

# Policy Statement

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**Policy Title:** Conforming Sign Grant  
**Effective:** January 11, 2018  
**Approved By:** Valparaiso Redevelopment Commission  
**Last Updated:** January 11, 2018

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## **Introduction**

The following Policy Statement defines the acceptable distribution of Sign Grant (“Grant”) funds provided by the City of Valparaiso Redevelopment Commission (“Commission”) to local businesses located along the Calumet Avenue Corridor (see Exhibit A).

## **Background**

Along Calumet Avenue, many “pole signs” were installed before the City of Valparaiso changed the zoning code to disallow this type of signage. Existing City code allows these pole signs to remain as they are; however, no structural or electrical repairs can be made. Instead, businesses must replace their pole signs with a monument sign, blade sign, or other conforming sign, if they intend to update signage. Therefore, the Redevelopment Commission aims to incentivize local businesses to transition away from pole signs along Calumet Avenue through this “Sign Grant” program.

## **Policy Statement**

Any business along the Calumet Avenue Corridor may submit two quotes from different signage companies for:

- i. The demolition of their current pole sign; and
- ii. The cost of a replacement conforming sign.

Quotes must include proofs of future signage for pre-approval from the City Planning Director. The Commission will consider the cost of the two quotes and may choose to grant the selected business a sign grant. Through this grant, the Commission will pay the first \$10,000 in expenses and half of the next \$10,000 in expenses. The most the Commission will grant for any one sign is \$15,000. In addition to the granted amount, City permitting costs will be fully reimbursed. If a grant is awarded, the grantee will receive funds up to the designated amount through a reimbursement process wherein the grantee will submit receipts to the Redevelopment Commission. Total available funds are set annually through the Commission’s budget.

The Commission reserves the right to offer additional financial assistance to property owners updating signage along Calumet Avenue, and will award funds on a case-by-case basis.

## **Legal**

Pursuant to Indiana Code § 36-7-14-39(b)(3)(J) the Commission, may use tax increment funds to pay expenses incurred by the Commission for local improvements that are in or serving the allocation area.

## **Procedure**

Once quotes and proofs are received by Commission staff for sign demolition and reconstruction, Commission staff will notify the business of their intention to review and vote on grant eligibility. The business owner will be required to attend a Redevelopment Commission meeting along with representatives of the selected signage company to help explain sign improvements. Following a Commission vote, the business will be notified of total grant funds available and will be invited to submit receipts for reimbursement.

## **Submission of Claims**

Claims for reimbursement may be submitted at any time on a rolling basis, but in order to pay claims by the end of the budget year, claims must be submitted to the Director of the Redevelopment Commission by November 30, 2018. There is no guarantee that claims for the Sign Grant program will be processed past the 2018 budget year.

Invoices describing the work performed and expenses advanced for payment must be submitted to the Commission's Executive Director by mail or email ([lorchard@valpo.us](mailto:lorchard@valpo.us)) no later than the end of business on the first day of the month for processing. Late invoices may not be processed until the following month's Commission meeting.

## **Disclaimer**

Grant funds are subject to available funding in the Commission's annual budget and are provided at the sole and absolute discretion of the Commission. Grant fund availability is also subject to any limitations as provided in bond covenants, resolutions or applicable federal, state and local laws. Unused funds fall into fund balance, and are not eligible to be carried forward for future years.

Grants will be considered and awarded on a first-come basis. Applicants are encouraged to submit their applications early.

EXHIBIT "A"

