



Façade Improvement Grant Program



Façade Improvement at 839 Conner Street

Table of Contents

Program Overview	3
Program Objectives	3
Eligibility Requirements	3
Program Boundaries	3
Available Funding	4
Program Guidelines	5
Eligible Improvements and Expenses	6
Application Process	10
Timeline	11
Other Programs	12
Project Partners	13
List of Appendices	14
Grant Application Checklist	15
Mural Program Guidelines	16
Before & After Façade Improvements	17

Program Overview

The City of Noblesville’s Façade Improvement Grant Program is designed to stimulate investment, promote architectural appreciation and initiate aesthetic improvements to historic buildings in Noblesville. The program is administered by the City’s Department of Economic Development whose staff members will work directly with applicants during the grant application process. All completed applications will be reviewed by a five-member Façade Grant Review Committee before being approved for funding.

Program Objectives

The primary objectives of the Façade Improvement Grant Program are to:

- Stimulate investment through preservation, rehabilitation and restoration of historic commercial buildings by offering financial and limited technical assistance for façade improvements;
- Maintain and expand the contribution of historic buildings in the City to Noblesville’s economy by providing a pleasing and aesthetically acceptable historic atmosphere that attracts new businesses and consumers;
- Promote architectural appreciation through maintenance and rehabilitation of historic Noblesville properties using practices that conserve the existing building stock and encourage the maintenance of historic or distinct architectural features; and to
- Initiate aesthetic improvements by helping to offset the cost of rehabilitation of an existing façade or creation of a façade that is architecturally consistent with the fabric of our historic city.

Preservation:

Protecting a historic building in its present date from further deterioration or damage.

Rehabilitation:

Adapting a historic building for modern use.

Restoration:

Accurately depicting a historic building as it appeared at a particular time period by removing and/or reconstructing features from other time periods.

Eligibility Requirements

To participate in the Façade Improvement Grant Program, an eligible property must:

- Be located within the corporate limits of the City of Noblesville
 - (see Program Boundaries section for map)
- Have commercial activity as its primary purpose, including but not limited to traditional retail and specialty shops, services, restaurants, and bars, live entertainment, cultural venues, galleries and professional offices.
- Not be delinquent in property taxes, City liens or fines or have any outstanding code compliance issues. This requirement applies to both property and applicant.

Program Boundaries

All eligible properties must be located within the corporate limits of the City of Noblesville. An up-to-date map can be found on the City of Noblesville’s website by [clicking here](#).

Available Funding

The City of Noblesville offers three different grants to assist commercial property and business owners in the City of Noblesville. Available funding includes a Small Projects Grant, a Substantial Façade Improvement Grant and an Architectural Design Assistance Grant. If you are unsure which grant is right for your property, please contact the Department of Economic Development. The Central Business District will receive priority funding.

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis and are due the last business day of each month to be considered at the following months meeting. Grant recipients will be notified within 30 days of the monthly application deadline.

Architectural Design Assistance Grants do not follow the above submittal date and may be applied for at any time.

Small Projects Grant

A 50% reimbursement of total approved actual project costs up to a maximum of \$2,500 per business/building owner (\$5,000 total project cost).

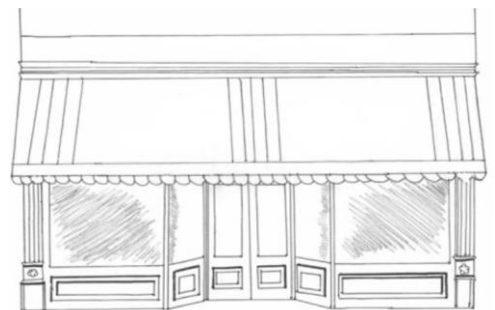
This grant is available to property and business owners with street-level businesses with a storefront presence. Tenants must provide written permission of building owners. Funding is available for a range of small projects including but not limited to the restoration, repair and/or removal of outdated and inappropriate exterior fixtures— to include signage, awnings and lighting and replacement of said with appropriate styles.

