



Commercial Building Improvement Program Offers Assistance to Building Owners

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EDWARDSVILLE – The City has launched a Commercial Building Improvement Program to help encourage safety and accessibility improvements by offering financial assistance to building and business owners.

Improvement projects that meet the program requirements will be eligible to receive 25% of applicable costs. Reimbursements cannot exceed \$25,000. The Commercial Building Improvement Program was initiated and developed by Alderman Chris Farrar, Ward 1, and approved by the City Council in late October.

“This new program provides financial support to help businesses and building owners update these older structures to our current building codes for improved safety,” Farrar said. Specifically, Farrar said he was eyeing enhancements such as sprinkler and fire alarm systems, electrical upgrades and accessibility features such as ramps. “I understand the importance of full participation by all our residents so there is also funding available to retrofit commercial buildings to help with ADA compliance,” Farrar added.

The program drew unanimous support and praise from Mayor Art Risavy and the City Council. Alderman Will Krause, Ward 5, noted that it’s “something that many small businesses certainly need, particularly in our B1 (zoning) district with the older buildings that have some rehabilitation challenges.” The Commercial Building Improvement Program is being offered through the City’s Economic Development Department. Economic and Community Development Director James Arnold will oversee the process and work with applicants.

“The City has created a program with business owners and residents in mind,” Arnold said. “It will allow business owners to address needs in older buildings that also will ensure public safety.”

Eligible properties include all commercial buildings within the B1 zoning district. The improvement must enable the structure to comply with current City building codes or Illinois Accessibility Code requirements. Any B1 commercial building owner or business owner, with the building owner’s authorization, may apply. Funds will be reimbursed by the City after all authorized work is completed, inspected and approved by the City. All applications must be approved before the project is started. Details, including eligibility requirements and an application that can be filled out online or printed and submitted, are on the City’s website: cityofedwardsville.com/CBIP