

2024 Building Official Training (BOT) Municipal Grants Program

Request for proposal (RFP), second offering

Available funding:	Up to \$195,000 total program funding is available for the second 2024 grant cycle. Up to three full-time grants may receive up to \$65,000 each. (See page 5).
Purpose:	Each grant is intended to provide partial funding and training guidance to qualified municipalities that will establish or continue training programs to train one individual on their path to becoming a certified building official.
Period of performance:	April 1, 2024, or the date the contract is fully executed, whichever occurs later, until March 31, 2025.
Application due date:	Application period begins Feb. 12, 2024, and closes when applications are due by 4 p.m., March 1, 2024. Submit applications by email to: bot.dli@state.mn.us
Questions:	<p>Technical questions such as obtaining/submitted documents, website navigation or informational webinar can be asked by phone or email and will be answered in a timely manner.</p> <p>Questions about the RFP, application help, content intentions or clarifications and qualifications, will be collected and posted for all to see equally. These questions may be submitted by email only.</p> <p>Questions and answers will be updated on Fridays, up to Feb. 23, 2024, and posted at dli.mn.gov/bot.</p> <p>Submit questions no later than noon, Feb. 23, 2024, CDT.</p> <p>Contact: Terence Olson, Municipal BOT Grant Administrator. Email: bot.dli@state.mn.us Phone: 651-284-5627</p>
Review and notification of award:	Review of the proposals will begin March 4, 2024. Applicant awards will be announced in early April 2024.
All RFP and application documents are at:	dli.mn.gov/bot

1. Name of grant program

2024 Building Official Training (BOT) Municipal Grants Program Second Offering.

2. Purpose of grant: background, objectives, focus populations and outcomes

Purpose

In the first application period of the 2024 BOT grants, there were eight grants available and five were awarded. Now, a second application period is being opened to allow competition for the remaining three grants.

These can be applied for in two different aspects:

1. An entry level training position where a municipality would hire a new trainee or cross train an existing city employee in a new entry level code enforcement position. (See Exhibit B-1 entry level)
2. Or a municipality could continue the training of an existing BOT grant trainee to a higher level of experience such as moving from residential to commercial training while accumulating experience and points toward a higher building official certification. (See Exhibit B-2 advanced level)

Background DLI

The mission of the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry (DLI) is to ensure Minnesota's work and living environments are equitable, healthy and safe. The department serves employees, employers and the public by regulating buildings and workplaces through education and enforcement. DLI will advance equity by identifying disparities and creating systemic change to better serve and protect all Minnesotans.

Background BOT Grant

The Building Official Training Municipal Grant Program (hereafter referred to as the **BOT Grant** or **BOT**) from DLI was created to provide support through partial funding and training guidance to qualified municipalities who wish to establish training programs that will educate and train individuals on their path to becoming building officials. This will be achieved through the implementation and coordination of partnerships between the State of Minnesota and those qualified municipalities.

Funding for the BOT Grant Program is provided by the Construction Codes and Licensing Division (CCLD) permit surcharge surplus as allowed in Minnesota Statutes 326B.148 subd. 1.

Objective

The BOT Grant Program will, through partial funding and training guidance, assist qualified municipalities to establish or continue inclusive training programs that will provide on-the-job training and education under the direct supervision of the municipality's Minnesota-certified building official. The municipality's trainee may achieve experience in building plan review and building inspections per Minnesota Rules 1301.0300 section C (1) by serving as a construction code inspector as specified in Minn. Stat. 326B.135 and achieve the competency

criteria detailed in Minn. R. 1301.1400. The grant program goal for the trainee is to gain a building official-limited (BO-L) or building official (BO) certification.

Focus populations

It is the policy of the state of Minnesota to ensure fairness, precision, equity and consistency in competitive grant awards. This includes implementing diversity and inclusion in grant-making.

The Minnesota Office of Grants Management (OGM) [Policy 08-02](#) establishes the expectation that grant programs intentionally identify how the grant serves diverse populations, especially populations experiencing inequities and/or disparities.

