ViBe Creative District Offers Matching Grants for Improvements

Virginia Beach Economic Development, in collaboration with the Office of Cultural Affairs and ViBe Creative District, announce the ViBe Creative District Matching Grant Program. The grants are designed to provide financial support to small and locally-owned and operated businesses located within the ViBe Creative District. The program offers financial incentives in the form of matching grants to new and existing property owners or businesses that plan to make capital investments within the District.

Grant funding is to be used for building improvements, equipment to expand or modernize businesses and façade improvements. Types of improvements funded will include enhanced entrances or storefronts, lighting, fencing, signage, landscaping, parking upgrades and open-air café spaces. Projects must make a demonstrable improvement to the property, and the funding is intended to encourage and support economic development and job growth within the District.

“We are looking forward to assisting business and property owners to enhance the already burgeoning ViBe Creative District,” said City Council Member John Uhrin. “Grant programs like this one are integral to supporting the growth of Virginia Beach’s small businesses and maintaining the positive momentum we have built in the ViBe Creative District.”

The matching grant program budget for Fiscal Year 2017-2018 is $50,000. Business or property owners may be eligible for one grant per fiscal year, with a minimum grant request of $1,000 and a maximum of $15,000. Funding is available on a first-come, first-served basis until funds for the fiscal year are depleted.

Grant applications and additional information are available at www.yesvirginiabeach.com/city-incentives.

Grant applications are reviewed by a selection committee that includes representatives from ViBe Creative District’s non-profit organization, Office of Cultural Affairs, Planning and Community Development, Economic Development, City Manager’s Office and City Council. The Grant Review Committee will convene quarterly, or more frequently if necessary, to
evaluate and rank applications to determine if they meet the objectives of the program and subsequently make recommendations to the Virginia Beach Development Authority for approval.

**About ViBe Creative District**

ViBe Creative District was established to attract creative industries to a section of the Virginia Beach oceanfront that was identified for revitalization. It was once an incubator for small and emerging businesses. In 2015, the City of Virginia Beach established the boundary of the district by ordinance and declared it "an arts and cultural district and technology zone" with incentives established by the Virginia General Assembly. The ViBe Creative District's purpose is to serve as a vibrant center for the arts, culture and technology.

*The mission of the Virginia Beach Department of Economic Development is to attract and retain national and international businesses to stimulate capital investment and create jobs. The Department of Economic Development received re-accreditation through the International Economic Development Council in 2016 and is one of only 50 economic development organizations in the world to have this recognition. Most recently, Virginia Beach was named America's #1 best big city to live in by wallethub.com. For more information, visit www.yesvirginiabeach.com.*

# # #

**News Release:** [VBgov.com/News](http://www.VBgov.com/News)