

Sidewalk Subsurface Infill Grant Program

1. **Purpose:** The purpose of this program is to eliminate the existence of hollow basements under the public sidewalks and within the public right-of-way. The intent of this program is to incorporate the subsurface infill project as part of an overall improvement project to the adjacent property owner's building.
2. **Applicability:** Downtown standards for sidewalks will be incorporated into each project. Funds from the Tax Increment Fund (TIF) will be used for all work within the public right-of-way, including excavation, compaction, fill and new sidewalk construction. Any utility service lines or connections, building foundations or any other building projections or protrusions into the public right-of-way will be the responsibility of the applicant.
3. **General Requirements:** The subject property must be located within the Tax Increment Finance District. Property owners seeking assistance from the Sidewalk Subsurface Infill program will provide three written bids. Three written bids/estimates from licensed and bonded contractors eligible to work within the public right-of-way must be obtained by the applicant and submitted with an application request for assistance. The estimates must generally be comparable and address similar aspects of the project in order to have a reasonable comparison of the scope of work to be performed. Upon identifying the lowest estimate/bid, the property owner may apply to the Renaissance Zone Authority for approval of a project. Once approved by the Renaissance Zone Authority and the Board of City Commissioners a signed agreement between all involved parties will be required. If removal of the water and/or sewer line(s) is required by the project, the City of Bismarck will cover fifty percent (50%) of the cost of the reconnection fee, the applicant would be required to cover fifty percent (50%) of the reconnection fee incurred. Properties that are exempt from general property taxes are not eligible to apply for assistance from this program.
4. **Process:** The property owner may apply to the Renaissance Zone Authority for approval of a project. The Renaissance Zone Authority will hold a public hearing and make a recommendation to the Board of City Commissioners based on the findings contained in the staff report. The Board of City Commissioners will take final action based on the recommendation provided by the Renaissance Zone Authority. If the applicant's request is approved by the Board of City Commissioners he/she may instruct the contractor to begin work on the project. The applicant will be responsible for all applicable bills and invoices associated with the project within the private property of the subject property. The City of Bismarck will be responsible for applicable bills and invoices associated with the project within the public

right-of-way. The work performed will be inspected by City staff to ensure appropriate methods of construction were used. The City of Bismarck will remit payment to the contractor for the work performed and completed on that part of the project. The property owner will be responsible for paying any portion of the work within the right-of-way that has been determined to be a private expense located within the public right-of-way and affiliated with the project.

5. **Grant Limits:** The grant limits will be considered on a case-by-case basis based on the estimates and scope of work to be performed.

For all CORE programs:

Reimbursements for work under a CORE program that does not have a stated hourly rate and for which bids or quotes are required will be reimbursed at the lowest quoted or bid amount unless otherwise approved in advance by the Renaissance Zone Authority.

Technical Assistance Bank Grant Program

1. **Purpose:** The purpose of this program is to provide monetary assistance for professional technical services during the preliminary and design phases of projects that involve structural assessment, assessment of suitability for rehabilitation and assessment of mechanical or electrical systems. This program is not intended to provide assistance for projects that mainly consist of remodeling, resurfacing or updating a property.
2. **Applicability:** The program is available to current or potential building owners, tenants, developers or other entities interested in projects that will promote or improve the downtown area in accordance with the Central Business District Plan.
3. **General Requirements:** The subject property must be located within the Tax Increment District (TIF). The projects must support the Central Business District Plan (1993), the Streetscape Guidelines for Downtown Bismarck (1995), any subsequent updates or revisions and the applicable design regulations of the DC-Downtown Core and DF-Downtown Fringe zoning districts for which the property is located within. All work shall be preliminary in scope. Construction work is not eligible for Technical Assistance Bank funds. Properties that are exempt from general property taxes are not eligible to apply for assistance from this program. A remodeling project is not eligible for Technical Assistance Bank funds. A project for the rehabilitation of a building which includes remodeling as a component of the project may be considered.
4. **Process:** The applicant submits an application to the Community Development Department – Planning Division requesting assistance from the Technical Assistance Bank. Planning Division staff will review the applicant’s request and provide a staff report and recommendation to the Renaissance Zone Authority. The Renaissance Zone Authority will hold a public hearing and make a recommendation to the Board of City Commissioners based on the findings contained in the staff report. The Board of City Commissioners will take final action based on the recommendation provided by the Renaissance Zone Authority. If the applicant’s request is approved by the Board of City Commissioners he/she may instruct the architect or engineer providing professional services to begin work on the project. The applicant will be responsible for paying all applicable bills and invoices associated with the project. A request for reimbursement may be submitted to the Planning Division once the professional services have been performed and all related bills have been paid by the applicant.

