented this as information and will start to gather information about what other cities do.

Next Meeting: Member Albrecht-Benson entered a motion to cancel the July 2, 2026, meeting; seconded by Member Tacke. Roll call was taken and motion carried with all in favor. The next regular meeting will be Thursday, August 6, 2026, at 10:45 a.m.

Member Albrecht-Benson adjourned the meeting at 11:21 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Marotzke
City of Lanesboro
Economic Development Director

**Lanesboro Entrepreneurial Action Network (LEAN)
Regular Meeting Minutes
May 28, 2026 – 8:30 a.m.
Lanesboro City Council Chambers**

Members Present:

☒ Michael Seiler ☒ Joe Goetzke ☒ Kara Maloney ☒ Kathryn Wade ☒ Allie Palmer
☒ Lori Bakke ☒ Steve Harris (*ad hoc*) ☒ Ambrin Olson (*ad hoc*)
☒ EDA Director Michelle Marotzke ☐ City Administrator Mitchell Walbridge

Call to Order

Chair Seiler called the meeting to order at 8:34 a.m.

- A. Agenda Approval:** Member Maloney entered a motion to approve the agenda; Member Wade seconded the motion. Motion approved with all in favor.
- B. Approval of Minutes:** Member Bakke entered a motion to approve the minutes of the April 23, 2026, meeting; Chair Seiler seconded the motion. Motion approved with all in favor.

New Business

There was no new business.

Continued Business

A. REV Program

- a. **REV Financials:** Marotzke provided reimbursement forms and shared an update of the REV Financials. After the workshop costs, there is approximately \$4,800 available.
- b. **Workshops:** Marotzke provided a recap of the workshops to date and shared that the Conflict Management workshop is scheduled for Tuesday, June 9th. Abbey Guggisberg from the University of Minnesota Extension will present and will add a layered focus to include the Highway 250 construction project and how conflict might be present through that process.

B. Business Promotion Group Update: An update is expected at the June meeting.

C. TH250:

- a. **City Update:** Administrator Walbridge was unavailable.
- b. **Empowering Small Minnesota Cities Application update:** Lanesboro's application to this program for mobility throughout the city during the Highway 250 project (and beyond) was approved to move to the next step. A small group of individuals has been selected to join the University of Minnesota staff for further conversation about the application. Representatives include Mayor Pearson, Administrator Walbridge, Director Marotzke, EDA Chair Wade, Member Palmer, Chamber Director Goetzke, Jeremy VanMeter with the Commonwealth Theatre, and Rochelle Gathje from Lanesboro Public School. There was a concern mentioned about the timeline matching up with the project, which will be discussed at the meeting with Extension.
- c. **MnDOT Introduction and Update:** Cindy Morgan, Sheila Thoma, and Michael Dougherty from the Communications Team at MnDOT joined the meeting to give an overview of the scope of their work with the Highway 250 project.
- d. **Okapi Strategy Presentation:** Linda Mathiasen from Okapi Strategy presented a follow-up report from the workshop she facilitated for Lanesboro businesses on April 16, 2026.
- e. **Highway 250 Advisory Group Plan Proposal:** Marotzke clarified that the Advisory Group for the Highway 250 project is intended to be a streamlined way to move communication between

Approved _____/26

the city and the business community/residents/visitors rather than a micromanaged approach (bottom-up versus top-down). If the business community wishes to coordinate amongst themselves for promotions or other ideas, they can do that. Member Maloney entered a motion to adopt the Highway 250 Advisory Group Plan Proposal, seconded by Chair Seiler. Motion approved with all in favor.

Miscellaneous: There was discussion about flower baskets downtown and if that is a budgeted cost for the city. It was also asked if there is money to pay people to water the plants. Some ideas for people to water include Jonathan at the Chamber and interns with the Lanesboro Arts Center. Marotzke will follow up with Administrator Walbridge and Members Harris and Wade will discuss at the next Park Board meeting.

The next meeting is scheduled for June 25, 2026, at Paddle On Coffee & Makers Emporium at 8:30 a.m.

