2026 CD PROGAM APPLICATION - SCORING SHEET

Each application is evaluated and scored based on how it meets the criteria listed in this document.

	Maximum Score
1. Consolidated Plan (ConPlan) Goals	**15**
ConPlan Community Development Goals	10
Anti-Poverty Strategies	5
Bonus Points	**20**
Childcare access and/or programming	5
Preparation for the Medicaid Work/Volunteer Requirement	5
Downtown Innovation/Revitalization	5
New Collaborative Partnerships and/or Co-locating	5
2. Project Readiness	**15**
Timely Completion/Expenditure of funds	10
No Additional Actions Needed	5
3. Project Impact and Delivery	**35**
Achievement of Expected Results	8
Target Clientele	8
Outcome Measurements	10
Business/Operations Plan Approach	9
4. Budget Narrative	**20**
Sufficiency and Leveraging	5
Financial Support and Viability	5
Project Budget Detail/Use of Funds	5
Number of Persons/Households to Benefit	5
5. Applicant Attributes	**15**
Project/Program Management Ability and Capacity	6
Past Performance/Experience	5
Quality of Application	4
Total Possible Score	**100**
Deductions	**-10**
Previous invoices or reporting data have needed repeated corrections	-10
Total Application Score	

2026 APPLICATION SCORING CRITERIA

* **Note to Applicant**: A high score is not a guarantee of funding. The City of Duluth Planning and Development Division considers the scoring sheet one of many tools to help make funding recommendations to the Community Development Committee, City Council, and Administration. The Planning and Development Division will use other information and sources including but not limited to consistency with the goals for the 2025-2029 Consolidated Plan, addressing the anti-poverty strategy policies, supporting one or more 2026 CD Committee Action Plan Funding Priorities, as well as the availability of limited funds to assist in funding recommendations.

SECTION 1. Consolidated Plan Goals

The project proposal shall be examined in relation to the City's community development goals and funding priorities as presented in the goals for the City of Duluth 2025-2029 Consolidated Plan (ConPlan).

The Consolidated Plan is a five-year plan, developed with community input, studies, and assessments that serves as a key strategic planning tool. The plan provides guidance and direction for Duluth in administering its federal program funds to address its community development goals and priority needs over a five-year period. The goals for the 2025-2029 Consolidated Plan, including the anti-poverty strategies, are available on the website at https://duluthmn.gov/planning-development/community-development/annual-funding-process/. HUD measures the City's performance on its accomplishment of its ConPlan goals. As such, project proposals that are consistent with the City's ConPlan goals shall be scored accordingly.

ConPlan Community Development Goals (10 Points)

10 pts Maximum Impact: Project directly relates to one of the ConPlan goals. Information and supporting documentation provided in the application is comprehensive and provides a clear indication how the project's outcome will substantially support a ConPlan goal.

5 pts Substantial Impact: Project is consistent with the ConPlan goals. The information and supporting documentation presented is not as clear and comprehensive as meeting one of the ConPlan goals, but it appears very probable that the project's outcome will support a ConPlan goal.

0 pts No Impact: Project does not meet one of the ConPlan goals.

Anti-Poverty Strategies (5 Points)

5 pts Maximum Impact: The proposal demonstrates an ability to address two or more anti-poverty strategies. There is a high likelihood the proposal will contribute to two or more policies in a meaningful way.

3 pts Substantial Impact: The proposal demonstrates an ability to address one anti-poverty strategy in a meaningful way.

0 pts Minimal/No Impact: The proposal demonstrates a low likelihood of effectively addressing one of the anti-poverty strategies.

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Bonus Points – CD Committee Action Plan Funding Priorities: 2026
(20 Points total: each item scored on a scale of 1-5 pts)

5 pts Childcare access and/or programming: All 5 points may be earned by applications that are childcare and/or children's programming focused. The proposal demonstrates a high likelihood of addressing the shortage of childcare or children's programming in Duluth.

5 pts Maintain Medicaid and SNAP Benefits: Beginning in 2026, the federal government is changing the work requirements for eligibility in both Medicaid and SNAP Benefits programs. All 5 points may be earned by proposals that are realistic solutions to address the increase in need to find employment or volunteer opportunities to maintain coverage under the federal programs.

5 pts Downtown Innovation/Revitalization: All 5 points may be earned by proposals for activating the downtown, with a special focus on 1st Street between Mesaba and 4th Ave East. (see the map for the boundary of "downtown" for these purposes)

5 pts New collaborative partnerships/co-locations: All 5 points may be earned by proposals that help to remove transportation barriers for people receiving services. Proposals may include offering available office space to other service providers and finding ways to make the provision of services more efficient.

