**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**
**108 E. MAIN STREET ~ CLUTE, TEXAS 77531**
www.clutetexas.gov

# CEDC SMALL BUSINESS GRANT PROGRAMS

The Clute Economic Development Corporation (CEDC) is committed to fostering economic growth and revitalizing business corridors within the City Limits. To support this mission, the CEDC offers a range of grant programs tailored to assist local small businesses in making exterior property and environmental improvements. These grants aim to enhance the aesthetic appeal, functionality, and overall economic stability of the community. The grant categories include:

1. **Façade Grants:** Up to $6,000 in matching funds to enhance the appearance of exterior building facades visible to the public right-of-way.
2. **Painting Grants:** 50% of the total cost, up to $6,000, to refurbish commercial building exteriors with fresh paint.
3. **Landscape Grants:** Matching funds of up to $6,000 to improve curb appeal through landscape enhancements, including irrigation systems.
4. **Signage Update Grants:** Assistance with costs associated with replacing and updating commercial business signs, up to $6,000.
5. **Fencing/Screening Grants:** Up to $5,000 in matching funds to comply with city ordinance requirements related to fencing.
6. **Parking Improvement Grants:** Support for enhancing parking facilities, grants will be awarded for those projects that not only enhance the aesthetic appearance of the parking lot, but also improve safety and reduce surface water runoff.
7. **Online Business Platform Enhancement Grants (OBPEG) Grants:** Grants of up to $2,500 to develop and enhance their online business platforms. These grants are intended to assist businesses in website development, bolstering their social media presence/campaigns, and optimizing their search engine visibility.

Each grant program operates on a reimbursement basis, with funds allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. Applicants must adhere to eligibility criteria, including ownership of the building or written consent from the owner, current property tax status, and, if applicable, possession of a State Sales Tax Certificate identifying Clute as the place of business.

The CEDC Board reviews and approves applications, prioritizing projects that align with the organization's goals and contribute to the overall aesthetic impact, infrastructure sustainability and economic development of the community.

By providing financial resources and incentives for property improvements, the CEDC aims to stimulate business growth, attract investment, and create a vibrant and thriving business environment in Clute. Businesses interested in accessing these grant opportunities are encouraged to submit their applications for consideration.

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# Grant Descriptions and Application Guidelines

## 1. Façade Grants:

- **Grant Description:** Façade Grants provide up to $6,000 in matching funds to improve the appearance of exterior building facades visible to the public right-of-way.
- **Eligibility Criteria:**
  - Applicants must be small businesses within the City Limits of Clute.
  - Ownership of the building or written consent from the owner is required.
  - Applicants must be current on all property tax, utility bill and other accounts owed to the City.
  - Possession of a State Sales Tax Certificate identifying Clute as the place of business (if applicable).
- **Scoring Criteria:**
  - 30 points for businesses that are newly opening in Clute or have been in Clute for more than 5 years.
  - 10 points for businesses that use materials designed to last more than 30 years.
  - 30 points for businesses that utilize innovative design, materials, or techniques to enhance the overall aesthetic of the property, energy efficiency, or reduce/reuse surface water flow from precipitation.
  - 30 points for businesses locating to or renovating a building built prior to 1994.
  - 10 bonus points for applicants with fewer than 20 total employees.
  - 15 bonus points for applicants that agree to use Dark Skies compliant lighting for all external lights.
  - 15 bonus points for businesses with an active Sales Tax Certificate identifying Clute as their primary place of business.

## 2. Painting Grants:

- **Grant Description:** Painting Grants cover 50% of the total cost, up to $6,000, for refurbishing commercial building exteriors with fresh paint.
- **Eligibility Criteria:**
    - Applicants must be small businesses within the City Limits of Clute.
    - Ownership of the building or written consent from the owner is required.
    - Applicants must be current on all property tax, utility bill and other accounts owed to the City.
    - Possession of a State Sales Tax Certificate identifying Clute as the place of business (if applicable).
- **Scoring Criteria:**
    - 30 points for businesses that are newly opening in Clute or have been in Clute for more than 5 years.
    - 10 points for businesses that use materials designed to last more than 30 years.
    - 30 points for businesses that utilize innovative design, materials, or techniques to enhance the overall aesthetic of the property, energy efficiency, or reduce/reuse surface water flow from precipitation.
    - 30 points for businesses locating to or renovating a building built prior to 1994.
    - 10 bonus points for applicants with fewer than 20 total employees.
    - 15 bonus points for businesses with an active Sales Tax Certificate identifying Clute as their primary place of business.

## 3. Landscape Grants:

- **Grant Description:** Landscape Grants provide matching funds of up to $6,000 to enhance curb appeal through landscape enhancements, including irrigation systems.
- **Eligibility Criteria:**
    - Applicants must be small businesses within the City Limits of Clute.
    - Ownership of the building or written consent from the owner is required.
    - Applicants must be current on all property tax, utility bill and other accounts owed to the City.
    - Possession of a State Sales Tax Certificate identifying Clute as the place of business (if applicable).
- **Scoring Criteria:**
    - 30 points for businesses that are newly opening in Clute or have been in Clute for more than 5 years.
    - 10 points for businesses that use materials designed to last more than 30 years.
    - 30 points for businesses that utilize innovative design, materials, or techniques to enhance the overall aesthetic of the property, energy efficiency, or reduce/reuse surface water flow from precipitation.
    - 30 points for businesses locating to or renovating a building built prior to 1994.
    - 10 bonus points for applicants with fewer than 20 total employees.
    - 10 bonus points for applicants that utilize native, drought resistant plants in their landscaping.
    - 15 bonus points for businesses with an active Sales Tax Certificate identifying Clute as their primary place of business.