5. **Grant Limits:** The current hourly rate is \$110/hour and will be evaluated on an annual basis to determine if the rate is consistent with professional architectural and engineering rates. The grant program covers façade design work and other services as delineated below under “Other Technical Services.” Each grant will require a match of funding by the applicant at the percentages listed below:

- *Façade Improvement Grants.* Façade improvement grant funds may be used to secure professional services to assist with the preliminary review and design of improvements to a building façade. The grant is limited to 30 hours of professional service at a rate of \$110/hour. The City of Bismarck will provide a grant for seventy-five percent (75%). Applicants will provide a twenty-five percent (25%) match. The maximum grant amount is \$2,475; the applicant’s responsibility would be \$825 for a total project amount of \$3,300.
- *Other Technical Services Grants.* The grant is limited to 70 hours of professional service at a rate of \$110/hour. The City of Bismarck will provide a grant for seventy-five percent (75%). Applicants will provide a twenty-five percent (25%) match. The maximum grant amount is \$5,775; the applicant’s responsibility would be \$1,925 for a total project amount of \$7,700.

Services which may qualify for façade improvement grant money or other technical service grants include, but are not limited to:

- Feasibility studies
- Preliminary development review assistance
- Preliminary building condition assessment studies – structural, mechanical, electrical, bacterial etc.
- Renovation versus restoration options
- Renovation for reuse studies
- Preliminary cost estimates
- Code analysis
- Landscape improvements
- Graphic design

For all CORE programs:

Reimbursements for work under a CORE program that does not have a stated hourly rate and for which bids or quotes are required will be reimbursed at the lowest quoted or bid amount unless otherwise approved in advance by the Renaissance Zone Authority.

Façade Incentive Grant Program

1. **Purpose:** The purpose of this program is to promote exterior maintenance, rehabilitation and exterior improvements of commercial buildings in order to enhance the overall appearance, quality and vitality of downtown Bismarck.
2. **Applicability:** The program is available to current or potential building owners, tenants, developers or other entities interested in projects that will promote or improve the downtown area in accordance with the Central Business District Plan.
3. **General Requirements:** The subject property must be located within the Tax Increment Finance District (TIF). The projects must support the Central Business District Plan (1993), the Streetscape Guidelines for Downtown Bismarck (1995), any subsequent updates or revisions and the applicable design regulations of the DC-Downtown Core and DF-Downtown Fringe zoning districts. Three written estimates must be obtained by the applicant and submitted with an application request for assistance. The estimates must generally be comparable and address similar aspects of the project in order to have a reasonable comparison of the scope of work to be performed. If the applicant prefers to work with a contractor whose estimate is not the lowest, the maximum grant amount would be based on the lowest estimate provided of a comparable project. For buildings located on a corner lot or a building with multiple facades adjacent to a public street, consideration will be given to allow an increase in the total maximum grant on a case-by-case basis, provided improvements are planned for all façades adjacent to a public street and the proposal satisfies the intent of the applicable zoning district regulations. A primary and secondary façade must be identified and grant amounts would be tiered accordingly. The grant amount available would be discretionary and up to double the amount available for one façade. Rehabilitation projects must address every story of the building façade, all signs of blight, deterioration and any portion of the façade that demonstrates a poor visual appearance, non-period appropriate building materials or renovations, and previous modifications that may compromise the historic integrity of historically significant properties. Properties that are exempt from general property taxes are not eligible to apply for assistance from this program.
4. **Process:** The applicant submits an application to the Community Development Department – Planning Division requesting assistance from the Façade Grant program. Planning Division staff will review the applicant’s request and provide a staff report and recommendation to the Renaissance Zone Authority. The Renaissance Zone Authority will hold a public hearing and make a recommendation to the Board of City Commissioners based on the findings contained in

the staff report. The Board of City Commissioners will take final action based on the recommendation provided by the Renaissance Zone Authority. If the applicant's request is approved by the Board of City Commissioners he/she may instruct the contractor to begin work on the project. The applicant will be responsible for all applicable bills and invoices associated with the project. A request for reimbursement may be submitted by the applicant to the Planning Division at the completion of a project and payment of any related bills or invoices.

