



FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT MATCHING GRANT PROGRAM

Downtown NOLA

Sponsored By:

Downtown Development District



201 St. Charles Ave, Suite 3912, New Orleans, Louisiana 70170
Phone (504) 561-8927 Fax (504) 581-1765

Façade Improvement Matching Grant Program

The Downtown Development District (DDD) has developed a Façade Improvement Matching Grant Program ("Program"). The program is designed to provide an economic incentive for improving the appearance of the facades of buildings in the District, and to encourage quality renovation that will enhance and be consistent with the historical design, materials, and architectural character reflected in the original design of the building.

The Program will provide a matching grant of 50% of eligible project costs, up to a maximum of Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000). A property owner or business tenant is eligible to apply for a Façade Improvement grant if the purpose of the grant is to make façade improvements to the outside building envelope. Eligible Improvement Projects include:

- Removing aluminum or non-historic siding
- Painting or cleaning of façade exterior
- Sign repair/replacement
- Repairs (cornices, cracked plaster, window repair)
- Installation of galleries/balconies
- Installation awnings/canopies
- Restoring historically compatible materials or features
- Window/door replacement
- Exterior lighting
- Professional fees
- Permits
- Materials
- Equipment
- Contracted labor

Improvements to the interior of the buildings or to exterior portions not visible from the street are not eligible for the grant. Buildings with first floor retail uses, which will result in new commercial occupancy, will receive funding priority. Façade improvements that are part of the creation or rehabilitation of upper story uses will also be considered a priority.

Eligibility

Applications for grants shall meet the criteria outlined below:

1. Properties must be located within the Downtown Development District boundary (See exhibit A)
2. The Façade Improvement Matching Grant shall only be awarded for properties that contribute to the DDD through the payment of ad valorem taxes and are current on payment.
3. Property address must be legible and placed in a position that is visible from the street or road fronting the property.
4. The properties proposed for façade improvement must be structurally sound with the roof intact and meet basic public safety codes.

5. Only facades abutting public rights-of-way are eligible for assistance, except for highly visible rear facades.
6. All proposed improvements must meet the requirements of the City or, if a landmark property or located within a historic preservation district, the Historic District Landmark Commission (HDLC), if applicable, as well as all other City Code requirements. Approvals or Certificates issued by the City or HDLC do not guarantee approval of grant funding.
7. Applications must meet all City and State regulatory/code requirements that affect leases and servitudes, air rights and sidewalk, fire and building safety, and all ADA requirements.
8. Applicants must be able to document total project costs that the matching grant amount will apply to, and the construction contract and related documents must clearly delineate the costs associated with the Façade Improvement project, separate and apart from any other construction or renovation costs.
9. Successful applicants must enter into a Funding/Grant Agreement with the DDD.

Receipt of funding through the Façade Improvement Matching Grant Program shall not affect eligibility for other DDD or City of New Orleans programs. Building projects listed on either the local or national register of historic places or in a local or national district will be eligible for participation in the program.

Ineligible Improvement Projects include

- Roof improvements
- Electric improvements
- HVAC improvements
- Any interior work to the building
- Property acquisition
- Working capital
- Equipment, Furniture and Fixtures used in the operation of the business

Disbursements

Documentation of total façade costs must be provided before payment of the matching grant amount is paid. The matching grant will not be paid until the project is complete and final approval of the project is granted by the Historic Districts Landmarks Commission, if applicable, and any other relevant City permitting agencies.

Funds will be disbursed by check payable to the grantee upon (1) upon certification of completion of the Allowable Improvements (2) upon verification by the DDD Program Coordinator that the work was completed as proposed in a satisfactory and professional manner and (3) provision of receipts for payment for such Allowable Improvements and lien releases from any contractors. Funds will not be disbursed on projects that are not in accordance with the approved plans. All grant funds shall be issued to the grantee on a reimbursement basis only.

Funding

The President & CEO of the DDD, by virtue of these guidelines, has the authority to approve and sign funding agreements on behalf of the DDD for assistance totaling three thousand dollars (\$3,000) or less. The President & CEO, at his or her discretion, may present any and all funding agreements to the DDD for approval. Such funding is subject to funding availability in any given fiscal year. The DDD may, from time to time at its discretion, establish annual funding for the program.

Disclosure

The DDD expressly reserves the right to reject any and all applications or to request additional information from any and all applicants and grantees. The DDD retains the right to deviate from the program guidelines, or amend the program guidelines, agreements, and application procedures. The

DDD also retains the right to display and advertise properties that receive matching funds under this Grant.

