

CITY OF WEST CHICAGO

WHERE HISTORY & PROGRESS MEET

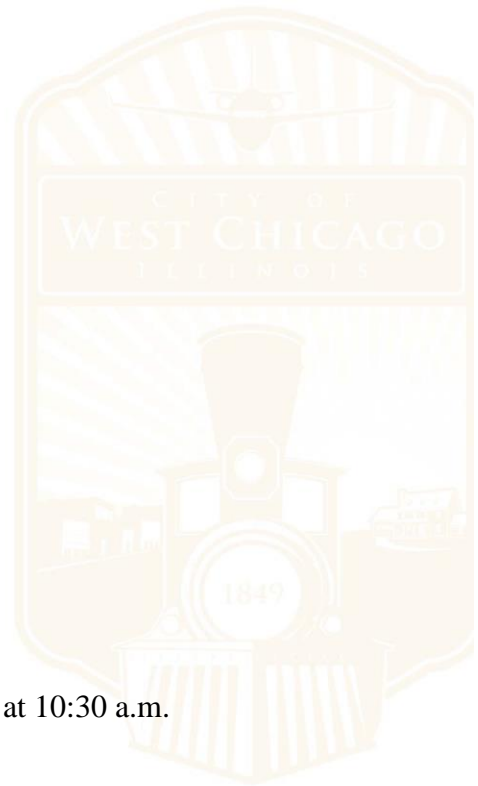
SPECIAL MEETING

**Economic Development Commission
Tuesday, August 27, 2024 - 10:30 a.m.**

**West Chicago City Hall
Committee Room B
475 Main Street, West Chicago, IL 60185**

A G E N D A

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Roll Call**
- 3. Public Comment**
- 4. Approval of the July 23, 2024 Meeting Minutes**
- 5. Downtown Investment Program**
- 6. Retail & Restaurant Grant Program**
- 7. Economic Development Priorities – FY 2025**
- 8. Staff Report**
- 9. Commissioner Reports**
- 10. Adjournment – Next Meeting Tuesday, October 22, 2024 at 10:30 a.m.**



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Ruben Pineda
MAYOR

Michael L. Guttman
CITY ADMINISTRATOR

CITY OF WEST CHICAGO

WHERE HISTORY & PROGRESS MEET

DRAFT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION July 23, 2024 – 10:30 a.m.

1. Call to Order

Chairperson Beles called the meeting to order at 10:32 a.m.

2. Roll Call

Roll call found Chairperson Beles, and Commissioners Harms, Espinosa, Johnson (arrived at 10:45 a.m.), Sabathne, and Ventimiglia (left at 11:43 a.m.) present. With five members present at the start of the meeting, a quorum was established.

The following staff were in attendance: Community Development Director Tom Dabareiner (arrived at 10:35 a.m. and left at 11:03 a.m.), Assistant Community Development Director/City Planner John Sterrett, and Economic Development Coordinator Kelley Chrissie.

3. Public Comment

None.

4. Approval of the April 30, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Espinosa made a motion to approve the April 30, 2024 Special Meeting Minutes, which was seconded by Commissioner Harms. The motion passed unanimously via voice vote (Commissioner Johnson had not yet arrived).

5. Downtown Investment Grant Program

Ms. Chrissie explained the City Council had previous conversations about the use of funding to address property maintenance violations. There had not been support for using public funding in this manner in those discussions, but it was unclear how long ago those conversations took place. The Commission, however, explained their perspective on fighting against blight and that there is not an issue with abuse of this program. Rather, the problem is that the program is not used. It was also noted that residential and commercial properties are different so there isn't a precedent being set by assisting property owners to improve their property, which would benefit the entire downtown area. There was discussion about the code violation process and it was agreed that when the property owner is put on notice (given a warning), that the City would provide information on this program to assist them in addressing the issue. However, if no action is taken on the warning and it progresses to a ticket (Notice to Appear), the property owner would be ineligible for assistance with the Downtown Investment Program.

Additional discussion included eliminating a maximum funding available per Applicant, as the Commission suggested that there could be a developer that wants to make improvements to multiple buildings in the downtown, which would be encouraged. It was also agreed, however, that if this becomes problematic in the future, that the Commission would revisit the matter.

