



Neighborhood Business Works (NBW) Program
Business Boost Microgrant (NBWBB-Microgrant)

APPLICATION GUIDE

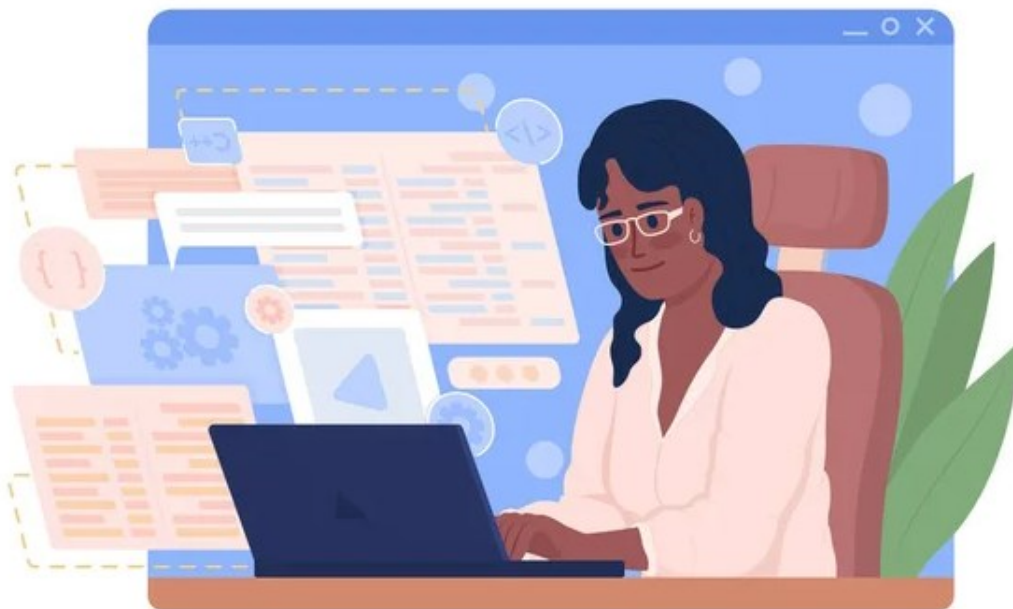




APPLICATION GUIDE

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MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT (DHCD)
Neighborhood Business Works (NBW) Program - Business Boost
Microgrant Funding (NBWBB-Microgrant):

I. Available Funding

Q1. What type of funding is available to support for-profit businesses?

Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) will provide grant funding to assist early-stage businesses in growing and expanding within a Sustainable Communities area.

Q2. How much may I apply for from the DHCD NBWBB- Microgrant funding?

The minimum grant request is \$20,000, and the maximum grant request is \$50,000 based on the organization's annual operating budget and subject to a financial review.

Q3. When does the application round open and when can applicants start applying?

The application round is projected to open on Monday, **September 23, 2024**, at 12:00 noon.

Q4. How do I apply?

The application will be online and can be accessed by visiting the DHCD website:

<https://apps.dhcd.state.md.us/NBWOZGrant/account/login>

Q5. When are applications due?

The application round is projected to close on Monday, **October 14th, 2024**, at 5 PM EST.

NOTE: *The round may close sooner if grant requests exceed available funding.*

Q6. How will applications be prioritized for funding?

Applications will be prioritized based on (1) the location of the business, (2) the impact of the business's expansion detailed by (a) new employees to be hired, (b) capital investment for the expansion, (c) additional square footage of expansion space for the project and (3) presentation of the business's financials and supporting documents submitted by the applicant.



In addition, priority impact attributes that will be considered in the review process include but are not limited to:

- Innovative small businesses that drive innovation or technology advancements
- Businesses that are growing in new industries.
- Businesses focused on regional strengths to grow local economies.
- Businesses that leverage partnerships between local school districts, community colleges, and other higher education institutions in Maryland
- Minority Business Enterprise (MBE)

II. Eligible Applicants and Use of Funds

Q1. Who is eligible to apply?

An organization must meet All of the following:

- Be a for-profit business;
- Have a matching contribution equal to or greater than the grant request amount. For example, if you apply for and are awarded a \$50k grant, you must also contribute \$50k of your own funds to the project.
- Be located at an **eligible location** in Maryland;
- Have greater than (2) employees and 50 or fewer employees (full-time equivalent) as of Monday, September 23, 2024;
- Have an annual revenue of at least \$50,000 but no more than \$1 million;
- Be in good standing with the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT) <https://egov.maryland.gov/BusinessExpress/EntitySearch>

NOTE: If you begin the application and do not meet any of the eligibility requirements, the system will **NOT** let you complete or submit an application.

