

## **BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT GRANT GUIDELINES**

### **1. Purpose**

The purpose of the Business Improvement Grant (**BIG**) is to encourage businesses to improve and revitalize the interior and/or exteriors of their commercial properties.

The appearance of a business plays a major role in its marketing success. A successful business will promote the attraction and retention of business operations, will halt property value deterioration, will promote economic growth and will preserve the business-historic district resources.

### **2. Grant amounts and participation**

The Business Improvement Grant Administrator (Administrator) will consider applications for grants of up to fifty (50%) percent of the eligible costs of the project. The maximum grant will be \$5000.00 which will be reimbursed to the business owner upon satisfactory completion of the project. To be eligible for grant funds, the business owner must provide a minimum of 50% of the total project cost.

Grants are being made available for the improvements of existing commercial properties in the, Business Improvement District, City of Shawano. Improvements include, but are not limited to, the material and labor for cleaning, painting, signage, awnings and many other improvements as outlined herein.

Operators of an existing commercial property with 25 or fewer full-time employees are eligible. Tenants of a commercial property are eligible, but the application must include written approval and consent of the property owner.

Land contract purchasers of property are eligible but the application must include written approval and consent of the fee title owner.

### **3. Eligible costs**

Eligible costs include, but are not limited to, labor and material for:

- a. Interior/Exterior painting or surface treatment including ceiling, wall and flooring renovations.
- b. Interior/Exterior lighting.
- c. Signage.
- d. Entranceway improvements and windows.
- e. Awnings, canopies, sunshades etc.
- f. Restoration of historic features.
- g. Asphalt paving.
- h. Fencing.
- l. Architectural features.
- j. Storefront modification.
- k. Exterior woodwork and architectural metals (repair, cleaning, restoration, painting or replacement, including shutters).
- l. Masonry.

Applicant Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

The following costs are not eligible:

- a. Costs associated with upgrades and/or improvements related to business operating activities.
- b. Costs incurred before final grant approval.
- c. Landscaping.
- d. Sidewalks.
- e. Maintenance, including routine equipment maintenance.
- e. Costs paid by the applicant in merchandise or in-kind services.
- f. Labor paid to the applicant or a family member of the applicant or an employee of the applicant unless the applicant, family member or employee of the applicant is a recognized contractor for the particular labor being provided to the project and has received written approval from the Administrator prior to any work being commenced.

#### **4. Conditions of eligibility**

Each applicant must meet the following requirements:

- a. The business must employ 25 or fewer employees.
- b. All taxes, such as property, sales, and income must be current at the time of approval for the grant funding.
- c. The applicant must, at the time of signing of the application, identify the contractor or contractors who will perform the work and disclose if any such contractor is a family member or employee of the applicant.

#### **5. Application process**

An applicant will complete an application provided by the Administrator and deliver it with all necessary attachments and exhibits to the Administrator.

The application will be reviewed by the Administrator who will notify the applicant whether or not the application meets the Business Improvement Grant objectives and will be accepted for consideration.

An application will consist of the following:

- a. A project description that summarizes the work to be performed.
- b. Renderings/description/photographs of the proposed work;
- c. A detailed cost estimate (a project budget worksheet) for all eligible costs supported by a quote from at least one (two or more is recommended) contractors or suppliers.

The Administrator will submit the application for approval to the BID PROPERTY COMMITTEE. The Administrator will notify the applicant of the BID PROPERTY COMMITTEE's decision.

#### **6. Administration**

Applicants should contact the Administrator to request an application at:

SCEPI  
1263 S. Main St.  
Shawano WI. 54166  
[www.shawanocondev.org](http://www.shawanocondev.org)

Phone 715.526.5839

Applicant Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

Applications may be submitted at any time during the calendar year. All eligible applicants will be notified of approval, a request for modification, if additional information is needed for the application, or for non-approval. Applicants can expect a turnaround time of 10 business days or less from the time the complete application, along with all supporting documentation, is submitted.

### **7. Final approval and agreement**

The applicant will be notified of approval by the Administrator. The applicant and the Administrator will sign the Grant Agreement in a form approved by the Administrator. The applicant is responsible for obtaining all building, zoning, and/or business permits for the work proposed for grant assistance. The Grant Agreement will include a covenant by the applicant to perform the work in accordance with the plans approved by the Administrator.

### **8. Changes**

Any changes in the scope of work must be approved in writing by the Administrator.

### **9. Completion of work and funding**

The approved work must be completed within six (6) months from the date the Grant Agreement is signed by the applicant and the Administrator.

Upon completion of the work, the applicant will submit to the Administrator a written request for reimbursement certifying that the work has been completed in accordance with the approvals and certifying the expenses were incurred and paid. Proof of payment must be submitted with reimbursement request.

The Administrator may conduct such inspections as it deems appropriate to confirm completion of the work in accordance with the approvals and to confirm that the expenses have been incurred.

The Administrator will submit the request for reimbursement of the approved grant amount to the City of Shawano, fiscal agent for the Business Improvement District, which should be paid within 15 to 30 days from Administrator's request for reimbursement.

### **10. Discretion of the Administrator**

Applicant understands that the Administrator may approve or reject any application or request modifications of the proposed project. The Administrator reserves the right to change these guidelines at any time to meet the needs and intent of the Business Improvement Grant program. The Business Improvement Grant program may be discontinued at any time at the Administrator's discretion or when the funds are depleted.

Applicant Initials: \_\_\_\_\_