The Commission also discussed the amount of time that an Applicant must wait before applying for subsequent funding. The consensus was that five years was too long, especially if a property owner can only take on either smaller projects or one at a time. As a result, the Commission agreed that an Applicant can apply for funding every two years. However, there was also a clarification offered that the wait period does not apply to Applicants who did not complete a previously approved project, as they would not have received the funding.

Staff inquired about the need to have some security for the larger grant awards but the Commission agreed that a forgivable loan structure is not necessary from their perspective. However, if the City Council were to have reservations about the significantly larger grant awards, then the forgivable loan structure would be a recommended option. The Commission agreed that this program, if approved, should not be effective until January 1 to coincide with the fiscal year budget.

6. Retail & Restaurant Grant Program

Ms. Chrise reviewed the proposed revisions. The Commission discussed adding a requirement to only reimburse expenses paid to a legitimate business. With the proliferation of many online services, there was some conversation about the challenges that might exist with proving the business is legally established. Additionally, there was a desire to show proof of work as part of the reimbursement process to ensure that the funding was used for a service that was actually rendered.

- 7. Staff Report** – Ms. Chrise provided updates on businesses within the community to include the closure of Cocoa Notes Bakeshop, the fire in the building occupied by Good Morning Family, and Jel Sert’s major investment to add new manufacturing lines at their facility on Charles Ct that will add at least 50 new jobs. Other updates include: the bowling alley has been purchased and the new owners intend to renovate the space for entertainment uses; the former Shell station will be redeveloped but has not yet been scheduled for the Plan Commission; insufficient electrical capacity is limiting the ability for property in the Roosevelt Rd-Fabyan Pkwy TIF District; and there was a grant application submitted for aesthetic and safety improvements, as well as service upgrades.

8. Commissioner Reports - None

- 9. Adjournment** – Commissioner Harms made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Commissioner Espinosa. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 11:58 a.m. (Commissioner Ventimiglia left prior to adjournment.).

Respectfully Submitted,
Kelley Chrise, Economic Development Coordinator

CITY OF WEST CHICAGO

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

ITEM TITLE:

Downtown Investment Program

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER:

5

COMMISSION AGENDA DATE:

08/27/2024

STAFF REVIEW: Kelley Chrisse, AICP**SIGNATURE****ITEM SUMMARY:**

Private property investment improves the overall aesthetic, quality, and vitality of the downtown and the City as a whole. Renewed investment in the downtown increases the opportunity for redevelopment, whereas a lack of private investment can effectively hinder (re)development efforts.

Unfortunately, there has been a lack of investment and in some cases general maintenance on private structures in the downtown. Additionally, there are still a number of commercial vacancies in the downtown resulting in less activity in the area. Despite the existing Façade Improvement and Retail & Restaurant Grant Programs having been around for many years, they are underutilized. Based on conversations with property and business owners, reasons they have not used the grant programs include lack of funding availability, amount of time required to obtain grant approval, "difficult" approval processes, need for three estimates, and lack of interest by multiple contractors for small projects.

The proposed Downtown Investment Program combines the Façade Improvement and a portion of the Retail & Restaurant Grant programs related to physical property improvements to streamline the application process, provide flexibility in funding, and incentivize certain improvements/projects. As a way to overcome barriers to participation, the Downtown Investment Program includes:

- Increasing the maximum funding amount for projects to encourage greater private investment;
- Allowing projects to include interior and/or exterior improvements with consistent requirements as one grant program;
- Categorizing improvements with corresponding reimbursement amounts based on the expected long-term impact;
- Allowing funding to address property maintenance projects but at a lower amount;
- Providing additional funding for historically significant properties that are making major and/or minor improvements; and
- Granting authority to the City Administrator, or designee, to approve maintenance items and streetscape improvements to reduce the approval timeline for smaller projects.

In an effort to streamline the submittal process, Staff will combine the Downtown Investment Program and Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) applications, which will be available digitally. The responses provided on the application will determine what other questions need to be answered. This approach is intended to minimize unnecessary questions and avoid duplication between different application processes.

To generate interest in these types of projects by the local businesses, Staff will be reaching out to contractors located within West Chicago and others that have done work on properties in the downtown. The contractors will be provided with an overview of the program and grant process, upon which interested contractors will be added to a participating contractor list that will be made available to potential applicants. This effort is intended to create a network of contractors and assist applicants in their efforts to obtain estimates, but the selection of a contractor would remain the applicant's responsibility.

