

# **“Focus on Downtown”**

City of Miles City  
Historic Downtown Main Street  
Façade Improvement Grant (FIG)  
Program Application Guidelines  
2020  
Application Deadline  
July 15, 2020



Miles City Downtown Urban Renewal Agency / Miles City Historic Preservation Office | 17 S. 8th, Miles City, MT 59301  
[www.milescity-mt.org](http://www.milescity-mt.org)

## **Façade Improvement Grant Guidelines**

The Miles City Downtown Urban Renewal Agency (URA) and Miles City Historic Preservation Office (MCHPO) is offering the Façade Improvement Grant (FIG) program. The program began in 2016, and designed to promote the improvement of commercial and multi-use properties in the Historic Downtown Main Street District by helping property owners upgrade, rehabilitate, and preserve the facades of eligible structures in Historic Downtown Miles City. The FIG program aims to make revitalization efforts more affordable by providing matching grant funds.

### **General Provisions**

The policies and procedures contained within these guidelines are to present the criteria which govern the façade improvement activities assisted with funds made available through the FIG program.

**Purpose:** FIG grants are provided to owners or tenants (with documentation) in recognition of the positive impacts that individual building improvements can have on overall appearance, quality, growth, and vitality of the downtown.

**Objectives:** Façade improvement activities, assisted with funds made available through the FIG program, are intended to meet the following objectives:

- To encourage the leveraging of new private investment into Downtown Miles City in the form of fixed asset investment related to exterior building improvements;
- To preserve, enhance, and restore the historical and architectural significance of buildings in Downtown Miles City; and
- To promote a positive and proactive business climate in Downtown Miles City that encourages the revitalization of buildings and supports business improvement.

**Minimum Requirements:** to be eligible for funding, a proposed project must meet all of the following minimum requirements:

1. Private Funds Leveraged – the applicant must leverage a minimum of one dollar (\$1.00) of private funds for every dollar (\$1.00) of grant funds requested.
2. When a historic building – exterior renovations shall to the extent practical, preserve and promote the significant architectural and historic features of the building. Modifications to listed historic buildings must be reviewed and approved by the State Historic Preservation Office and included in the application.
3. Compliance with Applicable Laws – applicant shall comply with all applicable local, state, and federal laws and codes.
4. Project Completion – projects must begin within three (3) months of grant award letter and completed October 1 of the year of the grant award.
5. Project must be within the Historical Downtown District boundary (inside shaded area), map attached.
6. Application is submitted by a property owner or tenant within the area shown on the map.
  - a. If applicant is a tenant, a letter of support from the property owner must be included. Please be sure to include how much time is on the lease.
7. Applications must include a title, deed, or lease.
8. Properties must be commercial, residential properties turning commercial, or multi-use.
9. Applicant must provide high resolution before pictures(s) within the application and emailed

### **Eligible Improvements Grants**

Eligible improvements may include:

- Awnings – repair or installation
- Rehabilitation or compatible reconstruction of storefronts
- Removal of metal siding and exterior slip covers (surfaces), exterior cleaning, painting, and/or paint removal

- Masonry repair and repainting
- Repair and replacement of architectural details or materials
- Window repair or replacement
- Improvement to backs of buildings are eligible if done in conjunction with a front façade improvement or if the front façade is already considered satisfactory according to program guidelines

### **Ineligible Improvements Grants**

Ineligible improvements may include:

- Improvements made prior to grant approval
- Interior rehabilitation unless it is essential to rehabilitate the building's façade
- Interior decoration
- Refinancing of existing debt
- Inventory and equipment
- Sweat equity (payments for applicant's own labor), although building materials/supplies are eligible for funding if the applicant does not use an outside contractor
- General business operations expenses (payroll, taxes, utilities, etc.)
- Business signs

### **Terms and Conditions include**

- Grant amounts are subject to the availability of program funds but shall not exceed \$5000. The Façade Grant Committee has the authority to recommend award of grants exceeding the \$5000 maximum if a project is deemed especially beneficial to the FIG program objectives.
- Grantees will be required to sign a grant agreement guaranteeing the project will be completed according to the details included on the grant application and approved by the Façade Grant Committee.
- Grants will be paid in a lump sum at the end of the project as a reimbursement of costs incurred. Invoices need to be sent no later than the project completion date.
- Awarded grantees will cooperate with any efforts of the URA to publicize the grant award.

