

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

FOR

NEW MARKET TAX CREDIT ELIGIBLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

**Issued by the Heartland Regional Investment Fund, LLC
an affiliate of the St. Louis Economic Development Partnership**

Proposals Due By:

November 2, 2021, at 1:00 PM

**Heartland Regional Investment Fund
c/o St. Louis Economic Development Partnership**

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Introduction

The Heartland Regional Investment Fund, LLC (“**HRIF**”) is a certified Community Development Entity, created by the St. Louis Economic Development Partnership (the “**Partnership**”), the Southwestern Illinois Development Authority, and the City of St. Charles, Missouri.

HRIF has received \$150 million in New Market Tax Credit (“**NMTC**”) allocation authority from the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund (the “**CDFI**”) of the U.S. Department of Treasury to stimulate investment and job creation in the St. Louis region – specifically, St. Louis County and the City of St. Charles in Missouri; and Madison, St. Clair, Clinton, and Bond counties in Illinois (the “**Service Area**”).

On September 1, 2021, HRIF was awarded \$50 million in NMTC allocation authority from the CDFI’s 2020 Round (the “**Award**”). HRIF now seeks public input on eligible community development projects within the Service Area.

HRIF issues this Request for Proposals (the “**RFP**”) for developers, business owners, consultants, and other stakeholders to submit shovel ready and conceptually planned community development projects for HRIF’s consideration when deploying the Award in the coming years.

About the NMTC Program

The NMTC Program, established by Congress in December 2000, permits individual and corporate taxpayers to receive a non-refundable tax credit against federal income taxes for making equity investments in financial intermediaries known as Community Development Entities (“**CDEs**”). CDEs, like HRIF, that receive tax credit allocation authority under the program are domestic corporations or partnerships that provide loans, investments, or financial counseling within low-income urban and rural communities. The tax credit provided to the investor totals 39% of the cost of the investment and is claimed over a seven-year period. The CDEs in turn use the capital raised to make investments in low-income communities. CDEs must apply annually to the CDFI Fund to compete for NMTC Program allocation authority. Since the inception of the NMTC Program, the CDFI Fund has completed 17 allocation rounds and has made 1,354 awards totaling \$66 billion in tax allocation authority. This includes \$3 billion in Recovery Act Awards and \$1 billion of special allocation authority used for the recovery and redevelopment of the Gulf Opportunity Zone.

Scope of Eligible Projects

Pursuant to this RFP, the scope of eligible projects should meet the following initial criteria:

1. **Location:**

Projects should be located in HRIF’s Service Area:

- St. Louis County, MO
- City of St. Charles, MO
- Madison County, IL

- St. Clair County, IL
- Clinton County, IL
- Bond County, IL

AND, within a low-income community census tract, where at a minimum:

- the Poverty Rate is greater than 20%; or
- the Median Family Income is less than 80% of the benchmarked average.

NMTC eligibility can be verified using the following [link](#) courtesy of PolicyMap.

2. Community Impact(s):

Projects must have demonstrable community impacts, including but not limited to:

- Direct job creation / retention
- Living wage employment with benefits, profit sharing, etc.
- Accessible jobs for low-income persons, residents of low-income communities, people with lower skills or education, formerly incarcerated, longer term unemployed, or disabled persons
- Job training and professional development
- Temporary construction & other indirect job creation
- New community goods and services (e.g. healthcare, social services, education, cultural, etc.)
- New commercial goods and services (e.g. access to retail, healthy foods, restaurants, pharmacies, etc.)
- Eliminating food deserts
- Reducing disparities in healthcare and other basic needs
- Minority construction, tenant, and owner participation
- Potential to serve as a community anchor with measurable catalytic effects

3. Industries:

Projects should fall within an industry that provides measurable community impacts to low-income persons and communities. Example industries include but are not limited to:

- Manufacturing / Industrial
- Multi-Service Community Facilities / Nonprofits
- Mixed-Use Commercial (e.g. office, retail, housing)
- Food Systems
- Healthcare
- Education & Workforce Development

4. Use of Proceeds:

Projects can include real estate, equipment, and working capital related expenditures.

