



Economic Development, Community Development and Downtown Development

## Downtown Façade Enhancement Program

TSEP and the City of Tiffin have partnered to provide a grant program for the purpose of revitalizing the exterior façades of downtown properties, while preserving the historic character of downtown Tiffin.

### **The Grant:**

This grant will reimburse up to 50% of the amount of expenses directly related to qualifying building improvements, to front facades, of properties within the downtown target area up to a maximum match of \$10,000. This grant is available on a first come first serve basis from application approval. If, by September 1<sup>st</sup>, there are still funds available, property owners may apply for additional funds. Property owners may re-apply annually for available funds, but priority will go to first-time applicants.

### **Eligible Improvements:**

Eligible improvements include all exterior improvements to the appearance of an eligible downtown building front façade. These improvements include:

- Awnings
- Masonry work: brick cleaning, tuck pointing, replacement
- Painting - Colors to be approved by the Architectural Board of Review
- Repair, restoration or appropriate replacement of exterior windows and doors
- Repair or replacement of roofing system (including gutters and downspouts)
- Fire escapes or exterior upper floor access
- Any other visible exterior improvements

### **Ineligible Improvements:**

This program will not fund interior improvements, operating funds, HVAC repair, plumbing repair, sidewalk repair, furnishings or equipment, landscaping and any exterior improvements that do not follow the historic guidelines set by Tiffin's Architectural Board of Review.

**Target Area:** (Refer to attached map)

**Clarifications:**

- The general purpose of this program is to improve the appearances of downtown properties that are visible from City streets. The City does not intend to provide funds to assist with the sides or rears of properties. However, there are several buildings at street corners in the downtown and those cases may be considered to have two fronts and would be eligible to receive funding for qualifying improvements on any part of the building which is immediately adjacent to a City street. This does not include alleys.
- If there is a building where there is no entry facing a main road, the side of the building with the most prominent entry will be considered the "front" facade of the building and eligible for facade grant funds. This will not include the back of a building with a rear entry.
- A property that functions as one building, regardless of the number of tax parcel numbers assigned to the property or multiple and different owners, is eligible for only one grant per year unless additional funding is available after September 1<sup>st</sup>.
- The front facade of the building will include any façade return where the identical ornamental architectural details of the front facade, returns continuously on the side of the building. This includes, but is not limited to, the upper cornice, facade brick, facing material, stone, ornamental window trim, first floor cornice, and storefront display windows.
- If there are guidelines by the parent company regulating that only one specific contractor is permitted to work with the organization, one quote would meet the grant program guidelines, but that they would only be eligible for a maximum \$1,500 reimbursement.

**Application:**

The Downtown Main Street Manager with TSEP will conduct the initial consultation regarding the process.

All grant applications must be submitted to TSEP and must include:

- Downtown Façade Enhancement Application
- Architectural Board of Review Application
- A project description
- Current photos of proposed work area (Google Street View not accepted)
- Rendering/drawing of proposed work to scale, including color scheme
- An itemized cost estimate of proposed work by a qualified third party. If the total amount of any portion of the work exceeds \$3,000, you will need at least two quotes to ensure competitive pricing.
- W9 tax form

**Application Review Process:**

- Downtown Main Street Manager review all applications to ensure all information is included. The application will also be reviewed for eligibility and ABR guideline compliance
- City Engineer Representative and Director of Downtown Revitalization will conduct a site visit of the property
- Applications will be processed within a 30 day period from the date the application is accepted by the City Engineer's Office

**Conditions:**

- The property owner will be responsible for maintaining improvements provided by this grant for a minimum of 5 years without alteration, unless a change request is submitted in writing to Tiffin's Architectural Board of Review for approval or further investment is approved
- The property owner must obtain all required permits and plan approvals prior to beginning work. (The permits may include, but are not limited to, building, zoning, occupancy, etc.)
- If your property is currently in violation with the Architectural Board of Review, you will not be eligible to receive Façade Enhancement funds until the violation is corrected.
- The amount of funding awarded cannot be amended following obtaining approval from the Architectural Board of Review. Reimbursement will be made at a percentage rate of 50% up to the amount approved by the Board. The applicant will not be permitted to reapply for additional funding for costs incurred which were not originally included within the application.

**Awards:**

- All applicants will receive written notification as to the approval or denial of the grant award in the form of the certificate of appropriateness issued by the Architectural Board of Review
- Approval must be confirmed prior to commencing work to be eligible to receive downtown enhancement funds.
- If a project comes in and the remaining funds are not enough to cover the grant reimbursement, the project may be broken into two separate parts, so the applicant may apply for the remaining funds January of the following calendar year.
- To be eligible to receive the approved funds, the project must be completed as submitted. This is an approved agreement and any changes to the project after approval are ineligible, unless the applicant comes in for a second approval for proposed changes prior to beginning the work

**Project Completion:**

- Upon approval, the applicant will have until December 1st of the following calendar year to submit receipts for reimbursement. After that, the account will be closed with the City
- Applicant must provide copies of invoices marked paid or cancelled checks showing payment
- Applicant must provide photographs of completed work
- City Engineer Representative will conduct a site visit of property to verify completion of the project

\*City employees and government buildings are not eligible to apply for this program.

## Updates:

- Program approval September 2, 2014
- September 29, 2014: Changed “Income producing” to “downtown” properties in the first paragraph per the suggestion of the City Attorney.
- December 16, 2014: Clarification on remaining funds in the “Awards” section.
- January 6, 2015: Clarification on “Front” and change to include single and two family dwellings.
- January 1, 2016: Clarifications section added (Ordinance 15-59). Additionally, clarification on color approval, application review, alterations in the “Application Review Process” section. As well as clarification in the “Awards” section about projects as submitted and in the “Project Completion” section about length of time for receiving funds. Additionally, eligibility requirements have been added to the “Conditions” section.
- May 2, 2016: Clarification section added (Ordinance 16-29). Façade Return is considered part of the front façade of a building. This is effective for all projects beginning in January of 2016.
- December 2021: In the “Clarifications” section a clarification was added regarding parent company regulations and contractor quote requirements and how this impacts reimbursement. This is effective Jan 2022.
- December 9, 2022: The Grant section changed “This grant will reimburse up to 50% of the amount of expenses directly related to qualifying building improvements”. Application section added “Google Street View not accepted”. Application Review Process section eliminated “with the Architectural Board of Review Chair”, added “Representative” to City Engineer, eliminated “Most”, changed “accepted by the City Engineer’s Office”. Conditions section added “The amount of funding awarded cannot be amended following obtaining approval from the Architectural Board of Review. Reimbursement will be made at a percentage rate of 50% up to the amount approved by the Board. The applicant will not be permitted to reapply for additional funding for costs incurred which were not originally included within the application.”, Project Completion section changed “December 1st”, added “Representative” to City Engineer, eliminated “Downtown Main Street Manager”, eliminated “\*Application with final cost estimate must be approved by December 19<sup>th</sup> to be eligible to receive the Façade Enhancement Program funds.”