



**Housing and Redevelopment  
Authority (HRA) Levy Update –  
City of Saint Paul  
April 23, 2025**



# Agenda

- Introduction
  - Ramsey County Commissioner Mai Chong Xiong, District 6 and Chair of Ramsey County Housing and Redevelopment Authority
- Ramsey County Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) Levy
  - Economic Competitiveness and Inclusion Plan
  - 2024 Spending Highlights – Saint Paul
- Looking ahead
  - EDA Legislative Request

## Vision

A vibrant community where all are valued and thrive.

## Mission

A county of excellence working with you to enhance our quality of life.

## Goals



WELL-BEING



PROSPERITY



OPPORTUNITY



ACCOUNTABILITY

## Introduction







## Ramsey County Economic Competitiveness and Inclusion Plan



The strategies in the **ECI Plan** prioritize inclusion in future investments and other actions related to housing, job creation, workforce development and place-based investments.

[View the full plan](#)

[Track the progress](#)

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# Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) Levy



Margaret St House, Saint Paul





## Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) Levy

- County approves HRA area of operation (excluding North Saint Paul) and approves 2022-2023 budget with levy for Housing and Redevelopment Authority.
  - Ramsey County was the *last metropolitan county to levy* from its Housing and Redevelopment Authority
- \$13.5 Million (2025 approved HRA Levy)
- Funding is guided by Economic Inclusion and Competitiveness Plan (Released: March 2021)

# Programming Funded by Ramsey County HRA Levy

## Housing Programs

- Affordable Housing infrastructure investments
- Down payment assistance (First Home)
- Emerging & Diverse Developers Program

## Redevelopment Programs

- Critical Corridors
  - Planning
  - Development + Infrastructure
  - Suburban Commercial Corridor Initiative
- Site Assessment Grants (SAG)

➔ Strive for 50/50 spending parity (Saint Paul/Suburbs) ➔



Spending by Programmatic Areas (Avg. of 2022 -2024)	
73%	Housing
17%	Redevelopment
10%	Admin

Geographic Spending Parity (2024)	
50%	Suburban RC
50%	Saint Paul

# Ramsey County HRA Levy spending in Saint Paul

- In 2024, over \$5.2 million went to projects located in Saint Paul

Ramsey County HRA Levy supported projects (2024)		
Inclusive Housing Solicitation	Emerging & Diverse Developers Program	Critical Corridors
Torre de San Miguel; The Heights- JO Companies; The Heights- Habitat For Humanity;	1609 Saint Anthony Rehab; Aurora Revitalization; Hewitt Pre-Development; Horace House Pre-Development; Merriam Park Acquisition; Reaney Acquisition; Taylor Acquisition; University Acquisition Rehab;	Plaza Del Sol; Hamms Brewery; Gloryville; Rice Street Redevelopment Framework Plan; Little Mekong Market;
\$2,000,000	\$1,999,550	\$1,204,305

- Also supported projects through the Site Assessment Grant (SAG) and individuals participating Emerging and Diverse Developers (EDD) programs.



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# Looking Ahead: Small Business & Entrepreneurship Programming



Margaret St House, Saint Paul

## Staying the course

The ECI Plan reinforced the important intersections and linkages of affordable housing, redevelopment, workforce development and small business supports.

**1 in 2**

Renters are cost-burdened

**1 in 5**

Homeowners who are housing cost-burdened

**36%**

Workers in Ramsey County are being paid less than a living wage.

**Lags**

Business starts and lending compared to region and nation

# How Ramsey County supports small businesses?

## Entrepreneurs

### Open to Business

< Established in 2019 >

Provides direct **no-cost** technical assistance and other forms of support to small business owners and entrepreneurs.

The Metropolitan Consortium of Community Developers (MCCD) serves as program administrator.

Open to Business Program is available countywide.

## Business Growth

### CEO Next

Provides **second-stage** small business owners and founders with a cohort learning opportunity designed to enhance their ability to develop robust systems and expand both their operations and technical expertise.

