



FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT MICRO 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 Micro Grant Program

The Downtown Development District (DDD) offers a Façade Improvement Micro Grant Program aims to stimulate new investment, enhance business and development opportunities and to attract new customers to Downtown New Orleans. The program is designed to increase customer traffic, enhance pedestrian safety and improve the visual appeal of the street by providing an economic incentive to retailers, restaurants and other businesses for renovations of exterior enhancements.

The Micro Grant Program will provide a matching grant of 60% of eligible project costs, up to a maximum of Six Thousand Dollars (\$6,000). The projects listed below are eligible for funding:

- Sign Repair/Replacement
- Improved Retail Window Displays
- Awnings
- Exterior and Interior lighting that can be seen from the street

For exterior lighting that enhances pedestrian safety in the public realm, a \$3,000 grant will be offered without requiring a match from the applicant, provided that the applicant keep the lighting on from dusk until dawn.

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 Micro 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. 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.
5. 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. The DDD may request up to three bids for the planned work.
6. Successful applicants must enter into a Funding/Grant Agreement with the DDD.

Receipt of funding through the Façade Improvement Micro Grant Program shall not affect eligibility for other DDD or City of New Orleans programs.

Application Process

Prospective applicant submits an application package which consists of an introductory letter providing an overview of the project and DDD Program Application. Once received, the DDD will schedule a meeting with the applicant to review the program and discuss the improvement plans. **The applicant is required, per program guidelines, to meet with the Historic Districts Landmarks Commission (HDLC) to review and/or approve the scope of the project, including necessary work with an architect or engineer.**

The DDD will provide a letter of Grant Commitment, subject to completion of the project according to city building permits, HDLC Certificate of appropriateness, compliance with DDD program requirements, and all other required approvals. The Grant Commitment letter serves as a notice to proceed on the façade improvement program.

The DDD does not accept as a part of the project costs any renovation expenditures made before the date of the grant commitment letter. 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). 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.

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.

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 Micro Grant Program**

The DDD Façade Improvement Micro 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, all approved applicants shall agree to have DDD signage on the property while the project is under construction. All signage is designed by the DDD and is required if the project is approved.

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: _____