

# 2022 FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT GRANTS (FIG)

A Matching Grant Program to Support Small, Locally-Owned, and Operated Businesses in the City of Virginia Beach.

## A. WHAT IS FIG?

Façade improvement grants (FIG) are reimbursements for impactful exterior improvements for small, locally owned, and operated businesses located in any commercial or industrial zoned area within the City of Virginia Beach.

The program will match a small business owners', or those who lease to small businesses, investments up to \$10,000, for exterior building, site and outdoor dining improvements.

## B. WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

- New or existing small businesses with less than 50 employees and those who lease to them.
- Properties and applicants that are current on all City of Virginia Beach licenses, fees, and taxes.
- Businesses located on any commercially or industrially zoned property (H, O, B, I, PD-H, OR, RT, and CBC Districts).

## C. WHO IS INELIGIBLE?

- Chain businesses with more than three (3) locations
- National franchises
- Places of worship
- Residential buildings or complexes
- Nonprofit organizations
- Government-supported institutions
- Private clubs or social centers

## D. WHAT IMPROVEMENTS ARE ELIGIBLE?

**Improvement projects must not have already occurred and must make a visible, demonstrable improvement to the exterior of a building or property.**

All improvements are required to meet applicable zoning, building codes, and design guidelines. Routine maintenance, indoor improvements, movable furnishing, consumable supplies, and other non-capital investments will not be funded. Improvements eligible for grant funding are as follows:

### FAÇADE IMPROVEMENTS

Exterior improvements may include any highly visible windows, doors, awnings, canopies, accent or security lighting improvements and building material upgrades. Building material specifications, imagery, and scaled



drawings or elevations of the proposed improvements, as would be required by the City to obtain a permit, must be provided.

Routine maintenance, such as roofing system repairs/replacements and HVAC system repairs/replacements are not eligible.

### FENCING

Example images or scaled drawing of proposed fencing, specifying height, length, color, and survey, as required to obtain a permit, must be provided.

### SIGNAGE

Signage improvements may include new or replacement of commercial signage. Scaled drawing with measurements of proposed sign(s), description, proposed location, and other specifications, as would be required for zoning review, must be provided.

### LANDSCAPING

A landscape plan must be submitted, showing site location, size, plant types, and quantity.

### PARKING UPGRADES

Upgrading an unimproved parking area (e.g. gravel lot) with a paved or other approved surfacing material is eligible, as well as bicycle parking areas and bike racks. Site drawings, site work description, proposed surfacing materials, and other perimeter improvements, as required by the Zoning Ordinance, must be provided.

Routine maintenance, including parking lot patching, re-striping or repaving will not be eligible.

### OUTDOOR CAFÉ

Upgrades to or establishment of an outdoor café space are eligible. A detailed scaled drawing of the outdoor café site, with the survey of the property, is required.

## E. HOW MUCH ARE THE GRANTS?

**Applicants may request one grant between \$1,000 and \$10,000 to match their investment of at least the same amount to achieve the proposed improvements.** A third party cost estimate or quote for the proposed improvements is required to justify the grant amount request.

No more than one grant shall be awarded to a business or property owner per fiscal year. Funding is not an

entitlement and is available on a competitive first-come, first-served basis until funds for the fiscal year are depleted.

## F. WHAT IS THE SELECTION PROCESS?

Applications will first be ranked on:

- Completeness of application
- Eligibility of business
- Eligibility of proposed improvements
- Whether they are a woman, minority or veteran owned business

A Grant Review Committee will then evaluate the highest ranked applications and recommend those that make the most demonstrable impact for approval to the Virginia Beach Development Authority (VBDA). VBDA will approve a resolution authorizing the grant award.

The Grant Review Committee is comprised of City representatives from Planning and Community Development, Virginia Beach Economic Development, Virginia Beach Development Authority (VBDA), the City Manager's Office and City Council.

## G. HOW DO I RECEIVE THE GRANT?

Grants are performance-based and will be authorized by VBDA after successful evaluation and completion of the improvements. Paid invoices and receipts must be submitted.

All improvements must be completed within six (6) months from the date of grant approval. A final inspection by Economic Development Staff will be conducted prior to payment approval to ensure consistency with the originally approved improvements. Substantial changes to the originally approved improvements must be approved by the Committee in writing prior to making changes. Only one grant check will be issued per award.

One extension for up to two (2) additional months can be approved administratively. Subsequent requests for an extension are not guaranteed and must be reviewed and approved by the VBDA. If an extension is not granted and work has not commenced within six (6) months from the award date, the Resolution becomes null and void.