CITY OF TOLEDO
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
Brandon Sehlhorst, Director
Sandy Spang, Deputy Director

NOTICE OF FUNDS AVAILABILITY (NOFA)
WHITE BOX GRANT PROGRAM
June, 2022

Public Notice Regarding Whitebox Application Process

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A. GENERAL OVERVIEW

The City of Toledo (COT), Department of Economic Development (DOED) hereby announces the availability of approximately $500,000 (Five Hundred Thousand Dollars) of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to incentivize property owners to bring vacant commercial first-floor spaces into compliance with current state and local building code, fire safety code, and accessibility requirements, thus creating a functional "white box" space ready for customization and occupancy by a business.

Awardees will receive a matching grant of $25,000 to $75,000 for first-floor, interior renovation expenses to meet current codes required to receive a certificate of occupancy, as demonstrated by stamped architectural or engineering drawings. Building owners are required to provide a 30% match and must either occupy the space as a business owner or actively market the space for lease at no more than the current average per square foot rate for similar condition properties in the area.

The program is subject to a three-year period of compliance, reporting, and annual inspection by the City of Toledo. The grant is collateralized by a springing personal guaranty and a promissory note, that will only be binding if the property owner sells the property without approval from the City of Toledo three years after the effective date.

The White Box Grant Program application is open from June 2022, to September 1, 2022. Upon closure of the application, period proposals will be reviewed and graded by the City’s Incentive Advisory Committee (“IAC”). Upon completion of review, the IAC will recommend the top-scoring applications to the Mayor for funding until all funds have been awarded. The Mayor shall have the sole and absolute discretion to award funds.

B. ELIGIBILITY

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants, whether an individual or organization, must meet the following criteria:

- Applicant is in good standing with applicable governmental entities (i.e. current on federal, state and local income tax, property tax, utilities, code violations, fees);
- Applicant owns the building for which they are applying.
Eligible Buildings
A building may be eligible for more than one grant if the building contains multiple
vacant commercial spaces, each to be occupied by separate businesses. Eligible
buildings must:
• Be located in a low-to-moderate income census tract within the city of Toledo;
• Have no code violation citations;
• Contain a first-floor commercial vacant space.

A building's eligibility is determined by actual use, not zoning codes. Eligible uses include:
• Commercial use (non-residential);
• Industrial use;
• Mixed-use (integrated first-floor commercial and upper floor residential uses).

Buildings with an exclusively single-family residential or multi-family residential use are not eligible.

Eligible Expenses
The White Box Grant program provides funding to bring vacant commercial spaces up
to code with the goal of receiving a certificate of occupancy. Eligible expenses address
deficiencies in meeting building code, fire code, or accessibility requirements, as outlined below.

Building Code
Interior improvements needed to meet the requirements of the Ohio Building Code
(OBC) for the intended use, or at a minimum a Business (B) or Mercantile (M) use, including:
• Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) replacement or upgrades to
meet the requirements of the OBC and the Ohio Mechanical Code for the
intended use.
• Plumbing rough-in, to meet the requirements of the OBC and the Ohio Plumbing
Code.
• Electrical services upgrades or modifications to meet the requirements of the
OBC and the National Electrical Code, including, but not limited to NEC 230
Services.
• Lighting rough-in, including required exit and egress lighting fixtures, but
excluding other fixtures.
• Repair or replacement of drywall, plaster or masonry walls, excluding finishes.
Accessibility
Interior improvements needed to meet the accessibility requirements of Chapter 11 of the Ohio Building Code, including:
- Restrooms, excluding fixtures and finishes, except OBC required accessible toilet and sink.
- Accessible Route compliance.

Fire Code
Fire and smoke protection systems and features needed to meet the requirements of the Ohio Building Code for the intended use, or at a minimum a Business (B) or Mercantile (M) use, including:
- Sprinkler System
- Fire Rated Walls
- Stairway Enclosure
- Fire Alarm System

All upgrades must comply with zoning and building codes. Any expense incurred prior to the execution of the White Box Grant program, or work performed without required permits, is ineligible. When system improvements benefit the entire building, any reimbursement will be for the prorated share of the first-floor vacant commercial space identified in the application, based on its percentage of the total building square footage.

A minimum of three (3) quotes is required for each eligible expense. Quotes must conform to federal Davis Bacon Act requirements, be on contractor letterhead, and clearly identify the scope of work and estimated cost. Contractors shall have required licensing, bond, and insurance, and all work shall be performed according to applicable codes (i.e. Ohio Revised Code and Toledo Municipal Code). Projects shall be completed within 12 months of the Effective Date of the White Box Grant Program Agreement.

C. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. Applications must be submitted online via the Zoom Grants platform at https://www.zoomgrants.com/zgf/whitebox. No paper or emailed applications will be accepted. Required documentation includes:
   - Architectural and engineering drawings that identify the code deficiencies to be addressed
   - Proof of Commercial Building Insurance Policy
City of Toledo Department of Economic Development
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Release Date: June 2022

- Historical and Environmental Form
- W-9
- Commitment letters for funding sources
- Quotes (3 quotes from a qualified contractor for every eligible expense)
- Current photos of the building’s vacant commercial first floor space
- Drawings, renderings, elevations (if available)
- Occupancy plan, which must be one of the following:
  - A marketing plan that demonstrates your intention to actively market the renovated space for commercial or industrial use.
  - A letter of intent from a business to occupy the space.
  - A statement of self-occupancy by the building owner.

2. The proposed schedule for this Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) is:
   - Public Notice June 2022, published in The Blade announcing NOFA.
   - Public Notice June 2022 published in The Sojourner’s Truth and La Prensa announcing NOFA.
   - Issue Whitebox Program NOFA: Wednesday, June 2022.
   - Applications due in Zoom Grants: Thursday, September 1, 2022.
   - All applicants notified of grant decision at completion of scoring.

3. DOED, in its sole discretion, reserves the right to modify the above dates; suspend, amend, or modify the provisions of this NOFA, to waive selected requirements or limitations herein, to reject all proposals, to negotiate modifications of proposal, or to award less than the full amount of the funding available; all in its sole and absolute discretion.

D. SELECTION AND EVALUATION PROCESS

DOED will conduct an initial screening of applications to determine if all submission requirements are met. Any incomplete applications will be rejected. Members of the IAC will review, evaluate and score each eligible application. For selected projects, DOED will execute an agreement. Projects must be completed and requests for reimbursement received 12 months after an agreement is signed.

F. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Upon closure of the White Box Grant Program application, proposals will be reviewed and graded by the IAC. The IAC will score applications using a specific evaluation criteria. Based on an application’s score, the IAC will then recommend the top-scoring applications to the Mayor who may fund the award in his sole and absolute discretion.
# EVALUATION CRITERIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVALUATION CRITERIA</th>
<th>SCORING</th>
<th>WEIGHT</th>
<th>MAX SCORE</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Catalyzing Impact</strong></td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>X3</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likely to attract additional investment to a disinvested area. A score of one (1) will be awarded to projects located in an area that has experienced significant recent investment. A score of five (5) will be awarded to projects located in an area that experiences continued disinvestment.</td>
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<td><strong>Improved Building Safety or Accessibility</strong></td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>x2</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>The proposed improvements will improve the fire safety or accessibility of the building. Projects will be scored as follows: One (1): no improvements; Two (2): fire or accessibility are moderately improved; Three (3): fire or accessibility are significantly improved; Four (4): fire and accessibility are moderately improved; Five (5): fire safety and accessibility are both significantly improved.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Tenant Commitment</strong></td>
<td>0/5</td>
<td>x2</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>Tenant is secured or property owner will self-occupy. A score of five (5) will be awarded to applications that include a signed letter of intent.</td>
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<td><strong>Applicant Experience and Capacity</strong></td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>x2</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>Likely to complete project within 12 months. A score of one (1) will be awarded to applicants with previous experience with building rehabilitation. A score of five (5) will be awarded to applicants with significant related experience and multiple successful redevelopment projects.</td>
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**Historic Preservation**  
The subject property is a building constructed prior to 1970 or has historical or design significance. Projects will be scored as follows: Zero (0): building was built post 1971; One (1): building was built prior to 1970; Two (2): building was built prior to 1950; Three (3): building was built prior to 1930; Four (4): building was built prior to 1910, Five (5): building was built prior to 1900.

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<thead>
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<td>0-5</td>
<td>x3</td>
<td>15</td>
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**Leveraged Investment**  
Will the award substantially leverage more investment in the space, including tenant improvements, than the required matching amount of the grant?

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<td>x3</td>
<td>15</td>
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**Diverse Property Owner**  
A score of five (5) will be awarded to projects in which the majority property ownership is held by a certified MBE/WMBE/DBE/Vet/EDGE.

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<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0/5</td>
<td>x1</td>
<td>5</td>
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**Diverse Tenant**  
A score of five (5) will be awarded to projects in which the majority tenant ownership is held by a certified MBE/WMBE/DBE/VBE/EDGE.

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<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>0/5</td>
<td>x1</td>
<td>5</td>
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Maximun Possible Score: **85**