



City of Claremont

Commercial District Revitalization Grant Program

The Commercial District Revitalization Grant Program was created to encourage private investment in Claremont's commercial business area and to improve and maintain storefronts, business aesthetics, and business functions in the City of Claremont. Building renovations and façade improvements can be costly to owners and can mean the difference between a vacant building and a vibrant, occupied storefront.

This grant program seeks to improve the facades of small businesses in our commercial business district so that after completion of work, citizens will notice a marked improvement in the appearance of the buildings. The purpose of the program is to provide an economic incentive to:

- A. Promote storefront rehabilitation in the commercial district area;
- B. Encourage improved design and building character;
- C. Attract reinvestment in our commercial buildings;
- D. Make improvements that produce a highly visible contribution to the City of Claremont

Source of Funding

Grants of up to \$5,000 or 50% of project costs (whichever is less) can be awarded and are made possible through general fund budget appropriations designated at the beginning of each fiscal year. Grants are competitive and awarded on a reimbursement basis. Priority is given to projects that improve the appearance of the property, as well as result in an occupied structure that promotes a vibrant, commercial district.

Eligibility

Funds are available for properties within the boundaries of the Commercial Business District. Commercial buildings must be zoned Central Business (B1) or Community Business (B2). Properties immediately outside the map boundaries or within a different zoning district may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

All proposals will be evaluated in terms of compliance with existing ordinances and plans, include (where applicable): Land Development Code, NC State Fire Code,

Americans with Disabilities Act, North Carolina State Building Code, and Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation and Rehabilitation
Applicants must be legal owner of the property and provide names of all owners and partners

Applicants must be financially stable and not owe any back taxes, utility fees, or civil penalties. In certain instances, Council may require applicants to personally guarantee loan or require deed of trust in case of default.

Structures must be covered by a current insurance policy sufficient to cover the value of the structure, plus improvements.

Only one improvement grant per property awarded within a fiscal year.

Must be a for-profit entity; Improvements for political activities, adult businesses, and general storage or warehousing uses are not allowed.

Organizations that discriminate on the basis of race, culture, gender, sexual orientation, age or religion are excluded from eligibility.

There is no right or entitlement of grant funding. All funding decisions are made at the discretion of the City Council and are subject to budget appropriations.

Guidelines

Approved projects include, but are not limited to:

Safe cleaning of brick/stone fronts or wall surfaces. This includes chemical stripping, water wash or scraping. No sand blasting is allowed.

Masonry repair, mortar joint repair, re-pointing of brick HVAC, plumbing, and electrical systems

Re-painting and patching of façade walls

Repair/replacement of windows and/or doors

Removal of siding and exterior false facades and metal canopies

Repair, reconstruction, and/or replacement of original architectural details

Installations of canvas-type awnings

Structural and cornice repair and/or replacement

Historic reconstructions, rehabilitation or compatible reconstruction of a store front. Landscaping including sidewalks and plantings

Murals

Installation/replacement/repair of exterior lighting and appropriate signage including structures or frames that contain or hold a sign

Demolition of blighted buildings and structures

Projects not eligible for grant funding include, but are not limited to:

Improvements made prior to grant approval

Interior rehabilitation/improvements

Routine maintenance and repair

New construction projects
Construction of false fronts
Blocking up of windows or installing storm/vinyl windows and doors
Demolition of historic features
Roof and chimney repair

Grant Award

Qualifying projects are eligible for a grant at a minimum of five hundred dollars (\$500) but not more than five thousand dollars (\$5,000) per building on a fifty/fifty (50/50) matching, reimbursement basis. Projects of extraordinary impact on the community and of exceptional merit may be considered for funding in excess of the \$5,000 ceiling.

Decisions may be based upon, but not limited to, size, project cost, and amount of available funds.

The grant amount shall be determined at time of application approval and reimbursements will be dispersed when the project is completed.

Funds will be treated as a forgivable loan. The term is 3 years from the date the funds are distributed. 1/3 of the grant/loan amount will be forgiven annually on the anniversary for the date on which the grant funds were disbursed. If all conditions are met, the loan will be completely forgiven on the 3-year anniversary.

The work must be completed within six months of application approval but the owner may request one extension for up to six months based upon compelling valid reasons for the delay. Extensions are discouraged.

Demolition grants will be issued upon completion of the demolition and stabilization of the site.

Application/Decision Process

1. Applicants must submit an application form and all required documentation.
2. Applications will be reviewed for completeness and compliance with the criteria above by either the City Manager or City Planner. Incomplete applications will be returned to the applicant. Complete applications will be submitted for review to be approved or denied by City Council.
3. Applications will be approved or denied by City Council on a rolling basis. If approved by the City Council, an agreement/contract will be prepared by the City and must be signed prior to the commencement of work. No after-the-fact applications are eligible.
4. Upon project completion, the applicant must notify the City Manager. A staff person will visit the site and certify that the work has been completed per agreement.
5. Once the work has been completed and verified, copies of all paid invoices must be submitted to the City. Once the staff has reviewed the invoices, a reimbursement will be processed and sent to the applicant.

6. Reimbursement funds will be treated as a forgivable loan. The term is 3 years from the date the funds are distributed. 1/3 of the grant/loan amount will be forgiven annually on the anniversary of the date on which the grant funds were distributed. If all conditions are met, the loan will be completely forgiven on the 3-year anniversary.



Building Revitalization Grant Program

(Latest return date for any month is 15 days prior to the regular scheduled City Council meeting)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Contact Numbers: _____

(Include E-Mail if available)

Address of Project: _____

Building owner and address: _____

(Only if different from applicant)

1. Describe your project: _____

2. When would you begin? _____ Expected Completion? _____

3. What is the estimated project cost? _____

4. ATTACHEMENTS – (Must be included with your complete application package.)

Sketch or drawing- Your own drawing is OK- professional work not required. Photo(s) of your project site (before and after)

Detailed project narrative that fully explains how the application meets the grant guidelines

Signature and date: _____

Return this form- keep a copy- to:

Leah Martin

Claremont City Hall

3288 E Main St, Claremont, NC 28610

Contact Leah Martin, Claremont City Planner, for more information. Phone: (828) 466-7260 Email:

lmartin@cityofclaremont.org