



DEPARTMENT OF NEIGHBORHOOD & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

Commercial Corridor Improvement Fund

Request for Applications

CITY OF SYRACUSE
BEN WALSH, MAYOR
DEPARTMENT OF NEIGHBORHOOD & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT
ADDRESS: 201 East Washington Street, Suite 612 Syracuse, NY 13202
EMAIL: business@syr.gov • WEB SITE: www.syr.gov/Neighborhood_and_Business_Development

Commercial Corridor Improvement Fund | Request for Applications Information + Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Using funding allocated from the Federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), the City of Syracuse has created an investment program designed to support the redevelopment and improvement of commercial and mixed-use properties that are underutilized in order to assist in the ongoing recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, reactivate storefronts, and foster new growth. Please see information and instructions on how to apply below.

1. What is the ARPA Commercial Corridor Improvement Fund?

In order to help address the economic challenges and hardship experienced by the small business and real estate community in Syracuse since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, the City of Syracuse has established a new capital improvement grant program to spur revitalization on commercial corridors and activate ground level storefronts. The goal of the program is to generate new investment within Syracuse neighborhoods while creating greater economic opportunity. The program is designed to promote economic recovery, and leverage new investment within commercial and mixed-use properties, with particular emphasis placed on neighborhood businesses districts and commercial corridors.

2. Who is eligible to apply?

Eligible applicants include those who own or occupy space within a property that is physically located in the City of Syracuse that is classified with a commercial use – this may include mixed-use buildings that contain residential apartments. Any property considered eligible must currently contain a significant portion of vacant and underutilized space at the time of this application. ‘Significant vacancy’ is defined as a minimum of 40% of the total square footage of the building that is not used or occupied. New construction projects are also qualified for funds. Both for-profit and nonprofit / 501c3 or c4 organizations are eligible to apply. Additionally all real estate and capital upgrades may only include properties located within a qualified ARPA census tract ([see map here](#)). A copy of the map can also be found on Page 15 within the request for applications document. Finally, all projects considered must have an estimated total development cost that does not exceed \$2,000,000. Under limited circumstances, a project with a total development cost of up to \$10,000,000 may be considered eligible, known as a ‘Neighborhood Catalyst’ project. These larger projects will include must adhere to higher threshold of MWBE utilization goals. Please note the total development cost does not include acquisition of a property.

More information on the project categories included within the ARPA Commercial Corridor Improvement Program can be found in the following table below:

Project Category	Estimated Total Project Cost Amount	Maximum Award Amount	Qualifications	MWBE Utilization
Level 1	\$10,000 to \$100,000	\$25,000	Exterior enhancements, façade improvements	30% of the total project award amount
Level 2	\$100,001 to \$1,000,000	\$50,000	Interior buildout to expand existing business or welcome new tenant	30% of the total project award amount
Level 3	\$1,000,001 to \$2,000,000	\$100,000	New construction/development; significant interior and exterior improvements	30% of the total project award amount
Quality of Life Corridor Improvements	Up to \$2,000,000	\$100,000	Public Area Improvements e.g. new lighting, shared energy efficiency upgrades, shared parking lot, gateway signage	30% of the total project award amount
Neighborhood Catalyst	Between \$2,000,000 to \$10,000,000	\$100,000	Large scale investment project that will create economic opportunity - must result in job creation. Project must involve new construction or adaptive reuse of longtime vacant structure	100% of the total project award amount

3. Can a commercial tenant of a building that needs improvement apply for this program?

Yes, however the property owner must sign the application and must agree to the improvements included in the proposed scope of work, as well as the terms and conditions if awarded. Additionally, if selected to receive funding assistance, the property owner must agree to a lien being placed on the property for the term of the program.

4. What uses qualify to receive funds through the Corridor Improvement Program?

Qualifying expenses and purchases may include but are not limited to: exterior façade improvements, ground level storefront enhancements, siding, painting, entry/window replacement; masonry/brick repairs; new exterior awnings or signage; interior buildout of vacant ground level commercial space. Projects that involve new construction and development are also considered eligible. Costs related to procuring design services and/or technical assistance will also be deemed eligible, however the total portion of the award used for these “soft costs” is limited to 10% of the total allocation. Projects should identify the name of the design and construction professionals they will be working with as part of the application process. Funds cannot be used for acquisition of a building or property.

