

Business Matching Grant Program

Façade Improvement Grant

Facade Improvement Grant Program

The Façade Improvement Grant Program seeks to remove blight by assisting businesses and commercial property owners with improving building appearance and by bringing signs, parking and landscaping into conformance with current codes.

Maximum Awards:

The program provides up to 50% reimbursement to commercial or industrial businesses or property owners for eligible renovation costs. A 60% reimbursement may be available on a case-by-case basis for utilization of certified Minority, Women or Small Business Enterprise (MWSBE) firms. Visit <http://smallbiz.charmeck.org> for a list of MWSBE firms.

Maximum grant awards are based upon building square footage:

Up to 3,000 sq/ft	\$ 20,000
3,001-6,000 sq/ft	\$ 30,000
Over 6,000 sq/ft	\$ 40,000
Shopping centers up to 30,000 sq/ft with 3 tenants	\$ 90,000
Shopping centers >30,000 sq/ft with 4 tenants	\$130,000

Eligible Expenses:

- Approved architectural renovations to the building facade
- Improvements to bring grandfathered signage, parking and landscaping into conformance with current codes.
- A 50% reimbursement of eligible architectural fees up to \$3,000, in addition to maximum award amount
- Infrastructure improvements in the public right-of-way for change of use permits

Eligible Geography:

Business Corridor Revitalization Geography

Eligible Applicants

- Owners or tenants of for-profit commercial buildings. Use of the building must conform to all current codes and ordinances; non-conforming uses of any kind are not allowed.
- National/regional chains headquartered in Charlotte MSA.
- Prohibited businesses include adult businesses, gambling including sweepstakes and cyber/internet cafes, new construction projects, businesses operating from residential property or residential uses, property owned by non-profit entities, and any non-conforming uses.
- Portions of buildings occupied by ineligible businesses of any kind are ineligible for program funds. Vacant buildings are subject to a clawback provision if space is occupied by a prohibited business within 12 months.
- Owners of vacant buildings shall be eligible if the owner's purpose is to rehabilitate the structure to attract eligible businesses.
- Owners and tenants are eligible to re-apply until the maximum award is reached.
- All real property taxes must be paid in full.

How the Program Works

- Application deadlines occur quarterly on February 15th, May 15th, August 15th and November 15th respectively.
- Applicants must submit an application to the Office of Economic Development by close of business on the date of the application deadline.
- An inter-departmental team of City staff reviews and approves proposals quarterly. Staff bases eligibility decisions on, among other things, the following criteria: improvement to the appearance of the site, building, and business district; reduction of crime; leveraging of additional economic activities; provision of needed services.
- Applicants using certified MWSBE contractors may undergo a MWSBE Utilization & Goal Setting review to determine if the project qualifies for 60% award (*refer to Maximum Award section on Page 1*).
- Upon approval, the City enters into a grant contract with the applicant setting forth, among other things, the scope of work as approved by the review team.
- Applicants are responsible for obtaining all necessary governmental permits and authorizations, including building permits.
- Staff will be permitted to inspect the project to ensure conformance with the grant contract.
- **The City does not reimburse for any work performed prior to application approval and contract signing.**
- The City will authorize reimbursement payment after, among other things, completion of the project in accordance with the approved plan as set forth in the contract. Proof of payment is required for reimbursement.
- The City will not contract to perform any of the work.
- Approved projects should be completed within six months from date of contract or funds may not be guaranteed

Additional program requirements or restrictions may apply.

Questions?

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