



Business Improvement Grant (BIG) Façade Program 2024

About the Program:

To encourage increased reinvestment, restoration, and redevelopment of existing buildings and to recruit new business in Gainesville, the Gainesville Economic Development Corporation updated the Business Improvement Grant (BIG) Program. The BIG Program provides financial assistance for building/business owners to make exterior building improvements in the Central Area Commercial District (CA) of Gainesville, Texas. The BIG Façade Program provides funds toward fixed site improvements in compliance with Section 501.103 of the Texas Local Government Code. Below are the program policies and qualifying business types. An application for this program is subject to GEDC Board approval.

Qualified Applicants:

A building owner (or a business owner with the building owner's written authorization) may receive financial assistance from the BIG Program for pre-approved façade improvements. Single-use residential buildings are not eligible.

Qualified Area:

- Central Area Commercial District (CA), zoned by the City of Gainesville (See Zoning Map)

Qualifying Improvements:

- Complete façade rehabilitation
- Replacement of window panes, window frames, broken storefront glass, and doors with commercial-grade replacements.
- Awnings – permanent new awnings and/or historic restorations/replacement that provide cover or protection from the elements such as rain, sun, and heat for patrons and pedestrians on the sidewalk and professionally constructed of wood, metal, vinyl, or other high-quality, durable materials. Excludes accent awning and customized, single-use cloth or vinyl awnings with company name, logo, etc.
- Murals/Street Art
- Exterior treatments, such as brick, tile, stucco, stone, wood or siding
- Exterior lighting
- Historic signage restoration
- Exterior signage (permits for permanent signage must be secured from the City of Gainesville)
- Addition or replacement of canopies or window awnings or window treatments such as tint
- Addition or replacement of ADA compliant entry-ways/access
- Restoration of historic or significant architectural features

Ineligible Expenses:

- New commercial construction
- Roof repair or replacement (except for ridge caps, etc. related to façade work)
- Signage only projects (unless historic)
- Vinyl signage

- Parking lots/allotments
- Brick painting of previously un-painted brick
- Interior remodeling or renovation
- Residential windows and doors in commercial facilities
- Fencing
- Burglar bars
- Landscaping/outdoor seating/benches/pots/planters
- Alarm system/security of building/cameras
- Construction that has been performed or placed under contract prior to approval of project application (unless approved by GEDC Board)
- Purchase or replacement of tools or equipment
- Electricity or plumbing (unless directly related to façade work)
- Insurance
- Pest control treatments
- In-kind services are not considered as part of the overall project budget
- Portions of investments receiving other GEDC incentives are not eligible for an additional 50% match.

Grant Calculations, Minimum, and Maximums:

Qualified applicants that receive an Approval Letter from the Gainesville EDC Board are eligible to receive up to 50% reimbursement with a maximum reimbursement of \$25,000 subject to the square footage of the building facade with grant values based on \$9.00/sf for street frontage façade and \$4.00/sf for non-street frontage façade and excludes insets, bump-outs, etc. Projects must meet a minimum of \$2,500 to qualify (i.e., the project total is \$2,500 and the BIG Program reimbursement would equal \$1,250). Grants may not be used for the refinance of existing loans, working capital or for purchase of inventory or interior projects. Grant applicants must secure their portion of the project cost before the start of the improvements and submit written documentation to the GEDC. Total BIG Façade Program Award amount will be reduced by any prior façade grant proceeds received at a specific property in the previous ten (10) years.

All projects shall be completed by contractors who meet all licensing requirements and shall comply with all applicable building codes of the City of Gainesville. Project owners and/or contractors shall acquire all necessary permits.

Applicants may want to consult their accountant when applying for this incentive as it may be subject to federal income taxes.

Grant Application Process:

Applicants must fill out an application and cannot begin work until such application is approved by the GEDC Board of Directors. Documents needed as part of a complete application include: total project budget, site plans, current before photos (digital preferred) of the building, proposed renderings of changes, bid statement(s) from contractor(s), detailed spreadsheet with lists of improvement subtotals and total project cost, proof of insurance, and completed IRS W-9 Form (for reimbursement payment). If the applicant does not own the building, they may still apply but must have written authorization from the building owner and submit the document as part of the application.

Applications will be available on the GEDC website, as well as in paper format to be picked up at the Gainesville Civic Center at 311 S Weaver Street. Applicants will need to complete a full application and submit to the GEDC.

