



Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How is MHC defining transit? Will funding only be awarded to projects that focus on light rail?

A: MHC will consider funding for projects that address or demonstrate a strong connection to public transportation, including bus, light rail, commuter rail and associated services (such as accessible services for seniors and individuals with disabilities). MHC's geographic focus is the Denver Metro area, Boulder, Longmont and the seven-county Regional Transportation District (RTD) service area (Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Broomfield, Denver, Douglas and Jefferson Counties).

Q: Typically, how many applications do you receive?

A: In previous years, the Grant Fund had multiple cycles with a range of 8 to 18 applications per cycle. Typically proposals from each cycle would be funded. For 2015, there will be one cycle but we do not know how many applications to anticipate; we estimate that we will fund within the range of 7 to 12 grants.

Q: Is there a maximum grant amount? How much funding should an organization request?

A: Grants awarded will be \$25,000 or less. All grants are for 12 months or less. In rare cases we may award slightly larger grants for projects that are highly aligned with our goals and have the potential for significant impact. Previously awarded grants have ranged from \$7,500 to \$25,000. The amount requested should be reasonable for the scope of the project and appropriately justified in the application and budget. We are happy to discuss whether the amount you plan to request is a reasonable ask.

Q: Should we identify in our grant application/process hard funding sources to address the issues we plan to address (i.e. sidewalks)?

A: If the ultimate goal of your project is a specific environmental change, we do not require that you secure funding for that outcome (e.g. sidewalks). While it would be great to see such an outcome, our goal is to fund projects that engage residents in the process for advocating for these changes, and we know that achieving these outcomes may require time beyond the grant period. Therefore, your budget should include those costs necessary for the activities you will implement to engage residents that would ultimately lead to an environmental change.

Q: Is it common in past review cycles to lower or negotiate the funds allotted?

A: Given that we have limited resources and our goal is to support as many projects as we can in the community, there may be projects for which we are not able to fund the full amount requested. We may award funding at a lower level than requested if a project is a fit for our goals but the amount requested exceeds our resources. In these cases, we will discuss with the grantee the best way to adjust the scope of the project to align with the reduced funding.

Q: If an organization receives a grant, will they be eligible for additional funding to continue the project? Will the grant cycle next year run around the same time?

A: MHC will award one-time grants for a duration of 12 months or less; these grants are not renewable. The Grant Fund guidelines and application process is determined on an annual basis and may look different in any given year. Since guidelines may change, there is no guarantee that funded projects will be eligible for additional funding in the future. However, if your project aligns with future priorities and guidelines, your organization is welcome to apply for funding. Please note that MHC should not be considered as a sustainable, long-term source of funding for projects.



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Q: If an organization is not awarded funding for a grant cycle, are they eligible to reapply for a future grant cycle? Will they receive feedback on why they were not funded?

A: The Grant Fund guidelines and application process is determined on an annual basis and may look different in any given year. Since guidelines may change, there is no guarantee that organizations will have the opportunity to apply for funding in the future. However, if your project aligns with future priorities and guidelines, your organization is welcome to apply for funding. We would be happy to provide feedback on unsuccessful proposals; you may contact the MHC coordinator for more information on your proposal.

Q: Does MHC require matching funds?

A: MHC does not require matching funding for projects. If other funds are needed to successfully complete your project, it is preferable that you secure those funds before applying to MHC. However, MHC will also consider projects that have pending sources of funding, if those sources of funding are realistic prospects. Please indicate pending sources of funding in the budget form.

Q: Can we go outside of the format of the application, and can we include photos?

A: We ask that you complete and submit the application form and budget template provided in the application. Please do not submit photos, letters of support or other additional materials. If your proposal is selected for a site visit, you will have the opportunity to share additional materials at that time.

Q: Do you need to attach proof of our tax-exempt status (e.g. IRS determination letter)?

A: You do not need to submit your IRS determination or tax-exempt letter. Please be sure to include your organization's tax identification number as indicated on the application form.

Q: Can we include indirect funds in our budget?

A: MHC will not fund indirect costs. We will consider administrative/operating costs that directly relate to the project; these must be described briefly in the budget form.