DHCD awards through the NBW program must also be approved by a local resolution from the applicant's governing executive body approving the grant. If awarded, DHCD will initiate the process with the local governing body to seek approval on your behalf.

Q2. What is an eligible location?

A location within a Sustainable Communities area

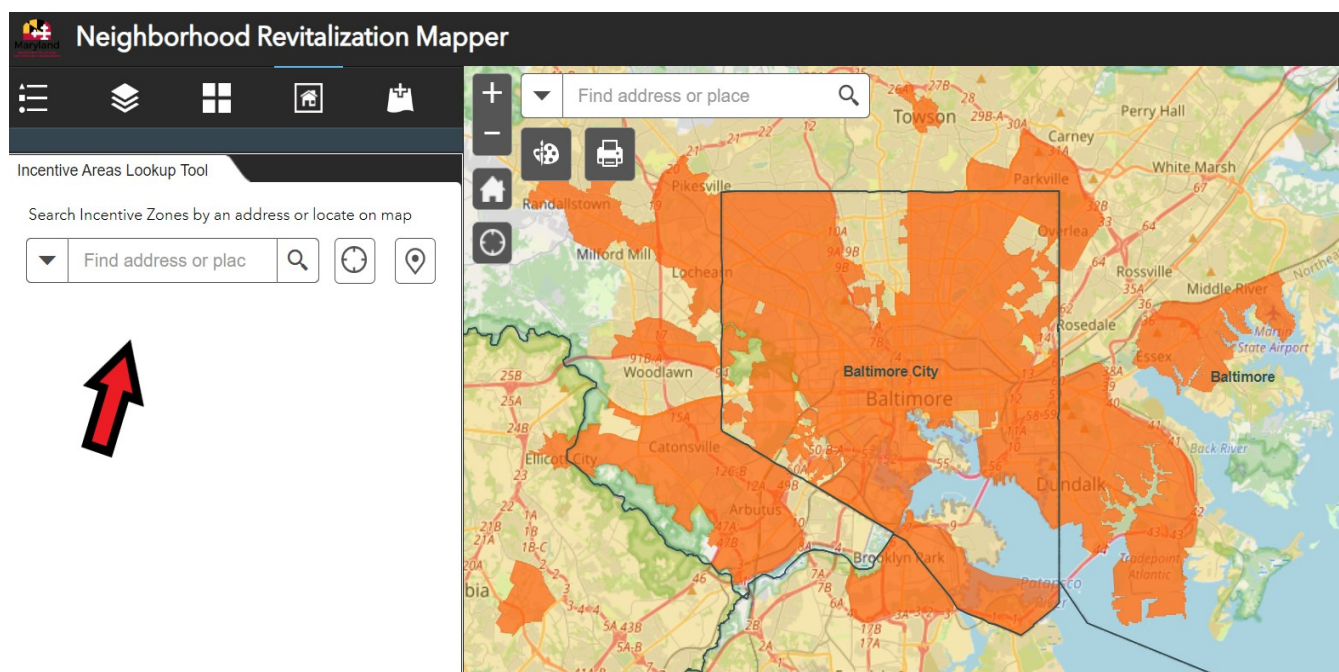


Q3. How can I determine if my business is in an eligible location?

