



PINAL COUNTY

WIDE OPEN OPPORTUNITY

Proposition 202 Tribal Gaming Application Sponsorship/Support Form Requesting Pinal County serve as the Fiscal Agent/Pass Through Entity

Name of the Tribal Community: AK-Chin Indian Community Grant

Due date of the application to the Tribal community: June 10, 2025

The following information will be used by Pinal County to 1) send the resolution and grant documents for the applicant to submit to the Tribal community, 2) send the funds, if awarded.

Name of the Non-profit: Black Maricopa Chamber of Commerce (Non Profit)

Contact person/title: CRYSTAL ALLEN O'JON, Co-founder

Email address: CRYSTALALLEN@aol.com

Address: 18961 N. Shelby Dr. Maricopa, AZ 85138

Project name: BMCC Entrepreneurship Training & Mentor Center

Amount being requested: \$250,000

Project summary: Acquire land and complete Phase I design/permit

Beneficiaries: For a 3-6,000 sq ft. Training and mentor center and co-working center serving 300-600+ residents.

Supervisor District: District 1 Rich Vitiello

The undersigns hereby certifies they have read and comply with the responsibilities set forth in the PINAL COUNTY TRIBAL GAMING GRANT PROGRAM
Request for fiscal agent/pass through support documentation.

KENT O'JON / 
Director name and signature

2025 Ak-Chin Indian Community Grant Application Cover Sheet

Entrepreneurship Training & Mentoring Center – Phase I Five-Page Narrative

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A. Purpose of Grant

In Maricopa's rapidly growing economy, small-business owners and aspiring entrepreneurs face a critical shortage of accessible training, mentoring, and collaborative workspace. The Black Maricopa Chamber of Commerce (BMCC) seeks a \$250,000 grant from the Ak-Chin Indian Community to acquire a one-acre parcel and finalize all architectural, engineering, and permitting work for a 6,000-square-foot Entrepreneurship Training & Mentoring Center that will also serve as BMCC's headquarters. This Phase I funding will resolve two urgent needs: a dedicated, no-cost facility for year-round small-business education, and a co-working hub tailored to the unique challenges faced by minority, veteran, and low-to-moderate-income entrepreneurs in Maricopa and Pinal County.

Currently, Maricopa has zero facilities offering free, ongoing business-development programming, and only a handful of for-profit co-working options that charge prohibitive fees. As a result, many entrepreneurs—especially those from underrepresented communities—either go unsupported or travel long distances for intermittent workshops. By securing land and completing schematic design and permitting in 2026, BMCC will lay the groundwork to begin construction in early 2027, positioning the Center to open its doors in mid-2028. This approach aligns with the Ak-Chin 12% guideline by excluding salaries and wages from the grant request, thereby maximizing every dollar for tangible, capital-asset creation.

1. Project Description & Need

- **Land Acquisition & Permitting (Q1–Q2 2026):** Purchase a one-acre site in Maricopa's enterprise zone, close to public transit and existing business corridors. Complete schematic architectural plans, engineering studies, and submit all city and county permits.
- **Co-Working & Training Space:** Design flexible classrooms, meeting rooms, and open-plan work areas that accommodate up to 60 users at once. Include A/V capabilities, mentorship pods, and a tech-equipped library.
- **BMCC Headquarters:** Incorporate administrative offices and a reception area, reducing BMCC's current \$3,000/month rent burden and allowing all programming to be delivered on-site.

2. Target Population

Over the grant year (Jan 1 – Dec 31 2026), Phase I activities will directly engage:

- **600 small-business owners** (35% Black, 25% Latino, 5% Ak-Chin tribal members, 10% veterans) through design charrettes, focus groups, and stakeholder meetings.
- **300 high-school youth** enrolled in "Young CEOs," BMCC's pipeline program that introduces students to entrepreneurship fundamentals.
- **1,000 total beneficiaries** (including extended family members and community partners) who will gain access to resources, mentorship, and eventual co-working space.

3. Goals & Objectives

BMCC has established clear, time-bound objectives to measure success in the 2026 performance year:

- **G1 (Q1):** Secure land purchase closing and obtain city zoning approval.
- **G2 (Q2):** Finalize 60% schematic design, complete cost estimates, and submit all permit applications.
- **G3 (Q3–Q4):** Pilot 12 workshops in a leased temporary classroom, serving at least 180 participants while construction fundraising continues.
- **G4 (Q4 rollover):** Prepare construction bid package, select general contractor, and schedule groundbreaking for early 2027.

