



Department of
Economic Development
McHenry Municipal Center
333 Green Street
McHenry, Illinois 60050
Phone: (815) 363-2110
Fax: (815) 363-2128
dmartin@cityofmchenry.org

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

CITY OF MCHENRY FAÇADE GRANT PROGRAM

What projects qualify under the Façade Grant Program?

Examples (non-inclusive) of eligible projects:

Exterior demolition; exterior lighting; exterior construction including electric, materials, labor; pressure washing; tuckpointing; painting; decorative awnings; shopping center façade renovations/painting; permanent exterior site work; landscape, hardscape (not parking lots), pedestrian amenities, pergolas, etc; signage (if included as part of a more extensive façade renovation project); restoration of historical identifying features that may not be relevant to the current building use; other projects as approved by the City Council.

What projects do not qualify under the Façade Grant Program?

Examples (non-inclusive) of ineligible projects:

Signage as a standalone request; parking lot improvements; security cameras; interior improvements; design/engineering/professional fees; roof repair/replacement; any improvement that could be removed from the building as personal property.

How does a matching Façade Grant work?

Under the program, the City will provide matching funds \$.50 for every \$1.00 spent up to a maximum of \$15,000 for eligible projects. Applicant labor and time contributions to the project or "sweat equity" cannot be included as matching expenditures required from applicant. All labor costs paid through the Façade Grant Program must comply with the Prevailing Wage Act/Requirements.



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Will the City of McHenry offer this every year?

The City Council approved \$100,000 in Façade Grant funding for FY 24-25. The Program is available until funds have been expended.

When is the application filing period?

The City will accept applications for Façade Grants for the first round from May 15, 2024-June 30, 2024, and then do a second round (dates yet to be determined) if necessary, and not all the funds are expended, until funds are no longer available.

How long do I have to complete the approved project?

A building permit must be issued within 60 days of notification of grant being awarded. Businesses have twelve (12) months from the issuance of a building permit to complete the approved project.

Is there an application fee?

There is no application fee.

What is the maximum I can apply for?

Businesses may request reimbursement of 50% of eligible expenses up to maximum of \$15,000 dependent on the lineal frontage of the building. Grant maximum is determined by the length of building, measured along the total linear frontage of adjacent public right of way/McHenry Riverwalk frontage, up to \$15,000 per property.

1 to 40 feet	\$5,000
41 to 80 feet	\$10,000
81 feet +	\$15,000



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What is the time frame on a decision once an application is submitted?

Staff recommendations will usually be made within 30 days after the closing of the application filing period, prior to the application being taken to the City Council for final consideration.

What criteria are used to review the applications?

Applications are reviewed based on the following evaluation criteria:

- Visually improves storefronts and streetscapes.
- Enhances business locations.
- Fills a previously vacant storefront.
- Rehabilitates or replaces historic features.
- Supports the rehabilitation and renovation of exterior building facades of existing non-residential buildings in McHenry.
- Supports the improvement of exterior facades facing the McHenry Riverwalk.
- Enhances the pedestrian aspect/usage of the business.

When are funds awarded?

Funds are awarded after a final inspection upon completion of the project(s), as long as the proper documentation is provided, which must include the following documents:

- W-9.
- Paid receipts.
- Contactor's affidavit affirming project completion and payment.



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What type of businesses qualify under the Program?

Eligible businesses must meet the following conditions.

- Be the current Property Owner, and/or
- Hold a current Certificate of Occupancy in the City of McHenry or be in the process of obtaining a Certificate of Occupancy on the property, and
- Must be licensed in all other respects if applicable (excludes home occupations), and
- Must be compliant with all obligations and in good standing with the City of McHenry.

Do I qualify if my business is located in unincorporated McHenry/McHenry County?

No, businesses located outside of the corporate limits of McHenry do not qualify.

Do I qualify if my business closed for a short duration during COVID-19?

Many businesses had to shut down temporarily during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. If the closure was temporary, and the eligible business is now open, it can qualify for the grant.

I own multiple businesses in the City. Can each qualify?

Yes, grants are funded per eligible business. Therefore, if you hold multiple City of McHenry business licenses/certificates of occupancy, each of those businesses may apply assuming it meets the program criteria. However, there is no guarantee all or any of the businesses would be funded.

Who needs to sign the application as "Applicant"?

The business owner or authorized agent for the business must sign on behalf of the business/ applicant.



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I own a business, but not the property, can my business still qualify?

Businesses can qualify with property owner consent, which needs to be indicated on the application.

I already received a commercial tenant incentive grant, am I eligible for a façade grant also?

Each physical address may be awarded a single City grant within a five-year period, including, but not limited to, façade grants, commercial tenant incentive grants, vacant building incentive grants, and Tax Increment Finance (TIF) incentive grants. Exceptions may be made at City Council's discretion.

If my business leases its location, can my landlord contribute matching funds for the project?

Yes, the landlord can provide some or all of the required matching funding for the project.

I own a shopping center in the City of McHenry, can I apply?

Eligible shopping center landowners, in the applicable grant areas, can apply to fund a proposed project for the entire shopping center, such as painting or improving of an entire shopping center façade, however parking lot improvements are not covered under the grant.

I received other grant funds for improvements. Do I still qualify?

If other public funding has been received for the same project expenses, then those particular expenses will not qualify for the grant. If there are other project expenses that were not covered, then those could be eligible under the grant program.



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Do I have to get permits if the City approved grant funding?

Yes, although the City has approved matching funds for the project, the applicant is still responsible for obtaining all necessary permits.

Can I use grant funds for permit fees?

No, permit fees do not qualify as an eligible expense.

How do I submit my application for the grant?

All Façade Grant applications, and any supporting documentation, must be submitted to dmartin@cityofmchenry.org or alternatively dropped off at the Municipal Center, 333 S Green Street, McHenry, IL 60050, 2nd Floor ATTN: Douglas Martin, Director of Economic Development.

How would I be notified if I am awarded grant funds?

City staff will provide written notification to the applicant stating whether the application was approved as submitted, approved with changes, or not approved.

How do I make sure payment of the grant goes to the right place?

A W-9 will be required upon notification of grant award.

Whom can I contact with questions?

All questions can be directed to Douglas Martin at dmartin@cityofmchenry.org or call 815.363.2110 or alternatively Dorothy Wolf at dwolf@cityofmchenry.org or call at 815.363.2175.



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Where can I find the application?

The Façade Grant application can be found here: <https://www.thinkmchenry.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Facade-Grant-Application-City-of-McHenry.pdf>

If I received Façade Grant funds under the original program, can I apply a second time?

Previous awardees may reapply, with new projects at the same address, five (5) years after their original award.