

Suggested Refinements of Eligibility Guidelines for LIFT Applications

Outcomes of discussion:

- Better defined guidelines for applicants, resulting in best use of funds
- Clearer directions to LIFT volunteers for scoring
- Increase consistency from Council for process to continue

Eligibility

- Applicants can not apply more than once for the same project

Intent:

- Encouraging request for smaller, finite projects at lower funding request
- Allows for larger, long term projects to receive on-going support, i.e. same applicant, different project for a large project like TMLC

Finance

- Applicant has to provide direct 50% funding match; can not use MOVE or EDGE funding for their match
- Must provide 3 year business plan
 - Applies to new and existing businesses
 - If not well done, send to SBDC to improve, not job of LIFT to develop business plan or improve application
- Financial review takes place currently, info kept confidential
 - Reviewed for bankruptcy
 - Applicant must certify if current on payroll; property, sales and income tax
 - In good standing with Secretary of State (doesn't apply to sole proprietor)
 - Tax returns and/or financial statements for last 2 years

Non-profit Organizations Eligibility

- Primary Dollar Events
 - I.e. Conference that brings people to Lander for meals, lodging
 - Offset operational costs (room rental, etc)
- New service, especially one that serves as a multiplier, such as child care or hospice that allows adults to be in workforce
- Creates well-paying job (minimum \$17.50/hour; benefited)

For-profit Organizations Eligibility

- A new product/service that keeps dollars in Fremont County (i.e. printing machine at Western Printing)
- Creates well-paying job (minimum \$17.50/hour and benefits preferred)
 - Restaurants should be able to show this including tips in business plan
- Items such as machines/equipment/building modification for direct operations
 - I.e. need garage door to for pallets fork-lifts, create walk-in cooler
- *Not* building purchase or major repairs (roofing, plumbing, foundation, etc)
- *Not* building upkeep

Place-making, Facade and Signage

Defining Facade and Signage from Port Angeles

- Rehabilitation, reconstruction, or restoration to the exterior, streetside of a building facade;
- Glass, windows, doors, trim, and accessories that are part of the streetside facade;
- Signage;
- Awnings, canopies, fences, and landscaping features;
- Street grade entrances which contribute to activity along street edge;
- Professional architectural/design/contractor fees as deemed appropriate for eligible projects;
- Improving empty Main Street windows? Public art?
 - Limited dollar amount for window art
- Other resources for benefit of and eligibility for facade and place-making programs:
 - [https://www.elevaterapidcity.com/clientuploads/PDFs/Elevate Rapid City Downtown Facade Loan Program.pdf](https://www.elevaterapidcity.com/clientuploads/PDFs/Elevate_Rapid_City_Downtown_Facade_Loan_Program.pdf)
 - <https://downtownboise.org/explore/beautification/placemaking-programs>

Supporting Existing Lander Businesses

- Required to follow City of Lander purchasing guidelines already in place
- Using local contractors/suppliers is currently scored in application

City Projects

Can the City apply for funds, if the projects benefit a large number of residents or enhance tourism? If so, the City should use the same application and be scored as other applicants. There is a “community Improvement” category of scoring

Wages

- Encourage applicants to apply for equipment or direct operations
- If wages are deemed eligible by Council:*
- Minimum \$17.50/hour; benefited
- Limit the percent of wage (already limited at 50% of funding)
- There could be cases in which salaries are best use of fund; defined time period
 - Need a compelling narrative that explains why funding wages is a flywheel to get business up and running for long-term success; Applicant must have match for wages
 - Limit to 1 year of funding (or different time frame?)

Recurring Primary Dollar Events

These are important drivers for economic development. Current scoring format may not favor PDEs in the way that best supports them.

- Small asks currently moved up 1 funding level
- Should PDE's be scored differently? If so, next focus of refinement

- PDEs scored based on size, time of year, extent of out of town participants, etc
- Can PDEs receive funding more than once?
 - Do so in decreasing manner over multi-year period

Recapture of Funds (machines, building improvements, etc)

- Require repayment of funds awarded AND cost of city staff time to manage recapture if business changes hands, moves out of Lander, ceases to operate for any reason within three years of receiving funds.

Advertising LIFT Awards

Businesses that receive funding must agree to advertising:

- On door of business; at cash register; on website, invoices, etc

Additional question for consideration

- Should Council have liaison to LIFT?

Continued refinements of program

- Better define LIFT's responsibilities:
 - Send apps back to applicant for further refinement with guidelines/suggestions
 - Improve reporting information for higher specificity of impact
 - Request more specific documentation for reports
 - Wage report; sales tax report