

## PROMOTIONAL CHALLENGE GRANT

### PURPOSE:

The purpose of the Promotional Challenge Grant is to provide a tool to help local merchant associations promote a positive image of their commercial districts. By marketing the district's unique characteristics to shoppers, investors, new businesses and visitors, an effective promotion strategy forges a positive image through advertising, retail promotional activity, special events, and marketing campaigns carried out by local volunteers. The image of a district will determine its potential for vitality and prosperity. Physical image, addressed by design improvements, is just part of the story. Promotion strengthens the district's image and marketability in several ways.

- **Changes** community attitudes by focusing attention on district's best assets and potential;
- **Builds** a unified image by targeting a clear specific niche with materials and activity;
- **Generates** fresh activity, helping re-establish the district as the center of neighborhood and community life;
- **Communicates** progress and excitement, attracting more investors and shoppers.

### HOW IT WORKS:

- The business/merchants association can create a strategy with which the monies will be used to enhance the image of the community.
- Each of the nine BEACON districts is allowed up to \$5,000 annually in grant funds to support promotional activities. The grant requires a dollar-for-dollar match. Evidence must be provided that the funding being requested can be matched by the merchants association, either by collected dues, donations, additional grants applied for or in-kind services.
- Detailed proposals for promotional activities should be submitted to Main Street Birmingham Inc. for approval of funding. Organizations planning to submit a proposal should identify what they are trying to accomplish with the funds for which they have applied. Organizations do not need to submit planning for the entire year when applying for the grant. However, the \$5,000 must be used in the calendar year for which it has been funded.

### The proposal should answer all of the following questions:

- Is the event a retail promotion; a special event; an image development campaign?
- Who is the target audience for your effort?
- If it is an event, when and where will the event be held? Why are you having the event?
- What is the detailed budget for your promotion effort?
- What is the timeline of all necessary events and actions needed to be carried out to accomplish the event within a specified timeframe?
- Detail the individual funding sources that would be used to match the amount that you are requesting from the grant fund. It is required that all monies requested from the grant fund be matched by the merchants association. Please include approximate values for in-kind services being provided as part of the matching funds total and supporting evidence of these services.

### SUBMITTING A PROPOSAL:

Proposals should be submitted to Main Street Birmingham (MSB) with enough lead time for possible suggestions and ample time to organize the activity. They may be mailed, faxed, e-mailed or delivered in person. The proposal must be submitted by a representative of an active merchants association. The grant is not available for individual businesses

Main Street Birmingham Inc. is available to provide any assistance that may be needed in this process. If you need assistance, please contact:

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