### CEO Now

Modeled after CEO Next. Focused on **early-stage** small business owners and founders.

< **NEW IN 2024** >

## Attraction/Marketing

### Ramsey County Means Business

< Established in 2019 >

An online portal showcasing the county's business landscape, economic and technical support services, workforce initiatives, and other business and economic development incentives/resources.

[RamseyCountyMeansBusiness.com](https://RamseyCountyMeansBusiness.com)

## Business Community Organizations

### Reimagination Resource Center

< **Starting in 2025** >

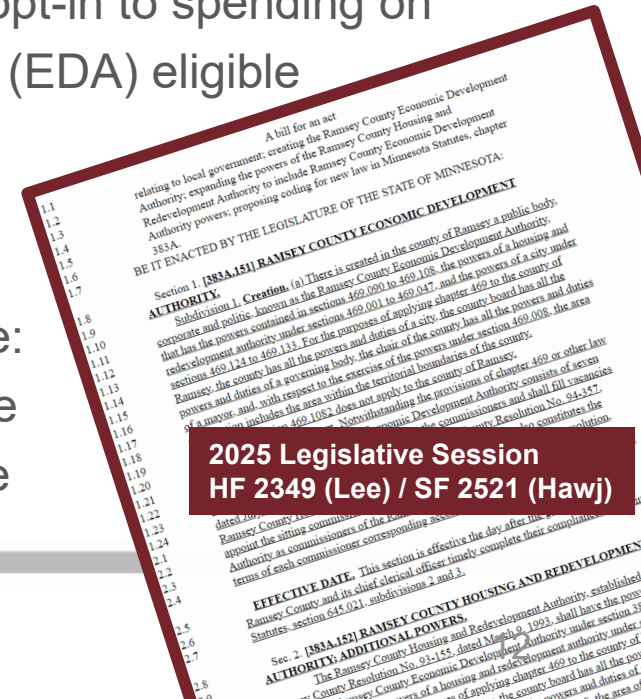
New initiative pilot supporting business community organizations (BCOs). Seeks to support BCOs current and future capabilities that would be needed to deliver enhanced technical services to businesses. This initiative seeks to enable greater business retention, expansion and attraction.





## 2025 Legislative Request

- Seeks to amend the county's HRA statutory language to expand authority to better support diversifying industries, communities, and emerging entrepreneurs
- Legislation would not impact the formula associated with HRA levy collection
- Cities would have the choice to opt-in to spending on economic development authority (EDA) eligible activities.
- If no opt-in, then existing HRA-eligible activities would remain.
- Cities expressing support to-date: Roseville, Shoreview, Lauderdale Falcon Heights, White Bear Lake



## Increasing the flexibility of HRA funding

- County remains steadfast in its prioritization of affordable housing.
  - Arrival of Local Affordable Housing Aid (i.e. housing sales tax) is providing added flexibility
    - Partial disbursement in 2024. Full disbursement in 2025 (estimated at \$14M).
- Increases flexibility in funding business programming.
  - Currently County's General Levy supports \$345,000 in business programming.
  - Initial plan is ~\$2M of HRA Levy (15%) towards business programming.
- Geographic parity of HRA levy spending remains.





# Acronym Key

HUD:	U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development.
CDBG:	Community Development Block Grant
CDBG-CV:	Community Development Block Grant – COVID19 allocation.
HOME:	Home Investment Partnership Program.
HOME-ARP:	Home Investment Partnership Program – American Rescue Plan allocation
GO Bonds:	General Obligation Bonds.
ERF:	Environmental Response Fund.
ECI Plan:	Economic Competitiveness & Inclusion Plan.
ARPA:	American Rescue Plan Act.
TFL:	Tax Forfeited Land.
RCMB:	RamseyCountyMeansBusiness.com.
LAHA:	Local Affordable Housing Aid.
SAHA:	State Affordable Housing Aid.
CED:	Community and Economic Development Department.
EDA:	Economic Development Authority.