

TOWN OF ROME CITY

ORDINANCE No. 2023-05 Amending #2022-17

ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING A FACADE IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM IN THE DOWNTOWN TIF DISTRICT.

WHEREAS, the Town of Rome City is desirous of providing a loan/grant program to provide incentives for businesses wishing to improve their facades and make other necessary business improvements in the TIF District.

WHEREAS, the Town wishes to empower the Rome City Redevelopment Commission with tools to permit grants to be made to businesses interested in repairing and improving certain portions of their structure, adding to the overall business environment, and establishing business entities for the employment of individuals.

BE IT THEREFORE ORDAINED, that the following facade improvement grant program is established:

FACADE IMPROVEMENT GRANT APPLICATION

The Rome City Redevelopment Commission (RCRC) generally meets bi-yearly or as called. All applications and supporting documents must be filed with the town Manager's Office no later than two weeks prior to the meeting in which the petition will be heard; or as otherwise stipulated.

The meetings are held in the Rome City Town Hall Council Room or as otherwise noticed. Petitions are heard in the order in which they are filed. A representative from the organization requesting an improvement grant must be present at both the RCRC meeting and Town Council Meeting at which the application will be considered.

Application requirements and procedures have been summarized below.

SUBMISSIONS SUBJECT TO INDIANA PUBLIC ACCESS LAWS

Completed applications and associated supporting documents will be subject to Indiana's Public Access Laws, the Open-Door Law and Access to Public Records Act. Information provided in the applications by the applicant can be disclosed. Therefore, any concerns over the provision of application information should be discussed with the Town prior to application submission.

APPLICATION SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

The following information and documents are required when filing a petition for a Facade Improvement Grant.

- Completed Improvement Application • Legal Description. Applicant is required to provide written legal description of the subject property.
- If the property is not a platted lot, then the applicant is required to provide a metes and bounds legal description
- An area map with the subject property highlighted
- Rendering of Proposed Project/Scope of Work •
- Provide Two Bids/Quotes from Qualified Contractors for all projects.

FINAL SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

The following information and documents are required prior to receiving grant disbursement(s).

- Completed Owner/Applicant Affidavit
- Expenditure Documentation
- Completed Façade Agreement

A representative from the requesting company must be present at the RCRC meeting which typically meets bi-yearly or as otherwise stipulated.

GENERAL POLICY INFORMATION

Overview. RCRC is authorized to administer grants as provided for by I.C. 36-7-14-12.2(a)(26). The Facade Improvement Grant program is funded through the Economic Redevelopment Fund (RCRC/TIF) Fund, or through such other means determined reasonable by the Town based on the specific application. Through Tax Increment Financing District Funds, the Town is willing to participate in up to 1/2 of the cost, up to \$10,000, for improving the exterior of commercial buildings located within boundaries of or physically connected to a TIF District. The purpose of the program is to assist businesses with facade improvements described in the policy. Table 3 below gives examples of grant amounts corresponding to project amounts:

Table 3

Project Amount	Maximum Grant Amount
\$2,000	\$1,000
\$4,000	\$2,000
\$6,000	\$3,000
\$8,000	\$4,000
\$10,000	\$5,000

Eligibility Requirements

A commercial property is eligible to apply for the grant program if they meet the eligibility requirements, which are as follows:

- Property must be located within boundaries of or physically connected to a TIF District. Subject structure must have at least 50 percent of total floor space assessed as commercial as determined by the Noble County Assessor's Office.
- Applicant must be the owner of property or the occupant of the property with the written consent of the owner to participate in program; proof of ownership will be required.
- Property must remain assessed 50% commercial, maintain its business function, and be reasonably maintained for a minimum of 3 years following completion of the facade work. Property must be subject to the payment of real estate taxes and be current on all tax payments. Property in any year of a real estate tax abatement is not eligible.
- Business must be registered with Indiana Secretary of State Business Services Division and possess any applicable business licenses.
- Buildings receiving facade grants will be ineligible to receive another facade grant for two years after receipt of funds.
- Minimum total project cost must be at least \$2,000 to be eligible for Town Participation. A legal description must be attached to application. If the property is not a platted lot, the description must be a complete metes and bounds legal description. To obtain a copy of the official legal description for the deed of the property purchased, applicants may retrieve the source document(s) from the Noble County Recorder's Office. Metes and bounds legal descriptions may either be a part of the deed or the applicant will need to source the project to a surveyor for completion.
- Housing is not viewed as a priority with the TIF District and, therefore, TIF funds will not be used to assist redevelopment projects that are primarily residential in nature. The exception to this limitation is that upper story housing within a commercial building in the TIF area may be allowed and may receive TIF funding assistance.
- Must be an operating business.

