

## ACTION FORM BRYAN CITY COUNCIL

<b>DATE OF COUNCIL MEETING:</b> December 2, 2014		<b>DATE SUBMITTED:</b> November 13, 2014	
<b>DEPARTMENT OF ORIGIN:</b> Economic Development		<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b> Lindsey Guindi	
<b>MEETING TYPE:</b>	<b>CLASSIFICATION:</b>	<b>ORDINANCE:</b>	<b>STRATEGIC INITIATIVE:</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> BCD	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC HEARING	<input type="checkbox"/> 1ST READING	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC SAFETY
<input type="checkbox"/> SPECIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSENT	<input type="checkbox"/> 2ND READING	<input type="checkbox"/> SERVICE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> REGULAR	<input type="checkbox"/> STATUTORY		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ECONOMIC DEVELOP.
<input type="checkbox"/> WORKSHOP	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> REGULAR		<input type="checkbox"/> INFRASTRUCTURE
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> QUALITY OF LIFE
<b>AGENDA ITEM DESCRIPTION:</b> Consideration of a request to amend the Downtown Improvements Program grant guidelines Section II: Initiating Requests for the Downtown Improvements Program, to include application deadlines and submittal requirements for all applications, and to add Section IV outlining the review panel process.			
<b>SUMMARY STATEMENT:</b> The City of Bryan's Downtown Improvements Program was established in July of 2001 (Resolution No. 2770) to act as a catalyst for downtown private property redevelopment and ultimately to bring businesses and citizens back to the downtown area. In May of 2005, the eligible boundary area for the project was expanded to include properties south and west from the previous boundary (Resolution No. 2988). From FY2002 to FY2011, the program helped fund thirty (30) separate projects in the downtown area along Main Street, Bryan Avenue, William Joel Bryan Parkway, and West 26 <sup>th</sup> Street.			
<p>Recently, the Downtown Improvements Program was allocated \$250,000 of funding from the Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ) #21 fund to distribute to approved project proposals. As this is a limited amount of funding for the amount of eligible and interested projects, staff has revised the submittal requirements for all applicants requesting funding from the program. In the past, applications were accepted throughout the year as funds were more readily available. Staff has revised the application to include a submittal timeline for all applications on the third Monday in February of each year (Section II. A.). Additionally, staff will conduct a review panel consisting of three designated staff members, a member of the Historic Landmark Commission, and a representative from the TIRZ 21 Board (Section IV.). The purpose of the panel will be to review applications and to ensure funds are awarded to viable improvements that are in compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation, and that the monies will be awarded to the projects believed to have the greatest impact on the community with regards to aesthetics, social wellbeing, and economics. The guidelines also have been revised to require all submittals be in a digital format (Section II. A.). In addition to this change, the guidelines will now require a maximum 750 word narrative of the project proposal describing the work to be completed on the structure (Section II. A. b.).</p> <p>The review criteria for project proposals have been revised for a more streamlined process. As there will be a February submittal deadline for all interested projects, the proposals will be submitted to the Historic Landmark Commission with the recommendation from the review panel regarding the amount of requested funding. The projects will be submitted as part of a package to Historic Landmark Commission on the fourth Wednesday each March, which is a regularly scheduled meeting date. The Commission will have the ability to recommend approval, approval with modifications, or denial of each application to the City Council for review and the final decision. Final decisions for the applications will be considered by the Bryan City Council on the second regular meeting date each April. The City Council will be able to vote to approve, approve with modifications, or deny each application.</p>			
At a special Historic Landmark Commission meeting on November 19, 2014, the Commission unanimously			

recommended approval of the proposed changes to the guidelines for the Downtown Improvements Program. Upon approval by the City Council, the changes will become effective immediately. Notification letters to eligible property owners will be mailed to ensure all eligible properties are aware of the changes and the opportunity to apply for grant funding.

**STAFF ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends approving the proposed amendment to the Downtown Improvements Grant application guidelines, including the establishment of submittal deadlines, the modification of submittal requirements for applicants, and the creation of an application review panel. Staff believes amending the application guidelines will help in the improvement of structures located within TIRZ 21 and the eligible improvement area. The proposed changes will create a more streamlined process for applications and the review panel will ensure viable projects are in compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation, and selected projects will be an economic impact to the downtown area.