Motion made by Member Wade to adjourn the meeting at 09:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Marotzke
EDA Director

**Lanesboro Entrepreneurial Action Network (LEAN)
Regular Meeting Minutes
June 25, 2026 – 8:30 a.m.
Lanesboro City Council Chambers**

Members Present:

☒ Michael Seiler ☒ Joe Goetzke ☐ Kara Maloney ☒ Kathryn Wade ☒ Allie Palmer
☒ Lori Bakke ☒ Steve Harris (*ad hoc*) ☒ Ambrin Olson (*ad hoc*)
☒ EDA Director Michelle Marotzke ☒ City Administrator Mitchell Walbridge (*remote*)

Call to Order

Chair Seiler called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m.

- A. **Agenda Approval:** Member Bakke entered a motion to approve the agenda; Member Palmer seconded the motion. Motion approved with all in favor.
- B. **Approval of Minutes:** Chair Seiler entered a motion to approve the minutes of the May 28, 2026, meeting; Member Wade seconded the motion. Motion approved with all in favor.

New Business

- A. **SMIF Grant Application:** Marotzke shared that the SMIF Economic Development Grant will be opening in July, so she will watch for information about that. This could be used for Highway 250 work like what Henderson, MN did in 2025.

Continued Business

A. REV Program

- a. **REV Financials:** Marotzke provided reimbursement forms and shared an update of the REV Financials. There is \$5,800 unspent with \$1,400 pending to be spent. The grant must be completed by June 30th. Marotzke will talk with SMIF to see what to do if we have less than \$5,000 available. She believes they may be ok with letting us use those for ongoing efforts of the REV program. Funds could be used for another Conflict Resolution workshop, purchasing a digital projector for presentations, and other needs that are identified in the REV interviews to assist business owners.
- b. **Workshops:**
- i. The Conflict Management workshop with Extension was very well done. There were only four people in attendance plus the two instructors, but it would be worth having them come out again.
 - ii. The One-on-One coaching sessions have been popular. Approximately 15 sessions were completed. This would be something to consider doing again in the future.

B. Business Promotion Group Update: No update

C. TH250:

- a. **City Update:** Administrator Walbridge shared that the City is in the final stretch of the bid package for the Highway 250 project. This includes infrastructure, personnel, and access management.
- b. **Empowering Minnesota Small Communities application:** The small group met with Andi Sutton from the Regional Sustainable Development Partnership and Mary Vogel with Extension's Design Team to discuss the application and project scope. The information was well

Approved _____/26

received, and they had a good discussion about the uniqueness of this project. Decisions should be made by August on which applications are accepted.

- c. **Highway 250 Advisory Group Leads:** There was further discussion about the Highway 250 Advisory Group. Marotzke clarified the role that the Highway 250 project plays in the scope of the L.E.A.N. sub-committee and that the Advisory Group is only intended to provide a clear communication path to the city and project management. It is not intended to guide business decisions or create any barriers to doing business activities. Chair Seiler agreed to lead the Communication and Navigation working groups with help from Member Wade. It was agreed to consider the Fundraising working group at the July meeting.

The next meeting is scheduled for July 23, 2026, at Paddle On Coffee & Makers Emporium at 8:30 a.m.

Motion made by Member Bakke to adjourn the meeting at 09:54 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Marotzke
EDA Director

