

2022-2023 City of Idaho Falls Facade Improvement Program

This program is made possible through the HUD Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds administered by the City of Idaho Falls. The Idaho Falls Downtown Development Corporation (IFDDC) works with the City Grants Administration Office to support and provide a review and approval of the design guidelines applicable to the Façade Improvement Program.

1. Introduction

The Downtown plan envisions a restored and revitalized downtown with vibrant, profitable businesses in a fun and exciting place for people to shop, do business and enjoy themselves. To improve and maintain the historic character of buildings and create the visual sense of “Place” in downtown, three business assistance programs are being created and funded to retain the uniqueness of downtown. Subject to review and approval, a property owner or business applicant may use the programs singly or in combination to finance a project.

2. Programs

A. Grants

- (1) **Sign Grant:** Up to **\$500** grant funds is available for new signs or restoring signs. These funds must be equally matched by the applicant. Projecting signs are preferred.
- (2) **Awning and Canopy Grant:** Up to **\$1,500** grant funds is available for the installation of awnings or canopies. These funds must be equally matched by the applicant. Traditional materials like canvas are preferred.
- (3) **Facade Improvements:** Under facade improvement, monies may be used for architectural and engineering services, historical research and documentation, permit fees, and construction costs to repair and restore character of the building and downtown.

Up to **\$30,000** grant funds may be available per project. The city will match the owner’s investment on a 75% grant to a 25% owner cash investment in the project.

3. Eligible Applicants

Building owners or their representatives are the eligible grant applicant since the improvements become part of the real estate value. Business tenants may apply for a grant with the approval of the building owner. **The building owner must guarantee the grant.**

4. Eligible Improvements

- A. The building exterior, visible from or fronting on a public street or alley, is eligible for this funding.
- B. Eligible project costs are (but not necessarily limited to):
Architectural and/or engineering services, historical review and documentation, fees and permits, all the building facade from the intersection of the ground to the building to the skyline including structural modifications, windows, casements, doors and doorways, canopy, awnings, signs, design details, fire escapes, power, drains, parapets, cornices, moldings, tiles, coatings, sealants, and other design details.
- C. Required Improvements
 - (1) Building Exterior code violations of the International Building Code (IBC) and other relevant building codes.
 - (2) City sign code standards. Available at www.idahofallsidaho.gov

5. Criteria for Selection of Projects

- A. Areas eligible to participate in the program:
Areas bordering the south side of Cliff Street to the North side of G street and Yellowstone Highway to Memorial Drive.
Project applications on Broadway Avenue shall be given the highest preference.
Project applications in the downtown Business Improvement District (BID) will be given preference over requests from non-BID areas.
- B. Projects should be designed following *The Idaho Falls Downtown Design Guideline*. Available at www.idahofallsidaho.gov.
General criteria for selection of projects include:
 - (1) Restoration of the historic character of downtown,
 - (2) The preservation or rehabilitation of original building character,
 - (3) Improvements that do not distract from the historic character of downtown,
 - (4) Elimination of building code violations and the implementation of the *Design Assessment for Idaho Falls, April 2006* prepared by Urban Development Services dated April 2006. Available at www.idahofallsidaho.gov,
 - (5) The street level should be pedestrian friendly with abundant windows, inviting entrances and with awnings or canopies sheltering the sidewalk,
 - (6) Rehab projects should not ignore the upper stories,
 - (7) Uncover or retain and preserve the original design of store fronts, windows and entrances,
 - (8) Secondary entrances to the building and upper floors should be solid but modest entrances,
 - (9) Uncover or preserve the original building materials,
 - (10) Uncover and restore original architectural ornaments and details,

- (11) The exposed sides and rear of buildings should be restored and made attractive as well,
- (12) Design for individual buildings should not ignore the surrounding structures, seeking to install or preserve elements that link buildings together within a block and across the street, such as height, cornices, window patterns or materials,
- (13) Colors, materials, design elements, lettering and signs should be compatible with the original historic period of the building,
- (14) Main entrances, if rebuilt, shall incorporate International Building Code (IBC) and Americans with Disability Act of 1990 (ADA) accessibility standards,
- (15) Energy conservation should be considered in modifying or replacing windows and doors,
- (16) Construction should maintain or compliment the height of neighboring buildings and incorporate similar architectural details and designs as to be compatible with the block and street.

6. Application Process

A. Letter of Intent to Apply is the first step in the process and shall be submitted to the Grant Administrator in the City's Planning and Building Department 680 Park Avenue or mailed to the Grant Administrator, City of Idaho Falls PO Box 50220 Idaho Falls, ID 83405-0220.

Letter of Intent should contain and generally describe:

- property, its age and condition;
- the potential project with photos of the existing building;
- photos of the neighboring buildings;
- any sketches of the improvements with descriptions;
- product information of materials, colors;
- contact information of design or construction professionals involved.

Note - Information provided will assist the Grant Administrator in completing a Project Scope. Project Scope is provided to Applicant to be used in acquiring (3) estimates from contractors. City of Idaho Falls may provide a list of licensed contractors upon request.

