

# **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, encourage entrepreneurship, and create local jobs 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: Business must be located within Suffolk
  
2. Grant Eligibility:
  - The property owner must approve of the SBIG application prior to submission in writing.
  - Business entities and properties are only eligible for one SBIG within a 10 year period. After the 10 year period has expired the business may reapply or if the property/business has been transferred they may reapply after 5 years.
  - Subject business property must be used for commercial purposes only. Mixed use properties may be eligible if improvements are only within commercial portion of property.
  - Owner/Grant Applicant and the business operating in the building must be in good standing with the City (real estate taxes, business licenses, Zoning approval etc...).
  - Have 50 or fewer employees, but no less than 2
  - To be eligible for a SBIG, a business must offer merchandise, services 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
  - Banks and financial institutions
  - Pawn Shops
  - Gun Shops
  - Mattress Stores
  - Title Loans
  - Check Cash
  - Churches
  - Non-Profit Organizations
  - Franchise Business
  - Hemp Stores
- 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 and connectivity (heating, air conditioning, plumbing, electrical)
    - Hoods if connected to ductwork or required for use codes
  - 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 must have been in operation for a minimum of 6 months.

- Businesses awarded a SBIG must make a good faith effort to remain in operation for a minimum of one year from the date the business opens or completes its expansion or return grant funding.
- Complete SBIG applications must be received before work is started in order to reserve funding.
- 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 completed 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.
- Three (3) 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 three estimates not be included at time of application to the EDA Board.
- Applications must include current building photos.
- Applications must include a current business plan.
- If grant is approved applicant will be required to enter into a formal SBIG agreement with the EDA.

### 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) via non negotiable instrument.
- 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.
- Grant awardees may utilize any outside source for 50% match.
- 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 (July 1 to June 30). First time recipients will be prioritized.

4. Project Description:

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

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

b. Provide three (3) written estimates from different contractors related to eligible build-out costs:

Estimated Cost (Invoice #1): \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated Cost (Invoice #2): \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated Cost (Invoice #3): \_\_\_\_\_

c. 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: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you consent to being highlighted on our website and socials as a grant recipient?

Yes       No

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
- 3 (3) 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: \_\_\_\_\_

