

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Quality of Island Life Grants

Introduction

The South Padre Island Economic Development Corporation (SPIEDC) is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for the residents of South Padre Island by investing in projects that contribute to our community's economic well-being. The FY2025 Quality of Life Grant Program is designed to support local organizations, businesses, and initiatives that contribute to South Padre Island's development. These grants aim to improve public spaces, and support projects that strengthen the community's vibrancy.

Purpose

The FY2025 Quality of Life Grant Program aims to provide financial support for initiatives that enhance South Padre Island's public amenities and spaces, recreational facilities, encourages innovations, and improves overall quality of life. By funding these projects, the program aims to create lasting impacts that improve the day-to-day experiences of residents, attract visitors, and contribute to the long-term economic development of the Island.

Eligible Activities and Grant Priorities

The FY2025 Quality of Life Grant Program supports a broad range of activities designed to enhance the well-being of South Padre Island residents thereby promoting economic development. The following activities are eligible for funding:

- Parks and green space enhancement or development
- Public art installations
- Beautification, landscaping
- Community programs that promote innovation and creativity

- Educational programs for the community
- New or improved sports facilities, playgrounds, and other outdoor fitness-related spaces
- Tourism-related initiatives that foster partnerships, collaborations, or community programming designed to enrich the visitor and resident experience. Examples include small business and entrepreneurship support programs, cultural and heritage preservation projects, educational or environmental initiatives, wellness and recreation programming, and workforce development efforts tied to tourism.
- Community gardens and farmers markets promoting healthy living
- Health-focused initiatives that encourage active lifestyles
- Development of green spaces, public art installations within or adjacent to commercial properties or shopping centers
- Projects that support destination retail, entertainment, or sports tourism
- Partner to assist with existing projects

Priority: Projects that support small businesses and entrepreneurs, and contribute to the city's long-term economic sustainability by creating a more vibrant destination. Projects that enhance tourism, increase recreational opportunities, create educational opportunities, and serve multi-generational members of the community

The examples provided above serve as a general reference, and eligibility is not confined to these categories. They are intended to guide applicants in shaping their proposals; however, SPIEDC welcomes other innovative and community-focused proposals. Final decisions regarding project funding rest with the designated board, which will evaluate each proposal based on its merits and alignment with the broader objectives of enhancing South Padre Island's quality of life. All applications are contingent upon the availability of funding.

Project Eligibility

The project must:

- Be located on South Padre Island or a location that brings economic benefit to South Padre Island, and must be open and accessible to the public.

- Address the priorities of the program.
- Serve a good percentage of residents and/or visitors.
- Be for public use or otherwise meet the definition of “Project” as that term is defined by Texas Local Government Code. §§ 501.101, Subchapter C.
- Illustrate how the Texas Local Government Code §§ 501.101 eligibility requirements are being met.
- Be an organization that has a federal non-profit status, a for-profit business, or the local municipality. Individuals and religious organizations do not qualify.
- Be self-sustainable and maintained properly once completed.
- Be shovel-ready, meaning the project has completed all architectural/engineering plans, has bids and pricing, etc.
- Be well-planned with stated goals, objectives and evaluation measures that demonstrate the impact to the community.

Grant Funding

- The grant award amount is subject to Board approval and may be more or less than the amount requested. All funding decisions by the Board will be based on the project, its scope, impact to the community, evaluation criteria, and any other factors determined by the Board.
- SPIEDC will cover 80% of project costs. Applicants are required to contribute a 20% match.
- In-kind donations may be considered as part of the match.

Eligible Expenditures

- Expenditures can be items that are associated with buildings, equipment, facilities, targeted infrastructure, and improvements.
- NOTE: our program funding does not cover operational costs. Operational expenses, such as rent, utilities, personnel costs, and other general administrative costs, are required to be covered independently by the organization applying for this funding.

Grant Disbursement

- This program offers reimbursable grants for eligible activities. Upon project approval, the applicant must first incur and pay for eligible expenses and then submit documentation to SPIEDC for reimbursement upon project completion. Please refer to the Program Agreement for detailed information about submitting reimbursement requests and the documentation required.

How to Apply

- Please email southpadreislandcdc@gmail.com to discuss your proposed project prior to applying. Applications are available on our online portal by [clicking here](#). Consideration for applications is subject to funding availability.
- Deadlines for submission are strictly followed. Please note that only completed applications will be reviewed for consideration. Submitted applications are subject to the Public Information Act and open to public review.

