



# **GROW GLADEWATER** GRANT PROGRAM

**BUILDING/BUSINESS INCENTIVE GRANT PROGRAM**

**FAÇADE IMPROVEMENTS  
BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS  
PROPERTY REDEVELOPMENT/REMEDICATION**

**ADMINISTERED BY:**

**GLADEWATER ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

**JANUARY 2023**

## **CURRENT CONDITIONS**

Gladewater has turned a corner in its recovery from the loss of Texas Die Cast and FEMCO. While it has not become an epicenter for large industrial business it has capitalized on the strength of its downtown small businesses. These locally owned businesses draw tourism from near and far, positively impacting many other businesses within our city limits.

While many of the downtown businesses are making strides to improve their buildings to improve their customer experience others are unable to do the same. Additionally, many buildings along the Highway 80 corridor have deteriorated and will not be brought back to life without assistance.

The downtown vacancy rate has decreased dramatically, but the goal is to have zero vacancies. The vacancy rate on the Highway 80 corridor is on the rise and its diminished tax contributions by its increasing absence of business are felt by all.

The purpose of this policy document is to try to correct these conditions.

## **VISION AND GOAL**

The City of Gladewater and the Gladewater Economic Development Corporation seek to have a strong, locally grown economy that is tourist friendly. Gladewater will increase its presence and reputation as a destination city and become the most desirable place in East Texas. Emphasis will be given to projects that align with the motto “Shop, Eat, Stay, and Play in Gladewater”.

This policy will address the business aspects of this vision statement by providing targeted incentives to attract entrepreneurs and businesses to invest in Gladewater.

## **PROGRAM OBJECTIVES**

The City of Gladewater and GEDCO seek to create a vibrant community where:

- The U.S. Highway 80 corridor and Downtown are attractive so that a positive impression of the community is created.
- Investment in commercial buildings is stimulated so that local jobs are created, and tax revenue generated.
- Investment risk in blighted and distressed properties is reduced.
- Occupancy of the U.S. Highway 80 corridor and Downtown are increased
- Safety and ADA issues are resolved
- The lifecycle of existing historic buildings is extended

## **PROGRAM COMPONENTS**

The Building/Business Incentive Grant Program has three components which may or may not be used in combination with each other.

1. Façade Improvements – a 50% matching grant program to improve the exterior appearance of commercial buildings.
2. Building Improvements – a matching grant program to reactivate blighted and distressed buildings through improvements in the plumbing, electrical, and structure.
3. Property Redevelopment/Remediation – a matching grant program meant to reduce investment risk in blighted commercial properties in Gladewater.

## **ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS**

To be eligible to receive assistance in any one of the three program components, all applicants must:

1. Be either a property owner or tenant/business owner of property located in business-zoned property (zoning classification commercial or industrial) within the City of Gladewater.
2. Business owner/tenants must have been at the location for at least six months. New businesses must submit a written Business Plan. Business tenants (non-property owners) must submit the property owner's express consent for the proposed improvements in writing.
3. To participate in the program, applicants must complete and submit the program application form provided by GEDCO along with the required attachments.
4. Property taxes must be current, and participants must represent to the best of their knowledge they have no debts in arrears to the City when a commitment letter is issued.
5. Further, the applicant must certify that there are no current code enforcement actions pending against the property that would not be mitigated by the project. The applicant must describe measures to remedy active code enforcement actions on the property, if any exist.
6. All necessary rights, licenses, permits, and authorities to carry on business must be obtained. No bankruptcy proceedings or other proceeding currently pending or contemplated can be open.

## **GENERAL PROGRAM POLICIES**

### **Ineligible Costs**

In-kind, donated, “sweat equity” or similar no cost to the applicant improvements, services or materials will not be matched and are ineligible costs under the program.

### **Design Requirements**

Applicants are encouraged to promote historic preservation, energy efficiency, and accessibility standards in designing improvements to the extent that they are financially feasible or required by law. All improvements must conform to applicable city building codes, zoning ordinances, local and state laws.

### **Targeted Investment Area**

The targeted areas of investment of this grant are the Downtown and the U.S. Highway 80 corridor west of U.S. Highway 271. While these are the areas of focus, other areas within the city limits may be considered based upon the criteria listed in the application process on page 8.

### **Reimbursement**

Any reimbursement to an applicant will only be made once project work is completed and under certain conditions of the program components.

### **Projects That Commence Prior to GEDCO Board Approval**

GEDCO recognizes that the speed of business and investment does not always match the speed of government. Applicants are encouraged not to begin a construction project until the GEDCO Board approves their application if they expect to be fully reimbursed. The Board may, at its own discretion, approve a grant application after work has commenced.

### **Project Start-Completion Schedule**

Projects must begin within 30 consecutive business days from the date of GEDCO Board approval. Projects must be complete 180 business days from the date of Board approval. The GEDCO Board reserves the right to grant extensions on a case-by-case basis. However, applicants must make a formal written request for an extension.

