



Façade Improvement Grant Application

Application Deadline: April 16th, 2018

The Helena Business Improvement District Façade Improvement Grant (FIG) program is designed to promote the improvement of commercial and multi-use properties in the Business Improvement District by helping property owners upgrade, rehabilitate, and preserve the facades of eligible structures in Historic Downtown Helena. The FIG program aims to make revitalization efforts affordable by providing matching grant funds up to \$5000. The FIG program is funded by the Helena Business Improvement District (HBID) and Montana Main Street. The following guidelines apply to the structuring of façade improvement grants.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Purpose: FIG 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 downtown.

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 into Downtown Helena 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 Downtown Helena; and
- To perpetuate a positive and proactive business climate in Downtown Helena that encourages the revitalization of building and supports business improvement.

Amendments and Modifications: HBID may from time to time amend the provisions imposed by the policies and procedures contained within this application.

ADMINISTRATION

1. HBID shall establish a Façade Grant Review Committee. The committee members will be from HBID Board of Directors, City of Helena, or community members with design experience. Members of the committee shall be approved by the HBID Board of Directors and the HBID Executive Director.
2. The committee shall have the authority to review, select and recommend grant applications for approval of the HBID Board of Directors.
3. Grant applications will be evaluated based on a clear and documented set of criteria including:
 - a. Impact – overall impact of the project on the HBID. Are inappropriate design elements removed? Will the project eliminate what was previously a liability for the district? Does the project seek to restore the historical or architectural significance of the building?

- b. Financial Leverage – projects that leverage more private investment will be graded higher than those seeking the maximum match.
 - c. Cost/Schedule – is the project feasible from a cost and schedule point of view?
 - d. Sustainability/Permanence – how permanent are the improvements? Eligible costs must be structural. Is there a maintenance plan for improvements? Does the business own the building? If not, how much time remains on the lease?
 - e. Community Contribution – is the applicant a good neighbor? Is the area around the business kept clean and free of debris on a consistent basis? Does the business participate in organized Downtown Helena promotions, events, or other community-based activities? Does the applicant actively promote downtown Helena and their own business?
4. Committee members will be selected at the beginning of each round of grant funding and will serve for the entire round. Committee members may serve for multiple rounds.
 5. The FIG program shall be administered by the HBID Executive Director who shall be known as the “administrator”. The Administrator shall explain the FIG program to prospective applicants, provide written information, assist applicants in completing applications, and process requests for funding.
 6. In the event there is a conflict of interest between a committee member and a particular grant application, an alternate committee member will be appointed by the Administrator to review the application.
 7. The Administrator shall be responsible for the maintenance of all other records for the FIG program and report annually to the HBID regarding use of FIG funds.
 8. HBID reserves the right to cancel a grant agreement in the event of failure to comply with this agreement.

MEETINGS

Meetings of the Façade Grant Committee shall be held on an as-needed basis. All committee members shall be given reasonable prior notice of each meeting. A majority of the committee in attendance at a meeting constituting a quorum shall be required for official committee action. Official actions must have the support of the majority of the total committee.

RECORDS

Written records of all program activities, including program inquiries, program meetings, grant applications, annual reports, and other documents, shall be properly maintained according to HBID policy. Additional information for each applicant will be filed containing the minimum information:

- Initial notes from Administrator indicating proposed project meets key criteria
- Application form with supporting documentation and correspondence.
- Copy of committee minutes summarizing the action taken on the grant request.

Each grant recipient should have a file containing the above information plus:

- Copy of grant agreement
- Grantee's project schedule
- Site visit notes
- Before and after project photographs

ELIGIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS

Eligible Area: the HBID shown on Map 1. (Shaded inside area)

Eligible Applicants:

- Applications may be submitted by a property owner or tenant within the area shown on Map 1.
- Tenants must provide proof of lease authority or a written statement declaring the property owner's agreement to the improvements.
- Tenants must have a least two years remaining on their lease or an option to renew.
- Properties must be commercial or residential properties turning commercial or multi-use.
- Applicants shall not be disqualified based on age, race, religion, color, handicap, sex, physical condition, development disability, sexual orientation, or national origin.

Eligible Activities: Grants shall be available to eligible applicants for the following activities:

- 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
- Masonry repair and repainting
- Repair and replacement of architectural details or materials
- Window repair or in certain cases replacement
- 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

Ineligible Activities: program grants shall not be available for the following activities:

- 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.)

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 one dollar (\$1.00) of private funds for every one dollar (\$1.00) of grant funds requested.
- If a 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 State Historic Preservation 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 October 15th, 2018.

