

Chapter 437

(House Bill 706)

AN ACT concerning

Economic Community Development – Sustainable Communities – Business Facade Improvement Program

FOR the purpose of establishing the Business Facade Improvement Program in the Department of ~~Commerce~~ Housing and Community Development to assist certain qualified businesses located in sustainable communities with improving the outside appearance of the qualified businesses' buildings or facilities; and generally relating to the Business Facade Improvement Program.

BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,

Article – ~~Economic Development~~ Housing and Community DevelopmentSection ~~1–101(a), (b), and (c)~~ 1–101(a), (c), (d), and (i)

Annotated Code of Maryland

~~(2018)~~ (2019 Replacement Volume and 2022 Supplement)

BY adding to

Article – ~~Economic Development~~ Housing and Community DevelopmentSection ~~5–2301 through 5–2303~~ 6–1101 through 6–1103 to be under the new subtitle
“~~Subtitle 23.~~ 11. Business Facade Improvement Program”

Annotated Code of Maryland

~~(2018)~~ (2019 Replacement Volume and 2022 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Economic Development~~1–101.~~

- ~~(a) In this division the following words have the meanings indicated.~~
- ~~(b) “County” means a county of the State or Baltimore City.~~
- ~~(c) “Department” means the Department of Commerce.~~

Article – Housing and Community Development1–101.

- (a) In this Division I of this article the following words have the meanings indicated.

(c) “County” means a county of the State or Baltimore City.

(d) “Department” means the Department of Housing and Community Development.

(i) “Political subdivision” means a county or municipal corporation of the State.

SUBTITLE ~~23~~ 11. BUSINESS FACADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.

~~5-2301. 6-1101.~~

(A) IN THIS SUBTITLE THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS INDICATED.

(B) **“PROGRAM” MEANS THE BUSINESS FACADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.**

(C) **“QUALIFIED BUSINESS” MEANS A BUSINESS THAT:**

(1) IS LOCATED IN A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY; AND

(2) PLANS TO IMPROVE THE OUTSIDE APPEARANCE OF THE BUSINESS’S BUILDING OR FACILITY.

(D) **“SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY” MEANS AN AREA DESIGNATED AS A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY UNDER § 6-205 OF ~~THE HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ARTICLE~~ THIS TITLE.**

~~5-2302. 6-1102.~~

(A) THERE IS A BUSINESS FACADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM IN THE DEPARTMENT.

(B) THE PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM IS TO ASSIST QUALIFIED BUSINESSES WITH IMPROVING THE OUTSIDE APPEARANCE OF THE BUSINESSES’ BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES.

(C) (1) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL DISTRIBUTE FUNDS FROM THE PROGRAM TO ~~COUNTIES~~ POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS THAT:

(I) HAVE AT LEAST ONE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY; AND

(II) APPLY FOR THE FUNDS.

(2) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL DEVELOP:

(I) AN APPLICATION PROCESS FOR ~~COUNTIES~~ POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS SEEKING TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM; AND

(II) CRITERIA FOR:

1. RATING ~~COUNTIES~~ POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS THAT APPLY FOR FUNDS; AND

2. AWARDING FUNDS TO ~~COUNTIES~~ POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS.

(D) (1) EACH ~~COUNTY~~ POLITICAL SUBDIVISION THAT RECEIVES FUNDS UNDER SUBSECTION (C) OF THIS SECTION SHALL DISTRIBUTE GRANTS TO QUALIFIED BUSINESSES THAT APPLY FOR A GRANT.

(2) EACH ~~COUNTY~~ POLITICAL SUBDIVISION SHALL DEVELOP:

(I) A GRANT APPLICATION PROCESS FOR QUALIFIED BUSINESSES SEEKING TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM; AND

(II) CRITERIA FOR:

1. RATING QUALIFIED BUSINESSES THAT APPLY FOR GRANTS; AND

2. AWARDING GRANTS TO QUALIFIED BUSINESSES.

(E) FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025 AND EACH FISCAL YEAR THEREAFTER, THE GOVERNOR SHALL INCLUDE IN THE ANNUAL BUDGET BILL AN APPROPRIATION OF \$5,000,000 TO THE PROGRAM.

~~5-2303~~ 6-1103.

THE DEPARTMENT MAY ADOPT REGULATIONS TO CARRY OUT THIS SUBTITLE.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2023.

Approved by the Governor, May 8, 2023.