



City of Racine

730 Washington Ave.

Program Contact:

Ken Plaski

Chief Building Official

(262) 636-9161

The White Box Program is targeted to currently vacant first-floor interiors of commercial buildings older than 50 years for the purpose of bringing these older commercial spaces into conformity with modern building code requirements. The goal of the program is to incentivize older, first floor commercial spaces into active, code conforming "white boxes" for lease or use by retail and restaurant tenants.

Remember to consult with City Building Department to determine project eligibility and to understand if building permits and inspections will be required as part of your project.

Commercial "White Box" Grant Program

The program will make available a new business development incentive to commercial building owners, leaseholders, and developers. The incentive will offer reimburseable grant funds up to \$10 per square foot with a maximum of \$20,000. The grant may not exceed 50% of the total white box project costs.

Eligible Project Costs

1. All work must be for a currently vacant, commercially-zoned building, older than 50 years old, on property located within the program boundaries (see attached map).
2. Grants are only for currently vacant first floor spaces with an active street presence along an arterial/trunk street. Interior improvements only. Works must be in accordance with City Building Codes and with building permits, if required.
3. Interior plumbing, electrical, and HVAC improvements that results in compliance with current building codes.
4. Repairing or replacing dry wall, plaster walls, floors, or ceilings.
5. Repairing or construction of required bathrooms.
6. Repairs or construction required under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Ineligible Project Costs

1. Correcting outstanding code violations, for property damage by collision, acts of nature, or any occurrence covered by insurance
2. Work begun or materials purchased before grant approval
3. Personal property, security systems, kitchen equipment, lighting
4. Windows, doors, stairways, signage, decorations, paint/wallpaper
5. Exterior improvements
6. Building permits, government approvals, taxes, or fees
7. Grant will not reimburse for labor if self-contracted. Material cost and labor costs of employees are eligible, if the number of hours worked, rate of pay are provided through timecards/check stubs/contract documents.

Ineligible properties

Properties that are: tax exempt, in litigation/condemnation/receivership, holding outstanding fees/penalties/delinquencies to federal, state, or local governments, in violation of Racine licensing, not on arterial/trunk streets, less than 50 years old.

Award of Grant

The grant will be awarded as a reimbursement after documentation of project completion is provided. The grant will be limited to eligible costs equalling \$10 per square foot, no more than 50% of the total white box eligible project costs, for a maximum of \$20,000.

Grant Application Process

- A pre-application meeting with the Chief Building Inspector is required
- Grant application will be reviewed by the Chief Building Inspector
- If the application is complete, will schedule for review at the Downtown Area Design Review Committee (DADRC). Chief Building Inspector will participate in review and will provide a recommendation.
- Applicant should prepare to attend the DADR Committee to speak to their application.
- DADRC will review and provide a recommendation to the City Redevelopment Authority (RDA).
- RDA will review the application and approve or deny. Work should not begin until after RDA approval has been provided.

Reimbursement can be refused in whole or in part if:

- The completed project does not conform to the program guidelines.
- The completed project does not conform to the application submitted.
- The project required building permits that were not acquired before work began.
- Project is not commensurate with the workmanship and cost customary in the industry.
- Project that is not completed within 120 days of receiving approval (time extensions can be considered ONLY if made in writing and progress toward completion has been demonstrated).
- Building Division staff will inspect all work to ensure compliance with application and approval.
- Any changes to the approved application and plans require a written requires from the applicant and approval by the Chief Building Inspector.

Application Contents

- ☐ Completed application form
- ☐ Photos of existing conditions
- ☐ Scaled floor plans
- ☐ Permit Applications, if required
- ☐ Samples of materials to be used
- ☐ A minimum of two (2) competitive bids from licensed and bonded contractors (Bids should include detailed cost information and schedules to begin and complete work)
- ☐ If project is self-contracted and labor costs are requested for employees, include hours worked, rate of pay, and employee social security numbers on a separate sheet of paper, sealed within an envelope. Verification through time cards, check stubs, or contracts may be required.

COMMERCIAL “WHITE BOX” GRANT APPLICATION

Applicant/Project Contact Information

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Business or Leaseholder Information

Name of business:

Business Owner's/Leaseholder's Name:

Address:

Phone:

Property Owner Information

Name:

Address:

Years Owned Building:

Age of Building:

Area of First Floor (Square Feet):

Proposed Improvements (describe in detail)

Estimated Project Costs (detail out, separate labor and materials)

Project Schedule (construction begin, end, and lease-up dates)

Applicant Certification

I have read the grant program guidelines (attached) If the application if approved, I will make the interior improvements described in this application, consistent with City Building Codes, and will complete within 120 days of approval.

Applicant Signature: _____

Date: _____

Written Consent of Property Owner

Written consent of the property owner is required when the applicant and property owner are different entities or persons. Please submit with initial White Box grant application.

- I certify that I am aware of the attached application for the City of Racine White Box Program submitted for property that I own by a developer or leaseholder.
- I give my permission to the applicant, if a lessee or developer, to apply for the grant.
- I consent to the improvements proposed for my building and will accept responsibility for any permit or code violations that arise from the proposed improvements.
- I acknowledge that the City Building Division employees will inspect my property during the application period and will make reports as to compliance with building codes. By submitting this application, I consent to all inspections by the City Building Division employees for the purposes of this application consideration.
- I acknowledge that depending on the building, proposed use, size of building, building components, etc. it may be necessary for multiple City inspectors to inspect the building or space to provide a complete overview. The inspectors will assess the building and provide a Summary of Findings Report (SFR). The SFR will identify the major impediments necessary to address before occupancy of the building or space.
- I acknowledge the White Box Inspection is not intended to identify every detail or every code requirement. The intent is to identify significant deficiencies in the building or space (based on the applicant's proposed use) that will add a significant cost to their plan to occupy the space.
- I acknowledge that it may still be necessary for the applicant or me to obtain the services of a professional to prepare plans and specifications for their project.
- I certify that the subject property does not have any outstanding fees, penalties, or delinquencies with federal, state or local units of government (County, City of Racine).
- I certify that the subject property is not in foreclosure, litigation, condemnation, or receivership.
- I certify that I am not in violation of any City alcohol or soda licensing requirements.
- I certify that this subject building is more than 50 years old.
- I certify that this property is not tax exempt and is up to date on property taxes.
- I acknowledge that the applicant will receive the grant reimbursement and that reimbursement will be made after improvements have been inspected and proper documentation has been provided to the City of Racine.

Name of Property Owner:

Address of Subject Property:

Signature of Property Owner: _____

Date:

REQUEST FOR REIMBURSEMENT

Use this form for requesting reimbursements for approved White Box Grants.

Required Attachments to Request

- ☐ Copy of all relevant permits (building, electrical, plumbing, health, occupancy, etc.)
- ☐ Photos of completed work
- ☐ Contractor and supplier invoices
- ☐ Lien waivers from all contractors and suppliers
- ☐ If materials and supplies purchased separately, include itemized receipts or invoices from the applicable merchants or suppliers
- ☐ If labor supplied by an independent contractor, provide a copy of the signed contract that includes the terms of employment between the laborers and the grant recipient
- ☐ If labor supplied by grant recipient's employee(s), provide:
 - ☐ Weekly time records for each employee that indicate the name of the each employee, employee contact information, social security number, days and hours worked, rate of pay, nature of work performed
 - ☐ Copy of all cancelled paychecks

Reimbursement Request Amount:

Explanation of Reimbursement Request:

Applicant Certification

I certify that the information submitted for this application for reimbursement is true.

Applicant Signature: _____

Date: _____