Go to DHCD's Neighborhood Revitalization

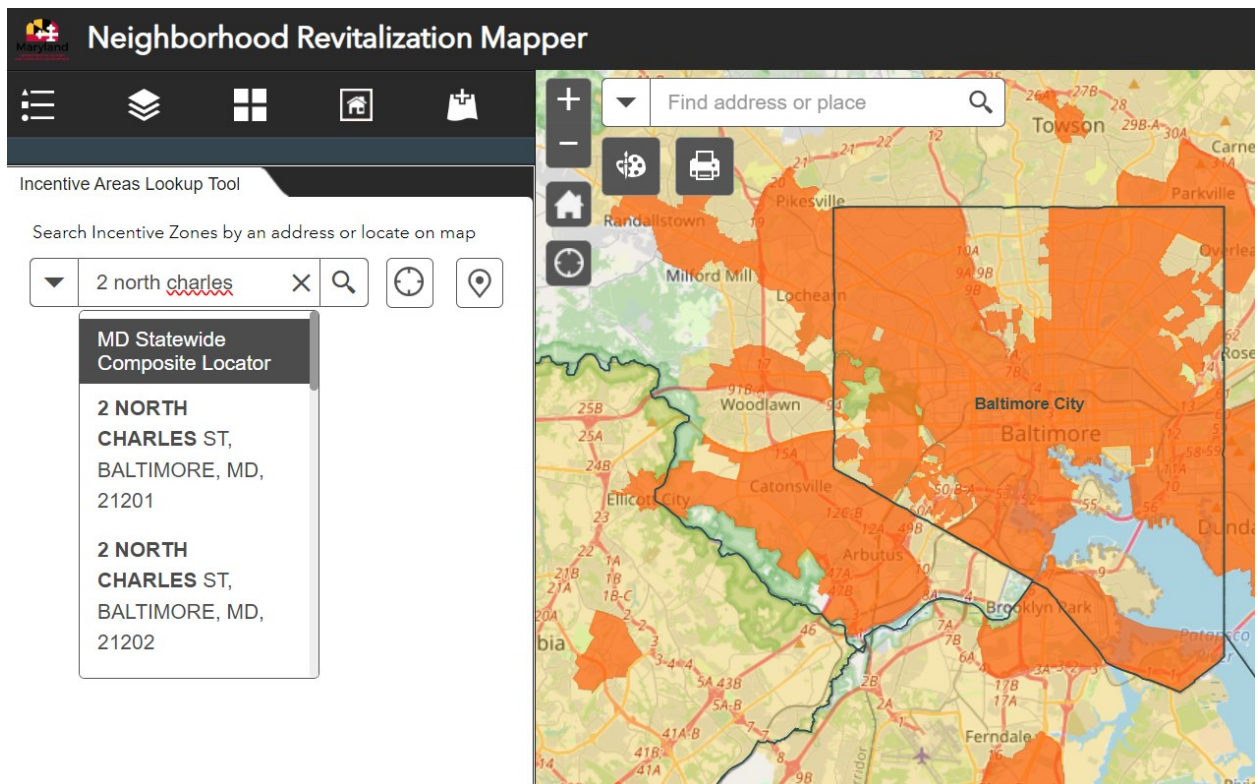
MapperLink: <https://portal.dhcd.state.md.us/GIS/revitalize/index.html>

Enter your business address (i.e. **"2 NORTH CHARLES ST, BALTIMORE, MD, 21201"**) in the incentive look-up tool, as seen in the following graphic:





Select the found address in the dropdown box as shown in the following graphic:
(i.e. business address - **2 NORTH CHARLES ST, BALTIMORE, MD, 21201**)





If your business is at an eligible location, you **must** see below the address entry bar the target areas as follows:

