

REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY

MAIN STREETS ALLEGHENY EVENT GRANT PROGRAM

Guidelines 2026

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PART 1. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Main Streets Allegheny Event Grant is one component under Main Streets Allegheny, a comprehensive, place-based initiative designed to support the revitalization of neighborhood commercial districts and downtown business corridors across the county.

Through a coordinated set of tools that include technical assistance, grant funding, and district-level investment, Main Streets Allegheny supports municipalities, small businesses, and community partners as they work together to strengthen local economies and create vibrant places. Main Streets Allegheny was created to better align planning, investment, and on-the-ground action across multiple funding sources and program tools, helping communities turn local vision into lasting impact.

The **Main Streets Allegheny Event Grant** is built to support events and activities that bring people to Main Street districts, increase economic activity, and activate commercial corridors.

PART 2. ELIGIBILITY

A. APPLICANTS

1. Eligible applicants
 - Municipalities (city, borough, township governments),
 - Council of Governments (COGs),
 - Non-profit organizations, local tourism coalitions and event organizers promoting tourism, community-based groups.
2. General requirements
 - The application must be submitted by a representative of the applicant. The applicant will bear all responsibility for completing and maintaining a project if a grant is awarded.
 - The applicant may partner with other public agencies, non-profit organizations, or private entities, but the applicant will still be responsible for facilitating and administering the grant. The partner organization or entity can carry out the work of the project.
 - The applicant may submit and have under review up to two (2) applications at a time, however only one (1) grant will be awarded in this funding round.

B. PROJECTS

1. Eligible projects must be located within the designated Main Street district and directly support its revitalization efforts.
2. Eligible activities may include community events, festivals, and district activation (e.g., cultural programming, public art, community engagement).
3. Additional requirements:
 - Projects should be completed within two years of contract execution.
 - If funds are being combined with other sources, projects must provide proof of secured funding.
 - Proposals must include a comprehensive project plan, detailing the scope of work, funding sources, project team, and a clear timeline for implementation.

C. COSTS

1. Eligible costs are any costs that directly relate to planning, administering, and implementing the eligible activities. This includes event materials, entertainment, food, logistics, and professional services within a scope of work associated with the event.
2. Ineligible costs include:
 - General expenses unrelated to the event

- Alcohol or cannabis-related expenses
- Salaries for permanent staff
- Salaries or overtime for public works, fire, or police staff
- Construction

D. INELIGIBLE PROJECTS

The following types of projects are not eligible under the Main Streets Allegheny Event Grant:

1. Any project that is not within the designated district and does not directly support the municipality's revitalization efforts.
2. Personnel, including staff costs for otherwise eligible projects.
3. Strategic plans and studies of main streets revitalization. This type of project can be supported by the Technical Assistance (TA) pillar of the Main Streets Allegheny Program.

PART 3. GRANT LIMITS AND REQUIREMENTS

A. GRANT LIMITS

1. The grant amount will be determined based on the size, reach, and impact of the project, and will fall within the following tiers:
 - Tier 1: from \$5,000 to \$29,999
 - Tier 2: from \$30,000 to \$75,000
2. Projects must be completed within twenty-four (24) months from the date the funding agreement is fully signed by RAAC and the grantee. Projects with expired funding will be canceled by vote of the Application Evaluation Committee. No outstanding or additional expenses can be submitted for reimbursement after a grant is canceled.

B. PROJECT EVALUATION CRITERIA

The following criteria will be used to evaluate grant applications, grant tier, and grant amount. All criteria are not weighed equally, but the combination of relevant factors will determine the overall likelihood of funding. The Application Evaluation Committee comprising of the Allegheny County Economic Development (ACED) executive team and staff from relevant ACED divisions will perform the evaluation and determine the awarded projects and awarded amount per project.

1. Strategic Alignment, Impact, and Sustainability:
 - Alignment: Does the event or activation support the municipality's revitalization goals and priorities?
 - Impact: Will it enhance community attractiveness, livability, and overall economic or social vitality?
 - Sustainability: How will the event build capacity and/or momentum for long-term district improvement?
2. Size and Reach: This criterion will look at the expected audience size and demographics, geographic reach (local, regional, national), initial marketing/communications plan to promote the event, and earned media coverage. Special consideration may be given to projects that intentionally engage youth audiences.
3. Financial feasibility: This criterion will consider factors relating to the following:
 - Realistic and cost-effective budget plan
 - Other funding sources or sponsorships secured
 - Is the event feasible without full support from this program?