### **Building Design Requirements**

- Exterior renovations shall, to the extent practical, preserve and promote the significant architectural and historic features of the building.
- All construction work shall comply with applicable local, state, and federal building codes.
- The program is geared towards façade projects that protect the historic integrity of the building and improve the overall appearance of the downtown area.
- The goal is to return the building facades in the downtown area to their appearance following their initial construction; however, it is recognized that some buildings may have a different period of architectural significance that supersedes the original construction appearance.
- Ideal projects will retain or repair original features and use historic materials. For example, installation of vinyl siding would not be funded but the repair and repainting of original wood

siding would.

- Projects should draw upon the history and architecture of the building while still reflecting the current use.
- The goal is not to try to recreate some past time in the history of Miles City; instead, it is to draw upon the architectural and historic distinctiveness of the downtown to enhance its value.
- Creative new uses for existing building stock will be strongly encouraged, as well as modern yet compatible awnings, signage, lighting, and other fixtures to enhance the appearance of storefronts and downtown.

### **Distribution of Funds**

Prior to releasing grant funds, the following documentation must be in place.

1. **Notice of Award** – will be emailed and/or mailed to awardee
2. **Grant Agreement** – will be included in the award letter
3. **Evidence of Program Expenditures** – documentation shall be provided by the awarded applicant of expenditures prior to the release of funds which can include bills, invoices, or receipts for materials. All documents shall be reviewed and approved by the Executive Director.
4. **Inspection** – the Executive Director shall perform a visual inspection to ensure the project activities were completed per the grant agreement. A photograph of the completed project will be filed.

# 2020 Miles City Historic Downtown District Façade Application

Application Deadline July 15, 2020  
Completion date of work November 1, 2020

We seek to assist the applicant by providing what the grant committee looks for while scoring the applications. By providing detailed information, you will be competitive. Applications that do not contain the minimum requirements may not be reviewed for funding.

**Applicants must be within the M C H D D boundaries.**

Your application should include (use the boxes to check completion and competitiveness)

Cover Letter (10 points)

- o Business name and location (include business card if applicable)
- o Summarize the project's improvements; indicating the investment and whether the project is multi-use or commercial (minimum requirement)

Proof of ownership of the building (title or deed) and if a tenant, an agreement between lessor and lessee (minimum requirement)

Evidence of investment expenditures including 2-3 quotes (20 points)

Specify the amount being asked (don't just say 1:1 match) (minimum requirement)

Sketches or drawings of the proposed improvements (20 points)

Colored photographs of the property as part of the application and in jpeg form emailed to [mcplanner@milescity-mt.org](mailto:mcplanner@milescity-mt.org). More pictures the better. (minimum requirement)

Applicant provides five hard copies of all materials by the application deadline

Addendum to the cover letter

In a word document, answer the following (50 points)

