



## City of Green Bay

### Commercial Façade Improvement Grant Program Policies and Procedures

#### Program Purpose & Overview

The purpose of the Commercial Façade Improvement Grant Program is to enhance and revitalize the aesthetics of Green Bay's commercial districts by providing a financial incentive for businesses to invest in their property. The Program aims to address deteriorating property conditions and encourage enhancements to the property as viewed from the public right of way as a means to generate economic development for Green Bay's business districts.

Program participants are eligible to be reimbursed up to 75% of their eligible costs for a façade improvement project. The level of grant funding will be determined on a case-by-case basis. The Program is funded by Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) provided by the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The Program is managed and administered by the City of Green Bay's Department of Community & Economic Development.

#### Participant & Property Eligibility

Eligible participants of the Program include commercial property owners and business owners leasing space in a commercial property. A business owner who is leasing space must have a current lease and written approval from the property owner to participate in the Program. Participants/property owners cannot be delinquent on any current City charges, taxes, or assessments or have defaulted on any previous city assistance.

Eligible properties include commercial buildings located within the City of Green Bay that are within either a Low/Moderate Income Area (LMI Area) or a designated slum/blight area. Properties may be located outside these areas if the project is limited to addressing serious conditions that are detrimental to public health and safety. Potential applicants should consult with City staff before applying to confirm eligibility.

#### Project Eligibility

Eligible improvements include:

- Restoration of masonry, brick, wood, and glass;

- Restoration/preservation of historical or architecturally significant features
- Storefront redesign and reconstruction
- Murals and permanent art fixtures
- Exterior lighting enhancements
- Awnings
- Other approved visual enhancement of a property as it relates to a public right-of-way or visible from a public vantage point.

Ineligible Improvements include roofs that are not “part of the façade” (i.e. do not face the public way; the portion of mansard roofs, for example, facing street frontage are eligible), non-permanent fixtures, security systems, personal property, interior window coverings, equipment, any improvements not visible from the public right-of-way or public vantage point, and any improvements deemed to be inconsistent with redevelopment purposes and objectives. Potential applicants should consult with City staff before applying to confirm project eligibility.

### **CDBG National Objective Requirements**

The City of Green Bay’s Façade Grant Program is funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program. All projects participating in the Façade Grant Program must meet a federally-established National Objectives and be an eligible activity. City staff will verify if the project meets one of the following National Objectives:

1. LMI Benefit: The project must benefit a Low/Moderate Income (LMI) Area as defined by HUD.
2. Slum/Blight Area: The project must eliminate slum/blight within a designated blighted area of the community.
3. SLUM/Blight Spot Basis: The project, if located outside an LMI Area and a designated slum/blight area, must eliminate slum/blight on a spot basis AND be limited to only those conditions that are detrimental to public health and safety.

### **Environmental Review Requirements**

All properties being considered for Façade Grant Program must have an environmental review conducted by City staff to ensure that the proposed project does not negatively impact the surrounding environment and that the property site itself is safe for development. Every project must be in compliance with the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA).

### **Application Process**

1. Potential applicants are required to meet with Community & Economic Development staff to discuss the project, review preliminary designs, and discuss Federal requirements (Environmental Review or Davis Bacon) that may affect the project timeline.
2. Applicants must provide project plans and obtain a cost estimate from a contractor. Applicants should include any consultation with architects to discuss design and implementation.

3. Submit a completed Façade Grant application. Applications are accepted year-round and may be emailed directly to staff or mailed to the following address:

Façade Grant Program  
Department of Community & Economic Development  
City of Green Bay  
100 N. Jefferson St. – Room 608  
Green Bay, WI 54301

4. Complete applications will be reviewed and scored by the Design Review Board. The Design Review Board is made up of a team of City staff specializing in economic development, historic preservation, urban design, and urban planning. If the proposed project is located within an established Business Improvement District (BID), the BID Director (or assigned representative) will also be invited to serve on the Design Review Board. The Design Review Board will make a recommendation on approval to the Green Bay Redevelopment Authority (RDA).
5. The RDA considers the application at their monthly meeting and will vote to approve or deny.
6. If approved, City staff will prepare a grant agreement, and once executed, the project may proceed.

### **Project Timeline Requirements**

Projects may not begin until after a grant agreement is executed between the RDA and the project participant. No work/ improvements conducted prior to the execution of the agreement (including materials ordered, preparation work, etc.) will be eligible for reimbursement or can be counted as project match.

Projects must begin within 3 months of the grant award and be completed within 9 months after the project start date. Longer timelines may be considered depending on the size and scope of the proposed project. Requests to extend an approved timeline must be requested in writing to City staff. The request must include a revised timeline and explanation for delays.

### **Davis-Bacon Prevailing Wage Requirements**

Federal Labor Standards are statutory provisions dealing with construction projects, including façade improvements that receive federal funds such as CDBG funds. Contracts in excess of \$2,000 which employ craftsmen, mechanics and/or laborers for construction-related activities shall contain provisions with respect to minimum wages and fringe benefits set by the federal Department of Labor, also known as Davis-Bacon wages. In general, if CDBG funds are used to purchase materials and/or for contracts less than \$2,000, the federal labor standards may not apply.

Program participants are asked for a detailed scope of work and budget broken down by labor and material costs so that City staff can determine whether or not federal labor standards might be required. In certain circumstances, the size of the company owned by the contractor will determine the application of the wage determination standards and it would be appropriate for the contractor to

provide a statement regarding the size of their company. Contractors that are sole proprietors are not required to meet Davis-Bacon wage standards.

If the project participant is undertaking other construction projects on the property (separate from the grant-funded work), and both projects are occurring simultaneously, Davis-Bacon standards may apply to the separate projects as well.

### **Bidding Requirements**

As these façade improvement grants are public funds, participants will be expected to get at least three bids for their project. Project participants are encouraged to use Green Bay-based businesses. This allows for some assurance that the project pricing is competitive and that there is an opportunity to support local businesses.

### **Funding Procedures**

Grants may fund up to 75% of approved project costs. Maximum funding levels are determined on a case-by-case basis and will be established upon announcement of the grant award. Projects must be approved prior to beginning construction to participate in the program. Once the grant agreement is executed, work may proceed.

Funds will be provided in the form of reimbursement. Reimbursements will only be issued after the submission and approval of proper documentation. Proof of contractor payment and compliance with applicable Davis-Bacon prevailing wage requirements is required before funds will be awarded. Grant reimbursement may be reduced or rescinded if the participant is unable to verify compliance with all applicable policies, procedures, or laws.