The proposed Downtown Investment Program has been revised per discussion at the July 23, 2024 EDC meeting and is attached for review and recommendation. As the Façade Improvement Grant Program is codified, the authorizing ordinance would need to be repealed and the chapter deleted in its entirety. A motion is requested to recommend the repeal of the existing program.

ACTIONS PROPOSED:

1. Recommend approval to repeal Ordinance No. 4301 and delete Chapter 4, Article VI. Façade Program in its entirety.
2. Recommend approval of the proposed Downtown Investment Program.
3. Recommend a budget request for FY 2025 in the amount of \$125,000.00 from the Downtown TIF #2 Fund, supplemented with funds from the General Fund until such time as the TIF Fund has sufficient revenues to cover the approved budget for the Downtown Investment Program.



City of West Chicago

DOWNTOWN INVESTMENT PROGRAM

I. PROGRAM PURPOSE

The Downtown Investment Program (“Program”) provides grant funding to promote revitalization and activation of downtown West Chicago that will spur future private development in the area. Reimbursement grants are provided to achieve the following:

1. Improve the overall image and increase property values within the downtown to strengthen the economy and quality of life in the City;
2. Remove and alleviate adverse conditions by encouraging private investment in the rehabilitation and maintenance of properties within the [Downtown Tax Increment Financing \(TIF\) District No. 2](#);
3. Assist property and business owners with restoring, renovating, and modernizing existing structures, especially historically significant buildings, in the downtown to increase the marketability of commercial spaces and promote occupancy; and
4. Further the objectives of the [Downtown TIF II Redevelopment Plan](#) including but not limited to reducing or eliminating the recurrence of blighted conditions.

II. GRANT ELIGIBILITY

1. **Properties.** Properties located within [Downtown TIF District No. 2](#) with existing buildings are eligible for participation in this Program. Properties and spaces used only for residential purposes (e.g. apartments) are not eligible for grant funding.

2. **Applicants.**

- A. Property and business owners of property specified in Sec. II.1 are eligible to apply for funding under this Program.
- B. A lessee of an eligible property must have a remaining lease term of not less than five (5) years to apply for funding.
- C. Any Applicant who is delinquent in the payment of any tax, fine, fee, or special assessment owed to the City, County, or State as documented by the City or County is ineligible until the outstanding tax, fine, fee or special assessment is paid.



III. FUNDING QUALIFICATIONS

1. **Eligible Expenses.** The Program provides reimbursement for eligible interior & exterior improvements (“Project”) as categorized by the expected impact on property value and ability to extend the longevity of the property. A detailed list of eligible improvements and reimbursement maximums are listed in the Funding Categories (attached). The types of projects and expenses generally eligible for grant funding include:
 - A. Major Improvements – represent a significant project (typically consisting of multiple elements) and investment resulting in a change to the structure that substantially changes the visual appearance, increases the value, and/or marketability of the property;
 - B. Minor Improvements – consist of fewer improvements that generally lead to an incremental increase in value and/or marketability of the property while also improving the building’s aesthetic and functional use of the property;
 - C. Maintenance Items – include any modifications that bring the building into code compliance and prevent deterioration of the property;
 - D. Streetscape Improvements – consist of elements that require a smaller investment and are considered less permanent but make a noticeable improvement to the curb appeal of the property; and
 - E. Design fees related to the eligible improvements.
2. **Ineligible Expenses.** Ineligible expenses include, but are not limited to:
 - A. Improvements in progress or completed prior to approval and execution of a Grant Agreement, which establishes the approved scope of work and reimbursement amount, by and between the City and the Applicant;
 - B. Improvements that do not comply with the approved Certificate of Appropriateness (COA), building permit(s), and/or zoning regulations;
 - C. Improvements that increase non-conforming conditions;
 - D. Labor associated with work performed by an Applicant and/or the Property Owner are not eligible to be monetized and reimbursed;
 - E. Work required to address code violations identified on a Notice To Appear (NTA); and
 - F. Improvements not specifically listed as eligible, including but not limited to:
 - 1) New or replacement wall signs;
 - 2) Non-permanent interior improvements, including but not limited to interior design elements, interior finishes, (e.g. paint, tile, flooring, lighting and plumbing fixtures, etc.), moveable business furniture/equipment, and interior signage;
 - 3) Interior improvements in a space used for residential purposes, unless required to preserve the integrity of the building infrastructure in a mixed-use structure; and
 - 4) Media marketing and advertising (see Retail & Restaurant Grant Program).
3. **Funding Maximums.**
 - A. Funding awards are determined by the lowest of the three (3) estimates submitted for the Project scope in accordance with the maximum reimbursement listed by Funding Category (see attached).
 - B. The maximum funding to be awarded for improvements to a single eligible property over the life of the Program is \$100,000.
 - C.
4. **Building Permit Fee Reduction.** Building permit fees, with the exception of third-party review and inspection fees, for approved Projects will be reduced by fifty percent (50%). The building permit fee reduction is over and above the grant award and is discounted upon permit issuance.

