DULUTH 1200 FUND

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Storefront Loan FAQ's

What is the purpose of this loan program?

The primary purpose of the Storefront Loan Program is to encourage reinvestment in designated Duluth neighborhood centers. Reinvestment is defined in this loan program as the restoration of the historic atmosphere, overall visual improvement of building facades to strengthen neighborhoods, and enhancement of community viability within Spirit Valley and Downtown Duluth.

What is the Duluth 1200 Fund?

The 1200 Fund, Inc. is a private non-profit organization dedicated to economic development and job growth in the City of Duluth. The 1200 Fund was originally established in 1985 with a mission "to create 1,200 new jobs in Duluth."

Is this a grant or a loan?

This is a loan program, with a 17-year term at 4% interest. The maximum loan request per application is $100,000.00.

Who can apply?

Eligible storefronts must be within the Spirit Valley commercial district and within the City of Duluth's Downtown area. See the attached map for boundaries of each.

How are the loans being selected?

All applications for the Storefront loan program will be reviewed by a panel chosen by the Duluth 1200 Fund Board. A predetermined scoring metric has been established to ensure a uniform and fair review process. Eligible applications will go before the board for final clarifications, followed by a vote. With board approval, the applicant will utilize the City of Duluth Construction Services department to ensure that permit compliance is met. Once all permits for the project have been approved, a loan closing will be arranged between the Duluth 1200 Fund and the applicant.

How much will this cost me?

A closing fee of 2% of the loan value being requested will be due at the time of the loan closing with the Duluth 1200 Fund. All soft costs, including the fees for permit applications, are not applicable for financing under the storefront loan program. Applicants may include the cost of services or renderings provided by a licensed architect for the project in their 10% match.

How much funding will be available?

Each applicant may request up to $100,000 in funding. The Duluth 1200 Fund has dedicated up to $300,000.00 for the 2026 Storefront Loan program.

What qualifies as the 10% match?

Soft costs related to the preparation of the improvements qualify, including permit fees, and architect or consultant costs. The applicant's 10% match should not be included in the total requested loan amount.

How do I obtain a Deed for my property?

Reach out to the St. Louis Couty recorder Wendy Levitt, at levittw@stlouiscountymn.gov or by phone at 218-726-2077. She can provide directions or access to certificate of title and deed documents. You can request a copy of certificate of title for $5, just provide your legal description or a way for them to look up the property such as your Parcel ID number.

Will there be future rounds of funding?

Yes, the Duluth 1200 Fund plans to pursue another funding round of an undisclosed amount annually until all funds are spent.

If I'm unable to attach all the required materials, will that disqualify my application?

This is a highly anticipated program; applicants are required to include all eligibility items in their application at the time of submission. If you are having trouble uploading required information contact planning@duluthMN.gov for assistance.

Inquiries for application assistance and additional questions should call the City's Planning and Economic Development Department at 218-730-5580 or email planning@DuluthMN.gov .