

Richmond Downtown and Village District Facade Grant Program

Information & Guidelines

Program Intent

This program will offer up to a 50% matching grant for facade improvements to downtown and village district properties. This program is funded with revenues generated from the Downtown Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District and the Pipeline/Compressor Station Municipal Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District, part of an overall downtown and village revitalization program.

- Promote improvements to structures in the Downtown and Village Districts to eliminate and prevent conditions that cause blight.
- Preserve the unique character of downtown and village district historic buildings by providing greater leverage to private investment and/or state and federal funding.
- Encourage facade improvements that meet Zoning Ordinance Village District standards.

Eligible Activities

Grant funds will be used only for eligible improvements to the exterior of buildings/structures. Eligible uses may include, but are not limited to:

- Signage, awnings and/or storefront improvements
- Restoration of original/historic windows, doors, and trim where possible
- Removal of non-historic features and/or inappropriate non-historic alterations and additions
- Repair or replacement of windows, doors, trim
- Roofing visible from street level
- Cleaning and/or painting/repainting of wood/brick/stone surfaces
- Replacement, repair, or addition of architectural details (e.g., cornices, bulkheads, transoms, etc.)
- Cleaning and repair or installation of approved siding
- Exterior lighting or landscaping
- Fire escape repairs or removal
- Exterior code violations
- Entranceway modifications, including provisions to improve accessibility in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Ineligible Activities

- Interior repairs of any kind
- Non-visible roofing
- Any improvements not seen from the public right-of-way or publicly owned space.
- Minor maintenance and repairs
- Purchase of commercial property/equipment
- Business operations-related costs including business inventory, debt reduction, etc.
- Property acquisition, new construction and/or expansion of building area
- Parking lot surfaces

Program Guidelines and Eligibility

1. **Applications are accepted from January 1, 2025 – March 31, 2025.**
2. A facade grant may be made to a commercial, mixed-use, multi-family housing or blighted single-family housing property located within the Downtown and Village District project area.
3. The applicant may be the property owner or the lessee/renter and either may provide the required matching funds. A lessee/renter will be required to have the building owner co-sign the formal application.
4. Grants are available for **up to 50% of the total cost** of the improvement project and therefore must be matched at a ratio of 1:1. **The maximum matching grant award is \$20,000.**
5. **Awards will be made by April 30, 2025**
6. Each applicant will only be awarded one grant per grant period (07/01/25 to 06/30/26) and cannot apply for another façade the following year.
7. Applicant must obtain all necessary approvals and/or permits from the Code Officer James Valley @ 737-4305 x205 or ceo@richmondmaine.com
8. The applicant must not owe any property taxes
9. The applicant will be reimbursed only upon completion of the project.
10. Project must be completed within 6 months after approval.

Application Review & Payment Procedures

1. The Development Director will review all facade grant applications.
2. Preference will be given to proposals that:
 - Make significant visual improvements to the storefronts/building facades.
 - Plan to match more than 50% of the grant amount.
 - Take advantage of the Town's Revolving Loan Fund.
 - Perform work in accordance with Village District Performance Standards outlined www.richmondmaine.com/CodeEnforcement/Land Use Ordinance, Article Four
3. Process for Payment:
 - Upon completion, the business/property owner shall submit invoices & cancelled checks/credit card statements/bank for the work done to the Development Director. **The reimbursement request cannot cover project costs that were completed before the project approval date.**
 - An inspection will be performed to ensure the work billed was performed. The amount of reimbursement shall be up to 50% of the actual total but not to exceed \$20,000
 - Reimbursement will usually be within 2 weeks if all invoices/receipts are submitted.

If you have any questions or would like to learn more, please contact **Darryl Sterling, Economic Development Director**: 207-737-4305 x. 331 or director@richmondmaine.com