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### Progress Submissions

Digital photos of the project progression (with explanations when necessary) must be submitted to the GEDCO Executive Director every 30 days with the first submission being within 10 days after the project start date.

### Project Change Orders

GEDCO must approve in writing any change orders for the proposed work. GEDCO Executive Director is allowed to approve minor changes; the Board shall approve changes of substance to the project.

### Withdrawal

The GEDCO Board of Directors reserves the right to withdraw grant approval and funding under any circumstances.

### Process of Appeal

There will be no procedure for the appeal of a decision made by the GEDCO Board of Directors.

### Funding Availability

Funding is limited and incentive awards will be subject to funding availability; project applicants will be prioritized on a first-come, first-serve basis. The GEDCO Board reserves the right to propose a Budget Amendment or Adjustment, per established financial policies, to alter program funding for a particular fiscal year.

### Repeat Applicants

Applicants are allowed to reapply for further property improvements 1 year after the reimbursement check has been issued to them.

First time applicants will receive priority over repeat applicants.

### Maintenance Requirements

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By accepting incentive funds, the Applicant commits to properly maintaining all improvements, clean and free of graffiti for a minimum of 2 years at the Applicant's own cost and expense. Any damage to the property is to be repaired immediately by the applicant so the property remains in good condition and positively contributes to the City of Gladewater. Applicants will be strongly encouraged to touch up painted areas and perform any other repairs on an ongoing basis.

### Promotional Rights

By accepting program funds, applicants authorize GEDCO to promote the project and property including, but not limited to, displaying a sign at the site during and up to 90 days after construction indicating participation in the program, and using photographs and descriptions of the project and property in GEDCO's printed promotional materials, press releases, social media, and websites.

### Application Evaluation

The GEDCO Executive Director and Board will evaluate applications based on how well the proposed project advances the program's policy goals.

## PROGRAM COMPONENT DESCRIPTION

The Building/Business Incentive Grant Program will reimburse grantees for expenses under certain conditions described below.

### *Façade Improvements*

The program provides matching funds for 50% of total façade improvements up to \$10,000 that restore, rehabilitate, enhance, or beautify a structure.

Eligible improvements include:

- Grate and grate box removal or conversion of solid grates to an open mesh style
- Awnings
- Lighting
- Paint
- Removal/replacement of inappropriate or incompatible exterior finishes or materials
- Recessing/reconfiguring entrances
- Removal of extraneous elements
- Door/window replacement or repair
- Exterior cleaning
- Historical architectural elements
- Labor, design, and material costs
- Permit fees

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- Architectural design and engineering

Reimbursement will be granted once work is complete, and the Applicant provides proof of payment to contractors.

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### *Building Improvements*

The program provides matching funds for 15% of building improvements based on the following guidelines with a maximum award of \$15,000.

Eligible improvements include:

- Labor, design, and material costs
- Permit fees
- Architectural design and engineering
- Improvements to bring the building into code compliance, e.g., plumbing, electrical, structural
- Other structural deficiencies which would prevent the building from being utilized for an active business

Reimbursement will be granted when the following three conditions are met:

1. Once the work is complete,
  2. The Applicant provides proof of payment to contractors, and
  3. The City has issued a Certificate of Occupancy to the Applicant.
- 

### *Property Redevelopment/Remediation*

This program component is meant to incentivize and reduce the risks involved with redeveloping a blighted structure or property. The goal is to use existing commercial properties and locations to construct new buildings once substandard or blighted properties are remediated.

Eligible activities include, but are not limited to:

- Structure demolition
- Environmental remediation
- Legal fees necessary for curing deficient property titles

Reimbursement will be granted when the following three conditions are met:

1. Once the work is complete, up to and including the construction of a new building,
2. The Applicant provides proof of payment to contractors, and
3. The City has issued a Certificate of Occupancy to the Applicant.

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Given the wide variety and costs associated with property redevelopment, the following guidelines are implemented. However, the GEDCO Board reserves the right to customize a grant application to meet a project's particular needs.

Demolition – Single family home or individual structure – GEDCO will reimburse the Applicant up to 50% of the cost for the demolition and removal of a single family home or individual structure up to \$5,000 upon the completion of a new structure on the property.

Demolition – Large building – GEDCO will reimburse the Applicant up to 50% of the cost for the demolition and removal of a large building up to \$15,000 upon the completion of a new structure on the property.

Environmental remediation – GEDCO will reimburse the Applicant up to 50% of the cost for any necessary environmental remediation up to \$25,000 upon the completion of a new structure on the property. Examples of environmental remediation include, but are not limited to tires; oil, gas, and chemical tanks; asbestos; other hazardous materials and waste.

Legal fees – GEDCO will reimburse the Applicant up to 50% of the cost up to \$5,000 for any necessary legal fees which may be required to cure a property title so that the property can be developed.