Additionally, building murals are also eligible for reimbursement. For the purposes of this program, a mural is a piece of art made of paint, tile or other material applied directly to the exterior surface of a wall that is visible from a public place. See Appendix B for more information regarding murals as small projects.

Primary (front-facing) façades, double façades on corner buildings, and façades that are clearly visible from the public right of way are eligible for funding. Total project costs must meet or exceed \$1,000 (for a minimum grant of \$500) to be considered for funding. Each business/building owner may apply and receive funding up to two times a year or until the maximum match has been reached, whichever comes first. Potential applicants may apply for funding each year. All improvements must comply with local and state ordinances and codes as well as follow the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings*. See pages 6-9 for a complete list of improvements and expenses eligible for funding.

"The storefront is usually the most prominent feature of a historic commercial building, playing a crucial role in a store's advertising and merchandising strategy."

[The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties]



Substantial Façade Improvement Grant

A 50% reimbursement of total approved project costs up to a maximum of \$25,000 per building (\$50,000 total

project cost). This grant is available to both building and business owners (tenants) for permanent aesthetic exterior improvements, exterior rehabilitation and/or extensive restoration of significant portions of a building's façade. Tenants must provide written permission of building owners. Eligible work may include window and door repair, cornice repair, exterior surface cleaning and painting, masonry repair, and other substantial improvements. Primary (front-facing) façades, double façades on corner buildings, and façades which are clearly visible from the public right of way are eligible for funding. Each building may receive funding only once a year. All improvements must comply with local and state ordinances and codes as well as follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation for the Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings. See pages 6-9 for a complete list of improvements and expenses eligible for funding.

Architectural Design Assistance

A 100% reimbursable grant up to \$500 per project is available for the cost of professional design services associated with the rehabilitation of commercial building exteriors. To receive reimbursement, the design must be used in an actual project. It may be used in conjunction with either the Small Projects grant or the Substantial Façade Improvement Grant. See page 9 for a complete list of expenses eligible for funding.

Program Guidelines

Start of Work: Work related to a Façade Improvement Grant cannot begin until authorized by the Program Administrator. Funds spent before grant approval do not qualify as matching funds and are not eligible for reimbursement.

Distribution of Grant Money: Funds will be allocated on a *first come, first serve* basis according to the date of application and subject to the availability of budgeted funds. Additionally, priority will be given to buildings within the Downtown District Boundary.

Changes to Project Plans: Any unapproved changes to project plans will void the grant and result in nonpayment of funds. If recipient decides to change the project after approval, the must immediately contact the Economic Development Department for additional project review. Funding awards cannot be increased after notification of the initial award.

Ownership of Property: If the applicant is not the owner of the building, written consent detailing the intended improvements must be obtained from the legal owner and submitted with the application. No grants will be awarded to government-owned properties. Non-profit organizations are not excluded from applying for grant funds; however, priority will be given to privately-owned commercial or mixed-use buildings.

Cost Estimates (Bids): The applicant is required to obtain in writing *two* preliminary cost estimates for all eligible improvements for which funding is being requested. The bids should be itemized for each portion of the improvement project (signage, exterior painting, window repair, etc.). The Economic Development Department reserves the right to request additional bids at any time. All improvements that are not eligible for the Façade Improvement Grant Program should be bid separately. The bids submitted to the Program

Administrator shall include only those improvements that are eligible for grant assistance. Bids must be made from the same scope of work by each contractor. Projects that are approved for funding will be based on the lowest of the bids; however, the applicant may select and of the submitted bidders to construct the improvement if the applicant chooses to pay the higher cost.

Labor by Applicant: The applicant may be capable of doing certain types of labor. After consultation with the applicant, if the Program Administrator determines that the applicant is qualified to perform the approved work, the applicant will be notified. All mechanical work such as electrical, plumbing and heating must be completed by a licensed contractor. The applicant must submit an itemized, written cost estimate for the work to be completed. In addition, the applicant must obtain and submit two written bids as required for all eligible improvements for which the applicant is requesting funding. ***Applicant labor may only account for 25% of the applicant's required match.***

Permits & Fees: The grant recipient is responsible for obtaining any required local and/or state permits. Additional information on permits is available on the [City of Noblesville's Planning Department website](#). City permits related to façade work will not be assessed fees. State permit fees may be required and are not eligible for grant funding.

