



## 2024 Business Investment Program

The Brighton Investment Program (BIP) is a grant program designed to enhance the vitality and prosperity of our local economy by cultivating a thriving business community. BIP provides support for business investment initiatives that focus on beautifying our city, generating and preserving jobs, attracting visitors, and improving the range of services and amenities available in Brighton.

In essence, the program aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Enhance property values throughout Brighton
- Facilitate development and redevelopment efforts
- Decrease vacancy rates
- Provide essential capital for improvements to Brighton businesses
- Increase employment opportunities and skills development for Brighton employees
- Enhancing the competitiveness of local businesses
- Fostering business attraction, retention, and expansion in Brighton
- Encouraging private sector investment in the city
- Attracting visitors to Brighton

The Brighton Investment Program is offered and administered by the Brighton Economic Development Corporation, with funding derived from the Lodging Tax Fee.

For more information contact:

**Brighton Economic Development Corporation**

**Phone: 303-655-2155**

**Email: [info@brightonedc.org](mailto:info@brightonedc.org)**

**Office: 22 S. 4th Ave. Suite**

**305 Brighton, CO 80601**

### **Program Guidelines:**

The Brighton Investment Program operates as a reimbursement program, requiring a 50/50 match between the participating business and Brighton EDC. The first \$3,000 allocated for exterior improvements will be covered at 100% reimbursement rate. Any additional costs and projects will require a 50/50 match between the business and Brighton EDC up to a maximum award of \$10,000 per year.

Businesses are eligible to apply for the Brighton Investment Program once every 2 years. If a business owner possess multiple businesses within the City of Brighton, they may only receive the grant for one location per calendar year. It's important to note that the funds cannot be used to cover expenses such as legal fees, debt refinancing, wages, monthly bills, working capital, or operating expenses.

### **Business Qualifications**

- Any commercial licensed business located within the Brighton municipal boundaries is eligible. **Exclusions include non-profits organizations, home-based businesses, residentially zoned properties, and religious institutions.**
- Businesses must either own the property or have a minimum of a 2-year signed lease agreement at the time of application.
- The business must be in good standing with the City of Brighton, including the Sales and Use Tax, Community Development Department, Utilities Department, and Code Enforcement. If the business's building is currently in violation with Code Enforcement and the business plans to utilize the grant to bring it into compliance, an exception may be considered.
- A City of Brighton-issued Certificate of Occupancy is required before reimbursement can occur. **Exclusions include non-profits organizations, home-based businesses, and religious institutions.**
- Lease holders must obtain written approval from the building owner for any major building improvements or modifications.
- Projects must be initiated and completed within the same calendar year.
- Projects requiring building permits and inspections, must be completed by a Brighton licensed contractor. Permits must be obtained before commencing the project, and all inspections and approvals must be successfully completed by the appropriate regulatory agency before reimbursement can occur. Contact the City of Brighton at 303-655-2000 or via email at [1stop@brightonco.gov](mailto:1stop@brightonco.gov) for any questions related to permits and inspections.

## Application Requirements

To ensure a complete application for the grant, please ensure the following documents and information are provided:

- Fully completed and signed grant application.
- Signed W-9, available at [www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf](http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf).
- Signed lease agreement indicating the dates of the agreement.
- Approval from the Property Manager or Building Owner, specifically for major building improvements or the addition of large equipment to the space (if not already clarified in the lease).
- Detailed project summary, including an estimated cost, justification for why your business should be considered for this grant, and the benefits that the funds will bring in line with the overall program objectives. Please provide as much detail as possible, as it increases your chances for approval.
- If applying for marketing dollars, please provide proofs and price estimates of your marketing plan, along with a summary demonstrating how your marketing project aligns with the program's objectives.
- If applying for Workforce Training Assistance, proof of Workers' Comp Insurance is required, and verification the training is an industry recognized training program.
- Before Photographs of each proposed project (if applicable).
- Itemized statement of the project or item, including estimated costs and the companies or contractors involved (we strongly encourage hiring local contractors and buying local whenever possible).
- Any additional documentation or drawings that are necessary to clarify your projects.
- If the business owner has been in operation for less than 2 years, additional documentation may be required.
- A Colorado Secretary of State Certificate of Good Standing is required.

## **Grant Review and Approval Process**

Applications are accepted on a first-come, first-serve basis from January to October or until funds are exhausted.

- All qualifying and complete business applications must be submitted by the 1st Friday of every month.
- Brighton EDC will review all applications received online for eligibility.
- Applications that are incomplete will be flagged by Brighton EDC. If any items are missing from the application, Brighton EDC will contact the application via email, phone, or mail to obtain the required information. Incomplete applications will NOT be considered or processed until they are completed, including all required documentation, verifications, and proofs.
- Brighton EDC will schedule and facilitate the grant review committee meeting for the third week of each month to review the applications.
- The business will be notified by Brighton EDC of the final approval or denial of their application and the total amount awarded by the end of the month.
- Once funds are exhausted, new applications will be placed on a waitlist. Applications on the waitlist will not be considered, processed, or receive notifications until funds become available.