4. Partnership and Execution capability: The project is supported by strong partnerships that will support execution capability and commitment between key stakeholders (e.g., local governments, organizations, small businesses, residents).
5. Applicant attendance in one of two Main Streets Allegheny Informational Webinars will be considered during application review.

PART 4. GRANT APPLICATION PROCESS

A. APPLICATION

To apply for the grant, applicants are required to submit application materials during the application period.

- Application materials include an application form, a project narrative document, and a project funding table.
- The project narrative should include supplementary information such as maps, photos, and any other supporting documentation.
- Application submission will be made online through the application submission portal.

B. TIMELINE OF APPLICATION AND AWARD PROCESS

The grant application and award process of the program is as follows:

1. The program announcement is released through the Allegheny County News newsletter. The newsletter provides a brief description of the program, application window, and a link to the ACED website where all information about the grant, including guidelines, forms, and application portal are available.
2. Two (2) follow-up Municipal Briefings/Informational Webinars will be delivered by ACED staff during the application period.
3. The application portal will be opened on the first date of the application period. Applications must be submitted through this designated portal. The application portal will remain open and accept submissions on a rolling basis until all available funds have been allocated.
4. Applications will be evaluated as they are received. The review process will typically be completed within thirty (30) days of submission, but expedited review may be considered for high-impact projects. During evaluation, applicants may be asked to provide additional materials or participate in interviews with ACED staff. The Application Evaluation Committee will determine which projects are awarded and the grant amount for each approved project.
5. Award letters will be sent via email to the grantees by the assigned ACED staff. Grantees must confirm their project continuity via email to the assigned ACED staff within five (5) days of the award letter date. Failure to comply with the required confirmation date will lead to the cancellation of the grant funding. Applicants who are not approved for funding will also be notified.

Main Streets Allegheny Event Grant

6. Funding agreements will be sent via email to the grantees by the assigned ACED staff. Grantees are expected to sign and return the agreement to the assigned ACED staff within seven (7) days.

PART 5. ADMINISTRATION FOR APPROVED GRANTS

A. TIMEFRAME FOR USING FUNDS

The timeframe for each Main Streets Allegheny Event Grant begins on the date the funding agreement is fully signed by RAAC and the grantee.

1. The grantee has twenty-four (24) months from this date to complete the awarded project.
2. Grantees that discontinue the awarded project at any time of the duration of the contract must notify the assigned ACED staff in formal writing detailing the reasons for the project cancellation. No expenses can be submitted for reimbursement after the project is canceled.
3. Grantees who use less than the granted amount for their project shall notify the assigned ACED staff in writing the amount of funds that will not be used.

B. RECAPTURE OF FUNDS

RAAC, at its discretion, may recapture funds and void grants for violations of the procedures in this guidebook, for inability to comply with the timeframes in this guidebook, or for failure to complete a project.

C. FUNDING AGREEMENT

For all awarded projects, funding agreements between RAAC and the grantees must be signed. This funding agreement serves as a formal contract between RAAC and the grantee and will include the terms and conditions for the funding, as well as a project description, project timeline, and budget summary. Funding agreements include both the contract and several exhibits. Exhibits include:

1. Exhibit A: A narrative summary detailing the project's implementation. This will be based on the project description provided in the application; however, RAAC may request a revised description for clarity or if partial funding is approved.
2. Exhibit B: Insurance coverage, as required by RAAC with the following minimum coverages:
 - a. Commercial Crime Insurance, which includes employee theft, disappearance, and destruction coverage parts, in an amount not than the grant award amount per occurrence.
 - b. Commercial Auto Liability insurance with minimum limits of \$500,000 for any one occurrence for bodily injury or property damage.
 - c. Worker's Compensation Insurance covering grantees employees pursuant to applicable Pennsylvania law, with minimum limits of \$500,000 policy limit.

- d. Commercial General Liability Insurance with minimum limits of \$500,000 for any one occurrence for bodily injury and property damage, and \$1,000,000 in the aggregate.
 - i. Redevelopment Authority of Allegheny County and the County of Allegheny must be included as additional insured for General Liability.
- 3. Exhibit C: A budget summary that lists the project costs in detail. This will be based on the project budget provided in the application; however, RAAC may request a revised budget for clarity or if partial funding is approved.

D. STATUS REPORT

A status report is required whenever the grantee submits a payment request. This report will be uploaded to the payment portal.

The status report form is in Appendix A of this guidebook.

E. CLOSE-OUT REPORT

A close-out report is required within fourteen (14) days after the project is delivered. This close-out report is accompanied by the final reimbursement request.

The close-out report form is in Appendix B of this guidebook.