In addition to capital improvements involving an existing structure, the program will also make funding available for commercial corridor enhancements to address quality of life concerns including lighting, accessibility, and environmental sustainability. These “Quality of Life” (QOL) improvements must require an applicant/sponsor and require a minimum funding match of 20%. Eligible quality of life corridor improvements will include: new lighting enhancements along building storefronts in the right of way (ROW); gateway signage to assist with branding within the corridor; site work enhancements for shared-parking facilities; and sustainable amenities such as urban new tree plantings that will increase canopy coverage or solar panels to provide energy efficiency upgrades. Building owners of eligible properties can incorporate quality of life improvements as part of their project, if desired, but cannot apply for funding under multiple categories. Only one application per eligible project will be accepted.

This program cannot reimburse previous expenses, with the exception of any eligible pre-development soft costs that have been expended to the project (again, a maximum of 10% of the total award), however these expenses cannot be earlier than January 1, 2022. All remaining eligible expenses assisted by this program must be expended after the award date.

5. Will funding be limited for use within designated Commercial Corridors?

No. The funds are available for eligible project sites throughout the City of Syracuse within ARPA eligible census tracts. However, please note that particular emphasis will be placed upon corridors designated as part of the City of Syracuse Resurgent Neighborhoods Initiative (RNI). *The following corridors are included as part of the Resurgent Neighborhoods Initiative*

- Burnet Avenue
- Butternut Street
- Erie Boulevard East
- South Geddes Street
- James Street
- North Salina Street
- South Salina Street
- South Avenue
- West Onondaga Street
- Wolf Street

6. How will funds be disbursed if my project is selected?

This program will have the ability to reimburse expenses as phases of the project are completed in partial draws. Grant proceeds will be disbursed upon approval from the City of Syracuse Department of Neighborhood & Business Development, and following execution of the necessary closing documents. Projects selected through the program will have the ability to receive partial draws upon completion of critical steps in the development process.

As part of the application process, proposed expenses and project costs should be itemized and explain how ARPA funds will be used as part of the project. The City may approve some requested expenses and disapprove others if the proposed costs do not meet the program requirements to receive funding. The City of Syracuse reserves the right to provide a smaller grant amount than originally requested.

As part of successful grant award, recipients will be eligible for an initial disbursement of up to \$10,000 to be used for pre-development expenses (including but not limited to architectural plans, engineering reports, environmental assessments). This funding can be disbursed upon execution of a contract agreement and prior to project completion. ARPA grant funds used for pre-development expenses shall not exceed more than 20% of the total award.

7. Is there a match requirement from applicants?

Yes. All projects must provide a 50% match from other identified funding sources in order to be considered eligible for receive an award through the ARPA Commercial Corridor Improvement Program. The only exception to this is the Quality of Life (QOL) enhancements, in which a minimum 20% match is required from applicants.

All applicants must identify the source of matching funds and explain how these will be secured as part of the application process.

8. Are there Minority and/or Women-owned Business Enterprise (MWBE) Goals as part of this program?

Yes. The City of Syracuse will require all projects to the minimum threshold of 30% utilization of City and/or New York State certified MWBE firms. All eligible vendors, contractors, and subcontractors must be certified at the time the work is being completed.

Additionally, any investment considered for funding with a total development cost of between \$2 Million and \$10 Million and seeking funds under the “Neighborhood Catalyst” category will be required to allocate 100% of a funding award to City and/or New York State Certified MWBE firms.

9. Can a property owner or business submit multiple applications if the project involves more than one property?

No. Only one application may be submitted by an applicant, and should select the project and/or property they would like to prioritize for this program.

10. Will funding be limited for use within designated Commercial Corridors?

No. The funds are available for eligible project sites throughout the City of Syracuse within ARPA eligible census tracts. However, please note that particular emphasis will be placed upon corridors designated as part of the City of Syracuse Resurgent Neighborhoods Initiative (RNI). *The following corridors are included as part of the Resurgent Neighborhoods Initiative:*

11. How can eligible applicants submit the necessary paperwork, including the application and supporting documentation?

Funds are limited. In order to seek funding, all interested applicants are required to fill out the application form beginning on Page 6 of the request for application (RFA) document. Electronic copies of the RFA are available online at the City of Syracuse Website at www.syr.gov.net Please see the “Application Instructions” on Page 5 of this document for more information.

Fully completed applications and required supporting documentation can be submitted starting on **Monday, April 18, 2022**. Applications will be accepted through **Wednesday, June 15, 2022 at 12:00 PM**. Only fully completed applications with all supporting documentation will be considered.

