



**Village of Lincolnwood  
Economic Development Commission**

***Meeting***  
**Wednesday, February 25, 2026**  
**8:00 A.M.**

**Gerald C. Turry Village Board Room  
Lincolnwood Village Hall  
6900 N. Lincoln Avenue  
Lincolnwood, IL 60712**

**Meeting Agenda**

- 1. Call to Order/Quorum Declaration**
- 2. Minutes Approval**
  - a. December 17, 2025, Meeting
- 3. Monthly Report**
- 4. Devon Avenue Streetscape Project Presentation (PW Director John Welch)**
- 5. Development Updates**
- 6. Presentation on New Grant for Devon/Lincoln TIF**
- 7. Other Business**
  - a. Discussion on Upcoming Topics and Initiatives
- 8. Public Forum**
- 9. Adjournment**

***The next scheduled meeting of the Economic Development Commission is on March 25, 2026***



**Economic Development Commission  
Draft Minutes**

**Wednesday, December 17, 2025  
Lincolnwood Village Hall  
Council Chambers  
6900 N. Lincoln Ave.  
Lincolnwood, IL 60712**

**Commissioners Present:** Chairman James Kucienski, Vice Chair James Berger and Commissioners, Maureen Ehrenberg, Robert Garcia, Rivak Albazi, Sun Blumenthal, Richard Sloan, and Nayyer Habeebuddin

**Commissioners Absent:** Commissioners Leonard Weiss

**Staff Present:** Community Development Director Patrick Ainsworth, Associate Planner Abigail Honeycutt

**I. Call to Order/ Quorum Declaration**

Chairman Kucienski noted a quorum of 6 members present. The meeting was called to order at 7:59am am.

**II. Minutes Approval**

A motion to approve September 17, 2025, minutes made by Vice Chairperson Berger.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Sloan.

**Aye:** Chairman James Kucienski, Vice Chair James Berger and Commissioners Ehrenberg, Sloan, Blumenthal, and Garcia

**Nay:** None

**Motion Approved:** 6-0

**III. 2026 EDC Meeting Dates**

Motion was made by Commissioner Maureen Ehrenberg to approve the 2026 EDC Meeting Dates

Seconded by Commissioner Garcia.

Commissioner Abazi entered the meeting at 8:03am

Commissioner Habeebuddin entered the meeting at 8:05am

#### **IV. December 2025 Monthly Report**

Community Development Director Patrick Ainsworth gave a brief presentation to the Economic Development Commission (EDC) on businesses that opened, closed, or are under construction. He noted CJ Foods closed their location on Morse Ave. Vice Chairperson Berger inquired about Donatella's being open. Commissioner Habeebuddin asked about how the village can help businesses. Director Ainsworth gave a building permit summary and new construction valuation. Commissioner Ehrenberg asked about separating residential and commercial valuations.

#### **V. Development Updates**

Community Development Director Patrick Ainsworth continued the discussion on permits issued.

#### **VI. Discussion on New Grant for Devon/Lincoln TIF**

Community Development Director Patrick Ainsworth gave a brief overview about Tax Increment Financing Districts (TIF) and introduced a new grant that the Village Board approved as part of the FY2026 budget. The Devon/Lincoln TIF Pilot Project Grant Program will have \$300,000 in the FY26 budget, but may not all be spent in the year. Director Ainsworth mentioned that the Devon/Lincoln Redevelopment Plan contains a 23-year budget inside this document and there is \$1 million identified to assist with reinvestment of private structures within the TIF District. The grant funds should be used to assist with generating more sales tax by assisting business owners with property improvements as well as building owners that contain a sales-tax generating business.

Director Ainsworth shared information on grant programs in surrounding municipalities.

Wheeling: reimbursement grant for restaurants, retailers, and businesses that generate an entertainment tax. Albazi asked for clarification about the reimbursement process. Grants that use TIF funds may only cover permanent building improvements items and all grants researched have a pre-approval process.

Des Plaines: currently offers a two-program approach with one being staff approved and the other going to City Council for approval.

- City Wide reimbursement grant (not dependent on location being in a TIF District)
- City Council sets the dollar cap for the second program
- 12-month time frame from approval to project completion

Des Plaines used to have a program called the Downtown Restaurant District Incentive Program which was offered to parallel the efforts of the Des Plaines Theatre renovations. This program no longer exists since TIF funds cannot be used after the expiration of a TIF District.

Mount Prospect's program is also Village Wide and is the smallest amount provided with \$10,000. This program is also set up as a reimbursement grant.

Lincolnwood's current Village-wide grant program, the Property Enhancement Program (PEP), was briefly discussed and has a budgeted amount of \$35,000. This program has not been utilized for a couple of years.

Commissioner Ehrenberg highlighted marketing is key for getting information about the grants PEP and the pilot program out to the businesses, highlighting it is good governance and transparency.

Director Ainsworth briefly mentioned that he intends to bring the PEP program to the EDC in a future meeting to revamp that program.

A high-level discussion regarding the program details for the Devon Lincoln Pilot Project Grant Program ensued.

Commissioner Ehrenberg asked about mixed-use development in this area, first floor retail and top residential and how the grant could impact this type of development. Director Ainsworth responded to mention that this program is only for existing buildings.

A discussion took place on the dollar amount. Commissioner Ehrenberg asked why there should be a cap on the program. Director Ainsworth shared that TIF dollars are being used for this program and there is a budget to follow for building enhancement.

