



BUILD Program Overview
Building Upgrades and
Improvements for Lenoir
Downtown

City of Lenoir
Economic Development
Department
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City of Lenoir

Lenoir Business Advisory Board (LBAB)

Building Upgrades and Improvements

for Lenoir Downtown (BUILD) Program

OVERVIEW

The City of Lenoir values the commercial buildings in Historic Downtown Lenoir and offers incentive grants to provide assistance with the improvement and rehabilitation of downtown properties. The Building Upgrades and Improvements for Lenoir Downtown (BUILD) Program was created to provide matching grants to encourage improvements and/or upgrades to the interior and exterior of downtown buildings to make them more attractive for new, existing, and expanding businesses. Under the program, applicants are eligible for up to thirty three and one third percent (33.33%) of the actual improvement costs, up to a maximum amount of \$5,000.00. BUILD applications will be accepted on an ongoing basis and grants will be awarded based on goals adopted by the Lenoir Business Advisory Board and the Lenoir City Council. Grants will be awarded depending on the availability of funds.

ELIGIBLE PROPERTIES

Eligible properties are those located in the Municipal Service Tax District (MSD).

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Commercial property owners inside the MSD are eligible applicants.

Business owners leasing commercial space within the MSD are eligible applicants.

NOTE: Business owners leasing property must have a minimum of two years remaining on the lease.

NOTE: Nonprofit entities are not eligible applicants.

MATCHING REQUIREMENT

The BUILD grants have a matching requirement. Applicants are required to invest two (2) dollars for every one (1) dollar of grant funding received. BUILD grants will pay for 33.33% (thirty-three and one third percent) of any approved building improvement or rehabilitation project.

AWARD AMOUNTS

The maximum award for each grant is five-thousand dollars (\$5,000.00). The minimum grant award is five-hundred dollars (\$500.00).

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

Eligible improvements include, but are not necessarily limited to:

Interior Improvements

- Accessibility improvements for handicapped persons
- Energy conservation improvements
- Electrical work, including service upgrades

- Fire alarm systems
- Fire sprinkler system installation or upgrade, including any needed water service improvements
- Heating, ventilation and air conditioning
- Lighting
- Painting
- Plumbing
- Restoration of historic interior architectural features, including ceilings, light fixtures, floors and architectural detailing
- Tenant improvements for a new, expanding or relocated business
- Utility service upgrades, including water and sewer

Exterior improvements

- Repair and restoration of architectural detail , including painting and cleaning
- Materials Costs
- Labor Costs, except for applicants serving as their own contractor
- Window repair
- Masonry work
- Repair and replacement of signs and awnings

INELIGIBLE PROJECTS

Projects and expenses such as the following are not eligible:

- Building or land acquisition
- Design services, including architectural and interior design
- Emergency or safety-related demolition expenses
- Flood or water damage repairs
- Furnishings, equipment or personal property not affixed to the real estate
- Legal fees
- Maintenance work (i.e. general repairs that maintain existing conditions)
- Parking lot resurfacing
- Pest extermination
- Work proposed on property with an active code compliance citation
- Work begun prior to application submittal or done without a required building permit;

BUILD GRANT PROGRAM DESIGN GUIDELINES

Applicants will also need to refer and adhere to the **BUILD GRANT PROGRAM DESIGN**

GUIDELINES. The Design Guidelines are listed on a separate document accompanying these Program Guidelines.

APPLICATION REVIEW AND EVALUATION

The Lenoir Business Advisory Board (LBAB) and Downtown Economic Development Director administer the program. All grants must be submitted to the Downtown Economic Development Director, and the Director will present the applications to the LBAB Grant Committee for consideration. The LBAB has formed a Grant Committee to conduct the initial review of all applications. Applications approved by the Grant Committee will be presented to the full LBAB for final approval. Once applicants receive LBAB approval, they can begin their projects. Complete grant request applications will be considered for approval in order of date received by the Downtown Economic Development Director.

CONTRACTORS

All work involved with the BUILD Grant project must be completed by licensed contractors. Applicants with the appropriate licenses may serve as their own contractor, but only the cost of materials will be considered eligible expenses to be funded by the grant.