Diverse populations include racial and ethnic communities including Native Americans, LGBTQI communities, disabled communities, veterans and geographical diversity.

The BOT Grant Program seeks to promote, encourage, and provide support to grantee municipalities who will educate and train individuals on their path to becoming building officials.

These inspectors, when trained, will serve diverse populations within their communities, enforcing compliance with Minnesota's building codes to safeguard public health, safety and general welfare and safety to life and property from fire and other hazards attributed to the built environment.

Review and scoring will include criteria that assess a municipality's diversity and inclusion policies and practices in addition to their ability to provide the required training.

Grant outcomes

- Municipalities with structured inspection/plan review training programs.
- Trained building inspectors/plan reviewers that can serve diverse populations and communities.
- Trainees that have gained experience in building code administration, building inspection and plan review while working toward their building official certification.
- Grant trainees that have met the state's competency criteria within the first year of employment and/or obtained a building official limited (BO-L) or building official (BO) certification.
- The trainees that have gained valuable experience as a municipal government employee.

3. Grant activities

Awardees can achieve the education and training needed through a variety of activities. Consult Minn. R. 1301.0300 as to which activities accumulate points for the BO-L or BO application. Grant award funding may be applied to cover:

Education:

Education to achieve the grant requirements and those detailed in Minn. R. 1301.1400, competency criteria, and BO-L or BO prerequisites in Minn. R. 1301.0300 (A.):

- College/trade school courses related to building code enforcement

- ICC courses and certifications in building inspection
- OSHA 10 safety training. (Grant requirement only, no BO-L points)

On-the-job training:

- Building department administration
- Legal aspects of code enforcement
- Plan review
- Building inspection
- Application of the Minnesota State Building Code
- Planning/zoning, city code and ordinances, public works/utilities

Additional activities:

Education that increases a trainee’s knowledge of building code enforcement and administration:

- CCLD Spring and Fall seminars.
- CCLD self-paced courses available through the CCLD Learn
- AMBO Region III seminars
- AIBO U of M seminars
- Building Official Limited and Accessibility Specialist Training Program
- Continued study of the Minnesota State Building Code
- Additional college/trade school courses related to building code enforcement
- Additional or expanded ICC courses and certifications.

Activities that expand the trainee’s skills and value:

- Continued application of the Minnesota Residential Code
- Field trips to other jurisdictions to train in areas not available in the grantee municipality.
- Creating mock scenarios that inform and test a trainee in areas not available at that time.
- Achieving a BO-L or BO certification

4. Eligible applicants

To be considered eligible, all applicants must be a qualified municipality. For the BOT grant, “municipality” is defined in Minn. R. 1300.0070 subp. 17 and Minn Stat. 326B.103 subd. 9 as a city, county, or town.

To be a qualified municipality:

1. A municipality must administer and enforce the Minnesota State Building Code by having adopted the code by ordinance in compliance with Minn. Stat. 326B.121 subd. 2(a)(b).
2. Education and training must be under the direct supervision of the municipality’s Minnesota-certified building official in accordance with Minn. R. 1301.0300 p. C (1). A building official – limited can NOT be the training supervisor.
3. Meet the application deadline.

If an application does not fully meet these requirements it will not be considered for further review.

Applicants must submit an application packet on or before 4 p.m. on March 1, 2024. See section 18 of this RFP for a list of all documents required to be submitted.

Collaboration

Collaboration between a municipality and other municipalities or organizations to achieve the requirements of the grant is allowed. Any services provided by collaborating municipalities must be clearly defined in the proposal. A copy of a joint-powers agreement or a letter of commitment between the collaborating municipalities must accompany the proposal, if applicable.

