

Downtown Brookings Façade Grant

Downtown Brookings, SD

Purpose:

The City of Brookings is dedicated to preserving, protecting and enhancing the Downtown Brookings community. The Downtown Brookings Façade Grant program was created to encourage and assist investment into downtown storefront and alley façades by making improvements for the purpose of preserving the architectural character that is unique to Brookings.

Program Overview:

The Downtown Brookings Façade Grant aims to stimulate private investment in Downtown Brookings by providing matching grant funds for façade improvements to street and alley-facing façades (where it is the primary entrance to a business). Eligible projects will be considered for up to a 50% match, meaning the fund may match dollar-for-dollar up to the maximum grant amount of \$25,000 or until available dollars are committed. Total project costs before the grant is applied must be \$35,000 minimum.

For example: A \$35,000 total project cost could be grant funded by up to \$17,500. A \$60,000 total project cost could be grant funded up to the maximum amount of \$25,000.

Eligibility:

1. **Property Location:** Only buildings located in the Downtown (B-1) Commercial District of Brookings are eligible to apply for funds. Preference will be given to Main Avenue-facing storefronts, but all are encouraged to apply.
2. **Ownership:** Applicants must have ownership interest in the property. Business owners who wish to apply must provide the City with written approval from the property owner to qualify. Property owners may need to sign additional documents after the application is submitted.
3. **Frequency:** A property improved under this program is not eligible for additional façade funding unless the property has more than one façade facing a public right-of-way. Applications cannot be submitted for a façade already improved by this program.
 - a. **Exception/Example:** A property may receive funding for a street-facing façade one year, and apply for funding for an alley-facing façade another year; however, funding will not be considered more than once through this program for each façade.
4. **Compliance:** All proposed improvements must comply with Brookings zoning regulations, building codes, and the "Downtown Brookings Design & Maintenance Guidelines", and the Historic Preservation process, when applicable.
5. **Historic Preservation Considerations:**
 - a. Those buildings which are designated as historic, as determined by consultation with the City of Brookings Community Development Department, may need to complete an additional 11.1 Review application.
 - b. Successful applicants must preserve and repair original historic materials when required for historic deemed projects.
 - c. All proposed rehabilitation and/or preservation work and improvements must be submitted to and approved in advance by the City of Brookings and be conducted in accordance with local design guidelines and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, if the building is designated on the National Register of Historic Places.

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Eligible Improvements:

Proceeds from the program may be used for any of the following purposes, but are not necessarily limited to:

1. **Exterior Improvements**
 - a. Façade painting (excluding painting of previously unpainted soft or unfired brick façades)
 - b. Exterior wall restoration including the repointing/tuck-pointing of brick façades
 - c. Repair, replacement, or preservation of significant façade details
 - d. Repair, addition, or replacement of cornices consistent with the aesthetics of the downtown area
 - e. Repair, addition, or replace windows and/or window treatments
 - f. Repair, addition, or replace doors
 - g. Repair, addition, or replacement of awnings consistent with the aesthetics of the downtown area
2. **Historic Preservation**
 - a. Addition of architectural details or façade elements consistent with the aesthetics of the downtown area
 - b. Removal of false fronts, panels, and other incompatible exterior finishes and materials
3. **Accessibility Improvements:**
 - a. Building accessibility and public access improvements such as adding ramps

Ineligible Improvements:

1. **General Maintenance:** Grants typically do not cover routine maintenance tasks like regular cleaning, repainting, or minor repairs that are considered part of the property owner's ongoing maintenance responsibilities.
2. **Interior Renovations:** No portion of the funds may be utilized for interior improvements of the building, unless otherwise specified by the City of Brookings.
3. **New Construction:** New construction, major expansions, and demolition of existing façades are ineligible.
4. **Non-Compliance:** Improvements that do not comply with local zoning or historic preservation guidelines, building codes, or which do not adhere to the "Downtown Brookings Design & Maintenance Guidelines" may be ineligible for funding.
5. **Temporary Installations:** Grants may not cover temporary installations or improvements with a short-term impact, such as seasonal decorations or banners.
6. **Services:** Labor done by the business or property owner, architectural and engineering design services, building permits & fees are all non-reimbursable expenses.

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Application Process:

Application Locations:

Applications can be obtained from the City Manager's Office (520 3rd Street, Suite 230, Brookings, SD 57006) or on the City's website.

1. **Pre-Application Consultation:** Applicants are strongly encouraged to seek consultation with City staff to discuss project feasibility, eligibility, and appropriate application materials.
2. **Submit Application:** Applicants must submit a completed application along with all required information and documents:
 - a. Current digital photos of all building façades visible from the public right-of-way which will receive improvements
 - b. Project plan which includes a schematic drawing with enough detail to depict the proposed improvements and a narrative outlining *all of the proposed improvements*
 - c. Cost estimates, including signed bids from two (2) licensed contractors with detailed costs for each improvement. If two bids cannot be obtained, please state why in the application.
 - d. **Due Date for Applications:** March 1, 2025; a second round may be available in fall of 2025, pending available funds.
3. **Review and Approval:** A review committee will evaluate each proposal. Based on funding availability and selection criteria, successful applicants will be notified. Should funding not be available at the time, applicants will be notified, placed on a waiting list, and contacted when additional funding is next available.
4. **Grant Award:** Approved applicants will receive a Conditional Grant Award Letter specifying the grant amount and any additional considerations.
5. **Project Forms:** Before any work may commence, the applicant will need to submit any required permits or approvals. Without these forms, the applicant will not be eligible for reimbursement. See City staff for these forms.
6. **Reimbursement:** The applicant must submit a copy of paid invoices or receipts they wish to be reimbursed for. The City will disburse grant funds to the applicant following a final inspection to verify that the work is consistent with the approved grant application and plan. Reimbursements will not exceed the amount on the conditional award letter. Approved grant funds are available to the applicant for one (1) year from the date of the Conditional Grant Award Letter. Reimbursement checks will be issued within 60 days and will be made payable directly to the applicant.
7. **Additional Considerations:** No portion of the funds may be utilized for work completed prior to the receipt of the conditional grant award letter. Work shall commence within 90 days after receiving the conditional grant award letter and must be completed within 180 days. Extensions may be granted at the discretion of City Staff, however it is up to the applicant to contact the City if an extension may be requested. The City may conduct periodic inspections to ensure compliance with the approved plans. The City reserves the right to reject, or not fund any application.

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Selection Criteria:

The level of City funding, if any, is at the discretion of the review committee but should be consistent with how each project or proposal meets or exceeds the criteria listed below. Not all criteria apply to every project or proposal.

1. Project eligibility/feasibility
2. Potential economic impact
3. Quality of materials
4. Design
5. Adherence to historic preservation design guidelines

Questions?

Please contact Samantha Beckman, Assistant to the City Manager
sbeckman@cityofbrookings-sd.gov or 605-697-8692