Building Design Requirements: one of the objectives of the FIG program is to preserve the historical character of buildings in the Downtown area:

- Exterior renovations shall to the extent practical, preserve and promote the significant architectural and historic features of the building.
- All construction work shall comply with applicable local, state, and federal building codes.
- The program is geared towards façade projects that protect the historic integrity of the building and improve the overall appearance of the downtown area.
- The goal is to return the building facades in the downtown area to their appearance following their initial construction; however, it is recognized that some buildings may have a different period of architectural significance that supersedes the original construction appearance.
- Ideal projects will retain or repair original features and use historic materials. For example, 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 not to try to recreate some past time in the history of Helena; instead, it is to draw upon the architectural and historic distinctiveness of the downtown as a means 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 downtown.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Minimum standards shall include the following:

- Grant amounts are subject to the availability of program funds but shall not exceed \$5000. The Façade Grant Committee has the authority to recommend award of grants exceeding the \$5000 maximum if a project is deemed especially beneficial to the FIG program objectives.
- Grantees will be required to sign a grant agreement (Exhibit A) guaranteeing the

project will be completed according to the details included on the grant application and approved by the Façade Grant Committee and HBID 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.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Applicant shall submit application which includes the following information: (use Microsoft Word, Excel, etc.)

- A. Applicant Name
- B. Applicant Type – property owner or tenant
 - a. For tenant, permission letter from property owner or lease proving lease authority
 - b. For tenant, copy of lease showing two (2) years remaining or option to renew
- C. Contact information including address, telephone number, and email address
- D. Building Information
 - a. Physical address
 - b. Property legal description
 - c. Year of construction
 - d. Number of stories
 - e. Building space type: (pick one from (i.) below)
 - i. Commercial, retail, restaurant, office, other (explain)
 - f. Verify whether there is a façade easement on the subject property, which would require City Commission approval for any alterations.
- E. Type of improvement with two color photographs of project prior to improvement
- F. Description of proposed improvements Sketches or drawing of proposed improvement including placement, color, dimensions, and materials
- G. Estimated total project cost
- H. Dollar amount of grant request
- I. Proposed start date
- J. Estimated completion date
- K. Description of additional work to interior or exterior
- L. Indication of interest in design assistance
- M. Date and Signature of applicant

REVIEW PROCESS

Grants applications will be awarded based of the above section title “Administration” number “3.”

Applicants should address their application to the following:

Executive Director, HBID
Façade Grant
318 Fuller Street
Helena, MT 59601

1. Within 30 working days of the application deadline, the Façade Grant Committee will meet to score applications and make recommendations for approval to the HIBD Board of Directors.
2. Board of Directors will reject or accept the proposal by the Committee.
3. Notice of Award will be emailed and/or written in a letter to the applicant explaining the terms of the grant and the grantee will sign the agreement.
4. Rejection of Award will be emailed and/or written in a letter to the applicant.

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 (Exhibit A) in this packet.
3. **Evidence of Permits** – documentation shall be provided by the applicant that all necessary permits, licenses, and any other registrations required have been obtained by the applicant prior to the release of program funds.
4. **Lien Waivers** – lien waivers must be submitted from all contractors and subcontractors.
5. **Evidence of Program Expenditures** – documentation shall be provided by the awarded applicant of expenditures prior to the release of funds which can include bills, invoices, or receipts for materials. All documents shall be reviewed and approved by the Administrator.
6. **Inspection** – the Administrator shall perform a visual inspection to ensure the project activities were completed per the grant agreement. A photograph of the completed project will be filed.

Map 1. Helena Business Improvement District (HBID)