5. Funding availability

Funding for BOT grants for the second 2024 grant cycle is as follows:

- Total funds allocated for this grant cycle: \$195,000.
- The maximum amount applicants can request is up to \$65,000.
- DLI plans to award funding for up to three grants.
- These funds will be available, until exhausted, during the period of performance described on page 1.
- The awarded funds are not intended to fully fund the trainee position. Grantee contribution is expected.
- Grants that are awarded will be restricted to one BOT grant per municipality to either hire a new trainee or extend the training of an existing BOT grant trainee toward a higher Minnesota certification. The award will be only for the period of performance specified on page 1.
- Funding will be allocated through a competitive process with review by a committee representing building code enforcement industry knowledge.
- If selected, the grantee can only incur eligible expenditures when the grant contract agreement has been fully executed and the grant has reached its effective date.

6. Eligible and ineligible expenses

Eligible expenses include:

Budget categories	Examples of allowable expenditures
Trainee expenses	BOT Grant trainee wages, benefits, insurances, taxes, and reimbursements directly related to grant program training activities.
Education and certification	Expenses related to education and certifications required by the BOT grant and for furthering their prerequisites for the BO-L or BO certification.
Support services (Limited to 10% of award)	Training materials and supplies directly supporting the trainee such as computers or handheld devices, cellphone, books, tools, protective clothing, and personal safety equipment related to the training activities.

All expenses submitted for reimbursement must be allowable by the terms of the grant, reasonable and necessary, rationally allocated and adequately documented.

Ineligible expenses include but are not limited to:

- Direct funding to program participants. Awarded funds must be processed through a grantee municipality’s financial department, expensed, and submitted for reimbursement as required in the grant contract agreement.
- Fundraising
- Taxes, except sales tax on goods and services and payroll taxes
- Lobbyists, political contributions
- Bad debts, late payment fees, finance charges, or contingency funds
- Parking violations or traffic violations
- Out-of-state transportation and travel expenses. Minnesota will be considered the home state for determining whether travel is out of state.
- Food, beverages, party supplies
- No applicant or grantee may incur eligible expenditures until the grant contract agreement has been fully executed and the grant has reached its effective start date.

7. Reviewing and scoring applications

The committee will be reviewing each application on a 200-point scale. The scoring factors are based on the points awarded to applicants who provide evidence of the municipality’s need and capacity to successfully accomplish the BOT grant programming requirements and intent.

Proposals must contain enough information to sufficiently support an applicant’s ability to deliver the required training of the BOT grant program or the applicant’s ability to deliver the services described through collaboration with another municipality or organization.

The review criteria below will be used to evaluate proposals in each scoring factor section. Review criteria are based both on the BOT grant program requirements and on an applicant’s ability to achieve the requirements of the grant.

Scoring factor	Scoring Criteria	Total points possible
Organizational need and abilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement detailing the municipality’s need for this grant. • Previous year’s total permit valuations • Number of permits last year broken down by permit types. • Municipality’s capacity to provide experience for the trainee including the municipality’s current and projected 2024 building activities. 	40

Organizational qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name of the municipality’s designated Minnesota-certified building official. Cannot be a building official – limited. Names and qualifications of other city staff that will be involved with the training. (Other certified building officials and building officials limited, mechanical inspectors, plumbing inspectors, plans examiners, permit techs, zoning dept., community development staff, fire dept., public works, engineering, city administrative staff). Include information as to whether there have been recent changes in the municipality’s building codes department leadership. Indicate whether your municipality has received a BOT Grant Program grant before. If so, detail the outcome. 	40
Organizational plan to achieve the grant’s goals. (Work plan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide details of the roles that each city staff member, listed in the ‘Qualifications’ section above, will play in achieving the training listed in the ‘Exhibit B Training Requirements’ document. Details of the plan to achieve the required competency criteria described in 1301.1400 and/or Detail of the plan to accumulate prerequisite points for the BO-limited application 1301.0300. Potential for continuing the employment of the trainee after the initial BOT Grant Program funding. (sustainability) Describe plans, if any, to provide education and experience for the trainee over and above the BOT grant requirements. 	50
Diversity, equity, inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe your municipality’s inclusion, diversity and equity policies and practices. Describe how you will reach, engage, and recruit individuals to become your trainee using inclusive practices. Explain the diversity of the population your building codes department serves. 	30
Measuring success or outcomes	<p>Provide goals or successes that will be achieved once the BOT grant program activities have completed.</p> <p>What are the municipality’s expectations for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The trainee The building department The municipality 	30
Budget and budget narrative	<p>Provided a proposed budget and budget narrative that breaks the budget down with details of the proposed expenditures listed on the budget form.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete Exhibit A. 	10
	Total score available	200

