



**VILLAGE OF BARTLETT
COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC AFFAIRS COMMISSION**

MEETING AGENDA

**Meeting to be held at:
BARTLETT VILLAGE HALL
228 South Main Street, Bartlett, IL
February 9, 2026 – 6:00 PM**

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of January 12, 2026 Meeting Minutes
4. Public Comment
5. Belong in Bartlett Grant Program Discussion
6. New Business
7. Adjournment

Village of Bartlett
Community & Economic Affairs Commission Meeting Minutes
January 12, 2026

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Gandsey called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to the January 12th, 2026, meeting of the Community & Economic Affairs Commission.

2. ROLL CALL

The following commissioners were present: Stephanie Gandsey, Kirsten Erickson, Bruce Suffern, Peggy O'Hare, Robert Gorski, Amy Tolosky, Kinga Szkotak, and Blake Koch. Commissioners Jerry Kubazsko, Dave Wetherton and Mike Densford were absent.

Also present: Tony Fradin, Economic Development Coordinator and Scott Skrycki, Assistant Village Administrator

3. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

Chairperson Gandsey asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the December 8th, 2025, meeting. A motion was made and seconded.

Commissioner Gorski had two discussion points on the minutes. First, on page three of seven, point number five, it was noted that the reference should be to the FY27 budget, not the FY26 budget, as the village is currently in FY26. The amendment was accepted to read "2026-27 budget."

The second was a correction on page six attributing a statement about an event involving fire trucks and a choir to Mike, but he clarified that he was the one who made that statement. With the amendments noted, a roll call vote was taken specifically on the approval of the minutes.

The motion carried.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

5. DISCUSSION ITEM: BELONG IN BARTLETT BUSINESS GRANT PROGRAM

Chairperson Gandsey introduced the main item for the evening: an overview and discussion of the proposed "Belong in Bartlett" business grant program, which was formerly called the Bartlett Economic Development Assistance (BEDA) Program. She noted having seen the program evolve and stated it was time for some changes. She turned the discussion over to Tony for a presentation.

Tony began by acknowledging that many commissioners were familiar with the BEDA program, with two having received grants and others having reviewed applications. He provided a brief background to launch the discussion on rebranding and adjusting the program.

Background on the BEDA Program:

The BEDA program started around 2018. Its core purpose was a small business grant assistance program aimed at converting vacant or underutilized space into sales tax-generating uses. Reimbursements were made only after code-compliant completion of work; businesses had to pay for all improvements upfront and pass all inspections (electrical, plumbing, health, fire, etc.) before any village reimbursement. The maximum grant was \$50,000.

Performance Metrics:

- 26 grants were approved in total.
- 21 grants were awarded (the discrepancy accounts for approvals that never moved forward).
- 2 grants are currently pending: one for MORE Brewing to build an outdoor enclosure for year-round use of their beer garden, and another for JC Mexican Restaurant for a fire alarm system upgrade.
- Approximately \$700,000 in grants was approved, with \$615,000 paid out. Grant amounts varied, with some as low as a few thousand dollars.

Program Updates Over the Years:

The program was updated four or five times based on board and staff feedback. Key updates included:

1. 2-Year Claw back Provision: Added after a couple of early recipients closed before staying open for two years, allowing the village to recoup funds if a business closes early.
2. Background Check Requirement: Added for applicants.
3. Online Application by Invitation: Changed from an open PDF to an online application that staff (Scott or Tony) must send. This was to prevent ineligible applications (e.g., from multifamily apartment owners or healthcare providers) as the program was geared toward sales-tax-producing businesses.
4. Preference for Military Veterans: Added but never utilized. It would have likely meant a small bump in the recommended grant amount.

5. Permanent Fixtures Only: Eligibility was changed to only include permanent fixtures (for both outdoor and indoor dining) to protect the village's investment and prevent someone from taking movable items funded by the grant.

