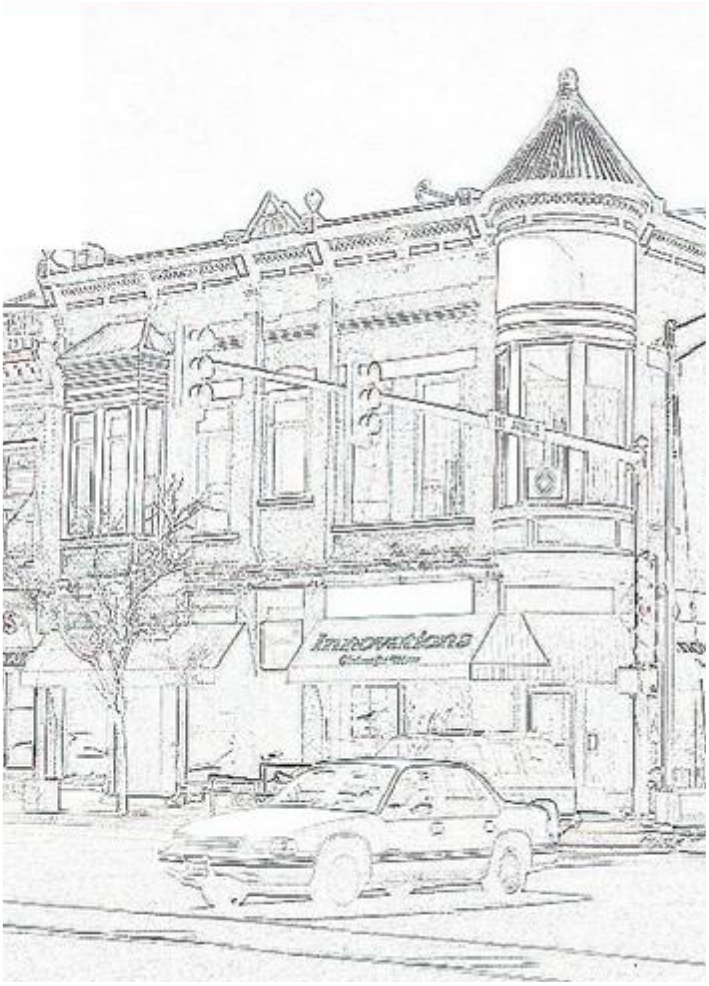

City of Rock Falls Facade Improvement Grant Application Packet

ADMINISTERED BY:
FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT GRANT COMMITTEE

FUNDED BY:
ROCK FALLS TOURISM
603 W. 10TH STREET, SUITE 1-A
ROCK FALLS, IL 61071
PH: (815) 622-1106
The following includes the Façade Improvement Program Description, Policies and Procedures

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City of Rock Falls

Façade Improvement Grant

Policy & Procedures

Adopted by the Rock Falls City Council on October 17, 2017

Description of Program

Facade Improvement Program provides grant funds to property and business owners to be matched by their equal or greater investment of private funds for the purpose of restoring and renovating commercial storefronts and replacing deteriorated or poor quality commercial signs and awnings. Funds are provided as a grant via reimbursement after all projects costs have been paid. Business must be "open for business" before reimbursement is granted.

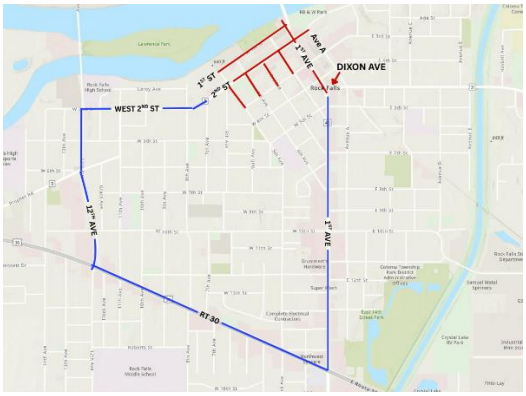
Program Objectives

- Encourage private investment in the visual improvement of storefronts, signs and awnings.
- Enhance the appearance of the streetscape
- Reduce vacancies in storefronts and upper floors
- Expand worker and shopper population in the Downtown area
- Provide a catalyst for others to improve their buildings
- Provide a cohesive appearance for all downtown storefronts and the newly developing Riverfront Areas

The Facade Improvement Program is funded by the Rock Falls Tourism Committee (RFT). There will be $10,000 budgeted for each Fiscal Year. Amounts will be awarded in the form of a matching grant, ranging from $500 to a maximum of $5,000 for reimbursements up to 50% of eligible costs of façade projects. These grants will be awarded on a competitive basis; not all applications will be funded or may be funded at a lower amount than requested. We recommend that the business requesting the grant come present their proposal to the Facade Improvement Committee (FIC) which meets on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 10am located in the Council Chambers at City Hall. Grant Determinations will be evaluated and the applications will be approved through the Facade Improvement Committee (FIC). Work cannot begin until the Façade Improvement Grant Application has been evaluated and approved by the FIC and all necessary permits and fees have been paid. Business must be "open for business" and requires final approval by the Rock Falls Tourism Committee before funds are reimbursed.

Target Areas

West First Street	1st Avenue to 5th Avenue
West Second Street	Ave A to 12th Avenue
First Avenue	1st Street to Route 30
Second Avenue	West 2nd to West 3rd
Third Avenue	West 2nd to West 3rd
Fourth Avenue	West 2nd to West 3rd
Fifth Avenue	West 2nd to West 3rd
12th Avenue	West 2nd St to Route 30
Route 30	12th Avenue to 1st Avenue



Eligible Projects

The grant is a 50/50 matching grant. The owner must pay out the total cost of the project and be reimbursed 50% of the qualifying project cost up to $5,000. Grant funds cannot be used for projects currently in progress or already completed. It is not the intent of the program to provide financial assistance to ongoing improvements that are considered regular building upkeep and maintenance.

Building must be located in the area designated (see map). If a buildings has an address that is located on a street within the grant program area but has other addresses contiguous to the main entrance, but those addresses are not in the grant program area, 75% of the designated area are eligible to apply. Tenant or lessees are eligible to apply if the building owner's consent is provided in writing.

A qualifying grant applicant may apply for multiple grants per fiscal year for a maximum amount of $5000.00 reimbursement. Each application will be evaluated by the FIC on its own merits. The approval of one grant application does not guarantee approval of future grant applications. A qualifying grant applicant may apply for a Façade Improvement Grant every fiscal year provided that they are in good standing with the City of Rock Falls. Each application will be evaluated by the FIC on its own merits.

You must submit at least 2 bids from insured and bonded contractors for the FIC grant application.
All contractors and subcontractors used for work funded by this grant must be registered through the City of Rock Falls.
If you choose to complete the work yourself, you will only be eligible for reimbursement of materials (with receipts provided); no labor costs will be covered.

All work performed must comply with the City of Rock Falls' ordinances, codes and regulations. It is the sole responsibility of the Grant applicant to obtain any and all zoning clearances, variances, permits and approvals before work commences. The project applicant must owe no outstanding property taxes, fees, judgments, or liens to the City of Rock Falls and have no outstanding code violations.

Some eligible projects would be aesthetic and structural signage improvements, awnings, lighting, doors and windows, exterior wall finishing, cornices and decorative detailing, and structural reinforcement. If project area is adjacent to an alleyway, these improvements may also be eligible. Other expenses may be eligible as determined by the FIC.

Ineligible Projects

Some ineligible expenses may be inappropriate materials and treatments, all interior improvements, roof and chimney repairs, electrical improvements as it pertains to interiors, security systems, personal property such as furniture and equipment, permits and fees. Some roof repairs may be included in the improvement if necessary to further the frontage facade improvements.

- **ROUTINE PROPERTY MAINTENANCE COSTS MAY NOT BE INCLUDED.**
- **IMPROVEMENTS COMPLETED OR STARTED PRIOR TO GRANT APPROVAL ARE NOT ELIGIBLE.**
- **GRANT FUNDS MAY NOT BE UTILIZED FOR WORKING CAPITAL, DEBT REFINANCING OR FOR PROPERTY ACQUISITION.**

Façade Improvement Committee

After the completed application is received, it will be reviewed by the Facade Improvement Committee (FIC). The FIC has the sole and absolute discretion to decide which proposed projects meet the guidelines and which projects may be awarded grants. The Rock Falls Tourism Committee has final approval for reimbursement of all grant applications. The FIC has the right to request an additional bid when reviewing the application if the Committee feels a presented bid is exorbitant or inflated. The Committee will then be allowed to use the requested second bid to calculate the amount of grant funds allocated to the applicant if the second bid has a large variance. The FIC will meet on an as needed basis.

All applicants will receive a written response regarding eligibility and/or approval within four weeks of application submission. Applicant may be asked to clarify project specifics and/or provide samples of proposed materials to be used. FIC may award an amount less that the allowable maximum.

Project must be completed within 90 days of receiving the notification of approval.
Additional time may be granted for completion if applicant provides documented explanation for the delay.

Design Guidelines

Landscaping and Screening

1. ***Entryways*.** Development entryways shall be planted with ornamental plant material, such as ornamental trees, flowering shrubs and perennials, and ground covers
2. ***Street Trees*.** If the BSO includes the planting of street trees, such street trees shall be installed along the public right- of-way for all developments. Street trees shall be illustrated on the landscape plan and shall be required in addition to any proposed on-site landscaping. Street trees shall be planted at fifty (50) foot intervals.
3. ***Parking Lot*.** Parking lot landscaping shall be utilized to minimize the expansive appearance of parking lots and pro- vide shaded parking area, and shall comply with Section 16-260 of the Municipal Code. The primary landscaping materials used in, and at the perimeter of, parking lots shall be trees that provide shade or are capable of providing shade at maturity. The perimeter of the parking area shall provide for a landscaped area in which trees and shrubs will be planted to screen parking areas from view and to allow snow storage capacity. Perimeter plantings shall be at the rate of one tree and/or grouping of **three or more shrubs for every forty (40) lineal feet.**
4. ***Building Foundation Landscaping*.** Building foundations shall be planted with ornamental plant material, such as ornamental trees, flowering shrubs and perennials, and ground covers. Planting shall be massed and scaled as appropriate for the building.
5. ***General Yard Areas*.** The development site should include additional general planting materials to provide visual appeal to the site. Groupings of shrubs with ornamental trees should be used.
6. ***Plant Materials*.** The use of native plant species is strongly encouraged. Effective use of earth berms, existing topography, and pre-existing, high-quality vegetation is also encouraged as a component of the Landscaping plan.
7. ***Planting Size Specifications*.** Deciduous trees shall be 1.5 inch to 2.5 inch minimum DBH. Coniferous trees shall be a minimum height of six (6) feet. Shrubs, hedges, and similar plantings shall be a minimum of 24 inches in height or the two-gallon (2-gal.) variety. All planting materials shall be guaranteed for a period of two (2) years from the date of planting. The installation of seed or sod shall be required for all yard areas.
8. ***Service Area Screening*.** To the maximum extent feasible, areas for outdoor storage, truck parking, trash collection or compaction, loading, or other such service areas shall not be visible from abutting streets or properties. Screening materials shall be the same as, or of equal quality to, the materials used for the principal building and landscaping.
9. ***Dumpster Enclosures*.** Trash enclosures shall include adequate, accessible and convenient areas for collecting and loading recyclable materials. Trash enclosures shall be constructed of sturdy, durable, opaque materials (with trash receptacles screened

from view) which are designed to be compatible with the project architecture, and shall not be located in a street yard. Trash enclosure screening should comply with Section 5-134(b) (3) (H) of this Guide.

10. ***Mechanicals/Utility Screening*.** Mechanical/utility screening shall be an integral part of the building structure and architecture and not give the appearance of being "tacked on" to the exterior surfaces. All mechanical equipment and utilities shall be screened.
11. ***Outdoor Storage, Sales, and Display Areas***. Non-enclosed areas for the storage and sales shall be permanently de- fined and screened with landscaping, walls and/or fences. Materials, colors, and design of screening walls and/or fences, and of any covering for such area, shall be compatible with those used as predominant materials and colors on the primary building(s). The height of stored or displayed inventory shall not exceed the height of the screening wall or fence. In addition, all fences/ walls shall comply with the standards set forth in Section.
12. ***Fencing and Walls*.** All fencing should be designed as an integrated part of the site, and shall comply with Chapter Five Article X of the Municipal Code. Retaining walls shall comply with the standards outlined in Section 5-134(a)(1)(C) of this Guide.
13. ***Screening Between Residential and Nonresidential Uses*.** Screening requirements between adjacent residential and nonresidential uses shall comply with the provisions outlined in Section 16-264 of the Municipal Code.

Architectural Guidelines

1. GENERAL

a. *Architectural Style.* Style is not restricted; evaluation of the appearance of a project shall be based on professional quality of its design, relationship to surroundings and the community.
b. *Corporate Identity.* Corporate identity may be apparent yet reserved in its display.
c. *Four-Sided Architecture.* Continuing an architectural theme on all exposed exterior surfaces through the use of the same building materials shall be required.

2. **BUILDING SCALE AND FAÇADE TREATMENTS**

a. *Building Scale.* Height and scale of new development should be compatible with that of surrounding development. New development height should transition from the height of adjacent development to the maximum height of the proposed structure. Building scale shall be reduced through the proper use of window patterns, structural bays, roof overhangs, siding, awnings, moldings, fixtures, and other details.
b. *Building Façades.* Building façades should be articulated by using color, arrangement, or change in materials to emphasize the facade elements. The planes of the exterior walls may be varied in height, depth or direction. Design elements and detailing shall be continued completely around the structure. Such design elements shall include window treatments, awnings, trim detailing, and exterior wall materials.
c. Building Materials.
   i. *Multi-Family Residential and Commercial Structures*.
   ii. Materials shall have good architectural character (i.e., strength, durability and quality) and shall be selected for harmony of the building with adjacent buildings and the surrounding community. Buildings shall have the same materials or materials that are architecturally harmonious, used for all building walls and other exterior building components wholly or partly visible from public streets.
   iii. Brick, architectural panels, pre-cast concrete, decorative (architectural) masonry block shall be utilized for at least seventy five percent (75%) of the exterior treatment of all buildings, exclusive of fenestration.
   iv. Natural materials (i.e. cedar siding, brick, stone) are preferred materials for the exterior treatment of structures.
   v. Metal or steel external siding shall not be permitted as a construction material for building elevations. The use of metal/steel for roofing material is permissible and may be approved by the Building Committee based upon context and overall site design.
   vi. Exterior Insulation and Finish System (E.I.F.S.) or Dry-vit are permitted building materials and may be approved by the Community Services Department based upon context and overall site design.
   vii. *Industrial Structures*.
   viii. Materials shall have good durability and quality and shall be selected for compatibility with adjacent buildings and the surrounding developments.
   ix. The façade of any building facing a public right-of-way shall be faced with brick, brick veneer, architectural panels, pre-cast concrete, decorative (architectural) masonry block, stone, glass, or similar materials.
   x. Metal siding shall not be utilized for any building elevation abutting a public right-of-way and may only be utilized for other elevations in conjunction with a brick or stone wainscoting. The use of metal/steel for roofing material is permissible and shall be approved by the Community Services Department based upon context and overall site design.
   xi. Building elevations along a public right-of-way shall wrap around a minimum of twenty feet (20') or to a natural dividing point approved by the Plan Commission. Elevations facing side or rear yards shall be finished with materials complementary to the street elevations. Side and rear elevations that do not incorporate a significant proportion of the building material outlined above shall incorporate enhanced landscape and screening measures. Appropriateness and effectiveness shall be subject to Building department approval.

xii. The use of staggered façades, articulated entryways, canopies, awning, bays, doors, windows, and variations in rooflines are strongly encouraged. Entries to industrial structures should portray a quality office appearance while being architecturally tied into the overall mass and building composition.

d. *Building Colors*. Building colors should contribute to the desired character and image of the City. Modifications to standardized prototype and corporate franchise designs may be required.
   i. Colors utilized in the project design shall be non-florescent, with bright or brilliant colors avoided. Earth tones such as gray, green, brown, burgundy, tan, and similar are encouraged.
   ii. All proposed color schemes shall be reviewed by the Building Committee on their individual merit.

e. *Service and Loading Areas.* Loading docks, truck parking, outdoor storage, trash collection, trash compaction, and other service functions shall be incorporated into the overall design of the building and landscaping so that the visual and acoustic impacts of these functions are fully contained and out of view from adjacent properties and public streets.
   i. Loading facilities shall be located at the rear or side of the development, and shall not be located in a required street yard setback. Loading facilities shall not be located within 50-feet of lands zoned or used for residential purposes.
   ii. Loading facilities shall be provided access to a public street and shall not interfere with a public right-of-way. In no instance shall loading areas rely on backing movements into a public right-of-way.
   iii. Screening for loading areas shall be incorporated in the required landscape plan. A combination of elements, including berms, walls, and plantings should be utilized to provide effective screening of loading areas. For double frontage lots, especially those abutting arterial and collector roadways, enhanced landscape and screening measures shall be incorporated into the site and landscape plans. Appropriateness and effectiveness shall be subject to Building Department approval.

f. *Multiple Buildings on a Development Site.* Multiple buildings on the same site shall be designed to create a cohesive visual relationship between the buildings and shall comply with Section 5-134(b)(1) of this Guide.

g. *Construction Phasing*. When there is no alternative but to leave portions of a phased project in an unfinished state over a period longer than one year. (e.g. – expansion wall on industrial building), a mitigation plan shall be submitted and approved by the Community Services Department to ensure acceptable site conditions will be maintained.

3. SIGNAGE All proposed and existing signs shall comply with the City of Rock Falls existing sign ordinance, outlined in Chapter 12.5 of the Municipal Code. Proposed signs should be part of a BSO Plan where applicable.

a. Wall signs shall be part of the architectural concept. Size, color, lettering, location, and arrangement shall be harmonious with the building design, and shall be compatible with signs on adjacent buildings. Signs shall have good proportions appropriate for the subject building and its surroundings (2) Ground or monument signs are strongly encouraged and should be designed to be compatible with the architecture and materials of the building. The same criteria applicable to wall signs shall apply to ground signs.
b. Identification signs of a prototype design shall conform to the criteria for building and ground signs.
c. Materials used in signs shall be harmonious with building design and surrounding landscape.
d. Every sign shall have good scale in its design and in its visual relationship to buildings and surroundings.
e. Colors shall be used harmoniously and with restrain. Excessive brightness and brilliant colors shall be avoided.
f. Lighting shall be harmonious with the design, and comply with the regulations outlined in Section 16-260(e) Of the Municipal Code.
g. The location and design of freestanding signs within a setback area should be coordinated with the landscape treatment.
h. Landscaping, including low growing shrubs, flower, and ground cover is to be provided at the base and full perimeter of such freestanding signs as outlined in Section 5-134(b)(3) of this Guide.

This is a partial list of Design Guidelines. If the project area for submission is not included in these guidelines, it is the applicant's responsibility to obtain copies of the applicable ordinances and permits from the City. Applicant must abide by all City ordinances and permits requirements. These may also be obtained by going to the City's website at www.rockfalls61071.com.

PROJECT TIMELINE/SUMMARY

- ☐ Application is Completed and FIC Receives the Application
- ☐ FIC Reviews Application
- ☐ Façade Improvement Grant Committee Approves or Denies Application
- ☐ Written Notification of Application Approval or Denial
- ☐ Work Commences
- ☐ Project Completion and Final Inspection Performed
- ☐ Submission of Final Documentations to FIC
- ☐ Façade Improvement Grant Committee Requests Reimbursement or Denial of Application to Rock Falls Tourism

1. ***Work Commences*** Work related to the Facade Improvement Program may not begin until authorization from the FIC has been received. Funds spent before approval date will not be eligible for reimbursement. All facade improvement projects must be started within 60 days of project approval. All skilled labor must be paid at prevailing wage per the requirements of the State of Illinois.
2. ***Project Completion Report/Final Inspection*** All facade improvements must be completed within three (3) months of project approval, depending on the project size and business must be ready to serve the public before reimbursement will be granted. An extension may be granted with documented explanation of cause of the delay and the approval of the FIC.
   A final inspection will need to be performed by the City's Building Inspector to verify all applied work has been completed satisfactorily. Once the final inspection is complete and all requirements have been met, applicant can submit for reimbursement of

Reimbursement Request Once work is completed and has been inspected and certified by City's Building Inspector, applicant should submit a copy of permit(s) (if not already submitted), copies of paid invoices from all contractors, proof of all payments (cancelled checks or credit card receipts), a copy of City's certification of completion, a signed Reimbursement Request form and digital copies or photos of all improvements completed to the FIC for review.

All information must be returned to Rock Falls Tourism within 90 days of final inspection.

The FIC will review all submitted documents to insure all work was performed as outlined. The FIC will then present the documents to RFT for approval. Once approved, a check will be dispersed to reimburse for 50% of qualifying expenses.

APPLICATION

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Applications will not be accepted without providing the items on the checklist.

