



Village of Germantown Hills Business Community Improvement Program

Economic Development Council
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Program Summary

Program Objective:

- Restoring, substantially beautifying, or enhancing the facade of a commercial building to make a positive impact to our community.

Eligible Applicants:

- Property owners of commercial structures within the Village of Germantown Hills.
- Tenants of commercial structures within the Village of Germantown Hills with written consent of the property owner.

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General Intentions and Guidelines:

- This program is intended to assist property owners or tenants with improvements or restorations of the aesthetics and architectural appearance of a complete building facade. The program is not intended for repairs or maintenance activities.
- The Program is intended to assist projects that promote retail activities, create an attractive environment, encourage neighborhood character and architectural design, use quality materials, and incorporate good design concepts. Projects meeting these objectives are eligible for a grant for up to one half the cost of facade improvements.
- The Program is intended to assist small private businesses. Property owners of service or commercial/mixed use structures and building tenants, with leases of more than one year in length, are eligible for funding.
- The funds may be used to restore the historical appearance of a building or to rehabilitate, enhance, or beautify the structure. Eligible items include uncovering and restoring historical façades, removing existing façade materials and replacing them with more appropriate and attractive designs and materials, and other detailing which leads to a substantially enhanced appearance. Although not eligible for funding on their own, the following may be funded as part of a more comprehensive façade improvement: windows, doors, exterior cleaning, tuck pointing, painting, exterior lighting, shutters, gutters, awnings, and historical architectural elements. The Program will only fund projects that significantly improve the visual appearance of the whole facade of the property from the street.

Projects will be reviewed and approved using the following criteria:

- The architectural or historical significance of the building.
- The impact of the project on the attractiveness of the building, the streetscape, and the surrounding area.
- The architectural quality of the design proposal
- All work performed must meet all applicable building and zoning codes and specifications.
- Projects must begin within three (3) months of grant approval and be completed no later than six (6) months (extensions may be considered on a case by case basis) after approval of the grant.
- One grant per applicant per building within a calendar year will be considered.
- Upon receipt of proof of completed work and that contractors have been paid, grant funds will be paid directly to the party submitting the application. Written confirmation of these items and photograph of completed project required.

Eligible Improvements:

- Exterior cleaning, painting, and/or paint removal
- Masonry repair and repainting
- Repair and replacement of architectural details or materials
- Window replacement or repair
- Rehabilitation or compatible reconstruction of storefronts
- Repair or rehabilitation of historic signage or new signage
- Removal of inappropriate or out-of-date signage
- New awnings or the rehabilitation of existing awnings
- Removal and replacement of siding and exterior slip covers (surfaces)
- Lighting and Landscaping improvements
- Parking lot paving

The above list provides examples. All projects are subject to the discretion of the Economic Development Council and the Village Board.

Ineligible Expenditures:

- Professional design, engineering, or architectural fees
- Improvements made prior to grant approval
- Interior rehabilitation or decoration
- Parking lot spot repairs and roof improvements
- Refinancing of existing debt
- Inventory and equipment
- Sweat equity (payments of applicant's own labor)
- General periodic maintenance
- General business operations expenses (payroll, taxes, utilities, etc.)

Grant Amount:

- The Program will pay Business Community Improvement grants up to fifty percent (50%) of the cost of the planned project, or \$5,000, whichever is less. Each fiscal year a minimum of \$5,000 will be available for a Business Community Improvement Grant. Additional funds may be allocated each year once the Village budget is determined.
- Applications are considered in the order in which they are received.

Application Process:

- Complete Grant Application Form in full must be submitted, including the necessary description of the scope of work, photographs of the facade as it now appears, drawings/sketches of proposed changes, and proposed budget. All forms are to be submitted to the Village of Germantown Hills Economic Development Council (EDC)
- Meet with the EDC to discuss plans. After a review of plans, the committee will make a recommendation to the Village Board for approval or denial. The applicant will be notified, in writing, of the Village board's decision.
- The applicant is responsible for obtaining the required permit(s) from the Village of Germantown Hills prior to work being done.
- Work must begin within three (3) months and be completed within six (6) months of approval (extensions may be considered on a case by case basis). **Applicant must have grant approval prior to starting the project.** Submit a financial summary report, copies of invoices and waivers of lien from contractors (and subcontractors, if applicable). Funds will be dispersed only after verification that the work has been completed in accordance with the contract.
- The Village of Germantown Hills and the EDC reserve the right to cancel this agreement in the event of failure to comply with this process and schedule.

PLEASE NOTE: THERE CAN BE NO CHANGES TO DESIGNS WITHOUT PRIOR VILLAGE BOARD APPROVAL.