



Business License Reserve Program

Guidelines and Procedures

Eligible Uses of Funds

Per Richland Municipal Code (RMC 5.04.385), each project applied for under this program must be used to promote **Business Activities** for the purpose of:

- Core Development
- Tourism
- Capital Expenditures for Community Improvements
- General Economic Development
- Prevention of Blight
- Small business development programs for Richland businesses

Eligible Entities

- Tri-City Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Tri-Cities Visitor and Convention Bureau
- SCORE Mid-Columbia
- Business Improvement Districts
- Small Business Development Center
- City of Richland Departments (public art from excess funds only)

Applicant Requirements

- An eligible organization shall have as their charter the enhancement of the local business community and the improvement of the environs of the City of Richland (RMC 5.04.386).
- It shall be the responsibility of the applicant to demonstrate that their application meets the criteria as an eligible use for funding under this program.
- Any organization receiving funds will be required to complete the reimbursement request form when submitting their receipts. Reimbursements will not be made without the cover sheet and appropriate backup documentation.

Subordinate Organizations

No entity except those listed as eligible may apply for funding under this program of their own accord (RMC 5.04.386). Eligible entities may apply on behalf of a subordinate entity or an entity that they are contractually collaborating with. A letter signed by both parties must be attached to each application made, which states the division of responsibility between the eligible entity and their subordinate collaborator.

Determination as to whether the collaboration and project is an eligible use will be made by the Economic Development Committee.

If a project is approved, the eligible entity shall be the signatory on any and all contracts and responsible for providing a project accounting, invoicing the program for reimbursement, and dispersing any funds to subordinate participants.

Guidelines

In reviewing the applications and making recommendations the following guidelines should be considered:

- The project must directly benefit the Richland business community.
- The fund is intended to serve as a seed fund to help new projects, events and other economic development initiatives get started and grow to success.
- In order for projects to apply for funds more than three consecutive years, the project needs to evolve in some way, showing progress and growth.
- The Economic Development Committee has the right to hold applications for funding until another funding cycle if the applicant can accommodate a delay in funding.
- Any organization receiving funds will be required to complete the reimbursement request form when submitting their receipts. Reimbursements **will not be made** without the cover sheet and appropriate backup documentation.
- Unused funds will roll over at the end of each year, not to exceed a year-end balance of \$200,000.
- In the event that there are not enough applications and the reserve exceeds \$200,000 at the end of the year, city departments may apply for public art projects to bring the balance of the fund back to \$200,000.

Review Procedures

- Applications must be fully completed. Applications are updated annually to reflect relevant updates to the goals, policies, and procedures of the Economic Development Committee.
- Each application is reviewed by Economic Development Staff. Incomplete applications or applications that do not fully answer each question, or meet all of the program guidelines staff has the option of disqualifying the application from further review or reach out to the applicant to request an update.
- Complete applications reviewed by the Economic Development Committee. Applicants or their designee are strongly encouraged to make a brief presentation to the Economic Development Committee review meeting. In the event that the applicant is unable to attend the meeting and there are questions from the Committee, the Committee may table the application or proceed without hearing a presentation. The eligible entity will also be required to attend the review meeting representing their collaboration with the subordinate entity before the Economic Development Committee.
- The Economic Development Committee will provide a recommendation for approval, denial, or approval with conditions to the Richland City Council. The Committee reserves the right to reject or table any application for further review and discussion if they determine that the application does not meet the intent of the program.
- After review by the City Attorney, recommendations are made to City Council for review and action.
- **The application period opens November of each year and closes on December 30 of each year with awards made by the end of February each year. Applicants are to spend the funds by December 31 of the award year.**
- Once approved by Richland City Council staff will notify the applicant and execute signed agreements.

Contact Information

Please return completed applications via mail or email to the address below. If you have questions regarding the program please use the contact information below:

City of Richland
Economic Development Department
Marketing Specialist – Mandy Wallner
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