

Business Revitalization Program Guidelines

American Rescue Plan Act - Coronavirus State Fiscal
Recovery Fund and the Coronavirus
Local Fiscal Recovery Fund



RIVERSIDE COUNTY
OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Riverside County Office of Economic Development
September 2022

In response to the coronavirus disease of 2019 (COVID-19), the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) established the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) to provide state, local, and Tribal governments with the resources needed to respond to the pandemic and its economic effects and to build a stronger, more equitable economy during the recovery.

The Riverside County Office of Economic Development (RivCoED) will utilize \$10,000,000 of ARPA SLFRF funding to create the Riverside County Business Revitalization Program (Program) to respond to the negative economic impacts of COVID-19 and reinvigorate the local economic recovery.

General Program objectives include, but are not limited to:

- The rehabilitation of commercial properties in unincorporated communities
- Storefront and façade improvements

See the Program Guidelines section of this document for additional information on eligible expenses. The Program is a discretionary incentive program designed to improve approximately forty (40) disproportionately impacted small businesses within the County's disadvantaged and unincorporated communities. Eligible small business owners can apply for a grant of up to \$75,000 for design services and a grant of up to \$175,000 for construction costs and permitting. The County's obligation under this Program is contingent upon the availability of appropriated funds and subject to Program interest.

Administration of the Program

- Centralized Application Process – an online application will be located on the RivCoED webpage at <https://rivcoed.org/brp>.
- The RivCoED website will be the centralized repository for all applications, agreements, and the tracking database.
- The RivCoED landing page will describe Program and provide online preliminary eligibility review.
- Grantees will be required to upload and sign a Program Agreement as part of the process to ensure funding is being used appropriately.
- As part of reporting and tracking requirements, RivCoED will track the number of grants provided along with the corresponding funding amount. A Final Report shall be provided at the end of Program Guideline Terms.

Implementation:

To implement the Program, RivCoED will:

1. Work with the SBA's Small Business Development Center, area Chambers of Commerce, County of Riverside Code Enforcement Department, and other small business support organizations in County to promote and market the program so that as many small business owners as possible throughout the County know about the Program and are able to apply, regardless of location.
2. Launch a rapid deployment application process for the Program and a public link which will direct to an on-line application on RivCoED web site <https://rivcoed.org/brp>. The landing page for the application will describe the program and invite eligible applicants to apply. All application responses will be securely stored and will serve as a repository for all program documents, and available for RivCoED staff to view at any time.
3. Have applications made available in English and Spanish for Program.

4. Have a process that once applications are received, RivCoED will determine the initial eligibility status of the business based on eligibility criteria set by the County of Riverside.
5. Ensure all ineligible applications will be notified of ineligible status by email.
6. Ensure that eligible businesses eligible will be sent a full application, which will require uploading documentation sufficient to determine that all criteria are met by the business.
7. RivCoED will evaluate the documentation provided by the business and approve or decline the application based on information provided by the applicant and the criteria established for the program. Documentation is intended to validate number of employees, business and financial history, business license, and other key documentation necessary to mitigate risk and fraud, and verify adverse impacts caused directly by the pandemic.
8. Require that both declined and approved applicants with completed applications will be notified within 10 business days of the funding decision.
9. Approve applications and have them remotely closed. Documentation will include obtaining signed copies of the Business Revitalization Program Application, Agreement, Grant Deed, Sam.gov Small Business Status registration, etc.
10. Provide all necessary reports and documentation, including progress reports and a Final Report at the end of the Term. All Program documentation and tracking will be available by request of RivCoED staff.

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

1. Eligibility

Eligible Small Business Types

- Small Private For-Profit with fewer than fifty (50) employees including sole proprietorships, independent contractors, owners, and owners on behalf of tenants.
- Business must be located in the unincorporated communities of Riverside County.
- Excluding Code Enforcement projects, existing businesses must be current on all permits and appropriate land use entitlements.

Ineligible Business Types

- Non-Profit or Public Entities;
- Startup Businesses (with less than one (1) year of operating history as of September 1, 2022);
- A business engaged in any activity that is illegal under federal, state, or local law;
- A passive business, investment company or investor who files a Schedule E on its tax returns;
- A speculative business, meaning a business for the sole purpose of purchasing and holding an item until the market price increases or other business principally engaged in risky activity for the chance of an unusually large profit;
- A business that restricts patronage for any reason other than capacity, specifically any business that illegally discriminates patronage;
- Residential projects or real estate investment projects including short-term rental operators;
- Casinos/gambling establishments;
- Adult-entertainment related businesses;
- Cannabis-related businesses.

2) Terms

- Applications accepted beginning September 1, 2022

- Funding for design and construction of individual projects must be awarded and obligated by December 31, 2024
- All work must be completed by December 31, 2026.

3) Grant Funding

Maximum Small Business Grant of \$250,000:

- Design Costs up to \$75,000
- Construction Activities and Permitting Costs up to \$175,000

4) Joint Participation

RivCoED will fund up to 100% of the total approved project costs and will manage the procurement of the following services:

- Design consultants
- Construction (and prevailing wages)
- Permitting
- Environmental

The property owner will be responsible for the day-to-day management of the design and construction; however, the County will be available to assist as needed and give clarification on a project. The County will ensure all construction is paid the higher of the federal Davis-Bacon Act or California Director of Industrial Relations prevailing wage rate for any given classification employed in the performance of this contract.

5) Eligible Program Costs

Eligible Program costs may include engineering design, architectural design, fees, permits and construction cost. Improvements will be made based on priority, subject to grant budget. Some of the eligible construction elements include:

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| • Storefront Upgrades | • Property Beautification |
| • Outdoor Dining Spaces | • Demolition or deconstruction of Abandoned Buildings |
| • Ventilation Improvements | • Removal and remediation of environmental contaminants |
| • Enhanced Cleaning Efforts | |
| • Barriers or Partitions | |
| • Signage | |

The eligibility of other capital improvements will be examined by County staff on a case-by-case basis.

6) Construction

Construction funding will be provided to approved project applicants who have executed a Program Agreement with the Riverside County Office of Economic Development. The County's contribution will not exceed \$175,000 for construction and any construction costs in excess of the County's contribution shall be the responsibility of the Applicant/Owner.

7) Program Agreement

Applicants are required to enter into the Program Agreement prior to the start of any design or construction. The agreement will outline requirements of the project applicant which will include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Authorized Improvements
- Authorized Funding
- Term and Schedule for Completion
- Insurance and Indemnification Requirements
- Conflict of Interest
- Prevailing Wages
- Mutual compliance with all applicable laws, ordinances, and codes of the federal, state, and local governments.