SECTION 2. Project Readiness

Consideration shall be given to proposals which demonstrate project readiness - projects which exhibit the greatest likelihood to start immediately upon receiving CDBG or HOME funding (hereinafter referred to as "Grant Funds") approval (expected on or about April 01, 2026) and the practicability to expend Grant Funds within or less than a one-year period; and be without factors which would cause undue delays. Strong applications will include a project budget that clearly demonstrates how the Grant Funds will be committed and expended within the desired one-year time frame or less. Factors to be considered include (a) the Project Schedule, (b) the availability of resources (including all non-Grant Funds, federal, state, county or private funding sources), and (c) any additional actions that may affect the timely implementation of the project. To satisfy HUD timeliness standards, CDBG projects are expected to be complete within 12 months (March 31, 2027). Construction projects may have a longer timeline. If the project includes HOME funding, those funds must be committed within two years from the beginning of the program year (April 1, 2026) and must be expended within five years.

Timely Completion/Expenditure of Grant Funds (10 Points)

10 pts Maximum Pace: The project schedule is comprehensive and includes clear documentation that the project is ready to start upon approval/receipt of funding and/or is very likely to be completed in less than one year of project funding. Project milestones (activities) and other critical elements necessary to accomplish the project are identified in the schedule and assigned time periods for each activity appear reasonable and achievable. It is certain or highly probable that the Grant Funds will be fully expended within the first 12 months (from April 2026 to March 2027) of the project's funding or less.

8 pts Substantial Pace: The project schedule is comprehensive. Documentation indicates that the project will be ready to start within one month of approval/receipt of funding (by May 2026) and/or may take 12 months or slightly longer to be completed. Project milestones (activities) and other critical elements necessary to accomplish the project are identified in the schedule and assigned time periods for each activity appear reasonable and achievable. It is somewhat likely the Grant Funds will be fully expended by the end of the first

12 months of the project's funding (March 2027) and very probable that it will be expended within the first 15 months (by June 2027).

5 pts Moderate Pace: The project schedule is comprehensive. Documentation indicates that the project is more likely to start later than one month from approval/receipt of funding and/or not be completed within the first 15 months of funding. Project milestones (activities) and other critical elements necessary to accomplish the project are identified in the schedule and assigned time periods for each activity appear reasonable. It is not likely the Grant funds will be fully expended by the first 15 months of the project's funding and probable that it may take up to 18 months to be fully expended.

2 pts Minimal Pace: The project start date is somewhat uncertain or has not been established and the project schedule is inadequately prepared with key information missing from the schedule and/or time periods are not reasonable. It is likely that the full expenditure of the Grant Funds will extend beyond the first 18 months of the project's funding.

0 pts The project schedule is poorly prepared and/or time periods are unrealistic and/or not achievable. It is highly likely that the expenditure of the Grant Funds will extend beyond the first 24 months of the project. Matter(s) were identified as requiring actions and/or potentially requiring actions to address federal review requirements. The applicant does not appear knowledgeable, committed, or able to complete the project.

<u>Additional Actions Needed (5 Points)</u>

Additional actions may have a significant impact on the start-up, progress and completion of the project. Matters that may have a critical impact on the progress of a project include, but are not limited to, site control, land use designation, plans and project design, and community support. These matters shall be considered together to evaluate the impact on the project and its ability to start upon approval and receipt of funding.

5 pts No additional action(s) is needed. The applicant has full and complete site control. There are no issues anticipated with land use designation, zoning, plans, project design, community support or any other issues as of the application date. The project will commence as planned.

3 pts The applicant has realistically identified action(s) and/or problem(s) relating to site selection, land use designation, zoning, plans, project designs or other issues, but they appear relatively minor, and the applicant exhibits the understanding and capacity to address these concerns. It appears highly probable that the concerns will be resolved before June 2026.

2 pts The applicant has realistically identified action(s) and/or problem(s) relating to site selection, land use designation, zoning, plans, project designs or other issues. The actions are somewhat complicated to resolve. The applicant has developed and implemented a comprehensive plan, and is already in the process of addressing these concerns. The concerns are expected to be fully resolved by the Annual Action Plan Public Hearing (January 2026), but also likely to adversely impact the project's implementation with delays.

1 pts The applicant has realistically identified some action(s) and/or problem(s) relating to site control, land use designation, zoning, plans, project designs or other issues. The actions are complicated to resolve. The applicant has developed a plan to address these concerns. The problems are expected to be fully resolved but will adversely impact the project's implementation with delays extending beyond the start of the program year (April 1, 2026).

