



City of Manassas Department of Economic Development
9027 Center Street
Manassas, VA 20110
703-257-8881

LOCAL INCENTIVES PROGRAM

LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENT GRANT

Program Guidelines Application Process Information

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I. Purpose

The purpose of the Landscape Improvement Grant Program (LIG) is to provide incentives in the form of matching grants to encourage the improvement of landscapes along major thoroughfares and at gateway entrances to the City of Manassas. The program assists commercial property owners with costs related to improving landscape areas in the front yard and side yard setbacks. The goal is to visually enhance the streetscape and increase interest in the designated area. The initiative also serves as a tool in supporting and retaining small businesses.

II. Eligibility

- Property must be current with City taxes and fees
- Property may not have outstanding codes violations* (exception: LIG will be used to rectify)
- Property is identified as commercial, industrial, office, or mixed-use
- Property is an existing improvement. New construction is not eligible
- Property is along a corridor or a gateway as identified on the adopted Character Area Map of the City Comprehensive Plan (page 3-6).

III. Reimbursable Costs

Allowable Improvements:

Please note:

(1.) All improvements must be allowable through the City's development guidelines and may require submission of a site plan or other documents as required by City regulations. All improvements in the Historic District must be allowable through the City's Historic guidelines (if applicable) and may require approval from the Architectural review Board.

(2.) LIG is a **reimbursement** grant based on **verifiable evidence** of paid expenses in the form of **canceled checks or receipts**.

In general, the intent of the guidelines is to restrict funding to visible improvements within the front yard or scenic setback. The following landscape improvements include, but are not limited to:

- Professional landscape designs
- Professional installation
- Installation of irrigation meter (reuse water if available)
- Installation of irrigation system
- Plant material
- Mulch
- Hardscape plazas (where appropriate in pedestrian areas)
- Decorative walls, fencing and planters
- Decorative (up) lighting and associated installation of electrical meters and service

- Improvements in response to code violations*
- Installation, repair or replacement of exterior signage
- Public art
- Removal/replacement of inappropriate or incompatible plant materials
- Screening of service and maintenance areas when visible from adjacent public areas
- Up to 15% contingency may be reimbursed, as based on contractor's estimates

Prohibited Improvements

- Billboards
- Improvements in progress or expenses incurred prior to final approval
- Temporary signage

IV. Application Process

The LIG application is a two-step process—there is a preliminary application and a finalized application.

The reason for this two-step process is because the finalized application may require documented approval from other City departments. A permit to begin work is required on all improvements, and additional approvals may be required, if applicable.

The pre-application is to be submitted to the Department of Economic Development for review and is not considered submitted if incomplete. The pre-application identifies all required information and attachments to be produced by the applicant. Completed applications will be presented to the Economic Development & Land Use Committee of City Council (LUC) for preliminary approval. Applicants will proceed to obtain appropriate approvals as described above. **Pre-approval is not a factor in obtaining further approvals**

The pre-application can become the finalized application if completed with City approvals.

With a finalized and complete application approved, the applicant moves into a Grant Agreement with Historic Manassas, Inc. (HMI), agreeing to accept the grant funds and not to exceed 33% of actual paid expenses.

V. Grant Funds

LIG is a matching, reimbursement program which requires the applicant to make the initial investment of the full project costs; one third of the eligible costs will be paid as a reimbursement based on verifiable evidence of payment (canceled checks and/or receipts).

The maximum LIG amount available for any approved project or property in any ten (10) year rolling period is \$15,000. The LIG maximum is connected to the subject property for the life of the program; therefore an applicant with a \$10,000-grant eligible

project may re-apply for up to \$5,000 for the same property at a future date (or any combination not to exceed \$15,000).

Funding is available until the funding pool has been exhausted on an annual basis as appropriated.

All recipients are required to enter into a LIG Agreement document that will establish the conditions of approval, terms of grant disbursement and allow the City the right (but not the obligation) to enter onto the subject property for the purpose of maintenance or to make repairs and improvements to the landscaping. Under no circumstances will funds be disbursed at a ratio higher than the matching requirements. **Proof of costs paid by the applicant will be required before grant funds are to be disbursed.** Grant payments will not be made if landscape improvements deviate from those outlined in the Grant Agreement and/or have not been previously approved.

