

## Binghamton Local Development Corporation - Commercial Façade Matching Grant Program

**Available funds:** \$500,000

**Minimum request:** \$1,000

**Maximum Request:** \$35,000, \$50,000 in Historic District

Requests between \$1,000 and \$7,500 can cover up to 75% of total expenditures

Requests between \$5,001 and \$35,000 (\$50,000 in Historic Districts) can cover up to 50% of total expenditures

Examples:

Grant Request	Property Owner Match	Total Project Cost	Grant as % of TPC
\$1,000	\$332	\$1,332	75%
\$3,000	\$1,000	\$4,000	75%
\$20,000	\$20,000	\$40,000	50%
\$50,000	\$50,000	\$100,000	50%

### What is the program?

The Commercial Façade Matching Grant Program is designed to support the revitalization of commercial corridors in the City of Binghamton by encouraging private investment that results in the improved appearance of buildings and properties. The program aims to enhance visual character, leading to an enriched perception of strategic commercial corridors and, ultimately, induce economic development through increased property values, tenant occupation, and business success.

The BLDC will be engaging an Architecture/Engineering firm to provide design, public bidding, contract administration and other architectural services for the Commercial Façade Matching Grant Program consisting of the improvement of business facades and the replacement of deteriorated or poor quality exterior façade, including but not limited to doors, windows, sidings, awnings, and commercial signs. Projects may require a combination of architectural services related to pre-construction, construction, and closeout phases of the project.

### Who is eligible for this program?

Property owners and multi-year commercial tenants with permission from property owners. Applicants must be up to date on taxes and have no active building/code violations or outstanding bills owed to the City of Binghamton. Multi-year tenants must have at least two years remaining on their lease. Preference will be given to tenants with at least five years remaining on their lease.

### What type of improvements are eligible for the grant?

Examples of eligible improvements are signs, awnings/canopies, façade improvements, removing and disposing of old façade coverings, removing excessive window signage, exterior lighting installation, and restoring building elements. Please note that this list is not exhaustive.

All improvements must comply with standards set forth in New York State Building Code, City of Binghamton's building construction and property maintenance codes, zoning ordinance, other guiding and statutory documents as appropriate, and any applicable federal rules or statutes. This includes applying for and receiving appropriate permits and approvals.

Property owners and multi-year commercial tenants of designated local landmarks or properties within a local historic district must ensure that any proposed façade alterations comply with the City of Binghamton's Historic Design Guidelines. Façade alterations proposed for designated local landmarks or properties within a local historic district must be reviewed by the City of Binghamton's Commission on Architecture and Urban Design.

If awarded, it is expected that grantees will attend at least one [pre-development meeting](#) prior to beginning work. These meetings are held weekly.

### **What type of improvements are not eligible for the grant?**

New construction, interior improvements, features designed to be installed temporarily including seasonal landscaping, permit fees and taxes, improvements made prior to grant approval, sweat equity payments (payments for "in-kind" labor performed by applicant), and improvements that are required as a result of a violation notice. Maintenance activities such as power-washing are not generally eligible unless included as part of a larger project (for instance, power washing a building to prepare for brick repointing).

### **Do I have to complete the work before I get paid?**

Yes, the applicant will incur 100% of the project costs and may receive reimbursement only after all improvements have been completed, documentation of incurred costs is received by BLDC staff, and a Certificate of Compliance (or other such documentation as may be required to document completion of work) is received by BLDC staff. For larger grants, progress payments may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

### **Can I apply for a grant if I am a commercial tenant and do not own my building?**

Yes, you will be required to provide a signed multi-year lease and written permission from the property owner to make the changes outlined in the project. Multi-year tenants must have at least two years remaining on their lease. Preference will be given to tenants with at least five years remaining on their lease.

### **How does the BLDC decide who is awarded funding?**

This grant is awarded on a rolling basis. Each month, the BLDC and City staff will evaluate applications against the evaluation criteria outlined in the application and make awards or request additional information from applicants at their monthly Board meeting.

Preference will be given to properties in BLDC-identified priority areas as outlined on the application.

The BLDC reserves the right to discontinue or modify funding for this program; however, all approved grants will be fulfilled as per contracted agreement.

**General Conditions:**

- It is expressly understood and agreed that the applicant shall be solely responsible for all safety conditions and compliance with all safety regulations, building codes, ordinances, and other applicable regulations.
- It is expressly understood and agreed that work completed prior to final approval is ineligible for funding.
- It is expressly understood and agreed that the applicant will not seek to hold the BLDC, the City of Binghamton, and/or its agents, employees, officers and/or directors liable for any property damage, personal injury, or other loss relating in any way to the Commercial Façade Matching Grant Program.
- The applicant shall maintain general liability insurance coverage in the amount of not less than one million dollars (\$1,000,000) and property damage insurance in an amount not less than fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) relating to work funded by the Commercial Façade Matching Grant Program. The Binghamton Local Development Corporation and each of its directors, officers, employees, agents, and representatives shall be named as additional insureds and certificate holders.
- If the applicant has paid employees, proof of workers compensation insurance coverage must be provided.
- The applicant agrees to maintain the property and improvements per the City of Binghamton Charter and New York State requirements, including, but not limited to, removing graffiti and trash, mowing grass, and shoveling the sidewalks of the property.
- The applicant agrees to return a pro-rated amount of the grant money received if the improvement is removed within two years.
- The applicant must begin the project within six months of being notified that they have been awarded the grant and must complete the façade project within twelve months of beginning the project.
- The applicant authorizes the BLDC to promote an approved grant, including but not limited to using photographs and descriptions of the business and/or business owner in BLDC and/or City of Binghamton materials and press releases. See attached "Image and Likeness" release form.
- The applicant has read and understands the "Binghamton Local Development Corporation - Commercial Façade Matching Grant Program" document outlining program guidelines and procedures.
- The applicant understands that the BLDC reserves the right to make changes in conditions of the Commercial Façade Matching Grant Program as warranted.