

CENTRAL CITY GROWTH ORGANIZATION & CITY OF CENTRAL CITY

Facade Improvement Grant Program Guidelines

The goal of this program is to encourage improvements which stress the historic significance and uniqueness of downtown structures through building restoration and physical improvements.

The design and physical integrity of downtown commercial structures is extremely important, not only as a matter of aesthetics, but also in contributing to the success of retail and commercial businesses. Property owners who have reinvested in their buildings through restoration and facade improvements have – in most cases – realized real gains in their property value and that of the downtown commercial district.

The Facade Improvement Grant Program utilizes public funds to entice private investment by property owners interested in rehabilitating and restoring downtown commercial structures, stressing their historic significance. The goal of the Central City Growth Organization Facade Improvement Grant Program encompasses four intents:

- 1) to encourage historic preservation through restoration of downtown structures
- 2) to abate any continued deterioration of downtown commercial and/or residential structures
- 3) to augment the natural assets of downtown by restoring the uniqueness, character and integrity of downtown structures to the period of their construction, and
- 4) to help in the economic recovery of downtown through property improvements that may result in increased sales in retail and commercial businesses, and increased valuation of property.

The Central City Growth Organization is equally interested in encouraging both large restoration & rehabilitation projects that would create significant improvement in the visual impact of the downtown area, and smaller projects – such as signage improvements, awning alternatives, as well as leasehold improvements that may be made by tenants – and recognizes that projects both large and small have a significant effect on the visual presentation of the downtown area and, therefore, its image.

The Central City Growth Organization also realizes that the improvement of the town's visual and economic impact is not solely dependent on the improvement of the downtown district exclusively, and encourages applicants who have projects located outside of the defined historic downtown. Applications will be weighed based on their merit and overall impact to the city's appeal.

The Facade Improvement Grant Program offers grant awards ranging from \$500 to \$5,000 in **matching funds** – it is expected that the grant award be matched or exceed by applicant monies.

- A \$12,000 project might be awarded \$5,000 in grant funds, with the applicant providing \$7,000, or 58%.
- A \$1,000 project might be awarded \$500 in grant funds, with the applicant providing \$500, or 50%.

Funds will be awarded based on a first come, first served basis, until such time as the funds have been exhausted, with preference given to first-time applicants, and applicants with projects located in the historic downtown district. The date the application is received at the Central City Growth Organization Office is the date the application is considered as received for eligibility to the program, assuming the requirements of the program are met.

The Central City Growth Organization will work with property owners/tenants as needed on recommendations for paint colors and color schemes, need or appropriateness of awnings or other window treatments, advice on masonry repair, signage, etc.

Who should apply:

Owners/tenants of existing commercial buildings located within the Central City TIF District (Tax Increment Financing District). Contact the City of Central City to verify if the subject property is located within a TIF District.

Eligible Activities (include but are not limited to the following):

- Repair to building exterior façades to enhance the public perception (front, rear & side facades are eligible)
- Masonry repair
- Cleaning of building exterior
- Exterior painting
- Repairing or replacing cornices, entrances, doors, windows, decorative detail, awnings
- Sign removal, repair or replacement
- Other repairs that may improve the aesthetic quality of the building

** Priority will be given to projects that eliminate slum and blight, enhance the structure and appearance of the downtown commercial district, and meet projected goals for the district.*

Ineligible Activities: (included but not limited to the following):

- Interior improvements
- Roofing
- Inappropriate cleaning methods
- Repairs, replacements, or alterations uncomplimentary to the structure or district image
- Owner occupied homes and apartments

Grant Policy:

The Central City Growth Organization (herein after referred to as CCGO) will not use race, sex, age or religion as grounds for refusing or granting assistance to an eligible applicant.

Program Implementation:

1. Application Process
 - a. Application and guidelines for the program will be available at the CCGO office and at the City of Central City office. Applications may be requested via email – send your request to centralcitygo@gmail.com.
 - b. Completed Facade Improvement Grant applications, including drawings and plans of the building which illustrate all proposed work (including any structural work or repair, awnings (plus a sample of the material), signage, cost estimates, construction schedules and paint colors) must be submitted to the CCGO office for review by the CCGO Board of Directors. The Board meets monthly, on the third Monday of each month.
 - i. Applications which are urgent or time-sensitive may be reviewed outside of Board meetings, subject to Board availability and discretion.
 - c. The CCGO Board of Directors may approve the application if it complies with the Design Guidelines as set out in the City of Central City's Zoning Ordinances and meets organizational goals.
 - i. If not approved, the CCGO Board of Directors will explain, in writing, to the applicant the reasons for rejection and what, if any, steps may be taken to receive further consideration.
 - ii. CCGO Board of Directors approval of the application is subject to City review.
 - d. Applicants requesting funds must sign an agreement with CCGO.

- e. Grant monies will be distributed to the applicant upon **completion** of the approved project and will be subject to a **final inspection** conducted by CCGO and/or City of Central City staff.
 - f. Property owners who have two or more businesses occupying a single building/property, with each business having its own entrance, may be eligible for a facade grant for each business.
 - g. **Applications must be completed and approved prior to any construction activity.**
2. Post Application Approval Procedures:
 - a. The CCGO Board of Directors, CCGO Program Coordinator and/or City of Central City staff members will monitor the progress of the project.
 - b. Changes in approved work specifications must be approved by the CCGO Board of Directors **prior** to those changes being implemented, and may also be subject to City of Central City approval.
 - c. Approved changes in work verifications will be attached to the original application, dated and signed by the CCGO Board of Directors and/or the CCGO Program Coordinator.
 - d. The applicant and the CCGO Board of Directors, CCGO Program Coordinator and/or City of Central City staff will conduct a final inspection before grant payment will be made to the applicant. A Certificate of Approval will be issued to the applicant.
 - e. Deviations from an approved plan may disqualify the applicant from this grant program.

Program Amendments:

The details of the Facade Improvement Grant Program may be amended subject to the formal approval of a majority of the Central City Growth Organization Board of Directors.

Central City