0 pts Extensive additional action and/or problems have been identified or pose a potential significant concern in regards to site control, land use designation, zoning, plans, project designs or other issues. The applicant

appears unsure as to how to address the issues and/or the problems do not appear to be fully resolvable without negatively impacting the project's implementation with delays extending beyond the 2026 construction season.

SECTION 3. Project Impact and Delivery

The impact of the project will be evaluated based on the information presented by the applicant in the narrative. The applicant should clearly explain the merits of the project focusing on the results and benefits to be achieved with the implementation of the project, the clientele that will directly benefit from the project and its long-term strategy and plan to ensure that the project continues to provide

Achievement of Expected Results (8 Points)

8 pts Maximum Impact: The applicant clearly and completely describes the significance of the need, and provides supporting documentation and statistics fully substantiating this need. The proposal addresses the need described and successfully resolves the problem completely. The achievement of the results is realistic and reasonable.

4 pts Moderate Impact: The applicant explains the significance of the need, and provides some supporting documentation and/or statistics that somewhat relate to the need. The proposed project would have a major impact on addressing the described need, but would not completely resolve the problem. The achievement of the results is somewhat realistic and reasonable.

2 pts Minimal Impact: The applicant describes the need, but not clearly or completely and provides minimal or no supporting documentation and/or statistics that relate to the need. The proposed project would have some impact on addressing the described need, but significant areas are not addressed. The achievement of the results is not realistic and reasonable.

0 pts No Impact: The need, as described, appears questionable as to its significance and seriousness to the community. The proposed project does not clearly address how the described need would be addressed or the project would be ineffective in resolving the described need.

Target Clientele (8 Points)

This section will address the impact on the low-income people served. It will measure the effectiveness of the project in regards to the number of the low- income persons served.

8 pts Maximum Impact: Direct benefit of 100% of project restricted to serving low- income persons (includes area-wide benefit).

6 pts Substantial Impact: Direct benefit of less than 100%, but at least 85% of project restricted to low-income people.

4 pts Moderate Impact: Direct benefit of less than 85% but at least 70% of project restricted to low-income people.

1 pt Minimal Impact: Direct benefit of less than 70% but at least 51% of project restricted to low-income persons.

0 pt No Impact: Direct benefit of less than 51% (HUD required minimum).

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Outcome Measurements (10 Points)

Outcome measurements and objectives of the previous year's performance were reviewed at the June 2025 Public Hearing. Programs that are meeting or exceeding their goals and creating great community impact are what the City of Duluth strives for.

10 pts Maximum Impact: Program met or exceeded the outcome objectives in recent years. The program also had a maximum impact and benefit for the participants it served.

8 pts Substantial Impact: Program was close to meeting its outcome objectives in recent years. The program had a substantial impact and benefit for the participants it served.

5 pts Moderate Impact: Program did not meet their outcome objectives in recent years. Program still had a moderate impact on the participants it served.

2 pts Minimal Impact: Program met some outcome objectives in recent years. Program had minimal impact on the participants it served.

0 pts No Impact: The program met few or none of the outcome objectives in recent years. Program had no impact on the participants it served.

Business/Operations Plan Approach (9 Points)

9 pts The proposal fully and thoroughly identifies the major critical issues and factors to implement and maintain the project objectives over the long term. The proposal addresses how these issues will be resolved to sustain the project results and ensure continued success after the implementation of the project. The approach is sound and reflects a clear understanding of the issues involved and how they will be resolved.

5 pts The proposal appears to identify most of the major critical issues and factors to implement and maintain the project objectives over the long term. The proposal somewhat addresses how some of these issues will be resolved to sustain the project results and ensure continued success after the implementation of the project.

2 pts The proposal appears to identify some of the major critical issues and factors to implement the project and maintain the project objectives over the long term but does not address how these issues will be resolved to sustain the project results and ensure continued success after the implementation of the project.

0 pts The proposal does not address major issues to implement the project and maintain the project objectives over the long term, nor how these issues will be resolved to sustain the project results and ensure continued success after the implementation of the project.

SECTION 4. Budget Narrative

Financial considerations are vital in assessing a project's ability to be completed successfully and timely. The following factors are essential for projects that involve rehabilitation or new construction of public facilities. Factors to be considered in this area include (a) the availability and sufficiency of resources (including all non-Grant Funds, federal, state, county or private funding sources), (b) the leveraging of resources, (c) fiscal support for the project for its continued viability and (d) the project budget's accuracy, reasonableness and completeness in determining the financial needs of the project.