IV. DESIGN GUIDELINES

All proposed exterior improvements within the Turner Junction Historic District shall be compatible with the downtown area; specifically, these improvements should:

1. Focus on restorative construction;
2. Be compatible with the original building material and style;
3. Be compatible with predominant color schemes and window configurations; and
4. Be compatible with the general architectural theme of the historic district.

V. APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

1. **Pre-Application Meeting.** Interested parties should schedule a pre-application meeting with Economic Development Coordinator at (630) 818-3331 or kchrisse@westchicago.org. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the Program details, proposed improvements, and Project eligibility.
2. **Request for Funding.** The Applicant shall submit a formal application for funding, which must be accompanied by the following items:
 - A. Proof of property ownership;
 - B. A copy of the signed sales contract, current lease, and/or written consent from the property owner, as applicable;
 - C. Proof of paid property taxes;
 - D. Photos of the subject property to be improved;
 - E. Narrative that incorporates:
 - 1) Detailed description of the proposed scope of work;
 - 2) Description of the use of the property and/or business; and
 - 3) Identification of the merits of the project (i.e. how the Project achieves the Program Purpose in Sec. I).
 - F. Plans, drawings and/or visual depictions of the proposed improvements;
 - G. Material and color sample(s) of exterior improvements, if requested;
 - H. Three (3) detailed, written estimates for the Project scope of work (alternatively, requests for material and equipment funding shall provide itemized quotes with applicable cut sheets); and
 - I. Construction schedule for the Project with specific milestones identified for Projects not expected to be completed in twelve (12) months or for partial reimbursement requests.
3. **Accompanying Applications.**
 - A. If the property is within the Turner Junction Historic District, the applicant shall concurrently file an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) with the Historical Preservation Commission (HPC). COA approval, if required, is a precondition to the City's consideration of the grant application. The HPC meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month, which could impact the timing of grant application processing.
 - B. A building permit application, if required, is recommended to be submitted simultaneously to ensure that all code requirements are included in the Project scope, the estimates of which determines the grant award. When required by the Project scope of work, architectural drawings must be prepared by a designer (e.g. architect, structural engineer, etc.) licensed in Illinois.
4. **Review and Approval.**
 - A. Any outstanding items required to complete the review and process the funding request will be coordinated with the Applicant. A complete application will be reviewed for eligibility and compliance with the terms of this Program.

- B. The determination of Program eligibility (property, applicant, and scope of work) is at the discretion of the City. The City retains the right to approve an entire request, to approve portions of a request, suggest and/or ask for changes/additions to a request before approving, or to deny any request or a portion thereof.
- C. Upon issuance of a COA, the funding request will be processed for approval as follows:
 - 1) The application for Major and/or Minor Improvements will be forwarded to the City Council, together with a recommendation, at the next available meeting (first and third Mondays of each month). The City Council shall determine whether, and the extent to which, the City will provide grant funding for the proposed project, subject to funding availability. If approved, the Mayor will execute the Grant Agreement on behalf of the City.
 - 2) The application for Maintenance Items and Streetscape Improvements will be forwarded to the City Administrator, or designee, with a recommendation. The City Administrator, or designee, will determine if the Project meets the terms of the Program and, if so, authorize and execute the Grant Agreement with awards up to \$5,000, subject to funding availability.
- D. The Applicant must execute the Grant Agreement before any portion of the Project may commence.