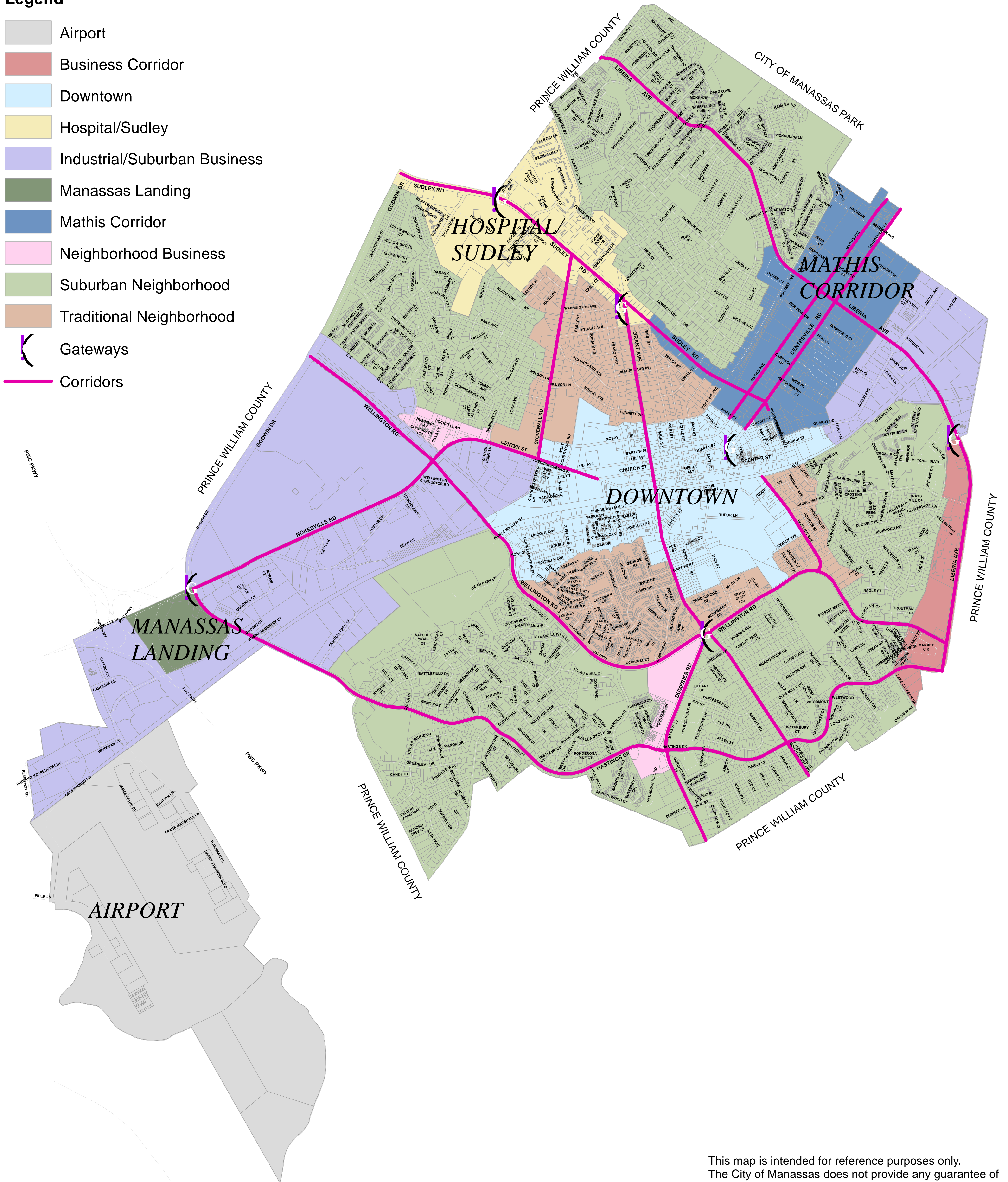
Grant funds are paid as a one-time reimbursement, not draws.

V. Process Flow Chart

- Applicant contacts the City of Manassas Department of Economic Development to express interest in the program, discuss project plans, and verify eligibility.
- Applicant completes application and submits to Economic Development Staff for review.
- Application is presented to LUC for decision.
- If approved, applicant proceeds to obtain other necessary approvals. The applicant has 90 days to receive approvals.
- With necessary approvals, applicant may add approval documentation to application for completion.
- Applicant enters into a Grant Agreement with HMI.
- From the date of the signed Grant Agreement, the applicant has 30 days to begin the project and 90 days to complete it. (Extensions for an additional 90 days may be granted and planting seasons will be considered.)
- Applicant contacts Economic Development staff to request reimbursement. Staff will verify completion using digital photographs and canceled checks and receipts.

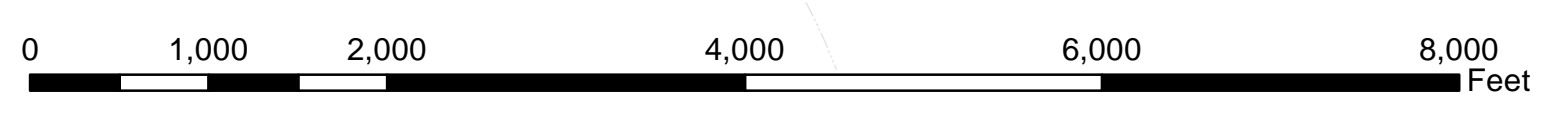
Legend

- Airport
- Business Corridor
- Downtown
- Hospital/Sudley
- Industrial/Suburban Business
- Manassas Landing
- Mathis Corridor
- Neighborhood Business
- Suburban Neighborhood
- Traditional Neighborhood
- Gateways
- Corridors



This map is intended for reference purposes only. The City of Manassas does not provide any guarantee of the accuracy or completeness regarding the map information.

City of Manassas Community Development
Updated: 7/25/2016



City of Manassas: Character Areas

Manassas Next: The 2032 Comprehensive Plan

Adopted: July 8, 2013