## 4. Signage Update Grants:

- **Grant Description:** Signage Update Grants offer assistance with costs associated with replacing and updating commercial business signs, up to $6,000.
- **Eligibility Criteria:**
    - Applicants must be small businesses within the City Limits of Clute.
    - Ownership of the building or written consent from the owner is required.
    - Applicants must be current on all property tax, utility bill and other accounts owed to the City.
    - Possession of a State Sales Tax Certificate identifying Clute as the place of business (if applicable).
- **Scoring Criteria:**
    - 30 points for businesses that are newly opening in Clute or have been in Clute for more than 5 years.
    - 10 points for businesses that use materials designed to last more than 30 years.
    - 30 points for businesses that utilize innovative design, materials, or techniques to enhance the overall aesthetic of the property and energy efficiency.
    - 30 points for businesses locating to or renovating a building built prior to 1994.
    - 10 bonus points for applicants with fewer than 20 total employees.
    - 15 bonus points for businesses with an active Sales Tax Certificate identifying Clute as their primary place of business.

## 5. Fencing/Screening Grants:

- **Grant Description:** Fencing/Screening Grants provide up to $5,000 in matching funds to comply with city ordinance requirements related to fencing.
- **Eligibility Criteria:**
    - Applicants must be small businesses within the City Limits of Clute.
    - Ownership of the building or written consent from the owner is required.
    - Applicants must be current on all property tax, utility bill and other accounts owed to the City.
    - Possession of a State Sales Tax Certificate identifying Clute as the place of business (if applicable).
- **Scoring Criteria:**
    - 30 points for businesses that are newly opening in Clute or have been in Clute for more than 5 years.
    - 10 points for businesses that use materials designed to last more than 30 years.
    - 30 points for businesses that utilize innovative design, materials, or techniques to enhance the overall aesthetic of the property, energy efficiency, or reduce/reuse surface water flow from precipitation.
    - 30 points for businesses locating to or renovating a building built prior to 1994.
    - 10 bonus points for applicants with fewer than 20 total employees.
    - 15 bonus points for businesses with an active Sales Tax Certificate identifying Clute as their primary place of business.

## 6. Parking Improvement Grants:

- **Grant Description:** Parking Improvement Grants support enhancing parking facilities, prioritizing projects that improve aesthetics, safety, and reduce surface water runoff.
- **Eligibility Criteria:**
    - Applicants must be small businesses within the City Limits of Clute.
    - Ownership of the building or written consent from the owner is required.
    - Applicants must be current on all property tax, utility bill and other accounts owed to the City.
    - Possession of a State Sales Tax Certificate identifying Clute as the place of business (if applicable).
- **Scoring Criteria:**
    - 30 points for businesses that are newly opening in Clute or have been in Clute for more than 5 years.
    - 10 points for businesses that use materials designed to last more than 30 years.
    - 30 points for businesses that utilize innovative design, materials, or techniques to enhance the overall aesthetic of the property, energy efficiency, or reduce/reuse surface water flow from precipitation.
    - 30 points for businesses locating to or renovating a building built prior to 1994.
    - 10 bonus points for applicants with fewer than 20 total employees.
    - 15 bonus points for applicants that agree to use Dark Skies compliant lighting.
    - 15 bonus points for applicants that utilize a design that includes additional landscaping and/or pervious pavement to enhance appearance and reduce water flow from precipitation.
    - 15 bonus points for businesses with an active Sales Tax Certificate identifying Clute as their primary place of business.

## 7. Online Business Platform Enhancement (OBPEG) Grants:

- **Grant Description:** OBPEG Grants provide up to $2,500 to develop and enhance online business platforms, including website development, social media campaigns, and search engine optimization.
- **Eligibility Criteria:**
    - The applicant must be a small business located within the city limits of Clute, Texas.
    - The business must possess a valid Sales Tax certificate indicating its location in Clute, Texas.
    - The business must have been in operation for a minimum of one year.
    - The applicant must demonstrate a genuine need for enhancing their online business platform.
- **Scoring Criteria:**
    - Business Ownership Age and Size (20 points): Points will be awarded based on the number of years the business has been in operation and its size, with consideration given to the impact of the grant on the business's growth potential.
    - Existence of Current Online Presence/Social Media Accounts (5 points).
    - Proof of Sales Tax Certificate Indicating Business Location as Clute, Texas (20 points): Businesses must provide a valid Sales Tax certificate indicating their location in Clute, Texas, to receive full points in this category.
    - Written Plan for Implementation (15 points): Points will be awarded based on the clarity, feasibility, and innovation demonstrated in the applicant's written plan for utilizing the grant funds to enhance their online business platform.

**Application Process:**

- Applicants must submit a completed application form with detailed project descriptions and supporting documentation.
- Grants are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis, subject to eligibility criteria and fund availability.
- The CEDC Board reviews and approves applications, prioritizing projects aligned with organizational goals and contributing to the community's overall aesthetic impact, infrastructure sustainability, and economic development.

By providing financial resources and incentives for property improvements, the CEDC aims to stimulate business growth, attract investment, and create a vibrant and thriving business environment in Clute. Interested businesses are encouraged to submit their applications for consideration.