A discussion also took place about businesses or property owners possibly applying for the PEP and the Devon/Lincoln Grant Program. There was general agreement that an applicant can't have both grants. For the Devon/Lincoln TIF Grant Program, there should be two programs, one that staff can approve, smaller grants, which will allow for faster processing, and the other grant program would go to the EDC and Village Board for review and consideration.

Commissioner Habeebuddin - Program A should be a \$20,000 max and decided by VMO. Commissioner Ehrenberg asked about best practices for this type of admin grant. A discussion took place on reimbursement items, contractor bids and policies to be placed in the grant.

Commissioner Albazi mentioned that the grant reimbursement minimum should be \$10,000. A discussion took place on the minimum dollar level of \$5000, \$7,500, or \$10,000. A general consensus was reached at \$7,500.

A discussion took place on the percentage covered for labor and materials. Commissioner Garcia wants 50/50 coverage for labor. Commissioner Ehrenberg disagreed, cap labor at 25%, materials at 50/50. Emphasis on return on investment.

Further discussion took place on the coverage for labor. There was a consensus to build in a waiver for extraordinary cases for labor coverage. Such a waiver would go to EDC and Village Board for consideration.

Director Ainsworth brought up the fact that the grant programs researched were for tax-generating businesses. He asked if the EDC is fine with focusing on such businesses for this grant program. Focus on tax generating business was a consensus among the EDC.

Grant eligibility for multi-tenant buildings was discussed as an option for property eligibility. There was a consensus that the building must have a sales generating business to qualify. There was a discussion if the sales tax generating business within a multi-tenant building could also qualify for a grant, the response was yes, but the scope of work cannot overlap with previously approved improvements.

With regards to eligibility requirements, there was a general consensus that any business owner applying should have a minimum lease term of five years to be eligible for a grant.

A discussion took place on possibly recouping money. There was a consensus that the grant policies will allow the Village Board to consider liening a property after a \$50,000+ grant was awarded to ensure any covered items are not removed within five years.

Director Ainsworth mentioned that he will bring a draft grant program and application together to the EDC with all of the items discussed.

## **VII. Other Business**

Community Development Director Patrick Ainsworth shared that Assistant Community Development Director Rati Akash went to ICSC Midwest with a new marketing brochure, which was presented. Habeebuddin shared as a small business owners there are struggles with the economy and many villages do not offer assistance and that it is a good opportunity for Lincolnwood. He asked about business advising and coaching and marketing.

New business fair and other potential ideas was brought up. A discussion took place about collaborating with the Lincolnwood Chamber of Commerce. Director Ainsworth also mentioned that there will be a recap presented for the Annual Joint Review Board at January 2026 meeting. The 2025 annual report in also be presented at a future EDC meeting.

## **VIII. Public Forum**

Let the record show that no additional members of the public addressed the Commission.

Kucienski shared that the commission has been wanting to see positive economic momentum and that he is happy about the grant and presentation.

## **IX. Motion to Adjourn**

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Sloan.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Albazi.

**Aye:** Chairman James Kucienski, Vice Chair James Berger and Commissioners, Maureen Ehrenberg, Robert Garcia, Rivak Albazi, Sun Blumenthal, Richard Sloan, and Nayyer Habeebuddin

**Nay:** None

**Motion Approved:** 8-0

**Meeting Adjourned at 9:27 am**

Respectfully submitted:

Abigail Honeycutt, Associate Planner



**Village of Lincolnwood**  
**Community Development Department**  
**Business Report**  
**February 2026**

<b>Business Name</b>	<b>Business Address</b>	<b>Nature of Business</b>
Lidu Academy Child Development	7301 N Cicero Avenue	Child Development
Evercare	7373 N Lincoln Avenue	Financial Services
University Retina & Macula Assoc.	7336 N Lincoln Avenue	Medical Clinic
Laccura Medical Group	7350 N Cicero Avenue	Medical Clinic
RestoPros of Chicago North Shore	7080 N McCormick	Restoration Service
Farabi Distributors Inc	7080 N McCormick	Food Distributor
Teddy's Ice Cream	3910 W Touhy Avenue	Ice Cream Parlor
Chris's Hair Salon	6849 N Lincoln Avenue	Hair Salon
Spencer's Gifts	3333 W Touhy Avenue	Retail
Journeys	3333 W Touhy Avenue	Retail
Bro's Italian Kitchen	3333 W Touhy Avenue	Food and Beverage
Scrubs Boutique	3333 W Touhy Avenue	Retail

Pending/Open
Closing/ Closed



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# MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** Economic Development Commission

**FROM:** Patrick Ainsworth, Community Development Director

**DATE:** January 20, 2025

**SUBJECT:** Presentation of Devon/Lincoln TIF Pilot Grant Program

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## Executive Summary

At the December 17, 2025 Economic Development Commission (EDC) Meeting, a discussion took place to help create parameters for the new grant application Devon/Lincoln TIF Pilot Grant Program. Several grant programs from other nearby communities were evaluated to assist with crafting the grant program and grant application. The draft grant application with the corresponding program parameters is attached to this memorandum and is highlighted below.

## Background

As mentioned at the December 17, 2025 EDC meeting, part of the [FY2026 Budget](#) included a line item for a new grant program to help certain properties within the Devon/Lincoln TIF District. This TIF District, which is shown in the photo below and as Attachment #1, encompasses approximately 55 acres along Devon Avenue, Lincoln Avenue, and properties within the MB zoning district.