In Addition:

- All construction management shall be the responsibility of the applicant.
- Project costs are not to include the acquisition of real estate property.

Eligible Improvements and Expenses

Design Review

All applications are evaluated by the Façade Grant Review Committee, who follows the advisory direction of the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings* ([available here](#)) and the *Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* ([available here](#)).

All projects seeking grant funding should follow these standards and guidelines. All projects are subject to approval by the Review Committee who may approve or deny portions of each application and accept the altered project without resubmission.

In addition, each grant is available for a specific set of improvements or related expenses. On the following pages you will find a listing of project expenses that may be eligible for funding and those that are ineligible. If you are unsure, please ask the Program Administrator in the Economic Development Department for clarification.

Small Projects Grant

Eligible Improvements & Expenses

- **Signage** - The restoration of historic signs and the design, construction and installation of new signs approved by the City and in conformance with the City's sign ordinance and the Municipal Code. May also include the removal of non-conforming or unused signs.

- **Awnings** - Canvas awnings with or without signage. Also includes canopies, marquees, and railings where historically and/or architecturally appropriate. May also include the removal of non-conforming or unused awnings and canopies.
- **Lighting** - Restoration, replacement, or new construction of historically and/or architecturally sensitive decorative lighting fixtures for the exterior of the building.
- **Hardscapes** - Hardscapes such as trellis work and fixtures permanently adhered to the façade of the building may be considered on a case by case basis if they are part of a larger design scheme.
- **Other Small Projects** - Miscellaneous small projects that fall beneath the funding limit of \$5,000 may include window and door repair or replacement, exterior surface cleaning and painting, and small detail work.
- **Murals** - A piece of art made of paint, tile or other material applied directly to the exterior surface of a wall that is visible from a public place. See Appendix B for additional details.

Ineligible Improvements & Expenses

- **Inappropriate Materials and Treatments** - Including but not limited to the installation of aluminum or vinyl siding and the use of sandblasting.
- **Interior Improvements** - Including restoration or rehabilitation work, interior window coverings, and interior window displays.
- **Site Improvements** - Including paving, fencing and improved pedestrian amenities such as sidewalks or benches.
- **Landscaping** - Including but not limited to street trees, shrubbery, raised planers, planting areas, irrigation systems or any other plant materials.
- **Electrical Work** - Except as related to appropriate signage or exterior lighting.
- **Security Systems**
- **Personal Property** - The purchase and installation of furnishings, equipment, or other personal property which does not transfer ownership as part of the real estate.
- **Permits & Fees** - Any local and/or state permitting costs or fees.

