

Maple Avenue Façade Improvement Grant Program

The City of Burlington will administer a Façade Improvement Grant Program. This matching grant initiative is aimed at encouraging and assisting currently operating business and property owners within the Maple Avenue Corridor to restore and improve the appearance of their storefronts.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- To encourage private, non-residential investment that enhances the visual aesthetics of Burlington’s Maple Avenue Corridor and leads to increased property values.
- To stimulate economic development through financial incentives to existing business owners to ensure business sustainability and to create aesthetically pleasing areas to attract new businesses and consumers.
- To preserve and beautify the Maple Avenue Corridor.

MAP OF ELIGIBLE AREA (Census Tracts 208.02, 208.01, 202)



GRANT DISBURSEMENT

The Façade Improvement Grant Program offers 75% of project expenses up to \$10,000. Minimum total project cost is \$1,000.00. For example:

- Expenses of \$1,000 → Granted \$750.00; \$250.00 Tenant/Owner Contribution
- Expenses of \$2,000 → Granted \$1,500.00; \$500.00 Tenant/Owner Contribution
- Expenses of \$5,000 → Granted \$3,750.00; \$1,250.00 Tenant/Owner Contribution

Grants are available on a first come, first served basis to eligible program participants that have an average of 25 points on the Score Sheet. Funds will be disbursed directly to the contractor once the project has been completed and all paper work has been completed. Applicants can only request one project per year.

ELIGIBLE IMPROVEMENTS

City staff may work with the applicant to include other elements to achieve a more comprehensive improvement/benefit for the corridor. Please note that improvements must have a life expectancy of a minimum of 5 years. Façade improvements include, but are not limited to:

- **Repairs, restoration, and/or re-painting of building exteriors**
- **Building Signage as per code/overlay requirements**
- **Exterior lighting for facades and signage**
- **Awning/ canopy installation**
- **Restoration of architectural details that highlights the building's historic nature**
- **Front door and impact window replacement**
- **Code Violations related to the exterior of the building**
- **Demolition of non-conforming signs**
- **Landscaping on a case-by-case basis**

As a note, eligible buildings will have an existing commercial or industrial occupancy. If more than one freestanding building exists on the property, each building that contains a separate business and meets the requirements listed is eligible for the grant. For multi-tenant buildings, the project must be for the entire building to be eligible for grant funding.

INELIGIBLE IMPROVEMENTS:

The following are not eligible improvements for this program:

- **New construction**
- **Interior renovations**
- **Refinancing existing debts**
- **Costs associated with security systems**
- **General Maintenance**
- **Payroll**
- **Billboards**
- **Work that principally involves routine maintenance, such as window cleaning**
- **Other work deemed inconsistent with the program objectives or Maple Avenue Corridor Plan as noted by the Façade Improvement Program Committee.**

APPLICATIONS WILL BE RECEIVED ON A ROLLING BASIS UNTIL ALL FUNDS ARE AWARDED (\$100,000)

THE PROCESS

Applications must be submitted before the project begins. Applications are reviewed and approved by the Façade Improvement Program Committee. This review process takes approximately 30-60 days after the application has been submitted.

During the processing time, application documentation will be verified, as well as area eligibility verified. Each project will be scored by each Façade Improvement Program Committee member. In order to be selected, the project must have an average minimum score of 25.

Once approved and selected, the owner/tenant, contractor and Economic Development staff will have a pre-construction meeting. During this meeting, the scope of work will be verified and a contract/promissory note will be signed. Additionally, the contractor will sign a Notice To Proceed, detailing the approximate start and end dates.

Contractors will be paid by the City of Burlington upon completion of the work and submission of all final paperwork. All work must be performed by a licensed general contractor where necessary, permitted/inspected, and completed within 180 working days of the application's approval. If the work is unable to be completed within the designated time frame, a written request must be submitted to the Economic Development Department prior to the expiration of the 180 working days time frame.

HOW TO APPLY

Applications can be filled out online at: www.burlingtonnc.gov

Or, you may contact the Economic Development office, at 336-222-5147 or pbishop@burlingtonnc.gov to have an application mailed to you.

PROCUREMENT REQUIREMENTS

Following approval by the City of Burlington, the applicant will be responsible for securing estimates for all work to be completed under the project. Prospective estimates should contain a copy of the approved design details/construction drawings, detailed construction specifications, and façade grant contract conditions (i.e. current prevailing wage rate determination, licensing requirements, etc.). A minimum of three estimates is required for all work to be completed. Estimates should be broken down by line item in accordance with the approved construction specifications.

The following federal procurement requirements shall apply:

- Under the small purchases method (up to \$150,000), grantees send a request for estimates to potential contractors with a detailed description of the goods or services needed. In return, grantees receive competitive written estimates from 3 qualified sources.
- The award shall be made to the lowest, responsive and responsible source.
- Documentation of the estimates shall be provided to City staff.

- It is recommended to send a request for estimates to at least one MWBE business; and, one Section 3 business, unless circumstances make this impossible. An MWBE/Section 3 form will need to be submitted.
- Contractors shall comply with all Davis Bacon Labor Standards.

DESIGN STANDARDS

Members of the City of Burlington’s Planning Department will review each project application prior to approval to ensure the project is consistent with city ordinances. Projects must be consistent with the city’s Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). Recommended improvements shall seek to maintain the architectural integrity of the building and, to the extent possible, shall seek to promote cohesiveness and compatibility of the commercial corridor. Recommended signage and landscaping improvements shall be consistent with the recommended façade improvements and the overall theme for the corridor/district. All recommended improvements shall be compatible with the City of Burlington’s standards that apply to the areas, taking into consideration the City of Burlington’s UDO with regards to setback, height, signage, and other elements.

MAPLE AVENUE CORRIDOR FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT GRANT CONDITIONS

1. Project shall be located in the Maple Avenue Corridor in Census Tracts designated as low-to-moderate income by HUD. (To determine if your property is in an eligible census tract, please contact the Economic Development Department.)
2. Existing buildings only --- NOT for new construction.
3. Project shall be constructed in accordance with the Scope of Work.
4. Budget shall be based upon 3 estimates.
5. Project plans/specifications/drawings shall be attached to the application.
6. Grant Funds will be disbursed in an amount not to exceed \$10,000.00 as match to the project’s budget upon completion of the project. Funds will not be disbursed until the following has been provided:
 - a. All invoices pertaining to the project
 - b. Evidence of all closed permits
 - c. Inspection performed by the City’s Rehab Specialist
 - d. Dated before and after photos submitted to the Community Development Administrator
 - e. Release of Liens
 - f. If applicable, written permission of building owner.
7. Work shall be done in accordance with the State of North Carolina Building Code and City of Burlington Codes/Corridor Overlay. Applicant is responsible for obtaining any permits and/or approvals required prior to construction.
8. Work shall commence within 30 days of permit issuance from the City of Burlington.
9. Work is required to be completed within 180 days from the noticed date of approval by the Economic Development Department, or the grant approval will become null.

10. All documents are to be provided to the Economic Development Department within 15 days of work completion.
11. Requests for extension of the 180-day timeline will be reviewed by the Façade Improvement Program Committee and may be granted under certain circumstances. Extension requests must be submitted in writing to the Economic Development Department at least 30 days prior to the 180-day expiration date.
12. Upon completion of the project, applicant is required to maintain the improvements for a minimum period of 5 years from the completion date.