Sufficiency and Leveraging of Resources (5 Points)

The sufficiency of resources and leveraging element is intended to ensure that the funding requirements of the proposed project have been thoughtfully considered to ensure the project's successful implementation. This assessment considers the adequacy and availability of the funding needs of the total project to determine its ability to start as planned and ensure that its funding requirements can be met. The evaluation also considers and encourages the use of resources and funds over and above the Grant Funds applied for in the undertaking of the project.

5 pts Funding needs are clearly identified to address the total project requirements. Other sources of funds have been **secured and firm** written commitments have been obtained for the project, such that upon approval of the Grant Funds, the project may commence immediately.

3 pts Funding needs are clearly identified to address the total project requirements but **not completely secured and confirmed**. Plans to secure other sources of funds are underway and information is presented to conclude that it is very probable that these other sources of funding will be obtained timely such that upon approval of the Grant Funds, the project may commence immediately or within 3 months after funding has been approved. There is at least $1 of other sources of funds for every $1 requested.

2 pt Funding needs are clearly identified to address the total project requirements. The project is mostly reliant on requested Grant Funds to finance the project with minimal leveraging.

0 pts Funding needs are identified to address the total project requirements. Plans to secure other sources of funds have been developed and/or underway, but it is questionable whether these funds will be secured and/or if they will be available upon approval of the Grant Funds in a timely manner (later than 3 months after funding has been approved). Funding needs are identified but incompletely addresses the total project requirements. Grant Funds would have little impact to complete the project and no other resources have been identified.

Financial Support & Viability (5 Points)

5 pts Applicant's audited financials indicate that the applicant appears to have more than sufficient long-term financial resources necessary to ensure the operating viability of the facility/project. An independent audit does not reveal any on-going concerns, risks and/or material weaknesses.

3 pts Applicant's audited financials indicate that the applicant appears to have enough of the long-term financial resources necessary to ensure viability of the facility/project. An independent audit does not reveal any on-going concerns, risks and/or material weaknesses.

1 pt Applicant has been in operation less than 2 years and/or is not able to provide audited financial statements. Therefore, an assessment of the financial viability and sustainability of the entity is difficult to perform, if not questionable.

0 pts Applicant has none of the long-term financial resources necessary to ensure the operating viability of the facility/project is sustained relative to the duration of the use restriction required and/or audit report of independent CPA reveal on-going and/or concerns, risks and/or material weaknesses of entity.

Project Budget Detail/Use of Grant Funds (5 Points)

The project budget element evaluates the reasonableness of the project's cost estimates, assumptions used in determining the cost estimates, attention to detail, the mathematical accuracy of the project budget tables and schedules and the overall cost effective use of funds.

5 pts Project budget appears accurate, comprehensive and detailed. Activities are itemized in detail and appear reasonable and justified (assumptions are logical and clearly substantiate cost estimates). The project budget schedule is presented logically and is mathematically accurate. The Grant Funds will be used in the most cost-

effective manner.

3 pts Project activity costs are itemized and appear to be reasonable, but the costs and assumptions are not clear or well documented. The project budget schedule is substantively mathematically accurate (i.e. minor footing errors noted), and/or does not appear complete.

0 pts Project costs are questionable and/or unreasonable, and assumptions are unclear and/or poorly documented. The project budget schedule is substantively mathematically incorrect and/or the Grant Funds do not appear to be used in a cost-effective manner.

Number of Persons/Households to Benefit (5 Points)

The per capita cost effectiveness of a proposed project is an important measurement in assessing overall cost-effectiveness. Consider the total cost of the proposed project (not just the Grant Funding request) and the total number of people served (not just the income eligible beneficiaries) to measure per capita cost effectiveness in its achievement and delivery of project results.

5 pts Maximum Impact: Per capita cost of $1 -$5,000 per person/household

4 pts Substantial Impact: Per capita cost of $5,001 -$20,000 per person/household

2 pts Moderate Impact: Per capita cost of $20,001 -$50,000 per person/household

1 pts Minimal Impact: Per capita cost of greater than $50,001 per person/household

Applicant Attributes

The applicant evaluation element is intended to ascertain that the applicant (or fiscal sponsor) has the necessary qualifications, ability and resources to effectively carry out the project. Additionally, as a sub-recipient, the applicant must have the managerial and technical capacity to be able to administer the project in compliance with the CDBG or HOME Programs rules and regulations. Applicants who have received Grant Funds in the past will be evaluated on the basis of their past performance. If the applicant has not received Grant Funds in the past, it will be rated on related information included in its application.

