



VERMILLION CHAMBER AND DEVELOPMENT COMPANY MISSOURI VALLEY GROWTH

FACADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

YEAR 1

ADMINISTRATION AND POLICY GUIDELINES

1. Program Summary

The VCDC-MVG has established a Facade Improvement Program to provide financial assistance to business and property owners (located within the established program area) who wish to make physical improvements to the exterior of their buildings.

A Facade Improvement Grant can be used for a variety of building facade rehabs, including painting, window or door repairs or replacements, signage, awnings, or other facade improvement projects outlined under the “Eligible Projects” section of these policy guidelines.

2. Administration

Funding for the Facade Improvement Program will come from the funds allocated by the Vermillion Chamber and Development Company through the Missouri Valley Growth. The VCDC-MVG in accordance with the procedures and guidelines outlined in this document will carry out the administration of the Facade Improvement Program. The administration and operation of the program shall conform to all local codes and permitting/approvals. Funding for this program is subject to availability.

3. Funding

Initial Funding was provided by the Vermillion NOW economic development initiative and all grants are subject to the availability of funding. Funding amounts are at the discretion of MVG and there is no specific formula, however a grant payment will likely be 30%-50% of project costs and likely not exceed \$1,500. No more than one grant per property may be awarded, unless subject to committee approval and funding availability. All applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

4. Program Guidelines and Eligibility

A. Eligible Area

Commercial properties in the Vermillion Central Business District and along the Cherry Street Business Corridor to include adjacent streets where commercial properties lie (i.e. Cottage Ave, Princeton St. north of Cherry St.) are eligible. Home-based businesses are not eligible.

B. Property Owner/ Business Tenant Eligibility

Any existing property owner or business tenant, as well as those establishing new businesses within the area are eligible to participate. Depending upon demand, the VCDC-MVG shall reserve the right to limit one grant per building.

To qualify for funding assistance through the Facade Improvement Program, an applicant must:

1. Provide suitable proof of ownership/control of the subject property. Business tenants wishing to apply must produce a lease/rental agreement of the subject premises and written permission from the owner for any proposed improvements to the leasehold.
2. Have paid all County property taxes due and assessed to the subject business/property.
3. Demonstrate the availability of the applicant's matching funds through evidence of either cash equity and/or a loan commitment.

C. Eligible Activities

Use of grant funds is restricted to eligible improvements to the exterior of buildings/structures. The following are eligible uses of grant funding under the Facade Improvement Program. The intent of this program is to focus on cosmetic issues versus structural. The order of the listing is not indicative of priority:

1. Signage
2. Awnings, canopy, porch installation/repair
3. Storefront Improvements
5. Repair or replacement of windows, doors, and trim (see Program Restrictions)
6. Cleaning and/or painting of wood surfaces
7. Cleaning and/or repainting of surface brick or stone
8. Exterior Lighting
10. Cleaning and/or repair or replacement of facade siding
12. Increased access for disabled (must be street frontage)
13. Repairs and improvements including murals to side and rear walls that are visible
14. Façade mortar joint repair (tuck-pointing)
15. Railings and ironwork repair or addition
16. Cornice repair and/or replacement
17. Replacement/repair to exterior steps

Program Restrictions

- 1. Window and door replacements must include trim.**
- 2. Program funding will only pay for those windows and doors used for commercial purposes. Priority will be given to those with storefront replacements directly on the street. No residential windows will be replaced.**
- 3. Window and door replacement projects must be part of a larger scope of work and will be reviewed on their impact to make a significant architectural improvement.**

D. Ineligible Activities

Grant funds may not be used for the following activities:

1. Interior repairs of any kind
2. Purchase of commercial property/equipment
3. New construction
4. Payment for the applicant's own labor and performance for improvements
4. Design assistance

5. Application Process and Timeline

- A. To apply for a Facade Improvement Grant, fill out the application form and submit it to the MVG. Applications are available from the Vermillion Area Chamber and Development Company.
- B. All applications must include sketches, architectural drawings and/or explanations of proposed work as well as cost estimates or construction bids.
- C. Applicants will be notified in writing of the decision of the application within 30 days of the receipt of a fully completed application. Incomplete applications will not be accepted. Any amendments, additions, deletions or other changes to the original application must be approved by the MVG in order to assure that grant funds will be awarded. Once the application is approved, the property is eligible for reimbursement according to the application submitted for up to one year. After one year from the application approval letter, the reimbursement will no longer be applicable and a new application must be submitted for reimbursement.
- D. All grants are awarded on a reimbursement-only basis. Copies of invoices AND paid receipts, canceled checks, or other proof of expenditures must be submitted within thirty working days of project completion. "Sweat Equity" may be considered as the applications match, however qualified cost estimates must be submitted that clearly establish the value of the labor being provided. Following satisfactory site inspection of the completed project by MBG payment of the grants to the applicant will be authorized. If applicable, a copy of the signed building permit from the City of Vermillion that signifies completion of the project must be submitted. If the site inspection is not satisfactory, the applicant will be notified and allowed up to sixty working days for correction of unsatisfactory items.

- E. Properties that have received funding will not be eligible for additional funds from this program for a period of three years, unless otherwise authorized by MVG.
- F. Improvement projects that began prior to September 1, 2011 will not be eligible for this program.

6. Application Requirements

Mandatory Application Submittal

- **You MUST submit the attached Facade Grant Application Form along with your cost estimates, proof of ownership or leasehold interest, and any available photos and design sketches. *Incomplete applications will not be processed for approval. . Note: Only preliminary design sketches are requested. Applicants should review the sign ordinance and architectural standards for the MSRD 1 attached to this application for guidance.***
- **The applicant MUST agree to comply with the VCDC-MVG's Recommended Design Guidelines described below. Proposed improvements that do not comply with these guidelines are not eligible for grant funding.**

Design Guidelines

- Any exterior change or addition to existing structures **must** be compatible with the **predominant** design of the building or with the predominant architectural style of the area.
- **The applicant will be required to produce, if awarded, architectural renderings and/or schematics of varying degrees in relationship to the scope of the project, in order to evaluate the conformity of proposed improvements with the design standards stated herein.**
- The applicant **must** agree to comply with all applicable state and local codes and ordinances governing proposed building and sign improvements, and must obtain permits as required.
- It is highly recommended that the design or improvements in the Downtown District comply with the Downtown Streetscape Planning Master Plan 2004. Projects complying with this will be given preference when plans are selected.