B. Sign and Awning letters of intent shall be reviewed by City Grant Administrator and the IFCCD Executive Director, using *The Idaho Falls Downtown Design Guidelines*. If, in their opinion, the project conforms to the design guidelines, the project can be approved and sent to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). If any serious questions arise, the project will be presented to the Idaho Falls Historic Preservation Commission for technical review.

C. Façade Projects Technical Assistance: Letters of intent shall be reviewed by City Grant Administrator and the IFDDC Executive Director. If, in their opinion, the Letter of Intent is complete, it will be sent to the Idaho Falls Historic Preservation Commission for informal technical review and technical assistance using

The Idaho Falls Downtown Design Guidelines and/or historic restoration according to the *Department of Interior Preservation Standards* as appropriate to the proposal.

The Commission may invite the IFDDC members and/or other experts to be represented. The Commission may review a project at its monthly meeting or call a special meeting to consider a project.

- D. Process and Potential Design** is initiated in a meeting between the Applicant's team and the Commission to initiate discussions about the process and the potential design to develop the following:

Detailed project concepts, historic preservation requirements, design details, design and construction process and the federal requirements.

A formal Application can then be made based upon these recommendations.

- E. Formal Applications** shall provide the specific information following the recommendations from the **Commission** and shall be submitted to the Grant Administrator in the City's Planning and Building Department 680 Park Avenue or mailed to the Grant Administrator, City of Idaho Falls PO Box 50220 Idaho Falls, ID 83405-0220.

Applications Shall Contain:

A. Proposed project description, drawings, elevations, with cost estimates, estimated schedule, photos, sketches, dimensional drawings, cross section profile detail, detail drawings (pictures historical and current; architectural renderings and architectural and/or engineering drawings and dimensions, if available).

B. Documentation of the required owner cash match for the project. Documentation demonstrating that Property Taxes, Special Assessments, and utility bills are current.

F. Approvals

Applications will be reviewed for consistency with the federal CDBG requirements and the **Technical Review** recommendations.

If consistent, the application will be sent to:

- a. The **State Historic Preservation Office** for historical review and clearance
- b. The **Idaho Falls Downtown Development Corporation** for review/approval.

G. Contract

With the approvals from the two agencies, a grant contract can then be executed between the City and Applicant with the approved project specifications incorporated.

- H. Additions, Modifications or Changes** to the approved project will jeopardize grant funding and may require additional review process and approvals to consider the modifications.

I. Construction of the original project must be completed within (1) year of the date of the application.

7. Compliance

The project must comply with the following requirements:

A. Projects shall comply with the city's International Building Code, Sign Ordinance and awnings and canopies requirements.

B. CDBG Environmental Review, and CDBG Federal Assurances and others (see below)

C. Historic Preservation standards and design review.

D. Work shall be performed by licensed contractors where required by City Code for Signs, Awnings, Canopies, Structural and Electrical.

8. Funds Disbursement

A. Upon executing the Assistance Agreement, the Project may proceed.

B. All grant monies are paid on a reimbursement basis upon satisfactory completion of the project and submittal of invoices, receipts, contractor lien releases, and copy(s) of code permits or inspections. The work shall be inspected by IFDDC staff and the Grant Administrator for completion of the project as approved.

C. A hold back of 10% of the project cost will be reserved until proof(s) of lien release(s) and inspections are satisfactory. Owner cash shall be spent proportionally with the grant funds.

9. Federal CDBG Requirements

- A. Because the grants are made available with the use of federal funding, the CDBG/federal program requirements shall apply:
- (1) No Displacement of Tenants or residents except under conditions equivalent to the Uniform Acquisition and Displacement Act,
 - (2) Environmental Review and mitigation requirements (must be met)
Includes but not limited to: Lead Based paint, Asbestos removal, and Historic Preservation.
 - (3) Licensed contractors where required,
 - (4) Davis Bacon Wage Rates,
 - (5) Civil Rights compliance and non-discrimination.
 - (6) No personal or financial conflict of interest exists with local, state or federal officials or employees;
 - (7) Appropriate Records shall be maintained for City Grant compliance;
 - (8) Records and the project are open to inspection by officials, agents and staffs of the city, county, state, or federal governments. (Excludes business financials)

**Idaho Falls Downtown
Letter of Intent - Façade Grant Application
2022-2023**

Date Submitted _____

Property Owner(s) _____

Business Owner _____

Mailing Address _____

Phone _____ Cell Phone _____ E-mail _____ Fax _____

Project/Property Address _____

History/description of your business _____

History of building
(Include: Original Construction date, Major Remodels, Previous Uses)

General Description of Façade Improvement _____

Name of contractor or architect _____
Address _____

Phone _____ Cell Phone _____ E-mail _____ Fax _____

Attachments:
___ Preliminary Plans ___ Current Photographs ___ Cost estimates

I (we) certify that I (we) have sufficient cash on hand to complete the project.
I (we) agree to comply with all grant requirements.

Printed name(s) _____

Signature(s) _____ Date _____

