

LAKELAND CRA

COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

ENCOURAGING DEVELOPMENT GROWTH & EXPANSION PROGRAM (EDGE)

(DIXIELAND, DOWNTOWN, MIDTOWN)

The Economic Development Growth and Expansion Program (EDGE) Program supports the development of new and expanding science, technology, engineering & mathematics (STEM), manufacturing and food service-related businesses that are located within CRA boundaries through a \$25,000 dollar-for-dollar matching grant. Assistance may be provided to qualified projects through electric, water and wastewater utility connections and upgrades, installation of attached fixtures, grease traps, backflow preventers, venting systems, sprinkler systems, solid waste and recycling management and engineering services for electrical, mechanical and plumbing services.

Application

- Completed and signed application
- Notarized letter from property owner
- Project description and schedule
- Support documentation from a local small business resource such as, the Lakeland Chamber, the Lakeland CRA, Catapult or the LEDC
- Description of the specific assistance that has been requested

Estimate of cost for the infrastructure improvements requested Program Eligibility

- Small and mid-sized manufactures that use innovative technology to make and improve customizable products and/or processes that drive the economy for customers.
- Businesses that are food related ventures, such as sit-down restaurants, coffee/tea shops, bakeries, commissary kitchens, grocery store, produce market, micro-brewery, distillery, health food store or other specialty food store.
- Businesses that are STEM related such as medical, research, development, engineering, nanotechnology and biotechnology.
- Financial assistance is intended for the rehabilitation and restoration of existing properties only.
- Project must be within a designated CRA.
- Drive through facilities, convenience stores with motor vehicle fuel sales, bars, lounges and nontax-paying entities are ineligible.

Eligible Improvements

- Electric, water and wastewater utility connections
- Installed and attached features, including grease traps, backflow preventers, venting systems and fire sprinkler systems
- Solid waste and recycling management
- Engineering services for electrical, mechanical and plumbing services (not to exceed 20% of the grant total)

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The following items are specifically ineligible for the program

- Equipment that is not attached or affixed to the building/structure
- Furniture
- Interior design fees
- New construction

Improvements must be consistent with the City of Lakeland's Land Development Regulations and Engineering Standards. Grant fund's may not be used to correct code violations or to bring a structure up to current code.

Applicant is responsible for obtaining or having obtained all required local and state approvals and permitting for the work to be completed.

As a condition of approval, the Applicant will agree that improvements made using these funds will stay in place a minimum of five (5) years. If improvements are replaced within five (5) years of construction completion, the grant recipient must pay a pro rata portion of the grant proceeds invested in the project for the number of months remaining.

Once a grant for any property has been awarded, businesses occupying the property and the building owner cannot reapply for another grant for the same location for a five (5) year period.

Funding & Distribution

- The maximum available matching grant per project shall be \$25,000.
- The incentive shall be distributed on a first-come first-serve basis to qualified applicants submitting a completed application.
- Matching funds shall be provided to the applicant after proof of Certificate of Occupancy has been provided.
- Once the incentive funds annual distribution has been depleted, no additional projects shall be funded until the incentive is replenished in the next fiscal year.
- Unencumbered dollars within this incentive fund shall rollover annually.
- This grant is usable concurrent with other CRA grants except for Tax Increment Financing (TIF).
- Once a reimbursement check has been issued, no further documents/funding requests will be considered.

Process

Qualified applicants must schedule an appointment with CRA staff prior to preparing an application for submittal. The CRA office is located on the 3rd floor of City Hall at 228 S. Massachusetts Avenue. Appointments can be made by calling (863) 834-5200. Applications will be accepted on a first come first served basis. City staff will review the application for completeness against the review criteria. All documentation must be submitted as a complete package. A letter of acceptance will be provided to applicants that successfully meet the criteria of the program. Incentive funds will be reimbursed to qualified and approved projects in one payment after proof of Building Permit and Certificate of Occupancy.