

**Building Improvement Program Grant Overview**

**City of Pawtucket ARPA Grant Program**

**Applications Open: August 8th 2024 until all funds are obligated**

**All completed applications must be sent to the following email address:**

**arpa-bip@pawtucketri.gov**

**Building Improvement Program (BIP)**

The purpose of the BIP grant is to support work that creates a more welcoming, vibrant, appealing downtown and growth district (train station through downtown to riverfront) streetscape. This geographic area of the City of Pawtucket has been disproportionately negatively impacted by Covid and the small businesses that struggled to survive have left vacancies and property owners have been left without resources to improve property or even to do proper maintenance. The result is a downtown that has been further eroded with prospects for retail and service industry growth very limited.

Eligible proposals will include scope of work elements such as:

* Assistance to tourism, travel, hospitality, and other impacted industries for facilities.
* Rehabilitation of commercial properties, storefront improvements, and/or façade improvements for a small business disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.
* Capital expenditures and other services to address vacant or abandoned properties in a disproportionately impacted community.
* Clearance, demolition, and removal of buildings and improvements, including movement of structures to other sites and remediation of known or suspected environmental contamination. Demolition of HUD–assisted or HUD–owned housing units may be undertaken only with the prior approval of HUD.
* The rehabilitation of publicly or privately owned commercial or industrial buildings, except that the rehabilitation of such buildings owned by a private for-profit business is limited to improvement to the exterior of the building, abatement of asbestos hazards, lead-based paint hazard evaluation and reduction, and the correction of code violations.
* Improvements to increase the efficient use of energy in structures through such means as installation of storm windows and doors, siding, wall and attic insulation, and conversion, modification, or replacement of heating and cooling equipment, including the use of solar energy equipment.
* The rehabilitation, preservation or restoration of historic properties, whether publicly or privately owned. Historic properties are those sites or structures that are either listed in or eligible to be listed in the National Register of Historic Places, listed in a State or local inventory of historic places, or designated as a State or local landmark or historic district by appropriate law or ordinance.

**Introduction:**

The City of Pawtucket is excited to launch an American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funded Building Improvement Program Grant. This initiative is designed to address critical needs within the community, particularly those exacerbated by the ongoing challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. By focusing on buildings in a severely impacted area of the city, this grant program will empower urban stakeholders, strengthen small business resilience, and foster positive social change. These grants can serve as catalysts for innovation, infrastructure improvements, or targeted interventions that address pressing community needs.

If any applicant needs assistance with compliance, design, engineering, project pricing, contractor selection and oversight, the City will be securing technical support from a professional full service project management firm to offer this assistance, without cost to the applicant.

**Building Improvement Program Projects Requirements**

* Applicant must be the building owner of a property that faces a commercial street in the designated impact area
* Proven need for proposed construction
* Satisfies a “but for” rationale for funding need
* Compliance with the design guidelines developed for the Downtown
* If an historic structure, meets requirements of the City Historic Commission
* Utilizes highest standards of construction practices, building and site materials
* Compliance with all zoning, building, and environmental requirements
* Enlists registered architects and engineers, commensurate with project size and complexity
* Enlists experienced project management services
* Has budget that matches specific eligible uses to funds utilized

**Impacted Population Requirements**

All projects must meet ARPA eligibility requirements before awards are made, including targeting requirements for impacted and (where applicable) disproportionately impacted populations. To meet this requirement, only projects located in a Qualified Census tract will be considered. The geography identified in this application meets that standard. For more detailed information consult the [**ARPA Final Rule Overview**](https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/SLFRF-Final-Rule-Overview.pdf)**.** When possible, the City of Pawtucket will work with the applicant to adjust projects to meet these requirements but reserves the right to deny any projects even if they meet eligibility requirements as submitted.

**Eligible Applicants:**

Eligible applicants include for-profit and nonprofit (registered 501c3) property owners or organizations with a stated intention to use the funds to respond to the negative impacts of the covid pandemic within the City of Pawtucket for any one or more of the above stated approved purposes. Applicants must be in good standing with the City and State departments of taxation, have no outstanding code violations, and a proven track record for property construction and maintenance.

**Funding:**

This one-time competitive program will be awarded on a first come first served basis to all eligible applicants until funds are fully utilized or December 31, 2024, whichever comes first. The BIP grant fund has $3,000,000 to be released over the next 2 years, through 2026. The eligible applicants must demonstrate that they can meet the service specifications and standards in this application. All grants will be following a reimbursement fund disbursement structure with the option to request 10% of the grant total up front. If unique aspects of your grant require additional funds up front, please make that clear in your application. Award recipients must meet all applicable regulations and policies, conditions, and requirements for ARPA funds and follow programmatic reporting requirements until project close out. The maximum allocation is $400,000 per project. Leveraging the BIP grant investment is a priority. A match of 10% is required, with points given to higher levels of outside public or private investment, which can include funds already committed to the project.

**Requested amounts:**

When determining the amounts to request please consider:

* Organizational Capacity
* Project Scope and Complexity
* Budget Justification
* Sustainability and Impact
* Collaborations and Partnerships (if any)

The requested grant amounts should be based on a thorough assessment of capabilities, project needs, and anticipated outcomes. Aligning the funding request with the applicant's capacity and the proposed project's scope and impact, may increase chances of securing funding and effectively implementing transformative initiatives that benefit the community. The City of Pawtucket reserves the right to make awards contingent on changes to budget and scope that shifts a project from one funding range to a lower or higher level. Where applicable the applicant can choose to make the requested changes and propose an adjusted project for final City approval or to deny the request and not receive funding.

