

2027 Healthy and Sustainable Communities Grant Awards

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

The United States Conference of Mayors (USCM) and the American Beverage Foundation for a Healthy America (ABFHA) are pleased to launch the 2027 Healthy and Sustainable Communities Grant Awards. Below are answers to Frequently Asked Questions about eligibility, the application process, and evaluation criteria. A separate document on our website lists the **actual application questions** included in the online portal.

For additional questions, contact abfha-awards@usmayors.org.

1. Who is eligible to apply?

All applications must meet **two primary eligibility criteria**:

- The application must be submitted **on behalf of a USCM member city** (service cities included).
- The application must include a **letter of support from the Mayor**.

Eligible applicants include:

- City departments and authorities (Mayor's Office, Parks & Recreation, Public Works, Housing Authorities, etc.)
- Individual schools or school districts
- Nonprofit organizations addressing issues within the scope of the awards program

If you are unsure about eligibility or your city's USCM membership, contact USCM staff.

Reminder: Every application must be submitted on behalf of a USCM member city **and** include a Mayor's letter of support.

2. How many awards will be given and what are the award amounts?

Awards are made in **three population categories**:

Small City (< 75,000)

- 1st Place — **\$150,000**
- 2nd Place — **\$50,000**
- 3rd Place — **\$25,000**

Medium City (75,000 – 250,000)

- 1st Place — **\$200,000**
- 2nd Place — **\$75,000**
- 3rd Place — **\$50,000**

Large City (> 250,000)

- 1st Place — **\$275,000**
- 2nd Place — **\$100,000**
- 3rd Place — **\$75,000**

3. What types of programs are eligible for funding?

The awards support programs that **engage community members** and **promote or stimulate behavior change** in the areas of **healthy communities** and **environmental health and sustainability**.

Health Initiatives

- Increasing access to fresh fruits and vegetables (school/community gardens, farmers' markets, free/low-cost distribution)
- Cooking and nutrition programs for children and families
- Programs encouraging physical activity in and out of school
- Youth empowerment and peer-education initiatives, including hiring/training youth advocates

Environmental Health & Sustainability Initiatives

- Strategies to improve residential recycling rates and reduce contamination
- Food waste reduction, composting, and landfill diversion programs
- Beach, waterway, and community clean-up initiatives
- Water conservation projects

Hybrid programs (e.g., childhood obesity prevention with environmental components) are welcome. This list is **suggestive, not exhaustive**. If unsure whether a program qualifies, contact USCM staff.

4. How many applications may be submitted per city?

There is **no limit**. If the Mayor supports multiple programs, each may be submitted as a separate application. Each application must:

- Be submitted on behalf of a USCM member city
- Include a Mayor's letter of support that is specific to each application

Each application is evaluated **independently**.

5. What should the Mayor's letter of support include?

The letter must:

- Be addressed to **Tom Cochran, Executive Director, USCM**
- Be printed on **official city letterhead**
- Include the **Mayor's signature**

The letter should:

- Demonstrate the Mayor's familiarity with and enthusiasm for the proposed program
- Explain why the program is important and necessary
- Include relevant anecdotes or personal experience
- Note any **active role** the Mayor will take in the program

The letter is **one of the evaluation criteria**.

6. What criteria will be used to evaluate applications?

Applications may be evaluated on:

- Strength of the case for need
- Potential effectiveness of proposed strategies
- Creativity or novelty of the approach
- Organizational capacity to implement the program
- Methods for measuring/evaluating outcomes
- Mayor's role and level of involvement

- Alignment between budget and proposed activities
- Potential for program sustainability
- Potential for replication in other communities

7. Who are the judges?

To preserve program integrity, the identities of the independent judging panel are **not disclosed**.

8. What is the application deadline?

Friday, August 14, 2026 at 11:59 PM Eastern Time

9. Where do I submit my application?

All applications must be submitted through the **online application portal**: [The 2027 Healthy and Sustainable Communities Grant Awards](#)

USCM will **not** accept applications by mail, email, fax, or any other method.

10. How can I confirm that our application was received? Can I print a copy?

After submission:

- A confirmation email is automatically sent to the listed contact(s).
- A **PDF copy** of the full application is attached to that email.

If you do not receive the email within one hour (and it is not in spam), contact USCM staff.

11. When will award decisions be announced?

Winners will be announced during the **95th Winter Meeting of USCM**.

- Winners will be contacted in advance by USCM staff.
- All applicants will be notified of their status by email.
- If you have not received notice by **January 31, 2026**, you may assume your application was not selected unless USCM communicates otherwise.

12. Our application was not selected. Can we receive feedback?

Yes. Email abfha-awards@usmayors.org. Due to volume, feedback may take **up to 90 days**.

13. I have a question not listed here.

Contact abfha-awards@usmayors.org or visit www.usmayors.org/abfha-awards.