

# downtown *Billings*

## Large Project Incentive Grant Information & Application

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Downtown Billings Partnership, Inc.  
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[www.downtownbillings.com](http://www.downtownbillings.com)

# Large Project Incentive Grant

## Purpose:

The purpose of this program is to provide financial and practical assistance to develop or redevelop buildings within the boundaries of the Expanded North 27th Street Urban Renewal District (URD) in downtown Billings. This program will:

- 1) Assist in the economic revitalization and stabilization of the URD;
- 2) Attract and retain a stable clientele population within the URD;
- 3) Stimulate private investment within the URD;
- 4) Generate additional property tax revenues within the URD; and
- 5) Encourage and facilitate in the remodeling and restoration of historically significant structures within the URD.

Large projects must support the goals of the Downtown Billings Strategic Plan and the Urban Renewal Plan of the North 27<sup>th</sup> St. TIFD. Applicants are encouraged to consider the design aesthetic of the surrounding neighborhood when submitting a design for review.

Applicants are reminded that grant awards made by the Downtown Billings Partnership (DBP) are discretionary in nature and should not be considered an entitlement by the applicant. All grant criteria contained herein are guidelines for awards and successful applicants may receive any amount up to the maximum award. Should an applicant meet all grant criteria, a grant may or may not be awarded at the DBP and Billings City Council's discretion due to funding limitation, competing applications, and/or competing priorities of the DBP.

## Eligible Expenses:

**Section One:** All public governments as well as public corporations (501c3) inherently have a public benefit purpose. Even though public business normally is not subject to property tax, if their projects, programs, or activities can show blight remediation, as defined by the Urban Renewal Plan, they qualify for up to 100% TIFD assistance. [MCA 35-1-1402 Definitions](#).

**Section Two:** Pursuant to [MCA 7-15-4208](#), private enterprise and private projects are encouraged and enabled to receive TIFD support for qualified expenditures/costs.

**Section Three:** Qualified Expenditures - [MCA 7-15-4282](#) through [7-15-4294](#). Ordinance [08-5483](#).

- a. Remediation or diminishing blight [{MCA 7-15-4206\(2\)}](#) affecting buildings and structures that negatively impact the residents of the city due to:
  - i. Substantial deterioration especially roofs in serious need of repair or replacement
  - ii. Obsolete uses that require a change of use
  - iii. Defective and not in compliance with current Building and Fire Codes
    1. Electrical service upgrades
    2. plumbing upgrades
  - iv. Unsanitary and/or unsafe structures
  - v. Vacant and unused spaces
- b. Relocation of displaced people and/or businesses
- c. Enhancement of infrastructure, public or private, that improve the pedestrian experience
  - i. Streetlights, sidewalks, curbs, gutters, wayfinding, and placemaking
  - ii. Repair and stabilization of vault caps in the public right of way
  - iii. Building and business signage
  - iv. Facade stabilization and/or improvement
  - v. Outdoor patios

- vi. Landscaping
- vii. Green spaces
- d. Mixed use redevelopment containing
  - i. Parking
  - ii. Conference facilities
  - iii. Housing
    - 1. Market rate
    - 2. Workforce
  - iv. Street level retail and dining
- e. Improvements that lead to stabilized and/or increased taxable valuation
- f. Relocation of utility wires, inefficient land use, and/or problems of access and circulation
- g. Increased use of public transit
- h. Increased Crime Prevention and Public Safety
  - i. Increased energy efficiencies
  - i. Exterior windows, and doors
  - ii. HVAC upgrades
- j. Change of ownership through property acquisition

**Section Four:** Qualified Expenditures - [MCA 7-15-4282](#) through [7-15-4294](#). Ordinance [12-5590](#).

- k. Remediation or diminishing blight {MCA 7-15-4206(2)} at sidewalk/street level that negatively impacts the residents of the city due to:
  - i. Vacant storefronts
    - 1. Business Retention and Recruitment projects
      - a. Business plan program/contest (e.g. Battle of the Plans)
      - b. Retail coordinator staff or consultant
      - c. Strategic planning
      - d. Marketing and promotion
      - e. Commercial rent assistance
      - f. Public art
      - g. Pocket parks

**Timeframe and application process:**

Applications will be accepted and reviewed quarterly. Applications must be received by the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the first month of each quarter. Each complete application will be reviewed by the DBP staff, Development Committee, and the DBP Board of Directors and, if recommended, will go in front of the Billings City Council for final approval within each quarterly grant cycle.

