



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Economic Development Division

Gallery District Incentive Program

The purpose of the Gallery District Incentive Program is to promote art galleries as a niche market within downtown Urbana. The program is funded by Urbana's Tax Increment Finance Districts, TIF 1 and TIF 2, and serves the Downtown Strategic Plan's Niche Market Initiative by catalyzing private investment.

The proprietor of a for-profit art gallery may apply for:

- A subsidy of 50 percent of the business's rent for 12 months (maximum of \$600 a month), **AND**
- A \$2,000 start-up grant to offset costs related to relocation, advertising, and tenant improvements.

Qualifications and conditions:

- The business must be locating in a building within TIF 1 or TIF 2.
- The business must be a start-up or a relocation of an existing business from outside of TIF 1 or TIF 2.
- The business must not yet have opened at the qualifying location.
- A business may only use this program once.
- The lease term must be for a period of at least 2 years.
- City staff will verify that the rental amount in the lease agreement is not above market rate.
- The applicant must present a business or financial plan evidencing their ability to pay rent and operating costs for at least 2 years.
- The business or financial plan should indicate the proposed operating hours. Preference will be given to businesses that post and observe customer-friendly business hours.

Approval, payments, and compliance:

- Approval is at the discretion of the City based on fund availability and the ability to meet the goals and guidelines of the program. Partially compliant applications may be considered on a case-by-case.
- If approved, start-up grant funds will be paid to the business owner upon opening.
- The rent subsidy is paid directly to the landlord.
- The subsidy will be paid for 12 consecutive months provided that the business is open and operating.
- The landlord will be required to notify the city if tenant business closes or does not pay rent.
- City staff will arrange periodic visits to check on progress and offer assistance.