



# CITY OF GROTON CONNECTICUT

## **Economic Development Grant Programs**

### **Description:**

The City of Groton's Economic Development Grant Programs are strategic investments to strengthen local businesses, attract private investment, enhance placemaking, and stimulate growth. They provide incentives to qualified existing and/or new businesses and commercial property owners in the City of Groton, CT.

Reimbursement funds, up to \$2,500, are available for the following:

- Business Soft Costs associated with opening or expanding a business in the City of Groton;
- Minor Façade Improvement costs associated with rehabilitating commercial façades within the [City of Groton Tax Increment Financing District](#).

Qualifying applications shall be consistent with the City of Groton's [2019 Plan of Conservation and Development](#), City of Groton [Zoning Regulations](#) and any economic development plans relevant to the City of Groton, CT.

### **Eligible Applicants:**

- Business Soft Cost:
  - Employ between 1 full-time employee and 25 full-time employees;
  - Business owner/operator and property owner must be in good standing with the payment of all local taxes;
  - Business must be located in a General Commercial (GC), Waterfront Business Residence (WBR), Five Corners (FC), Industrial/Technology (IT), or Technology Campus (TC) zone within the City of Groton. Exceptions may be made in transitional areas surrounding the aforementioned zones.
- Minor Façade Improvements:
  - Property must be located within the City of Groton Tax Increment Financing District. Exceptions may be made in transitional areas surrounding the aforementioned district;
  - Property must contain a permitted business and or service use as defined in the City of Groton Zoning Regulations;
  - Property Owner must be in good standing with the payment of all local taxes.



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## **Ineligible Applicant:**

- Business Soft Cost:
  - A home based business;
  - Employ more than 25 full time employees or less than 1 full time employee;
  - Business owner/operator and/or property owner with outstanding local taxes/fees;
  - Business owner/operator and/or property owner who is involved in litigation brought by the City of Groton or, against the City of Groton; and
  - Located in a zone other than General Commercial (GC), Waterfront Business Residence (WBR), Five Corners (FC), Industrial/Technology (IT), or Technology Campus (TC). Exceptions may be made in transitional areas surrounding the aforementioned zones.
- Minor Façade Improvement Program:
  - Residential Properties;
  - Property owner with outstanding local taxes/fees;
  - Property owner involved in litigation brought by the City of Groton or, against the City of Groton; and
  - Located outside of the City of Groton Tax Increment Financing District. Exceptions may be made in transitional areas surrounding the aforementioned district.

## **Eligible Cost:**

**Business Soft Costs** directly associated with the opening or expanding of a business. Including, but not limited to:

- Architectural Fees;
- Survey and/or Soil Scientist Fees;
- Engineering Fees;
- Legal Fees specific to planning and zoning issues; and,
- Consultant Fees
- Other Fees deemed necessary for business opening or expanding and pre-approved by the Planning & Economic Development Department.

**Minor Façade Improvement Costs** directly associated with the rehabilitation of a commercial façade (the frontage of the property along a public street). Including, but not limited to:

- Façade Repairs (painting, masonry, gutters, windows, and doors)
- Storefront Signage
- Awnings or Canopies
- Façade exterior lighting



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- Handicap accessibility
- Frontage Landscaping
- Other improvements pre-approved by the Planning & Economic Development Department

*\*Façade refers to the frontage of a commercial property along a public street*

### **Ineligible Costs:**

- Permit Fees;
- Utility Payments;
- Grant matching;
- Refinancing Debt;
- Payment of taxes or City/Town/State/Federal fees, assessments, interest, etc.

### **Funding Available:**

**Business Soft Costs** up to a \$2,500.00 reimbursement grant per business. Grant award will reimburse documented and eligible soft costs associated with opening or expanding a business in eligible zones.

**Minor Façade Improvement Costs** up to a \$2,500 reimbursement grant per active business tenant. Grant award will reimburse eligible and documented minor façade improvement costs associated with rehabilitating a commercial façade within the City of Groton Tax Increment Financing District. Property owners with multiple business tenants are encouraged to collaborate with business tenants, where feasible, to develop façade plans. Applicants are required to provide the City of Groton Planning & Economic Development a schematic sketch of proposed minor façade improvements, before and after pictures, and receipts for all work completed.

\*Applicants are eligible for one grant per project, per calendar year. The Economic Development Commission may waive this provision, but in no case can the total reimbursement exceed \$2,500/year/address. Applications for work completed within the previous six (6) months prior to the submittal of a grant application can be considered for this program.

