



ATHENS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION BUSINESS ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM

Section 1. Purpose

The purpose of this Program is to enhance the economic vitality of the City of Athens by encouraging visually appealing physical improvements to new or existing business within the Athens City Limits. Properties that reside within the city limits of Athens, Texas. Properties that are within areas highlighted on the beautification area map included in this packet will receive priority consideration. Please note that rehabilitation to properties located within the City of Athens downtown district, which possess historic significance, must meet the city's requirement of preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural or architectural values.

Section 2. Grant Type

- A. **FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT:** Improvements to storefronts, including, but not limited to, items such as painting, reconstruction and remodeling.

Up to a 75% matching grant with maximum of \$12,500

- B. **SIGN IMPROVEMENTS:** New signs, and renovation or removal of existing signs.

Up to a 75% matching grant with maximum of \$6,000

- C. **PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT:** Exterior or interior improvements that will enable expansion of the business as well as exterior items such as landscaping, lighting, sidewalk and driveway improvement, parking lot improvements are also allowed.

Up to a 75% matching grant with maximum of \$12,500

- D. **DEMOLITION IMPROVEMENT:** Demolition of signs or structures.

Up to a 75% matching grant with maximum of \$12,500

Section 3. Application & Approval

- I. Applications must be made on the form provided by AEDC and may be obtained at the Athens Partnership Center, 201 W. Corsicana Street, Suite 3, Athens, Texas 75751 or on the AEDC website at www.AthensTexasEDC.com.
- II. One (1) original and one (1) copy of an application must be submitted in hard copy.

- III. Proof of ownership of the property will be required of Applicants or an Applicant operating in a leased facility must apply jointly with property owner. Copies of a lease agreement, proof of ownership, and written permission for the improvements will be required.
- IV. **All applications must contain cost estimates (bid) from a minimum of two (2) qualified contractors or suppliers.**
- V. AEDC may request additional information or clarification from Applicant.
- VI. Application should include photos of the existing condition to be improved and a rendition of improvements to be made.
- VII. AEDC may approve an application grant with provisions, conditions, or other requirements as it deems appropriate.
- VIII. Applicants will be notified in writing of AEDC's approval or disapproval of an application. If approved, a Grant Agreement will be presented to Applicant for signature, to then be presented to the AEDC Board at a Board Meeting for approval.

Section 4: Restrictions

- A. Labor provided by the Applicant or his/her employees may not be included in the cost estimate of the project and is not reimbursable through this Grant Program.
- B. This Grant Program is a reimbursement style grant unless AEDC Board approves in writing that the grant may be administered on a "draw" system. All Grant terms will be governed by the Performance Agreement entered into by AEDC and the Grantee.
- C. Grant funding will be limited to one (1) grant to any one (1) Applicant or joint Applicant during a calendar year.
- D. Home-based businesses are not eligible.
- E. Applicants, business and/or properties which have outstanding financial obligations to AEDC or the City of Athens, such as liens, court fines, city utility bills, or delinquent property taxes are not eligible.
- F. A valid Certificate of Occupancy must be issued to the Business
- G. Improvements must be made in accordance with project drawings, specifications, and information provided in the application, and as approved by AEDC.
- H. Applicant must obtain all applicable permits related to the improvement project.
- I. Applicant may not knowingly employ an undocumented worker as defined by law.
- J. If landscaping is considered as part of the grant, all landscaping shall be irrigated and maintained and warranted by the Applicant for a minimum of one (1) year from the date of installation to be replaced by Applicant if the landscaping becomes diseased, damaged, or dies.
- K. Improvements may not commence prior to having received written approval for a grant from AEDC, execution of a Grant Agreement and approval of the AEDC Board.
- L. Grants are subject to approval by the AEDC Board.
- M. Applicant shall fully comply with all federal and Texas laws including, but not limited to those involving civil rights, employment, drug-free work place, and the handicapped, and specifically agrees that it will not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or by reason of being disabled.

Section 5. Evaluation of Applications

- A. AEDC reserves the sole discretion to approve or deny a grant application. The Applicant accepts that decisions relating to the award of grant funds involves subjective judgments on the part of AEDC, including the aesthetics of the proposed project, the proposed project as an improvement to the property, the benefit to the City of Athens, total funds to be expended by Applicant, productive life of improvements and the availability of funds budgeted by AEDC.
- B. AEDC reserves the right to utilize outside resources it deems necessary for assistance in its decision-making process.
- C. AEDC reserves the right to waive any requirement(s) herein contained, and/or add any requirements it deems appropriate in making its determination of approval or disapproval of a grant application.

