



<b>Meeting Date:</b>	February 23, 2026
<b>Submitter:</b>	Daniel Ritter, Community & Economic Development Director
<b>Department:</b>	Community & Economic Development
<b>Agenda Item:</b>	Sopranos Pizza & Catering, 20641 Renwick Road - Façade Improvement Grant for Signage (After-the-Fact)

**Summary:**

The Façade Improvement Grant Program has been in place and funded for several years, but has only been utilized once in the last 6 years. The one approval for The Feathered Fork’s wall sign (approved October 2025) is not expected to be funded or completed per the grant requirements due to the owner temporarily closing and rebranding the restaurant. The overall goal of the grant is to stimulate high-quality exterior building improvements on existing commercial buildings that improve the community’s appearance while also supporting businesses. The grant reimburses applicants (property owner or tenant with owner approval) up to 50% of eligible project costs, not to exceed \$10,000 per property.

Soprano’s Pizza and Catering is a new business that has reoccupied a commercial space that most recently operated as Burger City. Soprano’s remodeled and opened the restaurant space at 20631 Renwick Road in October 2025. The business primarily serves to-go pizzas but has a large variety of food options, including salads, burgers, and beef. This is the second Soprano’s location, with the first location in Lockport.

The grant request is for work that has already completed, which includes a new signage for the business. Per the Façade Improvement Grant Program document, after-the-fact grants are discouraged since it does not allow for prior council review of the proposal or bids. However, it does leave approval of after-the-fact proposals to the discretion of the City Council. The owner had noted they were not aware of the program until after their work had started and when The Feathered Fork had applied for their grant for a wall sign in the same Plaza. The work was completed by US Sign and Electric. All work has been completed, inspected, and fully paid for. To the right, there is a breakdown of the sign work costs.

<b>Improvement</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Sign Eligible Costs	\$2,197.81
Total Grant Request (50% of total)	<b>\$1,098.91</b>

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While the grant can be used for many things, including signage, the original intent of the grant was to accomplish larger facade improvement, and not necessarily for just tenant signage changes. However, the only grant that has been previously approved in many years was for The Feathered Fork in the same Plaza. That grant was approved but is not expected to meet the conditions of reimbursement for the grant. With no other interest, this project can start to pave a path forward for other businesses and property owners to utilize it. Additionally, this specific space has had a revolving door of restaurants, and a little bit of support up front can assist in its success. If the program becomes more competitive in future budget years, the council’s project preferences will become more relevant. Staff is working to bring changes and clarifications to the City Council for the Façade Improvement Grant in 2026 as well as target specific commercial properties that are highly visible and benefit from façade improvements.

<b>Financial/Budget Info</b>	
Budgeted FY26	\$12,750.00
Currently Obligated* FY26	\$2,631.90*
Requested Grant	\$1,098.91
Remaining Budget FY26	\$9,019.19
*Grant conditions are not expected to be fulfilled for previously approved grant.	

**Recommended Council Action:**

Discuss the proposed after-the-fact Façade Improvement Grant application for signage improvements at Soprano’s Pizza & Catering, 20641 Renwick Rd, in an amount not to exceed \$1,098.91, and move the item to the March 2, 2026, Regular Meeting Agenda for final consideration.

Attachments

- A. Completed Wall Sign Photo
- B. Proposal and Façade Improvement Grant Application – Soprano’s
- C. Contractor Letter of Completion and Payment – US Sign & Electric

**Exhibit 1 – Existing Wall Sign Photo**