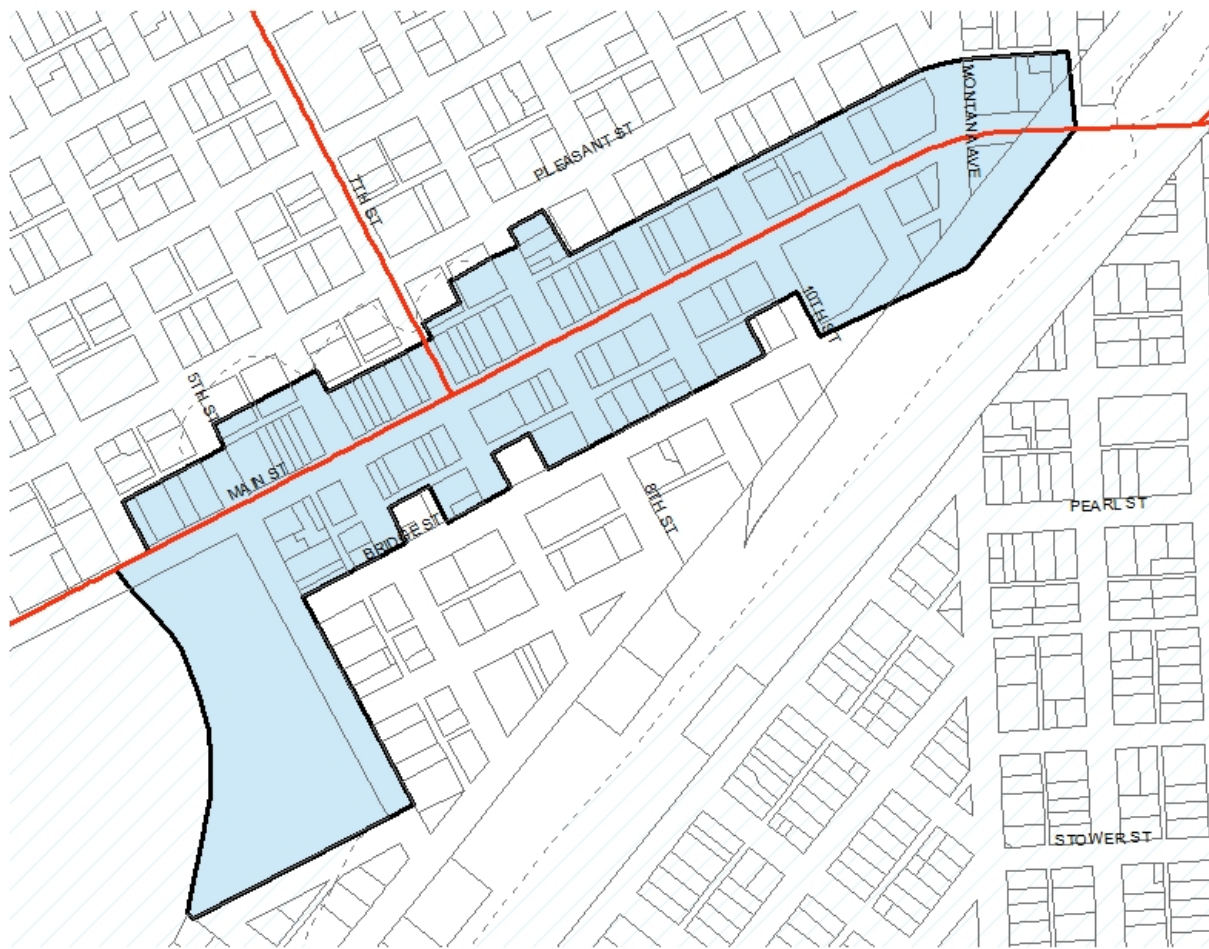
- A. Impact – **Detail** the overall impact of the project by answering: (Yes/No answers are not detailing)
  - a. Are inappropriate design elements removed?
  - b. Will the project eliminate what was previously a liability for the district?
  - c. Does the project seek to restore the historical or architectural significance of the building?
    - i. If you answer Yes to c. please include communication letter from Historic Preservation Officer (minimum requirement)
- B. Financial Leverage – minimum 1:1 match – must indicate total estimate of project and amount asking for (be specific) (minimum requirement)
- C. Sustainability/Permanence – eligible costs must be structural
  - a. How permanent are the improvements?
  - b. Is there a maintenance plan for improvements?
- D. Community Contribution – is the applicant a good neighbor
  - a. Is the area around the business kept clean and free of debris on a consistent basis?
  - b. How does the applicant participate in organized Downtown Miles City promotions, events, or other community-based activities?
  - c. How does applicant actively promote downtown Miles City and their own business?

