

**From:** [Taina Maki](#)  
**To:** [Kelly Bauer](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Draft Commercial Corridors Fund  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 19, 2024 10:13:44 AM

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Comments for the HRA Item tomorrow.

**Taina Maki** | Legislative Aide to City Councilmember Rebecca Noecker

Pronouns: she/her

15 West Kellogg Blvd – Suite 310B | Saint Paul, MN 55102

651.266.8621 | [taina.maki@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:taina.maki@ci.stpaul.mn.us)

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**From:** Jon Fure <[jon.fure@capitolrivercouncil.org](mailto:jon.fure@capitolrivercouncil.org)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 1:59 PM  
**To:** Taina Maki <[Taina.Maki@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:Taina.Maki@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>  
**Subject:** Re: Draft Commercial Corridors Fund

**Think Before You Click:** This email originated **outside** our organization.

Thanks for requesting our input, Taina. Here are my responses:

- Overall feedback: I like the idea. If I were promoting this to downtown business owners and managers, I would expect to hear similar comments that have been made in the community meetings that you just coordinated. For example, "Sure, flower baskets would be nice, but what about the people who are using or selling drugs, unpredictable skyway access, difficulty finding a place to park," or, "our taxes are high enough, so why should be paying businesses to do things that they should do anyway," etc. I still like the idea, but I think it would be important to be clear that this initiative doesn't mean that the City will be hiring fewer police officers or spending less time on snow removal or whatever.
- What would make it more workable: It would be impossible for us to do this if the same policies and constraints for district council funding are used for this new funding source. For example, each year, it takes several months for City staff to review and approve our community engagement contract materials, and then, when the contract is approved and signed, it takes another month to get reimbursed for eligible expenses from January-February. There's no way that we would be able to provide money to a business for any kind of improvement project or to coordinate an event, and then wait one month or more to get reimbursed. I also think the organizations that receive this funding should be able to spend at least 20 percent of the money for administrative and program-

related expenses. For example, I'm currently the only full-time employee for CRC, and if we were to receive \$100,000 for this new program, I would want to hire a part-time employee to help with this work. If only 10 percent of that \$100,000 could be spent on administration, that would be \$10,000 in staff time to spend \$90,000 in grants to businesses. That means \$10,000 to promote the opportunity to eligible businesses, provide some assistance to all applicants, evaluate and rank the applications, create a grant agreement for each recipient, assist as needed during the project, and evaluate and report the outcomes. I don't know if it would be feasible to find someone who would be willing and able to do all of that work for about \$800 per month (?). It seems like it would be more workable to hire a part-time employee for \$20,000, or maybe district councils could pool their resources to hire one person per ward to do some of this work.

- Maximum grant amount: I'm not sure, because I don't know what these kinds of projects might cost.
- Activities that should be eligible for funding: I'm not sure about this, but it would be great to have a conversation about whether this could or should pay for exterior repairs to skyway bridges (peeling paint, pigeon-proofing, etc.).
- How should we ensure that the funds are distributed equitably: I would like to know what the Reparations Commission thinks about this. I think it would be reasonable for the City to require all of this work to be done by companies that are on the certified vendor list. I'm sure there are other ideas, too.

Jon

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**From:** Taina Maki <[Taina.Maki@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:Taina.Maki@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 11:23 AM

**To:** [ed@southeastside.org](mailto:ed@southeastside.org) <[ed@southeastside.org](mailto:ed@southeastside.org)>; Lisa Theis <[d2lisa@outlook.com](mailto:d2lisa@outlook.com)>; [monica@wsco.org](mailto:monica@wsco.org) <[monica@wsco.org](mailto:monica@wsco.org)>; [roxanne@daytonsbuff.org](mailto:roxanne@daytonsbuff.org) <[roxanne@daytonsbuff.org](mailto:roxanne@daytonsbuff.org)>; [jackbyers@paynephallen.org](mailto:jackbyers@paynephallen.org) <[jackbyers@paynephallen.org](mailto:jackbyers@paynephallen.org)>; [ed@nenostpaul.org](mailto:ed@nenostpaul.org) <[ed@nenostpaul.org](mailto:ed@nenostpaul.org)>; [caty@frogtownmn.org](mailto:caty@frogtownmn.org) <[caty@frogtownmn.org](mailto:caty@frogtownmn.org)>; [tia@frogtownmn.org](mailto:tia@frogtownmn.org) <[tia@frogtownmn.org](mailto:tia@frogtownmn.org)>; Jennifer Werner <[jens@summit-university.org](mailto:jens@summit-university.org)>; [julia@fortroadfederation.org](mailto:julia@fortroadfederation.org) <[julia@fortroadfederation.org](mailto:julia@fortroadfederation.org)>; Michael Kuchta <[district10@district10comopark.org](mailto:district10@district10comopark.org)>; [director@hamlinmidway.org](mailto:director@hamlinmidway.org) <[director@hamlinmidway.org](mailto:director@hamlinmidway.org)>; [zev@sapcc.org](mailto:zev@sapcc.org) <[zev@sapcc.org](mailto:zev@sapcc.org)>; [director@sapcc.org](mailto:director@sapcc.org) <[director@sapcc.org](mailto:director@sapcc.org)>; [leah@unionparkdc.org](mailto:leah@unionparkdc.org) <[leah@unionparkdc.org](mailto:leah@unionparkdc.org)>; [director@macgrove.org](mailto:director@macgrove.org) <[director@macgrove.org](mailto:director@macgrove.org)>; [mgcc@macgrove.org](mailto:mgcc@macgrove.org) <[mgcc@macgrove.org](mailto:mgcc@macgrove.org)>; [kathy@highlanddistrictcouncil.org](mailto:kathy@highlanddistrictcouncil.org) <[kathy@highlanddistrictcouncil.org](mailto:kathy@highlanddistrictcouncil.org)>; [director@summithillassociation.org](mailto:director@summithillassociation.org) <[director@summithillassociation.org](mailto:director@summithillassociation.org)>; Jon Fure <[jon.fure@capitolrivercouncil.org](mailto:jon.fure@capitolrivercouncil.org)>

**Subject:** FW: Draft Commercial Corridors Fund

District Councils:

Councilmember Rebecca Noecker, as Chair of the Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA), is seeking your feedback on the attached *draft* proposal. The HRA is considering the creation of a fund for business organizations to improve commercial corridors. It's still in pencil, and they are eager for your feedback to shape the proposal.

There will be a public hearing on November 20 at 2 pm; individuals can testify in person, leave a voicemail at 651-266-6808, or submit a written comment to [HRAHearing@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:HRAHearing@ci.stpaul.mn.us). We look forward to your thoughts.

Thank you,

Taina

**Taina Maki | Legislative Aide to City Councilmember Rebecca Noecker**

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