VI. PROJECT COMMENCEMENT AND CONSTRUCTION

- 1. **Building Permit.** In addition to a fully executed Grant Agreement, a building permit may be required depending on the scope of work for the Project. If required, work on the Project subject to a permit shall not commence until the building permit has also been issued.
- 2. **Work in ROW.** Improvements located in the right-of-way (ROW) may require Public Works approval via ROW permit or a license agreement.
- 3. **Contractor Registration.** The Applicant may use any contractor they wish but Projects requiring a building permit must be performed by registered contractor(s). Contractors subject to [Contractor Registration](#) requirements include general contractors as well as all sub-contractors.
- 4. **Compliance Required.** Strict compliance with the Grant Agreement, COA, and building permit is required throughout and upon completion of the Project.
- 5. **Project Timeline.** The Project must be started within ninety (90) days of grant approval and completed within twelve (12) months of the building permit issuance or grant approval, if no permit is required. An alternate timeline may be approved as part of the Grant Agreement, if requested in the proposed Construction Schedule. An extension may be granted by the City Council via an amendment to the Grant Agreement if requested in writing prior to the expiration of the building permit.

VII. REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS

- 1. **Reimbursement Amount.** The Applicant shall be responsible for paying all expenses incurred for the Project and will only be reimbursed based on the actual amount paid in accordance with the Grant Agreement.
- 2. **Partial Reimbursement.** Reimbursements during the Project construction may be requested by the Applicant only if authorized in the Grant Agreement and in accordance with specified milestones and funding amounts.

- A. The Applicant may request partial reimbursement by submitting the following:
 - 1) Verification that a specific milestone has been met;
 - 2) Invoices for materials and equipment (when work is completed by the Applicant);
 - 3) Partially paid invoice from contractor(s);
 - 4) Proof of partial payment (e.g. copies of canceled checks and/or credit card receipts);
 - 5) Partial waiver(s) of lien from each contractor; and
 - 6) [IRS Form W-9](#).
- B. Upon receipt of all required documentation and verification of compliance with the terms of the Grant Agreement, the reimbursement request will be presented to the City Council for authorization at the next available meeting.
- 3. **Full or Final Reimbursement.**
 - A. The Applicant must pass all inspections to close out the building permit, as applicable. A Certificate of Occupancy is not required to close out the building permit but could be used to demonstrate Project completion.
 - B. To request reimbursement, the Applicant shall submit the following documents, as applicable, within sixty (60) days of Project close-out:
 - 1) Verification of project close-out, if a building permit was required;
 - 2) Invoices for materials and equipment (when work is completed by the Applicant);
 - 3) Paid invoice from contractor(s);
 - 4) Proof of payment (e.g. copies of canceled checks and/or credit card receipts);
 - 5) Final waiver(s) of lien from each contractor; and
 - 6) [IRS Form W-9](#), if not already provided.
 - C. Upon receipt of all required documentation and verification of compliance with the terms of the Grant Agreement, the reimbursement request will be presented for City Council authorization at the next available meeting.

VIII. **MAINTENANCE**

- 1. With the exception of Streetscape Improvements, the improvements made as part of the Project must be maintained for a period of five (5) years upon completion of the Project.
- 2. Upon entering into the Grant Agreement, the Applicant is not eligible to apply for a subsequent grant on the subject property for two (2) years from the date of approval unless the Project was not completed.

Downtown Investment Program - Funding Categories

	Major Improvements	Minor Improvements	Maintenance Items	Streetscape Improvements
Eligible Exterior Improvement Expenses	Significant façade renovation/enhancements, including façade replacements	Roofing repair or replacement that is part of the historical façade within the Turner Junction Historic District	Repair or replacement of retaining walls on Turner Court Façade cleaning and sealing	New or replacement signs (only includes under canopy, window and projecting)
	Restoration of original architectural features	Installation of new accessible entrance	Restoration of brick	New or replacement awnings
	New or replacement exterior doors and windows	Tuckpointing Exterior painting	Repair of window frames, sills, and glazing Gutter replacement	New permanent under canopy/awning lighting
	Replacement or repair of exterior building materials or decorative elements	Screening of unsightly utilities, including trash enclosures	Repair of pitched roof and chimney or flue when it improves the overall appearance of the building	Incorporating permanent seating adjacent to the eligible property
	Installation or replacement of stairs, porch and handrails	Adding or replacing exterior lighting	Repair or replacement of roofs not visible from the public way	Adding permanent landscaped planters Creating and installing exterior art (not signage)
Eligible Interior Improvement Expenses	New installation and replacement of commercial kitchen fixtures (plumbing, hood and duct system, grease trap, etc.) and associated utility work	Interior life safety improvements (e.g. fire walls, sprinklers, egress, fire alarm, exit signs, automatic lights, etc.)	Repair work to floors, walls, and ceilings	
	Utility service line and equipment replacement, including electric, gas, water, and sanitary	Building systems replacement or upgrades (e.g. plumbing, electric, HVAC, etc.) and associated fixtures		
	Interior structural repairs & upgrades (e.g. load bearing walls, roof beams, floor joists, ceiling repairs, etc.)	Installation of an elevator, chair lift, or ramp to access another commercial space		
	Installation of new restrooms	Retrofit of existing restrooms to meet accessibility standards		
Other Eligible Expenses	Design fees related to the eligible improvements, as applicable			
Maximum Reimbursement	50% Reimbursement, up to \$75,000 (up to \$100,000 for buildings designated as landmarks or contributing to the Turner Junction Historic District)	35% Reimbursement, up to \$30,000 (up to \$50,000 for buildings designated as landmarks or contributing to the Turner Junction Historic District)	25% Reimbursement, up to \$5,000 or 65% of the material and equipment expenses if applicant does work themselves, as applicable	50% reimbursement, up to \$3,000 or 65% of the material and equipment expenses if applicant does the work themselves, as applicable