Section 6. Funding

- A. Applicant shall provide AEDC with written notification of project completion by letter stating that all improvements have been completed in accordance with the application, approval and Grant Agreement, and that full payments have been made for all labor and materials with attached paid receipts for materials and labor, the issuance of a CO by the City of Athens, inspection reports, and project photographs.
- B. Upon receipt of a notification of completion, an on-site inspection may be made by a representative or representatives of AEDC. Such inspection shall not be considered in any way as a reflection of AEDC's approval on the quality, safety, or reliability of the improvements, such being the sole responsibility of Applicant.
- C. Following on-site inspection, AEDC will review the findings and request additional information if needed, and notify the Applicant of compliance or items of non-compliance. Failure to correct the items of non-compliance within thirty (30) days of notice thereof shall be cause for default on the Grant Agreement.
- D. On finding by the AEDC Board of Directors of completion of the project and approval, payment of the grant funds will be made.
- E. Should the AEDC Board issues an "draw" style reimbursement letter, draws will only be paid after the validation by AEDC staff that work represented in the draw request has been completed, proof of payment has been made and a physical site inspection has occurred.

Section 7. General

- I. The AEDC Board reserves unto itself the right to amend or end this Grant Program as it may from time to time find desirable.
- II. This Grant Program does not create any property, contract, or other legal rights in any person.
- III. AEDC, its employees, and its agents, do not attest to the quality, safety, or construction of a project eligible for, or receiving grant funding.



AEDC Grant Program Application Coversheet
2022 Business Assistance Grant Program

Applications open October 1, 2021.

Deadline for all applications to be turned in is at 5pm on November 19, 2021.

Awards will be announced after December 21, 2021 AEDC Board Meeting.

Applications must be delivered by hard copy in person at the Athens Economic Development Corporation office located at 201 W Corsicana Street in the Athens Partnership Center.

Awards will require a legally binding Performance Agreement.



Business Assistance Grant Program
Athens Economic Development Corporation
201 W. Corsicana Street | Athens, TX 75751 | (903)675-4617
www.Athenstexasedc.com

Privacy Information

Information provided in this application is considered a public record and may be subject to public disclosure through the Texas Public Records Act.

CONTACT INFORMATION

First/Last Name:

Name of Business:

Business Type:

Address of Business:

Email Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

City of Athens Certificate of Occupancy date (can be approximate) _____

Business ownership:

Please provide applicable business documentation such as DBA, Partnership Agreement, Corporate Charter, etc.

Type of grant(s) being requested:

- Facade Sign Property Improvement Demolition

Are you a First Time Applicant applying for AEDC Grant funds? Y / N

Please provide a brief description of business activity.

Real property is owned by Applicant This property is leased. Please provide lease agreement

Name of Lessor _____

Address of Lessor _____

Lessor Contact: phone _____

Email _____

Date business established in Athens, Texas: _____

Please provide a description of the proposed project:

Please provide any additional information which would further help describe this project, including paint color, photographs, rendering a design, specifications and other material to describe your project:

Amount of grant funds requested: _____

Total projected cost of project _____

Estimated start date of project _____

Estimated completion date of project _____

Please attach photos of existing conditions _____

Please provide any additional information you believe to be important concerning this grant application below or in cover letter format.

Acknowledgements/Signature

Please check each statement acknowledging that you have read and affirm the information you have submitted within this application is true and accurate to the best of your knowledge.

- My business has a physical and publicly accessible location within the city limits of Athens, TX.
- My business is in good standing with the City of Athens with respect to taxes, fees, utility payments, or other financial obligations to the City.
- My business is engaged in activities that are legal under city and state law.
- My business is registered with the Texas Secretary of State's Office or DBA registered with Henderson County.
- Attach proof of:** rent/mortgage payments (or letter stating you are in good standing); current utility bills; and payroll (most recent quarterly Workforce Solutions report)
- Attach copies of:** all bank statements; Sec. of State business registration or DBA; Profit and Loss statement for the past 3 years; if requested the last 2 years of corporate or personal income tax returns.

I (we) the undersigned do hereby acknowledge, certify and agree:

The submission of this Application does not create any property, contract or other legal rights in any person or entity to have AEDC provide grant funding.

Applicant certifies that it, the company, its branches, divisions and departments do not and will not knowingly employ an undocumented worker. Applicant will repay the total amount of the public benefit received with interest at the rate and accordingly if the company is convicted of a violation under 8 U.S.C. Section 1324a.

Improvements will not commence prior to having received written approval for a grant from AEDC, execution of a Grant Agreement and approval of the AEDC board.

This application and all statements therein are true and correct, and it is executed under penalties of perjury.

Signed this _____ day of _____, 20____.

Applicant

Applicant