Applications and supporting materials can be submitted one of the following ways:

- A) Email electronically to business@syr.gov.net
- B) Applications can be dropped off physically or mailed to the following address: City of Syracuse Department of Neighborhood & Business Development, 201 East Washington Street, Suite 612, Syracuse, NY 13202

12. How will funding requests be reviewed?

Funding requests will be considered by City of Syracuse staff and members of the Syracuse Common Council Economic Development Committee. The review committee will oversee the decision making process of all completed applications received. Following careful review and analysis, funding decisions will be made in June/July 2022, and a contract agreement must be executed with approved applicants prior to disbursement of any grant funds can occur.

13. What is the timeline of the program?

Any project that is selected and approved to receive funding must have design plans completed and submitted to the City of Syracuse within 6 months of the award date. Following review by the City's Central Permit Office and Office of Zoning Administration, all projects must commence within one (1) year of the award date. All projects must be completed with a certificate of occupancy within two (2) years of the award date.

14. Are there any job creation requirements for this program?

Projects under \$2 Million in total cost amount will not be subject to job creation requirements. For any project between \$2 Million and \$10 Million as part of the category of "Neighborhood Catalyst" will be required to create one (1) new full time equivalent (FTE) position for every \$25,000 in grant funding awarded.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Access and download the ARPA Commercial Corridor Improvement Fund application on the City of Syracuse Website (application also begins on Page 6 of this document): http://www.syr.gov.net/neighborhood_and_business_development
2. Carefully review and fill out/complete the application form. Please note in addition to the completed application, the proposal must provide the required supporting documentation items included in the application form.
3. Assess the checklist of items needed in order to ensure your application is complete at the time of submission. Please be aware of timelines required to receive 3rd party contractor quotes or estimates from design professionals in order to render services for cost projections and develop a detailed scope of work.

Please note in addition to the aforementioned list of required items, the City reserves the right to request additional financial or other corporate governance or other materials or information it deems necessary to adequately review and assess the application following submission.

4. Submit the completed application and supporting materials by email (preferred method) or by mail as noted above no later than **12:00 PM on Wednesday, June 15, 2022**. All questions regarding this program and application materials should be directed to City of Syracuse Staff and sent by email to: business@syr.gov.net.
5. Applicants shall cooperate with the City of Syracuse to satisfy any State or Federal mandated reporting requirements.



ARPA Commercial Corridor Improvement Fund

Program Application

1. APPLICANT INFORMATION

Legal Business / Applicant Name: _____ Year Founded: _____

Business Address: _____ Zip Code: _____

Applicant/Primary Contact: _____ Title: _____

Applicant Email: _____ Phone: _____

Project Identification:

What category best defines your proposed project:

Building renovation New Construction Quality of Life Corridor Enhancement

Is the project site address the same as the business address? Yes No

If No, please identify the project address: _____ Zip Code: _____

What is the total cost of the project (including all funding sources)?: \$ _____

Is your project site located within a designated ARPA eligible census tract*? Yes No

**Note: If you answered no, your project is not eligible to receive ARPA funds through the Commercial Corridor Improvement Fund. Please see the map included on Page 15 or [see our online mapping tool here](#) in order to see the boundaries for more information.*

Which best describes the ownership of the property:

Private/For-profit Corporation Individual owner Not-for-Profit Corporation

Which industry classification best describes your organization (check no more than 2):

Retail Trade Food Service Manufacturing Tourism / Travel / Hospitality

Personal Services Medical Services Transportation Child Care

Community Non-profit Real Estate Development Other: _____

2. CURRENT PROPERTY CONDITIONS

Property Ownership / Entity name: _____

Primary Owner Contact Name (if different from applicant): _____

Contact Email: _____ Phone: _____

Total building square footage: _____

Total square footage of the building/site that is vacant (as of January 1, 2022): _____

Will your project increase employment / add new jobs? Yes No

If yes, how many jobs do you project to create within the next 12 months?: _____

3. PROJECT INFORMATION

Is your business address / project site currently occupied? Yes No

If Yes, how many employees currently work at the project site? _____

Will the project result in job creation? Yes No

If Yes, please identify the number of estimated jobs created: _____

Is the applicant the currently seeking to acquire the property/project site? Yes No

If Yes, please identify the status of plans to secure site control, and a projected timeline of when this will be achieved (limit 50 words):

As part of the proposed redevelopment project, please identify any design or construction firms or individuals you are working with as part of the proposed activities:

- Architect: _____
- Engineer: _____
- General Contractor: _____
- Other Professional(s): _____