CITY OF WEST CHICAGO

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

ITEM TITLE:

Downtown Retail & Restaurant Grant
Program Revisions

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 6**COMMISSION AGENDA DATE:** 08/27/2024**STAFF REVIEW:** Kelley Chuisse, AICP**SIGNATURE****ITEM SUMMARY:**

The Downtown Retail & Restaurant Business Grant Program was adopted by the City Council in 2013 to strengthen retail business activity in the downtown. There has only been one grant awarded in the program's history. The business subject to the grant has not yet opened so there has not been any reimbursement made for this program to date. With only one Applicant since the program was adopted, revisions are being proposed to attract interest and support new retailers and restaurants in the downtown.

With expenses related to the build-out of retail and restaurant spaces being moved to the proposed Downtown Investment Program, the Downtown Retail & Restaurant Grant Program can now prioritize tools that will support the business' success upon opening or expansion. Key revisions to the Downtown Retail & Restaurant Grant Program include:

- Shift the improvements to build-out a retail or restaurant to the Downtown Investment Program to create consistency of requirements and prioritize physical improvements;
- Streamline the approval process by eliminating the Selection Committee, recognizing that Staff lacks the technical capacity to determine the viability of a business plan;
- Recognizing the value of a business plan for new and expanding businesses, retain the need to provide a business plan as an application requirement and have the Applicant demonstrate how the Program funding will support their plan; and
- Expand eligible expenses to include:
 - Retail consulting services;
 - Visual merchandising services;
 - Online sales platforms; and
 - Website development.

Attached is the revised proposed policy for the Downtown Retail & Restaurant Grant Program based on discussion from the July 23, 2024 EDC meeting.

ACTION PROPOSED:

1. Recommend approval of the proposed Downtown Retail & Restaurant Grant Program.
2. Recommend a budget request for FY 2025 in the amount of \$30,000 from the Downtown TIF #2 Fund for the Downtown Retail & Restaurant Grant Program.



City of West Chicago

DOWNTOWN RETAIL & RESTAURANT GRANT PROGRAM

I. PROGRAM PURPOSE

The Downtown Retail and Restaurant Grant Program (“Program”) provides grant funding to strengthen retail business activity in the Downtown by attracting new retail and restaurant businesses as well as assisting existing retailers and restaurants.

II. GRANT ELIGIBILITY

1. **Location.**

- A. Businesses must be locating within [Downtown TIF District No. 2](#) in order to apply for this Program.
- B. Existing businesses may apply if they are located within the district with plans to expand or are located outside the district with plans to open an additional location within the TIF District.
- C. All businesses applying for a grant under the Program must occupy a first-floor space on a public street to operate a retail or restaurant business. A lessee of an eligible property must have a remaining lease term of not less than three (3) years to apply for funding.



2. **Operations.**

- A. To be eligible for this Program, a business must offer merchandise and/or food to the public, the sale or providing of which is subject to sales tax (“Retail Sales”), and from which the revenue derived constitutes the majority of the revenue of the business. Professional and medical offices, salons and other service businesses are not eligible. Businesses that include Retail and/or Food & Beverage Sales as a complementary use to a primary use other than a Retail or Restaurant business may be considered for a grant under the Program, at the City’s discretion, if the Retail or Restaurant use is demonstrated to be a significant financial component of the overall business.
- B. All businesses applying for this Program must submit an application, obtain approval, and enter into a Grant Agreement prior to the opening or commencement of the retail or restaurant project.

