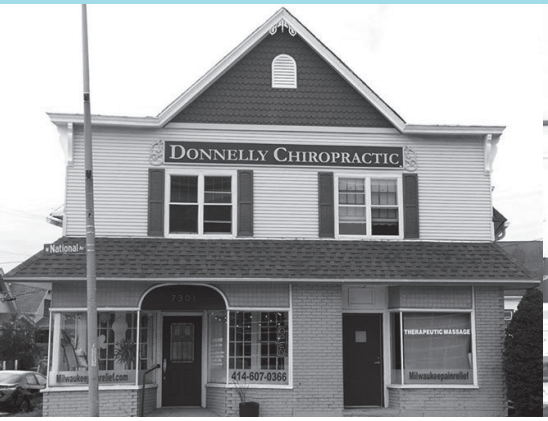
InStore Forgivable Loan Program



NATIONAL AVENUE EST. 1844
WEST ALLIS

National Avenue
Commercial Corridor

Department of Development
Community Development Division
414-302-8468 or development@westalliswi.gov

CITY AT THE CENTER
WEST ALLIS

Program Guidelines

Overview of the Program. The InStore Program is a forgivable loan program that helps eligible retail, food, and creative businesses purchase equipment and material associated with establishing a new location or expanding at an existing one within the National Avenue Commercial Corridor. The program is an effort to support and grow a vital mix of businesses that create a successful commercial corridor. With this program, the City's goal is to strengthen the role of creative businesses as economic and social anchors to the neighborhood and provide goods and services that are unique. The program is to support transformative projects along the commercial corridor of National Avenue that primarily occupy vacant spaces or underutilized buildings or spaces.

Funding Priorities

A limited number of projects will be approved annually. Proposals will be evaluated based on the following priorities:

☐ Generation of increased foot traffic to a commercial corridor

- Improvements will enhance an existing business
- Improves retail mix with a new business

☐ Financial feasibility of the project and equity investment from the applicant

☐ Demonstration of community support

☐ Impact of job retention and/or creation

☐ Preference will be given to projects located on blocks or portions of the corridor which have not previously received an InStore loan and have seen limited amounts of recent private or public investments.

Eligible Area:

Your project must be located within the boundaries of the National Avenue Commercial Corridor District. A map is provided below.

Eligibility Requirements

Please "check" each box to indicate how the project meets the InStore Program eligibility requirements. Work that does not comply with the eligibility requirements is subject to reduction or retraction of award.

Projects must achieve the following:

- ☐ The property being improved must be a commercial property that will be occupied by a retail, food, or creative business. Improvements will transform an existing space in order to attract or expand a business.
- ☐ All permits and plans must receive approval from all relevant City departments prior to work commencing.
- ☐ Project Cost must exceed $10,000 to be considered for funding.
- ☐ New businesses must be open within six months of approval.
- ☐ Upgrading equipment (a preference will be given for EnergyStar rated equipment if applicable)
- ☐ Financially feasible project (must have an eligible borrower with acceptable credit history).
- ☐ Project must be located in the eligible corridor.
- ☐ Make eligible improvements: security systems, telephone systems, alarms systems, point of sale equipment, kitchen equipment, computer ordering systems, millwork, flooring, lighting, sound systems, theater seating, display furnishing and shelving, HVAC equipment, coolers, refrigeration units, specialty piping (not including normal plumbing expenditures), and similar items.
- ☐ Job creation benefits for the project
- ☐ Project is aligned with the goals of the National Avenue Corridor Plan.

Ineligible Properties

The following types of property are not eligible for the Instore Program:

- Tax delinquent property
- Deferred maintenance activities such as painting, replacement of flooring, masonry, and minor repairs do not qualify.
- Property whose owner has any other tax delinquent property in West Allis
- Property in litigation
- Property owned by nonprofit organizations on which taxes are not being paid
- Properties, on which taxes are being paid, but have nonprofit use, such as schools, charities, clubs or organizations, etc.
- Exclusively residential buildings
- Daycare Centers
- Funeral Homes

Required Materials for Application

The process for the InStore Program starts with a pre-application meeting with the Community Development Division within the Department of Development to discuss the project and details of the financial structure.

Applications must be complete and include enough documentation to illustrate the details of the project and its costs. Failure to provide required information will delay the review process. The items submitted to the Department of Development should include:

- ☐ A completed application form
- ☐ Application Fee of $50
- ☐ Business Plan with three years of financial projections. If existing, three years of financials and taxes for underwriting purposes.
- ☐ At least two costs estimates for eligible items to be considered for funding.
- ☐ Copy of lease (if applicable)
- ☐ Digital photographs of existing conditions of property
- ☐ Resumes of business owners

Application Review

The following outlines the application process for the InStore Program:

- Applications will be reviewed on an ongoing basis.
- Applications which are complete and meet program criteria will be evaluated for compliance with funding priorities.
- Detailed information about the business and project, as well as a credit check and background check, will be required.
- Staff will determine if the submitted application package is sufficiently complete to review and will draft a recommendation to the Community Development Authority (CDA).
- The CDA meets the second Tuesday, of each month. The application package is expected at least one month before the meeting date.