5. Size:

Projects should entail approximately \$4 million to \$10+ million in costs to ensure transactional efficiencies and enhanced program benefits.

6. Community Alignment and Engagement:

Projects and their impacts should align with the underlying community's needs, as demonstrated through redevelopment plans, municipal letters of support, community surveys, town halls, and other similar forms of stakeholder engagement.

7. But For:

Projects should have a demonstrable "But For" statement, indicating that the project cannot and will not move forward without the use of NMTC gap financing.

Proposal Content

Proposals must include a completed Project Intake Form (**Exhibit A**) and, at a minimum, should provide the following information:

1. Project location
2. Project scope and size
3. Community impacts
4. Approach to diversity, equity, and inclusion in fulfilling the community impacts
5. Community alignment & engagement support
6. Proposed capital stack
7. Pro formas, if available
8. "But For" statement
9. Project sponsor experience
10. M/W/DBE certifications – project sponsor, contractors, and/or tenants, where applicable

Selection Criteria

Proposals submitted will be reviewed by the HRIF's staff for completeness and qualifications. Final selection of any proposals will be made on the basis of the following criteria:

1. Qualifications and experience of the project sponsor
2. The project location's level of distress
3. Depth, inclusiveness, and alignment of community impacts
4. Thoroughness of community engagement
5. Project readiness
6. Responsiveness to the RFP categories and completion of the Project Intake Form
7. Competitiveness to internally sourced project opportunities
8. Availability of NMTC allocation

Please note all HRIF commitments are subject to final approval by HRIF's Advisory and Governing Boards, including its managing member, the Partnership.

HRIF actively encourages submission of proposals from disadvantaged business enterprises and

companies owned by minorities, women, immigrants, and veterans. HRIF does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, ancestry, national origin, disability, or veteran status in consideration of this award. Equal Opportunity Employer.

Terms and Conditions

The following terms and conditions apply to all proposals:

1. HRIF reserves the right to reject any and all proposals submitted; to select one or more responding parties; to void this RFP and the review process and/or terminate negotiations at any time; and to select a final party/parties from among the proposals received in response to this RFP. Additionally, any and all RFP project elements, requirements and schedules are subject to change and modification. HRIF also reserves the unqualified right to modify, suspend, or terminate at its sole discretion any and all aspects of this RFP process, to obtain further information from any and all responding parties, and to waive any defects as to form or content of the RFP or any responses by any party.
2. This RFP does not commit HRIF to award an allocation commitment, defray any costs incurred in the preparation of a response to this RFP, or contract for any services. All submitted responses to this RFP become the property of HRIF as public records. All proposals may be subject to public review, on request, unless exempted as discussed elsewhere in this RFP.
3. By accepting this RFP and/or submitting a proposal in response thereto, each responding party agrees for itself, its successors and assigns, to hold HRIF, the St. Louis Economic Development Partnership and its affiliated entities, St. Louis County, the City of St. Louis, and all of their various agents, commissioners, directors, consultants, attorneys, officers and employees harmless from and against any and all claims and demands of whatever nature or type, which any such responding company, its representatives, agents, contractors, successors or assigns may have against any of them as a result of issuing this RFP, revising this RFP, conducting the selection process and subsequent negotiations, making a final recommendation, selecting a responding party/parties or negotiating or executing an agreement incorporating the commitments of the selected responding party.
4. By submitting responses, each responding party acknowledges having read this RFP in its entirety and agrees to all terms and conditions set out in this RFP.
5. Responses shall be open and valid for a period of ninety (90) days from the due date of this RFP.

Submission of Proposals

Submissions will be accepted on a rolling basis. HRIF staff will begin reviewing submissions on November 2, 2021. To ensure the earliest consideration of your submission, please submit your proposal no later than **November 2, 2021, at 1:00 PM CST. Proposals**

received after the deadline identified will be considered as received on a rolling basis.

Schedule

**RFP Released on Website
First Review of Proposals**

**October 12, 2021
November 2, 2021**

Electronic proposals should be sent by email to hbean@stlpartnership.com with a copy to jfrankel@stlpartnership.com.

EXHIBIT A

[NMTC Intake Form – see the associated file on the Partnership’s website]