



## **BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT GRANT (BIG) PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

With the goal of creating an enhanced and diverse local economic environment that is prosperous, stable and provides improved opportunities for residents, the Corinth Economic Development Corporation has established the Business Improvement Grant (BIG) Program to provide technical and financial assistance to property owners or their tenants seeking to renovate or restore façades and other visual elements for commercial buildings in Corinth. The BIG Program is designed to impact properties in need of revitalization, resulting in an improved exterior, visibility and presentation of a business. It is not designed to subsidize corrections to building code violations to prolong the life of a commercial property. Through working directly with local business owners in making improvements to their storefront, the Corinth Economic Development Corporation strives to help increase sales and revenue for the business while enhancing the overall vitality and appearance of the community.

### **II. ELIGIBILITY**

The following criteria must be met for participation in the Business Improvement Grant Program:

- a. Applicants must be commercial property owners or commercial tenants located within the Corinth city limits.
  - i. Tenants must submit a letter from the property owner certifying the tenant is eligible to participate in the program and verifying the expiration date of the tenant's lease.
- b. Applicants must have operated their business in the storefront to be improved for at least three consecutive years upon application submittal.
- c. Applicants must not have any current code violations.
- d. Applicants must be up to date on all municipal taxes. If the applicant is a tenant, both the tenant and property owner must be up to date on all municipal taxes.
- e. Applicants must comply with all federal, state, and local laws and regulations pertaining to permitting, licensing, building codes, and zoning requirements.
- f. Applicants must receive written approval from the City to commence improvements. Any improvements made prior to this will not be funded by the BIG Program.

### **III. PROJECT GUIDELINES**

Improvements to be funded by the Business Improvement Grant Program must be compatible with the character and architecture of the individual buildings and must meet City standards with regards to latest construction and design trends. Buildings with architecturally significant qualities are strongly encouraged to restore and maintain those qualities. Improvements for buildings not having such architectural qualities should be seen as an opportunity to substantially enhance the appearance of the buildings and their adjacent streetscapes. Buildings should be oriented to the pedestrian and provide visual interest both day and night. Effort should be made to promote accessibility and to create an identity unique to Corinth and the respective neighborhood.

#### **Eligible Project Examples**

- The restoration of exterior details in architecturally significant buildings, and the removal of elements that conceal architectural details, including cleaning, repainting, or residing of buildings.
- The construction of a new storefront/façade, appropriately scaled with the existing building.
- The installation of awnings or canopies in character with the building and streetscape.
- The installation of lighting that is visually appealing and appropriately illuminates signage, storefront window displays, and recessed areas of a building.
- The replacement of windows and/or window framing visible from the street and appropriately scaled to the building.
- The fabrication and/or installation of multi-tenant signage that is either affixed to the building or detached.
- The removal and replacement of non-conforming signs.
- The installation of curbing, irrigation, approved trees, landscaping beds (including planting material), or other landscape features attached to the building.
- The installation and/or improvement of streetscape features such as street trees, sidewalks, pedestrian lighting, seating, etc.
- The resurfacing and/or restriping of parking lots.
- The removal of architectural barriers to public accessibility.
- Other improvements that meet the objectives of the BIG Program.

Preference will be given to independent businesses not required by contractual arrangement to maintain standardized décor, architecture, signs, or similar features and those using a local licensed supplier and/or contractor for their project(s).

Applicable permit fees can be included as part of the grant award but must be noted in the application. The complete fee schedule can be viewed online [here](#).

Applicants are welcome to request funding for multiple projects, but each project must have its own application.

#### **IV. APPLICATION & AWARD PROCESS**

All applicants will be subject to the process outlined below:

1. The applicant submits a completed application to the Corinth Economic Development Corporation (page 6). Staff and/or members of the CEDC reserve the right to request additional information or materials to better understand the project(s).
2. The Corinth Economic Development Corporation will review the application to determine eligibility and vote on whether the applicant may proceed with their project.
3. The Corinth Economic Development Corporation will send the applicant a written notice either to proceed or notifying them that their application has been denied.
4. The applicant and/or their licensed contractor will meet with City Staff to review the proposed project. City Staff will provide input on the projects and help the applicant determine if they need to apply for any permits and/or inspections.
5. The applicant or their licensed contractor prepares the final project plans and submits them to applicable City staff for review and approval along with any applicable permit fees or permit-specific information.
6. The applicant or their licensed contractor completes the improvements as specified in the approved design plans.
7. The applicant will provide written notice to the Corinth Economic Development Corporation that the project is complete. **All projects must be completed within six (6) months from the date all applicable permits are issued.**
  - a. The applicant should not provide written notice to the CEDC that the project is complete until all necessary inspections are completed and successfully passed.
8. The applicant submits a reimbursement request as outlined in Section VI (below).
9. The City of Corinth issues a reimbursement check on behalf of the Corinth Economic Development Corporation.