6. Reapplication Period: Reduced from three years to two years.

Notable Success Stories:

Tony highlighted several successes:

- Bartlett Plaza: Received two BEDA grants over two years for major renovations, transforming a nearly vacant shopping center to Streets of Bartlett.
- MORE Brewing Co.: Received a \$50,000 grant as part of their roughly \$4 million investment in a downtown building.
- Banbury Fair (Bruce Suffern): Received grants for bringing water/sewer infrastructure to 211 Railroad and for converting a 140-year-old barn into La P'tit.
- Other \$50,000 grant recipients included 120 Live, O'Hare's, and Boss's Signature.
- The smallest award was \$903 to Hoelterhoff's Nursery for signage.

Tony noted the program mostly applied to downtown businesses due to the concentration of older, underutilized structures there.

Introducing the "Belong in Bartlett" Grant Program:

The discussion shifted to structuring the new program. The proposed name, "Belong in Bartlett," ties into the existing community brand developed by the Economic Development Committee (EDC).

Scott interjected to encourage commissioners to interrupt and engage conversationally during the presentation.

Commissioner Questions and Discussion on Program Philosophy:

Commissioner Tolosky asked about MORE Brewing, noting it seemed like a chain or not a "mom-and-pop" shop, and questioned why such a business would need a grant.

Tony responded that "small business" is a relative term. He would consider MORE Brewing a small business, just of a different size and scope than a smaller restaurant. From an economic development standpoint, when a business proposes a major project like MORE Brewing's two-story rooftop building, forming a public-private partnership is a responsible tool to encourage investment.

Chairperson Gandsey added to this, framing it as a philosophical choice. The program can be seen either as "giving money to business" or as a strategic tool for economic development. The sentiment has been evolving to focus more on exterior improvements that beautify the community, making it more inviting.

This encourages people to come downtown, potentially visit multiple businesses, and enhances the public good. The grant is also an incentive for businesses choosing between Bartlett and other locations.

Commissioner Koch continued discussing the focus on exteriors, making properties more inviting to residents and visitors, which is important for sales tax generation. He agreed with making improvements permanent, so they remain for the next tenant or owner.

Tony confirmed this was the intent of the proposed changes: to encourage businesses and property owners to beautify their exteriors to foster a sense of community and improve Bartlett's overall appeal. He referenced looking at similar programs in about seven other towns (Streamwood, Hanover Park, Geneva, St. Charles, Arlington Heights, etc.) and incorporating their best elements.

Proposed Changes for the New Program:

Tony outlined the key proposed changes:

1. 50/50 Match: A straightforward 50% reimbursement of eligible costs, removing previous ambiguity where staff would determine a percentage.
2. Cumulative Cap: A \$50,000 cumulative cap per business over a rolling four-year period. This replaces a fixed waiting period. For example, a business could get a \$5,000 grant for a sign in 2026 and still be eligible for up to \$45,000 for other projects within the next four years.
3. Flexible Re-Application: As implied by the rolling cap.
4. Minimum Project Size: A \$2,000 minimum project cost to receive a \$1,000 grant.
5. Exterior Focus: Primary emphasis on exterior improvements, with one key interior exception.
6. Critical Life Safety Improvements: Interior fire suppression systems would be eligible, as they are a critical and often major expense for certain business conversions (e.g., turning an office into a restaurant).

Chairperson Gandsey expressed enthusiasm for the public art component, citing examples like large signs or photo-worthy installations in other towns (St. Charles, West Dundee) that draw people and keep them in a business district. They wanted to see more of this in Bartlett, perhaps near the new fountain, to create focal points. They acknowledged a business would likely only pursue this if it were on their property and beneficial to them.

Discussion on Eligible Costs and Improvements:

Commissioner Gorski asked about “ineligible costs,” recalling they were part of the old program and needed to be deducted from the gross amount before calculating the grant. He suggested adding language about this.

Tony agreed, noting things like roof replacement and business equipment were typically ineligible. He explained the practical process: staff would meet with applicants, review all their proposed costs, and work with them to identify what is eligible, aiming to maximize their eligible amount. He used Commissioner O’Hare’s meticulous documentation for her past BEDA grant as an example.

Chairperson Gandsey reiterated that the goal of the discussion was to develop language and examples for the types of community-building projects they want to encourage, beyond basic awnings and signs.