**Mail Application to:  
Miles City Historical Preservation Office  
Ally Capps, Historical Preservation Officer  
Façade Improvement Grant  
PO Box 910  
Miles City, MT 59301**

1. Within 30 working days of the application deadline, the Façade Grant Committee will meet to score applications and will reject or accept proposals.
2. A written Notice of Award will be mailed to the applicant explaining the terms of the grant and the grantee will sign the agreement.
3. A written Rejection of Award will be mailed in a letter to the applicant. Any applicant who receives a rejection letter is encouraged to reach out to the Administrator for tips on how to make a competitive application.
4. ***Official Rules are final and binding:***
  - By entering this FIG competition, applicants/grantees (“*Competitor[s]*”) acknowledge that they have read and understand these Official Rules, and fully accept and agree to be bound by the outlined terms.
  - Applicants acknowledge compliance with the Official Rules, including, without limitation, eligibility requirements and the decisions of the URA.
  - Any competitor disputing these Official Rules shall be disqualified. **Failure to comply with these or any other Official Rules will result in disqualification.**
  - All decisions of the HBID, and/or its judges, are final and binding on all matters relating to this competition.

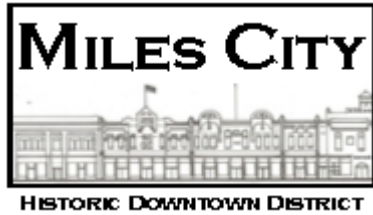


# MAIN STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT



## Legend

 Legal MainHistDist



## Façade Improvement Grant Agreement

- A. Grantee agrees complete the project as described in the application and approved by the Façade Grant Committee. This grant may be used only for eligible project activities described in the Grantee's façade improvement grant application and approved by the Façade Grant Committee and the URA Board of Commissioners.
- B. Grantee agrees to adhere to the project schedule requirements outlined in the application.
- C. Grantee agrees to preserve and promote the significant architectural and historic features of the building.
- D. Grantee agrees to provide additional information and documents as the URA may request and allow URA and its representatives to have reasonable access to the site for the purpose of evaluating the progress and completion of the project.
- E. Grantee agrees to comply with all applicable local, state, and federal laws and codes.
- F. Grantee agrees to maintain the property and improvement.
- G. Grantee agrees to allow the URA to promote the project including, but not limited to, displaying a URA logo sign at the site during and after construction, and using photographs and descriptions of the project in URA promotional materials and/or social media.
- H. URA reserves the right to withhold any payments to be made under this grant award if, in the URA's sole discretion, such action is necessary: (1) because Grantee has not fully complied with the terms and conditions of the grant; (2) to protect the purpose and objectives of the grant; or (3) to comply with any law or regulation applicable to Grantee, to URA, or this grant.

On behalf of Grantee, I understand and agree to the foregoing terms and conditions the URA grant, and hereby certify my authority to execute this agreement.

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*Business / Organization Name*

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*Applicant's Signature*

*Date*

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*Building Owner's Signature*

*Date*



[Large empty rectangular box for content]

Applicant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Miles City Facade Improvement Grant Application

This loan program is provided to assist businesses in the Miles City Urban Renewal (Tax Increment Finance) District in making physical improvements to the exterior of their properties. In addition to completing this application, please provide a detailed budget for your project.

Name of Applicant	
Business Name	
Business Address	
Business Primary Phone	
Business Email	
Name and Address of Building Owner if different than Applicant	
Period of Lease if applicable	
Please Attach Letter of Consent from Building Owner	
What is the estimated cost of your project?	
What is the estimated time to complete your project?	
Amount of Grant Request This is a 1:1 match, which means you must invest the same amount or more as the amount you are requesting.	

If your grant is funded, you will be asked to provide the following information if pertinent to your project:

- Grant Agreement: The Administrator shall prepare a grant agreement based on the example in Exhibit A and it shall be signed by grantee and Administrator.
- Evidence of Permits, Licenses, Bonds, etc: Documentation shall be provided by the applicant that all necessary permits, licenses, and any other registrations required have been obtained by the applicant prior to the release of program funds.
- Lien Waivers: Lien waivers must be submitted from all contractors and subcontractors.
- Evidence of Project Expenditures: Documentation shall be provided by the business prior to release of funds. This shall include bills and invoices or receipts for materials, final bills of sale or canceled checks. All documentation shall be reviewed and approved by the Administrator.
- Inspection: When required by the project scope, the Administrator and the Miles City Building Inspector, shall perform a visual inspection to ensure that project activities were completed per the grant agreement.
- A photograph of the completed project will be filed.

