



## **Norwalk Commercial Improvement Grant Program**

### **Small Grant Funds for the Purpose of:**

1. Physical facade Improvements to existing commercial buildings which would increase value and help spur business growth as well as improve overall appearance and structural safety. Interior improvements are also eligible if exterior improvements are also being made at the same time and the interior improvements increase the overall value or structure of the building.
2. Existing local businesses that are expanding their business operations or facilities (including building a new facility). \*See eligibility requirements regarding abatement program use.

### **Eligibility Requirements for Grant:**

1. Any commercial building that is 10 years of age or older within Norwalk city limits, OR, an existing Norwalk business owner who is building a new commercial facility within Norwalk city limits, or expanding their existing facility to accommodate their growth and expansion needs. Eligible commercial buildings must be used only for business operations and classified/taxed as commercial. Residences/home-based businesses and nonprofits are not eligible.
2. Applicant must show proof of matching funds equaling the requested grant amount (dollar for dollar match).
3. Applicants will be subject to all regular City requirements when building a facility, making exterior or structural changes, or building additions on existing structures. The Building Department at City Hall will provide necessary information to the applicant and their contractor regarding requirements and applicable fees. Call 515-981-9530
4. Eligible expenses must be used for improvements of the physical structure. These improvements can be:
  - Exterior façade improvements
  - Value added additions such as equipment that would be attached to and sold with the structure (ex. Commercial over/hood, grease trap, new ceiling, windows, etc.)
  - Façade beautification (Lighting, Shutters, Doors, Windows, Awnings, etc.)
  - Attached signage
  - Paint, brick, stone, and other qualifying façade materials (per City zoning code chapter 17.60)
  - Physical expansions and additions, as well as building of a new facility due



to expansion of existing Norwalk business

5. Expenses that are **not** eligible are as follows but not limited to:

- Carpet
- Fencing
- Any improvements related to parking lots, sidewalks, or driveways
- Replacement or basic maintenance of HVAC systems, i.e. boilers, furnace, geothermal, water heater, electrical or plumbing
- Stand-alone signs, roof, and structural improvements (these may be eligible if included with larger project) **Note: If a stand-alone sign, roof or structural improvements are approved with your project, the associated grant amounts for these items will be reimbursed last.**

6. Maximum grant amount is \$50,000 per applicant/project. Total amount approved is subject to Economic Development work group review.

7. Applicant is **not** eligible for the commercial tax abatement program **and** the commercial grant program for the same project improvements. To help determine which program would be more beneficial for the applicant's project, the Economic Development Department will provide applicants with more information on the tax abatement program if projects meet abatement eligibility.

### **Application Process:**

1. Applicant fills out application and submit all required documents to the Economic Development Department. *Application and instructions can be found @ [www.norwalk.iowa.gov/EconDev](http://www.norwalk.iowa.gov/EconDev) or pick one up at 1104 Sunset Dr. Economic Development Office M-F, 8-4:30.*
2. Economic Development Department reviews the application to ensure all required information and documentation is completed. If project meets eligibility requirements, it will be recommended for approval to Council within one month of application date.
3. If grant funds are awarded, funds will be reimbursed to applicant once copies of receipts or invoices, along with proof of payment are submitted to the City.

### **Funding:**

1. Funding has an annual cap of \$150,000.
2. Maximum of \$50,000 per applicant/project.
3. Applicant may not receive the full amount requested; the review committee reserves the right to award all, part or none of the applied-for funds.
4. Awarded applicants must begin their project within 60 days of approval or funds will no longer be guaranteed. Extensions may be considered on a case by case basis.



**Example:** applicant's project is delayed due to contractor's schedule changes, product on backorder, weather, etc.

5. Awards will be considered first come, first serve basis for the year's total pool. Applicants who are not granted any award in the year they apply may roll their application over to the following year, at which time it will be reviewed for consideration in the order that it was originally received.

### **Reimbursement Process:**

1. All invoices must include proof of payment to the contractor. Grant funds from the City will be paid to the applicant in reimbursement form upon proof of payment to contractor in one of the following two forms:
  - A. A document issued by the contractor stating that the applicant has paid the said improvement in full.
  - B. A cancelled check and a signed receipt for said improvement.
2. The City will reimburse **half** of all paid invoices (**of the eligible expenses**) that are submitted, up to the total approved grant amount. **Note:** Grant payments will be made two times a month and must be approved by the City Council.