If no design or professionals have been secured at this time, please briefly describe your plan and/or approach on how these professionals will be secured (limit 50 words):

4. BUDGET AND FINANCIAL REQUEST

Please complete the table below to list and explain the costs/expenses for your project. You must include the estimated cost amount of each item/service, the 3rd party vendor or company providing this (if applicable), and identify the proposed source of the funds that will benefit your business or project (e.g. personal equity, investor support, bank financing, other grants)

DESCRIPTION OF COST TYPE:	ESTIMATED BUDGET AMOUNT:	FUNDING SOURCE:
Building Construction & Renovation	\$	
Site Work/ Demolition	\$	
Equipment	\$	
Furniture & Fixtures	\$	
Anticipated Permitting Fees	\$	
Engineering/Architect Fees	\$	
Legal Fees	\$	
Management/Developer Fee	\$	
Other:	\$	
Other:	\$	
Other:	\$	
Total Investment:	\$	

Please provide in detail a summary narrative about your project and explain the activities that will be undertaken as part of the proposed investment (limit 500 words):

Please describe efforts taken so far to identify/secure a project team of design and construction professionals to work with the applicant to develop project plans & the estimated budget (limit 250 words):

Due to high demand, it is possible applicants may not receive the full funding request made to the ARPA Commercial Corridor Improvement Fund. Please explain how you will prioritize each expense item listed above relative the amount of any financial assistance provided (limit 250 words):

5. IMPACT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Did your organization experience a decline in sales in 2020 or 2021? Yes No N/A

Has your business received any prior financial assistance through federal, state, or local Covid-19 support program since March 7, 2020? Yes No N/A

If applicable, please estimate the total amount of Covid-19 funding assistance your organization has received since March 7, 2020: _____

Please describe, in detail, the impact Covid-19 has had on your organization, property, and/or project since March 2020. Additionally, please provide a summary of the measures your organization has taken to date in order to adapt to current economic conditions and still advance your project forward (limit 250 words):

The City of Syracuse is working with companies and organizations across our community and making efforts to provide resources to those most impacted by the economic hardship caused by Covid-19. Please explain how your request will immediately benefit your organization, your project, and more broadly, the City of Syracuse community in the short term and long term (limit 250 words).

6. MISCELLANEOUS

- Yes No Is the Company or its principals presently the subject of any litigation, or is any litigation threatened, which would have a material adverse effect on the Company's financial condition?
- Yes No Has the Company or its principals ever settled a debt with a lending institution for less than the full amount outstanding?
- Yes No Has the company, its affiliates or its principals ever filed bankruptcy, a creditor's rights or receivership proceeding, or sought protection from creditors?
- Yes No Is the Company or its principal's delinquent on property, personal, and/or employment taxes?
- Yes No Has the Company or its principals ever been convicted of any felony or misdemeanor, other than a minor traffic violation, or are any charges pending?
- Yes No Has the Company, its affiliates or its principals, been cited for a violation of federal, State or local laws or regulations with respect to labor practices, hazardous wastes, environmental pollution or operating practices?
- Yes No Are there any outstanding judgments or lien pending against the Company, its affiliates or its principals other than liens in the normal course of business? If yes, please specify the amount: \$ _____
- Yes No Has the company or principal(s) ever been issued an injunction, been imposed civil penalties or fines? been accused of false or misleading statements, or been the subject of a proceeding or had any allegations made against them, by any federal, state, local agency or authority including but not limited to the SEC, FCC, FDA, or OSHA? If yes, please attach a written explanation to this application.

7. APPLICATION ATTACHMENTS

Please verify the required materials have been submitted as part of your funding request. Applications will be considered incomplete and will not be reviewed without the following. **All required materials must be submitted along with this program application no later than Wednesday, June 15, 2022 at 12:00 PM. Late Applications will not be accepted.**

Required attachments (Note: please check all items submitted with application form):

- **For-Profit Business Applicants or Individuals:**

- Most recent available (2020 or 2021) Business Federal Tax Return including all schedules;
- Most recent available (2020 or 2021) Personal Federal Tax Return for any individuals with >20% ownership;

- **For 501c3 or 501c4 Organizations:**

- Most recent available (2020 or 2021) CPA Audited Financial Statements;
- Most recent available (2020 or 2021) Form 990 or similar tax filing;