<b>Application Due to DBP</b>	<b>Application Reviewed by Development Committee and DBP Board</b>	<b>Application Presented to City Council for Final Approval</b>
July 15	2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday of August – Dev. Com 4 <sup>th</sup> Friday of August – DBP Board	September Council Business Meeting
October 15	2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday of November – Dev. Com 4 <sup>th</sup> Friday of November – DBP Board	December Council Business Meeting
January 15	2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday of February – Dev. Com 4 <sup>th</sup> Friday of February – DBP Board	March Council Business Meeting
April 15	2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday of May – Dev. Com 4 <sup>th</sup> Friday of May – DBP Board	June Council Business Meeting
<b>Every effort will be made to facilitate every complete application through the entire process within each quarterly grant cycle. Incomplete applications may extend the process</b>		

**Grading Criteria:**

<p><b>The purpose of this program is to provide financial and practical assistance to develop or redevelop buildings within the boundaries of the Expanded North 27th Street Urban Renewal District (URD) in downtown Billings. This program will:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Assist in the economic revitalization and stabilization of the URD;</li> <li>- Attract and retain a stable clientele population within the URD;</li> <li>- Stimulate private investment within the URD;</li> <li>- Generate additional property tax revenues within the URD; and</li> <li>- Encourage and facilitate in the remodeling and restoration of historically significant structures within the URD.</li> </ul>		<p>Out of a total of 85 points, each item to be scored 0-5:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 55 to be considered</li> <li>● 65 to be strongly considered</li> <li>● 75 to be of highest priority</li> </ul>
<p><b>Vibrancy &amp; Connectedness</b></p>		
<p>Some of the resistance to walking from a parking facility to a destination in the downtown area can be overcome if the walk itself offers the visitor a pleasant, unique, fun, or informative experience.</p> <p>Promotion of upper floor housing and new housing development projects for downtown and prioritization of model housing development projects that test the market, establish a price floor, and prove viability.</p>		
Does the project eliminate blight?	Blight may include but is not limited to conditions which represent a risk to public health, morals, safety, and welfare in its present condition. Examples range from physical dilapidation to improper or inefficient layout. For a more complete list of factors, refer to MCA 7-15-4206	<b>0 1 2 3 4 5</b>
Does the project add or improve housing opportunities?	Construction or rehabilitation of housing is a priority in the downtown area. Quantity, quality, and projected rental or sale rates of units are to be considered.	<b>0 1 2 3 4 5</b>
Does the project add, maintain, and/or enhance landscaping?	Addition of significant and sustainable landscaping where appropriate is encouraged.	<b>0 1 2 3 4 5</b>
Does the project activate an inactive building or space?	Vacant buildings can be considered blighted. Consideration is to be given to current AND expected duration of vacancy based on all currently available information.	<b>0 1 2 3 4 5</b>
Does the project connect and/or improve walkways, parks, or parking options?	Does it widen sidewalks and calm car traffic? Does it provide weather protection with trees or awnings? Are any or all improvements aesthetically pleasing (painted in interesting ways or otherwise include public art)?	<b>0 1 2 3 4 5</b>
Does the project add or improve green space or public space?	Examples include urban parks, micro parks, and parklets.	<b>0 1 2 3 4 5</b>

