

City of Pickens



Façade Improvement Grant Program

Updated July 2020

City of Pickens Facade Improvement Grant Program (FIGP)

Purpose

The City of Pickens Façade Improvement Grant Program provides financial assistance to commercial property owners and business owners in the City Center and Gateway Overlay Districts that qualify for facade improvements. The purpose of the FIGP is to support the revitalization of the City's Overlay Districts by stimulating private investments in high-quality improvements that enhance the appearance of buildings and properties and eliminate blight and non-conforming design standards.

The Overlay Districts:

City Center Overlay District boundaries are established as:

- Main Street from Hampton Avenue to Bivens Street
- Court Street From Main Street to Cedar Rock
- Garvin Street from Main Street to Cedar Rock
- Ann Street/Hwy 178N from Main Street to Baker Street
- Hampton Ave. /Hwy 178N from Main Street to Baker Street.
- Pendleton Street from Main Street to W. Lee Street.

The Gateway Overlay District boundaries are established as:

- All properties that have frontage on Highways 183, 178, and 8 that are not located in the City Center Overlay District.

Funding

The program provides for a one-time reimbursement. The amount allocated annually by the City Council to this program is limited and will vary year to year. Applications will be funded throughout the year as long as funds are available.

A match of 60% of the project costs is required from the applicant. No matter the amount of the applicant's project costs, the grant awarded will not exceed \$2,500. For example, if total project costs are \$7,000 the applicant is to match 60% (which would be \$4,200) the City will award 40% of the project cost (\$2,800) not to exceed \$2,500. Another example, if project costs are \$5,000, the applicant will be reimbursed 40% at a total, which would be \$2,000 with the applicant matching 60% at \$3,000.

Eligibility

Eligible Applicants:

Eligible applicants include owners of commercial properties and owners/managers of businesses within the City of Pickens's Central Business District and Gateway Overlay Districts. Business owners/managers who are requesting funding to make improvements to a building they are leasing must submit an "Owner Consent Form" with the completed application. The City reserves the right to deny funding to applicants who are delinquent on payment of fees, fines, taxes, or licenses (city and county). The applicant must have a business license with the City of Pickens.

Eligible Buildings and Areas:

The eligible buildings are commercial buildings that are located in the Central Business District and the Gateway Overlay Districts. New construction will not be considered for this program. A building does not have to be currently occupied in order to be eligible for funding under this program.

Eligible Improvements/Activities:

For purposes of this program, eligible expenditures shall include expenses related solely to those exterior improvements, which are eligible for reimbursement, as outlined in the program guidelines. This excludes expenditures related to interior improvements, ordinary repair and maintenance, improvements required as a result of code violations, or other expenditures deemed ineligible. Façade program funding is to be used for permanent exterior visual improvements to the buildings. Funding cannot be used for improvements that can be removed if the business or owner leaves the property. The improvements must remain with the property. Projects involving a previously funded project will only be considered for another grant once the project is completed. Owners of multiple buildings may receive assistance for more than one building provided that funding is available.

Staff will determine if any improvements will need to be approved by the Board of Architectural Review prior to approval. Exterior colors must be listed on the Façade Colors list approved by city council which is located at City Hall.

Permanent Exterior Improvements that are eligible include:

- Masonry repairs
- Parking lot improvements
- Repairing, replacing, and preserving historically significant architectural details
- Storefront reconstruction/enhancements
- Cornice repair and exterior trim work
- Exterior painting and repairs to the finishes of original buildings
- Awnings and canopies
- Window and door repairs or replacement
- Permanent exterior signage (the sign must be able to be used for any future owners and/businesses of the property)
- Permanent exterior lighting
- Landscaping (plans must be submitted and meet the overlay district guidelines)
- Repair or replacement of gutters
- Installation or improvements to outdoors decking and stairs
- Outdoor patios and decks
- Side and rear building façade improvements where said improvements results in a significant enhancement of the building and surrounding area

Examples of activities that are not eligible include:

- Roofing
- Ordinary repair and maintenance
- Attached, hanging, or projecting signs unrelated to the architecture of the building
- Vinyl lettering on glass facades
- Portable signs or temporary signs
- Non visible mechanical equipment enclosures
- Billboards
- Interior renovations
- Temporary, portable, or non-permanent improvements or signs
- New construction
- Property acquisition
- Expansions of existing building area
- Working capital
- Refinancing existing debt
- Payment of current or delinquent taxes, license, or fees
- Contribution toward improvements in progress or reimbursement of improvements competed prior to grant approval
- Utility or trash enclosures
- Improvements required due to a violation notice of citation for violating City ordinances or building code standards
- Site furnishings
- Sandblasting
- Demolition of historic features
- Fees for professional service
- Irrigation

All work must be completed by a licensed contractor, legally operating in the City of Pickens. The applicants should contact the City for assistance with permitting and business licensing.

