



Downtown Economic Development Program

INTRODUCTION

The City of St. Marys – Downtown Economic Development Program is a program designed to attract new businesses in the downtown metered parking areas as determined by the Economic Development Committee (500 feet of any city parking areas), market vacant commercial sites and promote new initiatives.

The purpose of the program is to provide financial assistance to new business owners in commercial structures located in the designated area of the downtown (whether it's permanent, seasonal or a pop-up shop) in the form of a grant or loan, to assist with start-up costs up to \$4,000. These funds can be used towards inside improvements, utility hook-ups, rent, promotion material, signage, brochures, business cards, permit fees, advertising and Wi-Fi connection projects of existing commercial structures in an effort to market vacant commercial sites and recruit new business ventures within the downtown designated area as determined by the Economic Development Committee. Any project costs exceeding \$4,000 will be the responsibility of the business owner (i.e. Total Project Costs \$5,000; Grant or Loan \$4,000; Business owner \$1,000).

GOALS

- Encourage new business start-ups in our downtown metered parking area as determined by the Economic Development Committee (500 feet of city parking areas)
- Market vacant commercial sites
- Provide education material
- Promoting and advertising
- Create a viable downtown
- Encourage new ideas

OUTREACH

The availability of funds for this program will be announced during regular City Council Meetings; Announcements through local media i.e. Radio Station, Chamber Newsletter, Local Newspaper and City's website www.cityofstmaryspa.gov.

ELIGIBILITY

Any owner of a commercial structure located within our downtown parking meter areas who has a new tenant for at least a six month time frame; anyone seeking to purchase a vacant commercial structure to start a new business in our downtown parking meter areas or a current business owner looking to promote a new product or service. **Commitment must be for at least six months or funds will need to be repaid.**

A non-refundable application fee of \$50 is required.

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

The types of activities that are eligible under this program include, but are not limited to the following:

- Inside Improvements
- Utility Hook-Ups
- Rent
- Promotion Material
- Signage
- Brochures
- Business Cards
- Advertising
- Internet/Wi-Fi Connections
- Permit fees, i.e. Use Certificate, Signage Permit, etc.

The types of activities that are not eligible under this program include, but are not limited to, the following:

- New construction or additions
- Property acquisition
- Demolition
- Exterior Improvement
- Machinery and equipment
- Inventory and accounts receivable
- Façade' work
- Sidewalks

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Each potential recipient of the program must comply with the following application procedures and completed applications will be dated and processed in the order they are received. However, the Program Administrator will not consider any application with incomplete or missing information:

- Complete Application and return it to the Community & Economic Development Department, City Hall, Second Floor, Room 7
- Application will be dated and put on the next agenda of the Economic Development Committee for their review
- Applicant will be notified of approval by the Program Administrator
- A meeting will be scheduled with Property Owner, Applicant, Program Administrator and a representative of the City's Redevelopment Authority to review and approve any interior upgrades, if applicable
- If a contractor is needed, the Property Owner and Applicant will decide together
- If a contractor is needed, the company must be registered with the PA Attorney General's Office
- Required paperwork will be signed and start date and completion date determined

APPLICATION PACKAGE

1. Application packages can be obtained by calling the City's Community and Economic Development Coordinator at 781-1718 ext 225.
2. Completed application and attachments need to be returned to the City of St. Marys Community and Economic Development Department
3. Attachments include:
 - a. **Commitment letter from owner(s) stating they are in favor of proposed improvements to structure, if applicable.**
 - b. **Confirmation from owner that all Federal, State, Local and Real Estate taxes are up to date.**
 - c. **Copy of Agreement/Lease/Sales Agreement, if applicable.**
 - d. **Copies of photos, pictures, drawings, if applicable.**
 - e. **Copies of Estimates/Quotes.**
 - f. **Copy of Renters Insurance**

PROJECT PROCEDURES

1. Once the application is approved, a meeting will be held at the site with the contractor, if applicable, Property Owner, if applicable, Business Owner and Program Administrator and a representative of the City's Redevelopment Authority to discuss the specifics for the project; finalize required paperwork and address any concerns.
2. Monitoring and Inspections will be held throughout the project, if applicable
3. Payment(s) of grant will be issued directly to Business Owner upon completion of project
4. Copies of Receipts and payments will be provided to the City's Community & Economic Development Department
5. Photos will be taken at the completion of the project, if applicable.

Questions can be directed to:

**City of St. Marys
Tina Gradizzi
Community & Economic Development Coordinator
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St. Marys, PA 15857
tina@cityofstmarys.com
814-781-1718 ext. 225
814-834-1304 Fax**

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