## **Reimbursement Request Requirements**

To request reimbursement for your project(s), please ensure that you meet the following requirements:

1. Successful Completion and Full Payment of the Project(s):
  - I. After Photos of the project(s)
2. Payment and Proof of Payment:
  - I. Business must pay for all projects in full and provide receipts or proof of payment. If paying cash, a receipt must be provided.
3. Documentation and Completion:
  - I. Once the project is complete and all required documentation is received, a single reimbursement check will be issued for all project portions.
  - II. The business must be in good standing with the City at the time the reimbursement check is issued.
4. Submission Deadlines:
  - I. Reimbursement requests must be submitted no later Friday, December 8, 2024.

5. Reimbursement Calculation:

- I. Reimbursement will be made at 50% of the total proven project cost.
- II. For exterior projects, the first \$3,000 will be reimbursed at 100%.
- III. If a Brighton business or contractor is utilized, reimbursement will be provided at the rate of 60% to foster support for the local business community.

6. Requirements:

- I. Prior to approval, business must meet all the requirements outlined by the Brighton EDC.
- II. City-issued Certificate of Occupancy.
- III. Itemized list of receipts and invoices, including date of purchase, name of the company, description of the project or purchase, and amount.
- IV. Receipts or paid-in-full invoices.
- V. After photos of the project (these photos may be used to promote or highlight the BIP program).

**Interior Examples:**

Painting	Carpeting & Flooring
Lighting upgrades	Fire suppression systems
Grease traps	Mechanical, Electrical & Plumbing upgrades
Accommodations for disabled patrons/employees	Interior signage

**Exterior Examples:**

Facade improvements	Gutters & downspout upgrades
Exterior Signage	Exterior Lighting
Awnings	Accommodations for disabled patrons/employees
Roof repair	Exterior Paint

**Marketing and Promotion Examples:**

Website creation or improvements	Business marketing materials
Professional photography or video of business	Internet and Social media promotions
Promotional efforts for special events	Advertisements and brand creation

***The Brighton Investment Program Review Committee reserves the right to modify or change these guidelines at any time. In certain circumstances, exceptions to these guidelines may be considered on a case-by-case basis, particularly in emergency situations.***

## **Special Requirements for Workforce Training Assistance Grant Requests**

Workforce Training Assistance is designed to assist with the cost associated with occupation or industry-specific training for current permanent, full-time, non-seasonal, non-retail employees of an organization who seek to enhance their skills and advance their careers. The training aims to equip employees with the necessary knowledge and abilities to retain their current positions or transition into a new job classification. Upon successful completion of training, the business agrees to retain, promote, and potentially offer a wage increase to the employee.

To be eligible for reimbursement, the training must lead to the acquisition of an industry-recognized and transferable credential, and it should be conducted by a vendor recognized within the industry. The training should be relevant to the introduction of new technologies, production or service procedures, or additional skills required for upgrading to a new job classification. Upon successful completion of the training program, the Brighton EDC will reimburse **50%** of the total training costs.

### **Eligibility**

- Businesses must be located within the official City of Brighton municipal boundaries.
- Business must meet all program requirements of the Brighton Investment Program.
- Businesses must provide a completed W-9 form and proof of Workers' Compensation Insurance.
- This program aims to enhance employee skills through an industry-recognized training program. To be eligible, employees must meet the following criteria:
- The training program should have a duration of 6 months or less and result in the acquisition of an industry-recognized credential.
- Employees must have been employed for a minimum of 12 months prior to the start of the training.
- Once the training is completed, employees must receive a wage increase of at least 5% or as specified in the Employee Handbook, whichever is greater.

The award amounts will be capped at **\$3,000** per employee and/or **\$10,000** per businesses annually. This program is designed increase employment opportunities in Brighton and support Brighton employees in advancing their careers.

**Workforce Training Assistance Examples:**

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Training/Certification	Project Management Certification
Certified Welder	Carpentry Certification
ServSafe Certification	Lean Six Sigma Certification

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## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### **How long is the review and approval process?**

Grant applications are due by the 1<sup>st</sup> day of each month. The grant review committee will review applications monthly and notify the applicant by the end of the month in which it was reviewed. Incomplete applications will not be accepted, and further documentation may be required at the discretion of Brighton EDC.

### **Can I start my project right away if I receive approval from the Brighton EDC?**

Yes, if you are successful in receiving an award, you must then comply with all city, state, and federal regulations related to your project. If your project requires any permits or licenses, those must be obtained prior to the commencement of any work. Projects that do not adhere to applicable regulations will become disqualified.

### **What types of businesses are eligible to apply?**

Any commercial licensed business in good standing with the City of Brighton is eligible to apply. Exclusions: non-profits, home-based businesses, and religious institutions.

