



West 7th / Fort Road Federation
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Sustainable Business Enhancements Program Guidelines

Fall 2026 Grant Round

Administered under the “Revitalize West 7th Program”

West 7th/Fort Road Federation

Purpose:

The Sustainable Business Enhancements grant—operating under the Revitalize West 7th Program—supports small businesses in the West 7th neighborhood in making environmentally focused property improvements. This initiative is designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve stormwater management, and increase the long-term climate resilience of our community.

Funded through a Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) grant and administered by the West 7th/Fort Road Federation, this program offers **grants of up to \$10,000** for projects that align with climate action and sustainability goals.

Boundaries:

Eligible applicants must own or lease commercial property **within District 9 (West 7th/Fort Road neighborhood)**. Priority will be given to:

- Businesses that have not previously received funding through the Revitalize West 7th Program
- Independently owned businesses
- Projects that demonstrate clear environmental and community benefits

Eligible Uses/ Guidelines:

Fall 2026 Focus Areas: This round emphasizes improvements that contribute to long-term sustainability. Awardees will be required to provide reporting included but not limited to before/after pictures, and quantitative data related to the project (e.g. number of light bulbs changed). In certain cases, awardees may be asked to provide previous utility bills if available. Eligible projects include but are not limited to:

- **Energy Efficiency Upgrades:** LED lighting, high-efficiency HVAC systems, programmable thermostats, energy-efficient windows and doors
- **Green Infrastructure Installations:** Rain gardens, permeable pavement

- Sustainable Façade Enhancements: Solar shading devices, living walls, eco-friendly cladding or finishes
- Other climate-smart improvements that reduce emissions, conserve energy, or manage stormwater runoff.

Grant Amount and Requirements:

- Maximum award: **\$10,000 per business**
- Reimbursement-based: Funds are released monthly with appropriate documentation (invoices and itemized receipts due monthly on the 5th)
- Projects must be completed by May 15, 2027.

Public Benefits:

Projects are intended to:

- Lower greenhouse gas emissions and promote energy savings
- Enhance the appearance and environmental performance of commercial properties
- Strengthen the economic and climate resilience of West 7th's business corridor
- Support improvements consistent with local sustainability and livability plans

Site Control:

Applicants need to have site control of the property through ownership or lease. Applicants who are tenants must have a signed lease and property owners written approval.

Compliance:

Services and/or materials that are expected to cost between \$10,000 and \$24,999 must be competitively awarded based on a minimum of two (2) verbal quotes or bids or awarded to a targeted vendor.

The grantee must take all necessary affirmative steps to assure that targeted vendors from businesses with active certifications through these entities are used when possible:

- [State Department of Administration's Certified Targeted Group, Economically Disadvantaged and Veteran-Owned Vendor List](#)
- Metropolitan Council Underutilized Business Program: MCUB: [Metropolitan Council Underutilized Business Program](#)
- Small Business Certification Program through Hennepin County, Ramsey County, and City of St. Paul: [Central Certification Directory](#)

For projects that include construction work and have a total project cost of \$25,000 or more, prevailing wage rules apply per Minn. Stat. §§177.41 through 177.44. These rules require that the wages of laborers and workers should be comparable to wages paid for similar work in the community as a whole.

Selection Process:

Applications submitted by the deadline will be submitted to the West 7th/Fort Road Development Team for recommendation. W7FRDT utilizes a scorecard to rank individual applications. If recommended the project moves to the West 7th/Fort Road Federation Board of Directors for final approval. This is a first come first serve opportunity and there is no guarantee a project will be funded.

Timeline:

- **Deadline to Apply:** August 31, 2026 at 5:00 PM
- **Notification of Awards:** By September 30, 2026
- **Project Completion Deadline:** No later than May 15, 2027

Questions? Contact Julia with any questions: Julia@fortroadfederation.org or via phone 651-298-5599