8. Grantee reporting requirements

The grantee must submit quarterly training reports and financial reimbursement requests using the forms provided by the BOT grant administrator. Example form templates can be found on the BOT grant webpage at dli.mn.gov/bot.

Reporting schedules

All reports, payment requests, and required supporting documentation must be submitted as follows:

- 1st quarter April 1 – June 30 with a reporting/payment request deadline of July 31, 2024.
- 2nd quarter July 1 – Sept. 30 with a reporting/payment request deadline of Oct. 31, 2024.
- 3rd quarter Oct. 1 – Dec. 31 with a reporting/payment request deadline of February 15, 2025.
- 4th quarter Jan. 1 – March 31 with a reporting/payment request deadline of April 30, 2025.

Financial reporting/payment request requirements

Financial reporting and reconciliation will be required quarterly using forms provided by the BOT grant administrator. This will involve reconciling a grantee's submitted invoices with the supporting documentation. The final payment will be withheld pending verification that all training requirements have been achieved and all invoices have been reconciled. The financial forms include:

- Reimbursement Payment Request (RPR) for invoicing
- Expense Summary
- Supporting documents for financial reimbursement requests such as, but not limited to, payroll records, time sheets, financial reports, and expense receipts.

Training reporting requirements

Quarterly reports will include the training and instruction requirements achieved that quarter using the BOT provided templates or similar.

A Progress Narrative Report form, that summarizes each aspect achieved, will also be required to be submitted.

These training reports will be measured against the BOT grant training requirements included with the application and as an exhibit in the contract agreement.

Training report forms include:

- Quarterly training Progress Narrative Report
- Quarterly training hours Excel worksheet (See Exhibit B-1 or Exhibit B-2)
- Education certificates of completion
- Certifications of achievement
- Final grant report

Grantees must also provide a final grant report which summarizes all grant activity. The final grant report must be provided within 45 business days of the end of the grant period of performance and final invoices must be submitted within 60 days of the end of the grant period of performance, or as specified in the contract.

9. DLI monitoring of grantee performance

[Minn. Statute §16B.97](#) and OGM [Policy 08-10](#) Grant Monitoring require the following:

1. One monitoring visit (virtual) during the grant period of performance (see page 1) on all state grants of \$50,000 and higher.
 - The grant program monitoring visit(s) will be scheduled by the grant administrator and will be attended by DLI staff and the related municipal staff.
 - There will be a review of trainee progress to ensure the grant program training and instruction requirements are being achieved.
 - Progress will be gauged at that point in relation to the overall program requirements and any problems or issues, faced by the grantee, will be addressed.
 - Any changes or modifications to the grantee training staff or the grant program will be discussed.
2. Conducting a financial reconciliation of grantee's expenditures at least once during the grant period on grants of \$50,000 and higher. For this purpose, the grantee must make expense receipts, employee timesheets, invoices, and any other supporting documents available upon request by the State.

10. Payments to grantee

Per OGM [Policy 08-08](#) reimbursement is the preferred method for making grant payments. All grantee requests for reimbursement must correspond to the approved grant budget. The state will review each request for reimbursement against the approved grant budget, grant expenditures to-date and the latest grant progress report before approving payment. Grant payments will not be made on grants with past due progress reports unless DLI has given the grantee a written extension. Payments will be made through the State's SWIFT accounting system.

11. Required financial and grantee capacity review

Minn. Stat. §16B.981/Chapter 62 - MN Laws, Article 7, Section 11 requires that a pre-award risk assessment is conducted for grant awards of \$50,000 or more.

All grantees as defined in Minn. Stat. §16B.981 Subd. 1 (c) applying for grants in the state of Minnesota must undergo a financial and capacity review prior to a grant award of \$50,000 and higher.

In order to comply with this requirement, the following information and documents will need to be submitted before the grant contract agreement is fully executed.

1. Exhibit C Capacity Responses
 - Please describe your history of performing the work that will be funded by the grant. This includes describing your organization's current staffing, current grant budget and agency capacity to successfully conduct and administer grant programming.
2. Exhibit D Principals Certification
 - No current principals have been convicted of a felony financial crime in the last ten years.

The submission of inaccurate or misleading information may be grounds for disqualification from the grant contract agreement award and may subject an organization to suspension or debarment proceedings, as well as other remedies available to the State, by law.

Based on Minn. Stat. §16B.981/[Chapter 62 - MN Laws](#), Article 7, Section 11, Subd. 3-5 establishes the authority for a granting agency to:

- Provide or require enhanced grant oversight.
- Request additional information from a potential grantee to determine whether there is a substantial risk that the potential grantee cannot or would not perform the required duties of the grant agreement.
 - The potential grantee has 30 business days to respond.
- Develop a plan to address the risk or concerns identified.
- Not award the grant.
 - The granting agency must provide notice of this determination to not award the grant to the grantee and the commissioner of Administration.
 - The notice must include the following:
 - The reason for postponing/not awarding the grant.
 - The timeline for the process for contesting the agency's decision.

12. Audit of grantee's records

Per [Minn. Stat. §16B.98](#) Subd. 8, the grantee's books, records, documents and accounting procedures and practices of the grantee or other party that are relevant to the grant contract agreement or transaction are subject to examination by the commissioner of Administration, by the State granting agency and/or the state auditor or legislative auditor, as appropriate, for a minimum of six years from the end of the grant contract agreement, receipt and approval of all final reports, or the required period of time to satisfy all state and program retention requirements, whichever is later.

13. Grantee requirements when bidding grant related work

- Grantees that are municipalities must follow the contracting and bidding requirements in the Uniform Municipal Contracting Law as defined in [Minn. Stat. § 471.345](#)
- The requirements of prevailing wage for grant-funded projects that include construction work of \$25,000 or more, per [Minn. Stat. §§v177.41](#) through [177.44](#) These rules require that the wages of laborers and workers should be comparable to wages paid for similar work in the community as a whole.
- The grantee must not contract with vendors who are suspended or debarred in Minnesota: [Suspended/Debarred Vendor Information](#)

14. Conflicts of interest

State grant policy requires that processes are in place to prevent individual and organizational conflicts of interest, both in reference to applicants and reviewers per [Minn. Stat. § 16B.98 subd. 2-3](#) and OGM [08-01 Conflict of Interest in State Grant-Making Policy](#).

Organizational conflicts of interest occur when:

- a grantee or applicant is unable or potentially unable to render impartial assistance or advice to the department due to competing duties or loyalties.

- a grantee or applicant's objectivity in carrying out the grant is or might be otherwise impaired due to competing duties or loyalties.

15. Public access to applicant's data

[Per Minn. Stat. § 13.599](#)

- Names and addresses of grant applicants and amount requested will be public data once proposal responses are opened.
- All remaining data in proposal responses (except trade secret data as defined and classified in [§13.37](#)) will be public data after the evaluation process is completed. For the purposes of this grant, that will take place when all grant contract agreements have been fully executed.
- All data created or maintained by DLI as part of the evaluation process (except trade secret data as defined and classified in [§13.37](#)) will be public data after the evaluation process is completed. For the purposes of this grant, that will take place when all grant contract agreements have been fully executed.

16. Affirmative action and non-discrimination requirements for grantees:

- A. As per [Minn. Stat. § 363A.02](#) the grantee agrees not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status in regard to public assistance, membership or activity in a local commission, disability, sexual orientation, familial status or age in regard to any position for which the employee or applicant for employment is qualified. The grantee agrees to take affirmative steps to employ, advance in employment, upgrade, train, and recruit minority persons, women, and persons with disabilities.
- B. The grantee must not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of physical or mental disability in regard to any position for which the employee or applicant for employment is qualified. The grantee agrees to take affirmative action to employ, advance in employment, and otherwise treat qualified disabled persons without discrimination based upon their physical or mental disability in all employment practices such as the following: employment, upgrading, demotion or transfer, recruitment, advertising, layoff or termination, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, and selection for training, including apprenticeship. Minn. R., part [5000.3500](#).
- C. The grantee agrees to comply with the rules and relevant orders of the Minnesota Department of Human Rights issued pursuant to the Minnesota Human Rights Act.

17. Grantee voter registration requirement

The grantee will comply with [Minn. Stat. §201.162](#) by providing voter registration services for its employees and for the public served by the grantee.

18. Required application materials and checklist

Submission and DLI receipt of the completed BOT Grant Program application packet by 4 p.m., March 1, 2024, which includes:

1. Application/proposal
2. Exhibit A budget form with budget narrative form
3. Exhibit C Capacity responses worksheet
4. Exhibit D Principals' certification, signed
5. Provide proof of workers' compensation insurance coverage.
6. Include a copy of an effective and equal opportunity policy and any information about your municipality's inclusion and diversity programs.
7. Joint-powers agreement or letter of commitment if collaborating with another municipality or organization.
8. Signed and notarized Affidavit of Non-collusion
9. Visit the BOT grant webpage at dli.mn.gov/bot to view the documents and information.
10. Review and understand the Exhibit B Training Requirements documents.
11. Review the sample grant contract.
12. Read through the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) pages at the bottom of the webpage.

19. How to submit applications

Email to: Terence Olson at bot.dli@state.mn.us

All applications must be received by 4 p.m. Central Time, on March 1, 2024. The applicant will incur all costs associated with applying to this RFP.

20. Review process and timeline

The BOT grant review committee will evaluate all eligible applications received by the deadline. DLI will review all committee recommendations and is responsible for award decisions.

Proposals will first be reviewed by the grant administration to determine if the qualifying requirements listed in section 4 of this RFP have been met and if the proposal is complete (containing all required elements listed in section 18 above). Proposals that do not meet the qualifying requirements will not move on for further review by the BOT grant review committee.

Timeline:

- Applications due by 4 p.m., Central Time, March 1, 2024.
- Applicants notified of award decisions: early April 2024.
- Grant work begins on the date the grant contract agreement is fully executed.

21. Questions

Technical questions such as obtaining/submitting documents, website navigation or informational webinar can be asked by phone or email and will be answered in a timely manner.

Questions about the RFP, application help, content intentions or clarifications and qualifications, will be collected and posted for all to see equally. These questions may be submitted by email only.

Questions and answers will be updated on Fridays, up to Feb. 23, 2024, and posted at: dli.mn.gov/bot.

Submit questions no later than noon, Feb. 23, 2024, CDT.

Contact: Terence Olson, Municipal BOT Grant Administrator at Email: bot.dli@state.mn.us

Phone: 651-284-5627

22. Documents and support materials

The following documents, exhibits and support materials are at dli.mn.gov/bot:

- RFP
- Application form
- Exhibit A Budget form, budget narrative form
- Exhibit B-1 Training Requirements document – Entry Level
- Exhibit B-2 Training Requirements document – Advanced Level
- Exhibit C Capacity responses worksheet
- Exhibit D Principals' certification
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page
- Sample grant contract agreement
- Copy of the Affidavit of non-collusion
- Information on the applicant informational seminar when available
- Definitions page