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KANSAS
COMMERCE

BLOCK GRANT

Building Local Opportunity through
Coordinated Kansas Investment

WELCOME

Today's Agenda:

- Introduction to BLOCK
- Funding
- Program Timeline
- Application Details & Requirements
- Application Walkthrough
- Let's Talk



INTRODUCTION TO BLOCK

Building Local Opportunity through Coordinated Kansas-Investment (BLOCK)

A \$500,000 opportunity to transform one Kansas downtown block.

THIS IS NOT A SIMPLE BEAUTIFICATION GRANT. THIS IS A CATALYST. THIS IS A GAME CHANGER

BLOCK is an **economic development strategy**.

- Transform one concentrated downtown area
- Unlock underused buildings and properties
- Attract additional public and private investment
- Create momentum that continues after the grant
- **DO IT QUICKLY**



THINK: EXTREME MAKEOVER

One block.

At least three structures.

One big transformation.

We aren't looking for a block that looks nice, we are looking for one that is in desperate need of this makeover.

The goal is a dramatic, coordinated change that people can see and that changes what happens next in your downtown.



THE BLOCK TEST

Before applying, can you answer **YES** to every question?

- **Once we begin construction and rehabilitation efforts, can we complete the transformation within 14 days?**
- Do we know exactly which block we're transforming?
- Do we know exactly what we're going to change?
- Are the property owners on board?
- Are the contractors, vendors and partners ready to go?
- Do we have our 1:1 match secured?
- Can we begin immediately following the award?
- Can we complete the transformation before December 15, 2026?
- Will the investment create impact beyond the initial transformation?



WHAT CAN BLOCK FUND?

This funding will be hyper-focused on the exterior of the buildings and block.

- Facade improvements
- Exterior painting
- Tuckpointing and masonry repair
- Building stabilization
- Awnings
- Signage
- Windows and doors
- Exterior lighting
- Architectural details and trim
- Landscaping
- Planters
- Pocket parks
- Outdoor gathering spaces
- Sidewalk and small-scale streetscape improvements

Eligible interior improvements include: electrical work that directly effects exterior visualization, lighting improvements, and accessibility features.





THE MONEY MUST **MULTIPLY**

\$500,000 BLOCK award
+ \$500,000 minimum match
= \$1 MILLION minimum investment

- 1:1 match required
- 75% of required match must be cash
- Up to 25% may be eligible in-kind
- Additional public/private investment strengthens the application

Eligible match may include cash contributions, grants, documented in-kind contributions, and public or private investments made in the proposed block after July 1, 2024.



READY MEANS READY

Before you apply, you should have:

- Contractors and vendors identified
- Property owners committed
- Quotes/commitments secured
- Materials and logistics planned
- Permitting addressed
- The match secured and documented
- A realistic timeline to completion



PROJECT TIMELINE

- Grant Announcement: September 9, 2026
- Application Period: September 11-30, 2026
- Submission Deadline: September 30, 2026
- Award Notification: October 9, 2026
- Block Completion and Reveal: No later than December 15, 2026

AWARDED COMMUNITY WILL BE EXPECTED TO BEGIN AND FINISH ALL CONSTRUCTION AND REHABILITATION EFFORTS WITHIN A 14-DAY WINDOW.

DURING THIS 14 DAY WINDOW, AWARDED COMMUNITY WILL GIVE DAILY STATUS REPORTS TO DESIGNATED COMMERCE STAFF.



WHAT WILL MAKE AN APPLICATION STAND OUT?

- Readiness to Execute
- Visual Impact and WOW Factor
- Whole-Block Transformation
- Commerce Coordination
- Financial Leverage
- Long-Term Economic Impact
- Community and Property-Owner Partnerships

The question isn't simply, “Will it look better?”

The question is, “What economic activity will this investment unlock?”



FUNDING PRIORITIES

BLOCK funding will prioritize projects that:

- Demonstrate exceptional readiness to begin immediately following award. Can realistically be completed before December 15, 2026
- Create a dramatic and highly visible transformation.
- Coordinate the efforts of multiple property owners and businesses.
- Leverage multiple public/private programs and investments.
- Generate significant private investment.
- Address vacant, deteriorated or underutilized properties.
- Improve downtown business recruitment, retention and expansion opportunities.
- Support housing opportunities.
- Strengthen community identity and quality of place.
- Demonstrate strong public-private partnerships.
- Have measurable long-term economic impact.
- Can serve as a model for other Kansas communities.



THE BLOCK TEST - REVIEW

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- Are the property owners on board?
- Are the contractors, vendors and partners ready to go?
- Do we have our 1:1 match secured?
- Can we begin immediately following the award?
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APPLICATION WALKTHROUGH













BLOCK Grant Application
Ends on Wed, Sep 30, 2026 11:59 PM

What if you could take one ugly block in your downtown, bring every opportunity together, move quickly, make big changes and create a transformation that gets people talking?

That's the idea behind the Kansas Department of Commerce's new Building Local Opportunity through Coordinated Kansas-Investment (BLOCK) Program.

With \$500,000 available, BLOCK is a competitive placemaking initiative designed to help one Kansas community create a dramatic and visible transformation of an entire downtown block through coordinated public and private investment.

Inspired by the rapid, collaborative transformations popularized by "extreme makeover" programs, BLOCK brings community partners, property owners, businesses, contractors and resources together to create a visible, concentrated transformation in a short period of time. **Communities will be expected to begin and finish all construction and rehabilitation efforts within a 14-day window.**

 [Manage Collaborators](#)

Organization that is Applying: (required)

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Let's Talk

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