CITY OF LANESBORO

EDA June 2026

Fund Abbrev	Fund	Dept	Account Descr	Current Period	June 2026 Amt	2026 YTD Amt	2026 YTD Budget	%YTD Act Budget	Status
Expenditure									
EDAOPER	250	46500	E 250-46500-100 Wages and Salaries	June 2026	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$900.00	0.00%	Active
EDAOPER	250	46500	E 250-46500-122 FICA	June 2026	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$76.85	0.00%	Active
EDAOPER	250	46500	E 250-46500-136 MN Paid Leave	June 2026	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3.96	0.00%	Active
EDAOPER	250	46500	E 250-46500-210 Operating Supplies	June 2026	\$0.00	\$58.28	\$500.00	11.66%	Active
EDAOPER	250	46500	E 250-46500-300 Professional Svcs	June 2026	\$0.00	\$6,824.23	\$27,126.93	25.16%	Active
EDAOPER	250	46500	E 250-46500-445 EDA Project	June 2026	\$1,001.53	\$10,646.41	\$5,000.00	212.93%	Active
EDAOPER	250	46500	E 250-46500-500 Capital Outlay	June 2026	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%	Active
Revenue									
EDAOPER	250	46500	R 250-46500-36200 Miscellaneous	June 2026	\$150.00	\$675.00	\$0.00	0.00%	Active
EDAOPER	250	46500	R 250-46500-36210 Interest Earnings	June 2026	\$0.00	\$52.73	\$0.00	0.00%	Active
EDAOPER	250	46500	R 250-46500-39203 Transfer from Other	June 2026	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%	Active
EDAOPER	250	46600	R 250-46600-31000 General Property	June 2026	\$18,892.52	\$19,144.73	\$33,607.74	56.97%	Active
Fund			2026 Begin Balance	Disbursements	Transfers	Journal Entries	Payroll Jes	Balance	
10104 - F&M Bank EDA									
250 - EDA OPERATING									
313 - Sparrow Valley Properties Abt			\$61.95	\$52.73	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$114.68	In Balance
620 - EDA Loan Funds Flexible			\$6,489.53		0	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,121.10	In Balance
625 - EDA USDA Loan Funds			\$1,030.80	\$8,265.42	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$567.02	In Balance
			\$42,136.84	\$18,337.73	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$24,573.57	In Balance

CLIENT	STATUS	Monthly Payment	BALANCE as of 6/23/26	Loan Maturity Date
Root River Adventure Arcade	On-Time	\$510.70	\$34,763.41	08/15/2032
Hotel Lanesboro	On-Time	\$383.02	\$ 19,807.10	01/01/2031
Driftless Trading Post	Past-Due 5/1/26	\$191.51	\$ 8996.52	05/01/2030
Sparrow Valley Properties, LLC	Past Due 1/1/26	\$773.73	\$ 54,953.42	12/01/2032
Harvey High Court, LLC	On-Time	\$510.70	\$ 21,670.94	02/01/2030
Clara's Eatery	On-Time	\$319.19	\$ 11,143.19	06/01/2029
Root River Inn and Suites	On-Time	\$574.53	\$ 15,161.26	09/01/2028
Junipers	On- Time	\$638.37	\$ 20,498.73	05/01/2029
The Scoop	On-Time	\$1529.87	\$18,786.05	12/01/2032
Golf Club	On-Time	\$1534.61	\$37,086.75	10/1/2032
Clara's 2025	On-Time	\$383.02	\$27,939.14	12/20/2032
Bluffscape Amish Tours	7/17/26 1 st due	\$385.61	\$22,000.00	06/17/2031

CITY OF LANESBORO

EDA July 2026

07/24/26 1:15 PM

Fund Abbrev	Fund	Dept	Account Descr	Current Period	July 2026 Amt	2026 YTD Amt	2026 YTD Budget	%YTD Act Budget Status
Expenditure								
EDAOPER	250	46500	E 250-46500-100 Wages and Salaries	July 2026	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$900.00	0.00% Active
EDAOPER	250	46500	E 250-46500-122 FICA	July 2026	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$76.85	0.00% Active
EDAOPER	250	46500	E 250-46500-136 MN Paid Leave	July 2026	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3.96	0.00% Active
EDAOPER	250	46500	E 250-46500-210 Operating Supplies	July 2026	\$0.00	\$58.28	\$500.00	11.66% Active
EDAOPER	250	46500	E 250-46500-300 Professional Svcs	July 2026	\$6,781.75	\$13,605.98	\$27,126.93	50.16% Active
EDAOPER	250	46500	E 250-46500-445 EDA Project	July 2026	\$2,023.85	\$12,670.26	\$5,000.00	253.41% Active
EDAOPER	250	46500	E 250-46500-500 Capital Outlay	July 2026	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00% Active
Revenue								
EDAOPER	250	46500	R 250-46500-36200 Miscellaneous	July 2026	\$75.00	\$750.00	\$0.00	0.00% Active
EDAOPER	250	46500	R 250-46500-36210 Interest Earnings	July 2026	\$0.00	\$63.83	\$0.00	0.00% Active
EDAOPER	250	46500	R 250-46500-39203 Transfer from Other	July 2026	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00% Active
EDAOPER	250	46600	R 250-46600-31000 General Property	July 2026	\$0.00	\$19,144.73	\$33,607.74	56.97% Active
Fund 2026 Begin Balance								
				Receipts	Disbursements	Transfers	Journal Entries	Payroll JEs Balance
10104 - F&M Bank EDA								
250 - EDA OPERATING								
313 - Sparrow Valley Properties Abt								
620 - EDA Loan Funds Flexible								
625 - EDA USDA Loan Funds								
			\$61.95	\$63.83	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$125.78 In Balance
			\$6,489.53	(\$4,368.43)	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,121.10 In Balance
			\$1,030.80	(\$8,729.20)	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,146.43 In Balance
			\$42,136.84	(\$45,901.00)	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$30,094.58 In Balance
			\$49,719.12	(\$58,998.63)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$34,487.89