Establishing a grant program within this TIF District will advance a number of goals that were established in the [Devon/Lincoln TIF Redevelopment Plan](#) including: attracting new businesses, enhancing the existing building stock, and increasing the equalized assessed value of the properties within the TIF District. Implementing this new grant program will advance these and other goals as the intent is to modernize the existing building stock with new permanent improvements, reduce the vacancy with more sales tax generating businesses and provide financial assistance to entrepreneurs who might not otherwise open such a business without the grant program. The base program parameters and funding levels were thoroughly discussed at the December 17, 2025 EDC Meeting. A summary of this discussion is provided below as a means to help introduce the draft grant application.

### **Summary of December 17, 2025 EDC Discussion**

- Two programs encompassed within the Devon/Lincoln TIF District Grant Program
  - Spark Program
    - Administratively handled, approved by Village Manager
      - Minimum grant funding \$7,500, maximum grant allocation is \$20,000
      - 50% of eligible materials covered, only 25% of labor covered
  - Dream Storefront Program
    - Application reviewed by EDC, then recommended to Village Board for final consideration
      - Minimum grant funding \$20,001, maximum grant allocation is \$100,000, but applicant can ask for more funding with a compelling reason
      - 50% of eligible materials covered, only 25% of labor covered, but applicant can ask for higher percentage of labor covered if they offer a compelling reason
- Common grant parameters discussed for both programs
  - Must be sales tax generating businesses (new or existing)
  - Multi-tenant commercial building owners are allowed a grant with restrictions
  - Improvements must stay in place for at least five-years
  - Proof of ownership or a lease of at least five-years must be part of application documentation
  - Applicant who was previously awarded a Property Enhancement Program Grant not eligible for this grant for at least five years (and vice-versa)

### **Conclusion**

Staff incorporated all items discussed at the December 17, 2025 EDC meeting into the draft Devon/Lincoln TIF District Pilot Project Grant Program Application. This grant application was reviewed by the Village Attorney to ensure that the grant parameters are in-line with Illinois TIF laws.

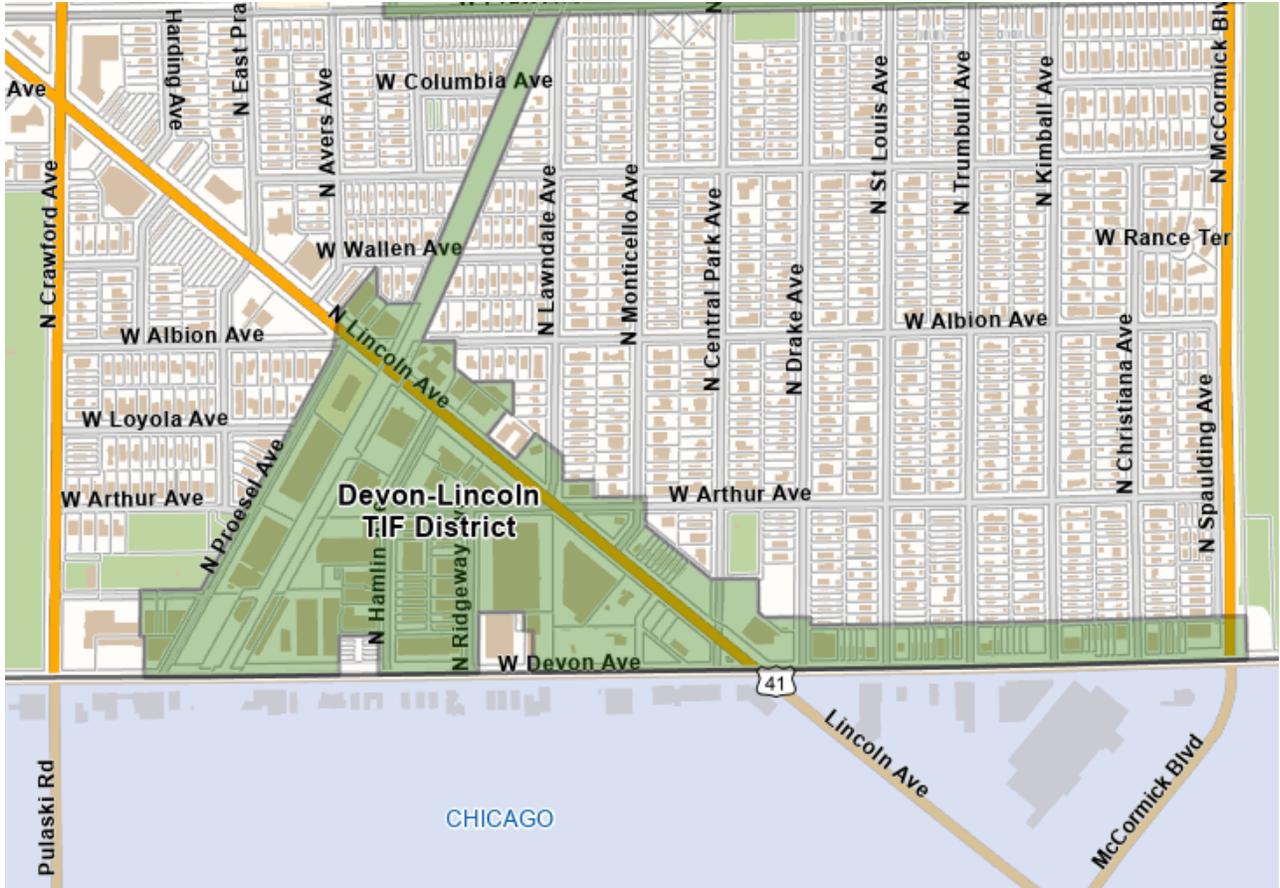
### **Recommendation**

Please review the draft grant application with the goal of making a recommendation to the Village Board. Should there be any requested modification, then a motion with the requested modifications can be made.