Substantial Façade Improvement Grant

Eligible Improvements & Expenses

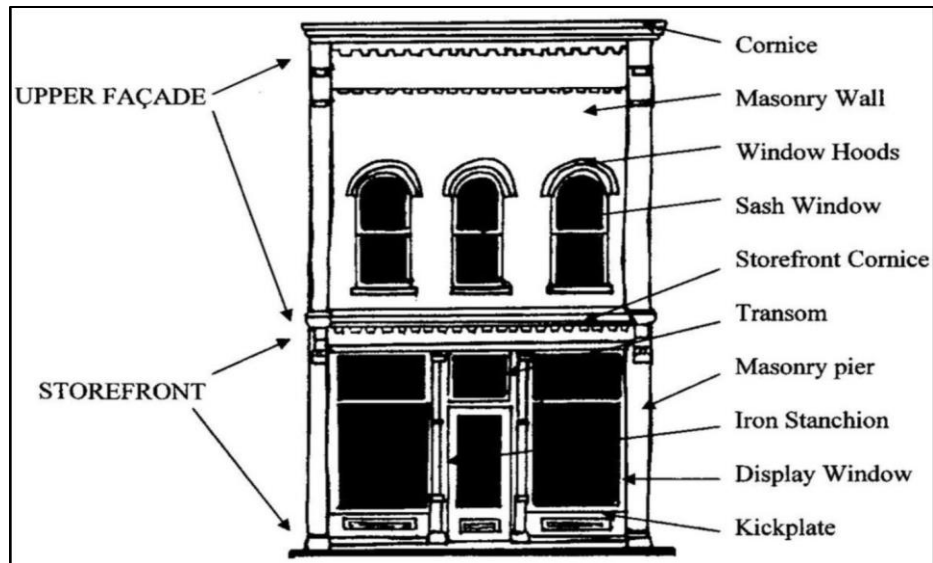
- **Doors and Windows**— Repair, restoration, replacement and installation of doors and windows, frames, railings, sills, glazing or glass, including storefront display windows. Restoration or reconstruction of original store-front entrance, as well as original window openings, is encouraged.
- **Exterior Wall Finishes**— Cleaning, repairing, or repainting building exterior surfaces, including brick, stone, wood, cast iron, tile, stucco or other similar exterior finishes and decorative treatments. All exterior wall finishes and improvements will be compatible to the architectural style of the building,

and color schemes shall accent the building and harmonize with adjacent buildings.

- **Cornices and Decorative Detailing** – Repairing or replacing cornices and other decorative detailing.
- **Hardscapes** – Hardscapes such as trellis work and fixtures permanently adhered to the façade of the building may be considered on a case by case basis if they are part of a larger design scheme.
- **Roof and Chimney Repairs** – Such repairs may only be eligible for funding when façade work is included in the project proposal and performed concurrently. Roof and chimney costs may not exceed 25% of the total project cost.
- **Structural Reinforcement** – As necessary to rehabilitate the façade(s) and/or roof and chimneys. Costs associated with structural reinforcement may not exceed 25% of the total project cost.
- **Signage, Awnings & Lighting** – See the Small Projects Grant for more details. ***The total cost of improvements for signage, awnings and lighting together may not exceed \$5,000 (the limit for the Small Projects Grant).*** The balance of the cost of improvements must be applied to other portions of the façade(s), roof and chimneys, and/or structural reinforcement.
- **Other Repairs** - Repairs and other exterior improvements that may improve the aesthetic quality and historic integrity of the building.

Ineligible Improvements & Expenses

- **Inappropriate Materials and Treatments** – Including but not limited to the installation of aluminum or vinyl siding and the use of sandblasting.
- **Interior Improvements** – Including restoration or rehabilitation work, interior window coverings, and interior window displays.
- **Site Improvements** – Including paving, fencing and improved pedestrian amenities such as sidewalks or benches.
- **Landscaping** – Including but not limited to street trees, shrubbery, raised planters, planting areas, irrigation systems or any other plant materials.
- **Electrical Work** – Except as related to appropriate signage or exterior lighting.
- **Security Systems**
- **Personal Property** – The purchase and installation of furnishings, equipment, or other personal property which does not transfer ownership as part of the real estate.
- **Permits & Fees** – Any local and/or state permitting costs or fees.



Architectural Design Assistance

Eligible Expenses

Design fees, concept drawings, façade drawings, floor plans, specifications and professional consultation by a licensed architect or design professional.

Ineligible Expenses

- Any construction costs.
- Any local and/or state permitting costs or fees.

Application Process

Pre-Application Meeting

All potential applicants are required to meet with the Program Administrator prior to application submission.