1. Sustainable Communities (DHCD)

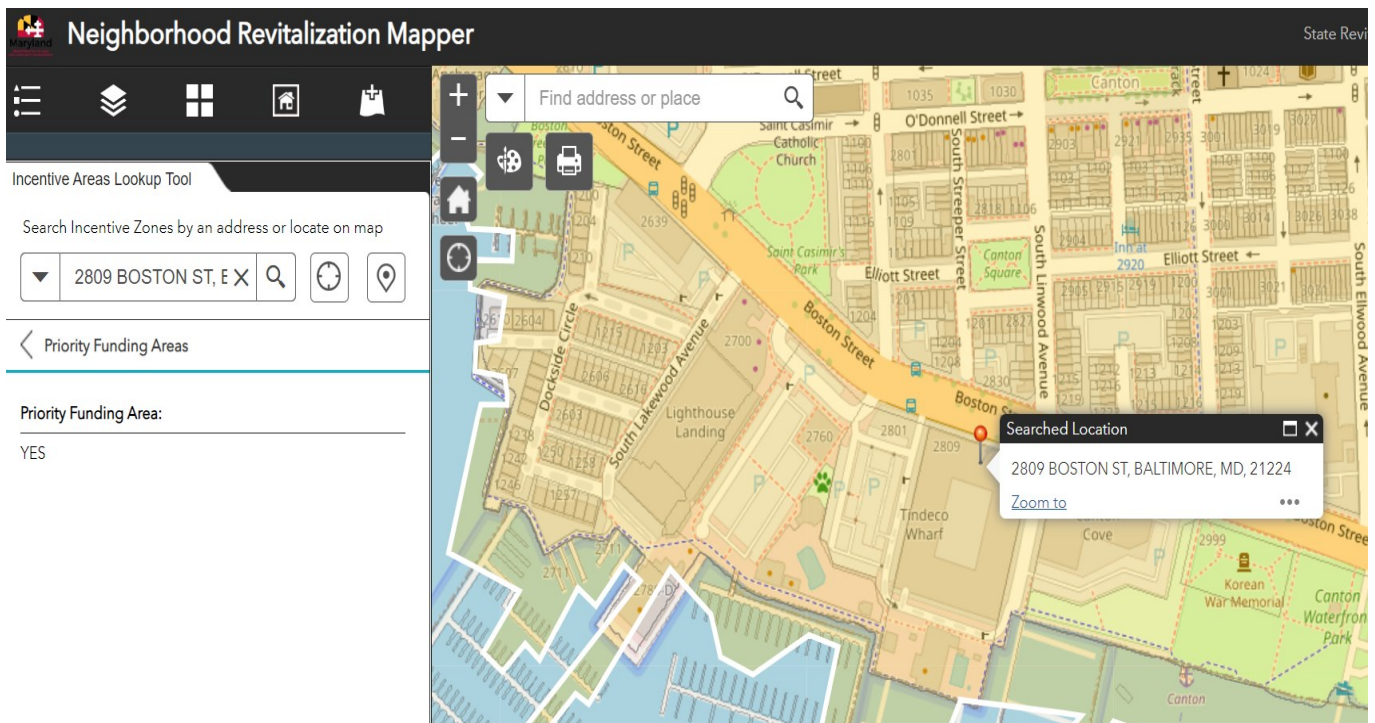
For example, the following map results yield a business address of “**2 NORTH CHARLES ST, BALTIMORE, MD, 21201**”. The business address is located in a Maryland Opportunity Zone, in a Sustainable Communities, and in a Priority Funding Area. This is an eligible location.

The screenshot shows the "Neighborhood Revitalization Mapper" web application. On the left, there is a sidebar titled "Incentive Areas Lookup Tool". It contains a search bar with the text "2 NORTH CHARLES" and a magnifying glass icon. Below the search bar, there are three rows of results, each with a right-pointing arrow: "Maryland Opportunity Zones (DHCD) (1)", "Sustainable Communities (DHCD) (1)", and "Priority Funding Areas (1)". The main area of the screen is a map of Baltimore City. A green rectangular overlay is placed on the map, indicating a specific area. A pop-up window is open over this green area, displaying the following information: "Sustainable Communities: City of Baltimore", "County: Baltimore City", "Acres: 43,951.17", "Sunset Date: August 21, 2027", and a link to the "Sustainable Communities Website". The pop-up window also has a "Zoom to" button and a close button (X).



An example of an address that is NOT an eligible location:

Address: “**2809 BOSTON ST, BALTIMORE, MD, 21224**” is NOT an eligible location. See graphic below. The business address is in a Priority Funding Area but **NOT** in a Sustainable Communities area.





Q4. How do I determine if my organization's employees meet the requirement of 50 or fewer employees (full-time equivalent)?

FTE stands for full-time equivalent. An organization may have a maximum of 50 FTEs to be eligible to apply for DHCD-NBWBB funding.

The full-time equivalent (FTE) calculation is an employee's scheduled hours divided by the employer's hours for a full-time workweek. When an employer has a 40-hour workweek, employees who are scheduled to work 40 hours per week are 1.0 FTEs. Employees scheduled to work 20 hours per week are 0.5 FTEs. The staff total will include regular employees (that get W2s) AND contractual staff (that get 1099s).

Q5. How can these grant funds be used?

Funds can be used towards an organization's capital and operating expenses that support revenue growth from **September 23, 2024, to March 23, 2025**.

These items may include but are not limited to capital and operating expenses such as salary, rent, utilities, product advertising, product development, commercial real estate acquisition, and professional services.