Application Process

All completed applications must be accompanied with the following items but not limited to plans, elevations, and estimate of repairs.

1. Verification of property ownership (Pickens County Parcel #, deed, etc).
2. Name and contact information of contractor.
3. Scope of work, timeline for project completion, and total estimate of project budget. Project must be completed within 180 days of funding being granted.
4. Color photos showing the existing building (front and all side elevations).
5. A completed W9 form.

Application Review Process

The FIGP applications are available at City Hall and on the website www.citypickens.com. Only completed applications that include all required documentation and information will be accepted:

1. Owner/tenant completes the application and attached the information required on the application.
2. Owner/tenant submits the application at City Hall to the City Administrator or designee.
3. Staff (City Administrator or designee) will review application to make sure all guidelines have been met. Staff will return incomplete applications or applications that have not met guidelines.
4. Staff will submit to the Planning/PRA committee for review.
5. PRA/Planning committee will submit the application to be placed on the City Council agenda for final approval.
6. If the City Council approves the application, then the applicant and the City sign the Façade Improvement Agreement. The applicant must sign the agreement prior to beginning work. Parties in the agreement will be the applicant, the building owner (if other than the applicant), and the City.
7. Any changes to the design after approval must be submitted and approved by staff and council.
8. All work must be completed within 180 days of grant award. Grant monies will be given once the work has been completed and inspected by city staff and the paid invoices have been submitted to the City of Pickens.

Review Process and Criteria:

The City Administrator or designee will review all applications prior to submission to the Planning/PRA committee and City Council. Staff will evaluate applications to determine eligibility. If eligibility is met, staff will pass along to the Planning/PRA committee, which will score, on the following criteria:

1. Visual Impact:
 - The project incorporates design elements that are appropriate for the Central Business District or the Gateway Overlay Districts
 - Design regulations listed in the zoning ordinance are met
 - The project restores details of the buildings that are historically or architecturally significant
 - The improvements enhance highly visible elements of the building
2. Quality of the Improvements:
 - The overall impact of the project on improving the appearance and revitalization of the Central Business District or Gateway Overlay Districts
 - The improvements will be durable and long lasting

Distribution of Funds

Requirements:

The City provides funding on a reimbursement basis following completion of the project. Applicants who have been awarded funding must document all project expenses and provide the City with proof of payment (Cancelled checks, Invoices, receipts, etc) for all eligible improvements within 30 days of completion.

Distribution timeline:

All work must be completed within 180 days of the award. Once construction is complete, the City will visit the project to ensure that it complies with the approved plans. After both verifying the applicant's proof of payment and completion of site visit the City will issue a check for the project cost, up to the approved amount, provide the work is in accordance with the agreement.

Grant Policy

The FIGP will not use race, sex, age, or religion as grounds for refusing a grant to an eligible applicant.

Grant recipients will agree to place a FIGP Recipient sign at the construction site, during the time of improvements and in their storefront window for 180 days after the completion of the project.

If all grant funds are spent during a fiscal year, city council can decide to place remaining applicants on a waiting list for the next fiscal year.

Contact Information:

For more information, please contact:

Jennifer Vissage at vissage@scacog.org

Or

Phillip Trotter at ptrotter@pickenssc.com



**Façade Improvement Grant Program
Application Form**

1. Applicant Name: _____
2. Contact Name: _____
3. Name of Tenant: _____
4. Name of Business: _____
5. Telephone Number: _____ Fax Number: _____
6. Email Address: _____
7. Project Address: _____
8. Mailing Address: _____
9. Does the applicant own the project building? _____ Yes _____ No
10. Will you be using the services of an architect, engineer, or contractor? ___Yes___ No
11. If yes, list your architect, engineer, or contractor of preference with name and contact number of business: _____
12. Estimated Total Project Cost: (A) _____ (*attach itemized budget*)
13. Owner to match 60% of Total: (B) _____
Total Grant Requested from City: (A-B) _____ (40% of the project cost not to exceed \$2,500)
14. Proposed Start Date: _____
15. Proposed Completion Date: _____

16. What is the existing use of the building? _____

17. Will this project proposal cause a change in the buildings use? ____Yes____No

18. If so, please explain. _____

Signature of Property Owner

Signature of Applicant

**APPLICANTS WHO DEVIATE FROM THE APPROVED APPLICATION OR DO NOT
PROVIDE COMPLETE APPLICATION WILL BE DISQUALIFIED FROM THIS GRANT
PROGRAM.**