**Ineligible Uses and Applicants:**

* Replacement of already covered expenses by internal or other funding sources.
* Building expenses that are not directly and exclusively for the approved scope of work
* Expenses that do not fit under the eligible uses listed
* Any organization debarred from receiving federal funds, has had audited negative compliance findings, or if the organization or individuals within the organization are under criminal investigation

**Reporting Requirements**

Selected organizations are expected to provide quarterly reports. This includes:

* Project Status Report, submitted by the 14th of each month to the contract administrator in the City of Pawtucket
* Supporting documentation for the Project Status Report (includes receipts and proof of payments)
* Reporting expenditures in the specific category (ies) identified in approved project scope

**Budget Templates:**

The budget template or Sources and Uses statement updates, shall include the total cost of the program for the complete performance in accordance with the requirements and specifications herein, as well as the breakdown between City of Pawtucket funds and other committed resources. The applicant shall not invoice for any amounts not allowed for in the line-item budget provided with their application.

**General Information on Submitting Applications**

**1) Award or Rejection: All qualified applications will be evaluated and awarded to property owners or organizations whose capabilities are deemed in the best interest of the City of Pawtucket.** The City of Pawtucket reserves the unqualified right to reject any or all offers if determined not to be in its best interest. Successful applicants will be notified upon review by the City of Pawtucket.

**2) Cost of Application Preparation:** Any cost incurred by the applicant in preparing or submitting an application is its sole responsibility; the funding agency will not reimburse for any pre-award costs incurred.

**3) Reference to Other Data:** Only information received in response to this Request for Applications (RFA) will be evaluated; reference to information previously submitted will not suffice.

**4) Form of Application:** Each application must be submitted as a single file PDF per document upload section. (budgets in excel)

**5) Exceptions**: All applications are subject to the terms and conditions outlined herein. All responses will be controlled by such terms and conditions.

**6) Advertising:** In submitting its application, the applicant agrees not to use the results therefrom or as part of any news release or commercial advertising without the prior written approval of The City of Pawtucket.

**7) Right to Submitted Material**: All responses, inquiries, or correspondence relating to or in reference to the RFA, and all other reports, charts, displays, schedules, exhibits, and other documentation submitted by the applicant will become the property of the City of Pawtucket when received.

**8) Property Owner’s or Organization's Representative** Each applicant shall submit with its application the name, address, and telephone number of the person(s) with authority to bind the property owner or organization and answer questions or provide clarification concerning the application.

**9) Subcontracting** The applicant may self perform the proposed scope of work or propose to subcontract portions of the work, provided their application indicates the scope of the work to be subcontracted, and to whom.

**10) Federal Certifications** Property owners or organizations receiving Federal funds will be required to execute Federal Certifications regarding Non-discrimination, Drug-Free Workplace, Environmental Tobacco Smoke, Debarment, Lobbying, and Lobbying Activities. Federal Certifications must be signed or returned with the application.

**Application Content and Instructions**

The applicant must clearly demonstrate in its proposal a response to how the applicant’s organization will meet or address the requirements described in the program objectives. The applicant’s proposal shall include the following items in the order provided in the application and clearly marked as such. See each section below for detailed information.

**Use the following email address to submit your application and required supporting documents: arpa-bip@pawtucketri.gov**

**A. Project Description:**

Communicate the objectives of the project and the benefits of the finished product. Explain why the proposed project is a good use of Covid dollars and how the project could not proceed “but for” the requested funding. Describe the potential impact and other effects on your community and its residents. Provide a timeline for project completion.

**B. Organization Background and Qualifications:**

Describe the applicant and/or organization and its qualifications for funding including qualifications/background of key staff and experience of the firm in executing projects of this kind

·

**C. Assessment of Needs**:

Problem (explain why the work is necessary), and how your organization is proposing to address this problem. Explain who will benefit from the proposed improvements, including your targeted end users. Identify potential challenges the project may face (regulatory, environmental, historic or other constraints) and discuss how these challenges will be addressed and/or minimized.

**D. Line-Item Budget and Budget Narrative** (template provided):

The budget should identify all labor and materials and in the Narrative section, explain how the numbers were calculated. The Budget Narrative is the justification of ‘how’ and/or ‘why’ a line item is necessary. It is also used to determine if the cost in the contract is reasonable, proportionate and permissible.

**Application Schedule Summary:**

The project may start as soon as an Award Letter is received and the work of the project cannot extend beyond **September 30, 2026**. Application portal is open on **August 8, 2024** and posted on the city website. The grant program will continue until funds are fully allocated. A Q&A session is scheduled for 1pm on **August 19, 2024** facilitating an interactive platform for queries and clarifications. The session will be recorded for future reference, and the recording will be posted on the city website to ensure accessibility to all stakeholders. The assessment phase commences promptly, with reviews conducted every 2 weeks for the first 2 months and every four weeks thereafter, ensuring a timely and efficient evaluation process. Following a complete assessment, grant awards will be announced, and successful recipients promptly notified of their selection. It is imperative to note that within two weeks of notification and formalization of any project modifications, grant recipients are required to sign the necessary agreements, locking in funding allocations.

To submit questions please email [**arpa-bip@pawtucketri.gov**](mailto:arpa-bip@pawtucketri.gov)with the subject line **BIP Questions**

Link for Q and A Session on **August 19, 2024 at 1pm** will be posted on our website at [**https://www.pawtucketri.gov/arpa-bip**](https://www.pawtucketri.gov/arpa-bip)