



Downtown Watertown Special Events Grant Program

Program Overview

The Redevelopment Authority of the City of Watertown (RDA) established its Special Events Grant Program to support special events located within the Downtown Watertown Redevelopment District Target Area. The program offers grants up to \$10,000 to organizations conducting events that will positively impact the Area and meet the RDA and City of Watertown's goals, as set forth in the Economic Development Chapter of the City's Comprehensive Plan.

The RDA defines special events as those public events which attract more than 150 attendees and take place within the Target Area, meet economic development goals, contribute to the unique identity of Downtown Watertown, make the City core a compelling destination, provide economic impact, and promote business and community involvement. Special events do not include conferences, grand openings or ribbon cuttings, social parties or open houses, or events not open to the public.

This is a competitive grant program. Applications are reviewed quarterly by the RDA Grant Program Committee. Deadlines for submission are March 31, June 30, September 30, and December 31 each year. Recommendations are presented to the RDA Board of Directors for final approval and awarding of funds.

Please note that applicants must complete the application process before incurring eligible expenses through the Special Events Grant Program. Any expenses incurred before a Grant Agreement is executed will be ineligible for reimbursement through the grant program.

Available Awards

The RDA has committed a total of \$50,000.00 from the Dr. John Beltz Charitable Foundation to the program, with a maximum grant award of \$10,000 per special event. Applications will be reviewed, and funds will be awarded on a quarterly basis.

Eligibility Requirements

- Event must occur entirely within the Target Area (If an event has multiple locations, the RDA will only consider funding the event portion occurring within the Target Area)
- Event must be open to the public
- Event must meet the objectives of the City's plans and the special event definition stated above
- Have anticipated attendance of over 150 people
- Occur after approval of any funding under this program

Eligible Applicants/Organizations

- Must be a registered entity with the State of Wisconsin, Department of Revenue

- Must not have any outstanding fees with the City of Watertown at the time of application

Eligible Expenses

- Event related marketing and promotion
- Rentals for the event such as equipment, tents, chairs, tables, facilities, and portable toilets
- Vendor, performer, or exhibitor fees

Please note that if awarded funding, the reimbursement amount will be based on receipts submitted.

Program Goals and Priority Criteria

- Support events that promote activity and foot traffic in the downtown area.
- Preference will be given to events that generate positive economic impact for the community, promote and grow downtown businesses, and attract visitors to the City of Watertown.
- Involve members of the community in event planning and participation.

Application Process

Pre-Application Consultation

Applicant should review all program guidelines to ensure eligibility before beginning the application process. After reviewing all program documents, interested applicants must contact the RDA Executive Director before beginning the application. The prospective applicant may be asked to set up a time with the Executive Director to review the program guidelines and discuss the proposed Special Event. The Executive Director may provide the prospective applicant with information as to whether the proposed event may fit within the guidelines of the program. Any such information provided by the Executive Director and any opinions or suggestions that may be conveyed as to the suitability of the event are preliminary only and are not binding on the RDA or Grant Program Committee and should not be relied upon by the applicant as a final determination of award status. At the Pre-Application Meeting, if it seems that the proposed event may fit within the guidelines of the program, the potential applicant will be encouraged to complete the application and return it with the required additional materials for review.

Application Contents

An application for the program must include all of the following:

- Special Events Grant Application Form
- Event Budget with expenses and any revenue
- If applicant is a nonprofit organization: Articles of incorporation, bylaws and any other relevant documents describing the structure, mission and vision of the organization
- If applicant is a for-profit organization: Last three years of business income statements and most recent balance sheet
- Detailed event plan/information

Submission of Application

The application and all required materials must be submitted to the RDA Executive Director in either print or digital form. Applications are reviewed on a quarterly basis. Applicants are encouraged to submit materials as soon as completed.

Review process

Time of Review

Applications are reviewed on a quarterly basis and reviewed by the RDA Grant Program Committee.