Office Use Only:

Starr Review: _____

Sent to Committee : _____

Committee Meeting: _____

Council Meeting: _____

Contract Date: _____

Expires: _____

Inspection: _____

Money Paid: _____

Staff Notes:

Committee Notes:

Council Notes:

City of Pickens Façade Grant Checklist:

- Application
- Proof of Building Ownership
- Owner Consent Form - required if the applicant is not the owner of the building
- Real Estate Taxes – receipt or proof showing that all county taxes are paid
- Narrative Project Description – A typed or written statement of what the façade project will involve. Provide as much detail as possible, including what you are changing or placing, type of new materials to be used, color, location on façade, etc.
- Photographs of existing façade – submit several photos on the building in its current condition. Be sure to label each photo and indicate what improvements you are proposing to make.
- Drawings of proposed façade improvements – conceptual plans showing colors, sizes, and materials of proposed changes.
- Detailed Cost Estimated – Estimate should provide enough detail to make the proposed scope of work clear (quantity, cost and type of work).
- Letter of Commitment- A letter of commitment must be provided from all entities providing the funds.

Acknowledgements

- I/We read and understand the Façade Grant Improvement Program policy and agree, to the fullest extent feasible, to abide by said policy.
- I/We understand we will be responsible for assuring all county and city permits and licenses.
- I/We understand that all property taxes and mortgage and rental payments must be current.
- I/We understand that, barring the occurrence of unforeseen circumstances beyond the control of me/us as applicant, I/We will be obligate to satisfactorily complete the façade improvements.

Applicant Signature

I understand that my submission of an application does not constitute a guarantee for funding under the façade improvement program. I certify that all information is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge, and if approved, work will be completed in accordance with the terms and conditions of the façade improvement program policy and guidelines.

By signing below, the Applicant acknowledges that he/she has received and read the program policy and guidelines for the Façade Improvement Grant program. Also, the applicant acknowledges that he/she is duly authorized to act on behalf of the company and that the company is licensed to conduct business in the state of South Carolina and the City of Pickens.

Applicant/Owner Signature

Date

**Substitute W-9
Request for Taxpayer Identification Number & Certification**

In order to comply with the Internal Revenue Code, we are required to obtain your Federal Identification Number to be used in reporting the payments we make to you. Please complete the following information and return to the address below. Please type or print your information on the form below. Your cooperation in this matter is greatly appreciated.

Vendor: _____
Address: _____
City, State, Zip: _____

Please mark the Type of Entity:

_____ Individual

_____ Sole Proprietor

_____ Corporation

_____ Partnership

_____ Governmental Unit

_____ LLC or other

Company Name

Employer Identification #

If individual or sole proprietor, also give name and SSN.

Name (print)

SSN

Authorized Signature _____

Title _____

Date _____

Telephone # _____

Email Address

Name of Primary Contact

City of Pickens
Façade Grant Improvement Program Agreement

This agreement, entered into this ____ day of _____, 20____ between the City of Pickens, South Carolina (hereinafter referred to as "CITY") and the following designated OWNER/LESSEE:

Owner's Name: _____
Lessee's Name: _____
Name of Business: _____
Tax ID#/Social Security #: _____
Address of Property to be improved: _____

WHEREAS, the City of Pickens has established a Façade Grant Improvement Program for projects located with the Central Business District and the Gateway Overlay Districts: and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Façade Grant Improvement Program, the CITY has agreed to participate, subject to its sole discretion, in reimbursing owners/lessees for the cost of eligible exterior improvements to commercial establishments up to a maximum of 40% of the approved contract cost of such improvements and no more than \$_____.

WHEREAS, the OWNER/LESSEE's property is located within either the Central Business District or Gateway Overlay Districts, and the OWNER/LESSEE desires to participate in the Façade Grant Improvement Program pursuant to the terms and provisions of this Agreement.

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual covenants and agreements obtained herein, the CITY and the OWNER/LESSEE do hereby agree as follows:

Section 1. With respect to the façade improvements, the CITY shall reimburse the OWNER/LESSEE for the costs of improvements to the OWNER/LESSEE's property at the rate of forty percent (40%) of such costs not to exceed \$_____ for façade improvements. The improvement costs that are eligible for CITY reimbursement include all labor, materials, equipment, and other contract items necessary for the proper execution of the work as shown on the plans, design drawing, specifications, and estimates approved by the CITY and attached hereto as EXHIBIT A.

