



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

AGENDA SECTION	BUSINESS ITEMS
MEETING DATE	02/02/2026

ITEM:	2026 Community/Economic Financial Relief Discussion.		
<i>Presenting Item:</i> CD Coordinator Emilie Voight			
DEPARTMENT: Community Development		BY/DATE: CD Staff, 01/22/2026	
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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Inclusive and Connected Community	

BACKGROUND

The EDA currently administers three ongoing programs that provide direct financial support to local business owners, commercial property owners, and residential multifamily rental property owners. On the business side, the Fire Suppression Grant Program and Façade Improvement Grant Program are targeted toward structural and aesthetic improvements to commercial and industrial buildings. On the housing side, the Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH) Loan Program is designed to help preserve affordable housing in Columbia Heights through building renovations and upgrades.

In previous years, the EDA has also administered temporary programs like the 2020 Columbia Heights Business Relief Grant Program. This program was a one-off initiative that delivered financial relief to local businesses in the form of grants up to \$20,000, funded by the City’s federal CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Funds. These grants were awarded to offset the financial hardships caused to local businesses by the COVID-19 pandemic.

As demonstrated by these programs, the City’s EDA has a history of designing and implementing efforts to support Columbia Heights’ economy and community. Today, Columbia Heights businesses and residents are facing new financial challenges due to the wide-ranging impacts of ongoing federal immigration enforcement. The EDA directed staff to bring this item to tonight’s meeting for discussion.

The goal of tonight’s discussion is for the EDA to come to a consensus and, as applicable, to provide direction to staff on next steps concerning any direct financial relief initiatives it would like to implement in 2026.

Staff have no specific recommendations at this time but are prepared to provide additional financial, logistic, and administrative details in response to Commissioners’ suggestions and questions.