**Documents Attached**

1. Map of Devon/Lincoln TIF
2. Draft Devon/Lincoln TIF District Pilot Project Grant Program and Application

# Attachment #1 - Devon/Lincoln TIF District Map





**Devon/Lincoln TIF District Grant Program**

**Program 1 – Business Spark Grant  
Program**

**Program 2 – Dream Storefront Program**



## **Program 1 – Spark Business Grant Program**

### **Introduction**

The Village of Lincolnwood understands that there are costs incurred in starting a business. To assist with certain construction projects, the Village can award reimbursable grants on approved costs to sales tax generating businesses located in *existing* buildings within the Devon/Lincoln TIF District boundaries (see Exhibit 1 below showing the Devon/Lincoln TIF District). Specifically, the Spark Business Grant Program (Program 1) can reimburse up to 50% of eligible materials and fixtures and up to 25% of labor costs associated with eligible improvements. This grant program can be approved administratively by Village staff if all criteria are met. Please see the Grant Policies and Procedures sections below for specific definitions and conditions.

The maximum award amount under Program 1 is \$20,000 for a new or existing sales tax generating business to remodel an existing commercial space. If you are seeking a larger grant, please review Program 2 to see if you qualify. The Village's Community Development Director (grant administrator) will review and make a recommendation to the Village Manager regarding project grant awards. The Village Manager has final authority to approve grants under Program 1. The grant administrator and the Village Manager reserve the right to forward Program 1 applications to the Village Board for consideration and approval.

### **Program 1 - Minimum Qualifications**

The applicant must be a new entrepreneur wishing to open a business, an existing business owner located within the Devon/Lincoln TIF District, or a multi-tenant commercial building owner located within the Devon/Lincoln TIF District (see Exhibit 1 for the boundaries of this TIF District). Under Illinois law, the Village cannot approve a grant for an applicant relocating an existing business from outside the Village within 10 miles of the subject address. The business concept must be sales tax generating. The minimum grant dollar request that the Village will entertain with this program is \$7,500 resulting in a minimum eligible investment of \$15,000. If a property owner of a multi-tenant commercial building is applying for a Spark grant, then at least one tenant must be a sales tax generating business and have at least five years remaining on the current lease. Additionally, if the property owner of a multi-tenant commercial building is applying for this grant and the qualifying sales-tax generating business within the subject building is a retail-based business, then at least 50% of their floor area should be dedicated to retail sales.

### **Eligible Improvements for Reimbursement**

Please note that new ground-up construction is not eligible for reimbursement per Illinois TIF Law. The chart below lists items that are eligible for reimbursement for Program 1:

<b>Eligible Items for Program 1</b>
ADA Enhancements (exterior and interior)
Permanent kitchen infrastructure (no removable kitchen equipment will be eligible)
Permanent fixtures related to bar and prep spaces
Built-ins (such as wall shelving) used with permanent materials
Walk-in cooler
Interior plumbing
Exterior and interior electrical
Interior HVAC equipment
Fire suppression systems
Permanent flooring materials (vinyl or linoleum products are ineligible)
Bathrooms including ADA compliance modifications
Grease-traps
Exterior façade elements, including wall signage, awnings, and street-facing elevation materials (which are building elevations parallel to a public or private roadway). Roofing materials and roof-mounted equipment is ineligible.
Permanent improvements to outside seating areas
New parking lot lighting, permanent landscaping bed improvements, and new parking lot installation
Any other interior building improvement that is deemed permanent by the grant administrator

**Grant Policies**

The following policies apply to eligible spaces under Program 1:

- The maximum grant awarded for this program is \$20,000 (with a minimum investment of \$40,000).
  - o The minimum grant awarded to be considered for this program will be \$7,500 (with a minimum investment of \$15,000).
- The Village of Lincolnwood will only reimburse for the materials and permanent fixtures associated with the eligible improvements. Additionally, 25% of the labor associated with the eligible improvements can be reimbursed through this grant program.
- Multi-tenant commercial property owners may only apply for one grant award for the life of the program. No exceptions shall be granted. For this grant program, a multi-tenant commercial property shall be defined as “a building or buildings under common ownership that contains at least two commercial spaces and that includes at least one retail or restaurant operation as a tenant.”
- Retail businesses applying for this grant must dedicate at least 50% of their floor area to retail sales at the specified address, be open to the public, and comply with Lincolnwood zoning ordinances for permitted or special retail use. Retail businesses that do not meet the 50% retail floor area requirement are not eligible for the grant, unless the applicant is a building material/fixture retailer and is constructing a showroom space in the subject unit. Grant proceeds must be primarily used for the showroom space.
- Food and beverage-based businesses must have at least a takeout counter within the subject space to qualify for this grant.
- Grant funds cannot be used to correct municipal code violations for existing businesses or properties. However, funds may be used to voluntarily modernize a building or property to meet current standards. If a property has unresolved code violations at the time of application or before

payment, and the Village has issued a notice, the Village may delay application review or payment until all violations are resolved.

- The applicant must own the property or have a signed or contingent lease for at least five years (proof required). If an existing business is applying and leases the subject space, then proof of five years being left on their lease is required.
- Approved applicants must complete the permitted scope work and open the business within 18 months from the date of the grant approval.
- The Community Development Director or the Village Manager (or the Village Board) may deny or adjust grant requests based on application review and available funds.
- All grants are subject to available funding. The Village Board may discontinue the program at any time. Businesses that sell tobacco, vape, and CBD items as their primary retail products are not eligible for this grant.
- Grant approval does not authorize work to begin. All work requires proper permits and approvals. Unauthorized work may result in grant termination.
- Note that any work conducted directly by the applicant is **not** eligible for reimbursement. The installation of the eligible permanent improvements must be performed by hired professionals who are not related to the applicant or the building owner, either through familial relationships or from any other business partnership.
- Any property that is owned by an elected or appointed official of the Village is not eligible for the grant program.
- Any applicant that previously received a Property Enhancement Program Grant in the past five-years is not eligible for this grant program.
- No grant reimbursement will be dispersed until all steps have been satisfied by the applicant (see below).