She mentioned murals, sculptures, and referenced the colorful umbrella installation in an Elmhurst alleyway that created buzz and drew people to businesses there. She proposed a potential tattoo parlor potentially wanting signage or planters to draw people in while improving the facade.

Commissioner Tolosky asked about improvements at the Metra train station (e.g., on a crumbling wall). Tony clarified that Metra owns the station and is very strict about such changes, so it would not fall under this program.

The conversation returned to ineligible costs. Commissioner Gorski specifically recalled building permits and licenses being ineligible in the old program and suggested adding them as a bullet point. Tony agreed it was an appropriate addition.

Expanding Eligibility: Life Safety and ADA:

Commissioner Gorski then posed a question to the commission: What are their thoughts on including Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) as an eligible life safety expense? While not expensive, they are valuable and portable.

Chairperson Gandsey supported the idea, noting that promoting such ideas is part of the program’s benefit. This led to a broader discussion about ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) improvements.

Commissioner Erickson wondered why ADA improvements, particularly for interiors like bathrooms, couldn’t be included. She argued that updating an older building’s bathroom to be accessible is very expensive and not always required by permit but doing so would make the business accessible to more people. They saw it as equally valuable as exterior improvements.

Other commissioners strongly agreed, stating that ADA improvements and AEDs align with making the community welcoming, safe, and accessible, a “nice 360 circle.” There was visible agreement across the dais. Tony confirmed that there was consensus among the CEAC.

Tony confirmed that ADA plumbing and similar improvements could be included. Commissioners shared personal anecdotes about the importance of accessibility.

Commissioner Szkotak suggested large, dynamic signage (e.g., a huge screen) on high-traffic roads like Route 59 to advertise events and businesses, which could also generate advertising revenue. Scott noted that the large wall at Route 59 and West Bartlett Road is IDOT property, and past requests for such use have been denied, but the idea could be revisited.

Chairperson Gandsey asked commissioners to consider what else would be appealing to a business considering Bartlett.

Discussion on Franchise and Business Type Eligibility:

Commissioner Erickson challenged the potential exclusion of franchises. She argued many franchises are owned by local operator-owners with one or two locations who are taking personal financial risk. The CEAC cited Culver’s and Marco’s Pizza downtown as good examples of franchises run by a local team. They felt a blanket exclusion might deter wanted businesses.

Tony clarified that for large corporate franchises (like McDonald’s), the village typically uses other tools like sales tax rebates or developer agreements, especially for projects on major corridors like Route 20 or 59. The BEDA/Belong program might not be the right fit for them anyway.

Chairperson Gandsey suggested potential limitations, like the 2020 relief program which excluded businesses with three or five or more units, or a geographic limitation (downtown only) to avoid franchises on the major highways.

Tony offered Dos Bros. as another example—a newer, smaller franchise concept where the local owners were essentially starting their first business.

Commissioner O’Hare noted that both Dos Bros. and Marco’s are in leased locations, highlighting the ongoing challenge of tenant-landlord cooperation for exterior improvements.

Tony explained that each shopping plaza and ownership and management operates differently. Some landlords may pitch in, while others most likely would not. Some of them do not contribute to upgrading their centers and spaces very often.

Scott added that when we learn of a property transfer through the village's transfer stamp process, we typically get into contact with them to inform them of this program. But there are some absentee landlords in town who have never even been to their center.

Landlord Challenges and Broader Eligibility:

Commissioner Suffern shared his perspective, first expressing his appreciation for the BEDA program for helping Banbury Fair. He expressed sadness about the BEDA program ending, as much downtown property is for sale and will require redevelopment to sell—something a simple sign grant won't help. He doubted many landlords would invest in art or major beautification without a clear return.

He advocated for marquee signage on major thoroughfares to project an image and help people find downtown Bartlett. He suggested using unspent grant money for such village-initiated capital projects. He said that people still don't know where downtown Bartlett is.

Chairperson Gandsey clarified that the BEDA grant money is still available and rolls over annually, and the new program is a reframing of it. Scott confirmed that staff has been informing prospective businesses about the pending changes.