Upon application, GEDC Staff will meet with the applicant and verify all submitted documentation. Depending on the design and scope of the project, GEDC Staff may seek feedback from the City of Gainesville Staff. GEDC Staff may request additional follow-up documentation, including company financial information. Upon verification, the complete application will be placed on the next agenda for the GEDC Board of Directors meeting. The GEDC Board will vet the application and vote whether to approve, deny, request additional information, or request changes, within 30 days from presentation and is at the sole discretion of the GEDC Board of Directors. Approval is not guaranteed. Should the application be rejected, the GEDC Board of Directors may suggest changes or improvements. If the applicant complies with the changes, the grant application can be reconsidered at the next meeting. Upon approval, the applicant will receive a BIG Façade Program Award Letter from Gainesville EDC. The applicant and their contractor(s) must comply with all City of Gainesville ordinances and development standards. This includes obtaining all necessary permits from the City of Gainesville. Work done out of compliance with City of Gainesville requirements may result in breach of contract with the GEDC and forfeiture of funding eligibility. Upon completion of improvements and GEDC receipt of paid receipts, GEDC and City of Gainesville Staff shall verify compliance (including removal of any code violations) and process a reimbursement based on applicant's proof of paid receipt(s).

Time to Complete:

Applicants will have up to eighteen (18) months upon approval by the GEDC Board to complete their project, unless approved for an amended timeline or as otherwise provided in the Performance Agreement.

Marketing:

Applicant/Grantee acknowledges that information provided by applicant and obtained by GEDC may be used in GEDC marketing, press releases, social media posts, websites, etc.

Business Improvement Grant (BIG) Façade Program Contact

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Gainesville Economic Development Corporation
311 S Weaver St
Gainesville, TX 76240
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William@GainesvilleTXEDC.com**



BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT GRANT (BIG) FACADE PROGRAM APPLICATION

NOTE: Application must be submitted and approved before any work is done on your project.

Please return completed application with necessary attachments and signatures to the Gainesville Economic Development Corporation, 311 S Weaver St, Gainesville, TX 76240. If you have application questions, please contact Gainesville EDC staff at (940) 665-5241.

Date: _____

Applicant First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Building Owner Name (if different): _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Building Owner (if different from applicant): _____

Address of Property/Building: _____

Tax ID Number: _____

Building Dimensions & Square Footage Calculations:

	Width		Height		Square Footage	Street Front	Office Use Only	Totals
1. Front of building		x		=		Yes	@ \$9.00	
2. Side of building		x		=		Yes / No (circle one)	No @ \$4.00 Yes @ \$9.00	
3. Side of building		x		=		Yes / No (circle one)	No @ \$4.00 Yes @ \$9.00	
4. Back of building		x		=		Yes/No (circle one)	No @ \$4.00 Yes @ \$9.00	

Type of Work (check all that apply):

- ☐ Complete Façade Rehabilitation
 ☐ Signage (by professional)
 ☐ Painting
- ☐ Windows/Doors (repair)
 ☐ Windows/Doors (replace)
 ☐ Transom Window Restoration

☐ Exterior Treatments: Brick, etc. ☐ Lighting (façade) ☐ Code Compliance
☐ Awnings ☐ Mural/Artwork ☐ Caulk and seal windows
☐ Other (specify): _____

Detailed Description of Proposed Fixed Site Improvements:

(provide itemized attachment(s) if necessary)

Total Anticipated Improvement Costs: _____

**Attach all estimates for work subject to the applicable uses of this grant program*

Anticipated Completion Date: _____

Name/Contact Info of General Contractor: _____

Type of Financing (*check all that apply*):

☐ Self-Funded ☐ Business Loan

Name/Contact Info of Banker (if applicable): _____

Attachments Requested (if available):

- **Proposed Project Plans/Renderings of Changes**
- **Estimates & Bids - Contractor/Other**
- **Photos of Building – Current/Before (digital)**
- **City of Gainesville Permit(s)(when received)**
- **Letter of Property Owner (if different than Applicant) Approval**

- **Proof of Insurance**

I have met with Gainesville EDC Staff and have read and fully understand the Business Improvement Grant (BIG) Façade Program policies and procedures. I intend to use this Grant program for the aforementioned renovation projects to revitalize and enhance my property and historic Downtown Gainesville. *I have not received, nor will I receive insurance monies for this redevelopment project.*

I understand that if awarded this grant, any material deviation from the approved project, without written notice via letter or email to GEDC, may result in the violation of the BIG Façade Program Award and partial or total withdrawal of the BIG Façade Program Grant. If I am awarded a grant for any work pursuant to this program and the completed work is altered for any reason, without prior GEDC approval in writing via letter or email, I may forfeit the full amount of the BIG Façade Program Grant Award. Immaterial changes substantially similar to the GEDC pre-approved project are acceptable.

I understand that any information related to this grant may be used in GEDC marketing, press releases, social media posts, websites, reports, etc.

Business Name: _____

Applicant Signature: _____

Applicant Name (printed): _____

Property Owner Signature (if different): _____

Property Owner Name (printed): _____

Date: _____

This section to be completed by GEDC Staff

GEDC Staff Review: _____ **Date:** _____

Staff Recommendation: ☐ Approve ☐ Deny ☐ More Information Needed

GEDC Board Action: ☐ Approve ☐ Deny ☐ More Information Needed **Date:** _____

GAINESVILLE CENTRAL AREA ZONING MAP

