



Building Better Business





Building Better Business

Objective

The Crookston Housing and Economic Development Authority (CHEDA) recognize that healthy businesses play an important role in the vitality of Crookston and understand there are numerous challenges that businesses can face. The Building Better Business Program aims to help initiate, revitalize, sustain and grow businesses. This program will encourage the recruitment, growth and success of small businesses located in our city. The program is designed to provide a mechanism for CHEDA to evaluate and award incentives to qualifying businesses, located within the city limits of Crookston.

Goals

- Encourage entrepreneurship and new business ventures
- Provide new and enhanced job opportunities
- Increase the commercial tax base in Crookston
- Advocate community vitality and presentation
- Occupy underutilized or vacant buildings, encouraging new investment and strengthening landlord return on investment



Guidelines

The Building Better Business funds are for the purpose of assisting with various start-up, improvement, or expansion expenses. CHEDA looks to leverage existing investment dollars and create additional funding mechanisms with these funds.

The program funds can be awarded for the following uses:

- Marketing and Advertising Expenses
- Signs (refurbish or replace existing and newly installed)
- Start-up costs (building renovation, capital)
- Business and/or workforce development
- Storefront or building enhancement and visibility
- Purchase of supplies, equipment or software
- Renovations or minor repairs
- Increase hours of operation
- Improve community vitality
- Down payments towards the lease or purchase of a commercial location
- Specific job training

The program funds are not awarded for the following uses:

- Lacking tax ID number
- Outside of city limits
- Incomplete application
- Government entity
- Completed projects
- Delinquent taxes
- Pay off existing debt



Frequently Asked Questions

How much money is available?

Program funds will be up to \$3000 per business owner and applicants must provide 1:1 matching funds. Additional funds are available as follows:

1. There is an additional \$1000 to be offered for the business owner who has graduated from Crookston High Schools. This award is intended to incentivize local graduates to start their businesses in Crookston. It is CHEDA's hope that this will keep local high school graduates in the area and provide local high school graduates with a benefit for doing so. CHEDA believes that local high school graduates are more likely to remain in Crookston, be successful in Crookston, and contribute to Crookston's development.
2. A graduate of the University of MN Crookston or Northland Community & Technical College will be offered an additional \$1000 of program funding. This award is intended to incentivize local college graduates to start their businesses in Crookston. It is CHEDA's hope that this will keep local college graduates in the area and provide local college graduates with a benefit for doing so. CHEDA believes that local college graduates are more likely to remain in Crookston, be successful in Crookston, and contribute to Crookston's development.
3. Any existing business wishing to relocate to Crookston will also be eligible to receive up to \$2000 of program funding payable upon successful relocation to Crookston.

Maximum award amount is up to \$5000.

Who is eligible?

Business owners located within Crookston City limits that are located in a tax paying property which is or becomes occupied.

Who is not eligible?

- Home business owners
- Nonprofit organizations
- Previous recipient of two BBB awards



Does the money need to be paid back?

If the business ceases to operate within two years of receipt of funds, 50% of all program funds must be repaid. Also, if the project is not completed within 6 months or the business relocates, 100% of program funds must be repaid.

How many times can I apply and receive funds?

Recipients can receive a maximum of two awards. The first one is up to \$5000 (taking advantage of local education graduations or business relocation) and the second with a maximum of \$3000. One award per calendar year.



Program Application Procedure

Program application must be completed and submitted in full.

The CHEDA Board of Commissioners reserves the right to make awards of limited funds based on relative merits, positive community impacts and funding available.

The applicant **shall not begin** any improvements related to the application prior to receiving written approval of program funding from CHEDA.

1. Complete the program application form available at the Valley Technology Park office. (Located on North side of UMC campus) or download from the CHEDA website (www.crookstonheda.com). Program proposal may be delivered in person or mailed to the CHEDA office at the bottom of this page.
2. If the Application is complete and all attachments acceptable, the CHEDA Staff will approve the application. Should the Staff require further information or alterations to the application; the applicant will be contacted by the CHEDA office.
3. An interview with a small B3 committee including the CHEDA Executive Director, City Administrator, and City Council member will be conducted with the applicant.
4. This B3 committee will make recommendation of award to the CHEDA Board.
5. Recipients will be required to show invoices and sign a grant repayment agreement before funds can be received. CHEDA will pay the invoices.
6. If the application is accepted and approved by the CHEDA Board of Commissioners and a grant repayment agreement is signed by the recipient, funds will be dispersed primarily in the form of direct payment on invoices provided.
7. Deviations from an approved project plan may disqualify the applicant from receiving program funding.
8. The applicant, CHEDA Executive Director and City Administrator will conduct a final inspection upon completion of the project.

Return completed application forms and materials to:

Crookston Housing and Economic Development Authority
510 County Road 71
Crookston, MN 56716



Building Better Business Program

APPLICATION

APPLICANT INFORMATION (please print clearly)

Applicant Name: _____

Applicant's Address: _____

Applicant's Phone: _____

Email: _____

Crookston Schools Graduate UMN/Northland Tech Graduate Business Relocating to Crookston

BUILDING INFORMATION

Building Address: _____

Are you the building owner? Yes No

If you are not the building owner, you must have the building owner fill out the following:

Building Owner's Name: _____

Building Owner's Address: _____

Building Owner's Phone: _____

I understand and agree to the project as detailed in this agreement.

Signature of Building Owner: _____ Date: _____

PROJECT INFORMATION

Please provide the following attachments¹:

- A) Itemized scope of work
- B) Project estimates
- C) Executive summary of your business plan

PROJECT COST

Estimated Project Cost: \$ _____

Funding Request: ² \$ _____

¹ Your application will not be considered complete if any of the attachments are missing.

² Your funding request must be 50% or less of the Estimated Project Cost.



PROJECT SCHEDULE

Anticipated Starting Date: _____

Anticipated Completion Date: _____

APPLICANT’S CERTIFICATION

I understand that the program applications will be evaluated and recommended to the CHEDA Board of Commissioners by a small committee interview process including the CHEDA Executive Director and City Administrator and perhaps up to two City Council members. The awards will be based on the following criteria, at the discretion of the CHEDA Board of Commissioners:

- Proposed use of the program funds (Scope of Work)
- Project estimate and/or bids
- Business Plan including current financial statement, length of time business has been operating, marketing and a marketing plan
- Readiness of the business to carry out proposed work.

I understand that program funds will only be awarded for work, items, and/or projects performed or received after approval of the application. All projects must be completed within 6 months of approval. Funds will be awarded to the applicant upon Board approval. Applicant must submit copies of all invoices/receipts and copies of all required permits and approvals. Fund disbursement will be to pay outstanding invoice balances.

I (Applicant) hereby confirm that _____ is a business that is/will be located in Crookston, Minnesota. I acknowledge that if I am not currently located in the area, I must purchase, lease or relocate the business to Crookston in order to receive funds. If my business ceases to operate within two years of program approval I must repay 50% of all program funds provided, or if my business relocates outside of Crookston within two years of program approval, I must repay all program funds provided. I also agree to a follow-up interview with the CHEDA Executive Director and City Administrator within 6 months after funds are received to better evaluate and document the program’s success. **I have read and understand the procedures and agree to follow the Building Better Business Program Process. I am submitting documentation as requested.**

Applicant’s Signature: _____ Date: _____



Attachment “A”

Itemized Scope of Work

A series of 20 horizontal lines spanning the width of the page, intended for itemizing the scope of work.

