



## AGENDA ITEM COMMENTARY

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| <b>MEETING NAME:</b>    | Economic Development Corporation                                  |
| <b>MEETING DATE:</b>    | September 1, 2026                                                 |
| <b>ITEM TITLE:</b>      | Consider and take appropriate action on BIG and Marketing Grants. |
| <b>STAFF INITIATOR:</b> | Danielle Sweat, EDC Director                                      |

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### **BACKGROUND:**

**This commentary is for the next two agenda items.**

As we begin the 2026/2027 fiscal year, it is time for the Board to consider renewing two of our existing business assistance programs: the Business Improvement Grant, commonly referred to as the BIG or Façade Grant, and the Marketing Grant.

Both programs were created as tools to support businesses located within the Wolfforth city limits and to encourage continued investment in our existing business community.

### **Business Improvement Grant**

For the 2026/2027 fiscal year, \$50,000 has been budgeted for the Business Improvement Grant program.

The BIG program is a matching program that allows eligible businesses to receive up to \$10,000 toward qualifying improvements to their property. The program requires a 1:1 match, with a minimum grant request of \$1,000. Funds are reimbursed after the approved project has been completed and proof of payment has been provided.

Over the past several years, this program has allowed the WEDC to partner directly with local businesses that are willing to invest their own money back into their properties. We have used the program to assist with exterior improvements, signage, patios, stucco and other improvements that enhance both the individual business and the overall appearance of our commercial areas.

I continue to believe this is one of our most effective business retention tools. Rather than the WEDC carrying the entire cost of an improvement, the business owner is making an equal or greater investment alongside us. The result is additional private investment in Wolfforth and improvements to properties that have a visible, long-term impact on our community.

### **Marketing Grant**

For the 2026/2027 fiscal year, \$20,000 has been budgeted for the Marketing Grant program.

The Marketing Grant is also a matching program and provides up to \$2,000 per eligible business to assist with marketing and advertising expenses. The minimum required marketing investment was previously lowered to \$1,000 in an effort to make the program more accessible to our small businesses.

To qualify, businesses must have a brick-and-mortar location within the Wolfforth city limits and remit applicable sales tax. The purpose of this program is to help our local businesses expand their reach, increase awareness and ultimately bring additional customers into Wolfforth businesses.

While the individual awards are relatively small, I believe this program gives the WEDC another opportunity to support our existing businesses in a practical way. Marketing can be a significant expense for a small business, and the matching structure ensures that the business is also investing its own funds into the effort.

Together, these two programs represent a \$70,000 commitment in the 2026/2027 budget toward supporting and retaining our existing business community. The \$50,000 for the BIG program and \$20,000 for the Marketing Grant are maximum annual program allocations. Funds are only expended as eligible applications are received, approved and program requirements are met.

I recommend continuing both programs for the 2026/2027 fiscal year. They provide the WEDC with two established tools to encourage private investment, improve the appearance of our commercial properties, support local businesses and continue our business retention efforts.

**EXHIBITS:**

**COUNCIL ACTION/STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**