



The RIPPLE Effect CITY OF COVINGTON, KENTUCKY PROGRAM YEAR 2019- 2020 GUIDELINES

I. PROGRAM SUMMARY

Revitalization Includes **P**eople, **P**laces, **L**ifestyles and **E**conomic Investment

The RIPPLE Effect is a competitively awarded program administered by the City of Covington. The purpose of the program is to assist neighborhoods by coordinating multiple city services and privately leveraged efforts to implement public improvement projects in designated business areas. These coordinated efforts shall serve to physically improve these business areas while also contributing to the overall economic vitality of the area.

The goals of the program include:

- to maximize the economic, social and community impact of public investments throughout the city;
- to create opportunities to collaborate and creatively leverage projects and programs among City departments;
- to create buy-in and ownership of revitalization efforts by neighborhoods, residents, business owners, and investors through competitive participation; and
- to elevate property values and neighborhood pride by creating walkable, bikeable and livable neighborhood business nodes and districts.

II. PROCESS

The application process includes a **mandatory Pre-Application**. This pre-application is a one page summary of the project and will allow the City to determine if a proposed project meets the program requirements and would be eligible to receive funding. The City will create a schedule outlining the due dates pre-application and full application deadlines and award notification.

Step One: Submit Pre-Application for review by City staff. **Pre-Applications are due by 4:30 pm on Friday, December 20, 2019.** Applicants are encouraged to submit pre-applications as early as possible. Please note that Pre-Applications can be revised and resubmitted as long as final submission meets the Pre-Application deadline. The City will notify applicants if their proposal meets the program eligibility requirements.

Step Two: After being notified of approved Pre-Application, applicants must submit a full Project Funding Request Application along with all required submission documents included on the Project Document Checklist.

Step Three: A committee of City staff will review and evaluate project submissions based on the program's scoring criteria and will select and recommend the winning proposal(s) to City Commission for approval.

Step Four: The program's Project Manager will work with the winning applicant(s) to coordinate City programs and services and the proposal's private leveraging efforts to create a final scope, schedule and logistics for implementing the project.

III. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Eligible Applicants: Applicants to the program must be one of the following types of organizations: Community Groups or Councils; Neighborhood Associations; and/or associations/organizations representing neighborhood businesses or business interests. Applicants must demonstrate that they represent the neighborhood in the proposed project area, have built community consensus for the proposal and have the capacity to implement the project.

Primary Funding Source/Eligible Neighborhoods: The City has allocated approximately \$200,000 for this program year. The program is funded with Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. CDBG funds are federal funds received by the City that can be used for projects that provide an Area Benefit to residents of designated low/moderate income residential neighborhoods. For this program, all Covington neighborhoods located north of I-275 are eligible. See below for other funds and services which may be applicable.

Eligible Project Areas: The proposed project area must meet the designation as a Neighborhood Business District or a Neighborhood Business Node.

A **Neighborhood Business District** is an area of the city with a collection of small businesses, commercial buildings, or buildings originally designed for commercial purposes (including buildings designed with first floor commercial storefronts and upper floor residential). A neighborhood business district shall have at least four contiguous majority commercial block faces along at least one side of the street (Example A attached) or at least three majority commercial block faces on both sides of a street (Example B attached). Other configurations with multiple street frontages will be considered.

A **Neighborhood Business Node** is an area of a neighborhood with small businesses, commercial buildings, or buildings originally designed for commercial purposes (including buildings designed with first floor commercial storefronts and upper floor residential) on at least two corners of an intersection (Example A attached) or a minimum of four qualifying structures in the same block (Examples B & C attached).

Allowed Use of CDBG Funds: Program funds can be used for eligible public improvements including but not limited to: public parking lot improvements; street improvements (repaving/reconstruction); sidewalks; curbs and gutters; lighting; utility lines; gateways/signage; new public trash cans; new street trees/landscaping; benches and other street furniture; bike racks and bike amenities; and other aesthetic amenities such as sculptures and works of art.

Other City Services/Programs: In addition to funding eligible public improvements, the program also provides these coordinated City services and partner programs:

- **Economic Development:** Zoning analysis and recommendations for amendments to code; historic structures identification and consultation for façade improvements; Small Business Program set-aside for rent subsidies and façade loans; business retention and expansion visits; market opportunities for vacant commercial land or structures; Section 108 Loans; City-owned commercial properties; waived or reduced fees for permits.

- **Neighborhood Services:** Upper Floor Residential Rental Rehab Program; solid waste analysis and recommendations; other development opportunities (including city-owned residential properties); parks and recreation analysis, recommendations and improvements; Code Enforcement sweeps and follow-ups.
- **Public Works:** Implementation of proposed public improvements; street tree inventory, recommendations for plantings; Adopt-A-Spot/Street.
- **Police:** Public safety assessment & recommendations; special patrols/concentrated enforcement; crime prevention through environmental design; crime data and hot spots.
- **Fire:** Safety assessment & code inspections/enforcement; safety & prevention training.

IV. PROJECT PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Pre-Application Form (attached): This form must be submitted to the City by **4:30 pm on Friday, December 20, 2019**. The Pre-Application includes the proposed project area (defined boundary of Business District or Business Node), name and contact information for the organization submitting the proposal, and a brief description of the proposed project.

Project Funding Request Application (attached): This form must be submitted to the City by the full application due date. The Project Funding Request Application outlines the full details of the proposed project including:

- detailed description of the proposed public improvements;
- description of other City provided services and programs that will be utilized for the project;
- outline of what the neighborhood/business community is bringing to the project (cash, volunteer hours, other types of contributions, etc.)
- assessments of property conditions and current uses in the project area;
- photographs of current project area conditions (streets, sidewalks, structures, etc.)
- goals and expected impacts of the project and description of how the goals were developed;
- business and property owner participation in the project; and
- names of residents, property owners, business owners who will serve as a task force to work with the City (minimum 6 maximum 10)

V. PROJECT SELECTION

Project Rating Sheet: Projects will be reviewed and evaluated based on the program's scoring criteria by a committee of City staff members from the various City departments participating in the program. The scoring criteria that will be utilized is included as an attachment to these guidelines. City staff will recommend the winning proposal to the City Commission for final approval.

VI. CONFLICT OF INTEREST:

A CDBG conflict of interest exists if an applicant is an employee, agent, consultant, officer elected or appointed official to the City of Covington, and if the applicant:

- Exercises or has exercised any functions or responsibilities with respect to CDBG funds for this program
- Participates in a decision making process or gains inside information with regard to such activities
- Obtains a financial interest or benefit from a CDBG-assisted activity, or has a financial interest in any contract, subcontract, or agreement with respect to a CDBG-assisted activity, or with respect to the proceeds of the CDBG-assisted activity, either for themselves or those with whom they have business or immediate family ties, during their tenure or for one year thereafter

If a conflict of interest exists, the applicant may not obtain assistance under this program. If there is any doubt of the conflict of interest, a written waiver may be requested from the City of Covington.

This program shall also be conducted in accordance with the prohibitions against conflicts of interest, gratuities, and kickbacks as set forth in KRS 45A.455 which are incorporated herein by reference.

For more information on The Ripple Effect, contact:

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