**WEBPAGE CONTENT FOR FOOD HALL SUPPORT GRANT PROGRAM**

Saint Paul Food Hall Support Grant Program Guidelines

**Program Overview**
Food Halls provide significant economic contributions, including providing a regional draw for visitors, a venue for emerging food businesses, and a source for a variety of jobs, from entry-level to operations management. With most of the individual businesses in a Food Hall limited in seating capacity, and therefore limited in revenues to pay rent, this program will provide much needed assistance to Saint Paul’s Food Halls that experienced business interruption due to COVID-19 related business closures or were affected by decreased customer demand as a result of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

**Program Goals**
Support Saint Paul’s Food Halls, by providing grant dollars toreimburse the costs of business interruption due to COVID-19 related business closures and/or decreased customer demand as a result of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

**Grant Structure**
One-time grants of $25,000 to $250,000 for qualified Food Falls to reimburse for eligible business expenses such as debt payments, limited utilities already paid, payroll, accounts payable, or other operating expenses.  Size of the grant will be based on demonstrated lost rental income, amount of eligible expenses, and the overall amount of eligible applications received. For purposes of this program, “lost rental income” means rent not collected as compared to normal operations before the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Saint Paul is making these grants available from funding awarded under the federal CARES Act in connection with a qualified disaster declaration in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency. As a disaster relief program, the grant applications will not ask about immigration or documentation status and eligibility determinations will not be made based on immigration or documentation status.

If you have questions regarding the application or guidelines, or want help applying please call (651) 266-6565.

**Eligibility Criteria**
To be eligible for this grant, the Food Hall (as defined below) must:

* Be located within Saint Paul city limits.
* Be currently operating or able to open for operation if circumstances allowed (i.e. still control the physical space).
* Have opened prior to December 1, 2019.
* Experienced business interruption due to COVID-19 related business closures or were affected by decreased customer demand as a result of the COVID-19 public health emergency.
* Be able to demonstrate lost rental income during the period March 1, 2020 through September 30, 2020.
* Detail how it would use a grant of up to $250,000 to pay for eligible expenses.
* Indicate if the business received a $7,500 grant from the Saint Paul Bridge Fund for Small Businesses and detail any amounts of CARES Act funding that has previously been received by the business, including Ramsey County’s Small Business Relief Fund. The business will also be required to attest that they HAVE NOT utilized any of the above amounts to cover the same expenditures identified for the use of this venue support grant.

The following are not eligible:

* Properties that received a grant from DEED’s Cultural Mall Operator Grants Program.

Eligible Uses of Grant Funds:

Grant funds may be used to pay for the following eligible expenses incurred between March 1 and September 30, 2020:

* rent or mortgage payments
* limited utilities (gas, electricity, telephone, business internet/cable, recycling, and security systems) already paid
* payroll
* earned sick and safe time relief to employees
* other eligible operating expenses (including insurance, marketing, supplies, inventory, security, maintenance, and cleaning)

Note:

* In no case will grant award exceed the amount of eligible expenses or demonstrated loss of rental income.
* Grant funds may not be used for expenses that have been or will be reimbursed under any federal program, such as the reimbursement by the federal government pursuant to the CARES Act of contributions by States to State unemployment funds.
* If an organization has already received federal CARES Act funding (Ramsey County Small Business Relief, Saint Paul Bridge Fund, SBA Payroll Protection Plan, SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loan, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development Small Business Relief Grant Program, this C-Star round), they cannot use different funds to cover the same eligible expenses. For example, if an SBA PPP loan covered payroll in March and April, the organization’s eligible payroll expenses would be May through September.
* Grant funds may not be used to cover damages and/or expenses covered by insurance.
* Grant funds may not be used to meet tax obligations.
* Grant funds may not be used for unpaid utility fees.
* Grant funds may not be used for capital improvement projects.

**Application Process**
Saint Paul will accept applications October 13 through October 21 at 5:00 PM. All eligible applicants will be funded, and the size of the grant will be based on demonstrated lost rental income, eligible expenses, and the overall amount of eligible applications received.

To apply:

Apply online here: <https://www.zoomgrants.com/zgf/stpaul.gov/COVID19-Grants>

Application requirements will involve providing:

* Evidence of Eligibility Criteria.
* Basic details about the Food Hall.
* A narrative description and calculation of negative impacts on the Food Hall, and associated costs, due to business interruptions and/or decreased customer demand caused by the COVID-19 public health emergency.
* Information on current operations, including whether the Food Hall closed or is providing reduced services.
* A narrative description of the current plans for operating under conditions caused by the COVID-19 public health emergency.
* Information on the intended use of the grant funds, together with a budget of eligible expenses.

A committee of City staff will review applications and make eligibility determinations. Staff may request additional information or documentation when processing applications. The City’s Director of the Planning and Economic Development Department, or designee, will oversee and sign off on eligibility determinations.

**Funding Process**

If application is approved, businesses will be notified within 10 business days and subsequently provided an electronic grant agreement for signature.

Upon full execution of the signed grant agreement to the City, payment will be made in approximately 10 business days and a check for the grant awarded will be mailed to the address listed on submitted W-9

Origination, application, and any other applicable fees will be waived.

Businesses receiving funds must attest to the fact that they HAVE NOT utilized any of the grant award to cover the same expenditures already covered by another federal program (e.g. other CARES Act funding) or Saint Paul Bridge Fund for Small Businesses grant, and agree to document and report specific uses of the funds, as well as the economic impact of the grant program, including, but not limited to, employees retained or rehired, and sales.

**Definitions**
For the purposes of this program, any references to these terms shall have the following meaning:

Food Hall
A *"Food Hall"* is a commercial space open to the general public with the following characteristics:

* Have a street-level presence where the space can be directly accessed from the street (i.e. skyway food courts would not be eligible).
* Have a tenant mix that includes restaurants and other food-oriented retail businesses under one roof, with the primary access to the businesses from interior common (shared) space.
* Have a minimum of four food-oriented businesses, with at least one serving prepared food able and/or likely to be consumed on premises (such as a restaurant or coffee shop), and at least one serving food meant to be prepared elsewhere (such as a butcher shop or specialty grocer).
* Have at least 60% of their tenants be food-oriented businesses.

**Follow-Up and Additional Resources**
For businesses needing additional resources such as technical assistance, larger working capital loans, or others, staff will provide ongoing assistance to businesses of all sizes and types, working with partners and other levels of government to access resources as they become available, such as SBA and State of Minnesota DEED loans.

City Staff will conduct check-ins with grant recipients, at times determined by the City, to monitor and/or audit the use of grant funds, to learn the effect of the grant and business outcomes, and whether they match the program’s desired outcomes of business and/or job retention.

Note: Applicants may be required to provide receipts for eligible expenses and ultimate grant recipients will be required to retain documentation of expenses reimbursed with grant funds.