STOREFRONT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

National Avenue
Commercial Corridor

Department of Development
Community Development Division

414-302-8468 or 414-302-8401

Purpose

The Storefront Improvement Program (SIP) is to stimulate exterior building improvements that are visible to customers, merchants, and residents within the National Avenue Commercial Corridor business district. The City of West Allis provides technical assistance and financial incentives to property owners and small businesses who wish to make a creative change to their storefronts. SIP's mission is promoting investment in the designated area while providing a financial incentive for businesses and property owners to renovate and enhance commercial property and storefronts. The improvements should produce a visible change and add curb appeal to the building facades. The program is funded with Tax Increment Financing Funds or other City resources.

Program Goals

- Stimulate exterior building improvements that are visible to customers, merchants, and residents.
- Enhance the attractiveness of the districts.
- Promote a high level of maintenance for a sustainable commercial area.
- Promote commercial vitality and increase economic activity.
- Maintain or improve existing property values in the target area and adjacent areas.
- Curb appeal that promotes pedestrian scale and activity.

Special Considerations:

- Projects that promote property ownership
- Projects that promote job creation in corridor

Target Area

A map of the National Avenue Commercial Corridor business district is provided below.

Eligible Activities

Eligible activities shall include but are not limited to the following:

- Repair and/or replacement of the original building's materials and decorative details, which are deteriorated of missing.
- Repair of non-original materials, which cannot be removed due to deterioration of the underlying original building material.
- Cleaning of exterior building surfaces.
- Tuck pointing and masonry repair.
- Painting.
- Repair, replacement or addition of entrances, doors, display windows, transoms, or second story windows.
- Removal, repair and/or replacement of existing signs and awnings.
- Historic preservation activities.
- New signs and awnings.
- Design fees on completed projects.
- Landscaping improvements and planters.
- Permanent exterior lighting.
- Permit fees for completed projects.
- Energy savings improvements in relationship to the front facade.

Non-Eligible Activities

- Work on a facade not visible from a public street.
- Work on a roof.
- Work done before approval of an Application Agreement for this Facade Improvement Program.
- Purchase of property.
- Construction of a NEW building.
- Fixtures and equipment.
- Inventory.

Program Funding

The program is funded with Tax Increment Financing Funds or other City resources.

Storefront Improvement Program:

This grant will share in the actual cost of implementing the improvements identified in the conceptual design and cost estimate including the cost to complete final design and construction documents.

An approved applicant will receive up to 50% of the aforementioned costs up to $30,000 ($60,000 project).

The City reserves the right to approve funding above this level for catalytic and transformative projects that promote ownership, job creation, and work involving historical preservation.

The City reserves the right to refuse reimbursements in whole or in part for applicants and businesses that:

- Do not conform to the Plan Commission conditions of approval.
- Do not comply with all City zoning, permitting, and licensing and other relevant requirements.

- Do not conform to the proposals submitted with the application and authorized City approval.
- Do not complete the project within 1 year. Since the City cannot reserve funds indefinitely, the grant may be subject to cancellation if not completed or significant progress hasn't been made by the completion date. Request for extensions will be considered only if made in writing has project toward completion has been demonstrated

Staff will inspect work to ensure that it complies with the approved plans. Any changes to the approved plan will require a written request from the applicant and approval by the CDA in order to retain the funding.

The following types of property are not eligible for the SIP program:

- Tax delinquent property
- Property whose owner has any other tax delinquent property
- Property in litigation
- Property in condemnation ore receivership
- Property owner by religious group
- 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
- National Franchises and Retail Chain Stores

Application Process

A. An official SIP application containing all information requested shall be submitted to the Community Development Manager.

B. Staff will review the SIP application and will meet with the Owner/Applicant to discuss the concept design process and program agreement.

C. Staff and/or Owner/Applicant arranges for preliminary consultation with a design professional to ascertain the aesthetic and functional goals of the facade remodeling and determine the potential budget parameters.

D. Design professional prepares schematic concept elevation of the facade and a cost estimate for approval by Owner/Applicant and City review process.

E. Owner/Applicant submits the design proposal to the City and the Plan Commission for approval.

F. Owner/Applicant obtains a minimum of two written proposals from experienced contractors to complete the remodeling in accordance with the approved plans and specifications and all applicable laws and submits them to staff for review and Plan Commission approval.

G. The SIP grant will be based on the lowest bid or proposal.

H. The Common Council must approve an agreement between the City and the Owner/Applicant.

I. The Owner/Applicant and City will execute an agreement in which the Owner/Applicant agrees to complete the project within one year and comply with all program requirements. In return, the City agrees to reimburse the Owner/Applicant for up to 50% of the cost of the project, up to $30,000, including the preparation of plans and specifications, upon completion of the project.