Q: Can an organization submit more than one proposal? If an organization submits a proposal but is included as a partner in another proposal, is that allowed or will either application be at a disadvantage for funding?

A: Given that we have limited resources and our goal is to support as many projects as we can in the community, we ask that organizations prioritize their requests and submit one proposal per deadline. We do not anticipate funding multiple proposals submitted by one organization. An organization may submit a proposal and also be included as partner on another proposal for a different project (for which they are not the applicant); those requests will be considered independently.

Q: Can more than one organization submit a proposal for the same project? If multiple organizations are partnering on a project, how would they apply for funding?

A: MHC does encourage partnerships on proposals when it makes sense. If organizations want to partner on a project, only one application should be submitted. The organization that is best positioned to serve as the lead on a project should submit the proposal; the role of others collaborating on the project should be sufficiently detailed in the accordingly in the application questions. Submitting multiple applications for the same project does not increase



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chances of funding. If multiple proposals are submitted for the same project, this is likely to raise questions and concerns about coordination and communication between the organizations involved.

Q: How does Mile High Connects define general operating support?

A: MHC defines general operating support as unrestricted grants (funding that is awarded to an organization to be used at their discretion). MHC does not award grants for this purpose; proposals must be for specific projects that are in line with our funding priorities, and grant funds must be used for direct costs specifically related to the proposed project (staff, materials and supplies, travel, consultants, etc. that are necessary to complete the project. Applicants are allowed to include up to 15 percent of the amount requested from MHC for indirect costs (also known as overhead costs); please refer to the budget section in the application for more details about allowed indirect costs.

Q: Affordable transit is a big issue in many communities – why won't MHC provide funding for bus passes for low-income individuals?

A: MHC will not fund the purchase of fares, passes or memberships for public transportation or other transit services (e.g. bike share, care share, call-and-ride, etc.) as a strategy for increasing access to public transit. We do not have the resources to fund these costs and are instead interested in more long-term, sustainable solutions to successfully address the issue of transit affordability. However, if an organization is proposing to implement a defined program or project (such as a resident leadership program) where transportation might be a barrier to participation, MHC may consider funding a portion of the budget for transit passes on a case-by-case basis.

Q: For projects that are funded, what are the reporting requirements?

A: A final report is required at the end of the grant (due one month after the end date of the grant). The final report will ask you to describe the outcomes of your work as it relates to what you proposed at the time of application. You will also have the opportunity to share successes, challenges, lessons learned and interesting stories or testimonials if relevant for your project.

Q: If the expected outcomes of our project are long term how will we measure success of our efforts?

A: We know that the true impact of many projects won't be determined for some period of time. While it is helpful for you to provide some context for how your project aims to effect long-term change, we will not hold you accountable to measuring those outcomes that are beyond the timeframe of the grant. You should have a clear plan for the short-term outcomes you plan to achieve, how you will measure those short-term outcomes and how they relate to long-term outcomes. We will want to know how you will measure success during the timeframe of your grant.

Q: MHC's focus is on underserved communities and populations (e.g. low-income, communities of color, individuals with disabilities, etc.). What if the population or community served by your project is mixed (e.g. higher income as well as low-income)?

A: MHC aims to support projects that address the highest need populations or communities. We will consider funding for projects implemented in mixed populations/communities, but the proposal must address specifically how the project will be successful at achieving equity and addressing the barriers experienced by those who are most underserved in the community. While a project may end up having a positive impact on all segments of the community, the focus should be on ensuring access to opportunity for those who are most underserved.



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Q: What is the relationship between the Denver Foundation and Mile High Connects? If an organization applies for funding from MHC, are they excluded from applying for grants from the Denver Foundation (or other foundations who are members of MHC)?

A: The Denver Foundation is a member of MHC and is also the fiscal agent for the collaborative. However, the MHC Grant Fund has no relationship with The Denver Foundation's grant programs – it is a separate review process and decisions are made by the MHC Steering Committee, not The Denver Foundation staff or board. Because The Denver Foundation is the fiscal agent for MHC, grants will be disbursed through The Denver Foundation. Organizations who apply to MHC for grant funding are not restricted from applying for funding from The Denver Foundation or any other funder that is a member of MHC.