

2020 South Thornton Attraction & Revitalization Grant (STAR Grant)

Applicant Requirements & Information

1. The STAR Grant is designed to enhance and revitalize commercial areas in the South Thornton Development Area (South TDA; identified as within the TDA, South of 104th Avenue) by attracting and supporting new and expanding businesses to the area, assisting business owners with building improvements, and assisting with the cost of permitting and licensing, regulatory compliance, equipment purchases or exterior and façade improvements. This program will only reimburse eligible expenses, up to the preapproved grant amount, for eligible projects. The business plan must be reviewed and approved by the STAR grant review committee before an award letter will be issued. **Applicants must be:**
 - A new business owner at the identified address, locating or expanding a commercial business into an existing building, within the South Thornton Development Area (If Certificate of Occupancy has been issued, it must have been issued within 6 months of the date you submit your completed application and business plan)
 - Locating in non-residential zoning designations, not on public property
 - In compliance with all government fees and taxes, licensing, and applicable laws and ordinances
 - EXCLUSIONS:** Funding cannot be used for non-profits, marijuana related businesses, pawn shops, bail bonds, money lending, used car lots, check cashing, liquor stores, adult oriented nature, religious institutions, residential living facilities
2. **Applicant is eligible for STAR grant funding only once per location**
3. **Business must be locating or has located into the South Thornton Development Area (South TDA) within the last 6 months**
4. **Applicants are responsible for:**
 - Filling out all application documentation COMPLETELY. An incomplete application may result in the dismissal of the application
 - Determining the Scope of Work for each project
 - Determining the qualifications of the contractors
 - Submitting a summary of the planned projects and purchases to be made
 - Paying the difference, if any, between the approved grant amount and total project costs
 - Ensuring that all work is permitted and inspected properly. Some inspections may need to be performed during the actual work, rather than afterward. You can speak to the Building Department for more information on permits and inspections
 - Collecting and compiling invoices, receipts, and photos for one submission in a concise and orderly manner
 - Providing a current Business Plan, if in business less than 2 years. (Assistance is available through a no-cost consultation with the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), your business plan must be completed, submitted and approved before funds will be reserved
 - Compliance with all city taxes, licensing, and applicable laws and ordinances
 - Obtaining a Thornton Business License and final Certificate of Occupancy from the city of Thornton before funding will be disbursed
 - Meeting all above requirements before 12/9/19
5. **Contractors**
 - Thornton-based contractors are strongly encouraged, if a Thornton contractor is hired, or purchases are made at a Thornton business, reimbursement will be awarded at 60%. Non-Thornton contractor services will be reimbursed at 50% of the actual cost. To view a list of local licensed contractors, go to: <http://www.cityofthornton.net/government/citydevelopment/Pages/contractors.aspx>
6. **Timelines and Requested Documentation**
 - **Applications are accepted January 2020 – October 30, 2020.** Applications will be reviewed on a **first-come, first-served basis** until the funding is gone. Submit your application early to give yourself the best opportunity for grant approval
 - **Deadline for project completion is December 11, 2020 – (no extensions will be entertained).** For reimbursement, all projects must be completed, paid for, and have passed required inspections

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Application Submittal Process

1. Applications, required documents, and current business plan (if required) may be completed online, dropped off, returned through the mail or by email to the Economic Development Office by 5 p.m. on October 30, 2020
 - The application will be reviewed by the following departments: Economic Development, Building Division, Development Engineering, and the Planning Division.
2. The application and business plan (if applicable) will be evaluated and approved by a review committee according to the STAR Rubric Scoresheet, which can be found online at www.businessinthornton.com. The application review committee meets 1 time per month on the 3rd Wednesday of the month.
 - If the business is a new start-up or in business for less than 2 years, a business plan approval is required from the STAR Grant Review Committee before applications will be approved.
 - Your application and business plan (if required) must be complete in order to be reviewed by the review committee
3. The STAR Grant Review Committee must approve all marketing samples for grant funding to be reimbursed. The Economic Development Office will notify the applicant if they have been approved or denied grant funding within 1 week of the application review. If approved, the applicant will be advised of
 - Approved grant funding amount
 - Business Plan change recommendations or approval
 - Permits and other regulatory requirements
4. The applicant will then work directly with Planning, Building, and Development Engineering division representatives to coordinate all permits, inspections, and other required elements of all project work
5. ***The STAR Grant reimburses awardees based on total project cost. Reimbursement will occur once all approved project work is complete, after photos and itemized statement and paid invoices/receipts are received, and Certificate of Occupancy and Business License is issued.

Funding and Eligible Expenses

1. **Tier 1** - An initial grant up to \$10,000 per business license holder and business location
2. **Tier 2** - Projects exceeding \$10,000 can receive an additional \$5,000 dollar grant with a 50/50 match, for a maximum grant award of \$15,000 per business license holder
3. **Eligible projects:** must be for code compliance costs, permitting fees, licensing fees, equipment costs, marketing of your new Thornton location (maximum marketing grant award is \$1,000 with a 50/50 match), exterior or interior Improvements such as:
 - Facades, gutters, downspouts
 - Exterior lighting
 - Awnings, canopies
 - Painting and masonry cleaning
 - Landscaping and fencing, irrigation system
 - Parking lots and sidewalks
 - Permanent bike racks
 - Security and Crime Prevention
 - Improvements to accommodate disabled patrons and employees
 - "Greening your business" (energy efficiency, recycling, water efficiency, etc.)
 - Signage (grant funds for signage cannot exceed \$10,000)
 - Doors, roofs and windows
 - Licensing and Permitting fees
 - Fire, sprinkler or alarm system improvements
 - Some Exclusions: inventory, employee wages, marketing costs
 - Fees / interest associated with obtaining a bank loan to cover the upfront cost of the project
4. **Taxes and Fees:** The city is required by federal tax law to report to the IRS any grant money awarded to a business above \$600 as income. Sales and Use Tax, Permit, and Design Review Fees will be charged, as applicable.
 - Contractors are responsible for itemizing permit fees and loan interest in their reimbursement request, which will be included in STAR Grant funding reimbursement calculations.

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5. Reimbursement Requirements –Deadline to submit for reimbursement is December 11, 2020

Applicant must

- Obtain final approval from the appropriate City department on all work requiring a permit and inspection
- A Business License and Certificate of Occupancy must be issued
- Pay for the work of the contractor prior to submitting for reimbursement.
- Submit an itemized list of your receipts and invoices, include date of purchase, name of company, description of project or purchase, and amount. Attach all supporting project documentation including receipts (i.e., proof of payment), lien waivers, and "after" photographs, indicating project completeness to the Economic Development Office no later than December 11, 2020

Thornton Economic Development Office

9500 Civic Center Drive

Thornton, CO 80229

303.538.7605