

RESOLUTION NO. 2019- R

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SAN MARCOS, TEXAS AMENDING THE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AND GROWTH (BIG) GRANT PROGRAM GUIDELINES TO PROHIBIT CITY EMPLOYEES AND OFFICIALS FROM BENEFITING FROM BIG GRANT PROGRAM FUNDS AND TO CLARIFY PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY AND INTENT; AND DECLARING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SAN MARCOS, TEXAS:

PART 1. The BIG Program Guidelines are amended as shown in the Exhibit A, attached hereto.

PART 2. This resolution shall be in full force and effect immediately from and after its passage.

ADOPTED on January 15, 2019.

Jane Hughson
Mayor

Attest:

Jamie Lee Case
City Clerk

EXHIBIT A

How does the BIG Program work?

The City will provide a fifty percent matching grant to reimburse up to \$20,000 for well-designed property improvements, and an additional fifty percent matching grant to reimburse up to \$5,000 for construction of monument-type signage or the removal and replacement of non-conforming signs. Grant funding for signage may only be requested in conjunction with a grant application for real property improvements. Applications for signage only will not be considered. The applicant's match may be in the form of other financial aid (grant or loan) received from other agencies or financial institutions, but may not be "in-kind."

The BIG Grant Program will only reimburse applicants after the project is determined to have been completed in accordance with the contract and the applicant has paid his/her architect, contractor and vendor(s) in full.

Improvements funded by the program must be compatible with the character and architecture of the individual property, and must meet current City standards with regard to occupant safety. Historical or architecturally significant features shall be restored and maintained. Improvements to properties without such features should be seen as an opportunity to substantially enhance the appearance of the properties and adjacent streetscapes. Properties should be oriented to the pedestrian and provide visual interest both day and night. Effort should be made to promote accessibility and to create a property identity unique to San Marcos or the respective neighborhood.

Initial consultation with City staff is necessary in order to help avoid misunderstanding as to the eligibility of proposals. City staff may provide guidance regarding improvements specific to individual storefronts. The applicant may hire his/her own licensed design professional(s) to work on the project from start to completion, or request that City staff assist first with the conceptual design of the project. If the latter option is chosen, the applicant may be required to hire his/her own licensed design professional(s) to carry forth the conceptual design to completion of construction.

What improvements are eligible for the BIG grant program?

- Restoration of exterior details in historically contributing or significant buildings, and removal of elements that conceal architectural details, including cleaning, repainting or residing of building;
- New storefront construction, appropriately scaled within an existing building, and in substantial conformance with all applicable provisions of the San Marcos Land Development Code;
- Awnings or canopies in character with the building and streetscape;
- Lighting that is visually appealing and appropriately illuminates signage, storefront window displays, and recessed areas of a building façade;
- Window replacement and window framing visible from the street and appropriately scaled to the building;
- Signage that is attractively integrated into the architecture of the building, including the window area, awnings or canopies, and entryways, and the removal and replacement of non-conforming signs;
- Installation of monument signage, and the removal and replacement of non-conforming signs;
- Curbing, irrigation, approved trees, landscaping beds (not including planting material) or other landscape features attached to the building where appropriate, not to exceed twenty percent (20%) of the project budget;
- Removal of architectural barriers to public accessibility;
- Installation of fire sprinklers or other life-safety systems in historically or architecturally significant buildings; and
- Other improvements that meet the objectives of the BIG Grant Program.

Who is eligible for the BIG grant program?

- Applicants must be commercial property owners or commercial tenants located in San Marcos within the Downtown CD-5D zoning district or along designated corridors (see BIG Grant Program Eligible Area Map);
- Preference will be given to independent businesses not required by contractual arrangement to maintain standardized décor, architecture, signs or similar features;
- Tenants must have written approval from property owners to participate in the program;
- Any and all nonconforming signage on the property must be permanently removed as part of the improvement;
- Property owners must be current on all municipal taxes prior to participation in the program;
- Applicants must comply with all State and local laws and regulations pertaining to licensing, permits, building code and zoning requirements;
- Applicants must agree not to change or alter the property improvements without prior written approval from the BIG Review Committee for three (3) years from the date of the rebate check issued under the BIG Grant Program;
- Improvements made prior to written approval by the BIG Review Committee will not be funded;
- City employees or officials, or their immediate family members (spouse, children, siblings, parents) are ineligible to apply for or receive BIG Program funds;
- BIG Program funds may not be awarded for any improvements to property or buildings owned in whole or in part by any city employee or official, or their immediate family members (spouse, children, siblings, parents), or any business organization of which such persons are equity owners, shareholders, members, partners or officers; and
- Understanding that the overall objective of the BIG Grant Program is to improve the exterior visibility and presentation of a property, the City has the discretion to decline an application while suggesting enhancements that would enable future acceptance.