Atlanta Beltline, Inc.
Local Developer Incentive Fund

Frequently Asked Questions

For any additional questions, please contact business@atlbeltline.org.

General

- **What does "market rate" mean, and how much below that should rent be?**
    - Market rate refers to the typical rental rate for comparable commercial spaces in the same area and under similar conditions. Applicants are responsible for determining the market rate through their own market study based on the project's location, property type, and local market trends. Under this program, affordable commercial spaces are expected to be leased at least 20% below the established market rate.
- **What insurance do I need if my project is still under construction?**
    - A detailed plan or quote outlining the insurance coverage that will be in place once construction begins and when the project becomes operational. This typically includes builder's risk insurance (during construction) and ongoing property and liability insurance (during operation).
- **Are developers leasing Beltline spaces eligible?**
    - To be eligible for the program, you must be a developer that is in or serving Beltline communities and have a project within lease-up phase (0-18 months from readiness or completed in the last 12 months).
- **What should my Leasing Plan include?**
    - This should include your marketing strategy plan including a timeline to identify and secure tenants for your development(s).
- **What should my Market Study include?**
    - This should include a preliminary market study or comparable rent analysis for the area in which your project is located. The study should incorporate data of which is/was used to determine market and rent rates.

- **How can I use the grant funds?**
  - Funds can be used for costs directly related to creating and maintaining affordable commercial spaces. This includes:
    - New construction: Hard and soft costs, professional services, and build-out improvements.
    - Recently completed projects: Tenant improvements, rental subsidies, marketing and leasing for affordable units, and minor renovations.

Eligibility

- **Can I apply if I don't yet own the property?**
  - To be eligible for the program, applicants must own or have site control of the commercial property in the Atlanta Beltline Planning Area or adjacent Beltline neighborhood.
- **Are food trucks or shipping containers eligible?**
  - Food trucks are not eligible for the program, however; shipping-container style setups will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- **Is a property in the overlay zone eligible?**
  - Yes, the project is eligible if it is in the planning area as it does not have to be directly adjacent to the Beltline. Please refer to Question #1 in the Eligibility section.
- **Are restaurants or multi-tenant projects eligible?**
  - Yes, if the items noted in Eligibility and Requirements sections are met.

Project Details

- **What counts as a "recently completed" project?**
  - The project should have been completed within the last 12 months and is currently in the lease-up phase.

- The project must have active tenant improvements taking place or demonstrate readiness to begin tenant improvements upon tenant commitment.

- **What counts as "new construction"?**
  - The project is within lease-up phase (0-18 months from readiness or completed in the last 12 months).

- **How is "below-market rent" defined?**
  - "Below-market rent" is defined as at least 20% below market rate for the tenant's total occupancy cost (base rent plus all tenant-paid expenses). Market rent will be determined through studies of comparable properties, with adjustments for space size, condition, and amenities that the applicant is responsible for providing.

- **How will small businesses access these spaces?**
  - Yes. ABI will use accelerated tenant sourcing through its Business Solutions Office pipeline of pre-qualified businesses. This creates a structured matching process where small business tenants are identified and placed in these spaces.

- **How is compliance monitored over 10 years?**
  - ABI is responsible for monitoring compliance via review of the following (but not limited to); initial certification when leases are executed, annual reviews of rent rolls, lease turnover reviews when spaces change tenants and market studies every three years (or sooner if the market shifts significantly).
  - If developers fail to comply, ABI can:
    - Issue a written notice with 30 days to cure.
    - Recapture the grant (require full repayment) if violations are not corrected or affordability is lost.

Priorities & Funding

- **Are certain areas or business types prioritized?**
  - Yes. The program prioritizes:

- Beltline Neighborhood Stabilization Areas (Subareas 1, 2, 9, and 10).
- Small-scale developments (projects under $20M or under 30,000 sq. ft.).
- Micro-spaces (<1,000 sq. ft.) and shared incubation/flexible spaces.
- Developers offering favorable lease terms.
- Businesses that provide needed retail/services, local hiring, community spaces, or arts/creative uses.

- **What are the grant terms and payment schedule?**
  - The funds have a 10-year term. Full disbursement occurs upon contract execution and submission of all required documentation. These are recoverable grants that carry no interest and no regular payment requirements. If the developer maintains all affordability requirements for the full 10-year term, the grant converts to permanent funding with no repayment obligation.
- **Do I submit financials for the project or developer?**
  - The financials are required for the applicant entity.
- **Is all listed documentation required?**
  - Yes. All documentation listed under each project is required to complete and submit an application.
- **Is an environmental assessment needed?**
  - The Environment Site Assessment is needed, only if it is required by property condition.
- **Can a business or nonprofit apply with a developer?**
  - To be eligible for the program, you must be a developer.
- **Are there examples of past successful applications?**
  - There are no examples available as this is a pilot program.