Required Documents:

- Cover letter (please refer to online application for specific information on what needs to be included in the letter)
- Most recent IRS tax return
- IRS Determination Letter for Nonprofit 501 (c)(3) or 501 (c)(6)
- Operating budget for the current year
- Detailed project scope
- Project budget
- Plat/map of the property, if applicable
- Project timeline (from design to completion)
- Supplemental materials/visual aids (renderings/illustrations of the project)
- Photos of the proposed project area(s) where the improvements will take place.
- Project Presentation for SPIEDC Board
- Two Letters of Support

Application Review Process

- The SPIEDC Board of Directors is responsible for reviewing and voting on applications for funding projects and initiatives in accordance with state law. The board consists of seven voting members, appointed by the City Council. The review process is as follows:
- Completed applications must be submitted using our [online portal](#).
- Applications may be reviewed by SPIEDC's legal counsel to determine eligibility under state law.
- Once eligibility is confirmed, applicants will be notified, and the project will be placed on the next available meeting agenda for consideration. Following each presentation, board members will have an opportunity to ask questions of the applicant.
- When action is taken, the board will approve, table, or deny an application by a majority vote of the board members.
- The SPIEDC Board, in its sole discretion, may determine the grant amount and any other terms.
- All applications approved will then be required to sign an agreement with SPIEDC.

The Organization's officials who have signed the application are authorized by the organization to submit the application and be the recipient of the funding.

Evaluation Criteria

SPIEDC will evaluate and score each application based on the following criteria:

- **Community Impact** of the project including how it improves the quality of life for residents and visitors. Does it increase sales tax dollars, and/or create additional jobs?
- **Project Budget** including match requirements, evidence of public and private financial support, additional funding partners, budget details, and cost benefits.
- **Project details** including how it will address a problem or community need or enhancement, goals and objectives of the project, and marketing.

- **Project sustainability** and longevity. If the project requires ongoing maintenance, a preventative maintenance schedule must be submitted with the application.
- **Organization's track record**, strong mission and programs, financial stability, proven results, and how the project will fulfill its strategic goals and objectives.

Grantee Responsibilities

Upon approval by the SPIEDC Board, grantees are required to do the following:

- Sign an agreement within 30 days of award notification. The project must be completed within one calendar year or a timeframe agreed upon by the SPIEDC Board. The project cannot begin until the agreement has been signed by all parties. If the project begins and/or expenses related to the project are expended before the Agreement is in place, SPIEDC will not reimburse those monies to the Organization. An extension to the deadline may be granted if requested in writing to SPIEDC.
- The grantee will comply with the Program Guidelines and Agreement in executing the Project.
- If the project involves construction, the grantee will be required to show proof of either a Contract Bond Guarantee or Financial Guarantee Bond prior to the start of the project.
- The project will be administered by or under the supervision of the organization listed on the application.
- Funds awarded will be utilized solely for the purposes described in the application. The program operates as a reimbursement grant; (i.e. funds must be spent before a reimbursement is issued by SPIEDC). The applicant must have expended a minimum of 20% of the total grant amount awarded before the first reimbursement is requested. If the organization has a match, the match must be spent first before requesting reimbursement from SPIEDC. The applicant will need to show proof of expenditures, as stipulated in the Program Agreement.
- SPIEDC may reimburse up to 80% of the total grant amount awarded prior to conclusion of the project, with proper documentation. The final 20% of the grant will be withheld until project completion.

- SPIEDC must be recognized as a funding partner in all marketing, outreach, advertising, and public relations campaigns related to the project. On construction projects, grantee will post signage, if allowed, indicating the project is funded by SPIEDC
- The grantee must submit a final report with photos no later than 30 days after project completion or the end of the agreement, whichever comes first.
- The application, including all documents and information included herein, become the sole property of the Board and are not subject to inspection, reviews, or disclosure, except with the expressed consent of the Board or as required by law.
- Organization must be current on any taxes owed to the city.

Additional Guidelines

- Applications will only be accepted and reviewed by the SPIEDC if completed in full and it includes all information requested. All applications must be completed using our application portal.
- Phased projects or multi-year grant requests will NOT be accepted.
- The applicant must own the property or land, or have written approval from the property owner which must be included with the application. The letter must document that the property owner has reviewed the project plan and application and approves and supports the efforts of the applicant.
- Only one applicant may apply for funding of a given project. Multiple applications for the same project by different organizations will be rejected.
- Grant funds shall not be used in a manner that benefits an individual board member, officer or employee contrary to applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations pertaining to nepotism, conflicts of interest, and other prohibitions.
- Any changes to these guidelines must be approved by the SPIEDC Board