Substantive Criteria

The RDA Grant Program Committee will screen each application based on the following criteria before making a recommendation regarding the application to the RDA Board of Directors:

- Completeness of application
- Type of special event
- Organization history and experience
- Potential economic impact on the business community in Downtown Watertown

Notification of Recommendation

The applicant will be notified of the RDA Grant Program Committee's recommendation regarding the requested grant to the RDA Board of Directors. The applicant will also be notified of the date, time and location of the RDA Board of Directors meeting at which the committee's recommendation regarding the application will be discussed. The applicant will be invited to attend the meeting and address the Board of Directors regarding their application. The committee may postpone a recommendation on an application if additional information is requested or the application is incomplete.

Board of Directors Approval

After the RDA Grant Program Committee makes a recommendation regarding the application, the recommendation will be placed on the next RDA Board of Directors meeting agenda. The applicant will be invited to attend the meeting and address the Board of Directors regarding their application. The RDA Board meets regularly on the third Wednesday of the month. The applicant will be notified of the RDA Board of Directors decision regarding their application.

Conflict of Interest

Members of the RDA Board of Directors or any of its committees who are in a position to influence decisions regarding grants awarded under this program shall not have a financial interest, either directly or indirectly, in any person or entity applying for a grant through this program, unless that interest has been fully disclosed in writing and the board member/committee member involved has removed him/herself from the decision-making process, including all deliberations.

Denial of Applications

Following the recommendation of the denial of an application by the RDA Grant Program Committee, the RDA Executive Director shall so notify the applicant, stating reasons for the recommendation as communicated by members of the Committee, and including, if applicable:

- Requests for additional documents or other information which, if submitted by the applicant, may result in a grant award based on a future application; or,
- Suggestions as to changes in the proposed application which may result in a grant award based on a future application.

Post Award Process

Grant Agreement

Upon approval of the grant award by the RDA Board of Directors, the applicant will be notified and will be sent a Grant Agreement that will need to be signed by the applicant before project expenses can be incurred. Any expenses incurred before the Grant Agreement is executed will be ineligible for reimbursement through the grant program.

Post-award amendments to Project

Following the award of an RDA Special Events Grant, if the applicant desires to make any changes or modifications from what was approved in their application, the applicant must submit to the RDA Grant Program Committee for review:

- Written description of the changes proposed

NOTE: Failure to obtain approval for any changes in the proposed event after awarding of the original grant will result in disqualification of the applicant from the program and the loss of the entire grant funding.

Distribution of Grant Funds

Payment Request

The applicant may request payment of funds in one payment upon completion of the special event. To request payment of funds the applicant must submit the following to the RDA Executive Director:

- Affidavit that all event activities match what was included in the submitted application
- All receipts from eligible expenses seeking to be reimbursed

Compliance with Approved Application

If all submitted documentation is in compliance with applicant's approved application and the program parameters, the RDA Executive Director will issue a reimbursement check. Checks will be issued within 15 days of request.

Non-compliance

If any of the relocation activities are found to be in non-compliance with the approved application or the program requirements, the applicant will be ineligible to receive grant funding or liable to pay back grant funding already received.

Redevelopment Authority of the City of Watertown

Special Events Grant Application

Applicant Information

Application Date: _____

Organization Name: _____

Organization Sector: _____

Contact Name: _____

Role at Organization: _____

Contact Phone: _____ Contact Email: _____

Organization Mailing Address: _____

Total Amount Requested: _____ Total Event Cost: _____

Brief Description of what funds will be used for (please see Program Guidelines for eligible expenses):

Anticipated Timeline (estimated start and end dates): _____

Organization Information

How long has your organization been established? _____

Please describe your organization, including services offered and a brief history of operations.

Additional Materials

The following materials must be included with your application:

- ✓ Event Budget with expenses and any revenue projections
- ✓ If a nonprofit: Articles of incorporation, bylaws, and any other relevant documents describing the structure, mission and vision of the organization
- ✓ If a for-profit entity: Last three years of business income statements and most recent balance sheet
- ✓ Detailed event plan/information

Applicant Agreement & Signature

I have read the program requirements and reviewed them with the Executive Director of the Watertown Redevelopment Authority, and I understand that my participation in the Special Events Grant Program is contingent upon my full compliance with all requirements. I understand that all grant funds must be used to cover eligible expenses as outlined in the program documents and will be reimbursed after submission of receipts. My application includes all the materials listed above.

Applicant Signature _____ Date _____