



## **DOWNTOWN SPOKANE** PARTNERSHIP

# **Small Business Façade Enhancement Program**

## **Details and Requirements**

### **About the Grant Program**

The goal of the Small Business Façade Enhancement Program is to improve the aesthetic of areas of downtown that face challenges associated with vacant and underutilized properties. Research indicates that exterior improvements to buildings lead to increased economic vitality for businesses in that commercial area, along with increased foot traffic and public safety.

This grant program is structured as a reimbursement program where business and property owners may be awarded up to \$5,000 in funds for completed work.

### **Eligible Applicants**

Include: Any building owner or tenant of a commercial or industrial building (Ratepayer) in good standing within the boundary of the Business Improvement District (BID) is eligible to apply. All applications from building tenants require the signature and approval of the building owner. All interested applicants must first request, and participate in a [Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design \(CPTED\) assessment](#) of their property or façade by the Downtown Spokane Partnership (DSP). CPTED assessments are available through the DSP free of charge to BID Ratepayers and are performed by CPTED Certified Downtown Ambassadors.

[Click here for a map of the Business Improvement District.](#)

### **Eligible Improvements**

Include: Any improvement to primary, front-facing commercial façades is eligible, such as attached signage, building entrances, doors, windows, awning, brick, stone, tuckpointing wood, or other building surfaces material. Additionally, flexibility will be given for façade improvements that incorporate design elements to prevent crime (e.g. nighttime lighting, windows looking onto streets and parking lots, etc.) and repair damage to façades (example: signage, attached awning, walk-up service window, outdoor seating structures, etc.). Street-facing murals/public art on commercial façades are eligible. Permitting fees for this work, when required, are also eligible expenses for grants.

### **Ineligible Improvements**

Include: Site improvements considered public amenities such as parking lots, paving, detached signage, invisible work on street trees, and sidewalks are ineligible. Roof repairs and new construction projects are also ineligible.

Grants cannot be used retroactively for building enhancements already completed.





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While generally intended for commercial properties that are not solely rental apartments, these properties may be eligible with additional considerations.

All related construction and improvements to be supported by the program must occur after the grant has been approved and prior to reimbursement, unless otherwise approved with special consideration by the DSP.

### **Eligible Boundary**

Include: The currently assessed boundary of the Downtown Spokane Business Improvement District as outlined in the City of Spokane Municipal Code, Section 04.31.020 BID Boundaries.

[BID Boundaries Map](#)

### **Completed Application**

A completed application form is required from each applicant (building owner or tenant) requesting a façade grant. The application must be returned to the DSP electronically through the online portal on our website, along with the required supplementary application documents, which include:

1. Statement of reason: a brief summary of the project the grant will support.
2. Verification of a completed or requested CPTED assessment by an accredited Downtown Ambassador.
3. Estimates from the vendor, contractor or business likely to do the façade improvements or repairs.
4. Detailed project budget outlining all costs to complete the work, financing/sources of funds to complete the project, and timeline for improvements in a single document.
5. Drawings and/or description of the improvements to be completed (if available).
6. Photos of the building/façade.

### **Selection Process**

The goal of the façade grant program is to improve the aesthetic of areas of downtown that face challenges associated with vacant and underutilized properties.

An internal review panel of the DSP will review each application and make award decisions. Prioritization is given to façade improvements based on the following accumulated criteria:

1. Projects in developing areas of the BID
2. Projects that support small business retention and expansion in the BID.
3. Projects that make significant visual enhancements to the aesthetic and look of the street-facing portion of the property or business
4. Priority will be given to support minority, immigrant, veteran, or women-owned enterprises.





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5. Projects in areas with high motor vehicle and pedestrian visibility.
6. Projects with façade improvements with high quality design and/or value based on recognized professional standards or best practices.
7. Projects that offer the potential for job creation.
8. Projects that align with design standards established for a neighborhood, when applicable, which may include historic preservation.
9. Projects that support existing businesses or project where new users are committed.
10. Projects where the entire construction budget is viable (if the full project requires additional capital, those sources are identified, secured or being pursued).
11. Projects that incorporate design elements to prevent crime such as but not limited to nighttime lighting, windows looking onto streets and parking lots, etc.
12. Projects that have a clear completion timeline and can be completed within a year.

### **Grant Awards**

The Small Business Façade Enhancement Program will reimburse up to \$5,000 of the total project costs upon full completion of the approved renovation. The project applicant is responsible for 100% of the construction costs before requesting reimbursement. Project costs incurred before the grant award may not be eligible for reimbursement, so please do not begin construction prior to applying for the program or receiving notification of award. Final award amounts will be determined at the discretion of the review committee. The maximum contribution awarded per address is \$5,000.

### **Receiving the Grant**

If awarded, the DSP underwrites a grant agreement for the recipient. An initial meeting with the DSP and the award recipient is encouraged to ensure clear understanding of the responsibilities of all parties. The award recipient is required to give regular updates throughout the completion process. After the project is complete to satisfaction of all parties, and only upon receipt of proof of payment documentation (paid invoices and cancelled checks), the DSP will issue the reimbursement funds.

### **Application Related Dates**

**Application Period:** Once applications are open, they will remain open until the total of funds dedicated to 2024 (\$30,000) is exhausted. An internal review panel consisting of DSP staff will review applications on an ongoing basis.

**Award Announcements:** Award announcements will be communicated via e-mail, phone or regular mail within 2 business days of grant approval.

**Post-Award Project Timeline:** Once awarded, projects typically follow the below sequence in order to complete the project and receive the reimbursement of funds:





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1. Award communicated;
2. Pull permits and order materials;
3. Begin construction;
4. Complete project
5. Submitted reimbursement request with contractor invoices and/or proof of payment
6. Grant Reimbursement Completed.

Grantees have until 11:59pm on June 1, 2025 to complete projects, and until June 30, 2025 to show proof of project expenses to be awarded reimbursement monies. Failure to do so may result in retraction of grant awards at the discretion of the DSP.

Address questions and return completed application electronically. Contact Kevin Campbell, Business Relations Coordinator at [kcampbell@downtownspokane.org](mailto:kcampbell@downtownspokane.org).

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