

Neighborhood Corner Store Program summary

Purpose

The purpose of the Neighborhood Corner Store program is to support the establishment or expansion of essential corner stores which derive most of their revenues from the sale of food and groceries. This initiative aligns with goals established within the city Comprehensive Plan which aim to “ensure that fresh, local food is equitably accessible to everyone regardless of income or geography” (Objective K.1.1) by “supporting practices that facilitate access to healthy food in residential settings” (Objective K.1.3).

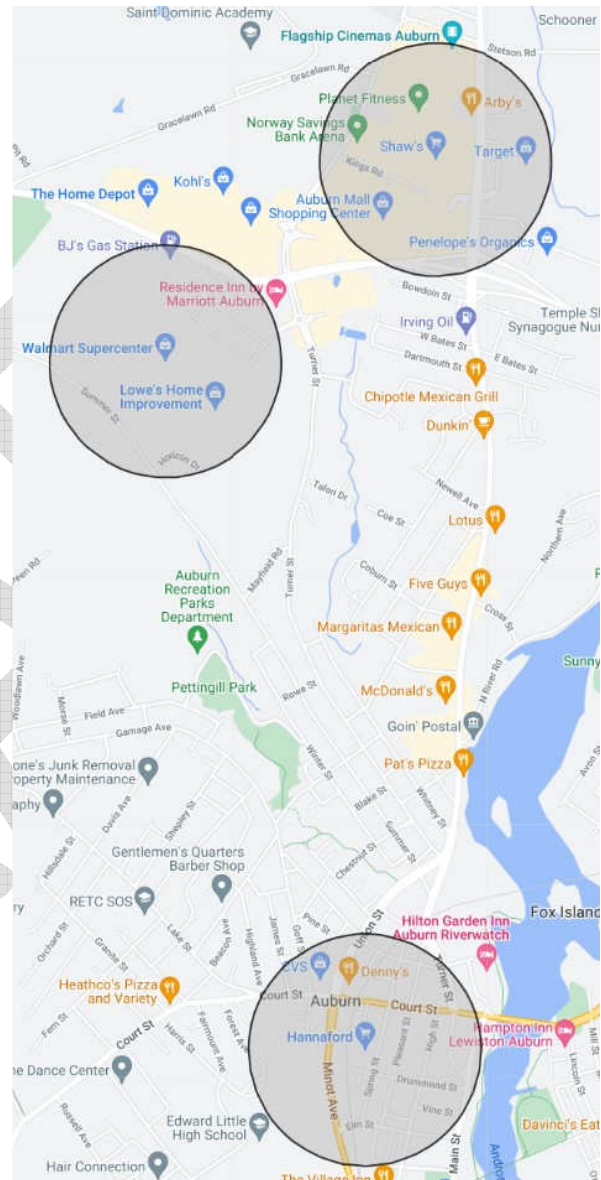
Funding

The City of Auburn may allocate \$150,000 from the City ARPA funds for this program to provide funds to a minimum of 4 businesses. Maximum assistance is \$35,000 per location for approved expenses.

All proposals will provide a detailed budget and explain how this expansion or construction will provide a net increase in healthy food options to their neighborhood. Financial assistance will only be available to those projects meeting eligibility requirements and preference will be given to projects that can be completed in a timely manner and make the most quantifiable impact on the local market.

Eligibility

Maine based food retailers (e.g. grocery stores, large convenience stores, cooperatives, etc.) which derive 50+% of their sales from food and groceries are eligible for financial assistance. The funds can be used to upgrade store infrastructure necessary to improve the selection of healthy food offerings or facilitate access to grocery retailers. Only projects located over ¼ mile from a regional or national chain, are eligible.





Eligible requests may include:

- **Funding for equipment and stock improvements which substantially increase fresh produce or for SNAP and/or WIC (Women, Infant, Children) eligible inventories**
 - For both new and existing retailers, improvements should enhance the ability of retailers to offer high quality produce and other healthy foods and serve a broader clientele. This could include the purchase of a refrigeration unit for produce at the front of the store. Marketing and merchandizing assistance should focus on the provision of healthy products or de-emphasis on unhealthy products.
 - For new retailers, funding can be requested for capital start-up costs, which include equipment and other retail infrastructure. Funding for marketing/merchandizing assistance can also be requested.

In order to be eligible to receive funds, all property taxes, real and personal, owed on the property that is the subject of the application must be current at the time the application is made. Any property on which there is past due balance for such taxes will be removed from consideration.

Neighborhood Corner Store Program

Sources and Uses	Unit Price	Quantity	Budget
Total Sources=			\$150,000
Auburn Funds (ARPA)			\$150,000
Total Uses=			\$150,000
Program Administration (1 year)			\$8,000
Forgivable Loans	\$35,000.00	4	\$140,000
Marketing and supplies			\$2,000

Marketing

The City of Auburn will utilize funds to broadly advertise the grant availability. After awards are made remaining funds will be used to educate local neighborhoods of existing and increased access to local, healthy food options made available through this program.

Application

This program will launch on Jan 1, 2023 and collect applications until March 1, 2023. Applicants will be driven to a website which details the program goals and conditions. Applications will be collected through the Auburn Community Development Grant application portal hosted by Neighborly. Qualified applications will be scored based on an internal rubric and up to 4 top scoring operations will be funded with the Community Development Grant Agreement. Funding approval and drawdown requests will be managed through the workflow for the Community Development Neighborly portal.

Neighborhood Corner Store Program Scoring Matrix

Scoring: 1-4 (4 being most applicable) based on proximity or applicability

Site Location	New product line (Yes=4, No = 1)	Distance from exclusion zone (1 point for each 1/4 mile)	>50% of grocery sales (Yes=4, No = 1)	New Operation (Yes=4, No = 1)	Quality of submission	Equipment (Yes=4, No = 1)	inventory expansion (Yes=4, No = 1)	Increase in staffing (Yes=4, No = 1)	Weighted Score
Condition Weight	15	15	10	20	5	10	5	20	100
Store 1									0
Store 2									0
Store 3									0
Store 4									0
Example Store 1	1	1	4	1	2	1	4	1	37.5
Example Store 2	4	4	1	4	2	4	4	4	90

Example 1 store located at Xivray street expanding product line no new employee's.
 Example 2 store located at Millet Drive new butcher shop adding 2 FTE's.