



THE UNITED STATES
CONFERENCE OF MAYORS



2027 GRANT PROGRAM

The Healthy and Sustainable Communities Grant Awards

*A partnership between The United States Conference of Mayors and the American Beverage
Foundation for a Healthy America*

Application deadline: August 14, 2026



About the Awards

The United States Conference of Mayors (USCM) and the American Beverage Foundation for a Healthy America (ABFHA) have launched the 2026 Healthy and Sustainable Communities Grant Awards.

The program supports city-led programs that engage community members and promote or stimulate behavior change across two focus areas: health initiatives, and environmental health and sustainability initiatives.

Awards are judged by an independent panel of judges across three city population categories, so cities of every size have a genuine path to funding.

3

population categories
(Small, Medium, Large)

9

total city winners
nationwide

\$1M

total awarded across
all categories

Engaging Communities. Changing Behaviors.

The core mission of this award is to fund initiatives that **go beyond infrastructure**, focusing on programs that actively engage community members and stimulate **positive behavior change** across two vital pillars:



1

Pillar 1: Healthy Cities

Programs that promote physical activity, nutrition, and community wellness.

2

Pillar 2: Sustainable Cities

Programs that reduce waste, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote environmental stewardship.

Who Can Apply

Two eligibility requirements apply to every application:

1

USCM Member City

The application must be submitted on behalf of a member (or member service) city of The United States Conference of Mayors.

2

Mayor's Letter of Support

The submission must include a letter of support from the Mayor, printed on official city letterhead.

Eligible applicants include:



City Departments & Authorities

Mayor's Office, Parks & Recreation, Public Works, local/regional housing authority, and similar.



Schools & School Districts

Individual schools or school districts within the member city.



Nonprofit Organizations

Nonprofits addressing issues within the scope of the awards program.

Funding Focus: Health Initiatives

Programs that engage the community and promote healthy behavior change

1

Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Access

School and community gardens, farmers' markets, and free or low-cost produce distribution in affected communities.

2

Health & Nutrition Education

Programs that teach kids how to eat better and how to prepare healthy meals.

3

Youth Exercise

Programs that encourage kids to exercise, both in and out of school.

4

Youth Advocacy & Peer Education

Empowering youth to educate peers and take part in community decisions that affect their health, e.g. hiring and training youth advocates.

Funding Focus: Environmental Health & Sustainability

Strategies that reduce waste, protect resources, and build greener cities

1

Reducing Waste

Strategies to encourage and improve residential recycling rates, reduce contamination, promote composting, and other waste and landfill diversion programs

2

Promoting Climate Change Strategies

Promoting efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

3

Community Clean-Up

Beach, waterway, and other types of community clean-up initiatives.

4

Water Conservation

Projects that promote water conservation across the community.

Award Amounts

Awards are made in three population categories, with three winners in each

Population Category	1st Place	2nd Place	3rd Place
Small City (under 75,000)	\$150,000	\$50,000	\$25,000
Medium City (75,000–250,000)	\$200,000	\$75,000	\$50,000
Large City (over 250,000)	\$275,000	\$100,000	\$75,000

\$1,000,000 awarded in total — across 9 winning cities. There is no limit on the number of applications a single city may submit; each is judged on its own merits.

The Mayor's Letter of Support

Required with every application — and one of the evaluation criteria

Format requirements

- Addressed to Tom Cochran, Executive Director, The United States Conference of Mayors
- Printed on official city letterhead
- Includes the Mayor's signature

What the letter should say

- The Mayor's familiarity with and enthusiasm for the proposed project
- Why the program is important and necessary
- Personal anecdotes connected to the program or the issues it addresses
- Any specific, active role the Mayor will take in the program — worth highlighting if so

How Applications Are Evaluated

Reviewed by an independent, confidential panel of judges

1

Compelling case for the need behind the proposed program

2

Potential of the strategies to effectively address that need

3

Novel, creative, or compelling approach to the need

4

Applicant's organizational capacity to implement the program

5

Methods proposed to measure and evaluate outcomes

6

Role and level of involvement of the Mayor

7

Budget expenditures consistent with proposed activities

8

Potential for the program to sustain itself beyond the award

9

Potential for the program to be replicated in other communities

Key Dates & What to Expect

August 14, 2026

Application Deadline

Applications are due by 11:59 PM Eastern Time. Submit only through the online portal — mail, email, and fax are not accepted.

Within 1 Hour

Confirmation Email

A confirmation email with a PDF copy of your full application is sent automatically after submission.

95th Winter
Meeting

Winners Announced

Winners are announced at the USCM Winter Meeting and are contacted by USCM staff in advance.

Up to 90 Days

Feedback on Request

Applicants who are not selected may request feedback on how to strengthen a future application.

How to Apply

1

Confirm Eligibility

Verify your city's USCM membership and confirm your program fits the award categories.

2

Secure the Mayor's Letter

Obtain a signed letter of support on official city letterhead.

3

Submit Online

Complete the application through the official online portal before the deadline.

Apply online: survey.usmayors.org/s3/The-2026-Healthy-and-Sustainable-Communities-Grant-Awards

Questions?

abfha-awards@usmayors.org

www.usmayors.org/abfha-awards

Get Started

