Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA)

City of Cape Coral, Florida
Breaking Barriers to Business (B2B) Grant Program

The City of Cape Coral Community Redevelopment Agency issues the following Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for the FY 2023 Breaking Barriers to Business (B2B) Grant Program to support incentive grants to assist with site development costs of new non-residential construction, building/facility expansions or renovations.

I. Program Overview

The Breaking Barriers to Business (B2B) Program is an initiative by the City of Cape Coral, Florida, designed to encourage new non-residential construction, building expansions, and renovations in the South Cape area. The purpose of the B2B program is to provide grant assistance to developers and business owners who are looking to invest in the South Cape Community Reinvestment Area and meet the requirements of the City's Land Development Code.

The B2B program is intended to support economic development and growth in the South Cape area by providing financial assistance to businesses and developers who are committed to building, expanding, or renovating their facilities in compliance with the City's regulations. By doing so, the B2B program seeks to remove barriers to business development and promote the growth of the local economy.

Through the B2B program, eligible businesses and developers can receive grant assistance to cover the costs incurred in meeting the requirements of the City's Land Development Code. This may include costs associated with site development, building construction, renovation, and other related expenses. By providing financial assistance for these costs, the B2B program aims to make it easier for businesses and developers to invest in the South Cape area and promote the economic growth of the region.

Overall, the B2B program is an important tool for promoting economic development and growth in the South Cape area, by encouraging businesses and developers to invest in the region and meet the City's Land Development Code requirements.

II. Program Goals

The Breaking Barriers to Business (B2B) Grant Program aims to achieve several program goals that align with the City's broader economic development objectives. These goals are designed to support job creation, business attraction and retention, enhance the local economy, improve infrastructure, and foster collaboration between the City of Cape Coral and the business community. The program seeks to accomplish the following:

- **Job Creation:** The B2B Grant Program aims to encourage projects that have the potential to create new employment opportunities within the City of Cape Coral. By providing incentive grants for site development costs, the program incentivizes businesses to invest in the community, expand their operations, and generate job opportunities for local residents.

- **Business Attraction and Retention:** The program aims to attract new businesses to the area and support existing businesses in their expansion efforts. By offering financial assistance for new non-residential construction, building/facility expansions, or renovations, the B2B Grant Program helps businesses overcome financial barriers, making it more attractive for them to establish or expand their operations within the city.

- **Impact on the Local Economy:** The B2B Grant Program recognizes the importance of economic growth and its impact on the local community. By facilitating new construction, expansions, or renovations, the program stimulates economic activity, increases tax revenue, and contributes to the overall prosperity of Cape Coral. The program focuses on projects that have the potential to positively influence the local economy and enhance the city's economic competitiveness.

- **Improved Infrastructure:** In order to support sustainable economic development, the B2B Grant Program emphasizes the importance of infrastructure improvements. The program encourages projects that not only contribute to the physical development of businesses but also enhance the surrounding infrastructure. This may include improvements to roads, utilities, transportation systems, or other public amenities that can support the growth and success of businesses in the area.

- **Fostering Collaboration:** The B2B Grant Program aims to foster collaboration and partnership between the City of Cape Coral and the business community. By providing financial incentives, the program encourages businesses to work closely with the city government, creating a collaborative environment that promotes shared goals and objectives. This collaboration helps ensure that projects align with the city's development plans, regulatory requirements, and long-term economic vision.

By pursuing these program goals, the Breaking Barriers to Business (B2B) Grant Program plays a crucial role in promoting economic development, job creation, and infrastructure improvements in the City of Cape Coral. It encourages businesses to invest in the community, fosters a supportive business environment, and strengthens the overall economic vitality of the city.

III. Funding Availability

Approximately $250,000 has been made available under the 2023 Breaking Barriers to Business (B2B) Program. The B2B program is a reimbursement-based program providing up to 20 percent of capital costs for eligible capital improvement projects. Projects exceeding $25,000 are eligible for a grant of 20 percent of capital costs, not exceeding $50,000. To be eligible, projects must have a minimum capital investment of $25,000. Disbursement of funds will be made only after the recipient secures all necessary permits and approvals, including a certificate of occupancy.

As a condition of award, all applicants that receive B2B funding will be required to place a sign or placard at sites supported under this award that informs the public that the improvement is funded in part by the Cape Coral Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA).

Please note that awards are subject to funding availability and at the discretion of the City Manager/CRA.

III. Eligibility Criteria

Eligible applicants include business owners and developers proposing new non-residential construction, building expansions or renovations in the South Cape area of the City. All proposed projects must be located within the South Cape area as defined in defined by the Cape Coral South Cape CRA.

- A minimum investment of $25,000 is required of all applicants, which can include land/building acquisition costs and soft costs such as design and permitting.
- Expenditures incurred up to 24 months prior to the date of grant submission will be allowed in calculating **minimum investment**.
- Expenditures incurred up to 90 days prior to submission of the grant application will be allowed for the **grant amount calculated.**
- Projects must have a permit application number assigned by the Development Services Department.
- Standalone residential development projects are ineligible.

IV. Eligible Expenditures

Land improvement and development costs including:

- On-site infrastructure design and construction
- Right-of-way improvements required by new construction or on-site improvement
- Landscaping and road beautification costs
- Water and sewer connection fees
- Telecommunication connection fees and costs
- Drainage facilities in conjunction with new construction or on-site improvements
- Construction of new curbs
- Curb cuts, medians, shoulders, and sidewalks
- Relocating utilities to accommodate new construction or on-site improvements
- Other types of site development expenses that may be approved by the city
- Payment of impact, Contribution In Aid of Construction (CIAC), and special assessment fees assessed by the city

VI. Application Instructions

The program application and list of required documents are available on the City of Cape Coral website at www.capecoral.gov/edo.

Deadline Date: Applications will be accepted on an ongoing basis until program funds have been depleted.

VII. Priority Consideration

The 2023 Breaking Barriers to Business (B2B) Business Infrastructure Grant Program will prioritize proposals that include plans for off-site parking for their business. This priority consideration underscores the City's commitment to sustainable development practices and supports businesses that prioritize the needs of their customers and the community as a whole.

VIII. Evaluation Criteria

Scoring will be based on a 100-point scale. Applicants with a score of 60 or higher will be referred to the CRA Board for consideration.

- **Compliance with the Cape Coral Land Development Code (10 points)**
  The proposal should demonstrate compliance with the city's land development code and regulations, including zoning laws, building codes, and environmental regulations. The proposal must have a permit application number assigned by the Development Services Department.

- **Project Feasibility and Viability: (20 points)**
  The proposal should demonstrate the feasibility and viability of the proposed project, including its economic and financial viability, and market demand.

- **Project Impact: (20 points)**
  The proposal should describe the expected impact of the project on the local economy, including job creation, increased tax revenue, and other economic benefits.

- **Off-Site Parking: (10 points)**
  The proposal should demonstrate how the project incorporates off-site parking for their business.

- **Sustainability: (20 points)**
  The proposal should demonstrate how the project incorporates sustainable design principles, energy efficiency, and renewable energy sources.

- **Public Benefit: (20 points)**
  The proposal should describe how the project will benefit the public, such as by creating public space; improving infrastructure; redevelops underutilized properties; promotes the efficient use of land through the elimination of blight; or enhances the community's quality of life.

X. Contact Information

Sharon Woodberry, Economic and Business Development Officer
Office: 239.242.3274
Email: swoodberry@capecoral.gov