

City & Borough of Juneau Community Funding Request

Basic Information

Name of Requesting Group or Organization	Downtown Business Association
Summary of request (sentence or phrase)	Family-Friendly Capital City
Amount of request	\$75,000
Assemblymember Sponsor	Wade Bryson
Is this a request for a one-time event, purchase or grant match?	No
Does this request provide monetary support for the group's ongoing or operating expenses?	Some of these resources will be used for projects such as expansion of permanent lighting in the Light Up Juneau project. Other funds augment activities that occur annually.
Primary contact individual for this group	Nimmy Philips, DBA President
Primary contact's phone number	907-523-2324
Primary contact's email	nimmy@spicejuneau.com

1. Funding Request (Project) Title (Suggested heading): Family-Friendly Capital City
2. Project description and benefit. Describe the project (in half a page or less), including specific aspects of the funding request and project. Explain how the project will benefit the community. What sector(s) of the community will this project benefit and/or serve?
The DBA is uniquely qualified and geographically situated to execute programming that will benefit all who visit, live, and work downtown. With the requested \$75,000 in CBJ Community Funding, DBA will implement several key programs, including:
 - \$25,000 – Community Promotions
 - \$25,000 – Light Up Juneau (maintenance and expansion)
 - \$25,000 – Family-Friendly Transformation Strategy (Main Street America initiatives)

The mission of the Downtown Business Association (DBA) is to promote and advocate, on behalf of our membership, for a vibrant and sustainable downtown. The DBA's membership reflects diversity, tenacity, and a shared commitment to providing Juneau with year-round products and services. It is the work of this collective community that shapes the unique environment of downtown Juneau while offsetting city operational costs through sales and property taxes. While not entirely exhaustive, the following list showcases the breadth and depth of the DBA's membership for the benefit of year-round downtown residents, year-round residents located elsewhere in Juneau, major employers (e.g., City and Borough of Juneau, State of Alaska, and federal government), small business owners, legislators and

staff, seasonal workers, entrepreneurs, regional neighbors, and visitors alike:

- Art and Culture (e.g., curated experiences, Northwest Coast Arts, skilled artisans)
- Community Services (e.g., education, sober living, urgent care, disability support)
- Convenience (e.g., cannabis, grocery, hardware, liquor, pharmacy)
- Entertainment (e.g., venues, bars, breweries, distilleries)
- Gastronomy (e.g., world cuisine, local fare, candy, pastries)
- Heritage (e.g., ancestral lands, historical buildings, museums, mining, totem trails)
- Industry (e.g., mariculture, tourism, hospitality, outdoor recreation)
- Lodging (e.g., local inns, hotel chains, bed and breakfasts)
- Operations (e.g., heating, shipping, printing, trade unions)
- Personal Services (e.g., dental care, eye care, salons)
- Professional Services (e.g., banks, architects, A/V, real estate)
- Retail (e.g., clothing, gifts, shoes, toys, outdoor gear, local year-round jewelers)
- Tourism (e.g., excursions, shopping, souvenirs)

Downtown Juneau's accreditation by Main Street was recently renewed. Our FY26 work plan continues to reflect the national program's framework of Economic Vitality, Design, Promotion, and Organization. To maintain this recognition while supporting a thriving capital city, the DBA's Board of Directors also adopted Main Street America's family-friendly transformation strategy. With the projected decline in school-aged children, the homeporting of a USCG icebreaker with crew and families, and the relocation of city employees outside the downtown core, corresponding changes are anticipated to downtown's daily foot traffic and point-of-sale transactions, adding to the challenges of maintaining a profitable year-round downtown business.

Community Promotions

(e.g., Gallery Walk, Pumpkin Patch, Scavenger Hunt, etc.)

These funds will support initiatives aimed at sustaining and enhancing downtown Juneau's economic vitality, attracting both residents and visitors year-round. The Community Promotions budget will enhance established flagship events such as Gallery Walk, First Fridays, Bruch Punch, Pumpkin Patch, Scavenger Hunt and new events while also incorporating the initiative to promote destination for locally owned businesses. This will help address the ongoing challenge of drawing foot traffic beyond South Franklin St., providing both tourists and locals with a clear, designated area showcasing year-round, locally owned businesses. Community promotions also support cross promotions with groups like TBMP, JAHC, Chamber of Commerce, Juneau Navy League, Juneau Maritime Festival, legislative fly-ins, and other conferences and events. DBA is producing the Marine View Mural Project in partnership with the JAHC and Carnival Cruise Ship. Community promotions also support membership connections (e.g., annual member meeting, virtual office hours, candidate forums, monthly newsletter, quarterly member gatherings), the Downtown Business Association strives to bring forth a unified voice on issues unique to the downtown district (e.g., Huna totem cruise ship dock, Telephone hill, The triangle building, etc.)

Light Up Juneau

(Maintenance and Expansion)

In November 2021, to help encourage visitors to the downtown corridor, the DBA began the Downtown Light Up Juneau project to install over 4,000 linear feet of string lights to outline the rooftops of downtown buildings with the goals of creating a brighter and more attractive downtown, highlighting historical architecture, and establishing a better lit and potentially safer downtown. To date, the DBA has partnered to invest over \$100,000 and many volunteer hours to see this project come to life. Continued

Light Up Juneau funding will support maintenance and expansion of downtown's building lighting, enhancing the area's ambiance and encouraging residents to visit during the dark winter months.