F. CHALLENGES AND CHANGES

If your project is not going as planned, please contact the assigned ACED staff as soon as possible to discuss potential changes to the scope or the cancellation of the project. Notify the assigned ACED staff in writing of all final changes for record and project management purposes.

PART 6. REIMBURSEMENT PROCEDURES

A. REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST

1. All payment requests must be submitted through the online payment portal.
2. For TIER 1 Projects, ACED may, at its discretion, grant all or part of the funds upfront. To access up-front funds, grantees must submit a waiver request. This waiver letter should be presented on formal letterhead.
 - o The grantee must submit the approved waiver form to the payment portal for reimbursement process.
 - o Proof of payment must be sent to the assigned ACED staff within thirty (30) days after the event's completion date.
3. For TIER 2 Projects, reimbursement will follow the process below.

B. DOCUMENTATION FOR REIMBURSEMENT

To submit a reimbursement request online, grantees must submit the following documents:

1. Proof of payment, including receipts, invoices marked “Paid”, or a bank/credit card statement.
2. If the receipt is not itemized, a separate invoice or breakdown may be required.
3. A status report form.
4. A close-out report is only required with the final payment request.

PART 7. COMPLIANCE PROCESS

A. GETTING INTO CONTRACT

Once in contract, grantees will be required to attend a compliance meeting for further discussion of grant procurement requirements. The compliance packet will be sent by the assigned ACED staff to the grantee before the meeting.

B. GENERAL PROCUREMENT REQUIREMENTS

Grantees should comply with the County procurement requirements as below:

1. Grant amount of \$30,000 or more
 - o Must be publicly advertised and publicly bid in accordance with Pennsylvania procurement statutes.
2. Grant amount between \$10,000 and \$29,999
 - o Must obtain at least three (3) written quotes from qualified vendors, including one MWDBE/VOSB.
 - o Quotes must be documented and retained for auditing purposes.
 - o No public advertising or bidding is required.
3. Grant amount under \$10,000
 - o No competitive bidding or quotes are required.
 - o Grantees may proceed with direct purchasing.
 - o Best practice: maintain documentation of vendor selection and pricing for transparency.
4. The suppliers and professional services documentation is required whenever a supplier's total cost is \$1,000 or more.

APPENDIX A. STATUS REPORT FORM

Status Report Form (For Tier 2 Projects Only)
Main Streets Allegheny Event Grant, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania

Status report is required whenever a payment request is submitted during the project.

Grantee and Project Information

Grantee Name:

Primary Contact Person of the Project:

Primary Contact's Email and Phone Number:

Project Name:

Project Funding Date:

Overview of the Project to Date

1. Fill in the project timetable to show the percentage of work completion for each milestone and the expected completion time for those which will be completed next.

Milestone	Brief Description	Percentage of completion	How is the completion compared to plan?			Expected completion date for next steps
			Behind	On-par	Ahead	
Concept & Approval	Finalize event/activation concept and objectives Secure internal approvals					
Planning & Partnerships	Develop event scope, including detailed budget, human resources, and timeline Identify and confirm partners Secure venue/location and permits					
Procurement & Contractor Selection	Solicit bids/quotes and select vendors					
Contract Execution	Sign agreements with contractors/vendors					
Marketing & Promotion	Launch marketing campaign Begin ticketing or registration (if applicable)					
Logistics & Operations	Arrange equipment, materials, infrastructure Confirm staffing and volunteers' assignment					
Pre-event readiness	Conduct risk assessment and contingency planning Final walkthrough and quality checks					

	Confirm all permits and compliance requirements					
Event day execution	Carry out the event/activation					
Post event evaluation & report	Collect feedback, analyze KPIs and prepare report					
Project Completion & Closeout	Submit close-out report, event report, and final reimbursement request					

2. If progress is behind the plan, describe any challenges or setbacks that caused the delay.

Please have the Primary Contact Person sign this form.

Name:

Signature:

Title:

Date:

APPENDIX B. PROJECT CLOSE-OUT REPORT

Close-Out Report Form

Event and District Activation Grant, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania

This form is required when the grantee submits the final payment request. Please attach to this form an event/activation report with a summary of how the event/activation was organized, KPIs, audiences' feedback, evaluation and recommendation for next events, photos. This event/activation report must be formatted as PDF.

Grantee and Project Information

Grantee Name:

Primary Contact Person of the Project:

Primary Contact's Email and Phone Number:

Project Name:

Project Funding Date:

Overview of the Project

Have all remaining expenses been included in this final reimbursement request? If not, what is the balance of your outstanding expenses?

Please have the Primary Contact Person sign this form.

Name:

Signature:

Title:

Date: