

# The Powering Safe Communities Grant Program

## 2026 Program Guidelines



The Metropolitan Mayors Caucus is proud to partner with ComEd to administer the Powering Safe Communities grant program. The Powering Safe Communities program will continue to provide grants of up to \$10,000 for local public safety and clean transportation projects. Recognizing that electrification can reduce carbon emissions, improve public health outcomes, and advance community resiliency, there will be a special focus on electrification projects this year.

### Key Dates

Grant Cycle Opens: January 12, 2026, 9:00 a.m. Central Time

Grant application deadline: March 13, 2026, 5:00 p.m. Central Time

### **A. Goals**

The *Powering Safe Communities* grant program seeks to:

- Enhance the quality of life in cities, villages, and towns in the ComEd service area and among Metropolitan Mayors Caucus member communities.
- Enable local governments to provide for the health and safety of their residents and visitors.
- Address unmet public safety needs.
- Advance local sustainability.
- Demonstrate innovation, professionalism, and cost-effective strategies.
- Build community resiliency and enhance preparedness.
- Improve public health outcomes.
- Provide access to electric vehicle charging station(s), electric vehicle infrastructure, and electric vehicles.
- Improve public safety relative to the use and distribution of electricity.

### **B. Eligibility**

Municipalities, townships, counties, and other local governments that provide for the safety of the public within ComEd's service territory ([see map](#)) in the following counties are eligible to apply: Boone, Bureau, Carroll, Cook, DeKalb, DuPage, Ford, Grundy, Henry, Iroquois, Jo Daviess, Kane, Kankakee, Kendall, Lake, LaSalle, Lee, Livingston, Marshall, McHenry, Ogle, Rock Island, Stephenson, Whiteside, Will, Winnebago and Woodford.

Not-for-profit organizations are eligible to apply if they partner with at least one municipality.

2024 and 2025 Powering Safe Communities grant recipients are ineligible. However, previous Powering Safe Communities grantees from 2015-2023 are eligible. Applicants must be in good standing with ComEd related to provision of utilities.

## **C. Eligible Activities**

The purchase of goods or services that enhance the applicant's ability to achieve the Goals in section A described above, are eligible costs. These include but are not limited to:

### **1. Public Safety Equipment**

Equipment that enhances the safety of the general public including traffic and pedestrian safety, communications, monitoring, protective and other equipment.

### **2. Emergency Response Equipment and Supplies**

Equipment that enhances the ability of first responders to provide for the safety and welfare of the general or targeted populations including specialized emergency response, emergency transport, communications, and other essential emergency equipment; and specialty emergency response supplies not otherwise available.

### **3. Disaster Preparedness and Resiliency**

Equipment and supplies that improve the ability of the community to prevent and respond to disasters and mitigate resulting threats.

### **4. Public Safety Programs and Plans**

Public education and engagement programs that prepare residents for disaster, reduce threats to vulnerable populations, and foster cooperation and collaboration to improve the long-term safety of the community; training resources and programs for government officials that improve skills, and other programs that meet the *Powering Safe Communities* grant program goals; and public safety plans that optimize a local government's ability to deliver services.

### **5. Electrification Projects (Special Focus area)**

Electrification is the use of electric energy efficient technologies as alternatives to fossil fuels or non-energized processes. Electrification projects that improve public health outcomes, provide for cleaner transportation options, and conserve the usage of energy are eligible. Examples of electrification projects include, but are not limited to:

- Electric vehicle charging station(s)
- Electric vehicle purchase

## **D. Ineligible Expenses**

Grant funds may not be used for lobbying activities; activities that are required in connection with regulatory compliance; capital costs; or to pay staff salaries\*. Grant funds cannot be used to pay private vendors for training or services otherwise offered through professional associations and public agencies, or to purchase routine supplies.

\*The cost of staff time needed to complete the project is eligible as a matching contribution towards the required 50% match.

## **E. Grant Matching and Reimbursement**

### **Match Required**

Recipients should match grant funds awarded with a direct equal expenditure of the organization's own funds, and/ or through in-kind contribution of goods and services of equal or greater value. *Therefore, 50% of the total project costs are paid for by the Powering Safe Communities grant award and 50% of the costs are paid by the grant recipient.*

The source of matching contributions must be identified at the time of application. Direct and matching expenditures must be documented, and documents must be submitted to the Caucus to receive grant reimbursement. Details will be provided at the time of the award. In-kind matching contributions must be documented with employee time and work records.

Contribution of volunteer labor can be applied to matching requirement with adequate documentation.

Applicants unable to make matching contributions may request a reduction or waiver at the time of application.

### **Reimbursement**

All grants are awarded on a reimbursement basis. Successful completion of the project or procurement; documentation of expenditures and expenses; and a submission of a reimbursement request and report are required for grant recipients to receive payment.

Successful applicants will be notified of a grant award and will enter into a grant agreement with the Metropolitan Mayor Caucus. Recipients must submit semi-annual progress reports. Grant recipients must complete their projects at any time prior to March 31, 2027.

Reimbursement payments will be made promptly by the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus.

Retroactive reimbursement for costs accrued between the application deadline and the grant award may be allowed on a case-by-case basis. All requests for such reimbursement must be made in writing to Ben Schnelle at [bschnelle@mayorscaucus.org](mailto:bschnelle@mayorscaucus.org).

