

# Commercial Corridors Facade Improvement Program



## PROGRAM GUIDELINES

The City of Greenville's Facade Improvement Program (FIP) provides financial assistance to commercial property owners and business owners in targeted commercial corridors for qualified exterior building and site improvements. The purpose of the FIP is to support the revitalization of the city's commercial corridors by stimulating private investment in high-quality improvements that enhance the appearance of buildings and properties and eliminate blight and non-conforming design standards.

### ELIGIBILITY:

**Eligible Applicants:** Eligible applicants include owners of commercial properties and owners/managers of businesses located in designated commercial corridors within the city of Greenville. Business owners/managers leasing a building for which improvements are proposed must submit a *Property Owner Consent Form* with their application. Only businesses whose existing use is allowable by the City's current codes and regulations are eligible for funding through the FIP.

**Eligible Areas:** The FIP is currently available in the following commercial corridors:

- **Augusta Street:** *Augusta Street from Vardry Street to Mauldin Road*
- **Laurens Road:** *Laurens Road from I-385 to I-85*
- **Pete Hollis Boulevard/Rutherford Street:** *See map for eligible area.*
- **Pleasantburg Drive:** *Pleasantburg Drive from Antrim Drive to Keith Drive*
- **Stone Avenue:** *Stone Avenue from Rutherford Street to I-385*
- **Wade Hampton Boulevard:** *Wade Hampton Boulevard from Stone Avenue to North Pleasantburg Drive*
- **West Greenville:** *See map for eligible area.*

### **Eligible Expenditures:**

- Expenditures eligible for reimbursement include those solely related to exterior building improvements (cosmetic and/or structural) and site improvements.
- Improvements must be visible from a public street. Examples include, but are not limited to exterior painting or surface treatment, architectural features, decorative awnings, window and/or door replacements, lighting, storefront enhancements, outdoor patios and decks, landscaping, irrigation and streetscape.
- Expenses related to the removal of a non-conforming sign and subsequent replacement with a new conforming sign (if applicable) are only eligible if the removal and/or replacement is voluntary and not required because of a violation notice, citation or change in business/use.
- Fees for architects, engineers or other design consultants are also eligible expenditures. Any engineered or architectural drawings must be completed by licensed professionals.
- All work must be completed by licensed contractors, legally operating in the city of Greenville. Applicants are responsible for obtaining required permits.

## Non-eligible Expenditures:

- Renovations that are solely the result of ordinary repair and maintenance are not eligible for reimbursement through the FIP. Ordinary repair and maintenance is defined as “any work, the purpose and effect of which is to correct or prevent any deterioration or decay of, or damage to, a structure, site or any part thereof and to restore the structure or site, as nearly as may be practicable, to its condition prior to such deterioration, decay or damage using materials which are of a design, color and outer appearance as close as practicable to the original.”
- Improvements that are required because of a violation notice or citation are not eligible for reimbursement through the FIP. However, improvements that are the result of voluntary compliance and the applicant’s desire to bring a property into conformance with the City’s current design standards will be considered.
- Site furnishings, amenities, non-permanent structures and movable equipment are not eligible for funding through the FIP.
- Installation of new signage (where it currently does not exist) is not eligible for funding. Likewise, replacement of signage due to change of use is not eligible for funding.

## APPLICABILITY:

Please reference the City of Greenville Land Management Ordinance: *Design Standards and Guidelines for Non-Residential Development, Sign Regulations, Landscaping Standards and Exterior Lighting Standards.*

**Exterior Building Improvements:** The *Design Standards and Guidelines for Non-Residential Development* shall apply to new construction, renovation or reconstruction of existing structures that exceed 25% of the current fair market value of the structure. For purposes of this program, proposed improvements that do not exceed 25% of the current fair market value must strive to meet the intent of these standards to the extent practicable. Improvements made to existing buildings will receive priority for funding. However, grants for new construction may be considered.

**Landscaping:** Only landscaping improvements that bring sites into compliance with the City’s Land Management Ordinance (to the extent practicable) will be eligible for funding through the FIP. Landscaping improvements completed in conjunction with building and site improvements will receive priority over those done without additional improvements.

## REIMBURSEMENT FORMULA:

The FIP provides a one-time reimbursement for qualified exterior building and site improvements. Applicants are eligible for a 50% reimbursement on expenses equal to or less than \$10,000, and a 20% reimbursement on additional expenses greater than the initial \$10,000 spent. The maximum reimbursement is \$10,000 per property.

*Example: If an applicant’s total approved expenses equal \$25,000, he/she would be eligible for an \$8,000 reimbursement grant.  $[(\$10,000 \times 50\%) + (\$15,000 \times 20\%)] = \$8,000$*

**Multiple Buildings/Properties:** Applications for improvements made to multiple buildings located on a single property or improvements to a single building (regardless of number of units) located on multiple properties (under same ownership) are also subject to the above-referenced rules regarding maximum allowable reimbursement. The City reserves the right to approve reimbursements greater than the maximum allowable if

the proposed improvements far exceed what is required by the City's Land Management Ordinance and the project has the potential to make a significant impact on the surrounding area.

**FACADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM REVIEW COMMITTEE (FIPRC):**

Applications will be reviewed by a five-person committee comprised of three City staff members and two members of the Greenville chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA).

**APPLICATION PROCESS:**

- Applicants are encouraged to request an informal review of the project by the City's Economic Development Department prior to submitting a completed application.
- Applicants must submit the following information:
  - Completed application
  - Photographs of existing building and site
  - Plans and/or elevations of proposed improvements
  - Detailed description of materials
  - Detailed cost estimates/bids for proposed improvements
  - IRS W-9 Form: <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf>
  - City of Greenville Vendor Form
  - Property Owner Consent Form (only if applicant is not the property owner)
- Following review of the application by the FIPRC, City staff will provide written notification to the applicant stating whether the application was approved as submitted, approved with changes or disapproved. City staff will also advise the applicant of the anticipated reimbursement amount, provided the improvements are completed as approved.
- The FIPRC has the authority to request modifications of a proposed design to ensure the appearance of the site or building will be compatible with the character of the surrounding neighborhood. If the applicant chooses not to make the requested modifications, the FIPRC reserves the right to deny funding.
- The FIPRC reserves the right to request further information from the applicant or visit the applicant's property in an effort to evaluate the merit of applicant's proposed improvements.
- The FIPRC reserves the right to deny funding to applicants who are delinquent in the payment of fines or fees.
- Projects must be completed within one year of approval by the FIPRC. The FIPRC reserves the right to deny funding to projects not completed within one year of approval.
- Applications must be approved by the FIPRC prior to commencement of work.

**REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS:**

Applicants who qualify for a reimbursement grant must document all expenditures and submit proof of payment (receipts, paid invoices, final contractor billing statements, etc.) for all eligible improvements within 60 days of completion. Once construction is complete, the FIPRC will visit the project to ensure compliance with the approved plans. The City will then provide the applicant a one-time reimbursement for the approved amount.