Funds are to assist businesses in the expansion of their business by covering the increased rent, increased payroll for hiring new employees, new equipment, and/or boosting marketing are all eligible expenses. It's important to clarify that **ONLY** new expenses are eligible; existing expenses, such as rent and payroll, are not. Therefore, you may **NOT** use existing rent or payroll as an eligible expense; it's the increase in rent and payroll that is an eligible expense.

Q6. What businesses are ineligible?

Professional services and sales-based businesses, including Insurance, Accounting, Real Estate, Legal, Finance, and other similar structured businesses are not eligible. Also, non-profit organizations, cannabis-based businesses, pawn shops, gun shops, massage parlors, adult video/book shops, adult entertainment facilities, rental real estate businesses, Insurance companies, tanning salons, check-cashing facilities, gambling facilities, tattoo parlors, and liquor stores are not eligible. In addition, previous award winners of an NBW Opportunity Zone grant and an NBW Business Boost grant are not eligible.



III. Submitting an Application

Q1. When does the application round open and when can applicants start applying?

Projected online DHCD-NBWBB grant application portal opens at 12:00 noon, Monday, September 23, 2024. Please check the DHCD website for updates.

Q2. How do I submit an application?

The application is online and can be accessed by visiting:

<https://apps.dhcd.state.md.us/NBWOZGrant/account/login>

You will be required to provide a brief description of your organization, answer questions about your organization, and complete a budget table on how you will use grant funds and your matching contribution. All applicants must provide a description of how these funds will advance their business within a sustainable community area.

ONLY fully completed applications at the time of submission will be considered for funding. Incomplete applications will be returned and processed when resources are available.

Q3. When are applications due?

The application round closes on Monday, October 14th, 2024, at 12 PM EST. **NOTE:** The round may close sooner if grant requests exceed available funding.

Q4. What documents will I need to provide with my application?

Organizations are **REQUIRED** to provide the following:

- Articles of Organization for the Business.
- By-laws for the business.
- Most recent annual tax return for the business filed. (Tax year 2023)
- Organization's financial statements as of August 31, 2024.
- Screen-shot showing the business is in an eligible location.
- Proof of matching funds equal to or greater than the grant request amount. If you request for \$50,000, you must show proof of \$50,000 in matching funds.
 - Examples of proof of matching funds are: (1) a copy of the business's bank statement with all pages as of August 31, 2024, showing a cash balance equal to or greater than the grant request amount, (2) a copy of a fully executed loan



statement from a financial institution that shows available funds for withdrawal equal to or greater than the grant request amount.

- Screen capture of an online verification of Certificate of Good Standing from the Maryland State Department of Assessments and Taxation **NOTE:** You should **NOT** purchase an official document; simply provide a screenshot from: <https://egov.maryland.gov/BusinessExpress/EntitySearch>
- IRS W-9 Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification.

NOTE: A few Sample documents are listed as exhibits in this pdf.

Important Notes:

- 1. The business name on the application and on the W-9 must EXACTLY match SDAT's Good Standing Certificate. If the business name on the application does not EXACTLY match what is shown on the SDAT's system and W-9, the application will be returned to the applicant for further updates.***
- 2. For the business's matching contribution, it's highly recommended that cash be in the business account to match the grant request amount upon applying for the grant funds. Applicants who demonstrate having cash in their business account will receive preference over those applicants who do not have cash at the time of submitting an application.***

IV. Notification of Awards

Q1. When will the announcement of awards be made?

Award announcements will be made on a rolling basis during December 2024 to January 2025.

Q2. What is the timing for receiving the grant funds?

Expect grant awards to be paid in the February - March 2025 timeframe. Applicants will be notified of an award as they are approved and will be presented with a grant agreement to sign.



The Department will, in turn, process the grant agreement for funding upon receipt of a local resolution from the applicant's governing executive body approving of the grant from DHCD to the applicant. DHCD will notify each jurisdiction of each grant award, and the local jurisdiction will have 45 days to respond to the notice. If a resolution is approved within 45 days, DHCD will be able to process the grant award for payment. If the local jurisdiction does not reply within the 45-day period, funding is deemed approved, and DHCD will implement the funding process.

Q3. If funds are awarded, will a final report be required?

Yes, applicants who receive a funding award will be required to submit a final report on how the funds were used based on the budget submitted with their application. Applicants will also be required to upload supporting documents, receipts, etc., to support the use of funds.

The applicant will submit a final report by March 31, 2026.