Family-Friendly Transformation Strategy

(Main Street America initiatives)

The Family-Friendly Transformation Strategy, guided by Main Street America principles, will fund initiatives to create a more welcoming and accessible downtown experience for all ages. These efforts align with the need to adapt to shifting local demographics, including the projected decline in school-aged children and the anticipated arrival of USCG families. Investments in community-focused improvements will help ensure downtown remains a vibrant, inclusive hub for residents and visitors alike.

The DBA will leverage CBJ Community Funding with existing sources of income, including advertising, dues, fees, fundraising, and sponsorships.

3. Plans and progress. Describe (in one or two paragraphs) what has been accomplished so far (if anything) toward this project's or funding's goal. This may include studies, designs, grant application status, fundraising activity, and total funds raised to date.

While some of the requested funding is project-based, renewed support from CBJ will continue to facilitate DBA's ongoing and year-round activities intentionally designed to promote a welcoming and hospitable downtown. The following is progress to-date in FY25:

- DBA FY24 membership includes 125 downtown businesses, property owners, and other community members that share an interest in a thriving year-round downtown.
- Fundraising, including dues (\$34K), advertising sales (\$31k), and promotion income.
- Planned, promoted, and executed multiple events including flagship activities such as Gallery Walk (attracted 10,000 unique visits to the downtown corridor), as well as the Pumpkin Patch and Scavenger Hunt at Halloween (record historical participation by downtown businesses attracting many families and children, as well as partnerships, sponsorships, and prize offerings).
- Events resulted in hundreds of volunteer hours as well as community sponsorships and in-kind support. With CBJ Community Funding, we plan to implement enhanced tracking measures to better capture these metrics.
- Helped promote various events and activities with our partners including JAHC First Fridays, JEDC Juneau Maritime Festival, and the Legislative Reception with the Juneau Chamber of Commerce).
- Hosted collaborative events to promote a healthy entrepreneurial ecosystem (e.g., Alaska Start Up Week) and public service via forums with our members and candidates.
- Continued Light Up Juneau project, which lead to an enhanced Gallery Walk event.

The DBA seeks to actively prepare for the projected decline in school-aged children, the pending homeporting of a USCG icebreaker with accompanying crew and families, and the potential relocation of City Hall outside the downtown core. Corresponding changes are expected to downtown's daily foot traffic and point-of-sale transactions, in addition to the ongoing challenges of operating a profitable year-round downtown business. We hope you will agree that the DBA is uniquely qualified and geographically situated to assist in these efforts to benefit all that visit, live, or work downtown.

4. Project support. Is the project supported in CBJ or other community plans (List where the project is mentioned or supports concepts in planning documents such as the Assembly Goals, Legislative Priorities, CIP Plan, etc.

This project strongly aligns with the *Juneau Economic Development Plan* (2015) goal to "brand and market Juneau as a desirable place to live, work, raise a family, recreate, and start a business." DBA is grateful for a long

history of CBJ approval for the use of Marine Passenger Fees to support the Downtown Ambassador program and general funds to invest in the success of Downtown Juneau.

In recent years, CBJ Community Grant funding to DBA has ranged from \$75,000 from FY19-23 to \$40,000 in FY24). This decrease in funding has directly impacted on our ability to fully implement key initiatives, limiting our capacity to deliver the greatest economic and community benefits. To sustain momentum and maximize impact, we request funding at previous levels, helping to ensure Juneau has a welcoming and hospitable downtown area to benefit businesses, residents, and visitors, alike.

The Blueprint Downtown Area Plan was adopted by Ordinance on January 6, 2025. The plan includes a “top five priorities for action”. One of these priorities is to *“fund and staff a dedicated entity to advocate for downtown Juneau, be a positive and energetic source for the long-term revitalization of downtown and launch Main Street, or similar program.”*

5. Goal of project. In one sentence or less, state the goal of the project. For example, “economic development” or “improve non-motorized transportation routes.”

A vibrant, year-round Downtown Juneau that fuels economic growth and fosters a welcoming, family-friendly Capital City experience for every single person.

6. Total cost:

A. TOTAL COST (including funds already secured) = \$125,000

- Community Promotions - \$45,000
- Family-Friendly Transformation - \$50,000
- Light up Juneau - \$30,000

B. AMOUNT SECURED (include funding source) = \$50,000

- Community Promotions - \$20,000 (Membership Dues, Contracts, and Advertising Sales)
- Family-Friendly Transformation - \$25,000 (Membership Dues, Contracts, and Advertising Sales)
- Light up Juneau - \$5,000 (Membership Dues, Contracts, and Advertising Sales)

7. Timeline: Indicate when you hope to complete the project.

This is an ongoing project with the requested CBJ Community Funding being used by the end of FY2026, June 30, 2026.

8. Physical Location. Please provide the address or physical description of where the project is located.

The operations for this project are managed from the DBA office located at 612 West Willoughby Avenue in Juneau. The area of impact is downtown Juneau, including the historic downtown center and the Aak’w Village District.