



Downtown Façade Improvement Program
Guidelines and Application

2020

City of Farmington

Downtown Façade Improvement Program

In conjunction with the Downtown Redevelopment Plan, the Economic Development Authority (EDA) has made funding available to commercial buildings zoned B-2 or B-3 in the downtown area to be used for building façade and exterior improvements.

Eligible Properties

Commercial buildings zoned B-2 or B-3 in the downtown area as shown on the attached map.

Funding Source

EDA fund balance of \$20,000 annually. Grants will be awarded according to the following scale:

Grant Amount	1:1 Match	Project Amount
\$1,500 - 2,500		\$3,000 – 5,000
\$2,501 – 5,000		\$5,001 - 10,000
\$5,001 - 10,000		\$10,001 - 20,000+

Grant Terms & Requirements

No more than one grant may be granted per property within one year from the initial application. A 1:1 match is required by the applicant. For every dollar contributed to funding eligible project costs, the applicant must contribute at least one dollar. The amount of grants to be awarded shall be \$1,500 up to \$10,000 according to the scale.

Program Objectives

The intent of this program is to leverage investment in the B-2 and B-3 zoned commercial buildings in the downtown area by providing matching grants of \$1,500 up to \$10,000 according to the scale, for façade and exterior improvements. As part of the Downtown Redevelopment Plan, business owners are encouraged to improve their buildings' front and back curb appeal through façade improvements such as awnings, paint, tuck pointing, exterior lighting, decorative signage, windows, doors, gutters, accessibility improvements, permanent patios, utility screening, dumpster enclosures, etc.

Program Definitions

Program Administrator

The Program Administrator shall be the City of Farmington Economic Development Authority, 430 Third Street, Farmington, MN 55024, phone 651-280-6820.

Applicant

Any commercial building zoned B-2 or B-3 within the downtown area (see attached map) seeking to obtain assistance under the terms of this program.

Building Official

The Building Official for the program shall be a City of Farmington employee and shall provide plan review and technical expertise relating to inspections, construction quality, code compliance and scope of work to be accomplished if required.

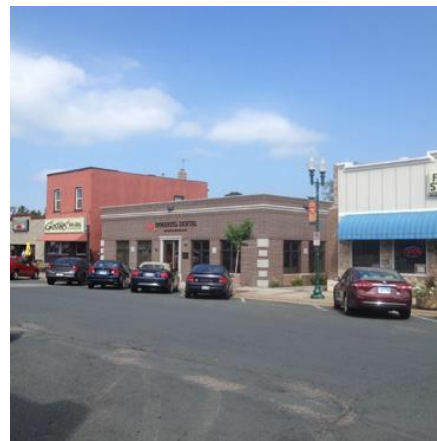
Project Coordinator

The Project Coordinator for the program shall be the Executive Director of the EDA.

Target Area

Commercial buildings zoned B-2 or B-3 in the downtown area as shown on the attached map.

Eligible Improvements: Funds may be used for façade and exterior improvements for the front and rear of buildings including, but not limited to awnings, paint, tuck pointing, exterior lighting, decorative signage, windows, doors, gutters, accessibility improvements, permanent patios, utility screening, dumpster enclosures, etc.



Special Conditions

Historic Properties

The City of Farmington is a Certified Local Government under the Historic Preservation Act. Each project submitted for review that is for a property determined eligible for designation or is a heritage landmark property will be reviewed as outlined in city code to receive a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Data Privacy

All information provided by applicants under the Downtown Façade Improvement Program shall be maintained in accordance with the Minnesota Data Practices Act.

Procedures

Application Intake

Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis and are reviewed based upon funds availability and in the order received. Applications will be reviewed for participation in the program based upon the following guidelines:

1. Whether the applicant has clear title to the property to be improved. Prior to project approval, the following will be ascertained:
 - a. Title verification;
 - b. All real estate taxes and any city fees or charges are current;
 - c. All individuals having an ownership interest, including contract holders, have agreed in writing to join in the application;
2. The extent to which the project meets the program objectives;
3. The degree of the project's overall impact on the surrounding area.

If necessary, applications competing for limited funds may be selected based upon these criteria.

Property Inspections

Upon determination that a property owner applying for rehabilitation assistance is eligible based on the program guidelines, the Building Official may conduct an inspection of the property to determine if the proposed improvements conform to City of Farmington building code standards.

Scope of Work

Upon completion of the initial inspection, the property owner shall provide a report or elevation drawing indicating any planned improvements. This report will be reviewed by the City of Farmington.

Project Approval

The final application will be approved by the Farmington EDA, following review by City of Farmington staff and recommendation of the Project Coordinator.

Approval by the Economic Development Authority (EDA)

The contract for work to be completed will be between the applicant and the contractor. Once the applicant has accepted a bid, staff will prepare the information for presentation to the EDA. Upon EDA approval, a Grant Agreement will be signed by the applicant and a designated city official. This agreement will outline the terms and conditions of the project, including the city's role and the applicant's responsibilities, and any corrective actions to be taken in the event of a dispute.

Notice to Proceed

Upon approval of the work to be done, and obtaining the required permits, the contractor will normally have six (6) months in which to complete the awarded contract. If construction work does not begin within 90 days of the award of contract, the Grant Agreement is null and void; however, the applicant may apply for one extension if necessary. The length of the extension will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Acceptance of Work

Interim inspections may be scheduled with the Building Official to monitor work in progress. Final inspection shall be required to ensure that the work has been completed in a satisfactory manner. In the event of a dispute between the owner and contractor concerning the completion of work, the Project Coordinator shall work with both parties to try to negotiate a satisfactory solution. Disputes that cannot be resolved by negotiation, and that result in legal action by either party to the contract, shall be resolved in accordance with applicable state law. EDA funds shall not be released to either the owner or contractor until such dispute has been settled.

Hold Harmless

The owner and the contractor shall indemnify and hold harmless the City of Farmington, the Farmington EDA, employees, and officials from any damages or liability arising from, or occurring as a result of, the activities funded through this program.

EDA Payment

All EDA funds will be disbursed by the EDA upon authorization by the owner and the City of Farmington. Payments will be made only after all work has been completed according to the authorized scope of work, and has been accepted by the owner. Funds will be released once all improvements are completed to the satisfaction of the city Building Official and final project inspection by the Project Coordinator.

Payment may be made directly to the contractor or in reimbursement to the owner, upon presentation of paid receipts for approved work to the Project Coordinator.

Appeals Process

Appeals concerning eligibility for the Downtown Façade Improvement Program or the proposed improvements shall be made in writing and addressed to the Project Coordinator. The coordinator will contact the applicant and attempt to rectify any concerns. A written response will be made within fifteen (15) days.

