

Volunteer Participation Policy

Purpose

To clarify how EDC directors and volunteers may assist the City on City-led capital or ineligible projects, including projects on Army Corps land where the EDC cannot participate in capital improvements. This policy protects the EDC from misrepresentation and ensures volunteers support the City only as private residents, not as EDC representatives.

1. Volunteers May Assist the City as Private Residents

EDC directors and community volunteers may support City-led research, outreach, concept development, or community engagement **in their personal capacity**, when requested by the City.

Examples include:

- Attending City-led meetings or workshops
- Helping gather resident input
- Assisting with City research or feasibility questions
- Supporting City staff on Corps-controlled land for City-led capital projects

All such participation must be clearly identified as **individual volunteer support**, not an EDC initiative.

2. No EDC Funds or Authority May Be Used for Capital Projects Without Formal Council Direction

The EDC may not use **any** EDC funds, procurement, authority, staff time, volunteer time, branding, or resources on **any capital project** unless all of the following conditions are met:

1. **City Council, acting as a body, formally directs the EDC to evaluate or administer the project**, and
2. The project is **legally eligible** under Chapters 501 and 505, and
3. The EDC Board votes to approve the project after a **public hearing** and **Council authorization**, as required for Type B corporations.

Without these steps, **no EDC funds, resources, or implied commitments may be used on capital projects**, including projects on City-owned or Corps-controlled land.

This protects the EDC from:

- implied commitments,
- informal or individual Council member requests,
- misunderstandings about the EDC's statutory role,
- and any perception of EDC endorsement or obligation.

3. Non-Capital Projects on Corps Land

The EDC may develop or support non-capital projects on Corps-controlled land when:

- The project is reversible and non-permanent
- The City (as the lessee) approves the activity
- The project aligns with Council priorities
- The project complies with Corps lease requirements

Examples include:

- Kayak trail markers
- Temporary signage or wayfinding
- Educational or tourism-oriented materials
- Non-permanent activation

4. City Retains Full Authority

The EDC's inability to participate in capital projects does not limit the City's ability to pursue them independently. All decisions, direction, and communication for City-led capital projects belong solely to the City.

5. EDC Neutrality on City-Led Capital Projects

For City-led capital projects, the following applies:

- The EDC has **no automatic funding obligation**, even when a project is legally eligible.
- Any City request must be submitted **formally** for Board consideration.
- The Board retains full discretion to approve or decline funding based on statutory authority, alignment with Council priorities, long-term economic value, and available resources.
- The EDC does not endorse or oppose City-led capital projects by default.
- Volunteer participation by individual directors does **not** create any EDC obligation or implied support.

As the steward of the voter-approved sales-tax revenue, the EDC must evaluate all funding requests through a formal, transparent process. This ensures that every dollar is used in compliance with Chapters 501 and 505, aligned with Council's adopted priorities, and supported by a majority of the Board. This "gatekeeper" role is not discretionary — it is a statutory responsibility designed to protect both the City and the EDC from misunderstandings, informal commitments, or individual requests made outside the proper process.

Approved by MPR EDC Directors on April 13, 2026 as part of the Revised FY25 Workplan & Budget