CLIENT	STATUS	Monthly Payment	BALANCE as of 7/24/26	Loan Maturity Date
Root River Adventure Arcade	On-Time	\$510.70	\$34,289.84	08/15/2032
Hotel Lanesboro	On-Time	\$383.02	\$ 19,457.73	01/01/2031
Driftless Trading Post	Past-Due 5/1/26	\$191.51	\$ 8996.52	05/01/2030
Sparrow Valley Properties, LLC	Past Due 1/1/26	\$773.73	\$ 54,953.42	12/01/2032
Harvey High Court, LLC	On-Time	\$510.70	\$ 21,193.49	02/01/2030
Clara's Eatery	On-Time	\$319.19	\$ 10,844.76	06/01/2029
Paddle On Coffee	On-Time	\$574.53	\$ 14,610.82	09/01/2028
Junipers	On- Time	\$638.37	\$ 19,891.81	05/01/2029
The Scoop	On-Time	\$1529.87	\$18,786.05	12/01/2032
Golf Club	On-Time	\$1534.61	\$35,751.29	10/1/2032
Clara's 2025	On-Time	\$383.02	\$27,605.11	12/20/2032
Bluffscape Amish Tours	On-Time	\$385.61	\$21,694.02	06/17/2031

To: Lanesboro Economic Development Authority Board
From: Michelle Marotzke, Economic Development Director
Date: August 3, 2025

Housing

- Fillmore County was awarded a 3-year, \$60,000 grant from the Blandin Foundation. This will be used to do work toward a Housing Study. I have been in touch with Allison Whalen and she will reach out with more information when she has the project team ready.

Revolving Loan Fund

- The Village Depot loan for \$10,000 was closed on Friday, 17, 2026.
- David Tracey from the USDA will be on site on Friday, August 7th to review two RLF clients and our files and processes.

LEAN and Rural Entrepreneurial Venture (REV) program

- The final report for the REV grant was submitted on July 31, 2026.
- Empowering Small Minnesota Cities application update – the City of Lanesboro was accepted into the ESMC program for the purpose of assistance with development of a community transportation/movement plan during the Highway 250 construction project. This is a value of \$50,000-\$60,000 for dedicated assistance from the University of Minnesota Design Team. More information will come as the Design Team rolls out the project plan.

Miscellaneous

- The Lanesboro City Council and EDA Board met on Tuesday, July 27th to discuss the EDA position. A search and subsequent interviews yielded no viable candidates, so the City is evaluating an option to partner with the Lanesboro Area Chamber of Commerce for EDA services. It was approved to end the Preston contract with an effective end date of December 31, 2026, as per the Agreement. Administrator Walbridge and I will develop a transition plan to ensure projects have continuity. Two primary projects include the ESMC grant and the Department of Commerce grant that was awarded in June, in addition to preparation for the Highway 250 reconstruction project.
- The SMIF Small Towns grant is open with an application deadline of August 19th. This will be reviewed on the agenda with a request for matching funds from the EDA fund.