### **When will I receive reimbursement for my project?**

Businesses that have received an award will be reimbursed for the amount detailed in the award upon the completion of the project and when all final documents are submitted to the Brighton EDC. Any costs that exceed the awarded amount are the responsibility of the applicant. We will make every effort to mail your reimbursement check within 2 weeks of receiving a complete reimbursement request.

### **What if I am leasing, but don't own the property?**

Businesses that are leasing space must obtain expressed written permission from the building owner in order to perform any major improvements to the building (internally and externally). Businesses without the approval of the building owner will not be eligible for the program.

### **How many times can I apply?**

Eligible businesses may receive only one award per business location per calendar year, starting from January 1st, 2024. Business owners are eligible to apply for the grant once every 2 years at each eligible business location.





### **Who can I contact to determine what permits I need?**

We encourage applicants interested in interior and exterior improvements to contact the City of Brighton at 303-655-2000 or by email at [1stop@brightonco.gov](mailto:1stop@brightonco.gov) to determine the permits, inspections, and other services required for the successful completion of the project.

### **What's the maximum reimbursement amount I can apply for each project at rates of 50% or 60%?**

BIP is a reimbursement program that requires a 50/50 match. The maximum award is capped at \$10,000 for all projects combined. For example, if the project cost is \$20,000 or more, the reimbursement amount may be up to \$10,000. The project must be completed within 2024, and proof of reimbursement needs to be submitted by December 8, 2024.

### **What is the maximum amount I can receive for Workforce Training Dollars and Business Investments?**

The maximum amount any business can receive in a calendar year is \$10,000. These funds can be used in combination with business investments such as building improvements, marketing, and Workforce Training, with a maximum reimbursement of \$10,000.

### **Can I apply for the grant if my project has already been started / completed?**

Applicants are highly encouraged to receive grant award approval prior to starting their project. However, all applications will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and considered according to the individual circumstances of the application. Decisions will be based on the available funding and the impact of the project.

### **Can I apply for one than one project?**

Yes, BIP can be used for marketing, equipment, interior and exterior improvements, and workforce training assistance. Only one application per calendar year.

### **What is the reimbursement rate if a Brighton business or contractor is utilized for my project?**

If a Brighton business or contractor is utilized to complete your project, the reimbursement rate will be 60%.

### **What qualifies as marketing?**

Marketing can vary from business to business, but generally, it would include activities such as newsletter creation, website building, store signage, business cards, flyers, business branding, logo creation, brochures, etc.

### **What qualifies as equipment?**

Equipment can vary from business to business. Generally, equipment would include items such as copying machines, office desk phones, restaurant furniture, computers, yoga mats, tools, etc.

Note: BIP does not reimburse operational costs such as goods/products that the business intends to resell, payroll services, HR services, legal services, decor, etc.

### **What qualifies as building improvement?**

Building improvement refers to improvements made to the commercial building where the business is located. This can include building expansion, renovation, installation of central air conditioning, new plumbing systems, window treatments, flooring, electrical systems, HVAC, painting, fixing existing AC units, replacing a few shingles on a roof, replacing a door, replacing a broken pipe, and fixing the building structure.

### **What can the grant money be used for?**

The grant can be used for the following:

Interior improvement: Examples include painting, lighting upgrades, grease traps, accommodations for disabled patrons/employees, carpeting & flooring, fire suppression systems, mechanical/electrical/plumbing upgrades, and interior signage.

Exterior Examples: Examples include façade improvements, exterior signage, awnings, roof repair, gutters/downspout upgrades, exterior lighting, accommodations for disabled patrons/employees, and exterior paint.

Marketing and promotion: Examples include website creation or improvement, professional photography or video of the business, promotional efforts for special events, business marketing materials, internet and social media promotions, and advertisements and brand creation.

Workforce Training Assistance: Examples include occupational safety and health administrative training, certified welder, ServSafe certification, carpentry certification, project management certification, and lean six sigma certification.

### **What if I need to change my project?**

You are required to request for an Amendment of Change Form, complete the form and submit the form to Brighton EDC. A new application is not required.

### **Can the grant be used for operational expenses?**

No, it cannot cover operational reimbursement such as payroll or labor for the business's internal employees.

### **Do I submit my reimbursement request every time I complete a project?**

Reimbursement will be processed only once. Therefore, if you intend to maximize the eligible reimbursement award amount, it is recommended that you include all projects, invoices, and proofs.



**If I own the building and have a separate business within my building, can I apply twice for the same location?**

The business and the building owner cannot apply for the grant program (including BURA and BIP) simultaneously for the same project.

**If my application is on the waitlist, will it be processed?**

Any new applications will be added to the waitlist and will not be processed unless funding becomes available.

**The building is owned by my property company/me. Do I apply under my business or my property company?**

If it is for exterior, you can apply through either your business or your property company. If you apply through your business, you'll need to include a property manager approval letter for modification with your business application.