Application Process

1. A prospective applicant meets with DDD staff regarding the Program and development of improvement plans.
2. Applicant meets with Historic District Landmarks Commission (HDLC) to determine development criteria and completes improvement plans, including necessary work with an architect or engineer. Applicant obtains approvals of plans with the New Orleans Department of Safety and Permits and HDLC if applicable.
 - a) The DDD will directly review the plans for any projects which do not require the approval of the HDLC; and render a decision based on consultation with the HDLC
3. Applicant provides to the DDD satisfactory evidence of City and HDLC approvals (if HDLC approval is applicable).
4. If approved, DDD provides letter of Grant Commitment, subject to completion of the project according to city building permits, compliance with DDD program requirements, and all other required approvals. **This letter will act as a notice to proceed on the Outdoor Dining Grant Program. The DDD will not accept as a part of the project costs any renovation expenditures made before the date of the grant commitment letter.**
5. Construction must commence within 45 days of DDD Commitment and be completed within 120 days after construction start date (subject to weather and other unavoidable events).
 - a) Successful grantee applicants will acquire and install eligible project improvements. The contractor(s) used by the grantees must be licensed and insured. The DDD will not be responsible in any manner for the selection of a contractor. The property owner and/or tenant should pursue all activities necessary to determine contractor qualifications, quality of workmanship, and reputation. The property or business owner will be responsible for reviewing the competence and abilities of prospective contractors and secure proof of their licensing and insurance coverage. The DDD may request up to three bids for the planned work.
 - b) In order to ensure that funds are available, eligible products must be purchased within forty-five (45) days of the effective date of the application. Extensions may be granted by the Executive Director of the DDD given just cause by the applicant (e.g., contractor delays, acts of God, etc.). All grant funds shall be issued to the grantee on a reimbursement basis only. Additionally, the applicant may need to secure permission from the City and HDLC for the installation of eligible products.
6. Once construction has been completed and all necessary final City and HDLC approvals are obtained and documentation (copies of cancelled checks) showing the applicant's share of cost has been provided, the DDD will process a check for payment of the approved grant amount payable to the applicant.

Exhibit A



Contact

Please contact **Darren Harris** (dharris@downtownnola.com) or **Meaghan Nguyen** (mnguyen@downtownnola.com) at 504-620-9290 for an application and for additional details.

Helpful Links

City of New Orleans One Stop App (Permits and Licenses)

<https://nola.gov/onestop/>

Historic District Landmarks Commission (HDLC) Design Guidelines

<https://nola.gov/hdlc/design-guidelines/>



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**Application For
Façade Improvement Matching Grant Program**

The DDD Façade Improvement Matching Grant Program Funding is based on availability and considered on a first come first served basis. A completed application does not guarantee funding. Furthermore, no grants will be awarded retroactively, which means that funding will not be awarded for eligible products purchased prior to the application date.

Applications will be reviewed and accepted as long as the required program guidelines have been met. Projects that do not comply with the program requirements and conditions will not be eligible for funding. An authorized corporate officer or partner(s) of the applicant's business must sign the application, in addition to the property owner(s), if the applicant is a tenant.

Name of applicant: _____

Home address: _____

Home phone number: _____ Tax I.D. or SSN: _____

Office address: _____

Office phone number: _____ Office fax: _____

Address of project/property: _____

Amount Requested: _____

Status of applicant/property-ownership (check one):

- _____ Sole Ownership
- _____ Corporation, Partnership or Trust (provide the names, addresses and phone numbers of all officers or trustees and include articles of incorporation, by-laws and/or partnership agreement)
- _____ Tenant (provide written consent from the property-owner for the project)

Attach the following documents to your completed application:

1. Introductory letter providing an itemized overview of the project
2. Copy of current business license
3. Copy of paid property tax receipt or copy of canceled check for current tax year
4. Copy of completed IRS Tax Form W9
5. A line drawing of the building that details existing conditions as well as the work to be done. Drawings must be to scale and list all proposed changes.
6. Two 3x5 (or larger) photographs of the building, one from the front and one showing the building in context to area and around it. If the building is on a corner, please include a third photo of the side-street facade. Photos in digital format are acceptable.
(Email to ddd@downtownnola.com)
7. Written consent from the property-owner if applicant is a tenant.
8. Construction contract and related documents clearly delineating the Façade improvement costs separate and apart from any other renovation costs

Please complete and sign:

I, _____, certify that the information presented in this application and in all attachments is true and complete to the best of my knowledge.

I authorize the Downtown Development District or its agent to check with City and regulatory agencies to determine compliance with city codes and status of tax collections.

I understand that the proceeds from any grant funds may be used only for facade renovation projects. All façade projects must meet the design criteria established by (or **DDD's consultation with**) the Central Business District Historic District Landmarks Commission.

I understand that, in addition to this application, I must also seek and receive approval of my facade improvement project from the Central Business District Historic District Landmarks Commission, **if applicable**, and all related approvals from the City of New Orleans.

I understand that no construction activity may begin until the Downtown Development District provides authorization to proceed.

I further understand and agree that the final decision on project cost or eligibility lies with the DDD in its sole discretion.

Signature: _____ Date: _____