- **For ALL projects (required regardless of applicant type):**

- Five year operating pro-forma with projected financials for the improvement project showing anticipated expenses/revenues and net income/loss;
- Interim Profit & Loss Statement for the 2021 fiscal year (note: optional if submitting 2021 taxes);
- Interim Balance Sheet for the 2021 fiscal year (note: optional if submitting 2021 taxes);
- Interim Profit & Loss Statement through March 31, 2022 (Quarter 1);
- Cost estimates for project scope of work, including soft costs and/or contractor bids. (Note: 3rd party estimates provided by a contractor or design professional are strongly encouraged.);
- Provide site plans, design plans, and/or maps as necessary;
- A minimum of four (4) exterior images and four (4) interior images showing current building conditions at the time of application. (Note: photos must be taken within 30 days of the application submission date.)
- Bank financing commitment and/or interest letters (Note: if applicable)

If any of the checklist items included above are not attached and submitted with this application, please provide explanation (limit 50 words):

Other Requirements:

For each of the above, a resolution of the board of directors, if applicable, or other certification acceptable to the corporation of an authorized officer of the company authorizing the submission of this application and the acceptance of any approved grant proceeds.

Aside from the foregoing, the City of Syracuse may request other corporate governance materials or information it deems necessary to adequately review and assess the application. A contract agreement must be executed between the City of Syracuse and awardees prior to disbursement of any approved funds.

8. SIGNATURE AND APPLICATION ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Applicant understands and agrees with the Agency as follows:

A. Absence of Conflicts of Interest

The applicant has received from the Agency a list of members, officers and staff of the Agency. To the best of my knowledge, no member, officer or employee of the Agency has an interest, whether direct or indirect, in any transaction contemplated by this application, except as hereinafter described.

Initial

B. False or Misleading Information

The applicant understands and agrees that the submission of knowingly false or misleading information in this application may lead to the immediate termination of any financial assistance and the reimbursement of an amount equal to all or part of any awarded and disbursed.

Initial

C. Hold Harmless Agreement

Applicant hereby releases the Agency and the members, officers, servants, agents and employees thereof (collectively, the "Employees") from, agrees that the City and the Employees shall not be liable for, and agrees to indemnify, defend, and hold the City and the Employees harmless from and against any and all liability arising from or expense incurred by the City's examination and processing of, and action pursuant to or upon, the attached application, regardless of whether or not the application is favorably acted upon by the City of Syracuse.

Initial

D. Disclosures

The Applicant understands that the Applicant must identify in writing to the City of Syracuse any information it seeks to have redacted.

Initial

E. Reporting

Applicants agree to cooperate with the City of Syracuse to satisfy any Federally mandated reporting requirements.

Initial

APPLICANT VERIFICATION

STATE OF _____)
COUNTY OF _____) SS:

_____, deposes and says that s/he is the
(Name of Individual)

_____ of _____
(Title) *(Applicant Name)*

that s/he is the CEO or a person authorized to bind the company/applicant, and has personally completed and read the foregoing application and knows the contents thereof and that the same is true, accurate, and complete to the best of her/his knowledge, as subscribed and affirmed under the penalties of perjury. The grounds of deponent's beliefs relative to all matters in the said application which are not stated upon her/his own personal knowledge are investigations which the deponent has caused to be made concerning the subject matter of the application as well as, if applicable, information acquired by deponent in the course of her/his duties/responsibilities for the applicant and from the books and papers of the applicant. The deponent also acknowledges the City's fee schedule and assumes responsibility for payment of any and all applicable fees as described herein. Deponent further acknowledges review and understanding of the City's published policies, and agrees on behalf of the Applicant to be bound by and comply with, all such policies as set forth in the application.

Applicant Representative's Signature

Title

**PROPERTY OWNER VERIFICATION (IF APPLICABLE AND
DIFFERENT FROM THE APPLICANT)**

STATE OF _____)
COUNTY OF _____) SS:

