



City of Highland

Façade Improvement Program Information

Description

The City of Highland seeks to encourage commercial building owners to invest in upgrading their existing building storefronts. All commercial buildings within the boundary of Business District A qualify for this program.

Grant Amounts Available

The Façade Program will provide a grant of up to 25% of the documented cost of improving the exterior of commercial buildings. For a building with one façade, reimbursement will be limited to 25% of the documented cost of the façade improvements, not to exceed \$10,000 on any one project.

All work is subject to prevailing wage requirements. Applicant must demonstrate compliance with this requirement. Minimum façade project cost to be eligible for the City of Highland Façade Program is \$10,000. Receipts must be submitted in order for the expenses to be considered as project cost.

A total of \$50,000 is allocated for the current fiscal year, which runs from May 1, 2024-April 30, 2025. Applications are reviewed in the order they are submitted. If the application is approved, incentives are awarded in application order.

Eligible Improvements

The following improvements are eligible to receive funding through the program. A building or business owner who is undertaking an improvement project that includes a portion of the eligible improvement may apply, but only the improvements identified below will be eligible for funding. This program defines total project cost as those costs associated with the program's design guidelines and incurred by third-party independent contractors to make improvements and repairs to the exterior facades of the commercial building.

Improvements Eligible for Façade Grant include: changes to exterior wall materials/colors, addition of architectural wall panels, addition of other exterior building elements such as faux columns/beams, changes to exterior roof materials/colors, enhancing doors or windows, addition of architecturally compatible awnings or shutters, façade lighting, addition of building or site signs, or sign removal.

Funds may only be used for exterior repairs and improvements to commercial buildings. Front, side, and rear of buildings are eligible but priority is given to fronts and other portions of buildings that are directly exposed to a street.

Other items may be considered eligible improvements at the discretion of the Incentive Review Committee.

Ineligible Projects

The Façade Improvement Program will not provide funds for working capital, debt refinancing, equipment/inventory acquisition, legal fees, plumbing repair/improvements, HVAC



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repair/improvements, parking lot resurfacing, interior remodeling, roof work, residential structures, or other ineligible items as determined by the Incentive Review Committee.

Maintenance and upkeep to buildings are generally not appropriate for façade program funding. Items determined to be maintenance/upkeep may be determined ineligible at the discretion of the Incentive Review Committee.

Administration

Only complete applications that include all required submittal documents and information will be accepted. Estimates provided in application are for budgeting purposes & will determine potential award amount. Reimbursements will not exceed estimate & will be based on submitted receipts.

The Director of Economic Development will review the application for accuracy and will determine if it meets the requirements for funding. These requirements for funding include:

- Improvements must meet all applicable city codes, including for properties in the C-2 zoning district, as outlined in Section 90-239 of the Municipal Code.
- Improvements are eligible under the provisions of the Façade Improvement Program.

The Director of Economic Development will review applications for completeness and program eligibility, and then forward applications and a summary of comments to the Incentive Review Committee. The Incentive Review Committee will consider such requests for funding at the committee meetings and will make funding recommendations to the City Council. The City Council will make the final funding decision.

If the application receives City Council approval, the applicant must enter into an agreement with the city. The Façade Improvement Grant Agreement stipulates that the improvement must commence within 90 days of approval. Matching grant funds will only be disseminated to the applicant once the authorized construction of the improvement has been completed and verified by the City, and receipts have been submitted. Matching grant funds will be disseminated to the applicant within 45 days of passing inspection and receipt verification. All applications must be approved before the commencement of the façade improvement.

Program Contact

To obtain an application or for questions about the program, please contact Mallord Hubbard, Director of Economic Development, at mhubbard@highlandil.gov or 618-654-9891.

Completed applications may be submitted to the Director of Economic Development at City Hall (1115 Broadway) or via email at mhubbard@highlandil.gov.