



GRIFFIN DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM OVERVIEW

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Design changes that take place at commercial properties are a critical part of any successful revitalization strategy. Customers want to shop in an attractive and inviting environment, not an environment poorly designed or maintained. Property owners want to generate adequate rents from their commercial properties, while lessees desire to have pride in their place of business.

The Griffin Downtown Development Authority (DDA) wishes to maintain and improve the quality of life for its citizens by fostering economically viable commercial districts. To reach this goal, the Griffin DDA has established a Façade Improvement Program. This program, administered by the Griffin DDA Board, will offer technical and financial assistance to commercial property owners seeking to renovate or restore the exterior of their buildings.

There will be two rounds of funding offered each year, if funds are available. The 50/50 matching grant is for building rehabilitation/renovation projects for business and property owners. The maximum a project may receive is \$5,000.

Round One Applications Due: April 1st* at 5:00pm*

Round Two Applications Due: September 1st at 5:00pm*

**If these dates fall on a weekend, then the following business day will be the due date*

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Grant money awarded to potential applicants located inside the DDA District only (map attached). All funding for façade projects is through a reimbursement process. **Applicants will be reimbursed up to 50% of the project amount only after applicants have paid for work to be done.** The amount of reimbursement each applicant receives will be determined by how many grant applications and how the applicant's project scores. Grant assistance is limited to the amount budgeted by the Griffin DDA for the program during that fiscal year. Griffin DDA reserves the right to discontinue or modify funding for this program; however, all approved grants will be fulfilled as per contracted agreement.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

All improvements must comply with standards set forth by the City of Griffin Planning and Development Department, Downtown Façade Guidelines, all applicable Building and Maintenance Codes enforced by the City, and all state and federal laws that apply. Before applying, applicants must purchase all required permits; and the Historic Preservation Commission must approve all exterior improvements. For more information, contact the City of Griffin Planning and Development Department at 770-233-4130. Building projects must address any needed maintenance. Maintenance issues include, but are not limited to: plants growing out of or on a building, broken windows, unkempt or torn awnings, missing bricks or mortar, deteriorating architectural features, mold growth, damaged entries, and chipping or peeling paint.

Applicants for participation in the program must meet the following eligibility criteria.

- √ Applicants must be property owners, or be tenants with written permission from property owner
- √ Commercial and residential properties must be up to date on all property taxes and other applicable fees owed to the City of Griffin
- √ Property must be in the DDA District.
- √ If property is leased, tenant must have a minimum of two years remaining on the lease or an option to renew.

ELIGIBLE IMPROVEMENTS

- Removal of materials which cover original architectural details
- Repair and/or replacement of original architectural details
- Replacement of original architectural details
- Window repair or replacement including window framing (must match original in size, style and scale)
- Repainting and repair of facade
- Exterior lighting
- Gutters and downspouts
- Other improvements can be made if they meet the objectives of the program **and have prior written approval of the Griffin DDA**

INELIGIBLE IMPROVEMENTS

- IMPROVEMENTS MADE PRIOR TO GRANT APPROVAL
- Interior improvements
- Removal of architecturally important features, as determined by the Griffin DDA or the HPC
- New construction and additions
- Sweat equity (payments for applicant's own labor)
- Planting or landscaping

HOW ARE PROJECTS SELECTED FOR FUNDING?

Applications will be ranked and selected based on a clear and documented set of evaluative criteria. Depending on the number of applications, we may assign "waiting list" status to projects that qualify for selection, but do not rank as high as other applications selected for funding. Projects that score below 60 percent will not receive funding; projects that score 60-79.9% will be funded at 25% of the project cost; and projects that score over 80% will receive the full 50% matching funds. The evaluative criteria and their respective weights are as follows:

Impact (40%): – Overall impact of the project on the DDA District. Are inappropriate design elements removed? Will the project eliminate what was previously a liability for the commercial district? Does the project seek to restore the historical or architectural significance of the building? Is the project in a highly visible location that has significant impact on surrounding properties?

Financial Leverage (10%): –Projects that leverage more private investment will be graded higher than those seeking only grant funding.

Sustainability/Permanence (30%): – How permanent are the improvements (signs are more changeable than new glazing, for example) and is there a maintenance plan for improvements? Does the business own the building? If not, how much time remains on the lease?

Community Contribution (20%): – Is the applicant a good neighbor? Is the area around the business kept clean and free of debris on a consistent basis? Does the business participate in organized downtown promotions or other community-based activities? Does the applicant actively promote downtown Griffin and its own business?

PROCEDURE

1. Griffin DDA will notify building owners and tenants in the DDA District of the grant and when the deadline will be for the applicants to send in their applications.
2. All exterior improvements in the Historic District must be approved by the Historic Preservation Commission before submitting the application. The deadline for this Façade Grant will allow for each applicant to participate in a review by this Commission. For more information on the Historic Preservation Commission's meetings and on the standards used, please contact the City of Griffin Planning and Development Department at 770-233-4130.
3. Required permits and applications for performing the work efforts must be obtained from the applicable City of Griffin Departments prior to beginning work associated with this grant.
4. Applicant picks up an application for a Façade Grant from the Griffin DDA office located at 201 East Solomon Street or by downloading from the DDA page located at www.cityofgriffin.com.
5. Applicant delivers or mails an application before the deadline to the Griffin DDA along with color photographs that show existing building conditions, detailed sketches or drawings of the proposed improvements (including placement, color, dimensions and materials), two separate bids from two separate contractors on their letterhead and any other additional information that may be considered during the review process. **Mailing Address: City of Griffin Economic Development, PO Box T, Griffin, GA 30223**
6. Incomplete applications may not be reviewed or considered.
7. Griffin DDA will review all completed and acceptable applications and determine which projects are funded and what amounts each will receive. Applications will be scored based on the evaluative criteria detailed above.
8. Griffin DDA will notify each recipient of the results within 60 days after the grant deadline and require a signed agreement returned to them before work may begin.
9. Once the Griffin DDA has received the signed agreement and needed permits are obtained by the applicant, work may begin. (Applicant should start the work within three months of being notified of the grant status and work must be completed within twelve months from the start of construction.)
10. Once construction begins, a Façade Improvement Program sign should be installed at the project location during construction. (This will be provided.)
11. The Director of the DDA and DDA members have the right to conduct site inspections. Any minor changes in the approved work must have prior approval of the Griffin DDA Director and also the Historic Preservation Commission, when applicable.
12. Applicant must submit copies of cost documentation (invoices, etc.) along with copies of all cleared checks to Griffin DDA for reimbursement. Proof of all closed permits issued for project must be included with copies of cleared checks. It is the intent of the DDA to reimburse the applicant within 45 days of receipt of project payment and closed permit documents.

CHANGES TO THE FAÇADE AFTER COMPLETION

Participants must agree not to change or alter the improved façade without prior written approval from the Griffin DDA for two years from the date of Final Closeout of the application.

ADDITIONAL CONTACT INFORMATION

Potential applicants are encouraged to meet with the Director of the Griffin DDA, or a board member of the DDA prior to filling out the application. To schedule a time to meet with the director or a board member, please call 770-233-2901.

Applicants are encouraged to contact the City of Griffin Solid Waste Department prior to construction. The commercial division offers light commercial (4, 6 and 8 yard containers) and heavy commercial (20, 30 and 40 yard roll-off and compactor boxes) for your solid waste and recycling needs. Contact the City of Griffin Solid Waste Department at 770-229-6421 for more information.