J. The Owner/Applicant and the City will conduct a preconstruction meeting prior to the start of work.

Project Completion-Reimbursement Process

A. SIP funds will be disbursed on a reimbursement basis and upon project completion.

B. The Owner/Applicant must notify the Community Development Manager when project is complete. Color photographs of completed project should be emailed.

C. A Certificate of Final Inspection must be signed by the Owner/Applicant that the project is complete and to their satisfaction.

D. Reimbursement can be expected in approximately three (3) to six (6) weeks after all of the following documentation has been provided to the Community Development Manager, Community Development Division, Department of Development.

- **i.** Copies of all paid invoices, canceled checks, and or bank statements for all of the code compliance work covered by the grant. The invoices must be marked paid, signed, and dated by the contractors. Cash payments are not allowed.
- **ii.** Lien waivers must be provided upon receipt of payment with a copy to the City of West Allis.

E. A check will be requested that is made payable to the Owner/Applicant and the Contractor. The payment should be expected

F. The City reserves the right to withhold payment if terms and conditions of the grant pertaining to project compliance and plan approval are not satisfied during the course of the project.

(Please complete the following application)

National Avenue Corridor
Storefront Improvement Program
Application and Approval Form

City of West Allis
Department of Development
7525 W. Greenfield Avenue
West Allis, WI 53214
(414) 302-8460
Email: development@westalliswi.gov

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Application Date: _____

Approval Date: _____

Amount: $ _____

PART 1. Application Information

Property Address _____ Year Built _____

Name if Principal Business Occupant _____

Applicant's Name _____

Are you the ☐ Property Owner ☐ Business Occupant ☐ Both

Briefly describe the property improvements you wish to undertake _____

_____

_____

PART 2. Proposed Improvements

Please attach a sketch plan or architect's rendering of the proposed improvements.

What is the estimated cost of the improvements? Labor _____ Materials _____

If work is to be performed by a contractor, attach copies of at least two contractor estimates. If applicant will be performing the work, attach a supplier's estimate for materials.

REMEMBER: The only labor costs, which are eligible for reimbursement are those of a bona fide contractor.

Also, do not sign the contractor's estimate or order materials until after this application has been approved.

PART 4. Application Required Materials

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

- ☐ A completed application form
- ☐ Application Fee of $25
- ☐ Written Consent from Property owner giving permission to conduct improvements (if applicable).
- ☐ Color photographs of existing conditions
- ☐ Any other documentation that is necessary to illustrate the proposed improvements and completion schedule.
- ☐ Submit two competitive proposals from licensed and bonded contractors. These proposals should give detailed information about the work to be done, the costs, and the project completion schedule. Any contractor that has submitted a competitive detailed estimate may be used. Contractors cannot be changed unless new proposals have been submitted to the City.
- ☐ Owners and merchants who are licensed or bonded contractors may perform work on their own properties or businesses, but must furnish at least one proposal other than their own.
- ☐ Owners and merchants may perform work on their own buildings; however, they will not be reimbursed for their time while acting as a contractor and/or installing material. Material costs and labor or employees are reimbursable; however, documentation must be produced for the number of hours worked on the project by the employees and the rate of pay of the employees'.

PART 5. **Design Approval.** Project will require a review for Compliance with Design Standards (If applicable) and also require Plan Commission approval.

In the opinion of the Plan Commission, the proposed improvements . . . ☐ Do not conform ☐ Conform

with the following revisions: _____

Attach separate sheet if necessary.

PART 6. City Treasurer's Sign off

I have reviewed our files on this property and have found that there are no delinquent real estate taxes, personal property taxes, special assessments charges or sewer/water charges, except for: _____

_____

Signature of City Treasurer _____ Date _____

PART 7. Calculation of Eligible Grant Amount and Special Conditions

_____

_____

PART 8. Building Inspector's Sign off

I have reviewed our files on this property and have found no record of any outstanding code violations, except for:

_____

_____

Signature of Building Inspector _____ Date _____

PART 9. "After-Rehab" Inspection Report and Disbursement Authorization

I have inspected the property on _____ and have reviewed the applicant's documentation of payment. I find that the documentation is in order and the improvements have been completed.

Signature of Staff Person _____ Date _____

PART 10. Record of Grant Disbursement

I hereby acknowledge receipt of check # _____ in the amount of $ _____ as the full amount of eligible reimbursement for the improvements described in Part I of this form.

Signature of Applicant _____ Date _____