III. **FUNDING QUALIFICATIONS**

1. **Eligible Expenses.** The Program provides reimbursement for eligible expenses (“Project”) provided by a legitimate business, which includes:
 - A. Retail consulting services;
 - B. Visual merchandising services;
 - C. Online sales platforms;
 - D. Website development; and
 - E. Marketing and advertising.
2. **Ineligible Expenses.** Ineligible expenses include, but are not limited to:
 - A. Expenses incurred prior to approval and execution of a Grant Agreement, which establishes the approved grant award, by and between the City and the Applicant;
 - B. Services performed by the Applicant are not eligible to be monetized and reimbursed;
 - C. Expenses not specifically listed as eligible, including but not limited to:
 - 1) Physical improvements to the property (see Downtown Investment Program);
 - 2) Rent;
 - 3) Payroll; and
 - 4) Inventory.
3. **Grant Funding.**
 - A. Grants will be awarded for up to 50% of the Project cost with a maximum of \$10,000.
 - B. Only one grant will be awarded per business for each location and/or expansion project.

IV. **APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS**

1. **Pre-Application Meeting.** Interested parties should schedule a pre-application meeting with the Economic Development Coordinator at (630) 818-3331 or kchrisse@westchicago.org. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the proposed business and discuss the Program details and eligibility.
2. **Request for Funding.** A formal application for funding is required, which must be accompanied by the following items:
 - A. [Business Plan](#);
 - B. Copy of the lease that has a remaining term of at least three (3) years on a first-floor commercial space on a public street in the Downtown TIF No. 2;
 - C. Narrative that describes:
 - 1) The Project scope (intended use of the grant funding); and
 - 2) How the business will contribute to or enhance the activity in the downtown, which may include:
 1. Anticipated sales tax revenue;
 2. Expected job creation; and
 3. Overall business activity that will contribute to the mix of businesses in the downtown.
3. **Review and Approval.**
 - A. Any outstanding items required to complete the review and process the funding request will be coordinated with the Applicant. A complete application will be reviewed for eligibility and compliance with the terms of this Program.
 - B. The determination of Program eligibility is at the discretion of the City. The City retains the right to approve an entire request, to approve portions of a request, suggest and/or ask for changes/additions to a request before approving, or to deny any request or a portion thereof.

- C. The application will be forwarded to the City Council, together with a recommendation, at the next available meeting (first and third Mondays of each month). The City Council shall determine whether, and the extent to which, the City will provide grant funding for the proposed project, subject to funding availability. The City Council has the right to amend or waive program terms and conditions to accommodate special circumstances. If approved, the Mayor will execute the Grant Agreement on behalf of the City.
- D. The Applicant must execute the Grant Agreement before any portion of the Project may commence.

V. **PROJECT CONDITIONS**

- 1. **Project Timeline.** All businesses approved for a grant must obtain occupancy, register the business, open for business, and complete the Project within six (6) months from the date of grant approval by the City. Exceptions may be considered at the time of approval if the Applicant is concurrently completing property improvements that would delay the opening or other extenuating circumstances exist.
- 2. **Compliance Required.** Strict compliance with the Grant Agreement is required throughout and upon completion of the Project. Failure to abide by the terms of the Grant Agreement will result in forfeiture of funding, at the discretion of the City.

VI. **REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS**

- 1. **Reimbursement Amount.** The Applicant shall be responsible for paying all expenses for the Project and will only be reimbursed based on the actual costs incurred in accordance with the Grant Agreement.
- 2. **Reimbursement Process.**
 - A. To request reimbursement, the Applicant shall submit the following, as applicable, within sixty (60) days of project completion:
 - 1) Proof of work performed;
 - 2) Invoice itemizing service(s) provided;
 - 3) Proof of payment (e.g. copies of canceled checks and/or credit card receipts);
 - 4) Final waiver(s) of lien from each consultant/contractor, as applicable; and
 - 5) [IRS Form W-9](#).
 - B. Upon receipt of all required documentation and verification of compliance with the terms of the Grant Agreement, the reimbursement request will be presented for City Council authorization at the next available meeting.