Kayla Arnold, Community Engagement Manager; karnold@noblesville.in.us

Application Submission

In addition to the completed Façade Improvement Grant Application, all applications must include:

- Current photographs of the property to be improved (at least one photograph per façade).
- Historic photographs of the property to be improved, when available. Historic photographs of properties in Noblesville and Hamilton County may be obtained from the Roberts Collection at the Hamilton East Public Library in Noblesville (317-773-1384) and from the Brooks Collection at the Hamilton County Historical Society (317-770-0775).
- Written description of current condition of the building including any significant maintenance issues.
- Detailed project plans and specifications, including a written description of improvements to be made indicating project materials, finishes and colors to be used.
- Samples of all materials and surface applications to be used in the rehabilitation (i.e. paint, awning color/material, and any other finishes or treatments). Samples can usually be obtained from the manufacturer, distributor, or retailer.
- Copies of receipts or other documentation showing personal property, business property and real estate taxes paid in full is required to be eligible for program funding and is to be submitted with completed application. If unable to provide receipts, documentation may be obtained by the applicant from the Hamilton County Treasurer's Office (317-776-9620).
- Bid/Estimate Summary Sheet and two preliminary construction or contractor cost estimates/bids in writing, itemized for each portion of the project.
- Or: Itemized cost estimate for work to be completed by applicant; and, Bid/Estimate Summary Sheet with two additional cost estimates/bids in writing for all eligible improvements for which the applicant is not doing the work.

Application Deadline:

Applications are due the last business day of each month to the Economic Development Department to be considered at the following months meeting.

Architectural Design Assistance Grants follow the above submittal date.

Applications should be submitted to:

Noblesville Economic Development Department

City Hall c/o Kayla Arnold
16 S 10th Street, Suite 275
Noblesville, IN 46060

Timeline

- **Application Received:** Department of Economic Development receives completed application and all supplemental materials by the applicable due date.
- **Design Review:** Application is evaluated by the Façade Grant Review Committee. See above (*Eligible Improvements & Expenses*) for more information.
- **Design Approval:** The Façade Grant Review Committee may approve or deny portions of any application and accept the altered project without resubmission.
- **Notification of Award:** Grant recipients will be notified approximately 30 days after the application deadline.
- **Façade Improvement Agreement Signed:** A Façade Improvement Agreement is signed by the City and the grantee to verify the approved Scope of Work and reimbursement amount.
- **Maintenance Agreement Signed:** Grant recipient signs a Maintenance Agreement consenting to maintain the improved property for 2 years (3 years for Mural Grants) from the date of receiving grant funding.
- **Grant Program Recognition:** Upon notification of receipt of the grant, each building/business owner is required to display a sign, provided by the City, stating the project was partially funded by a grant from the City of Noblesville's Façade Improvement Grant Program. This sign shall be displayed in a prominent location on or near the front façade of the project building during the duration of construction and for three (3) months after project completion, at which time the sign shall be returned to the Department of Economic Development. Failure to return the sign will result in deduction of the cost of the sign from the reimbursement amount.
- **Work Commences:** All façade improvements must be started within 60 days of project approval.
- **Work Completed:** All façade improvements must be completed within 6 to 12 months of project approval, depending on the project/grant size. A 6 month extension may be granted with demonstrated hardship.
- **Inspection:** All façade improvements must be inspected by the Program Administrator and certified by building inspectors to verify work has been completed according to the Façade Improvement Agreement.
- **Submission of Final Documentation:** "After" photos and paid invoices itemizing all eligible costs are submitted to the Department of Economic Development for verification by the Program Administrator.
- **Reimbursement:** After all work has been completed, funds will be dispersed. Funds may be distributed in phases depending upon project cost and funding circumstances. These factors will be analyzed, administered on a case by case basis and incorporated into the Façade Improvement Agreement.