Awards are made based on the project presented in the application. Any major changes to the scope of a project must first be approved to avoid forfeiting the grant award. Contact Ben Schnelle at [bschnelle@mayorscaucus.org](mailto:bschnelle@mayorscaucus.org) if you anticipate there will be a major change to your project scope.

## **F. Application information**

The administrator of the Powering Safe Communities program is the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus. Applications are accepted online at <https://metropolitanmayorscaucus.submittable.com/submit>. Create a free profile to begin the submission process.

- Applications must be received by 5:00 p.m. Central Time on March 13, 2026.
- All communication regarding your application, including grant decision, will be directed to the contact person listed in your application.
- Partial funding is possible for your project.
- Support letters are strongly encouraged.
- Applications will be reviewed by a team comprised of professionals in the fields of public safety, transportation, urban planning, and public health. Final decisions on award recipients and amounts are at the discretion of ComEd.
- Decisions on grant awards will be announced by early July 2026.

## **G. Grant Conditions**

- Grants will be for amounts up to \$10,000.
- Failure to submit a final grant report with all of the required attachments by the posted deadline may prohibit applicants from participating in any future grant cycles. If you have questions about the final grant report and its attachments, please reach out to Ben Schnelle at [bschnelle@mayorscaucus.org](mailto:bschnelle@mayorscaucus.org).
- During the grant period, award recipients will agree to participate in the events or media inquiries and to identify ComEd as a funder in any materials produced to explain or promote the funded project.

## **H. Budget Instructions**

Use this guide to develop your project Budget. Then submit the completed Budget form in the Application, (*Application Section C*). Cost must relate to the grant project, be allowable, and align with your Work Plan (*Application Section D*). (No need to submit the Sample Budget.)

Costs are to be divided between those eligible for reimbursement from the grant and those to be paid by your organization as your matching share. Therefore, only budget items in Section I, Purchased Goods and Services, Column B, are to be charged to the grant request. You may propose to spend more on these items than the maximum grant allowed (\$10,000) if you contribute your own agency funds for that purpose. See sample budget.

The proposed Match, Column C, must be 50% or more of the proposed Total Project Cost, Column D.

Download the [Budget Form and Instructions](#). Complete the Budget Form in Microsoft Excel then upload it to your online application. Sample budget below.

<b>Project Title: Automatic External Defibrillators for Anytown Public Buildings</b>			
A	B	C	D
<b>Expense</b>	<b>Grant Share</b>	<b>Match</b>	<b>Total Project Cost</b>
<b>Purchased Goods &amp; Services</b>			
AED purchase	10,000	5,000	
<i>I. Sub Total Purchase</i>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>5,000</b>	<b>15,000</b>
<b>Matching In-House Services</b>			
AED installation by facility manager		500	
Staff training by Chief		3,500	
<i>II. Sub Total In-House</i>		<b>4,000</b>	<b>4,000</b>
<b>Matching Donated Services</b>			
Training Assistance from Community Hospital		1,000	
<i>III. Sub Total Donated</i>		<b>1,000</b>	<b>1,000</b>
<b>Total I, II, III</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>

### Prepare Budget:

- Assemble cost estimates for all eligible costs related to the grant project.
- Itemize estimated payment for each good and/or service. Enter probable vendor, if known. (i.e., total cost of AED purchase – ACME Medical Supplies: \$15,000).
- Enter the amount of the goods or services that you would like to pay for using grant funds in *Column B, Section I.* to a maximum of \$10,000. (i.e., AEDs, \$10,000).
- Enter the amount of the goods or services (in excess of a \$10,000 grant) that you will contribute as your match in *Column C Section I.* (i.e., AED purchase \$5,000.).
- Enter the amount of in-kind services your agency will contribute as a match in *Column C Section II.* (i.e., AED installation; \$500; staff training provided by officers \$3,500).
- Enter the amount of any volunteer services from partners in *Column C Section III.* (i.e., Training Assistance from Community Hospital \$1,000).
- Briefly describe each item in the Budget Form.
- Total All Columns. **The Total of Column B, Section 1 is your grant request. The Total of Column C is your agency's Match.** The total in *Column D* should be your total expenditure for all purchases related to your project.
- Explain your Budget in the Workplan Narrative.

## I. Scoring Criteria

- *Cover Letter*: Scored highest if signed by Village Mayor / President, Village Manager, or CEO.
- *Project Description*: Not scored but provides reviewers with a helpful summary of the entire proposal.
- *Budget*: Scored highest if accurate, clear, and cost-effective.
- *Work Plan*: Scored highest if thoroughly planned, well-described, and accomplishes one or more of the grant program goals.
- *Outcomes and Leveraged Benefits*: Scored highest if able to demonstrate positive outcomes expected in public safety, well-being, and local sustainability.
- *Need*: Scored highest if able to clearly demonstrate why the grant is needed.
- *Support Letters*: Scored highest if providing 2+ support letters.

Contact: Ben Schnelle  
Metropolitan Mayors Caucus  
[bschnelle@mayorscaucus.org](mailto:bschnelle@mayorscaucus.org).