

# **Rock Rapids Store Front Incentive Grant Program**

## **Purpose**

The City of Rock Rapids has established this program to encourage rehabilitation, reinvestment and development in the commercial/retail area of our community. The goal of this program is to improve the exterior appearance of existing commercial properties and assist with revitalizing the downtown area of our community.

## **Eligible Properties**

Owners and developers of commercial property located within the Downtown Commercial (C-1), General Commercial (C-2) or Highway Commercial (C-3) zoning districts of the City of Rock Rapids are eligible for this matching grant program. Properties must be used for commercial purposes and pay real estate taxes at the commercial rate. Properties with past due real estate taxes are not eligible. Leasehold improvements by a commercial tenant are also eligible if the current tenant has operated a commercial business continuously at an eligible location for at least one year and has a written lease for the next two years. Commercial tenants must provide written project authorization from the property owner(s).

## **Eligible Improvements**

The types of projects which may be funded include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Façade brick or wall surface cleaning
- Patching and painting of façade walls
- Signage or lighting replacement/repair
- Canopy, porch, awning installation/repair;
- Window and/or door replacement/repair
- Façade mortar joint repair (tuck-pointing)
- Railings and ironwork repair or addition
- Cornice repair and/or replacement
- Replacement/repair to exterior steps

## **Compliance with Codes and Regulations**

All projects seeking incentive funding must conform to existing building codes and regulations of the City of Rock Rapids.

## **Funding Formula**

Subject to the availability of funding, matching grants are based on the linear front footage of the building being renovated. Linear front footage is defined as frontage that is parallel to, and adjoins, a City street. Typically, grants will be limited to \$100 per foot or 50 percent of the total project cost, whichever is less. Maximum grant is \$5,000 per project for exterior improvements to buildings. No more than one grant per property may be awarded, unless subject to committee approval and funding availability. A property can be shown to have multiple store fronts and therefore should be considered exempt from this limitation. All applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Grants are subject to prior approval by the City Council and limited to available funding budgeted. Grant

reimbursement may be delayed, in part or in full, until the start of the following fiscal year in order to remain within budget limitations. The City Council reserves the right to amend this grant program at any time without prior notice.

## **Application Process**

1. All applications must be submitted to the City of Rock Rapids, 310 South 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, Rock Rapids, IA 51246. Applications can be downloaded from [www.rockrapids.com](http://www.rockrapids.com) or picked up at the City Office or at the office of Rock Rapids Development Corp, located at 411 First Avenue. Call 472-2553 or email [city@rockrapids.net](mailto:city@rockrapids.net) or [lindajt.city@rockrapids.net](mailto:lindajt.city@rockrapids.net) for more info.
2. All applications must include sketches, architectural drawings and/or explanations of proposed work as well as cost estimates or construction bids.
3. Applicants will be notified in writing of the decision of the application within 60 days of the receipt of a fully-completed application. Incomplete applications will not be accepted. Any amendments, additions, deletions, or other changes to the original application must be approved by the City Administrator in order to assure the grant funds will be awarded. Once the application is approved, the property is eligible for reimbursement according to the application submitted for up to one year. After one year from the application approval letter, the reimbursement will no longer be applicable and a new application must be submitted for reimbursement.
4. All grants are awarded on a reimbursement-only basis. Copies of invoices *AND* paid receipts, cancelled checks, or other proof of expenditures must be submitted within thirty working days of project completion. "Sweat Equity" may be considered as the applicants match, however, qualified cost estimates must be submitted that clearly establish the value of the labor being provided. Following satisfactory site inspection of the completed project by the City of Rock Rapids or its authorized representative, payment of the grant to the applicant will be authorized. If the site inspection is not satisfactory, the applicant will be notified and allowed up to 60 days for correction of unsatisfactory items.
5. Properties that have received funding will not be eligible for additional funds from this program for a period of ten years, unless otherwise authorized by the City.
6. New construction, national franchise, government buildings, residences and appurtenant residential structures, non-profit entities, churches or other religious institutions are not eligible.
7. SFI will not be issued to otherwise eligible applicants who are in arrears of any financial obligation to the City of Rock Rapids in the past 12 months.
8. Assistance is granted to a particular project is site specific and is not transferable to another property or location.
9. Properties currently receiving real estate tax abatement, TIF rebate or other real estate tax reductions are not eligible.
10. Projects begun prior to submitting an application are not eligible.

# Rock Rapids Store Front Incentive Program Application

1. Name of Applicant(s): \_\_\_\_\_

2. Business Name and Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Estimated cost of project:

Sidewalks \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Paint \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Signage \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Repair or replacement of windows \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Masonry repairs \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Awnings \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Project Cost \$ \_\_\_\_\_

5. Items needed to process this application:

- a. Current photograph of property to be improved.
- b. Drawings of proposed improvements.
- c. Written description of proposed improvements, including cost estimates, materials and colors.
- d. Proof of ownership.
- e. Proof of insurance.
- f. Landlord authorization if applicable.

Applicant Signature(s)

Date Signed

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