Commissioner Szkotak suggested better promotion, like QR code stickers on business doors linking to the village app to raise awareness. It could provide information about Bartlett including how to open a business.

Commissioner Suffern continued, questioning the focus only on retail. Given Bartlett's demographics and traffic, attracting major retail downtown is difficult. He argued the program should apply to all of Bartlett, including businesses on Army Trail Road and Route 59, as they pay property taxes and are part of the community. He noted that many past BEDA recipients were restaurants, not retailers.

Commissioner Erickson agreed, noting that excluding non-sales-tax businesses like dentists or salons might be too broad. She suggested a way to include them while still excluding large banks, perhaps by limiting eligibility based on the number of locations a corporation owns.

Scott added a consideration for equity: if an old doctor's office gets funds for beautification, should an animal hospital on Route 59 be eligible too? He emphasized no decision was needed that night.

Commissioner Suffern reiterated his point: with little retail, why limit the program? If the money isn't being fully used, broaden eligibility to get more uptake.

Commissioner O'Hare emphasized the difficulty for tenants when landlords are uncooperative or don't use Common Area Maintenance (CAM) fees for improvements.

She shared personal frustration about wanting to improve a property without landlord support.

Summarizing the Discussion for Next Steps:

Chairperson Gandsey summarized the key discussion points to potentially incorporate:

1. Including ADA and AED improvements.
2. Considering service businesses for exterior beautification.
3. Determining what to do with unused funds (e.g., earmark for specific capital projects like art or signage that meet community goals).

She asked if these recommendations would then go to the board committee.

Tony explained the commission's recommendations would go to the village board committee for further discussion. That committee might have additional opinions, and then it would go to a full board meeting for a final vote.

Given the amount of discussion, it was decided to put the item back on the agenda for the February commission meeting to continue the conversation. Commissioners were encouraged to look at what other communities do and bring back ideas.

Chairperson Gandsey reminded commissioners that she, Tony, and Scott are resources and encouraged them to ask questions.

6. NEW BUSINESS

Best Pizza Contest:

Tony announced a "Best Pizza in Bartlett" contest currently running from January 9th through the 26th. Fourteen local establishments are participating, including those that are not exclusively pizzerias.

The public can vote online for best specialty pizza, best cheese pizza, and best overall pizza place. Commissioners were asked to promote the contest. Ideas were shared to boost engagement, such as encouraging people to submit photos of pizza tastings and providing periodic updates on vote totals.

Bartlett Restaurant Week:

Scheduled for February 2nd through the 8th. This is the second year of the event, which aims to support restaurants during the slow post-holiday period. Last year we had mid-20s participants. It is timed to promote local dining during a cold and slow time of year. Participating restaurants may offer specials or new dishes.

Beauty & Wellness Week Idea:

Commissioner Szkotak proposed a future “Beauty and Wellness Week” promotion focusing on gyms, salons, massage, etc., potentially around Mother’s Day or prom season. The idea was well received.

Lake Street TIF District Update:

Scott provided a preview of upcoming work on the Lake Street Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district. Staff are interviewing planning consultants and will soon bring recommendations to the board.

The process will include significant public outreach to gather a community vision for the area, which will be combined with market and financial feasibility studies to create a conceptual plan.

Simultaneously, the village’s branding consultant will work on a dedicated TIF “landing page” on the village website and enhance the existing TIF property database.

The database (demonstrated briefly) is in its infancy but will grow to include detailed information, drone footage, and updates on key properties (like one recently acquired by the village). It is designed to market the area to developers. Commissioners will receive a link to the current database and will be asked for input as the landing page and planning process move forward, likely in the spring.

7. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:24 P.M.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 29, 2026
TO: Chairperson and Members of the Community & Economic Affairs Commission
FROM: Tony Fradin, Economic Development Coordinator
RE: Belong in Bartlett Business Grant

BACKGROUND:

The Village created a grant program called the Bartlett Economic Development Assistance (BEDA) program in 2018.