### **Waivers and Grant Interpretation to the Spark Business Grant Program (Program 1)**

All policies identified in Program 1 cannot be waived or amended. If an applicant is desirous to request a waiver from Program 1 grant policies, then the applicant will have to apply under Program 2 and present their case to the Economic Development Commission and the Village Board. All questions regarding Program 1 should be directed to the Community Development Director (grant administrator). The grant administrator shall research the request and provide a response to the potential grant applicant in writing. If there is uncertainty with the application document, then the grant administrator will review the inquiry and report suggested edits, additions, or omissions and present the changes to the Village Board. Any edits approved by the Village Board will be promptly made to the application.

### **Grant Submittal Requirements and Application Steps**

Any applicant interested in applying for the grant program **must** complete all steps listed below:

#### ***Step 1 – Pre-Application Meeting***

Prospective applicants must meet with the Community Development Director/grant administrator to review the application, process, and requirements. Applicants should read the entire grant application beforehand to ensure compliance with all conditions. Bringing the project architect and/or general contractor is strongly recommended, as submittals require base drawings and a contractor's cost estimate. Applications will not be accepted without this meeting. The Director may include additional staff in the pre-application meeting to address zoning and permitting items. Conceptual sign off from the Zoning Officer is required at this step to ensure that any proposed business use aligns with the assigned zoning district.

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### **Step 2 – Application Submission**

Submit a complete application to the Community Development Director at Lincolnwood Village Hall. A complete application must include:

- **Completed Application Form** (attached)
- **Project Narrative** describing the business concept and scope of work, with a signed lease matching the applicant’s name.
  - If the applicant owns the property and business, provide proof of ownership (deed or title).
- **Detailed Floor Plans** showing proposed improvements.
- **Itemized Cost Estimate** from an unrelated general contractor, **separating** permanent interior/exterior improvements from labor costs (grant reimburses 25% of eligible labor).
  - Permanent items/materials values must be provided in the cost estimates.
- **Business Plan**, including:
  - Executive summary
  - Business concept and offerings
  - Background of key decision-makers (previous experience, certifications, training)
  - Organizational chart
  - Marketing strategy
  - Menu or product list
  - Five-year financial projections (sales, profit/loss, overhead)
- **Business Details**, including:
  - Articles of incorporation or any other documentation showing the existence of the subject business (include any DBA details)
  - A copy of the ST-1 Sales Tax Remittance Form from the State of Illinois
  - Current copy of State of Illinois Business License
- **Consent Form** for background check and financial review (attached).

The Village highly recommends that the applicant apply for any special approvals and/or building permits immediately after submitting the application to assist with the project review timeline. The decision for this grant application may be withheld if a public hearing is required for zoning approvals.

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### **Step 3 – Staff Review and Approval**

The grant administrator will review the application for completeness and may request additional documentation. During this stage, the Village may conduct a background check on the applicant(s) and review all requested financial information. Once all materials are deemed satisfactory at the grant administrator’s discretion, the Village Manager will approve or deny the grant request. If approved, an approval letter will be issued to the applicant. If the application is referred to the Village Board for review and approval, then the applicant will be notified of the Village Board meeting date. If approved by the Village Board, a resolution confirming the approval then will accompany the letter.

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### **Step 4 – Build Out the Space, Open to the Public, and Submit for Reimbursement**

After the applicant receives the letter from the grant administrator approving the grant request, the applicant has 18 months from the date of the approval letter to complete the following:

- ✓ Complete the construction buildout.
- ✓ Close out all permits by passing all final inspections.
- ✓ Finish paying all vendors and contractors.
- ✓ Obtain a Certificate of Occupancy and open to the public.

Once Step 4 has been completed, the applicant can submit the documentation for reimbursement to the Community Development Director. The documentation needed for consideration of the reimbursement includes:

- ✓ All receipts and paid-in-full invoices covering eligible expenses (copy or original)
- ✓ A notarized Final Waiver(s) of Lien (completed by contractor and all subcontractors)
- ✓ A completed IRS W-9 form
- ✓ Other documentation may be requested by the Village to verify completion of the work related to the grant

Prior to submitting the reimbursement request, the grant administrator will review all submitted documentation and confirm that all permits have been closed out, that no litigation is pending or active, and that no liens are recorded against the property. Note, if the final expenditures comes in **under** the initial cost estimates provided for the grant application, then the reimbursement amount issued under the grant will be less than the amount that was approved by the Village Manager or the Village Board. If all reimbursement documentation is in order, the reimbursement request will be included on the next Village Board warrant register.

DRAFT



## **Program 2 – Dream Storefront Grant Program**

### **Introduction**

The Village of Lincolnwood wants to help entrepreneurs cover the costs incurred when constructing and opening a new restaurant or retail space or when updating a multi-tenant commercial building. To assist with such projects, the Dream Storefront Grant Program (Program 2) can reimburse up to 50% of eligible materials and fixtures, and up to 25% of labor costs associated with the improvements. The maximum award amount for Program 2 is \$100,000; however, the Village Board can determine a higher grant threshold should the application provides a compelling reason (see the Waiver and Grant Interpretations to the Dream Storefront Grant Program section below for more information). To receive the maximum reimbursement, the applicant must spend at least \$200,000 in eligible costs.

