



CITY OF SHAWNEE
POLICY STATEMENT

SUBJECT	POLICY NO.	EFFECTIVE DATE	REVISION DATE	PAGE
	Downtown Improvement Program	PS-47	10/27/2003	08/24/2020

BACKGROUND

In February 2002, the City Council authorized a study of the downtown area. The report generated through that project included many recommendations, and culminated in the appointment of the Shawnee Downtown Partnership (SDP) in late 2002. Since the establishment of the SDP, numerous efforts have been made toward enhancing the viability of the Shawnee Downtown area. Beautification efforts and establishing more visual continuity in the downtown area, especially as it relates to buildings, has been a priority of the SDP. At their October 9, 2003 meeting, the SDP voted unanimously to recommend that the Council establish a grant program and a loan buy-down program to provide additional encouragement to business and property owners to improve the appearance of their buildings. In 2006, the SDP recommended the loan program be extended to include a business loan incentive program designed to help existing businesses expanding or new businesses locating downtown. The policy was revised multiple times after 2006 to extend incentive program offerings and to target desired businesses.

PURPOSE

Maintaining a positive image is important to the City. The appearance of the downtown area plays a vital role in the perception of the quality of the community. The City wants to encourage businesses to invest in their buildings by making attractive improvements on building exteriors. The improved appearance of buildings will make downtown more attractive to customers and to new businesses, contributing to the enhanced viability of the entire area, and to the entire community.

POLICY

Downtown Improvement Grant Program

1. Basic Program Elements

- a. Grants will be awarded as a reimbursement of actual costs for architectural services, construction costs, and/or materials for exterior and interior building and property improvements.
- b. Fifty percent (50%) of the total cost of the improvements up to \$7,500 is reimbursable. The minimum grant amount is \$1,000.
- c. A minimum of \$50,000 will be provided annually for the Incentive Program in the City's Neighborhood Revitalization Special Revenue Fund. Continuation of the program will be considered by the Shawnee Downtown Partnership and the Shawnee Governing Body on an as needed basis. Additional funding may be allocated for the Incentive Program by the Shawnee Governing Body.
- d. Each building/property will be eligible to receive one grant every three years throughout the life of the program.

2. Eligibility Requirements

- a. The building or property must be used for commercial purposes.

POLICY STATEMENT	POLICY NO.	EFFECTIVE DATE	REVISION DATE	PAGE
Downtown Improvement Program	PS-47	10/27/2003	08/24/2020	2 of 5

- b. If the use of the property does not conform to the Zoning Regulations Chapter 17.51, Table of General Use Regulations, Townsquare Zoning District permitted or special uses, the grant funds may only be used for building and property improvements in accordance with the Zoning Regulations Chapter 17.90.
- c. The total cost of the improvements must equal or exceed \$2,000.
- d. Eligible Improvements do not include general on-going maintenance of a building or property. Items that are eligible include but are not limited to:
 - i. Exterior – new construction, new signs, façade renovation beyond painting and general maintenance, awnings, exterior lighting, window and door replacement, place-making enhancements (e.g., art installation, landscaping, outdoor patios, bicycle amenities, and repurposed private parking areas), parking lot reconstruction and resurfacing, seasonal parklet construction and installation, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance for access and egress, screening of ground and roof-mounted equipment, and fencing.
 - ii. Interior – permanent tenant finish improvements, expansion of existing floor area, Fire and Building Code life/safety compliance including installation of fire sprinklers and fire alarms and electrical system upgrades, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance for bathrooms, installation of permanent equipment, including new grease traps and kitchen hoods, and new bathroom facilities.
- e. Properties located within designated Downtown Improvement Program – Eligibility Area (see attachment).
- f. Exterior improvements must be consistent with the Pedestrian Zone and South Nieman Road Design Guidelines. Planning Commission approval is required for significant façade revisions and site improvements, and must be obtained prior to beginning work.
- g. Business owners and/or property owners are eligible to receive grant.
- h. The property cannot have exterior property maintenance violations, and the grant cannot be used to remediate property maintenance violations.
- i. If a building permit is required, one must be obtained by June 1 of grant year and prior to commencement of applicable scope of work. Failure to do so results in a forfeiture of the grant for that program year.
- j. All City, County, State, and Federal requirements must be met with regard to the scope of work.
- k. If progress cannot be demonstrated towards completion of the proposed scope of work by July 1, then the grant is forfeited for that program year. Progress is defined as incurring project costs or a contract or agreement has been executed for the physical improvements to begin within the grant year. Documentation must be provided.
- l. Use of the Downtown Improvement Program grant does not preclude applicants from participating in the Neighborhood Revitalization Program.
- m. Use of the Downtown Improvement Program grant does preclude applicants from receiving a SEED loan for the same scope of work.