4. Timetable

Quarter	Milestone
Q1 2026	Close on land; secure zoning and conditional use permits
Q2 2026	Complete A/E drawings at 60%; finalize engineering specs; submit permits
Q3 2026	Launch pilot training series (12 sessions; 180 attendees total)
Q4 2026	Finalize design development; issue construction bid documents

B. Resources

Current Funding & In-Kind Support

BMCC is requesting from other organizations \$750,000 toward the center’s capital campaign:

- **\$500,000** from private donors and corporate pledges.
- **\$200,000** City of Maricopa ARPA set-aside allocated for land infrastructure (has requested this).
- **\$50,000** in-kind legal and appraisal services provided pro bono - Board Member in Legal Services.

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Strategic Partners

To ensure robust programming and community engagement, BMCC will collaborate with:

- **City of Maricopa Economic Development Department**, offering site-selection guidance and permit-expediting support.
- **Maricopa Community Colleges Small Business Development Center (SBDC)**, providing curriculum design and workshop facilitation.
- **Local First Arizona**, supplying peer-networking opportunities and vendor connections.
- **Ak-Chin Employment & Training**, integrating tribal workforce development into our youth pipelines.

Sustainability Plan

Upon completion, operating revenues—generated through room rentals, sponsorships, chamber membership dues, and program fees—are projected to cover 100% of annual operations and maintenance by Year 3. BMCC will implement a sliding-scale membership model to keep core services free or low-cost for underserved users, while premium options (e.g., dedicated desks, private offices) subsidize community access.

Alignment with Tribal Funding History

In the next 18 months, BMCC wants to pursue similar requests from Gila River and Tohono O’odham tribal entities (each at \$250,000 for capital phases). This demonstrates both the scalability of our proposed phased approach and tribal interest in catalyzing minority-led entrepreneurship.

C. Accounting & Reporting

BMCC adheres to rigorous financial controls and transparent reporting protocols:

1. **Dedicated Fund Tracking:** All grant proceeds will be recorded in QuickBooks under a specialized “Ak-Chin Grant” class, ensuring zero commingling with operating accounts.
2. **Quarterly Financial Statements:** A certified public accountant (CPA) will issue quarterly reports, reconciled to bank statements and reviewable by Ak-Chin staff.
3. **Performance Monitoring:** Outputs—such as acres acquired, schematic design completion percentage, participant attendance, and pilot workshop feedback—will be tracked in Salesforce, or something similar.
4. **Mid-Year & Final Reports:** BMCC will submit a detailed mid-year progress report by July 15 2026 and a final report, including financial statements, schematic design deliverables, and pilot program outcomes, by January 31 2027.

D. Budget & Justification – Phase I (Jan – Dec 2026)

Line Item	Cost	Justification
Land Acquisition (1 acre, enterprise zone)	\$150,000	Market-appraised February 2025; essential for project site.
Architectural & Engineering Fees	\$50,000	8% of estimated construction; covers schematic & permitting.
City & County Permits / Impact Fees	\$10,000	Based on City Development Services estimates.
Temporary Classroom Fit-Out & Furnishings	\$20,000	Lease and equip off-site training space during design phase.
Contingency (8%)	\$20,000	Mitigates cost volatility in materials and permitting delays.
Total Request (rounded)	\$250,000	

If only partial funding is awarded, BMCC will first allocate \$150,000 to secure the land parcel; remaining funds will follow the priority sequence above, ensuring each tranche delivers tangible progress.

E. Additional Information

Since its founding in 2023, the Black Maricopa Chamber of Commerce has grown to represent over 125 Black-owned and allied businesses. BMCC hosts quarterly expos, free financial-literacy workshops, and networking mixers—activities that have catalyzed over 50 new micro-enterprises in the last year. With Ak-Chin’s support, BMCC commits to delivering four no-cost business-skills bootcamps on tribal lands in 2026, directly serving Ak-Chin entrepreneurs and reinforcing reciprocal community impact.

By funding this Phase I proposal, the Ak-Chin Indian Community will empower BMCC to remove structural barriers, build local capacity, and lay a foundation for a permanent entrepreneurial hub—transforming Maricopa’s business ecosystem and generating sustainable economic growth for decades to come.