The CDA will review the application and determine if the amount of project funding aligns with the goals and funding priorities of the InStore Program. In making the determination, the CDA will consider the following factors and may give priority to projects that meet the following criteria:

- Will the project positively contribute to the City's assisted redevelopment effort, goals and objectives in the National Avenue Commercial Corridor?
- Will the business retain or create jobs?
- Will the business/project occupy a vacant commercial space?
- Will the grant result in an improvement that would not be made otherwise?

Eligibility. A Forgivable Loan Program for New or Expanding Retail, Food, and/or Creative Businesses

Please review the following questions which are provided to help you understand if your project qualifies for the InStore Program. If you can answer YES to all of the following applicable questions, your project MAY qualify.

Yes or No **1.** The business or the tenant is an existing business or a new business to the National Avenue Commercial Corridor.

Yes or No **2.** The proposed or existing business is a retail business, restaurant or creative business (arts/culture).

Yes or No **3.** The project is for a street-level business or building that is open to the public.

Yes or No **4.** Project funding for interior improvements to the business over a six month period that will remain on the property and be used for the business: security systems, telephone systems, alarms systems, point of sale equipment, kitchen equipment, computer ordering systems, millwork, flooring, lighting, sound systems, theater seating, display furnishing and shelving, HVAC equipment, coolers, refrigeration units, specialty piping (not including normal plumbing expenditures), and similar items.

Yes or No **5.** You will have or have occupancy for the proposed location.

Yes or No **6.** The project will:

- **A.** Increase public access to the goods and services provided on the corridor
- **B.** Enable the business to expand or become more efficient through the acquisition of new equipment.
- **C.** Create new employment opportunities within the National Avenue

Yes or No **7.** The business must maintain regular business hours or be open minimum of five (days) per week, including Saturday and/or Sunday.

Yes or No **8.** Project has support from the community and other stakeholders (i.e. elected officials, neighbors, Chamber of Commerce).

Yes or No **9.** Your project meets most, if not all, of the funding priorities listed on page 2.

Yes or No **10.** Business is not one of the following: a government agency or office, a church or religious organization, a private club, membership organization or a residential project.

Yes or No **11.** As applicant or business owner/partner, do you owe the City of West Allis any taxes or fees on real property or personal property? ***If answer is yes contact the department of development about eligibility***

If you can answer YES to the above questions and are interested in applying to the program or if you have any additional questions, contact Patrick Schloss, Community Development Manager at (414) 302-8468 or pschloss@westalliswi.gov

Forgivable Loan. The loan will require market interest payments, but will have principal forgiven in the following manner

The property shall be held in operation and ownership or lease by the Borrower for a minimum of five (5) years or the Borrower shall remit the forgivable loan funds in the following proportion:

Year 0-1: 100% of eligible loan funds
Year 1-2: 80% of eligible loan funds
Year 2-3: 60% of eligible loan funds
Year 3-4: 40% of eligible loan funds
Year 4-5: 20% of eligible loan funds

National Avenue Commercial Corridor InStore Program Application

APPLICATION INFORMATION

Name:		
Phone:		
E-Mail:		
Address:		
City:	State:	Zip Code:
Applying as a ☐ Property Owner	☐ Business Owner/Tenant	

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Application Date:
Approval Date:
Amount:
Treasurers Sign Off:

PROPERTY OWNER INFORMATION

Name:	Years Owned:	
Address:	Phone:	
City:	State:	Zip:
Legal Name of property owner (s):		
Owner's Signature (if not applicant):		
Describe Ownership structure		

BUSINESS AND/OR PROJECT INFORMATION

Name of Business:	Type of Business:
Business/Project Owner's Name:	
Address:	Phone:
Email:	
Business EIN or SSN:	DUNS # (See note below on how to obtain)
Type of Business:	
Date of Incorporation	
Is the business certified: ☐ MBE ☐ WBE ☐ DSBE	

Number of existing Full Time Equivalent (FTE) jobs (40 hrs per week)
Estimated number of FTE (40 hrs per week)
Days Open and Hours of Operation

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

Describe the improvements of the project.
Describe how the project will meet the funding priorities.
Estimated Cost of Improvements:

ADDITIONAL FORMS.

A personal financial statement must be completed by every person who owns 20% or more of the business applying for an InStore Loan.

I have read the InStore Forgivable Loan Program Eligibility Requirements and Guidelines. I understand that if the proposal is approved, I will make the above improvements to the property within the specified time allowed.

Applicant Signature:

Date: