



## City of South Milwaukee BUCYRUS STOREFRONT ACTIVATION GRANT GUIDE

The City of South Milwaukee Plan Commission and Economic Development Team administers the Bucyrus Storefront Activation Grant Program. Funding for this program is provided through the Bucyrus Foundation and are subject to annual funding.

### Program Goals

The City of South Milwaukee Bucyrus Storefront Activation Grant Program is designed to encourage the redevelopment of older commercial buildings as vibrant, commercial spaces within the traditional neighborhood downtown district. The city recognizes that many buildings may be non-compliant with modern building codes and that the cost of these improvements often fall to new entrepreneurs looking to establish small businesses.

### Who is Eligible

Owners of properties within South Milwaukee's Downtown District used wholly or partially for commercial activities and proposed new business owners with a signed lease located in the Downtown District are eligible to apply. **Property owners are required to be co-applicant on any grant application for a business owner tenant.**

Applicants must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- Commercial spaces must be located in the Downtown District (Exh A)
- Commercial spaces must be a first-floor and be vacant at the time of application
- Buildings must be greater than 50 years old
- Work must be completed after grant approval to be eligible for grant reimbursement
- Commercial spaces shall be in such condition that the space is not readily leasable
- Completed projects must result in a close-to finished space supporting a relatively quick move-in time for a business
- Street-facing building exteriors that are in poor condition or have unresolved exterior code violations may require façade improvements
- Planned or future business lease agreements shall require a business open to the public at least 25 hours per week

### Funding Details

The program offers reimbursable grants:

- Grant maximum \$20,000; minimum \$3,000
- Grants may not exceed 50% of the total project costs

*If there is a competitive award process, funding for retail and restaurant commercial spaces is preferred*

## Eligible Expenses

The program supports building improvement projects that use quality materials.

Eligible improvements must stay with the property and expenses include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Accessibility improvements
- Building expansion (does not mean a new building addition)
- Drywall, plaster walls, floors or ceilings repair or replacement
- Energy conservation improvements
- Electrical work, including service upgrades
- Fire suppression and fire alert systems
- Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning
- Hood
- Lighting
- Painting
- Plumbing
- Restoration of historic or original interior architectural features, including ceilings, light fixtures, floors and architectural detailing
- Structural repairs
- Utility service upgrades, including water, grease trap, or sewer connections

All applicable project permits must be submitted and approved in order to be eligible.

## Applications

- ☐ Submit the application to the City
- ☐ Include:
  - 2 bids by qualified contractors
  - Digital photographs of interior space
  - Drawings or modified photos showing proposed improvements, where applicable
- ☐ Applications are reviewed by the Plan Commission

Qualified applicants may apply and serve as their own contractor, but only project materials shall be reimbursed. The Plan Commission may approve sole source bids for specialized work, if reasonable attempts to obtain a second bid have been unsuccessful.

**Contact the city economic development manager before submitting an application.**

Submit to: City of South Milwaukee  
2424 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
South Milwaukee, WI 53172  
elang@smwi.org  
414-762-2222 ext 135

*This document is meant as a guide.  
Contact and information about project  
evaluation, commencement and reimbursement  
is not included.  
Further eligibility criteria may apply.*

## Ineligibility

Projects and expenses not eligible:

- Building or land acquisition
- Buildings less than 50 years old
- Conversion of first floor commercial space to residential use
- Demolition, including emergency or safety-related demo expenses (with the exception of demolition that is required for larger catalytic redevelopment opportunities)
- Exterior improvements such as windows, doors or stairways, signs, lighting, etc.
- Flood or water damage repairs
- Furnishings, equipment, or personal/business property not affixed to real estate
- Improvements for tax exempt properties
- Legal fees
- New building construction or addition
- Parking lot resurfacing

- Permit fees
- Pest extermination
- Residential units, either multi-unit or single-family
- Security systems
- Work covered by insurance
- Work begun prior to application submittal or done without a required building permit as part of an approved project

Properties with delinquent fees, including personal property taxes, owed to the City of South Milwaukee or with an active code compliance matter are not eligible. Properties with real estate tax delinquencies, or in litigation, condemnation, foreclosure or receivership are not eligible.