5. **Grant Limit:** Façade improvement grant funds are limited to fifty percent (50%) of the total project cost up to \$30,000 (\$60,000 total project costs). If a building lies on a corner lot, with two facades, the maximum grant amount would be \$60,000 (\$120,000 total project cost). Applicants shall provide a fifty percent (50%) match for all applicable improvements.

For all CORE programs:

Reimbursements for work under a CORE program that does not have a stated hourly rate and for which bids or quotes are required will be reimbursed at the lowest quoted or bid amount unless otherwise approved in advance by the Renaissance Zone Authority.

Housing Incentive Grant Program

1. **Purpose:** The purpose of this program is to increase the residency rate and tax base in the downtown area by encouraging the creation of new or substantially rehabilitated housing units within the Tax Increment Finance District (TIF).
2. **Applicability:** The program is available to current or potential building owners, developers or other entities interested in projects that will promote or improve the residency rate and market-rate housing opportunities in the downtown area in accordance with the Central Business District Plan.
3. **General Requirements:** The subject property must be located within the Tax Increment Finance District (TIF). The project must support the Central Business District Plan (1993), the Streetscape Guidelines for Downtown Bismarck (1995), any subsequent updates or revisions and the applicable zoning regulations for which the property is located within. The following criteria must be met:
 - a. Substantial rehabilitation of existing housing and apartment units; including but not limited to, mechanical, electrical, plumbing and HVAC systems, exterior improvements including but not limited to, windows, roofing, exterior siding; interior improvements including but not limited to, flooring, cabinets, fixtures and other capital improvements tied to the living units.
 - b. Creation of new housing units that address the housing goals of the Urban Renewal Plan.
 - c. The minimum investment level is \$20,000 per household/apartment.
 - d. The property must be owner-occupied, rental property or property intended for sale.
 - e. The program is not available for projects tied to state or federal programs that require below market rents or sale prices.
 - f. Each unit/house must meet current building and zoning code regulations listed in Title 4 – Building Regulations and Title 14 – Zoning, of the City Code of Ordinances.Properties that are exempt from general property taxes are not eligible to apply for assistance from this program.
4. **Process:** The applicant must submit an application with supporting plans and information along with three written contractor bids/estimates for the work proposed to the Community Development Department – Planning Division requesting assistance from the Housing Incentive Grant Program. Planning Division staff will review the applicant’s request and provide a staff report and recommendation to the Renaissance Zone Authority. The Renaissance Zone Authority will hold a public hearing and make a recommendation to the Board of City

Commissioners based on the findings contained in the staff report. The Board of City Commissioners will take final action based on the recommendation provided by the Renaissance Zone Authority. If the applicant's request is approved by the Board of City Commissioners he/she may begin work on the project. The applicant will be responsible for all applicable bills and invoices associated with the project. A request for reimbursement may be submitted to the Planning Division at the 50% completion level and 100% completion level of a project.

- 5. Grant Limit:** The grant limit is based upon capital improvements to the property only. Capital improvements include, but are not limited to improvements tied to the building. Typical capital improvements include, exterior improvements such as windows, doors, roofing and siding, HVAC, electrical and plumbing systems; flooring and wall treatments would be eligible when part of a demolition and rehabilitation project only. General maintenance, appliances and fixtures would not be applicable. The maximum grant amount for single, two and three-family dwellings is 20% of the applicant's investment, up to \$70,000. The maximum grant amount for dwellings with four (4) units or more is 20% of the applicant's investment, up to \$100,000.

For all CORE programs:

Reimbursements for work under a CORE program that does not have a stated hourly rate and for which bids or quotes are required will be reimbursed at the lowest quoted or bid amount unless otherwise approved in advance by the Renaissance Zone Authority.