Section 2. No improvement work shall be undertaken until its design has been submitted to and approved by the CITY and until OWNER/LESSEE has obtained all permits required pursuant to the applicable building and zoning codes. Following approval, the OWNER/LESSEE shall contract for the work and shall commence and complete all such work within one hundred eighty days (180) from the date of this

agreement. The OWNER/LESSEE may request a ninety day (90) extension provided there is a demonstrated hardship.

Section 3. Upon completion of the improvements and upon their final inspection and approved by the CITY, the OWNER/LESSEE shall submit to the CITY showing the full cost of the work. In addition, the OWNER/LESSEE shall submit to the CITY proof of payment of the contract cost pursuant to the contractor's statement. The CITY shall issue a check to the OWNER/LESSEE as reimbursement for forty percent (40%) of actual construction cost, whichever is less, subject to the limitations set forth in Section 1 hereof, upon receipt of proof of payment.

Section 4. The OWNER/LESSEE shall place a sign acknowledging the CITY's reimbursement for the façade improvements. The OWNER/LESSEE shall place the sign at the construction site during the time improvements are being made. After completion of the improvements, the OWNER/LESSEE shall place the sign in their storefront window for 180 days after completion of the improvements. The sign must be posted prior to the CITY issuing its reimbursement.

Section 5. If the OWNER/LESSEE or the OWNER/LESSEE's contractor fails to complete the improvement work provided for herein in conformity with the approved plans, design drawings and specification, and the terms of this Agreement, then upon written notice being given by the CITY administrator to the OWNER/LESSEE to the address listed above, this Agreement shall terminate and the financial obligation on the part of the CITY shall cease and become null and void.

Section 6. For a period four (4) years from the date of the project completion, the OWNER/LESSEE shall be considered in default of the agreement in one or more of the following circumstances: (1) the recipient fails to properly maintain the façade after improvements are completed; (2) the recipient becomes delinquent in paying all property taxes, fees, and licenses associated with the business/building where the improvements were made; or (3) the recipient fails to operate the business building where the improvements were made in compliance.

Section 7. In cases of default of the OWNER/LESSEE, the OWNER/LESSEE must repay to the CITY on a prorated basis the reimbursement that the CITY made to OWNER/LESSEE pursuant to this agreement, to be calculated as follows:

Multiply the total reimbursement that CITY made to OWNER/LESSEE by the following fraction: the number of months remaining between the month when OWNER's/LESSEE's default occurred and the total number months (48) of the contract term divided by the total number of months (48) of the contract term.

Section 8. The CITY may take whatever action by law, or in equity, as many be necessary or desirable to collect any outstanding balance or to enforce the performance and observation of any other obligation or agreement of the recipient.

Section 9. Nothing herein is intended to limit, restrict, or prohibit the OWNER/LESSEE from undertaking any other work in or about the subject premises, which is unrelated to the façade improvement provided for in this Agreement.

IN WITNESS THEREOF, the parties hereto have executed the Agreement on the date first appearing above.

OWNER/LESSEE:

BY: _____

By: _____

Name: _____

Name: _____

City of Pickens:

By: _____

Attest:

Name: _____

By: _____

City Clerk

Title: _____

Owner Consent Form

If the applicant does not own the property, this form must be completed by the property owner and submitted with the application. Please print or type requested information and submit to Pickens City Hal.

The undersigned owner of the existing building located at: _____
_____ (address) hereby grants permission to _____ (applicant) to act on behalf of the owner for this funding request and has the authority to deal with the property and Façade Improvement funding request in all aspects. I understand that I will be required to jointly (with the applicant) enter into a Façade Improvement Agreement with the City of Pickens.

I further grant permission to _____ (applicant) and his/her contractors to implement the improvements listed on the application approved through PRA/Planning Committee and City Council. The undersigned also agrees to work with the applicant to adhere to the façade improvement program requirements, which include maintaining the improvement authorized by the façade improvement program for a period of at least four years from the date of the City's reimbursement.

I certify that I have received a copy of the Façade Improvement Grant project Policy and Guidelines from the applicant and that I am fully aware of what is being proposed. The undersigned agrees and understands it will be the applicant's/primary contact's responsibility to inform all other interested parties of any correspondence and the status of the commercial façade improvement program funding.

The undersigned hereby waives any claim against the City of Pickens arising out of the use of said reimbursement for the purposed set forth in the Façade Grant Improvement Application. The undersigned agrees to hold the City harmless for any charges, damages, claims or liens arising out of the Applicants participation in the Façade Improvement program.

Owner Signature: _____

Owner Name: _____

Title: _____