### **Selection:**

The City of Groton Economic Development Specialist is available to work with applicants on grant submissions. The City of Groton Economic Development Commission will review and evaluate



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applications on a rolling basis and provide reimbursement recommendations to City Council for final approval.

**Submit Applications To:**

Planning & Economic Development Department  
C/O Economic Development Commission  
295 Meridian Street  
Groton, CT 06340

**Direct Questions To:**

Cierra Patrick  
[patrickc@cityofgroton-ct.gov](mailto:patrickc@cityofgroton-ct.gov)  
(860) 446-4066



## **Economic Development Grant Program**

### **POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

#### **I. PURPOSE**

Strategic investments to strengthen local business, attract private investment, enhance placemaking, and stimulate growth by providing incentives to qualifying existing and/or new businesses and commercial property owners in the City of Groton.

#### **II. ADMINISTRATION**

Economic Development Grant Programs will be administered by the Department of Planning & Economic Development. Applications will be vetted by the Economic Development Commission (EDC). The City's Economic Development Specialist will determine initial eligibility for the program. The EDC will determine application eligibility, alignment with program goals, level of funding reimbursement and recommend qualifying applications to be moved forward to the City Council for final approval; The City's Economic Development Specialist and EDC Chairperson will present recommend application(s) and level of funding reimbursement to City Council; The City Council has final authority for approval of the reimbursement amount within the parameters of these Policies and Procedures.

#### **III. PROGRAM AND TERMS**

Economic Development Grant Programs provide reimbursement grants of up to \$2,500 to qualified and approved commercial property owners and/or business owners for costs including but not limited to: Architectural Fees; Survey/Soil Scientist Fees; Engineering Fees; Legal Fees specific to planning and zoning issues related to the business; Consultant Fees; and Other Fees deemed necessary for business opening or expanding and pre-approved by the Planning & Economic Development Department; Façade Repairs (painting, masonry, gutters, windows, and doors); Storefront Signage; Awnings or Canopies; Exterior lighting; Handicap accessibility; Frontage Landscaping; and Other improvements pre-approved by the Planning & Economic Development Department. Programs are designed to help fund approved business soft costs and minor façade improvements only, no major building renovation, purchase of property or equipment, etc. will be considered. Funding awarded may be a lesser amount than the amount requested. The Economic Development Commission (EDC) will recommend a reimbursement award amount to City Council. The final amount of reimbursement awarded is at the discretion of the City Council.



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This is a reimbursement grant program. Reimbursement is available to the applicant when the grant request application has been processed, approved and the work requested for reimbursement in the application has been completed and paid for. Proof of payment must be provided to the Economic Development Specialist at the time of request for reimbursement.

## **IV. PROGRAM OVERSIGHT**

All applications shall initially be processed by the City of Groton's Economic Development Specialist. Eligible applications shall be reviewed by the Economic Development Commission in accordance with the program priorities as outlined below:

- A. Priority will be given to existing or new businesses that strengthen the City's business base, support existing businesses, stimulate growth, occupy or expand into vacant building space, meet zoning regulations and the goals of the Plan of Conservation and Development.
- B. Priority will be given to projects located in the Thames Street, Bridge Street, and Five Corners areas of the City of Groton.

## **V. ELIGIBLE COSTS**

Grants up to \$2,500 are available to business owners and/or property owners. All businesses and properties must be located in a General Commercial (GC), Waterfront Business Residence (WBR), Five Corners (FC), Industrial/Technology (IT), or Technology Campus (TC) zone. Or the Joint City & Town Tax Increment Financing District. All applicants must meet the following additional eligibility requirements.

- A. Eligible costs include, but are not limited to the following:
  - Architectural Fees;
  - Survey /Soil Scientist Fees;
  - Engineering Fees;
  - Legal Fees (specific to planning and zoning issues); and,
  - Consultant Fees as pre-approved by Staff (deemed specific/unique to the type of business operations).
  - Façade Repairs (painting, masonry, gutters, windows, and doors)
  - Storefront Signage
  - Awnings or Canopies
  - Exterior lighting
  - Handicap accessibility



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- Frontage Landscaping
- B. Ineligible costs include:
- Permit Fees;
  - Utility Payments;
  - Grant matching;
  - Refinancing Debt;
  - Payment of taxes
  - Payment to the business operator/owner and/or property owner or employee to reimburse their time applying for the grant.