## APPLICATION PROCESS

1. An application, attached to this policy document, will need to be completed with all required information.
2. GEDCO Executive Director will review the application and supporting materials for completeness. If required, Executive Director will contact the Applicant to resolve any deficiencies.
3. GEDCO Executive Director will make a funding recommendation to the GEDCO Board based on the following criteria and preferences:
  - Appropriateness of Project
  - Attractiveness
  - Creativity
  - Timeliness
  - Community Impact
  - Permanent, Tangible Improvements
  - Economic Impact
  - Preservation
  - Rehabilitation
  - Location and Visibility



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Applicants may be invited to present their applications before the GEDCO Board.

4. The GEDCO Board will review and discuss the application at their regular Board meeting and will make the final decision on approving a grant application and funding amount.
5. GEDCO Executive Director will notify the Applicant in writing via email on their application status and provide a notice to proceed.

## REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS AND POLICY

Requests for reimbursement will only be processed after the rehabilitation/improvement work is completed and approved following a final field inspection by GEDCO Staff to verify compliance with the project scope.

All expenses must be paid by check or credit/debit card. No cash payments to contractors will be accepted.

Reimbursement claims must be accompanied by the following supporting documents: statements from architects, contractors and/or subcontractors acknowledging all payments have been received; notarized final lien waivers from all contractors and/or subcontractors, if applicable; proof of final City inspections and Certificate of Occupancy (CO), if applicable; and a digital “after” photograph of the façade improvements.

A readable photocopy of all credit/debit card receipts and/or the front and back of all cancelled checks must be submitted for reimbursement along with an invoice marked “paid”. All invoices must clearly indicate the work that was performed, the amount of the invoice as well as the corresponding credit/debit card receipt(s) and/or check number(s).

All payments are subject to the review and approval of GEDCO. Please allow up to 15 business days for receipt of the reimbursement check.

If Applicant should cease its operations or close its business at the project site this Agreement will be immediately terminated and GEDCO will have no further obligations under this Agreement, and Applicant will repay GEDCO any grants or payments made by GEDCO pursuant to this Agreement within 30 days. Applicant will notify GEDCO of any decision made by it to cease its operations or close its business.



GEDCO  
213 NORTH MAIN STREET  
GLADEWATER, TX 75647  
(903) 902-5441

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**I. APPLICANT INFORMATION:**

A. First and Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

B. Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

C. Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

D. Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E. Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_

F. Business Address: \_\_\_\_\_

G. Business Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

H. Business Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I. Address of Project Site: \_\_\_\_\_

J. Tax ID#: \_\_\_\_\_

K. Name of Property Owner: \_\_\_\_\_

L. Type of Entity Applying for Award:

- Individual(s)
- General Partnership
- Limited Partnership
- Corporation
- Other

M. Type of Business (Retail, Service, Etc.): \_\_\_\_\_

N. Business Description:

O. Type of Program Component – check all that apply:

Façade Improvements

Building Improvements

Property Redevelopment/Remediation

**II. PROJECT INFORMATION**

A. Description of Proposed Improvements (Attach additional pages if needed.):

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B. Estimated Cost of Improvements: \_\_\_\_\_  
➤ *Contractor's detailed cost estimate must be attached.*

C. Name of Contractor or Person who will be doing majority of construction work:

D. Contractor Address:

E. Contractor Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

F. Contractor Email: \_\_\_\_\_

G. Name of Architect and/or Sign Designer/Installer:

H. Estimated Date of Project Commencement: \_\_\_\_\_

I. Detailed Project Timeline:

**III. REQUIRED APPLICATION DOCUMENTS:**

- A. Contractor's detailed cost estimate or bid on contractor's letterhead including a breakdown of all anticipated expenses.
- B. Proof of property ownership or letter of consent from property owner if the applicant is a tenant.
- C. Photograph(s) of existing building/property showing current condition of all areas to be included in the project.
- D. Rendering from architect, contractor, or designer depicting the exterior of the building after completion of proposed project. Or other appropriate method of explaining the proposed improvements.
- E. Paint samples, if applicable.
- F. Business plan for businesses less than 6 months at location.
- G. Proof of no outstanding property taxes owed on the building.
- H. Remedies for active City code enforcement cases, if applicable.

(The remainder of this page is intentionally left blank.)

**CONDITIONS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS STATEMENT**

This Grow Gladewater Building/Business Incentive Grant Program is subject to change or cancellation at any time by vote of the GEDCO Board of Directors. In addition, any policy or procedure described herein may be waived by official action of this same committee. GEDCO reserves the right to reject any/and or all applications.

*If I am successful in obtaining a Grow Gladewater Building/Business Incentive Grant from GEDCO, I am obligated to maintain the funded improvements for a minimum of 2 years from the time I receive reimbursement. If the improvements are removed or changed prior to the 2-year timeline without prior approval, I agree to reimburse GEDCO for the entire amount of the incentive.*

*I have read, understand, and will comply with the criteria described in this application, as well as the timeline, and I certify that the above information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I certify that I am current with all local, state, and federal taxes and business fees.*

*I hereby acknowledge that, to the best of my knowledge, there are no active code enforcement violations or cases regarding the property.*

*I also hereby acknowledge my application for an incentive and do authorize GEDCO to obtain verifications from any source named in this application.*

Applicant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_