<b><u>Strong Identity</u></b>		
Creative painting of crosswalks and intersections can have dual benefits of adding to the visual appeal of downtown while also improving safety by alerting drivers to areas with heavier pedestrian traffic.		
Two way street networks provide lower vehicle moving capacities but can serve trips at a higher rate.		
Two way traffic, enhanced sidewalk spaces, and a narrower street attracts new and vibrant businesses.		
Does the project support increased visitation?	Examples include large spaces which could host concerts or other gatherings, spaces which could be occupied by destination businesses such as restaurants or boutique retail.	<b>0 1 2 3 4 5</b>
Does the project improve the overall design/aesthetic?	Examples include improvements to the façade, signage, historic preservation, alleyscapes.	<b>0 1 2 3 4 5</b>
Does the project provide an improved pedestrian/visitor experience?	Examples include seasonal décor, seasonal event opportunity, ambiance lighting, safety improvements, additional trees or landscaping, public seating, etc.	<b>0 1 2 3 4 5</b>
Does the project add public art?	Examples include large murals, sculptures, interactive installations.	<b>0 1 2 3 4 5</b>
<b><u>Diverse Economy &amp; Sustainability</u></b>		
Downtown Billings has the opportunity to implement large scale development in the Downtown area. Such development should create new jobs and engage the existing workforce as well as provide meaningful economic and fiscal impacts to the city, county, and state.		
Does the project promote the creation of jobs?	Will potential tenants create new jobs? How many employees?	<b>0 1 2 3 4 5</b>
Does the project promote economic growth?	Current taxable value vs. projected value	<b>0 1 2 3 4 5</b>
Does the project include energy efficient components?	Examples include doors, windows, roofing, HVAC, plumbing, recycled products, etc.	<b>0 1 2 3 4 5</b>
Does the project encourage business development?	Will the project assist in business recruitment (new business), retention (expansion of existing business), diversification (add new industry/retail/etc.)	<b>0 1 2 3 4 5</b>
<b><u>Benefit to the Public</u></b>		
Project should include appropriate wayfinding signage to direct drivers to existing parking and then on foot to their destination. Where possible, the project should also delineate future employee parking on higher floors of parking garages.		
Does the project add public parking?	Underground? Ground? Higher floors?	<b>0 1 2 3 4 5</b>
Does the project support public safety	Will the project incorporate CPTED evaluation and standards? Will the project improve an existing public safety challenge?	<b>0 1 2 3 4 5</b>
Does the project reinforce safe pedestrian crossing and promote traffic calming?	Examples include installation of pedlets, widening of sidewalks	<b>0 1 2 3 4 5</b>
<b><u>Additional/Bonus</u></b>		
Convention Center		<b>0 1 2 3 4 5</b>
Infrastructure		<b>0 1 2 3 4 5</b>

At the sole discretion of the DBP Board of Directors, applicants are required to seek endorsement from the TIF Development Committee, which shall consist of design professionals, business or property owners, community members with an interest in downtown vitality, and members of the DBP Board. Applications will be reviewed by the DBP staff under supervision of the Development Committee. The DBP shall review applications on a first come, first served basis for the duration of funding availability. Quarterly, all projects that are recommended for approval by the Committee shall be submitted to the DBP Board of Directors for recommendation to Billings City Council for final approval or disapproval of funding the project.

All applicants will be apprised of the status of their application by written communication from the DBP staff. Award recipients shall receive a Development Agreement indicating the amount of the incentive funds awarded and any conditions deemed necessary by the DBP Board for receipt of the award. Applicants are required to return a signed copy of the Development Agreement to the DBP staff before funds will be committed to the project.

#### **Release of Funds:**

It is the responsibility of the award recipient to maintain proper documentation of funds expended in the course of completing the project. Release of funds is subject to submission of this documentation to the DBP by the award recipient. The project must be completed essentially as presented to the Committee and DBP Board in order to receive payment.

Incentive funds will be paid out according to the following criteria:

1. Applicants must submit copies of all required building permits.
2. Payment documentation must be submitted to the DBP office at 116 N 29<sup>th</sup> St.
3. Incentive awards will be paid upon **completion** of the project.