POLICY STATEMENT	POLICY NO.	EFFECTIVE DATE	REVISION DATE	PAGE
Downtown Improvement Program	PS-47	10/27/2003	08/24/2020	3 of 5

3. Application Process

- a. Applications will be accepted on a first come, first serve basis for first time recipients beginning January 2 each calendar year through January 31.
- b. Applications will be accepted on a first come, first serve basis beginning February 1 of each calendar year from any eligible business/property owner who has previously received a Downtown Improvement Program incentive.
- c. Once the amount of grant requests has reached the annual funding capacity, applications will be accepted on a waitlist basis. Staff will notify any waitlisted applicants by July 8 if their application can be funded during the applicable grant period.
- d. For all grant requests estimated to be between \$5,001-7,500, a minimum of three (3) quotes must be solicited for the eligible scope of work, and provided to the Community Development Department prior to commencement of the work.

4. Receiving the Grant

- a. Upon completion of the improvements, the applicant must submit proof of payment to the Community Development Department totaling in excess of \$2,000. Monies are payable to the expending party.
- b. For new businesses, the grant may be awarded upon receipt of a Certificate of Occupancy (if applicable) and opening to the public.
- c. Any projects not completed by December 1 of each applicable grant year must request an extension of up to 6 months in writing to the Community Development Department. The applicant must demonstrate progress to obtain an extension, including incurring eligible project costs.

IMPLEMENTATION

1. The revised Downtown Improvement Program as approved by the City Council on August 24, 2020 shall become effective January 1, 2021.
2. Prior recipients include all businesses and/or property owners who received any one of the prior Policy Statement 47 - Downtown Improvement Program grants or loans as effective October 27, 2003 through December 31, 2020.

This policy shall remain in force until officially changed by the majority of the Council Members present and voting; where the number of the favorable votes is one (1) less than required the Mayor shall have the power to cast the deciding vote in favor of the action.

POLICY STATEMENT	POLICY NO.	EFFECTIVE DATE	REVISION DATE	PAGE
Downtown Improvement Program	PS-47	10/27/2003	08/24/2020	4 of 5

CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL AND REVISION DATES

October 27, 2003; November 22, 2004; November 28, 2005; January 28, 2008; March 8, 2010; September 9, 2013; March 23, 2015; November 23, 2015; August 24, 2020

OTHER REFERENCE (COMMITTEE MEETINGS)

October 21, 2003: Public Works and Safety Committee Meeting, Agenda Item 2

June 10, 2007: Public Works and Safety Committee Meeting, Agenda Item 2

December 14, 2007: Public Works and Safety Committee Meeting, Agenda Item 1

August 4, 2020: Council Committee Meeting, Agenda Item 1



Michelle Distler, Mayor



Stephanie Zaldivar, City Clerk

POLICY STATEMENT Downtown Improvement Program	POLICY NO.	EFFECTIVE DATE	REVISION DATE	PAGE
	PS-47	10/27/2003	08/24/2020	5 of 5

Attachment: Downtown Improvement Program – Eligibility Area