Eligible Project Elements: Eligible work items include practically any work done to the exterior of a structure or lot with the exception of normal and/or routine maintenance activities, sidewalks, parking lots, sprinkler systems, storm or sanitary sewers, wiring, plumbing, heating or air conditioning. Resurfacing, resealing, and restriping of parking lots is considered routine maintenance and is not an eligible project element. Examples of eligible project elements include:

Painting	Restoration of historic or architectural details
Tuck-pointing and other brick or other exterior structural restoration	Fencing
Sealing	Walkways (Walkways refer to paths that lead to or around customer entrances, not sidewalks in the public right-of-way)

Wall Cleaning	Perennial landscaping and plantings
Wall Coverings	Chimneys
Doors and Doorways	● Cornices
Shutters	Parapets
Awnings	● Bulkheads
Canopies	Fascia's
Signage (must meet sign code)	Lighting
Windows	● Stairs and railings
Roof Work	

Note: Eligible project elements are considered those elements that are primarily intended for the sides of structures or lots that face the street, alley and/or main customer entrances. Work related to project elements on sides of a structure or lot not readily visible to the public or routine maintenance will not be funded unless such work does not constitute most project costs. Paving of parking lots from gravel/dirt to asphalt or concrete may be considered at not more than 30% for surfaces adjacent to the street or main customer entrance of the project consists of other eligible project elements. As such, the match for paving of lots cannot exceed more than half of the total grant award and therefore may be less than 30% in instances where the 30% for pavement would otherwise exceed 50% of the total grant award.

General Public Process: First, determine if your project or proposed facade improvement is eligible per the policy. You may discuss your proposal with the Town Manager's Office. They will summarize the application process and provide an application checklist that includes the following: Complete Facade Application and prepare to attend a RCRC meeting. After receiving preliminary approval from the RCRC, prepare to attend a Town Council meeting for final approval. If preliminary approval is not obtained from the RCRC, no further action will be taken and consequently a grant will not be awarded.

Please note that reimbursement for an approved project element may be reduced if the actual cost is less than the proposed cost. For example, if an applicant receives a 50% match of a proposed \$2,000 project element, but the actual cost is \$900, then reimbursement would be at \$450. Conversely, if the actual cost is \$2,100, then the match would not exceed \$1000, or 50% of the original proposed amount.

If the amount of funds requested by all applicants in each call exceeds the available program funds, the RCRC will utilize a scoring sheet that weighs various program criteria in the varying amounts. The scoring sheet will be utilized to rank projects, with the highest scoring projects receiving priority. If the scoring sheet will be utilized, it will be provided to applicants upon request prior to the application deadline for their reference.

Facade Improvement Approval Procedures

The following steps are the general procedures for receiving support from the Town of Rome City in the form of a Facade Improvement Grant to Businesses.

- a) Business owner applies to the Town Manager's office. A review will be conducted, and the application will be placed on the agenda for the next regularly scheduled RCRC meeting.
- b) RCRC hears the request at a public meeting and move for recommendations to forward to the Town Council.
- c) The Town Council hears the matter in which the applicant will be required to attend to answer any additional questions the Town Council may have. The Town Council will make a motion for approval based off the application and agreement set forth by the applicant and the Town.
- d) Formal recognition of Facade Improvement Grant will be sent to the applicant.
- e) After approval and upon project completion, the Town will distribute a check with the appropriate funds (project also subject to compliance inspections and verification of applicant's funds allocated to project in the amount of fifty percent of the project) after the Town Council Meeting and upon completion of the applicants required portion of the project and submission of required documents.