**St. Louis County Port Authority Community Investment Fund**

**Frequently Asked Questions**

1. What kinds of projects are considered for funding by the Port Authority?

The Port will consider economic and community development projects that fall within one or more of its funding priorities and may include non-construction (e.g., programmatic) or construction (including land acquisition, renovation, new construction and/or infrastructure) projects.

2. What does the Port Authority mean by economic and community development?

To aid in understanding of the types of projects that the Port Authority funds, we provide the following definitions of “economic development” and “community development.”

**Economic development** means promoting the development, growth and retention of long-term diversified business and employment opportunities that equitably generate increased wealth and enhanced quality life for a community’s residents, businesses and institutions.

Typically, economic developmentcan be described as the creation of jobs and wealth and the improvement in our quality of life.

**Community development** is not separate from but is an integral part of economic development. Community development sustains and supports economic development by ensuring that local communities have the resources and conditions necessary to benefit from large scale initiatives.

Community development encompasses a broad range of activities and programs that build community and human capacity, and are often undertaken by non-profits, including local community development corporations.

These activities may include community planning, façade improvement programs for local businesses, and workforce development and training programs. Community development may also include activities that enhance the physical environment, such as public infrastructure (e.g. streetscape improvements like sidewalks and lighting and public art or gathering spaces) and brownfields remediation.

3. Who can apply for a Port Community Investment Fund grant?

Non-profits (must have 501(c)(3) designation) are eligible applicants for Port Community Investment Fund grants. The Port does not accept applications for funding from individuals.

4. Are there any geographic restrictions that affect eligibility?

Yes. Applicants or projects must be located in St. Louis County or primarily serve St. Louis County.

5. How will applications be evaluated?

Requests for funding will be considered, as applicable, in light of the following criteria—

* Quality and quantity of economic and community outcomes, including jobs created/retained and businesses served
* Consistency with a neighborhood, community or regional economic or community development plan or strategy and the degree to which the project contributes to one or more strategies within the applicable plan
* Other resources leveraged
* Potential to catalyze additional investment and/or development
* Capacity and experience of applicant organization to execute project
* Sustainability of proposed project (future funding and implementation)
* Demonstrated community support and engagement in establishing project priorities and outcomes

6. How does the Port Authority evaluate community support?

With respect to community support and alignment, the Port Authority also looks to principles of community economic development when it considers proposals for funding under the Community Investment Fund.

**Community economic development** is an inclusive and participatory process by which communities initiate and generate their solutions to economic problems. Community economic development focuses on community centered solutions for stabilizing local economies; creating long-term employment; building on local resources and capacities; increasing community control and ownership, and enhancing environmental health.

Principles of Community Economic Development included the following—

* Sustainability: Is this a long-term solution?
* Community-Based: Does it serve the interests of the broader community?
* Participatory: Have a broad and diverse range of community members been involved?
* Asset-Based: What are the community’s resources and assets?
* Self-Reliance: Does it reduce economic dependence?

7. What are typical grant amounts?

Because the Port accepts grant applications for a range of projects, including both programmatic and redevelopment/construction related projects, there is no typical grant amount. Awards will be based on community impact. See Question 4, Evaluation Criteria.

8. Can my organization apply for general operating expenses?

No. Organizations may, however, include administrative or operating expenses related to the specific project or program that is the subject of grant request.

9. Do you accept multi-year funding requests?

Typically, the Port will fund up to 24 months for a project or program.