

Suffolk Economic Development Authority Small Business Improvement Grant

The Economic Development Authority Small Business Improvement Grant (SBIG) was established to provide financial assistance to new and existing retail and restaurant businesses looking to expand in designated areas of the City of Suffolk to generate tax revenue and entrepreneurship in specific categories. Grant awards are discretionary. The Economic Development Authority Board reviews and votes to either approve or deny each grant application.

The regulations, qualifications and procedures for the Suffolk Economic Development Authority (EDA) Small Business Improvement Grant (Grant) program follow:

1. SBIG Program Jurisdiction: (map attached)

- Downtown Suffolk
- Central/Northern Growth Areas
- Villages

2. Grant Eligibility:

- The property owner must approve of the SBIG application prior to submission.
- Business entities and properties are only eligible for one SBIG.
- Subject business property must be used for commercial purposes only.
- Owner/Grant Applicant and the business operating in the building must be in good standing with the City (real estate taxes, business licenses etc...).
- To be eligible for a SBIG, a business must offer merchandise and/or food to the public, which is subject to sales tax ("Retail Sales"), and from which the revenue derived constitutes the majority of the revenue of the business. Businesses not eligible for the SBIG include but are not limited to:
 - Automotive (Sales & Service)
 - Professional and Medical offices
 - Home Healthcare
 - Beauty Salons
 - Vape/Tobacco/Cannabis Shops

- Pawn Shops
 - Gun Shops
 - Mattress Stores
 - Title Loans
 - Check Cash
 - Churches
 - Non-Profit Organizations
- The SBIG can be used to fund permanent tenant build-out and building-code related capital improvements required to open or expand a qualified business. Such improvements include but are not limited to:
 - Walls
 - Ceilings
 - Flooring
 - Permanent shelving and cabinets
 - Interior lighting
 - Elevators
 - Life safety upgrades (sprinkler and fire alarm systems)
 - Utility related improvements (heating, air conditioning, plumbing, electrical)
 - Ineligible uses for the SBIG include but are not limited to:
 - Building maintenance
 - Acquisition of land or buildings
 - Operating expenses and/or equipment
 - Product inventory
 - Ovens, Fryers, Cooking equipment
 - Rent or mortgage payment
 - Payroll
 - Day-to-day operation expenses (utilities, taxes, maintenance, refuse)
 - Improvements in programs or completed improvements
 - Businesses awarded a SBIG must create a minimum of one (1) new full time equivalent job.
 - Businesses awarded a SBIG must remain in operation for a minimum of one year from the date the business opens or completes its expansion.
 - Complete SBIG applications must be received before work is started in order to reserve funding. Applicant will also be required to enter into a formal SBIG agreement with the EDA once the grant has been approved.

- Projects must be approved by the EDA prior to a SBIG applicant establishing or commencing a qualifying commercial project under the terms of the SBIG program.
- Project must be complete within twelve (12) months from approval of SBIG by the EDA Board. If the project is completed after the twelve (12) month window, the funding reservation will be cancelled.
- Two (2) written estimates from different contractors related to eligible build-out costs must be turned in with the application for funding reservation. An application will be deemed incomplete should the two estimates not be submitted at time of application submittal and therefore will not be submitted to the EDA Board.
- Applications must include current building photos.
- Applications must include a current business plan.

3. Reimbursement:

- All applicable licenses, certificates, and approvals (Business License, Certificate of Occupancy, Historic Landmark's Commission etc...) required for a business to operate in the City of Suffolk must be submitted to the EDA prior to a SBIG recipient applying for reimbursement.
- SBIG funds will be disbursed to reimburse grant awardees for approved SBIG expenditures only after the project is complete and EDA staff has verified all eligible expenses of the total project costs (i.e. invoices).
- Grant funds will be issued to eligible business owners on a reimbursement basis up to fifty percent (50%) of the total cost of the improvements, not to exceed \$10,000.
- The applicant shall have six (6) months from the time of the EDA grant approval to request a review of project cost adjustments and possible grant amendments.
- SBIG awards will be issued on a first-come, first served basis and are limited to the amount of funds available through the EDA during the fiscal year.

4. Project Description:

a. Provide a description of planned uses for grant funds.

b. Provide a description of the duties related to the creation of one (1) full-time employee.

c. Provide two (2) written estimates from different contractors related to eligible build-out costs:

Estimated Cost (Invoice #1): _____

Estimated Cost (Invoice #2): _____

d. Completed W-9

I agree to abide by the policies listed above. I hereby accept a reservation of funds effective on the following date:

Business Name: _____

Business Owner: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Property Address: _____

Mailing Address (if different from Property Address): _____

Applicant Name: _____

Applicant Signature: _____ Date: _____

Property Owner's approval for funds to be issued to Applicant:

Owner's Name: _____

Owner's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please return the original, completed form to:

**Economic Development Department
City of Suffolk
Post Office Box 1858
Suffolk, VA 23439
Telephone: 757-514-4040**

Grant Application Checklist

- Completed application
- Two (2) written estimates from different contractors related to eligible build-out costs (Attached)
- Current building photos (Attached)
- Business Plan: (Attached)
 - Business Description
 - Market Research and Customer Strategies
 - Management & Personnel
 - Financial Documents
- Completed W-9 Form (Attached)

Small Business Resources:

(Assistance Resources for a business plan include: HR Chamber Small Business Development Center and Old Dominion University Veterans Outreach Center)

****NOTE: EDA will not consider application unless ALL items are included****

For Administrative Use Only:

Date Application Approved: _____ Vote: _____

Amount Approved: _____

Project Estimated Completion Date: _____

Project Actual Completion Date: _____

Approved for Reimbursement By:

(Attach support documentation to this application upon reimbursement approval)

Check#: _____

Check Date: _____

Amount: _____

Exhibit A