All grant awardees will be contacted nine months after receiving grant funds to complete a questionnaire and provide a one-page summary detailing how the grant was used and its impact on their business and community.

V. Contact for Additional Questions

If you have any further questions regarding the application or requirements, DHCD is here to assist you.

Contact: microreview.dhcd@maryland.gov



VI. Sample Documents:

Certificate of Good Standing

Screen capture of an online verification of **Certificate of Good Standing** from the Maryland State Department of Assessments and Taxation. **NOTE:** You should **NOT** purchase an official document; simply provide a screenshot from:

<https://egov.maryland.gov/BusinessExpress/EntitySearch>


Note: The screen print below has the date in the upper left corner of when the screen print was executed, and the source of the website is on the footer of the page.


8/31/23, 3:08 PM Register Your Business Online | Maryland.gov

T. ROWE PRICE ASSOCIATES, INC.: D00175984

Department ID Number:
D00175984

Business Name:
T. ROWE PRICE ASSOCIATES, INC.

Principal Office: 
100 E. PRATT STREET
BALTIMORE MD 21202

Resident Agent: 
CSC-LAWYERS INCORPORATING SERVICE COMPAN
7 ST. PAUL STREET
SUITE 820
BALTIMORE MD 21202

Status:
INCORPORATED

Good Standing:
THIS BUSINESS IS IN GOOD STANDING

Business Type:
CORPORATION

Business Code:
03 ORDINARY BUSINESS - STOCK

Date of Formation/ Registration:
01/02/1947

State of Formation:
MD

Stock Status:
STOCK

Close Status:
NO

<https://egov.maryland.gov/BusinessExpress/EntitySearch/Business> 1/1



2. FAQs

Q: Can we waive the requirement for businesses to be located within a sustainable community on the Neighborhood Business tracker?

A: Unfortunately, this requirement cannot be waived as it is currently a requirement for the Business Boost Microgrant Program. You can determine if your business is located in a sustainable community by typing your address in DHCD's Neighborhood Business Tracker: [Neighborhood Revitalization Mapper \(state.md.us\)](https://state.md.us/neighborhood-revitalization-mapper)

Q: We have answered "Yes" to all the questions and we are now trying to create an account, but it says that "Registration is Closed." I have completed all the fields and checked all the information, and everything seems to be in order.

A: You're receiving that message because the application round is projected to open on September 23rd, 2024, at noon. Unfortunately, we are not taking applications until the specified date.

Q: Can matching contributions be waived for small businesses?

A: Unfortunately, matching contributions cannot be waived. All applicants must have a matching contribution equal to or greater than the grant request amount. If you apply for and are awarded a \$50,000 grant, you must also contribute \$50,000 of your own funds to the project.

Q: Can businesses that are currently working to obtain NBW loan funds apply for Business Boost funds as part of the total project costs?

A: Certainly, all businesses must ensure they meet all of the criteria displayed in the Business Boost Microgrant application guide.



Q: We're a new business that has yet to generate annual revenue. Are we eligible for the business boost program?

A: All businesses must have an annual revenue greater than \$50,000 but less than \$1 million; unfortunately, this requirement cannot be waived.

Q: I've previously been awarded an NBW Opportunity Zone grant or an NBW Business Boost grant. Am I eligible to apply again?

A: Unfortunately, all previous awardees of the NBW Opportunity Zone grant or NBW Business Boost grant are not eligible.

Q: Are there any restrictions on how I use funds awarded from the Business Boost Microgrant?

A: Yes, Funds can be used towards an organization's capital and operating expenses that support revenue growth from September 23, 2024, through March 23, 2025. These items may include, but are not limited to, capital and operating expenses such as salary, rent, utilities, product advertising, product development, commercial real estate acquisition, and professional services.

Q: What type of business is eligible for the Business Boost Microgrant?

A: Please refer to section 2, titled "Eligible Applicants & Use of Funds," in the "Business Boost Microgrant Application Guide" provided on the Maryland Business Boost website. This section outlines the criteria that all organizations must follow to determine eligibility. Examples of ineligible businesses are non-profit organizations, Cannabis-based businesses, pawn shops, gun shops, massage parlors, adult video/book shops, adult entertainment facilities, rental real estate business, Insurance company, tanning salons, check-cashing facilities, gambling facilities, tattoo parlors, and liquor stores but not limited.