Since the dollar amount range for Program 2 is larger than Program 1, all applicants shall present their request in front of the Economic Development Commission (EDC) and then to the Village Board. The EDC will make a recommendation to the Village Board about each grant application, but it is the Village Board that makes the final determination on whether to approve or deny a grant application. Please see the Grant Policies and Procedures sections below for specific definitions and conditions. The Village's Community Development Director (grant administrator) shall review and ensure all grant application items and documents have been submitted.

### **Program 2 - Minimum Qualifications**

The applicant must be a new entrepreneur wishing to open a business, an existing business owner located within the Devon/Lincoln TIF District, or a multi-tenant commercial building owner located within the Devon/Lincoln TIF District see Exhibit 1 for the boundaries of this TIF District. Under Illinois law, the Village cannot approve a grant for an applicant relocating an existing business from outside the Village within 10 miles of the subject address. The business concept must be sales tax generating. The minimum grant dollar request that the Village will entertain with this program is \$20,001 resulting in a minimum eligible investment of \$40,002. If a property owner of a multi-tenant building is applying for a Dream Storefront Grant, then at least one tenant, within the subject building must be a sales tax generating business and have at least five years remaining on the current lease. Additionally, if the property owner of a multi-tenant commercial building is applying for this grant and the qualifying sales-tax generating business within the subject building is a retail-based business, then at least 50% of their floor area should be dedicated to retail sales.

### **Eligible Improvements for Reimbursement**

Please note that new ground-up construction is not eligible for reimbursement per Illinois TIF Law. The chart below lists items that are eligible for reimbursement under Program 2:

<b>Eligible Items for Program 2</b>
ADA Enhancements (exterior and interior)
Permanent kitchen infrastructure (no removable kitchen equipment will be eligible)
Permanent fixtures related to bar and prep spaces
Built-ins (such as wall shelving) used with permanent materials
Walk-in cooler
Interior plumbing
Exterior and interior electrical
Interior HVAC equipment
Fire suppression systems
Permanent flooring materials (vinyl or linoleum products are ineligible)
Bathrooms including ADA compliance modifications
Grease-traps
Exterior façade elements, including wall signage, awnings, and street-facing elevation materials (which are building elevations parallel to a public or private roadway). Roofing materials and roof-mounted equipment are ineligible.
Permanent improvements to outside seating areas
New parking lot lighting, permanent landscaping bed improvements, and new parking lot installation
Any other interior building improvement that is deemed permanent by the grant administrator

**Grant Policies**

The following policies apply to eligible spaces under Program 2:

- The maximum grant awarded for this program is \$100,000 (with a minimum investment of \$200,000).
  - o The minimum grant awarded to be considered for this program will be \$20,001 (with a minimum investment of \$40,002).
- The Village of Lincolnwood will only reimburse for the materials and permanent fixtures associated with the eligible improvements. Additionally, 25% of the labor associated with the eligible improvements can be reimbursed through this grant program. See the Waiver and Grant Interpretations to the Dream Storefront Grant Program section below regarding any request to cover more than 25% of labor costs.
- Multi-tenant commercial property owners may only apply for one grant award for the life of the program. No exceptions shall be granted. For this grant program, a multi-tenant commercial property shall be defined as “a building or buildings under common ownership that contains at least two commercial spaces and that includes at least one retail or restaurant operation as a tenant.” The maximum grant amount for a multi-tenant commercial building is \$50,000.
- Retail businesses applying for this grant must dedicate at least 50% of their floor area to retail sales at the specified address, be open to the public, and comply with Lincolnwood zoning ordinances for permitted or special retail use. Businesses that do not meet the 50% retail floor area requirement are not eligible for the grant, unless the applicant is a building material/fixture retailer and is constructing a showroom space in the subject unit (e.g. a cabinet maker). Grant proceeds must be primarily used for the showroom space.
- Food and beverage-based businesses must have at least a takeout counter and be open to the public to qualify for this grant.
- In instances when a property owner applies for a grant to improve a multi-tenant commercial building, the eligible individual tenants may also submit their own respective grant requests subject to the

- policies and procedures defined in this document.
- Given the dollar amount associated with Program 2, the Village Board may require an additional agreement be recorded against the subject property to ensure that the eligible improvements associated with the grant application remain in place for a minimum period of five years. A claw back clause may be part of such agreement on a pro-rated basis.
  - The Village of Lincolnwood will only reimburse for up to 50% of the cost of materials and permanent fixtures associated with the eligible improvements. Additionally, 25% of the labor associated with the eligible improvements can be reimbursed through this grant program.
    - o A waiver can be requested for additional financial support associated with the labor costs – see the Waiver section below.
  - Grant funds cannot be used to correct municipal code violations for existing businesses or properties. However, they may be used to voluntarily modernize a building or property to meet current standards. If a property has unresolved code violations at the time of application or before payment, and the Village has issued a notice, the Village may delay application review or payment until all violations are resolved.
  - The applicant must own the property or have a signed or contingent lease for at least five years (proof required). If an existing business is applying and leases the subject space, then proof of five years being left on their lease is required.
  - Approved applicants must complete the permitted scope work and open the business within 18 months of the grant approval.
    - o If the applicant cannot complete the project within 18 months, they may request a six-month extension by submitting a written request to the Village Board no later than the first day of the 18th month after grant approval.
  - All grants are subject to available funding. The Village Board may discontinue the program at any time. Businesses that sell tobacco, vape, and CBD items as their primary retail products are not eligible for this grant.
  - Grant approval does not authorize work to begin. All work requires proper permits and approvals. Unauthorized work may result in grant termination.
  - As part of the grant submittals, the applicant shall provide evidence that the eligible business owner must have either a signed contingent lease for a minimum of a five-year period. Or if the applicant is the property owner, then proof of property ownership is required.
  - The grant administrator reserves the right and option to not approve or recommend a grant request to the Economic Development Commission and the Village Board after vetting each applicant and application. The Community Development Director also reserves the right and option to amend the requested grant amount based on review of the application, anticipation of grant applications, and available funding.
  - Note that any work conducted directly by the applicant is **not** eligible for reimbursement. The installation of the eligible permanent improvements must be performed by hired professionals who are not related to the applicant or the building owner, either through familial relationships or from any other business partnership.
  - Any property that is owned by an elected or appointed official of the Village is not eligible for the grant program.
  - This grant will not cover any expenses incurred prior to applying for and receiving an approval letter or resolution approving the grant request.
  - Any applicant that previously received a Property Enhancement Program Grant in the past five-years is not eligible for this grant program.
  - No grant reimbursement will be dispersed until all steps have been satisfied by the applicant (see below).

