



Downtown Blackstone, Inc.

Façade Improvement Grant Program 2022-2023

GUIDELINES

Overview

Downtown Blackstone, Inc. (DBI) is pleased to announce the launch of the 2022-2023 Façade Improvement Grant (FIG) program, designed to assist business and property owners with the rehabilitation of their commercial facades in Blackstone's Historic Business District. The goal of the program is to improve the visual impact of buildings downtown by stimulating private investment in them as a complement to other public and private community development efforts.

DBI is excited to present this matching grant program to help improve the appearance of Blackstone's downtown businesses. It is hoped that by helping fund exterior renovations in the Historic Business District, the draw of Main Street for residents and visitors alike will be enhanced and that others will be encouraged to invest in their businesses and properties for the benefit of the entire community.

Eligibility

In order to be eligible for the FIG program, you must be located within Blackstone's Historic Business District.

Appropriate Uses

Eligible grant uses may include but are not limited to:

- Cleaning, prep, and painting of exterior walls and trim
- Cleaning and/or repointing of brick or other masonry
- Replacement of siding materials
- Signage
- Repair or replacement of doors or windows and associated framing
- Repair or replacement of awnings, canopies or shutters
- Lighting
- Repair of cornices and other architectural details
- Repair of gutters and downspouts
- **All eligible work must be visible from the public way**



Ineligible grant uses include:

- Improvements not visible from the public way
- Interior improvements
- Non-façade exterior improvements (such as roof or foundation repair)
- Improvements to structures outside the Historic Business District
- Items related to business operations (such as inventory or equipment)
- Property acquisition, new construction, or additions
- Payment of delinquent taxes, outstanding loans, or existing debts
- Projects that do not comply with local Town of Blackstone codes and regulations or that have not been properly permitted

FIG Details

Grants may be awarded for up to 50% of the total cost of eligible façade restorations, repairs, or rehabilitations subject to a maximum grant award of \$7,000. Grants are required to have a 1:1 match up to the maximum grant amount of \$7,000. Match amounts must be in cash or other certified funds; match amounts may not be in the form of owner, applicant, or unskilled labor or “sweat equity.” FIG funds will be disbursed on a reimbursement basis only upon the completion of the project.

The annual budget for this program is \$35,000. Applications will be reviewed in the order they are received and will be processed until the allocated funding has been expended; in other words, funding is reviewed and granted on a first-come, first-served basis. Applicants are not guaranteed funding until the project has been reviewed by DBI’s Design Committee and an MOU has been signed by both parties.

Additional Grant Provisions

Neither DBI staff nor its board members are liable for damage to the building or personal injury that occurs during the project. All contractors and subcontractors used for work funded by this grant must be licensed and insured if required by law and must be able to demonstrate qualifications.

The successful applicant agrees to maintain the property and its improvements for a period of no less than two years and agrees to return a pro-rated portion of the grant funding if the improvements they funded are removed or altered within that two-year timeframe.

Successful applicants agree to complete the project by May 31, 2023.



With the submittal of an application for a FIG, the applicant gives DBI permission to notify the media about the award of the grant, which may include photographs of the property and applicant.

Grant Application Process

- Applicant submits a Façade Improvement Grant (FIG) application to DBI
- DBI staff will review the application with the applicant and may require additional information before submitting it to the Design Committee for review
- The Design Committee will review the application in a timely fashion and may ask for additional information of the applicant but will make every attempt to act decisively at its soonest meeting
- The applicant will be made aware of an award and asked to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the two parties dictating any project stipulations beyond those already articulated in this document
- Necessary permits must be obtained before work begins in accordance with local ordinances.
- Prior to the release of grant funds, the applicant must demonstrate that the project is complete and must submit documentation of all expenses related to the project. DBI reserves the right to inspect the property upon its completion and may require proof that all outstanding accounts and invoices of such completed project are paid in full.

