

**South Billings Urban Renewal Association  
Residential & Community Enhancements  
Guidelines  
February 2023**

## **Introduction**

The South Billings Urban Renewal Association (SBURA) recognizes that smaller-scale community projects contribute significantly towards SBURA's mission to reduce blight and/or promote economic development in the South Billings Boulevard Urban Renewal District ("the District"). In recent years, the Billings City Council has approved funding for a host of SBURA-recommended community development projects including:

1. Playground enhancements at Orchard Elementary School.
2. Enhancements to Newman Elementary School's student pick-up/drop-off location.
3. Fence and sidewalk construction at Ponderosa Elementary School.
4. Softball field construction at Riverside Middle School.

The above examples plus other projects that benefit the District as a whole are collectively known as "Residential & Community Enhancements." Beginning in fiscal year 2023, SBURA intends to ear-mark a portion of its annual tax increment for these enhancements.

## **Guidelines**

The guidelines set forth below provide a framework for SBURA to consider recommendations for tax increment assistance. SBURA understands that it is likely that applications will differ, perhaps materially, on a case-by-case basis. Accordingly, SBURA reserves the right to apply "reasonableness" when considering applications and recommendations for tax increment assistance. In all cases, however, applications must comply with Montana Code Sections 7-15-4233 and 7-15-4288.

**Project Qualification:** SBURA will consider applications for tax increment assistance for projects that:

- a) Enhance the aesthetics or promote the safety of the District. Such projects generally must promote the well-being of the District as a whole. Projects that are constructed on private property but benefit the District's residents will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- b) Examples of projects that enhance the aesthetics or promote the safety of the District include, but are not limited to:
  - Trail construction
  - Sidewalk repair
  - Abandoned/junked vehicle removal

- Graffiti removal on public property
- Tree planting on public property
- School playground and student pick up/drop off area enhancements
- Signage installation/enhancement that is not already required by city code.
- Creation of neighborhood gardens
- Landscaping on main thoroughfares that is not already required by city code.
- Street lighting.
- Safe routes to school.
- Traffic calming.

## Application

Applications will be classified in two separate tiers:

### Tier I Applications:

- Maximum tax increment assistance \$5,000.
- Applicants will use a short form Request for Tax Increment Assistance form.
- Will receive City Council approval/disapproval via consent agenda.
- Do not require matching applicant funds.

### Tier II Applications:

- Tax increment assistance \$5,000 - \$25,000
- Applicants will use a long form Request for Tax Increment Assistance form.
- Will receive City Council approval/disapproval via regular agenda.
- May require matching applicant funds.

### Tier III Applications:

- Tax increment assistance \$25,000 - \$100,000
- Applicants will use a long form Request for Tax Increment Assistance form
- Will receive City Council approval/disapproval via regular agenda.
- May require matching applicant funds.
- May require compliance with City of Billings purchasing procedures.

## Approval

Billings City Council must approve all expenditures. SBURA will reserve funding, if any, for each fiscal year with awards being conferred on a first come, first serve basis. Once the appropriated funds have been exhausted or encumbered, SBURA will close applications. Unused funds may be carried over to the subsequent fiscal year.

## Award Term

Funding will be available for one year from City Council approval. Upon expiration, the award funding will be reclassified as open and available for other applicants. Recipients may request extensions in writing no less than 30 days prior to award expiration.

## **Matching Requirement**

SBURA anticipates that applications for tax increment assistance for Residential & Community Enhancements could come from private individuals, non-profit corporations, and perhaps private enterprise. Given this, SBURA reserves the right to determine the amount of matching funds required by the applicant.

## **Development Agreement**

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a development agreement that defines the project, establishes the funding authorized and sets forth the terms of payment.

## **Payment**

Payment is on a reimbursement basis. Recipients will receive payment upon documentation of actual expenses incurred.

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