**Any projects completed before a notice to proceed is sent and/or before being permitted by the City of Corinth will NOT be reimbursed.**

#### **V. EXTENSIONS**

In the event that the applicant is unable to complete their approved project within six (6) months following issuance of a notice to proceed and all applicable permits, the applicant may submit a written extension request to [EconomicDevelopment@CityofCorinth.com](mailto:EconomicDevelopment@CityofCorinth.com) with the following:

- a. A brief summary providing an update on the project status; and
- b. The amount of additional time being requested, not to exceed six (6) months.

Any extension requests made are not valid until written approval is received from the Corinth Economic Development Corporation confirming such.

## **VI. REIMBURSEMENT**

The Corinth Economic Development Corporation will provide a 50% matching grant to reimburse up to \$20,000 of approved projects per the following stipulations:

- a. The applicant's match may be sourced from other financial aid (grant or loan) provided by other agencies or financial institutions but may not be "in-kind".
- b. A reimbursement request must be made in writing to [EconomicDevelopment@CityofCorinth.com](mailto:EconomicDevelopment@CityofCorinth.com) with the following items:
  - i. Copy of final invoice(s).
  - ii. Proof of payment such as a cashier's check, billing statement, canceled check, etc.
  - iii. Photos of improvement(s).
  - iv. W-9 Form.

City Staff will confirm with the applicant in writing that the request has been received and all supporting materials are sufficient. Upon confirmation, the City will issue a purchase order and provide reimbursement to the applicant within thirty (30) days.

## **VII. GENERAL CONDITIONS**

A. It is expressly understood and agreed that the applicant shall be solely responsible for all safety conditions and in compliance with all safety regulations, building codes, ordinances, and other applicable regulations. Neither approval of a grant application nor payment of the grant upon completion of the project shall constitute approval by any City Department or Staff Member, nor shall approval of such grant application or payment of the grant upon completion of the project constitute a waiver by the City of any safety regulations, building codes, ordinances, and other applicable regulations.

B. It is expressly understood and agreed that the applicant is solely responsible for overseeing the work, and will not seek to hold the Corinth Economic Development Corporation, the City of Corinth, and/or their agents, employees, officers, and/or directors liable for any property damage, personal injury, or other loss related in any way to the Storefront Improvement Program, and by submission of application, the applicant agrees to indemnify the Corinth Economic Development Corporation, the City of Corinth, and/or their agents, employees, officers, and/or directors from any claims or damages resulting from the project, including reasonable attorney's fees.

C. The applicant shall be responsible for maintaining sufficient insurance coverage for property damage and personal injury liability relating to the applicant's participation in the Business Improvement Grant (BIG) Program.

D. The applicant authorizes the Corinth Economic Development Corporation to promote an approved project by, including but not limited to, displaying a sign at the site during and after construction, and using photographs and descriptions of the project in material and media releases.

E. If the applicant seeks to change the scope of the project after the grant has been approved, the applicant must submit a letter requesting such changes to the CEDC Staff. The applicant must have written staff approval on all modifications to remain eligible for grant funding.

F. The Corinth Economic Development Corporation has the right to terminate the Business Improvement Grant (BIG) Program at any time and any agreement under the Business Improvement Grant (BIG) Program if a participant is found to be in violation of any conditions set forth in these guidelines, or if the project has been started prior to receiving a notice to proceed from the CEDC and/or receiving all necessary permits.

G. Businesses can only apply for one (1) grant per year every three (3) years.

H. Applicants automatically forfeit grant reimbursement if the project is not completed within six (6) months of receiving all applicable permits, unless otherwise approved.

I. Applicants must be operating a for-profit business. Nonprofit organizations are not eligible for program.



**BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM APPLICATION**

BUSINESS NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

BUSINESS ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

APPLICANT NAME & TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

TEXAS SALES TAX PERMIT AND/OR USE TAX I.D. NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

GRANT AMOUNT REQUESTED: \_\_\_\_\_

DESCRIBE THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE APPLICANT TO THE PROPERTY TO BE IMPROVED (CHECK APPLICABLE BOX):

- Property Owner
- Tenant

*If you are a tenant, please provide the contact information for your property owner below.*

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BRIEFLY DESCRIBE THE PROPOSED PROJECT(S):

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BRIEFLY DESCRIBE HOW THIS PROJECT WILL BENEFIT YOUR BUSINESS & ENHANCE ITS PERFORMANCE IN CORINTH:

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ATTACHMENTS

*Please provide copies of the following with this application.*

- Photos clearly showing the present conditions of the areas to be improved by the proposed project(s).
- A preliminary project plan showing drawings or renderings with detailed descriptions of the proposed work including but not limited to paint colors, materials, and design.
- Project quote(s).
- Tenants only: a letter from the property owner certifying the tenant is eligible to participate in the program and verifying the expiration date of the tenant's lease.

**By affixing your signature below, you are acknowledging that you have read the Corinth Economic Development Corporation Business Improvement Grant Program Guidelines in its entirety and fully understand the guidelines and conditions you must abide by to participate in the program.**

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return your completed application to the City of Corinth Economic Development Department at [EconomicDevelopment@CityofCorinth.com](mailto:EconomicDevelopment@CityofCorinth.com) or to the following address:

Attn: Economic Development  
City of Corinth  
3300 Corinth Parkway  
Corinth, TX 76208