The program is generally a small business assistance program with a limit of \$50,000 based on a new or existing business' investment in a property, converting a vacant and/or underutilized space into a sales tax generating one. Funds are distributed once all work is completed to all applicable Codes and proof of payment is submitted.

Since 2019, 26 grants have been approved in the amount of \$700,222 and 21 have been awarded in the amount of \$615,308. Some projects have been approved but never moved forward and expired.

Staff detailed many of the grants at the CEAC's January 2026 meeting.

BEDA UPDATES:

Over the past seven years, multiple modifications and improvements were made to the BEDA program, including the addition of a two-year claw back provision, requirement for a background check, moving the application online rather than on paper and by invitation only, adding preference for military veterans, requiring that only permanent fixtures (such as outdoor dining) are eligible, and reducing the reapplication period from the initial three year period to two.

Recently, Mayor Gunsteen and the Board have expressed their desire to revise and launch the BEDA program into a new and improved one.

BELONG IN BARTLETT BUSINESS GRANT PROGRAM:

As part of the Village's ongoing branding initiative, we continue our discussion of the proposed **Belong in Bartlett Business Grant program**. This program is designed to demonstrate the Village Board's commitment to supporting businesses that choose

Bartlett as their location, while also assisting existing businesses seeking to expand or improve.

The grant program will reinforce that Bartlett is a welcoming, pro-business community where companies can grow and thrive.

Staff will continue budgeting appropriately as part of the annual budgeting process with the Village Board.

The attached Procedures & Guidelines document for the grant program modifies the BEDA program from one that includes reimbursements for interior buildouts to one that focuses on exterior beautification and improvements.

One interior improvement to remain eligible is for life/safety items such as fire suppression, a common expense for businesses converting individual spaces to restaurant uses.

The CEAC added interior improvements relating to accessibility/ADA Compliance at last month's meeting. Updating a washroom to meet current ADA standards is an example.

A change in the eligibility period is also proposed. Rather than making eligibility for a property or business to be able to apply again in two years no matter the size and scope of the project, we propose a cap on the total grant amount, leaving it at **\$50,000**, over a four-year period.

For example, if a new business receives a \$5,000 grant for a new sign in 2026, rather than wait for years to apply again, they would be eligible to apply for additional smaller grants within the next three years for tuckpointing, landscaping, etc., not to exceed an additional \$45,000.

Another proposed change is to make the Belong in Bartlett grant a straight 50/50 match, removing any disparity or ambiguity between percentages.

We also propose a minimum project cost of \$2,000, resulting in a grant of at least \$1,000.

DECEMBER 2 COW MEETING:

The Committee of the Whole reviewed the updated program at its meeting of December 2, 2025.

Chairperson Gandsey stated that she would like to have the focus of this new program include investing in the village for community experiences, making every exterior and outdoor area look better and including gathering spaces and artwork.

Often a small investment in a particular place, such as a new mural, plaza or community garden, can be a powerful catalyst for positive change in a neighborhood.

In addition to core economic development goals of business attraction and retention, the Belong in Bartlett program can provide small grants and loans to help neighborhood partners make targeted improvements that add beauty, attract pedestrian traffic or improve safety.

To achieve that goal, we are asking the Chairperson and members of the CEAC for their thoughts and suggestions on how to best optimize village funds to help attract new businesses as well as retain and support existing ones.

JANUARY 12 CEAC MEETING:

The CEAC reviewed the Belong in Bartlett grant program at its January 12th meeting.

In addition to adding interior ADA improvements to eligible costs, it was also suggested to add some additional items to ineligible costs, for example all permitting and licensing fees, which was previously listed in the BEDA application.

The CEAC also discussed three additional points for consideration at this meeting.

The first one is whether to allow franchises or small chains to be eligible.

Although there was no language addressing that with the BEDA program, there were not any corporate businesses that applied or received funds. All grants made were either to businesses with single locations or operations with a handful, such as MORE Brewing and a sign grant for Taylor Street Pizza.

Tony cited the temporary SBERP (Small Business Emergency Relief Program) the village implemented in spring 2020 in response to the Coronavirus shutdown as an example.

