



BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM – FY2025

Program Purpose and Goal

The Program is intended to encourage owners and business tenants of existing commercial properties to invest in the improvement, renovation, or restoration of their buildings. The Business Improvement Program (“Program”) is designed to improve business properties to serve the community better and bring value to the property.

Property or business owners or tenants, with consent from property owners, may receive a reimbursement of 50% up to \$10,000. OWNERS MUST OBTAIN APPROVAL FROM THE CITY BEFORE STARTING ANY WORK.

Project Approval and Grant Reimbursement Process

The project will be processed on a “first-come, first-served” basis, and applicants are encouraged to apply as soon as possible as limited funds are set-aside and available during **FY2025, May 1, 2024, through April 30, 2025.**

All paperwork must be turned in no later than March 31st to allow payments from the correct Fiscal Year.

1. **Application Submittal** – Submit a complete application to City Hall with before pictures, project cost estimate, and property tax verification. On a large project, it is recommended that the applicant retain the services of a registered architect or similarly qualified design professional to prepare plans, drawings, and construction specifications.
2. **City Staff Review** – Staff will review the application for eligibility, completeness, and compliance and propose any changes before a final application is recommended and the funds are set aside. Owners must obtain preapproval before starting any work.
3. **Construction & Permits** – The applicant must obtain all necessary permits and notify the City Staff of the construction start date. Construction must be completed within 120 calendar days, or as otherwise specified, from the start of construction.
4. **Construction Completion** – Applicant shall schedule a final walk-through with City Staff to determine the completion of the project. All improvements must comply with the application, City Code, and Ordinances. Discrepancies must be corrected to maintain eligibility.
5. **Final Determination and Grant Fund Disbursement** – Applicant must provide the following:
 - a. proof of payment for all project costs,
 - b. obtain contractors’ affidavits and final mechanics’ lien waivers from any and all contractors, subcontract and/or suppliers,
 - c. completion photos, and
 - d. Certified payroll for all contractors who worked on the project.
6. **Finance Committee and City Council approval** – Upon receipt of all necessary paperwork, the Finance Committee will review the application and recommend the acceptance/denial to City Council. Once the City Council approves the application, grant funds will be disbursed by check payable to the applicant upon final determination that the project was completed and fully paid.

Project Eligibility

A project is eligible for grant fund reimbursement if the following conditions are met:

- **Applicant must follow the City’s Responsible Bidder Ordinance (Section 1-10-1), including providing certified payroll at the time of project completion showing prevailing wage rates.**

- Applicant must be the property owner or business tenant of an existing commercial property.
- Applicant nor any of their principals may be in default of any obligations to the City.
- Applicant must demonstrate they can fully pay for the project before grant reimbursement.
- Property must be zoned for and occupied by a commercial, mixed, or industrial user. Vacant properties are not eligible unless occupancy is pending via a lease agreement.
- Property must be within the City's corporate limits and in a commercial/industrial district.
- Property taxes and/or assessments, general and special, must be paid and current.
- Property and property owners have no more than one grant awarded within a year.
- Project improvements must be at least \$1,000 in eligible costs (Exhibit A).
- Project improvements must be an improvement to the building, parking lot, or land the business sets on.
- Project improvements must comply with all City zoning and building code requirements and all applicable permitting as required by City ordinances.
- Any outstanding zoning or building code violations must be corrected before reimbursement will occur.

Miscellaneous and Other Considerations

Project Modifications – Modifications of “approved” plans, design/color, or construction materials will require review and approval by City staff. Failure to receive such approval may invalidate the grant award.

Displacement of Tenants – No financial assistance will be provided if the project involves the permanent and involuntary displacement of tenants unless the applicant agrees to provide financial assistance to the tenants at levels consistent with the Federal Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Act, as amended.

Sales Tax Exemption of Building Materials – If the project is located in an Enterprise Zone, the retail sales tax may be waived on building materials (items affixed to real property) purchased, provided State and City processes have been completed. All contractors and subcontractors are to pay not less than the prevailing wage to all laborers, workers, and mechanics.

Contractor Selection – The applicant is responsible for determining contractor qualifications, quality of work, and professional record. The applicant will be responsible for securing proof of their licensing and insurance coverage and obtaining certified payroll.

Taxation of Grant Funds – The applicant's sole responsibility is to determine consequences for receipt and/or subsequent forgiveness of these funds pursuant to the Internal Revenue Code or Illinois Revenue Code as currently in force or as periodically amended.