CITY OF WEST CHICAGO

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

ITEM TITLE:

Economic Development Priorities – FY 2025

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER:

7

COMMISSION AGENDA DATE:

08/27/2024

STAFF REVIEW: Kelley Chrusse, AICP**SIGNATURE****ITEM SUMMARY:**

The primary function of the Economic Development Commission is to make recommendations to the City Council of the City of West Chicago for the fostering and cultivation of an environment in which commercial, cultural and community enterprises will flourish within the corporate limits of the City of West Chicago. As such, the attached priorities are being presented for consideration.

Nearly all the economic development priorities presented have been previously identified in various planning documents. There are numerous activities listed that are labeled as ongoing, meaning that they are currently being pursued, the activities are already underway, or the activity is not expected to cease within the proposed three-year timeframe. Note that there are many other activities that are performed to promote economic development activities, but this document is intended to get concurrence on the priorities that should guide budget requests and activities for the next three years.

The major priority categories include (in alphabetical order):

- Activate businesses, community partners & residents/employees;
- Advocate for the interests of business & investment opportunities;
- Attract new investment, customers, employees & residents;
- Connect people, places & things;
- Educate the City, businesses, community partners & the general public on economic development opportunities; and
- Retain businesses, investment & community support.

While this document will serve to guide activities over the coming years, it is expected to be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure alignment with community goals.

ACTION PROPOSED:

Recommend acceptance of the proposed FY 2025 Economic Development priorities.

FY 2025 Economic Development Priorities

The following **Economic Development Priorities** are intended to foster and cultivate an environment in which commercial, cultural and community enterprises will flourish within the corporate limits of the City of West Chicago

Priority Category			
	Goal/Objective	Applicable Reference Document	Activity Year
1. Activate businesses, community partners & residents/employees			
1.1	Advocate for ways to activate the downtown	Economic Development Plan	Ongoing
1.2	Engage larger businesses to support the development of community identity components, including public art, landscaping, events and marketing	Comprehensive Plan	2027
1.3	Lead a community-wide planning effort to evaluate existing events, assess the potential to expand Railroad Days & program new potential community events & festivals	Strategic Plan	2027
2. Advocate for the interests of business & investment opportunities			
2.1	Streamline business-related processes, including occupancy, registration & licensing	Economic Development Plan	Ongoing
2.2	Review business-related policies to create business friendly codes	Economic Development Plan	Ongoing
3. Attract new investment, customers, employees & residents			
3.1	Prepare downtown for investment opportunities	Central-Main St Redevelopment Plan	Ongoing
3.2	Support the marketing of available properties	Economic Development Plan	Ongoing
4. Connect people, places & things			
4.1	Modernize infrastructure to support continued investment & attract businesses	Economic Development Plan	Ongoing
4.2	Create opportunities for businesses to connect with capital providers	Comprehensive Plan	Ongoing
5. Educate the City, businesses, community partners and general public on economic development opportunities			
5.1	Create an online resource for economic & business development activities	Strategic Plan	2025
5.2	Evaluate parking minimums, particularly on Roosevelt Rd, to identify opportunities for outlot development on existing sites	Strategic Plan	2025
5.3	Provide greater opportunities for the general public to learn about businesses in the community	Comprehensive Plan	2025
5.4	Coordinate workshops and events with community partners to provide information on investment, potential funding opportunities, and budgeting techniques for local owners, entrepreneurs & residents	Comprehensive Plan	2025
5.5	Evaluate the potential for creating a business incubator and/or accelerator program	Economic Development Plan & Strategic Plan	2027

FY 2025 Economic Development Priorities

Priority Category			
	Goal/Objective	Applicable Reference Document	Activity Year
6. Retain businesses, investment & community support			
6.1	Regularly visit businesses in the community	Comprehensive Plan & Strategic Plan	Ongoing
6.2	Conduct regular business surveys to identify warning flags for business relocation or expansion, receive feedback on programs & practices, and maintain ongoing communications with owners & managers	Comprehensive Plan	Ongoing
6.3	Provide regular communication with the business community through the use of social media, business community newsletters & incorporate this on the EconDev website	Comprehensive Plan	Ongoing
6.4	Establish a formal Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) program	Economic Development Plan	2026
6.5	Assemble workforce development statistics & share resources	Comprehensive Plan	2025