For that program, it was limited to small sales tax-producing businesses with annual revenues between \$50,000 and \$2MM. Also, franchise businesses and others with *more* than four units were not eligible. It was also specified that home-based businesses were not eligible.

The next item concerns unused funds from the program. It was reported that the village has never allocated the full amount budgeted. Scott explained that it is a regular budgeted item, and like any other, the funds are not rolled over into the next fiscal year.

The CEAC suggested that unallocated Belong in Bartlett grant funds could be set aside at the end of the fiscal year for capital projects, perhaps public art or other community-oriented improvements.

The third item relates to eligibility.

The BEDA program specifically targeted sales tax producing businesses.

At the time of its creation, a small percentage of licensed businesses in town were sales tax producers. Besides large corporations such as Jewel, the Home Depot, Walgreens and CVS, most of the other businesses in town provided personal services.

There was and remains a scarcity of retail businesses, with the numbers dwindling in the village and at large.

Most of the grants were made to eating and drinking establishments, a category that has continued expanding throughout and since the Pandemic.

Some commissioners suggested expanding the eligibility beyond sales tax generating businesses. Commissioner Suffern noted that perhaps the program should apply to any business in Bartlett, since they all pay property taxes and are part of the community. Commissioner Erickson echoed that sentiment, while still excluding large banks, returning to the notion of limiting eligibility based on the number of locations a corporation owns.

FEBRUARY CEAC MEETING:

The Procedures & Guidelines have been updated to reflect the two changes (ADA Interior and exclusion of business-related fees) along with language excluding home-based and industrial businesses.

Staff seeks further guidance from the CEAC on the aforementioned items:

- 1) Should there be a limitation on the type of business entity that is eligible, i.e. corporate stores or franchises with a certain number of units?
- 2) Should the program be broadened to include non-sales-tax producing businesses and, if so, should there be certain categories excluded?
- 3) Should the village have a mechanism to earmark unused funds for specific capital projects like art or signage that foster a greater sense of community?

The CEAC's recommendations for this program will be forwarded to the Village Board for its consideration as this rebranded grant program is launched.

VILLAGE OF BARTLETT

DRAFT Belong in Bartlett Business Grant Program Procedures & Guidelines

Purpose & Introduction

The purpose of the Belong in Bartlett Business Grant Program is to encourage the improvement and revitalization of the exterior of existing commercial buildings fronting public streets. The Village of Bartlett (Village) promotes these improvements to enhance the visual appeal of our commercial corridors, increase long-term property values, and support the goals outlined in the Village's Strategic Plan.

This document outlines the qualified uses of funding, eligibility criteria, and the procedural guidelines for the Belong in Bartlett Business Grant. All grant requests must be approved by the Village Board.

All economic incentive requests are subject to the following Belong in Bartlett Grant Program criteria. The request will be reviewed to determine if it is aligned with the Village's Strategic Plan and creates a clear benefit and/or value to the Village.

Furthermore, the following specific uses have been identified for Belong in Bartlett Business Grants:

Qualified Uses and Expenses:

- Awnings and Canopies (permanent)
- Exterior Walls: repair, restoration, tuckpointing, painting, or replacement of siding/masonry
- Exterior Doors and Windows: repair, restoration, or replacement
- Gutters and Downspouts
- Stairs, Sidewalks, Porches, and Railings affecting building access
- Signage
- Exterior Lighting
- Landscaping and hardscaping adjacent to the street
- Screening of mechanical equipment or utilities visible from the street
- Decorative fencing visible from the street
- Interior and exterior improvements to meet ADA compliance.
- Dumpster enclosures
- Parking Lot improvements (reconstruction/resurfacing only if visible from the right-of-way)
- Life/Safety Improvements including Fire Suppression

Unqualified Uses and Expenses:

- Any exterior work not visible from a public street.
- Routine maintenance (e.g., grass cutting, pruning, repainting without other improvements).
- Roof replacement.
- Furniture, moveable planters, or temporary fixtures.
- Business equipment, payroll, or office supplies.
- Work on properties that host video gaming as a primary use.
- Work on residential, warehousing, or industrial properties.
- Work completed or commenced prior to this update.
- All permitting, licensing, and other Federal, State, and Village related fees.
- Franchise businesses which the corporation pays for improvements or where the franchisee owns more than four units.

