

**ABERDEEN FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM  
PROGRAM GUIDELINES  
2020**

**Program Overview**

The Façade Improvement Program provides matching grants to property owners and businesses to stimulate improvements to building frontages for commercial properties located within the Aberdeen Sustainable Community Area, which encompasses areas of the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) area and U.S. Route 40.

The primary goals of the Façade Improvement Program are to facilitate investment and create visual improvements in commercial façade appearance that enhances the overall strength of the City's commercial districts.

**Assistance Available**

Approved projects are eligible to receive a dollar-for-dollar matching grant to assist with the exterior rehabilitation of eligible commercial and mixed-use structures. Sources of match will be cash match directly related to the physical improvements.

**Eligibility Requirements**

Existing structures currently zoned for commercial use and in current commercial use, or planned for commercial use, within the City of Aberdeen's Community Legacy Area.

If a building code compliance violation is present, correction of the violation must be made as part of the façade improvement work. Properties which are vacant at the time of award must tenant the improved space, with a permitted use, within twelve (12) months of the completion of the façade improvement work.

Eligible applicants include the owner of a commercial building or the owner of a commercial business. All applications must be signed by the property owner to indicate consent for proposed improvements. The determination of eligibility and priority for assistance is at the discretion of the City of Aberdeen. Work which qualifies for assistance includes improvements to the exterior of a building which are visible from the public right-of-way, and may also include documented costs for architectural design, permitting and inspection services. Assistance may also include interior improvements on a case-by-case basis determined by the City of Aberdeen.

**Ineligible Improvements:**

- Structural Repairs
- Roof Repairs
- Parking lot resurfacing
- Routine Maintenance

## **Process Steps**

### **1. Application**

The application must fill out all sections of the application, which is located on the City's website, [www.aberdeenmd.gov](http://www.aberdeenmd.gov). The following requirements are outlined in the application:

- Submission of completed application form
- Color photographs of current façade
- Conceptual design and specific scope of work
- Copy of current Harford County Business License
- A copy of either the property deed; municipal tax bill; insurance certificate
- Two itemized project cost estimates
- Documentation of owner's approval and permission for tenant improvements

### **2. State Approval**

The completed application will be sent to the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development and the Maryland Historic Trust for approval.

### **3. City Approval**

The completed application and award amount will be approved by the Aberdeen City Council at an available meeting date. Please note, the requested award amount on the application may differ than the actual award granted by the City Council.

### **4. Notice to Proceed**

The Notice to Proceed with construction activity will be issued by the City of Aberdeen to the grant recipient. The Notice to Proceed does not guarantee the issuance of required building permits, which must be secured prior to the start of construction.

### **5. Modification**

Any modification to an approved design requires the grant recipient to contact the City of Aberdeen for approval of the modification. Non-substantive modifications will be approved by City staff; however, more significant changes may require approval from the City Council and State. Grant recipients shall not authorize execution of plan modifications until they have received written approval from Program Staff. Doing so may jeopardize the guarantee of project funding.

### **6. Project Schedule and Payment**

The grant recipient will have twelve (12) months from the date of award in which to complete the required improvements. Exceptions for new construction or pending leases will be considered at the time of application. If grantee does not utilize funds within the given term, funds may be redistributed, and grantee will have to reapply. Following the completion

of the improvements, the grantee should submit all required documentation to the City for processing of payment. Documentation is required for all eligible work for which reimbursement is being requested, and shall include, but not limited to:

- Copies of all invoices for work performed
- Copies of cancelled checks for all work performed
- Copies of any required approved building permits and inspections related to the project (only if requested by the City).

Partial reimbursements may be requested as line items are completed and costs are incurred, provided that all required supporting documentation is submitted with each request for reimbursement. If the completed work does not conform to the approved plans and specifications, the City may instruct the contractor and grant recipient to bring the work into compliance. The City will not process the reimbursement payment and issue a check until all improvements have been satisfactorily completed and all required documentation has been submitted. In no case shall payment exceed the amount stipulated in the grant contract.