Project/Program Management Ability and Capacity (6 Points)

6 pts The applicant clearly documents or shows evidence of the necessary competencies, management capacity, and professional experience to successfully manage and complete the project. The applicant also clearly understands its responsibility for income compliance regarding primarily benefitting low- and moderate-income beneficiaries; the applicant has clearly described the process and controls the project will utilize for income verification; and the applicant has the ability and capacity to implement this process successfully. Program staff is knowledgeable and trained in documenting federal objectives, income, and other programmatic policies.

4 pts The applicant appears to have most of the necessary competencies, management capacity, and professional experience to successfully manage and implement the project, but it is not well documented. The applicant also appears to understand its responsibility for income compliance regarding primarily benefitting low-and moderate-income beneficiaries; but the applicant has not clearly or fully described the process and controls the project will utilize to ensure compliance; and/or there is some uncertainty whether the Applicant has the ability and capacity to implement such a process. Program staff is knowledgeable and trained in documenting

federal objectives, income, and other programmatic policies.

2 pts The Applicant appears to have some of the necessary competencies, skill set, management capacity, professional experience and qualifications to successfully manage and complete the project (documentation is unclear). The Applicant also appears to not fully understand its responsibility for income compliance in regards to primarily benefitting low-and moderate-income beneficiaries; the Applicant did not describe the process and controls the project will utilize to ensure compliance; and the Applicant does not appear to have the ability and capacity to implement such a process. Program staff needs additional training in documenting federal objectives, income, and other programmatic policies.

0 pts The Applicant appears to have very minimal or none of the necessary competencies, skill set, and capacity to successfully manage the project (documentation is unclear). The Applicant also appears to not fully understand its responsibility for income compliance in regards to primarily benefitting low-and moderate-income beneficiaries; the Applicant did not describe the process and controls the project will utilize to ensure compliance; and the Applicant does not appear to have the ability and capacity to implement such a process.

Past Performance /Experience (5 Points)

5 pts The Applicant has extensive past experience with Grant Funds and/or other federal funding programs. The Applicant has been directly involved in 5 or more federally funded projects within the past five years of which 3 projects involved Grant Funding that were favorably completed. This Applicant has had no problems substantiating low-to moderate-income compliance for past projects (if applicable). This Applicant has been timely, complete and accurate with Grant Funds reporting requirements (if applicable).

4 pts The Applicant has adequate past experience with Grant Funds and/or other federal funding programs. The Applicant has been directly involved in 3 or more federally funded projects within the past five years of which 1 project involved Grant Funding that was favorably completed. This Applicant has had no problems substantiating low-to moderate-income compliance for past projects (if applicable). This Applicant has been timely, complete and accurate with Grant Funds reporting requirements (if applicable).

3 pts The Applicant has some past experience with federally funded projects. The Applicant has been directly involved in 3 or more federally funded projects within the past five years that involved Grant Funding which were completed. The Applicant may have experienced some problems in implementing past projects timely, but the problems were fully resolved. This Applicant has had minor problems substantiating low-to moderate-income compliance for past projects (if applicable). The Applicant may have difficulty complying with program requirements and/or federal overlay statutes.

1 pts The Applicant has little past experience with Grant Funds and/or federally funded projects. The Applicant has had extensive problems in implementing past projects timely and/or substantiating low-to moderate-income compliance and/or meeting Grant Funds reporting requirements and/or other requests for information by the City (if applicable).

0 pts This Applicant appears to have no related professional experience with Grant Funds and/or other

Quality of the Application (4 Points)

4 pts The application is clear, well written, accurate and attentive to detail, but also concise with appropriate statistical information and supporting documentation provided to thoroughly support any conclusions provided. Where applicable, the applicant addresses additional requirements such as the ESG Project Measurable Outcomes or the Section 3 requirements.

3 pts The application is adequately written, but statistics, observation and/or conclusions are not well documented.

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2 pts The application is adequately written, but statistics, observations and/or conclusions are not well documented and inconsistencies and/or errors were noted.

1 pts The application is adequately written, but statistics, observations and/or conclusions are not well documented; inconsistencies and/or errors were noted; and some application instructions were not followed. The credibility of information and statistics provided appear questionable.

0 pts The application is poorly written, statistics, observations and conclusions are not documented, and apparent and substantive internal inconsistencies and material errors were noted. A majority of the application instructions were not followed. The credibility of information and statistics provided is questionable.

Deductions

City Staff will provide insight into applicants past performance and quality of invoices.

-10 pts The agency's invoices or quarterly data have needed repeated corrections or haven't provided sufficient detail to staff.