**Acceptable documentation is defined as PAID invoices, statements, or schedule of values from vendors, contractors, or consultants clearly detailing the work completed for the project.**

#### **Encumbrance Policy:**

Applicants receiving funding under this program during the course of a given fiscal year (July 1 through June 30) are eligible to carry forward/encumber unexpended funds for a **maximum of one additional fiscal year** if all effort has been made to begin the project in the initial year; and/or when circumstances related to weather, construction season, etc. prohibit the completion of the project. Applicants must advise the DBP by June 1<sup>st</sup> if they will be requesting an extension of their project schedule.

#### **Disclaimer:**

The Downtown Billings Partnership, Inc., its committees, partners and or affiliates are not responsible for the planning, design, or construction of improvements to property that is owned by the applicant. No warranties or guarantees are expressed or implied by the description of, application for, or participation in the Urban Renewal Project Program. The applicant is advised to consult with licensed architects, engineers, or building contractors before proceeding with final plans or construction.



**DOWNTOWN (N 27TH STREET) URBAN RENEWAL DISTRICT  
N27URD**

**Tax Increment Financing Fund Application**

**APPLICANT INFORMATION**

Name:

Address:

City/State/Zip

Phone: E-mail:

If the applicant is not an individual doing business under his/her own name, the applicant has the status indicated below and is organized or operating under the laws of:

A corporation/LLC:  A non-profit or charitable institution or corporation  A partnership:  Other:   
Known as:

Date of Organization:

**PROJECT INFORMATION**

Building Address:

City: State: ZIP Code:

Legal Description:

**Property Owner** (if property is not owned by the Applicant, list leasehold interests and attach evidentiary materials)

Property Owner (name or entity):

Property Owner Contact Name: Contact Phone:

Lessor's Address:

City: State: ZIP Code:

**PROJECT ARCHITECTURAL FIRM**

Firm Name:

Address:

Representative:

Phone: E-mail:

**PROJECT CONTRACTOR (OR PARTY RESPONSIBLE FOR CONSTRUCTION)**

Name/Representative:

Address:

Phone: E-mail:

**PROJECT FINANCIAL LENDING INSTITUTION** (leave blank if not applicable)

Name/Representative:

Address:

Phone: E-mail:

**PROJECT INFORMATION**

**Description of Project:**

Attach a narrative explanation and any other design information. Use this section to pitch your project and explain how it will eliminate blight and/or benefit the public.

**Rehabilitation Plans:**

Attach schematic design drawings and/or completed construction document plans - including site, landscaping, and other engineering design information.

**Project Schedule:**

Attach a timeline or schedule through completion.

**PROJECT FINANCING**

Please complete Sources of Funds detail and summarize below.

**Applicant Equity**

Cash Invested	\$ _____
Land & Buildings	\$ _____
Other (Specify) _____	\$ _____
Subtotal	\$ _____

If land & building value is more than the State of Montana valuation, a current appraisal must be submitted.

**Lender Commitments** (Attach evidence i.e. Letters of Credit or other documentation)

Lender	Loan Amount	Interest Term	Payment/Period
_____	\$ _____	____ % ____ yrs	\$ _____/Month
_____	\$ _____	____ % ____ yrs	\$ _____/Month
Total Loan Amount			\$ _____

**TIF Request**

Eligible Improvements

_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____

Subtotal of TIF Funds Requested \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Sources of Funds Summary** (Post totals from above)

Applicant Equity	\$ _____
Lender Commitments	\$ _____
TIF Funds Request	\$ _____
Other Funds (Specify) _____	\$ _____

**Total Project Cost** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

To receive maximum funding all applications must be submitted to the DBP and approved by the CITY prior to the start of the relevant phase of construction.

**CERTIFICATION**

I (we), \_\_\_\_\_ (please print), the APPLICANT, certify that the statements and estimates within this Application as well as any and all documentation submitted as attachments to this Application or under separate cover are true and correct to the best of my (our) knowledge and belief.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*URD TIF GRANT PROGRAMS – Governing Body: City of Billings, City Council*

To receive maximum funding all applications must be submitted to the DBP and approved by the CITY prior to the start of the relevant phase of construction.