



Urban Enterprise Zone Authority Highlights Projects That Are Helping Small Businesses in the City of Vineland

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Grants Are Helping to Strengthen Small Businesses Located in Vineland UEZ

TRENTON, NJ – The Urban Enterprise Zone Authority (UEZA), an affiliate of New Jersey’s Department of Community Affairs, proudly highlights the positive changes happening in Vineland with the assistance of the UEZA grant awards. Over the past year, the Authority awarded approximately \$5.5 million in Zone Assistance Fund grants to support initiatives focused on strengthening small businesses located in the Vineland Urban Enterprise Zone.

Vineland UEZ officials have invested the grant awards in innovative projects, including the “Project Beautify” Exterior Improvement Program, as well as programs that support public safety, the beautification of public spaces, and business attraction efforts, which have resulted in a microbrewery and a state-of-the art film and digital media studio that are currently being developed.

“Vineland’s forward-thinking business development concepts supported by Urban Enterprise Zone Authority funds are prime examples of how effective public-private partnerships can drive economic growth and community revitalization,” **said DCA Commissioner Jacquelyn A. Suarez.** “These grants help to create new jobs, improve the vibrancy and quality of life in Vineland neighborhoods, and make the city more attractive for future investment and opportunities.”

“Vineland has been on the cutting edge of UEZ project ideas for the last couple of years,” **said UEZA Deputy Director Joseph Fusco.** “The microbrewery, which is supported by a \$2 million award from UEZA, will be an exciting attraction for the region. The Vineland UEZ also received \$900,000 for the media studio project in December 2023, and we anticipate that initiative will not only be a fantastic job creation tool but will be a boon to local businesses that feed and house production crews coming to town.”

The Vineland UEZ’s “Project Beautify” program, which is backed by a \$1.5 million Zone Assistance Fund grant, is focused on improving items such as facades, awnings, lighting, signage, landscaping, parking, trash enclosures, and security cameras. The initiative offers 5-year forgivable loans with a maximum amount of \$50,000, and a 10% match by the property owner.

“‘Project Beautify’ is part of our overall strategy to attract customers and new businesses to Vineland, as well as to support our existing businesses in the city,” **said Vineland Mayor Anthony Fanucci.** “By improving the physical attractiveness of businesses throughout Vineland’s commercial corridors, we can boost foot traffic locally and market our commercial districts as a destination, bringing in customers from outside the city.”

“The program has been very well received,” **said Vineland Economic Development Director Sandy Forosisky.** “Since we started accepting applications late in 2023, we have received over 40 requests that are either completed, in process, or out to bid. More than \$550,000 in improvements have been completed to date. Investing in the community through a variety of infrastructure upgrades, including to commercial properties, is critical to ensuring long-lasting and equitable economic development throughout the city.”

Vineland’s UEZ has also received recent awards in the amount of \$305,000 for its commercial corridor improvement program that will focus on keeping the UEZ area clean and \$550,000 for a police foot patrol detail for the UEZ area.

“We currently have 526 registered UEZ businesses and we are working hard to spread the word about the advantages the program offers. As the number of registered businesses continues to grow, so does the Vineland UEZ’s ability to help create jobs and improve our community in so many ways,” **Forosisky added.**

For more information about Vineland’s UEZ program, people can contact Sandy Forosisky at (856) 794-4100.

The Urban Enterprise Zone program was originally established in 1983. In August 2021, Acting Governor Sheila Y. Oliver signed legislation that appropriated \$42.5 million to the program, enabling an expansion of UEZA services within the designated UEZ zones. The UEZA offers business and tax incentives with the primary objective of reinvigorating designated urban communities, thus driving growth by encouraging businesses to expand and create private sector employment opportunities through a blend of public and private investments.