

City of Forest Park Facade Grant Eligibility & Application Guidelines

Overview & Purpose

The City of Forest Park Facade Grant Program is intended to stimulate investment in the revitalization of building exteriors in commercial areas of the City of Forest Park.

Matching funds are made available for eligible improvements to business facades that are easily visible to the public via public right of ways, such as those that face a public street. Improvements must meet the design standards set by the Architectural Review Board (ARB) and abide by the City of Forest Park Code of Ordinances.

The Facade Grant Program is funded by the Development Authority (DA) and is administered by the Economic Development Department. The DA will determine the amount of the matching funds based on the proposed facade improvement, grant funds available, and the number of requests under consideration.

Facade Grant Eligibility Criteria

Eligible projects must be zoned C-1, C-2, or C-3. For information regarding zoning designations, please visit <https://www.forestparkga.gov/planning/page/maps>, or contact the Planning, Building, and Zoning Department at 404-608-2307.

Eligible participants include commercial and mixed-use business owners. Government entities (including any elected officials, city staff, and direct family members), churches, and national franchises of all types are excluded. Additionally, properties owned by the City of Forest Park Development Authority or members of the City of Forest Park Development Authority are not eligible for façade grant funds. If the property is leased, the tenant must submit an application for the proposed project with the property owner as the co-applicant.

Priority will be given to buildings that are visually prominent from the street, and to buildings with inappropriately applied facades that are unsightly or in need of repair.

To qualify for a façade grant, projects must result in improvements that:

- a) Are appropriate for the building and consistent with its current business uses.
- b) Positively contribute to the appearance and vitality of Forest Park's downtown and commercial districts.

Eligible projects must be in accordance with all government rules, regulations, and laws, including but not limited to the City of Forest Park's ordinances and building codes, and the ARB's Architectural Design Standards.

Guidelines for Facade Improvements

Potentially eligible work is limited to exterior improvements only – business facades that are easily visible to the public and within public right of ways, such as those that face a public street, are top priority.

From minor improvements to full-scale restoration, a wide range of investment proposals will be considered, including:

- a) Exterior Painting
- b) Structural Stabilization
- c) Canopies and Awnings
- d) Exterior Walls/Materials - Replacement Damaged Storefronts (Demolition)
- e) Exterior Signs
- f) Gutters and Downspouts
- g) Exterior Door & Window Repair/Replacement and Treatments
- h) Decorative Exterior Architectural Features
- i) Yard Improvements (Landscaping/Pavement)

Ineligible work includes but is not limited to:

- a) Roofs - interior improvements of any type
- b) Security Systems - general maintenance (except painting)
- c) Personal Property/Equipment - interior window/door treatments

Colors should be harmonious with the neighboring structures and comply with ARB design standards.

The size, color, and shape of a sign should complement the building and comply with local sign ordinances.

Final approval of signage must be granted by the Planning, Building, and Zoning Department (PBZ).

Participants assume full responsibility for all aspects of the project, which includes any relationships with contractors and/or suppliers and securing all necessary municipal approvals.

Applicants interested in this program should consult the PBZ, which may be of assistance during project design and proposal.

Application Guidelines

Applications will be reviewed by the Economic Development Department within four weeks of receipt and in the order received. Only complete application packages will be reviewed.

A complete application package includes the application and all supporting materials as specified in the instructions.

Incomplete application packages will be returned to sender within two weeks of receipt.

Applications should be mailed or delivered to:

City of Forest Park
ATTN: Economic Development Department
Ref: Façade Grant Application
745 Forest Parkway
Forest Park, GA 30297

For more information, please contact the Economic Development Department at 404-363-2454.

Application Review

The Economic Development Department, authorized by the Development Authority (DA), shall:

- Review each application package for completeness.
- Determine eligibility.
- Classify the project as either a minor or major improvement.
- Provide a grant recommendation to the DA or deny the project.
- Each application package will be judged by the following standards for review:
 - Priority will be given to buildings that are visually prominent, and/or buildings with inappropriately applied facades that are unsightly or in need of repair.
 - Extent to which the project advances the goals of improving building appearance.
 - Extent to which the project is compatible with ARB design standards for the targeted area.
 - Extent of the project's impact upon the overall streetscape and pedestrian atmosphere.
 - Original condition of the building and the need for the changes of the proposed project.
 - Quality of the work proposed.
 - Level of match participation by the applicant.
 - Range of projects completed and proposed as part of the Façade Grant program.
 - Any other relevant factors deemed by the Economic Development Department to be applicable.

Recommendations for facade grants will then be given to the DA for approval.

Within two weeks of a DA meeting, each applicant will receive confirmation via email indicating the grant award decision, or in some cases a request for additional information. In the instance of a decision to deny or table an application, the email will indicate the board's reason for doing so.

The DA reserves the right to table, deny, or request modifications in any or all application packages, in whole or in part, and to negotiate changes in the proposed project. In the case of denial by the DA, the applicant can address any issues identified and re-apply for a grant.

Grant Awards

Approved projects will be funded at up to eighty percent (80%) of the approved project's total cost.

The award will not exceed the amounts shown on the Maximum Grant Schedule (see below) adopted by the DA for a specific project type and scope, with a maximum of \$25,000.

Many factors are considered when determining grant awards. Such factors include grant funds available, the project budget, number of applicants, financial considerations, applicant match, mixture of proposed projects, and the extent to which projects fulfill the goals and standards for eligible projects as set forth above.

Maximum Award Structure

Each project is classified with specific funding limits per category. However, funding may not exceed eighty percent (80%) of the total cost of the project.

- Major Improvement(s):
 - Restoration / Rehabilitation: substantial changes to building's exterior appearance
 - Any project total of \$20,000+ ▪ \$16,000 maximum award
- Minor Improvement(s):
 - Small updates to the exterior, which include, but are not limited to exterior painting, sign/awning replacements or repairs, landscaping, and window/door repairs and updates.
 - \$10,000 maximum award
 - If applying for the grant to make multiple improvements, \$12,000 maximum award.

Grant Disbursement

- Once a project is complete, grant funds are disbursed to the contractor upon:
 - Satisfactory completion of the project with conformance to approved plans.
 - Compliance with all applicable municipal rules, laws, ordinances, and regulations; and
 - Reaffirmation of applicant's commitment to maintain project improvements.
 - Improvements funded by the Development Authority must be maintained for at least three (3) years.
 - Grantees are ineligible for additional funds for three years after project is complete.
- All invoices are to be submitted to:

City of Forest Park
ATTN: Economic Development Department
Ref: Façade Grant Program
745 Forest Parkway Forest
Park, GA 30297.

NOTE: The Economic Development Department and Development Authority reserves the right to increase or decrease a grant award in accordance with receipt of actual expenditures.