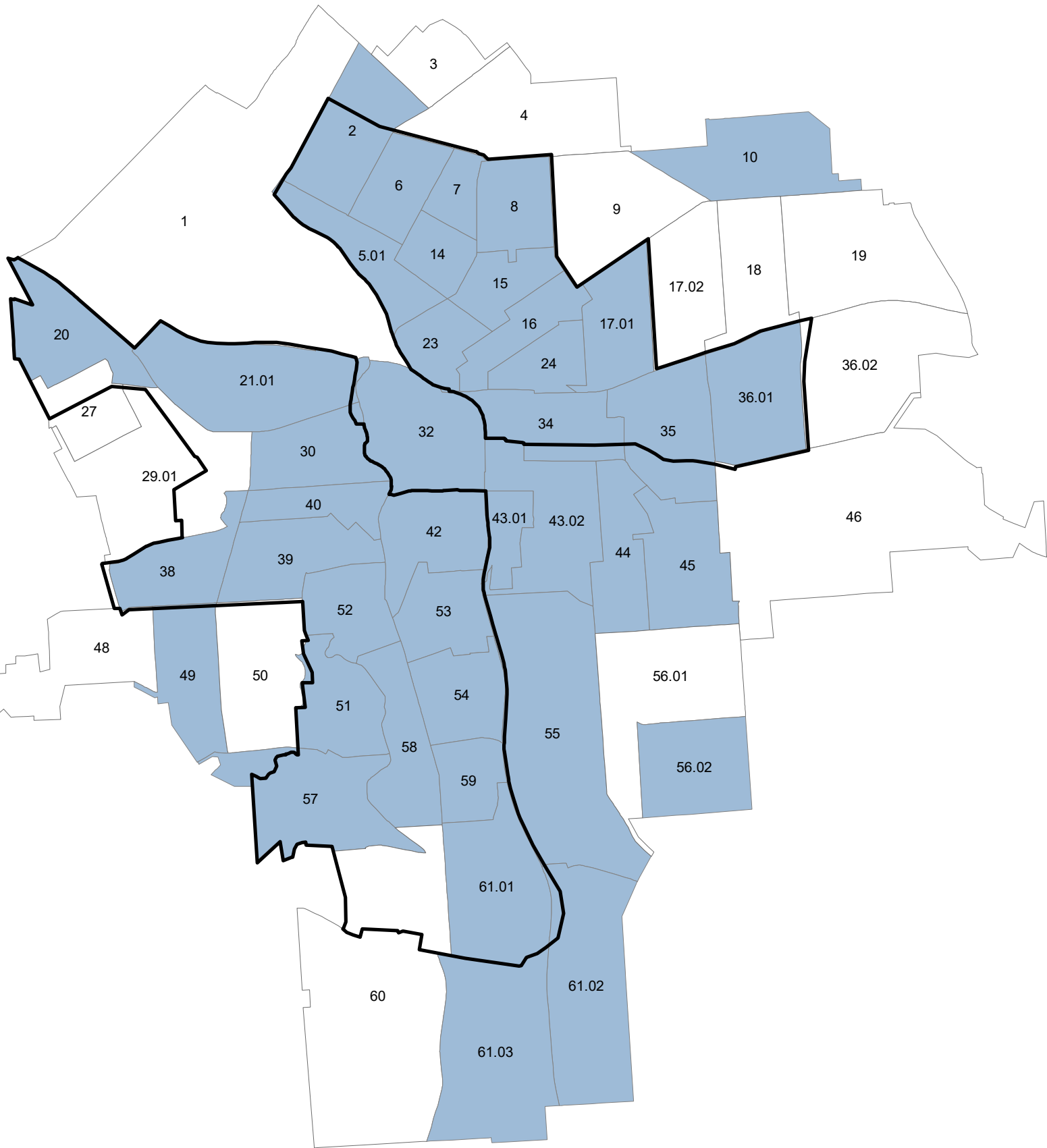
_____, deposes and says that s/he is the
(Name of Individual)

Owner of _____
(Title) (Property Address/es)

that s/he is the person authorized to bind the property owner, and has personally completed and read the foregoing application and knows the contents thereof and that the same is true, accurate, and complete to the best of her/his knowledge, as subscribed and affirmed under the penalties of perjury. The grounds of deponent's beliefs relative to all matters in the said application which are not stated upon her/his own personal knowledge are investigations which the deponent has caused to be made concerning the subject matter of the application as well as, if applicable, information acquired by deponent in the course of her/his duties/responsibilities for the applicant and from the books and papers of the applicant. The deponent also acknowledges the City's fee schedule and assumes responsibility for payment of any and all applicable fees as described herein. Deponent further acknowledges review and understanding of the City's published policies, and agrees on behalf of the Applicant to be bound by and comply with, all such policies as set forth in the application.

Owner's Signature

Title



City of Syracuse | ARPA Qualified Census Tracts

This map was prepared by the Department of Neighborhood and Business Development based on current property records and is provided for planning purposes only. MLS | 06/10/2021

MAP KEY

Qualified Census Tracts

- Not Qualified
- Qualified Census Tracts
- NRSA Boundary

