

**ABERDEEN FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
PROGRAM GUIDELINES
2023**

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) District, Main Street District 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 Sustainable Community 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 have a tenant in 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 and exterior improvements on multi-family properties on a case-by-case basis as determined by the City of Aberdeen.

Ineligible Improvements:

- Improvements made prior to award approval
- Structural Repairs
- Roof Repairs
- Routine Maintenance
- Parking Lot Resurfacing

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. 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 canceled checks for all work performed (City will not accept payments made in cash to pay invoices)
- 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.

City of Aberdeen Façade Improvement Application

Please return your completed application with all supporting documents to:

Facade Improvement Program
City of Aberdeen
Department of Planning and Community Development
60 North Parke Street Aberdeen, Maryland 21001
410-272-1600 ext. 216 or 220

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- _____ Completed application form
- _____ Photographs (color) of existing conditions
- _____ Conceptual idea of improvements or architectural services rendered
- _____ Copy of current Harford County/ City Business License for all businesses occupying the building
- _____ Two contract estimates/bids attached to application

Please check one and provide the necessary documents:

- _____ Property Deed
- _____ Business License
- _____ Paid Municipal Tax Bill
- _____ Business Owner Permission Form
- _____ Insurance Certificate

This application is for assistance to:

Name of Business: _____

Business Address: _____

Business Phone Number: _____

SECTION A. BUILDING OWNERSHIP INFORMATION (Only if different from applicant)

Property Owner's Name: _____

Property Owner's Address: _____

Property Owner's Phone Number: _____

Please note:

- There can be no liens other than mortgages against the Applicant's property. All payments to the City of Aberdeen and other government entities must be current (taxes, water, etc).

- Projects must conform to applicable building codes, zoning regulations, and/or requirements for public accessibility. Other conditions may apply.
- Applicant is responsible for obtaining appropriate building permits, obtaining bids for construction activity, and must submit any state license numbers that apply to the work and agree to an inspection of the work by the City of Aberdeen.
- Applicant is responsible for submitting design drawing to the Aberdeen Architectural Review Committee (if applicable).

Instructions: Applicants must answer all items; incomplete applications will be returned. Any items which do not apply to your project should be marked "N/A".

SECTION B. PROPERTY INFORMATION

1. Number of businesses occupying the building: _____
2. Number of vacant commercial units in the building: _____
3. How long have these units been vacant: _____
4. Assessed value of the property per Maryland Dept. of Assessment & Taxation: \$_____
5. Year Built: _____
6. Gross area of building: _____
7. Tax ID # _____
8. Current Annual Property Taxes _____
9. Are there any outstanding debts (mortgages, encumbrances, liens, attachments) on the property? Yes_
No__

If "Yes", please indicate all secured interests in this property.

If necessary, attach a separate page to document additional items.

SECTION C. PROJECT INFORMATION

Please describe the type of improvements you propose to make to the building façade or interior. Include a brief description of all other improvements (use additional sheets, if necessary).

Total Project Cost: \$ _____

Source of Funds: _____

Grant Request in the amount of: _____

Matching Fund obtained through: _____

Have you sought architectural assistance? Yes__ No__

If yes, please attach drawings, renderings and plans.

Firm or individual's Name, Address, and Phone # _____

Please list the names of all contractors who provided an estimate and attach copies of all estimates

Firm or Individual's Name, Address, and Phone # _____

Firm or Individual's Name, Address, and Phone # _____

Firm or Individual's Name, Address, and Phone # _____

Estimated time of project completion? _____

APPLICANT CERTIFICATION

I/we certify that all information provided in the application is accurate and that I/we will complete a facade improvement project in accordance with plans approved by the City of Aberdeen. Upon notification that my/our project is approved for the Façade Improvement Program Grant, I/we will sign a participation agreement authorizing the City of Aberdeen to encumber funds for my/our project, and stipulating that I/we will abide by all program requirements. I further agree that at the conclusion of the facade improvements to maintain the completed project. I/we understand there will be no alterations of the completed work without approval from the City of Aberdeen.

Applicant(s) Signature(s):

_____ Date: _____

_____ Date: _____