SOUTHERN MINNESOTA
INITIATIVE FOUNDATION

525 Florence Avenue • PO Box 595 • Owatonna, MN 55060-0595
PH 507.455.3215 • FAX 507.455.2098 • smifoundation.org

Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation Small Town Grant Program Guidelines and Procedures

Effective July 2026

Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF) works collaboratively to help create vibrant communities, innovative and successful economies and engaged and valued citizens. A key component to creating a vibrant region is to ensure all its communities are strong and successful.

The Small Town Grant Program seeks to invest in collaborative initiatives which improve the way your community works together, solves challenges, creates a welcoming community and sense of belonging for all. SMIF seeks proposals which focus on collaboration throughout the project and will impact the culture, education, economy and/or social aspects of your community. This is a competitive grant round, and projects that prioritize making the community more welcoming and/or foster a sense of belonging for all will be prioritized above other projects.

SMIF offers up to \$10,000 for projects in communities located in our 20-county region with populations of 10,000 or less to be completed over a 12-month timeframe between October 8, 2026 and October 8, 2027. Projects must be new or have a significant new aspect.

Examples of past grant projects include: the establishment of a new organization to unite various cultures in town, a new event to draw tourism and create a welcoming atmosphere, a community volunteer day to build new amenities, a program that makes bicycling accessible to people with disabilities, a welcome basket program for new residents, translation services for non-English speaking residents and more. Applications that consider groups within the community that often get overlooked are encouraged.

Applications should clearly indicate how the project is incorporating community collaboration and is creating a more welcoming and/or belonging community. Examples of collaboration include schools, the city, businesses, churches, volunteer groups and other members of the community working together. We know that some communities are so small that organizations to collaborate with might be limited. If this is the case, consider collaborating with individual volunteers or asking SMIF for guidance before applying.

Eligible organizations are units/agencies of government, IRS-designated 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations (current status, not pending), Tribal government, and public institutions (public schools, public higher education, etc.) Organizations which do not comply with the above status may seek a fiscal agent who holds one of the above legal statuses.





SOUTHERN MINNESOTA
INITIATIVE FOUNDATION

525 Florence Avenue • PO Box 695 • Owatonna, MN 55060-0695
PH 507.455.3215 • FAX 507.455.2098 • smifoundation.org

If you feel this grant can make an impact on your community, but you are unsure about the grant writing process, please reach out to SMIF for assistance.

The Small Town Grant program is supported, in part, by a generous donation in memory of Paul Johnson who wanted southern Minnesota's smallest communities to thrive. We are grateful to Paul Johnson's family for continuing his legacy.

Exclusions

- Individuals, businesses or other for-profit organizations
- General operating expenses and expenses not directly related to the project
- Programs or services mandated by law
- Routine maintenance
- Campaigns or endowments
- *Projects that cannot be finished by Oct 8, 2027 will not qualify*
- Projects with little to no community collaboration

Application Requirements

- Completed application (online)
- 1-2 letter(s)/email(s) of support from partner organization(s) other than the applicant. Letters of support should not come from the applicant, project contact or fiscal agent. We are looking for buy-in and support for your project.
- 25% cash match (For example, applicant must have \$2,500 cash in-hand for a \$10,000 Small Town Grant request. This brings your total project cost to \$12,500. This does not need to be in-hand to apply but must be in-hand before SMIF will release any awarded grant funds.)
- *Project must be completed within 12-months of the award date. Projects must be complete by October 8, 2027 to qualify.*
- All grant funds must be expended within the 12-month timeframe.
- A Progress Report must be submitted 6 months after the grant award date and a Final Report is due within 60 days of project completion.
- Capital expenses will generally not be considered for funding.

FY27 Small Town Grant Program Timeline

- July 22, 2026 - Announcement
- August 19, 2026 - Applications Due
- October 8, 2026 - Award Date





SOUTHERN MINNESOTA
INITIATIVE FOUNDATION

525 Florence Avenue • PO Box 695 • Owatonna, MN 55060-0695
PH 507.455.3215 • FAX 507.455.2098 • smifoundation.org

- October 8, 2027 - Completion Date

For questions, contact:

Sarah Scheffert, Communications & Community Vitality Specialist

507-214-7015

sarahs@smifoundation.org

Collaborating for Regional Vitality

