FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT GRANT (FIG) PROGRAM

A **matching grant program** to support small, locally owned, and operated businesses in the City of Virginia Beach.



virginia beach

To learn more and apply, visit this page:

www.yesvirginiabeach.com/fig.

A. WHAT IS FIG?

This is a reimbursement program for significant exterior improvements for small, locally owned, and operated businesses located in any commercial or industrial zoned area within the City of Virginia Beach.

The program will match small business owners, or those who lease to small businesses, investments up to $10,000, for exterior building, site and outdoor dining improvements. Please note this is only a 50% match of the actual capital investment. ***(For instance, if you invest $20,000, we will match 50% or $10,000.)***

B. WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

- New or existing small businesses with less than 50 employees and those who lease to them.
- Nonprofit entities and organizations
- Properties and applicants that are current on all City of Virginia Beach licenses, fees, and taxes.
- Businesses and nonprofit entities located on any commercially or industrially zoned property (H, O, B, I, PD-H, OR, RT, and CBC Districts).

C. WHO IS NOT ELIGIBLE?

- Chain businesses with more than three locations
- National franchises
- Places of worship
- Residential buildings or complexes
- Government-supported institutions
- Private clubs or social centers

D. WHAT IMPROVEMENTS ARE ELIGIBLE?

Improvement projects must not have already occurred at the time of the application and must make a visible, demonstrable improvement to the exterior of a building or property. All improvements are required to meet applicable zoning, building codes, and design guidelines. Routine maintenance, indoor improvements, movable furnishing, consumable supplies, and other non-capital investments will not be considered. Improvements eligible for grant funding are as follows:

FAÇADE IMPROVEMENTS

Exterior improvements may include any highly visible windows, doors, awnings, parapets, canopies, accent or security lighting improvements and building

material upgrades. Building material specifications, imagery, and scaled drawings or elevations of the proposed improvements, as would be required by the City to obtain a permit, must be provided.

Routine maintenance, such as roofing system repairs/ replacements, power washing, and HVAC system repairs/replacements are not eligible.

FENCING

Example images or scaled drawing of proposed fencing, specifying height, length, color, and survey, as required to obtain a permit, must be provided.

SIGNAGE

Signage improvements may include new or replacement of commercial signage. Scaled drawing with measurements of proposed sign(s), description, proposed location, and other specifications, as would be required for zoning review, must be provided.

LANDSCAPING

A landscape plan must be submitted, showing site location, size, plant types, and quantity.

PARKING UPGRADES

Upgrading an unimproved parking area (e.g. gravel lot) with a paved or other approved surfacing material is eligible, as well as full repaving and re-striping, bicycle parking areas and bike racks. Site drawings, site work description, proposed surfacing materials, and other perimeter improvements, as required by the Zoning Ordinance, must be provided.

Minor and routine parking maintenance, such as parking lot patching, <u>will not be eligible.</u>

OUTDOOR CAFÉ

Upgrades to or establishment of an outdoor café space are eligible. A detailed scaled drawing of the outdoor café site, with the survey of the property, is required.

E. HOW MUCH ARE THE GRANTS?

Applicants may request one grant between $1,000 and $10,000 to match their investment of at least the same amount to achieve the proposed improvements. A third-party cost estimate or quote for the proposed improvements is required to justify the grant amount request.

No more than one grant shall be awarded to a business or property owner per fiscal year. Funding is not an entitlement and is available on a competitive first-come, first-served basis until funds for the fiscal year are depleted.

F. WHAT IS THE SELECTION PROCESS?

Applications will first be ranked on:

- Completeness of application
- Eligibility of business (per section B)
- Eligibility of proposed improvements (per section D)
- Whether they are a woman, minority or veteran-owned business
- If an applicant has previously received a FIG grant

A Grant Review Committee will then evaluate the highest-ranked applications and recommend those that make the most demonstrable impact for approval to the Virginia Beach Development Authority (VBDA). VBDA will approve a resolution authorizing the grant award.

The Grant Review Committee is comprised of representatives from Virginia Beach City Council, VBDA, the City Manager's Office, and the City Departments of Planning and Community Development, and Economic Development.

G. HOW DO I RECEIVE THE GRANT?

Grants are performance-based and will be authorized by VBDA after successful completion and evaluation of the improvements. Invoices and proof of payment must be submitted.

All improvements must be completed within <u>six (6) months</u> from the date of grant award. A final inspection by Economic Development Staff will be conducted prior to payment approval to ensure consistency with the originally approved improvements. Substantial changes to the originally approved improvements must be approved by the VBDA prior to making changes. Only one grant check will be issued per award.

<u>One extension for up to two (2) additional months</u> can be approved administratively. Subsequent requests for an extension are not guaranteed and must be reviewed and approved by the VBDA. If an extension is not granted and work has not commenced within six (6) months from the award date, the Resolution becomes null and void.