## VI. APPLICANT AND PROPERTY ELIGIBILITY

- A. Applicants may be:
- Individual property owners, including partnerships and corporations making changes to their buildings in support of a existing and/or new commercial tenant
  - Business owners and/or operators. (If leasing space, application must come with written approval of the property owner)
- B. Each applicant is eligible for one grant per project, per calendar year. The Economic Development Commission may waive this provision, but in no case can the total reimbursement exceed \$2,500/year/address. Applications for work completed within the previous six (6) months prior to the submittal of a grant application, can be considered for this program. An individual property/address may receive more than one grant if each applicant applies separately, is proven to be a qualified single entity separate from the other applicant(s), the applications are reimbursement for separate, and distinct project costs, and the proposals meet the eligibility guidelines. For example, Businesses located in the same commercial complex are encouraged to collaborate with the property owner and adjoining businesses to develop Facade Improvements Plans. Each business can submit a reimbursement grant application for eligible façade improvements as they pertain to that business.
- C. **All proposals must comply with building and zoning requirements to be eligible. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that their proposal complies with building and zoning requirements and have written approval from all appropriate City staff before funds are dispersed.**
- D. Businesses/properties must be located in the previously listed eligible zones.
- E. All real estate and personal property taxes due to the City of Groton and Town of Groton for the property or business, for which funds are requested, must be paid in full at the time of application.



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- F. No applicant can be involved in litigation brought by the City of Groton or against the City of Groton.
- G. No applicant shall be eligible if they have been recently cited for existing zoning, building or property maintenance code violations at the location under consideration for program funds.
- H. Applicants who have outstanding water and sewer bills for any properties located in the City of Groton are not eligible unless a payment plan has been established with Groton Utilities or respective utility company.
- I. Letter of Good Standing ([DRS Status Letter](#)) from the CT Department of Revenue Services

## VII. PROCEDURE

- A. Complete the Economic Development Grant Reimbursement Application and submit it with all the required application materials to the City of Groton Planning & Economic Development Department. The City of Groton Economic Development Specialist will process applications on a rolling basis. All applications must be complete and eligible within these policies, to be considered for review by the City of Groton Economic Development Commission.
- B. Completed applications will be reviewed by the City of Groton Economic Development Commission to determine eligibility and amount of funding reimbursement to be recommended to City Council.
- C. Eligible applicants will be notified and the applications forwarded to the City Council for review and action at a Mayor & Council meeting or Committee of the Whole meeting. Applicants are required to attend the meeting.
- D. Upon final approval of the application the applicant will complete and sign all necessary Economic Development Grant Program Agreements and/or Contracts.
- E. When a request for reimbursement is submitted with verification proving that the approved work is completed and paid for in full, the applicant will be issued the appropriate reimbursement – based on the grant award.

### **Please Note:**

- ***Any property or business owner/operator thinking about applying should contact, Cierra Patrick, Economic Development Specialist, who will provide assistance with application submissions.***
- ***All applicants are responsible for the completeness and eligibility of their application.***
- ***The Economic Development Commission may reject applications deemed to be incomplete.***



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## VIII. GENERAL CONDITIONS

- A. Applicants must submit precise costs via an invoice or bill or an estimate signed by the contractor(s) doing the work. All costs will be reviewed to determine if the charge is reasonable (labor, material costs and standard going rates for the job or service).
- B. A project shall be considered eligible for reimbursement, when all the work as proposed has been verified as complete, and paid in full.
- C. Reimbursement from this grant program may not exceed \$2,500.
- D. The applicant and owner of the property agree upon executing an agreement with the City of Groton, to indemnify and hold harmless the members of the Economic Development Commission, the City of Groton, the Planning & Economic Development Department and its employees, contractors and agents against any claims, suits, liabilities or judgments for injury or injuries to persons, injury or destruction to owner's building(s), grounds or adjacent building(s) or grounds, loss to or interruption of the business or commerce of the owner, applicant, and/or the owner's tenants or agents due to work performed under said agreement.  
**Applicants must provide an insurance policy or certificate of insurance protecting the city from any loss, liability or damage that may result or accrue from or because of the proposed activity.**
- E. An applicant may appeal decisions of the Economic Development Commission for the applicant's project only. Said appeal shall be reviewed by the Planning & Economic Development Department & Mayor's Office.