The ViBe Creative District Matching Grant Program is designed to provide impactful support to small and locally-owned and operated businesses located within the ViBe Creative District ("District") that fulfill the goals of the District. This program provides monetary matching grants to existing business owners or those who plan to buy or lease existing and/or vacant industrial or commercial property within the District. The grant funding is to be used for building improvements, equipment to expand or modernize businesses and façade improvements. The program is intended to encourage and support economic development and job growth within the District.

Who is eligible?

Grants are available to all new and existing businesses that are located within the District boundaries and support the goals of the District. Projects must make a demonstrable improvement to the property and follow applicable Oceanfront Resort District Design Guidelines. This program will not fund routine maintenance.

What kind of improvements will be funded and what is required?

- **Building Improvements** – build out and architectural services, electrical and plumbing repairs, upgrades needed to increase occupancy levels or to increase the size and scale of the business operation per code regulations and sustainable renovations that make the building more efficient. Itemized quotes or estimates of work from at least two contractors must be included with the application.

- **Modernization** – technological upgrades or operational equipment to expand the business or create efficiencies. An itemized quote or detailed description of the equipment to be purchased must be included with the application.

- **Façade Improvements**
  - **Exterior building improvements** – may include windows, doors, awnings and building materials. Such improvements require registered architectural or engineer plans that illustrate work areas, proposed changes, materials, colors and an elevation drawing illustrating proposed improvements. All proposals involving structural changes must include a stamped architectural drawing/pre-approved plan by the Building Official.
  - **Enhanced building entrances or storefronts** – may include awnings, canopies, etc. Documentation must include scaled drawing, picture, brochure and colors.
  - **Lighting** – may include exterior or security lighting. Applicants must submit type, location, detailed description or specifications and labor costs (for installation, etc.).

- **Exterior Property Improvements**
  - **Fencing** – such as wood, metal, etc. Applicant must submit a picture or scaled drawing with height, length, location, color and a site survey that is required by the City for a permit.
  - **Signage** – new or replacement of commercial signage. Documentation includes a scaled drawing of proposed sign including information and specifications for zoning review, measurements and location.
• **Landscaping** – A detailed plan by a licensed landscape professional is required that shows location, prices, size, type and quantity of plants.

• **Parking Upgrades** – upgrading an unimproved parking area (e.g. gravel lot) with a paved or other approved surfacing material. Bicycle parking areas and bike racks are also eligible. Documentation by registered professional must include drawing of area or a survey, description of work, and proposed surfacing materials including parking lot perimeter or interior landscaping as required by the Zoning Ordinance.

• **Open Air Café** – upgrades or the establishment of an outdoor café space including tables, chairs, shade canopies and planters. A detailed scaled drawing of the café location and layout along with the survey of the property is required. All café space within the public right of way will need a separate Resort Open Air Café Franchise Agreement.

**Available Funding**

The program budget for Fiscal Year 2018-2019 is $25,000. No more than one grant shall be awarded to each business or property owner per fiscal year. Funding is available on a first-come, first-served basis until funds for the fiscal year are depleted. The minimum request is $1,000 and the maximum request is $10,000. However, the request may be increased to a maximum of $15,000 if a business has been approved for a grant in the same amount from another government or non-profit agency.

**Selection Process**

1. Completed applications must be submitted to ViBe District, c/o Michelle Chapleau, Virginia Beach Department of Economic Development, 4525 Main Street, Suite 700, Virginia Beach, VA 23462, with all required support documentation and attachments, including a Disclosure Statement. Grant recipients are required to secure appropriate permits as outlined above.

2. Review by Grant Review Committee including representatives from the following stakeholders: ViBe Creative District non-profit organizations, Cultural Affairs, Planning and Community Development, Economic Development and the City Manager’s Office.

3. The Grant Review Committee will evaluate the application and determine if the project meets the objectives of the program. Due to limited funding, not every application will qualify. A decision on applications will occur within 30 days of the application submittal. The Grant Review Committee will make a recommendation on an award amount to the City of Virginia Beach Development Authority.

4. The City of Virginia Beach Development Authority will approve a Resolution authorizing the grant award, project parameters and a schedule for completion.

5. Payment will be made by the City of Virginia Beach Development Authority after completion and final inspection by program staff to ensure consistency with the application. The Grant Review Committee must approve in writing any substantial changes to the approved plan.

**Reimbursement Process**

• Grants will be paid after applicant completes the improvements and submits a paid invoice as set forth in the Resolution. All work will be reviewed and approved by the Grant Review Committee for consistency with the application.
• Improvements shall be completed within four months from the date of grant approval by the Virginia Beach Development Authority.

• One extension of time may be requested and approved administratively. Subsequent extensions may be requested, but must be reviewed and approved by the Grant Review Committee. If an extension is not granted and work has not started within three months from the award date, the Resolution becomes null and void.

**Goals of the ViBe Creative District**

• To establish a Creative Industries District in the City of Virginia Beach, which will serve as a vibrant center for the arts, culture, technology, and is environmentally friendly

• To enhance a sense of discovery for visitors and residents by revitalizing the area and making this uniquely ours

• To encourage the arts and artists as well as technical and creative resources to help them flourish and cross-pollinate

• To support and expand the industry and creativity of those who live and work in the District

• To stimulate commerce and enhance the quality of life for citizens of Virginia Beach and the District

• To foster rising real estate values by helping the District become a place where people want to be

• To assist in creating resources to help artists and artisans become established within the District
ViBe Creative District Matching Grant Application

APPLICANT INFORMATION
Name: ____________________________ Company: ____________________________
Address: __________________________
Phone: ____________________________ Email: ____________________________

PROJECT INFORMATION
Address of the project: ____________________________
Are you the owner of the property: Y or N
Requested Grant Funding:
Type of Business: ____________________________
How will the non-grant funded portion of the project be paid for? CASH or LOAN
If loan, name of lender: ____________________________

PROPERTY OWNER
Name: ____________________________
Address: ____________________________
Phone: ____________________________ Email: ____________________________
Years owned property: ____________________________
Type of ownership: ____________________________

PLEASE SUBMIT THE FOLLOWING ITEMS WITH THIS APPLICATION.
1. Signed application form
2. A written description of the project with floor plan, drawings, photographs of the building and/or equipment and other supporting materials that accurately represent the scope and intent of project improvements
3. Detail how project will benefit the neighborhood (i.e. increase foot traffic, provide jobs, increase revenues, community investment, contribute to placemaking, etc.)
4. Provide evidence that you have matching dollars available for the project
5. Estimate the costs associated with the project including: design fees, permits, construction, materials and fabrication costs. If required, provide two contractor’s bids for the scope of work. Contractors must be licensed, bonded and insured.
6. If you are a tenant, a letter from the property owner authorizing the tenant to apply and undertake the work if selected for funding.
7. I have read and fully understand the ViBe Creative District Matching Grant Program guidelines and attest that all information contained in this application and its attachments are accurate and truthful.

Application signature: ____________________________ Date: ____________________________