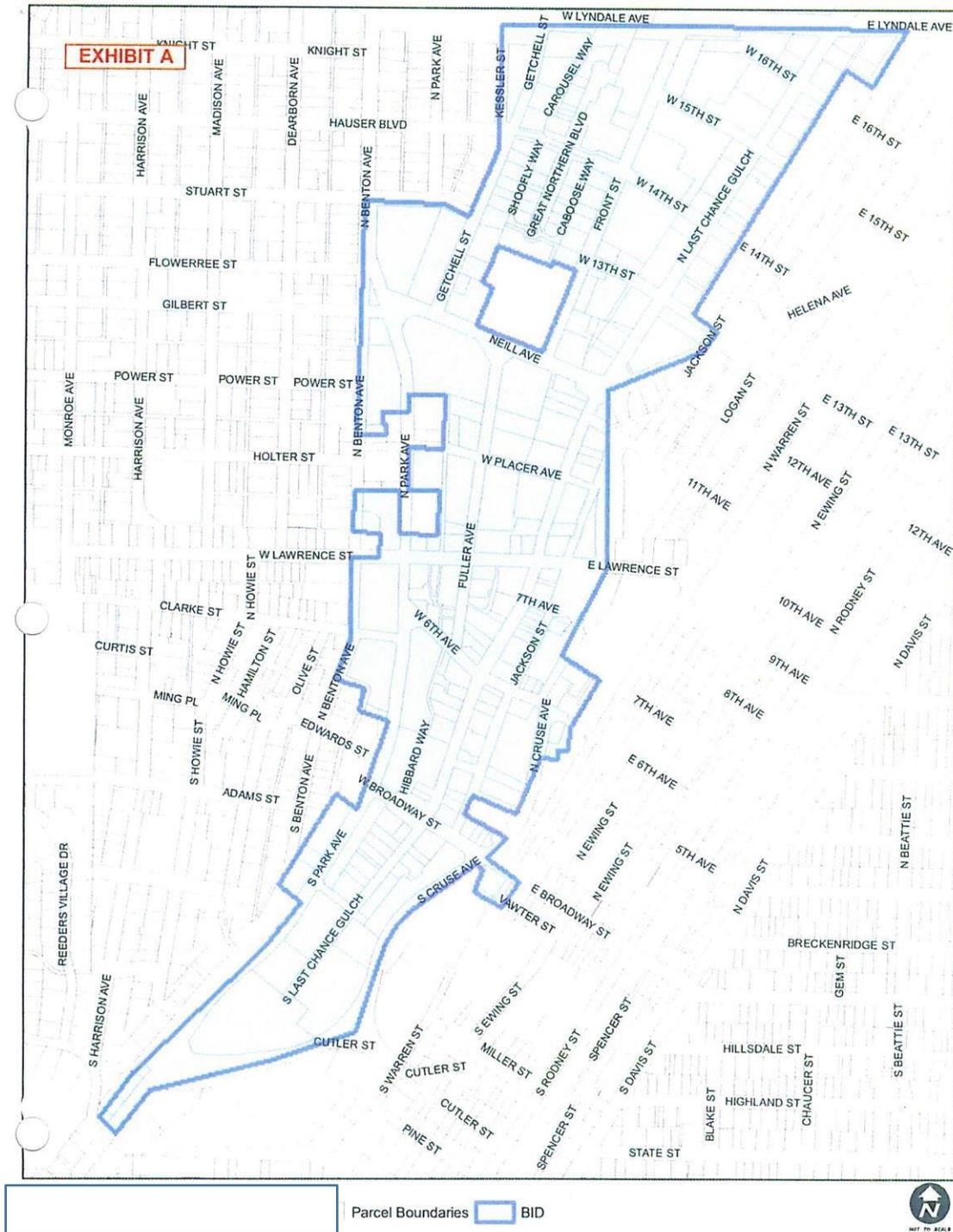


Exhibit A



Façade Improvement Grant Agreement

- A. Grantee agrees to complete the project as described in the application and approved by the Façade Grant Committee. This grant may be used only for eligible project activities described in the Grantee’s façade improvement grant application and approved by the Façade Grant Committee and the HBID Board of Directors.
- B. Grantee agrees to adhere to the project schedule requirements outlined in the application.
- C. Grantee agrees to preserve and promote the significant architectural and historic features of the building.
- D. Grantee agrees to provide additional information and documents as the HBID may request and allow HBID and its representatives to have reasonable access to the site for the purpose of evaluating the progress and completion of the project.
- E. Grantee agrees to comply with all applicable local, state, and federal laws and codes.
- F. Grantee agrees to maintain the property and improvement.
- G. Grantee agrees to allow the HBID to promote the project including, but not limited to, displaying a HBID logo sign at the site, during and after construction, and using photographs and descriptions of the project in HBID promotional materials and/or social media.
- H. HBID reserves the right to withhold any payments to be made under this grant award if, in the HBID’s sole discretion, such action is necessary: (1) because Grantee has not fully complied with the terms and conditions of the grant; (2) to protect the purpose and objectives of the grant; or (3) to comply with any law or regulation applicable to Grantee, to HBID, or this grant.

On behalf of Grantee, I understand and agree to the foregoing terms and conditions the HBID grant, and hereby certify my authority to execute this agreement.

Business / Organization Name

Applicant’s Signature *Date*

Building Owner’s Signature *Date*