### **Waiver and Grant Interpretations to the Dream Storefront Grant Program (Program 2)**

Under special circumstances, the applicant may request additional funding by providing written justification that the project would not proceed without the extra funds. Moreover, an applicant can request a higher percentage coverage for labor; however, no such request shall exceed 50% of labor associated with eligible improvements. Any additional dollar amount request will need to be compared to the remaining dollar amount allocated to the grant program budget. The grant administrator will review and recommend such requests, but final approval rests with the Village Board. No additional funding will be granted after the Board's initial resolution.

All questions regarding Program 2 should be directed to the Community Development Director (grant administrator). The grant administrator will review and propose edits for Village Board approval. Approved changes will be promptly incorporated into the application.

### **Grant Submittal Requirements and Application Steps**

Any applicant interested in applying for the grant program **must** complete all steps listed below:

#### ***Step 1 – Pre-Application Meeting***

Prospective applicants must meet with the Community Development Director to review the application, process, and requirements. Applicants should read the entire grant application beforehand to ensure compliance with all conditions. Bringing the project architect and/or general contractor is strongly recommended, as submittals require base drawings and a contractor's cost estimate. Applications will not be accepted without this meeting. The Director may include staff from other departments to address zoning and permitting issues. Conceptual sign off from the Zoning Officer is required at this step to ensure that any proposed business use aligns with the assigned zoning district.

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#### ***Step 2 – Application Submission***

Submit a complete application to the Community Development Director at Lincolnwood Village Hall. A complete application must include:

- **Completed Application Form** (attached)
- **Project Narrative** describing the business concept and scope of work, with a signed lease matching the applicant's name.
  - If the applicant owns the property and business, provide proof of ownership (deed or title).
- **Detailed Floor Plans** showing proposed improvements.
- **Itemized Cost Estimate** from an unrelated general contractor, **separating** permanent interior/exterior improvements from labor costs (grant reimburses 25% of eligible labor).
  - Permanent items/materials values must be provided in the cost estimates.
- **Business Plan**, including:
  - Executive summary
  - Business concept and offerings
  - Background of key decision-makers (previous experience, certifications, training)
  - Organizational chart
  - Marketing strategy
  - Menu or product list
  - Five-year financial projections (sales, profit/loss, overhead)
- **Business Details**, including:
  - Articles of incorporation or any other documentation showing the existence of the subject business (include any DBA details)
  - A copy of the ST-1 Sales Tax Remittance Form from the State of Illinois
  - Current copy of State of Illinois Business License
- **Consent Form** for background check and financial review (attached).

The Village highly recommends that the applicant apply for any special approvals and/or building permits immediately after submitting the application to assist with the project review timeline. The decision for this grant application may be withheld if a public hearing is required for zoning approvals.

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### **Step 3 – Staff Review and Approval**

The Community Development Director will review the application for completeness and may request additional documentation. During this stage, the Village may conduct a background check on the applicant(s) and review all required financial information which may occur in person. Once all materials are deemed satisfactory at the Director’s discretion, an approval letter will be issued, including the date the grant request will be presented to the Village Board. If approved, the Village Board will adopt a resolution confirming the approval, which will accompany the letter.

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### **Step 4 – Build Out the Space, Open to the Public, and Submit for Reimbursement**

After the applicant receives the letter from the Community Development Director/grant administrator approving the grant request, the applicant has 18 months from the date of the approval letter to complete the following:

