

WEST COLUMBIA
— EST.  1836 —
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

GUIDELINES, CRITERIA, AND APPLICATION FOR
WCEDC BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM

Section 1. Purpose

The purpose of this program is to promote the development and expansion of new and existing business enterprises within the City of West Columbia, Texas, (the “City”) and to enhance the economic welfare of the citizens of the City, by securing and retaining business enterprises and maintaining a higher level of employment, economic activity, and stability. The West Columbia Economic Development Corporation (the “WCEDC”) has budgeted \$25,000 per year to fund this grant program.

Section 2. Types and Amounts of Grants

- (A) **FACADE IMPROVEMENT:** Improvements to storefronts including, but not limited to, painting, reconstruction, and/or remodeling. The grant amount shall be equal to 50% of the cost of such improvements, up to a maximum of \$2,000.
- (B) **SIGN IMPROVEMENT:** New signs and/or renovation or removal of existing signs. The grant amount shall be equal to 50% of the cost of such improvements, up to a maximum of \$1,000.
- (C) **PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT:** Items such as, but not limited to landscaping, parking lot resurfacing, striping, driveway improvement, and lighting. The grant amount shall be equal to 50% of the cost of such improvements, up to a maximum of \$2,000.
- (D) **MURAL INCENTIVE:** Murals added to commercial buildings. The grant amount shall be equal to 50% of the cost of the mural, up to a maximum of \$2,500.

Section 3. Eligibility

Any new business planning to locate within the City, or any existing business located within the city limits at the time of adoption of these guidelines, shall be eligible for this program.

Section 4. Application and Approval

Applications are available at city offices at 512 E. Brazos Ave., West Columbia, Texas or online at www.westcolumbiatx.org.

- Applications filed with the Registered Agent on or before the first Monday of each month shall be considered at the next regular WCEDC Board meeting or at such special Board meeting that may be called.
- All WCEDC approved applications will then be forwarded to the West Columbia City Council for final approval.
- An applicant shall be notified in writing within ten (10) days of final approval or disapproval of the application.

Section 5. Guidelines

- (A) Proof of applicant's ownership of the subject facility or facilities, or proof that the owner of such facility has approved the application for such grant funds, and current tax receipt shall be required.
- (B) The owner of a business to be operated within a leased facility and the owner of such lease facility must apply jointly for the program. Copies of a lease agreement, proof of ownership of the leased facility, and current tax receipt shall be required.
- (C) A business may apply for one (1) or more of the four types of grants set forth herein within any calendar year. A business that receives grant funding during a calendar year shall not be prohibited from making subsequent applications for funding in following years.
- (D) The maximum amount of funding available to any one applicant or business establishment shall be \$7,500 per calendar year. Such \$7,500 annual maximum shall only apply if all three grant types, as set forth in Section 2 (A), (B), (C) and (D) hereof, are requested and approved.
- (E) All grants are reimbursement grants and will only be funded after completion of the project and proof of receipts for all applicable materials and labor are submitted to the WCEDC. Photographs of the completed work shall also be required.
- (F) The applicant shall be obligated to make the improvements in accordance with the approved application. Thereafter, any modifications must be submitted in writing and approved by the WCEDC. Failure to obtain written approval prior to making any modifications shall render the applicant ineligible to receive grant funding.
- (G) The applicant shall be responsible for obtaining all applicable permits related to the improvement project and comply with all current city ordinances. Failure to do so will render the applicant ineligible to receive grant funding. Failure to complete all the stated improvements shall render the applicant ineligible to receive grant funding.
- (H) The applicant shall NOT begin any improvements prior to receiving written approval from the WCEDC. All improvement projects must be completed within six (6) months of the

- (I) approval date. Failure to complete the improvements within the required time period may render the applicant ineligible to receive grant funding.

Section 6. Funding

- (A) The applicant shall confirm that the project has been completed in accordance with the application. Such notification shall include, but not be limited to, a certificate of completion, documentation of paid receipts for materials and labor, and photos of completion. The WCEDC may request other items reasonably deemed necessary for determining the project's completion. An inspection will be performed within five (5) business days of notification by applicant. If needed, a letter will be issued to the applicant indicating all areas of noncompliance.
- (B) When all areas of the project are complying, the inspector will approve the Certificate of Completion and submit to the Registered Agent for payment. The Registered Agent will authorize the release of grant funds equal to 50% up to the maximum eligible limit.

Section 7. Default

The applicant shall be considered in default under this agreement for failure to comply with the following provisions.

- (A) The applicant must remain in business for 12 months from the date of Certificate of Completion. If the subject business is closed, sold, transferred or relocated within a six (6) month period, the applicant shall be required to reimburse the WCEDC for 100% of grant funds received.
- (B) Thereafter, until the 12-month anniversary date of Certificate of Completion, the applicant shall be required to reimburse the WCEDC for 50% of the grant funds received if the subject business is closed, sold, transferred or relocated.