Eligibility & Funding

Eligible Properties:

All sales tax generating commercial properties (or all commercially zoned properties) within the Village are eligible. Properties must be in good standing with the Village, with no defaults on payments, or delinquent property taxes. If the grant is made to remedy a code-related item, the improvement must pass required inspections to receive funding.

The maximum aggregate amount of all grants approved for a building or property within any four (4) year period shall be limited to \$50,000.

Funding Structure:

This is a reimbursement grant. The applicant must pay all costs upfront. The Village will reimburse the lesser of:

- Fifty percent (50%) of eligible project costs, **OR**
- A maximum of **\$50,000**.

The minimum project cost is \$2,000. Funding is approved on a first-come, first-served basis, subject to the annual budget.

Application & Approval Process

The following process details the Belong in Bartlett Business Grant Program's required steps for Village Board approval.

Step 1: Pre-Application Review

Applicants are required to review these guidelines with Economic Development staff prior to submission.

Step 2: Formal Application Submission

Submit a complete application packet to Economic Development staff, including:

- Complete Application Form
- Narrative description, schedule, and projected budget
- Current photos of the building exterior
- Evidence of property ownership or control (e.g., warranty deed, lease)
- Plat of Survey and Site Plan required if the improvement is for an entire shopping plaza
- Elevation drawings showing proposed changes and materials
- Plans for landscaping, lighting, signage, or awnings, if applicable

Step 3: Staff Review & Belong in Bartlett Business Grant Compliance Check

Staff will conduct an initial review to ensure the request qualifies for an incentive and meets Program criteria. Staff may request additional information or clarification.

Step 4: Village Management Team Review

If the Village Management Team determines the request is not qualified or does not provide value to the Village, the application will not move forward, and the applicant will be notified.

Step 5: Commission & Committee Review

If the Village Management Team finds the request has merit, it will be forwarded to the **Community and Economic Affairs Commission** for its review and a formal recommendation. The recommendation is then sent to the **Committee of the Whole** for review.

Step 6: Village Board Approval

Following a positive recommendation from the Committee of the Whole, the grant application will be placed on a Village Board agenda for a final vote.

Step 7: Agreement Execution & Permitting

Once approved by the Village Board, the Village will execute a Belong in Bartlett Business Grant Agreement with the applicant. Construction cannot begin until a permit has been issued.

Step 8: Grant Disbursement

Grant funds will be paid once all improvements are made to Code, approved by applicable inspectors, and proof of payment has been submitted.

Construction & Reimbursement

Construction Process:

All work must conform to the approved plans and all Village codes. Work must begin

within 90 days of the agreement execution and be completed within one year of the building permit issuance, unless otherwise approved.

Reimbursement Process:

Upon project completion and final inspection approval, the applicant must submit the following to request reimbursement:

- Contractor’s Sworn Statement
- Final Lien Waivers
- Proof of payment for all services

The *Planning & Development Services Department* will inspect the completed work. Upon verification that the work matches the approved agreement, the Village will process the reimbursement, not to exceed the amount specified in the agreement.

Maintenance

The property owner is required to maintain the improved façade for a minimum of **four (4) years** from the project's completion date.

Default/Clawback

If, within two (2) years of the date the Village delivers the Award to the Recipient, the Recipient relocates its business outside of the Village, ceases business operations, fails to comply with the terms of its Agreement, fails to comply with the Program’s rules and regulations, or fails to maintain the Improvements in the condition and state set forth by its approval (collectively, “*Default Event*”), the Recipient must refund the Village in accordance with the following schedule:

<u>Timing of Default Event</u>	<u>Percentage of Award that must be refunded</u>
Within 1 year of Award payment	60%
Within 2 years of Award payment	40%

Disclaimer: The Village Board reserves the right to refuse any incentive request, to amend these guidelines, and to terminate the program at any time. All projects are subject to the availability of funds.