PAYMENT

Applicants will be reimbursed after the LBAB Grant Committee reviews and approves of the completed project. Grant reimbursements will be based on the actual costs of the project. Applicants must submit all receipts and paid invoices prior to receiving grant funds. In addition, upon completion of the project, project completion photos will be submitted and an invitation to visit the completed project site will be scheduled prior to receiving grant funds.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

1. Grant applications may be submitted at any time.
2. Applicants shall contact the Downtown Economic Development Director to establish potential eligibility of proposed improvements.
3. A complete application form shall be submitted to the Downtown Economic Development Director, including appropriate drawings, budget estimates, two current bids for the proposed work, and proof of ownership or executed lease with owner's written consent. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit "before project photos." Applicant will be required to submit "after completion" photos during a "Project Completion" presentation.
4. Applicants shall submit at least two formal written bids for all work being proposed in the project.
Please include the following:
 - a. Names and license number of contractors
 - b. Copies of all bids and photos
 - c. Anticipated dates to begin construction and for project completion

NOTE: Sole source bidding may be approved by the LBAB Grant Committee for specialized work if reasonable attempts to obtain a second bid have been unsuccessful.

NOTE: Contractor Applicants shall submit copies of estimates for all materials, along with anticipated dates of construction and completion, as part of the application.

5. The Applicant or a designated representative will attend preliminary presentation meeting and a post project completion meeting with the LBAB Grant Committee members. The LBAB Grant Committee members will not take action on an application unless the Applicant agrees to these presentation meetings. Grant committee members may make requests that applicants also make these presentations at a monthly LBAB meeting.
6. Revised plans shall be submitted to the Downtown Economic Development Director immediately.
7. If the LBAB Grant Committee recommends approval, the application and a Grant Agreement shall be forwarded to the LBAB for approval.

8. If approved, the BUILD Grant Agreement shall be signed by the Applicant and the City of Lenoir as provided in Item 5 of Administrative Procedures, listed below.

9. Applicants shall apply for and receive a building permit prior to undertaking any work requiring a permit under the Building Code.

10. Construction shall proceed according to the approved plans and subject to periodic inspections. Construction must be completed within 180 days of execution of the Agreement, unless a written extension is granted by the LBAB Grant Committee.

11. Applicants shall submit final receipts and lien waivers to the Downtown Economic Development Director to request reimbursement.

12. Applicants shall maintain these improvements to the property without changes or alterations to work funded by the BUILD Grant Program for a period of two years from the date of completion. The City Council may require the owner of the benefiting property to consent to imposition of a lien on the property to insure that the property continues to be maintained in accordance with the terms of the grant and that there are no alterations or removal of improvements funded by the grant without the express written consent of the City. In the event there are unauthorized alterations or removal of improvements funded by the grant that result in diminution of value of the grant, the owner shall reimburse the City for the lost value. In the event the owner refuses to so compensate the City, the City shall have the right but not the obligation to foreclose the lien in order to collect the debt. The lien shall be released by the City at the end of the period of three years from the date of completion unless foreclosure activity is taking place, it appears reasonably likely that foreclosure will be necessary or there has been a refusal by the owner to compensate the City and the City has chosen to defer foreclosure of the lien.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

1. Upon submittal, the Downtown Economic Development Director will review the application to ensure that it contains all necessary information, including drawings and specifications, preliminary cost estimates, bids, photos, and proof of ownership or executed lease with owner's written consent. The Director will prepare written notification to the Applicant confirming receipt of the application. If the application is incomplete, a detail of all remaining items will be included. When the application is complete the Director will notify the Applicant of the date of the LBAB Grant Committee meeting when the application will be discussed.

2 The Downtown Economic Development Director shall present complete applications to the LBAB Grant Committee for review.

3. The LBAB Grant Committee shall review each application and make a recommendation for approval or disapproval.

4. A Project Presentation Meeting will then be scheduled with the Applicant and the LBAB Grant Committee outlining the project details.

5. If the LBAB Grant Committee recommends approval, the Downtown Economic Development Director shall prepare a BUILD Grant Agreement. The Agreement shall be signed by the Applicant and the City of Lenoir prior to any initial project work.

6. When the project is completed, a Project Completion Presentation Meeting will be scheduled presenting photos and the LBAB Grant Committee Members shall inspect all work done and document that the Applicant has made the improvements as per the Agreement and approved plans. The LBAB Grants Committee may also expect the Applicant to share their success story and improvements with the LBAB members and request that the Applicant attend a monthly LBAB meeting.

7. Upon determination that the work has been satisfactorily completed and all lien waivers have been received (if applicable), the Downtown Economic Development Director shall approve the release of a check in the amount of the approved grant to the Applicant.

8. The Downtown Economic Development Director shall maintain a record of each complete application.