



## Business Improvement and Expansion Grant (ARPA Pilot Program) Guidelines

**Purpose:** The purpose of the grant is to provide financial assistance to help overcome the potentially prohibitive costs for adding fire suppression and accessibility improvements to existing buildings.

### **Goals:**

- Provide financial assistance to help overcome the initial high cost of fire suppression installation and ADA accessible improvements
- Encourage better utilization of existing business spaces
- Increase the quality of available business spaces to draw new business to Leavenworth
- Support Community Risk Reduction (CRR) fire safety efforts
- Lower building insurance premiums

### **Criteria:**

- \$200,000 ARPA grant funding available on a first-come, first-serve basis until funds are expended
- 50% of eligible expenses up to \$30,000
- Can cover smaller project amounts (ex. \$10,000 grant on a \$20,000 project)
- Citywide, existing buildings (Eligible zoning includes NBD, OBD, CBD, GBD, PUD with specified business use or lawfully existing non-conforming use business inside a residential zoning district. Home-based businesses not eligible. Zoning available at [www.GIS.FirstCity.org](http://www.GIS.FirstCity.org) )
- Must directly support a current or identified business (speculative business space, residential, and non-profit is not eligible)
- New or expanded business activity must comply with zoning regulations regarding use
- For improvements made or under contract to be performed between November 1, 2022 and December 31, 2024 (Mandatory ARPA timeframe)
- City funding will follow all applicable federal ARPA guidelines
- Improvements made before November 1, 2022 are not eligible (the grant is not retroactive)
- Grant approval required before eligible work begins
- Eligible improvements will remain with the property to support a future business should the building be sold or re-purposed:
  - Engineer/architect plan development expenses
  - Leavenworth Waterworks main connection fees
  - Installation and supply costs from a licensed contractor for fire suppression installation and ADA accessible improvements
- Eligible Waterworks fees apply to initial connection only for new fire suppression system (inspection costs, annual fees, and water usage not eligible)
- Eligible fire suppression work includes initial sprinkler system installation (not repairs/maintenance of existing system)

- For projects where equivalent life safety improvements such as egress could support a change in use, expansion of service area, or increased occupancy in lieu of fire suppression system installation, those equivalents may be considered for grant funding
- Interior ADA accessibility improvements should follow current accessibility standards (specific guidance can be found here <https://www.access-board.gov/ada/> )
- Eligible ADA accessibility improvements may also be eligible for the State of Kansas tax credit (<https://www.ksrevenue.gov/prtaxcredits-disabled.html> )
- Business/building owner must pay for full project cost and submit copy of cancelled check or contractor's paid invoice as proof of payment before grant funds will be reimbursed for work
- All grant-funded project work subject to inspection and verification of program guidelines and permit requirements before funding is released
- Eligible work may also require other permits or approvals (ex. building permit or historic preservation approval)
- Work performed must comply with all other permit, licensing, and other requirements from federal, state, and local governments including the City
- Accessory units not eligible
- Can utilize the Small Business Economic Development Grant (if eligible) or the Business Improvement and Expansion Grant (not both for the same expenses)
- Only one Business Improvement and Expansion Grant provided per business, location/address, or building owner (whether single or multiple business tenants). If tenant receives grant then the building owner is not eligible (and vice versa).
- Completed application and professional contractor quote for work required
- Quote acceptability is subject to City staff approval. Staff may require second quote if necessary.
- City not responsible for any costs incurred in the creation of grant application or gaining of professional quotes
- Incomplete applications or those submitted without required quotes will be returned for completion and future submission
- Grant recipients are responsible for any necessary state and federal tax reporting
- Grant information including business name, funding amount, and building improvements will be publicly available for program transparency
- Businesses may submit a grant application for engineer/architect fees for development of life safety and ADA accessible plans. After plans are developed, businesses may submit a second grant application for installation/supply costs and Waterworks connection fees tied to enacting those plans. Grant approval for second application contingent on available grant funding and subject to the \$30,000 grant maximum for all eligible expenses.
- The City reserves the right to determine, at its sole discretion, which projects are eligible for grant funding

For questions, please contact Assistant City Manager Penny Holler at (913) 680-2602 or [Penny.Holler@FirstCity.org](mailto:Penny.Holler@FirstCity.org)