



Downtown Fredericktown Matching Business Grant Program Policy & Procedures (2022)

The Downtown Fredericktown Matching Business Grant Program is a volunteer-driven community initiative to induce business/property owners in the designated area of Fredericktown, Knox County, to update and improve their building façades. The program will help fund exterior-improvement projects that enhance the design integrity of the downtown area and secure participating buildings against further devaluation and disinvestment.

Section 1: Background and Rationale

Fredericktown is a Village on the rise in Knox County with a motivated village government and staff, public and private investment in revitalization, the opportunity for industrial growth, and a strong sense of community pride. Having just completed a strategic planning process, there is a cohesive vision for the future of the Fredericktown area supported by grant funds and implementation support.

The Village of Fredericktown is wholly independent of Mount Vernon, with a healthy school system and immense community pride. While the community has an independent spirit, economically, the Village relies heavily on businesses outside of the village area. To help maintain both social and economic independence, the village must invest in the downtown area to maintain its identity. This investment has already begun with a streetscape improvement project and a new community splash pad project downtown.

The Matching Business Grant program's goal is to stimulate re-investment in properties within its project area—particularly downtown businesses. Grant projects can thereby preserve the Village's unique and beautiful aesthetics in the downtown area.

The program designers seek to create positive reinforcing effects from improving properties' exterior facades. These long-lasting improvements will increase the vibrancy of downtown, therefore, benefiting the residents and visitors for generations to come.

Section 2: Financial Assistance

The program will provide matching grants to fund exterior improvements to commercial buildings. This assistance will be provided as a draw-down grant to awardees, based on the total project costs. The program will earmark 50% of the project costs, up to \$5,000, with the remaining total costs fully borne by the property owner. As invoices are received for completed work FCDF will payout the grant portion of the funds directly to the contractor.

An application seeking funds must be filed with the Fredericktown Community Development Foundation (FCDF). Volunteers on behalf of the Foundation will review applications on a first-come, first-served basis, with awards subject to the availability of funds.

Section 3: Eligibility

To be eligible to participate, the property must be located within the Program Area (see **Appendix A**). The grant award must be for exterior front façade enhancements (or side building elevation if located on a corner lot) and/or the streetscape adjacent to the subject building.

The committee will only consider prospective projects. It will not reimburse applicants if they have already completed the work described in their applications' scope of work.

After an award is made, all build-out work must be completed according to the construction schedule submitted as part of the application; in all cases, construction must be completed within 24 months of making an application. All build-out work must be bid by qualified, insured, and experienced contractors.

All project work must be in compliance with applicable Village building permit processes and planning commission approvals.

To receive funding or otherwise participate in the program, recipients cannot be in violation of any Village rules, regulations, or ordinances. A project close-out occurs upon an awardee's submission of invoices to be paid regarding the project, or 24 months whichever occurs first.

Table 1: Eligible Improvement Costs

- Exterior painting that incorporates a major visual change
- Installation or repair of signage
- Significant masonry cleaning, tuckpointing, and restoration modification (if part of an overall design restoration)
- Enhanced exterior building lighting that creates a noticeably enhanced appearance
- Front entry systems and individual windows and door replacement or modification (if part of an overall design restoration)
- New or restored façade elements such as: cornices, soffits, canopies, and other detail elements
- Demolition (if part of an overall design)

- Routine maintenance (incl. painting, general masonry upkeep, general window and door upkeep, and repair replacement of current lighting or removing inoperable lighting fixtures)
- Decorative fencing or gates
- Roof and awning repair or replacement, so long as clearly visible from the street

Table 2: *Ineligible Costs*

- Paying down on existing loans
- Building permit & inspection fees
- Security equipment
- Interior improvements of ANY kind

Section 4: Application & Grant Payment Process

Building owners are to complete and submit the **Application Form** before the work is done. The application must include photographs of the subject property as well as a narrative description of the proposed improvements (applicants are encouraged to provide schematic drawings, if any, provided by housing improvement specialists). The costs to prepare an application, if any, are solely the responsibility of the applicant.

Prospective applicants are encouraged to contact the FCDF Economic Development Committee to discuss the project before submitting application materials.

The FCDF Economic Development Committee will review submitted applications each month on a first-come, first-served basis. Awards will be in the form of a drawdown grant, meaning approved projects can request payment as work is completed and invoiced. Such funds will be remitted upon the Foundation approving the project and execution of one or more legal documents between the Foundation and the awardee detailing the terms and conditions of assistance. Such documents may include, but are not limited to, grant agreements, any or all of which will be used to provide assurance the project will be completed.

Section 5: Selection Criteria

Applications for assistance to improve subject properties will be measured according to the following:

- What is the subject property’s current physical condition and exterior appearance?
- Will the proposed improvements enhance and promote the historic look of downtown?
- Has the applicant provided a well-constructed, thought-out written scope of work for the exterior enhancement project?
- How extensive is the proposed exterior enhancement project?
 - Will the grant assist in making substantial improvements to the outside appearance and exterior condition of the subject property?
- What is the applicant’s demonstrated ability to complete the project as proposed?

Appendix A: Program Area

Fredericktown Matching Grant Program Map - 2022

Highlighted areas are eligible for the downtown business matching grant program.

The projects for this program are for facade improvements **only**, with special attention to improvements that maintain or enhance the historic character of downtown Fredericktown.

Applicants are encouraged to reach out to the FCDF Economic Development Committee to review their project before submission to verify eligibility.

