



Façade Improvement Grant Guidelines

The South Huntsville Main Business Association (South Huntsville Main) Façade Improvement Grant (FIG) program is designed to promote the improvement of commercial and multi-use properties in the South Huntsville Main district by helping property owners upgrade, rehabilitate, and preserve the facades of eligible structures in the South Huntsville Main district. The program aims to make revitalization efforts affordable by providing matching grant funds up to \$5,000.

Purpose: Grants are provided to owners in recognition of the positive impacts that individual building improvements can have on overall appearance, quality, growth, and vitality of the district.

Objectives: Façade improvement activities, assisted with funds made available through the FIG program, are intended to meet the following objectives:

- To encourage the leveraging of new private investment the South Huntsville Main district in the form of fixed asset investment related to exterior building improvements;
- To preserve, enhance, and restore the historical and architectural significance of buildings in South Huntsville (if applicable);
- To perpetuate a positive and proactive business climate in South Huntsville that encourages the revitalization of buildings and supports business improvement.

Minimum Requirements: To be eligible for funding, a proposed project must meet all of the following minimum requirements:

- Private Funds Leveraged – The applicant must leverage a minimum of two dollars (\$2.00) of private funds for every one dollar (\$1.00) of grant funds requested. (For example, if the project costs \$15,000 total, South Huntsville Main will donate up to \$5,000.)
- For an historic building – Exterior renovations shall, to the extent practical, preserve and promote the significant architectural and historic features of the building. Modifications to listed historic buildings must be reviewed and approved by the City of Huntsville Planning Department and potentially the State of Alabama Historical Office.
- Compliance with Applicable Laws – Applicant shall comply with all applicable local, state, and federal laws and codes.
- Project Completion – Projects must begin within three (3) months of grant award letter and completed by November 1, 2022. (Exceptions will be made for communicated and reasonable delays.)
- Project must be within the South Huntsville Main district (inside shaded area), map attached.
- Applications may be submitted by a property owner or tenant within the area shown on the map.
- Properties must be commercial, residential properties that are turning commercial, or multi-use.

Eligible Improvements: Grants shall be available to eligible applicants for the following improvements:

- Awnings – repair or installation
- Rehabilitation or compatible reconstruction of storefronts
- Removal of metal siding and exterior slip covers (surfaces), exterior cleaning, painting*, and/or paint removal
- Business signage
- Masonry repair and repainting
- Repair and replacement of architectural details or materials
- Window repair or in certain cases replacement
- Hardscape of parking lot or sidewalk in front of storefront
- Permanent landscape
- Improvement to backs of buildings are eligible if done in conjunction with a front façade improvement or if the front façade is already considered satisfactory according to program guidelines

**Proposals with permanent improvements will score higher*

Ineligible Improvements: Grants shall not be available for the following:

- Improvements made prior to grant approval
- Interior rehabilitation unless it is essential to rehabilitate the building's façade
- Interior decoration
- Refinancing of existing debt
- Inventory and equipment
- Sweat equity (payments for applicant's own labor) although building materials/supplies are eligible for funding if the applicant does not use an outside contractor
- General business operations expenses (payroll, taxes, utilities, etc.)

Terms and Conditions:

- Grant amounts are subject to the availability of program funds but shall not exceed \$5,000. The Façade Grant Committee has the authority to recommend award of grants exceeding the \$5,000 maximum if a project is deemed especially beneficial to the FIG program objectives.
- Grantees will be required to sign a grant agreement guaranteeing the project will be completed according to the details included on the grant application and approved by the Façade Grant Committee and SHMBA Board of Directors.
- Grants will be paid in a lump sum at the end of the project as a reimbursement of costs incurred. Invoices need to be sent no later than the project completion date.
- Awarded grantees will agree to any and all public relations requests.

Building Design Requirements:

- Exterior renovations shall, to the extent practical, preserve and promote the significant architectural and historic features of the building (if applicable).
- All construction work shall comply with applicable local, state, and federal building codes.
- The program is geared towards façade projects that improve the overall appearance of the South Huntsville Main district.

- Ideal projects will retain or repair original features and use historic materials (if applicable). For example, on historical structures, installation of vinyl siding would not be funded but the repair and repainting of original wood siding would.
- Projects should draw upon the history and architecture of the building while still reflecting the current use.
- The goal is to draw upon the architectural and distinctiveness of the South Huntsville district to enhance its value.
- Creative new uses for existing building stock will be strongly encouraged, as well as modern yet compatible awnings, signage, lighting, and other fixtures to enhance the appearance of storefronts and South Huntsville. Creative placemaking projects are encouraged as well.

Distribution of funds: Prior to releasing grant funds, the following documentation must be in place:

1. Notice of Award – will be emailed and/or mailed to awardee
2. Grant Agreement – will be included in the award letter
3. Evidence of Program Expenditures – documentation shall be provided by the awarded applicant