



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

AGENDA SECTION	BUSINESS ITEMS
MEETING DATE	04/06/2026

ITEM:	Columbia Heights Economic Support Microloan Program Proposal.		
<i>Presenting Item:</i> CD Coordinator Emilie Voight			
DEPARTMENT:	Community Development	BY/DATE:	CD Coordinator 04/02/2026
CORE CITY STRATEGIES: <i>(please indicate areas that apply by adding an "X" in front of the selected text below)</i>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Community that Grows with Purpose and Equity		<input type="checkbox"/> Engaged, Effective and Forward-Thinking	
<input type="checkbox"/> High Quality Public Spaces		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Resilient and Prosperous Economy	
<input type="checkbox"/> Safe, Accessible and Built for Everyone		<input type="checkbox"/> Inclusive and Connected Community	

BACKGROUND

At the EDA’s February and March meetings, the Commission discussed providing support to the local business community to help defray the economic impacts of recent federal immigration enforcement actions. These discussions included consideration of a variety of different forms of assistance.

Following the EDA’s direction, Community Development staff conducted research into statutory regulations concerning EDA and HRA powers, assessed business community need through the Columbia Heights 2026 Business Economic Impact Survey, and tracked other municipalities’ and counties’ efforts to support businesses at this time. Finally, Community Development staff met with the Metropolitan (dba Minnesota) Consortium of Community Developers (MCCD), a Minnesota-based consortium of nonprofit community development organizations and Community Development Financial Institutions committed to expanding access to wealth and resources for neighborhoods through housing and economic development initiatives.

SUMMARY OF CURRENT STATUS

In collaboration with MCCD, Community Development staff designed the Columbia Heights Economic Support Microloan Program to serve the Columbia Heights business community. Tonight’s packet includes draft program guidelines, a draft professional services agreement between the EDA and MCCD, draft program loan documents, and draft Resolution 2026-13 to establish and administer the program.

Loans will be awarded based on a four-month multiplier of demonstrated costs such as regular monthly lease or mortgage payments, not to exceed a total of \$10,000 per business. The loan duration will be eight months. In order to have the loan forgiven, the business must still be in operation in the same location in Columbia Heights eight months after the date of the loan agreement, with no interruptions, and the business must provide a summary describing how the funds helped it continue to operate its business. Eligibility criteria, as listed in the Program Guidelines, include:

- the business must be locally owned, operated, and domiciled in the state of Minnesota with a physical establishment in Columbia Heights,

- the business must be able to demonstrate financial hardship as a result of the Metro Surge federal immigration enforcement actions,
- the business must be current on property taxes and assessments and in good standing with the City,
- the business must have employed 50 or fewer Full Time Equivalent employees as of Q4 2025, and
- the business must have been in operation at least 6 months prior to application date.

Although this EDA program creation and budget amendment process is not subject to statutory public hearing or public comment requirements, staff have been circulating information about the proposal on social media and the City website in order to keep residents and businesses informed of the EDA's efforts. Public comments received in writing have been included in the packet.

SOURCES AND USES

The proposal specifies that the program will be funded through current economic development project funds in Fund 408. This Fund includes the EDA's Commercial Revitalization Program, its Façade Improvement Program, and its Fire Suppression Program. By granting approval at tonight's meeting, the EDA is agreeing to a budget with MCCD. Specifically, it is confirming that it will dedicate a total of \$340,000 to the Economic Support Microloan Program. As proposed, the program will require no new or outside funds; all funding for the program will be redistributed from existing programs in the EDA's 2026 budget. The proposed \$340,000 program budget will be composed of:

- \$300,000 in funds for loan principals, reassigned from the Commercial Revitalization Program. The Commercial Revitalization program budgets \$300,000 a year for the purchase and removal of substandard buildings for future redevelopment.
- \$40,000 in funds for administrative costs, reassigned from the Façade Improvement Program. The Façade Improvement Program budgets \$80,000 a year for this capital improvement grant program. This proposal would leave approximately \$29,350 for façade grants for the remainder of 2026.

The attached resolution amends the EDA's 2026 budget to reflect these proposed redistributions.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Community Development staff recommend that the EDA review the attached draft program documents and Resolution 2026-13, then move to authorize creation and implementation of the Columbia Heights Economic Support Microloan Program.

If there are residents or business owners present at tonight's meeting who would like to speak about this item, staff recommend that the EDA open the floor to public comment prior to the Commission's discussion.

RECOMMENDED MOTION(S):

MOTION: Move to waive the reading of Resolution 2026-13, there being ample copies available to the public.

MOTION: Move to adopt Resolution 2026-13, a resolution of the Economic Development Authority of Columbia Heights, Minnesota, approving the creation and implementation of the Columbia Heights Economic Support Microloan Program.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Resolution 2026-13
2. Draft Microloan Program Guidelines

3. Draft Professional Services Agreement MCCD / Columbia Heights EDA
4. Draft Microloan Program Loan Documents
5. Estimated impact data previously submitted to Cities for Safe and Stable Communities Coalition survey
6. Public comments received through 04/02/2026 at noon