Reimbursement payments due to default must be paid in full within thirty (30) days after the date of written notification by the WCEDC that the applicant is in default of any of the funding requirements set forth herein. Payment only accepted in the form of a cashier's check or money order, made payable to West Columbia Economic Development Corporation.

The applicant must agree that, in the event of default of its obligations, the WCEDC has the right to reimbursement for all attorney's fees and costs, which may be incurred as a result of any legal action required to seek reimbursement of all grant funding received by applicant.

Section 8. Notice

- (A) The WCEDC shall deliver a copy of these guidelines to any applicant for his/her review and the delivery hereof does not constitute an offer of a business improvement grant to the applicant.

- (B) The laws of the State of Texas shall govern the interpretation, validity, performance and enforcement of this business improvement grant program, and venue for any lawsuit or other proceeding involving this program shall be in Brazoria County, Texas. If any provision of this business improvement grant program is held to be invalid or unenforceable, the validity and enforceability of the remaining provisions shall not be affected thereby.

West Columbia Economic Development Corporation

APPLICATION FOR BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM

Please carefully read the following:

A business may receive assistance from one or more of the following programs during the fiscal year (October 1 to September 30). Funding assistance is approved and awarded at the discretion of the West Columbia Economic Development Corporation Board. Funding assistance is distributed as reimbursement after the applicant submits paid receipts for the project. Photographs of the completed project may be required when receipts are submitted.

- FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT SIGN IMPROVEMENT PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT
 MURAL INCENTIVE

Applicant Name: _____

Business Name: _____

Property Address: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____ Other: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Please provide one of the following:

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Individual owner | Recorded DBA Certificate |
| 2. Partnership | Partnership Agreement |
| 3. Corporation | Articles of Incorporation |

Date business was established or opened in West Columbia: _____

Brief description of business (attach additional sheet if necessary): _____

Number of employees: _____ Full-Time: _____ Part-Time: _____

Description of proposed project (attach additional sheet if necessary): _____

Estimated date of completion for this project: _____

Estimated Material cost: _____ Labor cost: _____

(Three estimates/Quotes must be submitted with application.)

The undersigned acknowledges and agrees to abide by and subject to the terms and conditions of the business improvement grant program described herein.

I certify that no improvements, as described in this application, shall begin prior to receiving written approval of grant funding from the WCEDC.

Business Owner's Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____ Date: _____

Property Owner's Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____ Date: _____

Applications may be delivered to WCEDC Registered Agent, 512 E. Brazos Ave., West Columbia, Texas or mailed to P.O. Box 487, West Columbia, TX 77486

For more information, please call the office of the Registered Agent West Columbia Economic Development Corporation at (979) 345-3123.

Checklist:

- _____ Completed application with all required estimates
- _____ Entity legal documents
- _____ Proof of ownership
- _____ Current paid tax receipts (real & personal property)
- _____ Copy of lease agreement

West Columbia Economic Development Corporation

Timeline

Application received by WCEDC Registered Agent _____/_____/_____
Submitted to WCEDC meeting on _____/_____/_____
Submitted to West Columbia City Council meeting on _____/_____/_____
Applicant notified of decision to approve/disapprove (10 days) _____/_____/_____
Completion deadline (6 months from approval) _____/_____/_____
Certificate of Completion received by WCEDC _____/_____/_____
Inspection performed on (5 business days) _____/_____/_____
If applicable, letter of non-compliance to applicant _____/_____/_____
Final approved Certificate of Completion received by Register Agent _____/_____/_____

Total of receipts submitted for reimbursement \$ _____
Less 50% - _____
Amount of eligible grant funding \$ _____
Registered Agent Approval: _____/_____/_____

Release of grant fund by Registered Agent Pd Amt. \$ _____ Ck # _____ _____/_____/_____

Check payable to: _____

Address: _____

West Columbia Economic Development Corporation-Certification of Completion

- FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT SIGN IMPROVEMENT PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT
 MURAL INCENTIVE

Applicant Name: _____

Business Name: _____

AFFIDAVIT

I CERTIFY that all improvements have been satisfactorily completed in accordance to the approved application, that all charges or bills for labor or services performed or materials furnished, and other charges against the subcontractors, have been paid in full and in accordance with the terms of the contract; that no liens have been attached against the property and improvements of owner; that no notice of intention to claim liens is outstanding; that no suits are pending by reason on the project under the contract; that all Worker's Compensation claims have been settled and no public liability claims are pending.

Affidavit is made for the purpose of reimbursement of funds according to the West Columbia Business Improvement Program.

Total of Paid Receipts submitted for reimbursement \$ _____

Business Owner's Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____ Date: _____

Property Owner's Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____ Date: _____

Attachments:

- ____ Copies of paid receipts
____ Photographs of completed work
____ Other _____

Sworn to and subscribed before me, a notary public,

This _____ day of _____, _____.

(seal)

Notary Public Signature

INSPECTION

I CERTIFY that I have inspected the project and have found all improvements to be satisfactorily completed in accordance to the approved application and in compliance to any applicable city ordinances.

Inspector's Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____ Date: _____