Other Programs

Some restoration and rehabilitation projects qualify for additional financial assistance through other grant programs and the federal Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credit (RITC) program. The rehabilitation of certified historic structures may qualify for a tax credit of 20% when completed. For further information on other opportunities please contact the following agencies:

Technical Preservation Services

National Park Service
1849 C Street NW, Mail Stop 7243
Washington, DC 20240
Phone: (202) 513-7270
Email: NPS_TPS@nps.gov
Website: <https://www.nps.gov/tps/tax-incentives/application.htm>

Indiana Landmarks

1201 Central Avenue
Indianapolis, IN 46202
Phone: (317) 639-4534
Email: info@indianalandmarks.org
Website: <https://www.indianalandmarks.org/>

Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs

1 N. Capitol Avenue #600
Indianapolis, IN 46204
Phone: (317) 233-3762
Website: www.in.gov/ocra

Project Partners

This project was completed by the Center for Historic Preservation at Ball State University for the City of Noblesville, Indiana. The Center for Historic Preservation is the outreach arm of the Graduate Program in Historic Preservation in the Department of Architecture, College of Architecture and Planning. For this project, the Center provided the services of a graduate assistant, Chris Pratt, under the direction of Assistant Director Susan Lankford and Interim Center Director Duncan Campbell. Special thanks go to the building and business owners of 808 W. Logan Street and 823 & 829 Conner Street.



List of Appendices

- A. Grant Application Checklist
- B. Mural Program Guidelines
- C. Completed Façade Improvements with Pictures

Appendix A: Grant Application Checklist

Submit all application material to the Economic Development Department by the last Friday of the month. Please submit, along with this checklist:

- **Completed Façade Improvement Grant Application** with all necessary information and signatures, including building owner consent (if applicant is not the legal owner).
- **Current photographs** of the property to be improved (at least one photograph per façade).
- **Historic photographs** of the property to be improved, when available.
- **Written description of the current condition** of the building including any significant maintenance issues.
- **Detailed project plans and specifications**, including a written description of improvements to be made indication project materials, treatments, finishes and colors to be used.
- **Samples of all materials and surface applications** to be used in the rehabilitation (i.e. paint, awning color/material, and any other finishes or treatments).
- **Copies of receipts or other documentation showing all taxes paid.**
- **Bid/Estimate Summary Sheet and two preliminary cost estimates/bids** in writing by contractors of construction, itemized for each portion of the project.
- **OR**
- **Itemized cost estimate** for work to be completed by applicant.
 - **AND**
 - **Bid/Estimate Summary Sheet and two additional cost estimates/bids** in writing by contractors of construction for all eligible improvements for which the applicant is not doing the work.

Appendix B: Mural Program Guidelines and Checklist

For the purposes of this program, a mural is a piece of art made of paint, tile or other material applied directly to the exterior surface of a wall that is visible from a public place. Murals do not contain any protrusions greater than one half (1/2) inch and murals are a minimum size of 10 feet by 7 feet. Murals cannot contain any forms of advertising.

Murals are eligible for a 50% reimbursement of total approved actual project costs up to a maximum of \$2,500 per business/building owner (\$5,000 total project cost) at the rate of \$25 per square foot of artwork. Therefore, business and building owners are eligible for a reimbursement at \$12.50 per square foot up to \$2,500 for a \$5,000 mural.

Mural grants are limited to outdoor murals proposed on income-producing properties within the City of Noblesville (i.e. single family residences, churches and historic properties are not eligible).

Mural grants will be considered for original art and restorations of old or existing murals.

Mural art must be approved by the City of Noblesville and a representative from the Noblesville Arts Council. Please contact the program administrator for approval process.

Grantees are to maintain their properties for three (3) years per the Mural Maintenance Agreement.

Submit all application material to the Economic Development Department by the last Friday of the month. Please submit, along with this checklist:

- **Completed Façade Improvement Grant Application** with all necessary information and signatures, including building owner consent (if applicant is not the legal owner).
- **Cost Analysis Worksheet** itemizing the mural costs, documented by written estimates broken down in major categories such as paint and supplies, labor and equipment and safety.
- **Map and photograph** showing exactly where the proposed mural would be installed.
- **Drawing or depiction** of the proposed mural, detailing type, color, size, etc. of material to be used.
- **Installation and maintenance plan** describing your plan to safely and adequately install the mural.

Appendix C: Before & After Façade Improvements



Façade Improvement at 818 Logan Street

Before & After Façade Improvements



Façade Improvement at 2 N. 9th Street

Before & After Façade Improvements



Façade Improvement at 808 Logan Street