**OPTIONS (In Suggested Order of Staff Preference):**

1. approve the requested amendment to the Downtown Improvements Program grant guidelines, as recommended by the Historic Landmark Commission and staff;
2. approve the requested amendment to the Downtown Improvements Program grant guidelines with modifications, (which may require consideration at a future City Council meeting); or
3. deny the requested amendment to the Downtown Improvements Program grant guidelines.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Proposed resolution approving the revised Downtown Improvements Program
2. Downtown Improvements Program grant application and guidelines with changes highlighted in yellow (separate pdf)
3. excerpt from the Historic Landmark Commission special meeting minutes of November 19, 2014

**FUNDING SOURCE:** The Downtown Improvements Program is currently being funded through TIRZ #21.

**APPROVALS:** Joey Dunn, 11-14-14; Hugh R. Walker, 11/18/2014

**APPROVED FOR SUBMITTAL: CITY MANAGER** Kean Register, 11-17-2014

**APPROVED FOR SUBMITTAL: CITY ATTORNEY** Janis K. Hampton, 11-24-2014

**RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF BRYAN, TEXAS, AMENDING RESOLUTION NO. 2988 ADOPTED ON THE MAY 24, 2005, BY AMENDING THE SUBMITTAL GUIDELINES AND CREATING A DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENTS REVIEW PANEL FOR THE DOWNTOWN AREA FOR THE PURPOSE OF THE DOWNTOWN FAÇADE IMPROVEMENTS MATCHING GRANT PROGRAM AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

**WHEREAS**, Downtown property owners and merchants have requested assistance from the City of Bryan in the redevelopment and enhancement of historical and other significant buildings in the downtown area; and

**WHEREAS**, the proposed downtown economic development programs have been developed to assist in making existing downtown building more attractive and useful; and

**WHEREAS**, these programs are designed to improve the safety and accessibility of existing buildings in Downtown Bryan and the surrounding area; and

**WHEREAS**, these programs are designed to preserve the historical fabric of the downtown area while stimulating economic activity; and

**WHEREAS**, these programs are designed to provide funding assistance to stimulate new business development and the retention and expansion of existing businesses in the downtown area; and

**WHEREAS**, City Council has expressed a desire to amend the guidelines for such programs.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BRYAN, TEXAS:**

That the Downtown Improvements Program is hereby amended by amending the submittal guidelines and creating a Downtown Improvements Program review panel set forth in exhibit "A" to this resolution. The program guidelines are restated in the exhibit and hereby confirmed.

**APPROVED AND ADOPTED** by the City Council of the City of Bryan on this 2<sup>nd</sup> day of December, 2014, and effective the same date.

ATTEST:

CITY OF BRYAN

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mary Lynne Stratta, City Secretary

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Jason P. Bienski, Mayor

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

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Janis K. Hampton, City Attorney

**EXCERPT FROM THE HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION'S NOVEMBER 19, 2014 SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES:**

**6. STAFF PRESENTATION, DISCUSSION, AND POSSIBLE ACTION CONCERNING CHANGES TO THE APPLICATION PROCEDURES AND REVIEW PROCESS FOR THE DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENTS GRANT PROGRAM (Commission makes recommendation; City Council has final approval).**

*Commissioner Lawrence recused himself from discussion and voting on this item due to a conflict of interest.*

Ms. Dalton gave the staff presentation (on file in the Development Services Department). Staff recommends approval of the proposed changes to the application procedures and review process for the Downtown Improvements Grant program.

In response to questions from the Commission, Ms. Dalton stated that

- A TIRZ is a Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone;
- The monies for the program are from the TIRZ fund, which is why they can be recycled;
- An extension to the 180 day construction time limit can be granted under certain circumstances;
- The review panel would evaluate all applications and make a recommendation to the Historic Landmark Commission regarding each case;
- The City Council is the final deciding body and would ultimately determine how much grant money each project receives;
- The review panel would not be an appointed position.

**Commissioner Banks moved to recommend approval of the changes to the application procedures and review process for the Downtown Improvements Grant program as presented by staff to the Bryan City Council. Commissioner Beto seconded the motion and the motion passed with a vote of 4-0, with Commissioner Lawrence abstaining.**