



WESTSIDE CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENT AUTHORITY BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Purpose

To provide incentive and financial assistance for facade enhancements of commercial buildings in the Westside Corridor Improvement Authority (WSCIA).

Focus

The program is designed to fund projects including, but not limited to:

- New construction or façade installation or improvement to an existing façade
- Installation of greenspace available for public use
- *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design* (CPTED)-based improvements (including exterior security cameras, new windows, and lighting improvements). Please Note: Landscaping is **NOT** included in this program.

Exclusions:

The program is not designed to fund projects including, but not limited to:

- Brick and mortar projects other than those listed above
- General maintenance and upkeep costs
- General facility or program operational expenses
- Project elements necessary to meet requirements of the City of Grand Rapids which would be deemed to be publicly owned
- Funding is generally not available for buildings owned or operated by a government entity, church or school system, but may be considered at the discretion of the Westside Corridor Improvement Authority Board (Board).

Funding

- Approved projects are eligible for reimbursement of up to 50% of documented project costs up to \$10,000 (Note: A building or site renovation may be eligible for up to three grants by **separate application**)
- Funding is awarded competitively based upon application
- Use of awarded funding is restricted to those purposes outlined in the approved application
- Funding will be allocated per project.

Evaluation

- Applications will be evaluated by the Board or by a committee appointed by the Board, to determine their alignment with goals established in the WSCIA's [*Tax Increment Financing and Development Plan and the Westside Area Specific Plan*](#)
- Approval is awarded at the sole discretion of the Board
- Applications will be reviewed 'first come/first served'; generally, reviews will occur on a monthly basis
- These program guidelines will be reviewed on an annual basis and modified as necessary.

Eligibility

- Projects must be located within the [WSCIA boundary](#)
- The property or facility must house or support an active commercial business or be undergoing new construction or renovation for the commencement of business operations within 180 days from the date of application approval
- Applications by businesses leasing space must include a letter on the property owner's letterhead, stating approval, and any conditions for approval for the project
- Projects for which an applicant is seeking reimbursement must not have commenced construction within 90 days of the time the application is submitted for review by the board
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- Applicants must be current with the City of Grand Rapids regarding all taxes, fees, charges or assessments
- Applications must include evidence that all necessary governmental permissions have been obtained
- If relevant, applications must include a copy of a survey performed by a certified CPTED specialist recommending improvements to be funded

Approval

- Submit application with necessary attachments
- Applications will be presented to the Board or its designated committee
- Board will approve or reject the application
- Applicant will be informed about the Board's decision
- An agreement will be executed following Board approval
- Construction will be completed
- Itemized receipts and proofs of payment will be provided by the applicant to the Board/committee
- Reimbursement will be issued

Guidelines revised and approved by the Westside CIA at a regular public board meeting on January 8, 2021.