**Program Emphasis Areas:** *(These aspects will also be taken into consideration in the event that two applications are received at the same time at the end of funding pool. The applicant not chosen at that time may roll application over into the next year's funding cycle).*

- Largest impact to visual appearance and/or value added to commercial structure
- Historical, dated, or dilapidated buildings
- Number of full time employees
- Growth plan and history of business growth/success
- Length of time business has been in community
- Use of local contractors and/or lenders
- Businesses that provide goods and services to Norwalk residents as well as a market outside of Norwalk
- Commercial structures in higher traffic areas with high visibility
- Existing business that are expanding or building new facility

**For questions contact Deanna Schulz [dschulz@norwalk.iowa.gov](mailto:dschulz@norwalk.iowa.gov), 515-981-3579 or Hollie Zajicek [hzejicek@norwalk.iowa.gov](mailto:hzejicek@norwalk.iowa.gov), 515-314-5862, 1104 Sunset Dr. Norwalk IA 50211**



## Commercial Grant Application

Project/Business Name:	
Business Address:	
Business Contact:	
Project Contact:	
Phone:	
Email:	
Date:	

\*Please note that in order to meet City codes and façade requirements, all physical changes to buildings must be inspected and approved by the City's building department prior to implementation. Applicants and contractors can stop into City Hall or call 515-981-9530 for more information.

1. Description and history of business:

2. Describe in detail the proposed project being undertaken:

3. What date will the project begin? Projected to be completed when?

4. Has any part of the project started yet?  Yes |  No

If yes, please describe:

5. What is the total project cost?

6. Amount requested from the City of Norwalk:

7. What will the requested funds be used for?



- 8. How many employees are currently employed by the company?
- 9. How many new employees will you hire if the project is completed?
- 10. What is the average wage rate or salary projected to be for the new employees?
- 11. Is a local lender (Warren County) being used for any portion of the project financing?  Yes |  No  
Name of Lending Institution(s):
- 12. Is a local (Warren County) builder/developer being used for the project?  Yes |  No  
Name of builder(s)/construction Company:

***Before submitting application, make sure you've included the following items. Have you completed or included the following?***

<b>Y/N</b>	Have you submitted plans to the City's Building department for approval
<b>Y/N</b>	If leasing the property, include approval of improvements from building owner(email is sufficient)
<b>Y/N</b>	Proof of matching funds(letter from bank)
<b>Y/N</b>	Bids/estimates from contractors matching the amount of total project cost
<b>Y/N</b>	Proof of building ownership(can be a copy of deed, printout from assessor's website, or other)
<b>Y/N</b>	Proof of building insurance
<b>Y/N</b>	Renderings/drawings/photos/schematics indicating what the changes will look like once completed (not required but preferred)

\*Project must begin within 60 days of notification of award if application is selected for grant. Grant funds will be administered in reimbursement form to the applicant as invoices for completed work and proof of payments are submitted to the Economic Development Department. Payments are made bi-monthly after City Council approval.

**Return completed application along with all supporting documents to:**  
Economic Development Department, 1104 Sunset Dr. Norwalk, Iowa 50211 or  
email to [dschulz@norwalk.iowa.gov](mailto:dschulz@norwalk.iowa.gov) or [hzejicek@norwalk.iowa.gov](mailto:hzejicek@norwalk.iowa.gov)



## Commercial Grant Program - Expense Reimbursement Form

Name of Business: \_\_\_\_\_

Recipient of payment: \_\_\_\_\_

Payment Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Itemized Expenses

Receipt#	Invoice Date	Description of Work	Contractor/Vendor	Amount Paid
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
			Total amount paid by applicant	\$ _____

Approved By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** *Must attach original receipts/invoices for completed work to be reimbursed along with proof of payment, i.e. a document issued by the contractor stating that the applicant has paid in full or a cancelled check and a signed receipt for said improvement.*

**For City Use Only:**

Grant amount due by the City of Norwalk (half of total above): \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Code: 430.4.160.2.4705

Pay to: Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_



Remaining grant dollars available to this applicant = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total amount granted = \$ \_\_\_\_\_