- ☐ Completed Application with Signature & Date
- ☐ Completed Scope of Work Form
- ☐ Complete Written Description of Current Condition of Building
- ☐ Copy of Construction Bid
- ☐ Current Photos of Project Area and Building and Design Diagrams of How the Project Will Appear After Work Is Completed
- ☐ Include Samples of All Materials and Finishes That Will Be Applied to the Facade
- ☐ Copies of All Required Permits

Estimated Total Project Cost $ _____ Amount Requested $ _____

Name _____

Mailing address _____

Phone _____ Email address _____

IS APPLICANT PROPERTY OWNER: YES _____ NO _____ **(if no, please provide the following)**

If applicant is not property owner, the following must be completed by the property owner:

I certify that I, the owner of the property located at _____, authorize the applicant _____, to apply for a reimbursement grant under the Rock Falls Tourism's Facade Improvement Grant Program and to undertake the approved improvements. I understand that work completed must be paid at prevailing wage per the requirements of the State of Illinois.

Property Owner's Name _____

Mailing address _____

Phone _____ Email address _____

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Address of property to be improved_____

Property PIN _____

Name of Business_____

1. Description of Proposed Improvements:

2. Please describe why this proposed improvement project and funding is necessary to your business and the community:

I understand that the Facade Improvement Program Grant must be used for the project described in this application and that the Facade Improvement Committee must review the application and approve it prior to beginning construction. I understand that failure to comply with the approved application may result in losing my eligibility to receive funds.

I acknowledge that the Rock Falls Tourism Committee and the Facade Improvement Committee are obligated only to administer the grant procedures and is not liable to the applicant for any obligations or claims of any nature growing out of, arising out of or otherwise related to the project or application undertaken by the applicant.

Signature of Applicant	**Date**	**Signature of Property Owner**	**Date**

Return Completed Application to: Rock Falls Tourism
Attn: Director of Tourism

Rock Falls Building Department
Attn: Mark Searing

603 W. 10th Street, Suite 1-A
Rock Falls, IL 61071

603 W. 10th Street
Rock Falls, IL 61071

Questions: call (815) 622-1106 or email at: director@visitrockfalls.com

SCOPE OF WORK

Address of property to be improved _____

Applicants name _____

WORK	**COST**
Permit (s), etc.	
Demolition	
Structural Reinforcement	
Masonry Repairs/Cleaning	
Window Replacement/Repair	
Door Replacement/Repair	
Storefront Replacement/Repair	
Painting	
Cornice Replacement/Repair	
Exterior Lighting	
Signage	
Awnings	
Alleyway	
Other than listed*	
Other than listed*	
Other than listed*	
TOTAL	$

*please add additional sheet if needed

WRITTEN DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT CONDITION OF BUILDING

FINAL INSPECTION CERTIFICATION

Date _____

Property Address _____

Applicant's Name _____

- ☐ Work Completed under authority of valid City of Rock Falls building permit
- ☐ Work Completed meets all applicable building codes as adopted by the City of Rock Falls
- ☐ Work completed fully conforms with project description submitted with the applicant's application for the Facade Improvement Program

Comments _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____ _____

Signature of City Inspector Date

_____

Printed Name of Inspector

REIMBURSEMENT CHECKLIST

Please submit the following information to the FIC once the approved work is complete, and the final inspection has been performed:

- ☐ Copy of building permit(s)
- ☐ Copies of paid invoices from all contractors
- ☐ Proof of payment (canceled check or credit card receipt)
- ☐ City's certification of completion (see attached)
- ☐ Submittal for Reimbursement Form
- ☐ Digital copies or photos of all improvements completed
- ☐ Must have no outstanding obligations to the City of Rock Falls

To receive grant reimbursement, you must present the above within 90 days from the date the final inspection was performed.

SUBMITTAL FOR REIMBURSEMENT

Property Address _____

_____

Applicant's Name _____

I, the undersigned, warrant that all representations of the application submitted under the Facade Improvement Program are true and accurate and that there has been no material change that would in itself or cumulatively with other events impair the profitable functioning of my business operation. All agreements, warranties and representations made to the City of Rock Falls are true at the time they were made and shall remain true at the time of submittal for reimbursement under the program. All work done by professional laborers must be paid at prevailing wage per the requirements of the State of Illinois.

The total amount of the grant approved was $_____ toward which I have as of this date paid $_____. I hereby attest that I have not received any other funds from a third party to pay for the work which is paid for by this grant. I hereby certify that the final Costs have been completed at the project address and they have been paid in full and my business is "open for business" as of this date.

_____ _____

Signature of Applicant **Date** **Signature of Property Owner** **Date**

REIMBURSEMENT AUTHORIZATION

_____ _____

Signature Date

_____ _____

Print name Title