



Avenue NYC

Building Better Business Districts in New York City

FY2008 Avenue NYC Program Information Sheet

While many of the city's neighborhood development programs focus on housing and social services, the New York City Department of Small Business Services' Avenue NYC program targets the economic base of the neighborhood – the local commercial corridor. Avenue NYC provides funding for neighborhood development organizations (Local Development Corporations, Merchants' Associations and other not-for-profit economic development organizations) throughout the five boroughs to carry out commercial revitalization activities in the corridors they serve. The goal of the program is to create the conditions under which businesses can thrive and residents enjoy access to a vibrant mix of goods and services.

In FY2008, SBS will fund local development organizations to carry out one or more initiatives under Avenue NYC's three programmatic categories:

- I. **Neighborhood Core Program**
- II. **Borough-Wide Technical Assistance Program**
- III. **District Development Projects**

Please review the details of each of these programs below for information on eligible activities and funding levels. Applications for Avenue NYC are available online at <http://nyc.gov/html/sbs/html/neighborhood/avenuenyc.shtml>.

I. NEIGHBORHOOD CORE PROGRAM

The neighborhood core program offers organizations the opportunity to engage in a four-year initiative that focuses on three activities: neighborhood economic development planning, business attraction, and district marketing. The goal of the neighborhood core program is to help organizations develop a comprehensive long-term commercial revitalization strategy through which businesses succeed and residents have access to a broader array of goods and services.

In the first year of the neighborhood core program, selected groups will be expected to carry out the following activities:

- 1) **Neighborhood Economic Development Planning:** Selected groups will develop a comprehensive neighborhood economic development plan that assesses the strengths and weaknesses of the commercial district, creates a vision for the district based on that analysis, and identifies short and long term activities that will achieve that vision. Included in those activities can be planning for any commercial development sites strategically located along the corridor, new business targets, and needed infrastructure improvements to achieve success. The plan should lay out activities that can be feasibly implemented over a specific period of time, identifying discrete milestones and steps needed to implement those projects. This plan will inform the organization's activities in the second, third and fourth years of the program.
- 2) **Business Attraction:** Selected groups will create a baseline census of businesses and commercial real estate in their commercial district and maintain accurate and up-to-date

information on commercial property available for development, sale or lease. Organizations will use that baseline census to engage in business attraction efforts, liaising with real estate brokers, property owners, and managers to facilitate sales and leasing of available ground- and upper-floor space.

- 3) **District Marketing:** Selected groups will design a comprehensive marketing program that will encourage consumers to visit and shop in the district and increase sales among district businesses. Organizations will also be expected to participate in and build upon multi-district marketing campaigns carried out by SBS.

In the years two through four, core neighborhood program groups will be expected to carry out the short- and long-term activities outlined in the comprehensive neighborhood development plan created during the first year of the program.

Funding Levels

Organizations selected for the neighborhood core program will receive funding (assuming funding availability) for a four-year period according to the schedule below. In the first year of the program, selected groups will receive \$66,000. Funding in years two through four can be expected to follow the chart below, but will ultimately be based on the successful completion of the preceding year's activities (and funding availability).

	FY2008	FY2009	FY2010	FY2011
Personnel & Fringe	\$50,000	\$35,000	\$20,000	\$12,500
Program Expenses	\$6,000	\$5,000	\$4,000	\$3,000
Administrative Expenses	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$7,000	\$5,000
TOTAL	\$66,000	\$ 50,000	\$31,000	\$ 20,500

As part of the planning component of the neighborhood core program, selected organizations will be expected to identify other sources of revenue to carry out the initiatives as funding levels decrease over the four-year period.

Selected organizations must re-apply for funding each year throughout the four-year program.

If your group is currently completing its first year of the Neighborhood Core Program and will be applying for Year 2 funding, please check the Neighborhood Core Program (Year 2) box on the Avenue NYC application and provide the necessary documentation detailed in the application for consideration for FY2008 funding.

II. BOROUGH-WIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The borough-wide technical assistance program offers one lead economic development organization in each borough the opportunity to provide a range of technical support services to neighborhood-based economic development organizations throughout that borough. The borough-wide technical assistance program has as its goal to identify, support and grow local development corporations in neighborhoods throughout the City so that they are able to provide better services to business owners and residents.

Selected groups will be expected to carry out the following activities:

- 1) **Comprehensive census of neighborhood economic development organizations:** Selected groups will identify all existing local economic development organizations in their respective boroughs and maintain an up-to-date database and borough map with information on all groups. They will also conduct ongoing needs assessments of each of these organizations to identify the specific services local groups need to more effectively serve their constituents.

- 2) **Formation of new local economic development organizations:** Selected groups will assist in the formation of new local economic development organizations in commercial districts that currently lack organized representation.
- 3) **Technical assistance to existing local economic development organizations:** Selected groups will provide a range of technical assistance to neighborhood economic development organizations in their borough based on the needs assessment conducted as part of the comprehensive census. Technical assistance activities should include, but are not limited to, help with market research, GIS and other data analysis, strategic planning, board/staff/membership development, revenue generation and diversification, and pro forma analysis.

Funding Levels

Organizations selected for the borough-wide technical assistance program will receive between \$100,000 and \$150,000 to carry out these efforts. SBS expects that award recipients will offer their resources and expertise to neighborhood economic development organizations free of charge.

III. DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Avenue NYC's district development projects offer local economic development organizations the opportunity to engage in one-year initiatives that foster growth in their commercial corridors. Under the FY2008 Avenue NYC program, SBS will fund five district development projects:

- 1) **Neighborhood Economic Development Planning**
- 2) **Business Attraction**
- 3) **District Marketing**
- 4) **Business Improvement District (BID) Formation**
- 5) **Other Economic Development Activities**

Local groups may apply for one or more of these district development projects. *However, those groups applying for the four-year Neighborhood Core Program should not apply for the Neighborhood Economic Development Planning, Business Attraction or District Marketing projects because these District Development Projects are part of the Neighborhood Core Program.*

Please note that for FY2008 SBS will not be funding new Storefront Improvement Projects. Those organizations with existing FY2007 and FY2006 Storefront Improvement contracts should contact their SBS contract manager to determine the exact expiration date of existing contracts.

1) Neighborhood Economic Development Planning

Selected groups will develop a comprehensive neighborhood economic development plan that assesses the strengths and weaknesses of their commercial district, creates a vision for the district based on that analysis, and identifies short and long term activities that will achieve that vision. Included in those activities can be planning for any commercial development sites strategically located along the corridor, new business targets, and needed infrastructure improvements to achieve success. The plan should lay out activities that can be feasibly implemented over a specific period of time, identifying discrete milestones and steps needed to implement those projects.

There is no specified range of funding for Neighborhood Economic Development Planning, although funding levels generally do not exceed \$25,000. Awards will be competitive and based on the strength of the proposal.

2) Business Attraction

Selected groups will create a baseline census of businesses and commercial real estate in their commercial district and maintain accurate and up-to-date information on commercial property available for development, sale or lease. Groups will use that baseline census to engage in business attraction efforts,

liaising with real estate brokers, property owners and managers to facilitate sales and leasing of available ground- and upper-floor space. Groups will be expected to fill vacancies over the term of the contract, reduce the vacancy rate and/or impact the retail mix of the street in a measurable way.

Possible Business Attraction activities include:

- Creation of commercial databases of properties for sale and for lease, property owners and other relevant information to assist with the sale, leasing or development of property
- Organization of community planning sessions to determine local preferences for retail
- Analysis of the retail mix and business growth opportunities based on current and changing conditions and demographics
- Coordinated events with the real estate community and property owners to showcase area vacancies

There is no specified range of funding for Business Attraction, although funding levels generally do not exceed \$25,000. Awards will be competitive and based on the strength of the proposal.

3) District Marketing

Selected groups will design a comprehensive marketing program that will encourage consumers to visit and shop in the district and increase sales among district businesses. Organizations will also be expected to participate in and build upon multi-district marketing campaigns carried out by SBS.

Examples of District Marketing activities include:

- Creation of promotional literature, such as a district map
- Creation of a website promoting the organization and the commercial area it serves
- Organization of special cultural festivals involving local merchants and constituents
- Organization of special sales days with shopping discounts

There is no specified range of funding for District Marketing, although funding levels generally do not exceed \$25,000. Awards will be competitive and based on the strength of the proposal.

4) Business Improvement District (BID) Formation

Selected groups will spearhead planning and outreach efforts for the formation of a new Business Improvement District (BID) to deliver supplemental maintenance, security and/or marketing services to a targeted commercial area. Groups will be expected to complete the first eleven steps in the BID formation process during the project term. A comprehensive explanation of those steps can be found in SBS' "Starting a Business Improvement District: A Step-by-Step Guide" (available online on SBS' website at <http://nyc.gov/html/sbs/html/neighborhood/bid.shtml>).

Business Improvement District (BID) Formation grants will be awarded in the range of \$10,000 - \$25,000.

5) Other Economic Development Activities

Selected groups will carry out an innovative program that draws on the strengths and distinctiveness of their respective commercial districts and produces a measurable improvement in the commercial life of the community. Joint projects with institutions, cultural or other unique community resources are encouraged.

Possible Other Economic Development activities include:

- Merchant organizing and the development of a robust merchant's association with dues paying members, the identification of local leadership and active participation of the business community;
- Student internship/mentorship program with local businesses or restaurants that introduce and engage community youth to the world of business;

- Special technical assistance programs that do not duplicate services available elsewhere.

There is no specified range of funding for Other Economic Development Activities, although funding levels generally do not exceed \$25,000. Awards will be competitive and based on the strength of the proposal.

Application Evaluation Guidelines:

All organizations applying for the FY2008 Avenue NYC program will be evaluated on three criteria:

- 1) The existing organizational capacity of the group
- 2) The strength of their Avenue NYC program proposal
- 3) The viability of their proposed Avenue NYC budget

Details on each of these criteria are included in the Avenue NYC application. ***Please read through the corresponding section of the Avenue NYC application and supply the necessary documentation for each.***

Applications will be rated according to the following points scale:

- 30 points: Existing Organizational Capacity
- 60 points: Avenue NYC Program/Project Proposal
- 10 points: Proposed Avenue NYC Budget

Application Information Session:

Groups interested in applying for the Avenue NYC program are strongly encouraged to attend an information session:

- Friday, May 18 from 10:00AM to 12:00PM

During this session, SBS staff will provide a comprehensive overview of the program and walk applicants through the application process. The session will be held at the offices of the New York City Economic Development Corporation, located on the 4th Floor of 110 William Street in Lower Manhattan.

Please RSVP for the information session by calling Iona Allen at 212-513-6329.

Submittal Process:

All completed applications should be returned to the New York City Department of Small Business Services via e-mail or post mail (certified or express mail is recommended).

Please submit TWO COPIES of your application if sent by post mail. The application should not deviate from the standard format: 8 ½" x 11" paper, single-sided, including all attachments. Do not include CD-ROMs, promotional materials, or other extraneous materials. The applications should be presented in a format that can be easily copied: it should be loose leaf and may be paper clipped but not stapled or bound and without dividers.

Applications must be received by **Friday, June 1, 2007**, to be considered for funding as of July 1, 2007. SBS reserves the right to reject, at its sole discretion, any application received past the deadline. Award letters will be sent upon determination of the City's and the SBS FY 2008 budget.

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