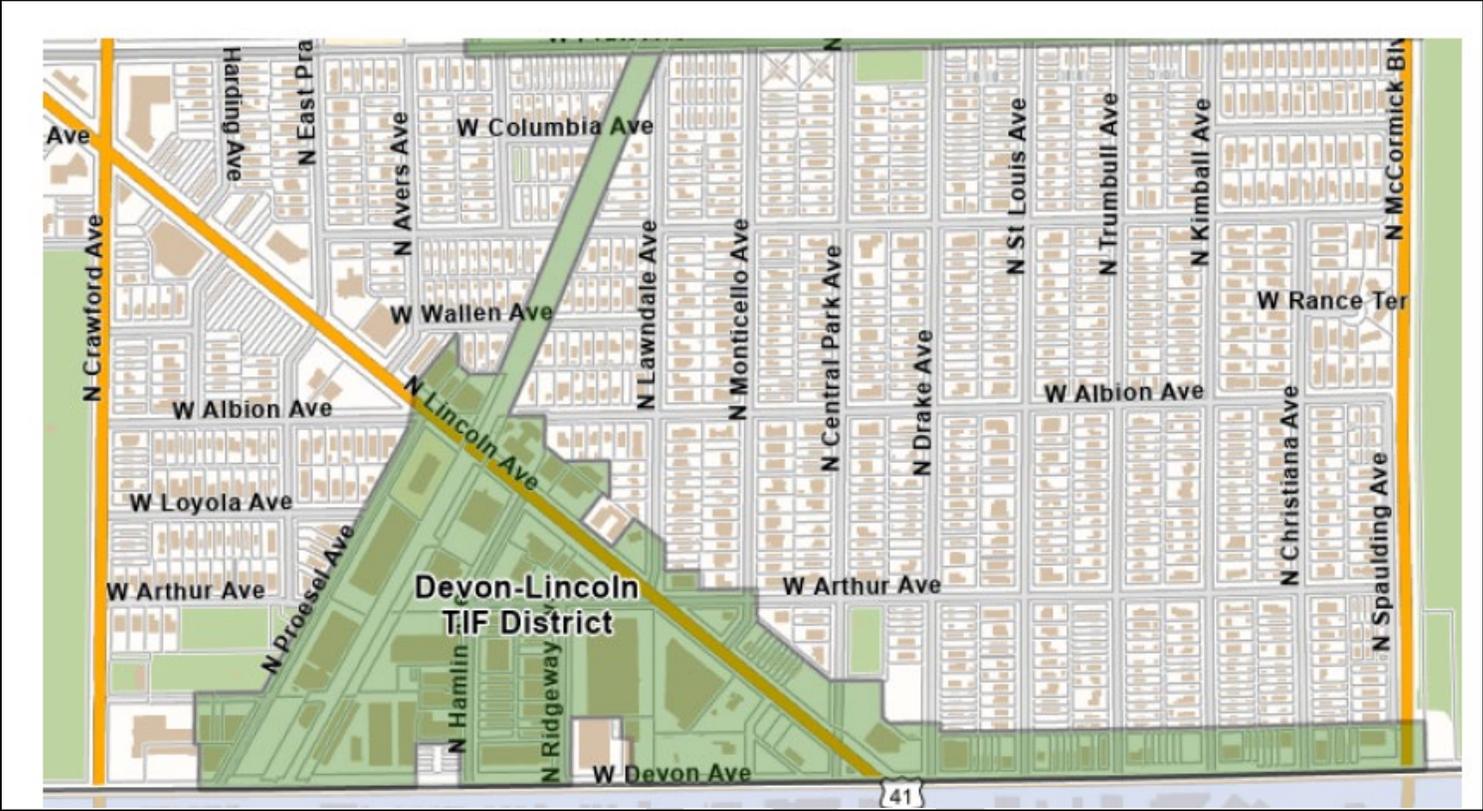
- ✓ Complete the construction buildout.
- ✓ Close out all permits by passing all final inspections.
- ✓ Finish paying all vendors and contractors.
- ✓ Obtain a Certificate of Occupancy and open to the public.

Once Step 4 has been completed, the applicant can submit the documentation for reimbursement to the Community Development Director. The documentation needed for consideration of the reimbursement includes:

- ✓ All receipts and paid-in-full invoices covering eligible expenses (copy or original)
- ✓ A notarized Final Waiver(s) of Lien (completed by contractor and all subcontractors)
- ✓ A completed IRS W-9 form
- ✓ Other documentation may be requested by the Village to verify completion of the work related to the grant

Prior to submitting the reimbursement request, the grant administrator will review all submitted documentation and confirm that all permits have been closed out, that no litigation is pending or active, and that no liens are recorded against the property. Note, if the final expenditure comes in **under** the initial cost estimates provided for the grant application, then the reimbursement amount issued under the grant will be less than the amount that was approved by the Village Board. If all reimbursement documentation is in order, the reimbursement request will be included on the next Village Board warrant register.

**Exhibit 1 - Map of Devon/Lincoln TIF District**



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**Lincolnwood Devon/Lincoln TIF District Grant Program**

**APPLICATION PAGE**

To determine eligibility of your project for the grant program, please provide the following information.

Name of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Property Address for Proposed Improvements: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Proposed Improvements (please attach separate narrative)

Estimated cost of improvements: \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated cost of qualifying labor: \_\_\_\_\_

Please be sure all application items are attached as identified in Step 2 for your applicable Program (1 or

2) Applicant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**(To be completed by Village)**

**Eligible [ ]**

**Not Eligible [ ]**

Grant Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_

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



**Devon/Lincoln TIF District Pilot Project Grant Program**  
**CONSENT AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ hereby acknowledge that the Village of Lincolnwood has the right and ability to conduct a background investigation as part of its evaluation of this application and consent to such investigation. I understand that all individuals holding an ownership interest in the business submitting this grant application shall be subject to a background check, which may include a credit report inquiry and a review of financial documentation as requested by the Community Development Director/grant administrator.

I further represent that I have thoroughly reviewed all provisions of the grant program and agree to comply with all applicable terms, conditions, policies, and procedures governing eligibility and reimbursement. I acknowledge that the determination to award grant funds rests solely within the discretion of the Village Manager (for Program 1) or the Village Board.

Additionally, I understand and agree that if the actual project costs are less than the estimated costs used to calculate the reimbursement amount, the final grant disbursement may be reduced accordingly.

The building owner shall sign this consent form (if applicable) acknowledging their approval consenting to the work detailed and as part of this application.

Applicant Signature \_\_\_\_\_

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

Building Owner Signature (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

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