EXHIBIT A ELIGIBLE PROJECT COSTS

The following list contains eligible improvements which may be included under the Improvement Program for grant assistance:

- **Exit Doors (exterior):** Installation, repair and/or replacement of exit doors and hardware to provide public access, or where current doors do not meet the building or fire codes or it will improve the overall appearance of the building;
- **Facia/Gutters/Downspouts:** Replacement or repair of facia, gutters and downspouts;
- **Landscaping:** Limited to perennial plantings, such as trees and shrubs; construction of planter or window boxes permanently affixed to the building is included;
- **Lighting:** Repair, replacement or installation of exterior building and sign lighting;
- **Painting:** Exterior surface of the building;
- **Parking Lot:** Improvements;
- **Removal of materials:** Removal of any inappropriate or incompatible exterior finishes and materials;
- **Air conditioning and/or heating facilities; Plumbing;**
- **Sprinkler systems-** interior for fire safety;
- **Building security systems-** interior and exterior;
- **Electrical wiring or service upgrade,** except electrical work necessary to illuminate an eligible sign;
- **Interior floor, wall, flooring and/or ceiling** replacement or repair;

- **Roof work**, repair and replacement - at least 50%;
- **Siding, Aluminum or Vinyl:** Installation, repair and/or replacement of aluminum or vinyl siding;
- **Signs:** New, repair, replacement or removal;
- **Shutters/Awnings/Canopies:** Repair, replace or additions;
- **Stairs, Porches, Railings, Exits:** Repair, replacement or installation;
- **Walls:** Repair or rebuilding of exterior walls, including cleanings (wall and/or brick), tuckpointing, sealing, painting, etc.;
- **Windows:** Repair of frames, and sills, replacement of glass and installation of new windows;
- **Walkways:** Restoration or replacement of deteriorated or hazardous sidewalks, pavers, plazas or other permanent improvements designed primarily for pedestrian use;

COSTS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR REIMBURSEMENT:

- Building permit fees and related costs;
- Title reports and legal fees;
- Extermination of insects, rodents, vermin and other pests;
- Acquisition of land or buildings;
- Working capital for businesses or refinancing of existing debt;
- General repair/maintenance work not contributing to the overall exterior impact of the building.
- “Sweat equity” work performed by the applicant, family members of the applicant or employees of the applicant, unless the work is done as an agent of a construction company that has provided a quote included in the original application and recommended for approval by City Staff and approved by City Council.
- General construction oversight and project administration work performed by the applicant, family members of the applicant or employees of the applicant are not eligible.

Improvements not specifically listed as eligible or ineligible are subject to review as to their eligibility or ineligibility by City Council in its sole and exclusive discretion.

**BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
APPLICATION FORM**

Name of Individual Applicant: _____ Title: _____

Name of Business: _____ Type: _____

Address of Property: _____ Property (P.I.N.): _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Applicant is: ___ Property Owner ___ Business Tenant ___ Other (_____)

Project Description: _____

_____ Total Estimated Cost: _____

The following items should be attached to the final application. Please check the items submitted:

- 1. Letter of Financial Commitment addressed to City of West Peoria detailing: a) total improvement cost of at least \$1,000, b) requested grant amount equal to the lesser of 50% of total eligible project cost or \$10,000, and c) commitment and capacity to fund total project cost.
- 2. Property Owner Certification (deed, title search, or Form-1A) or Property Owner's Consent (Form-1B)
- 3. Before and after pictures of the Project(at least two)
- 4. Cost Estimates from Contractors
- 5. Final Contractor Documents from Contractors chosen to perform work on; (i.e., cost estimate, contract for material and labor, schedule of completion, license, and insurance)
- 6. Certified Payroll & Responsible bidder ordinance
- 7. Improvement description, which details proposed improvements, if applicable.
- 8. Construction plans/drawings with the material used and site plan with elevations, showing improvements drawn to scale
- 9. Final design rendering and architect cost estimates, if applicable
- 10. Landscape plan and/or signage plans

The City expressly reserves the right to reject any or all applicants, request more information, and cancel the program at any time, in its sole and exclusive discretion.

By signing this document, the applicant agrees they shall

- comply with all City, State, and Federal statutes and ordinances
- are solely responsible for the selection of contractors, securing proof of their licensing
- will obtain proof of completion and payment to contractors (Form 2B – lien waivers and affidavits) and certified payrolls (if applicable) for improvements.

NOTE: According to Resolution No. 2017-02, City policy requires all contractors and subcontractors to pay not less than the prevailing wage to all laborers, workers, and mechanics.

Applicant Signature: _____ Date: _____

**BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
FORM 1A
PROPERTY OWNER CERTIFICATION**

Dear City of West Peoria,

I/We, _____, am/are the owner(s) of
the property located at _____ (address) in the City of West Peoria, IL.

I/We plan to participate in the City of West Peoria's Improvement Program and follow the necessary procedures in order
to receive financial assistance from the City of West Peoria for the improvements to my property.

Sincerely,

Signature of Property Owner or Authorized Representative (1) Name	Title (Please Print)	Date

Signature of Property Owner (2) Name	Title (Please Print)	Date

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

FORM 1B

PROPERTY OWNER CONSENT

I/We, _____, am/are the owner/s of the property located at _____(address) in the City of West Peoria, and have or will lease the property to _____ (name of tenant).

I/We understand the tenant plans to participate in the City of West Peoria’s Improvement Program and support their effort to improve the appearance of my property at the above address. I/We agree to allow the tenant to complete the improvements and understand that the responsibilities and liabilities associated with the project rest upon the owner(s) and tenant. Furthermore, I/We agree to cooperate and participate in the program in order to obtain financial assistance from the City of West Peoria.

Sincerely,

_____	_____	_____
Signature of Property Owner or Authorized Representative (1) Name	Title (Please Print)	Date

_____	_____	_____
Signature of Property Owner (2) Name	Title (Please Print)	Date