

Program Details

OVERVIEW

The City of Hardeeville's **Property Improvement Funding Assistance Program** provides grant funds to help finance exterior improvements to commercial or multi-family residential property that will be aesthetically pleasing and in compliance with all applicable zoning codes and design standards.

FUNDING

The program provides for a one-time reimbursement, **up to \$8,000 per property**. Only eligible property improvements will be considered for funding. The City's Board of Appearances is tasked with reviewing applications for funding assistance and awarding funds to successful applicants following a review of their proposed improvements. Funding is based on budget availability and should be considered on a "first come, first served" basis. Filing of an application does not guarantee funding. Applications must be submitted prior to commencement of any improvement work, the cost of which is sought to be reimbursed by this program. No grants will be awarded retroactively.

PROCESS

1. Pre-Application Meeting: The Applicant is required to meet with the Property Improvement Program Coordinator who will review the Applicant's plans per the program requirements to determine eligibility. The Coordinator will provide the Applicant with general guidance as to whether the proposed project is likely to qualify for program funding and whether the Applicant is sufficiently prepared to move forward to submit the application.

2. Submittal to Board of Appearances: Eligible applicants shall submit applications to the Program Coordinator no later than 12:00 p.m. Wednesday, November 7, 2018. Applications will be reviewed by the City's Board of Appearances at their regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, November 15, 2018 at 10:00 a.m. at City Hall. Applicants or a representative for the Applicant are required to attend the meeting in order to be considered for funding.

Applications will be reviewed based on funding availability and scoring criteria outlined in this packet. In addition to the application form, applications must also include any drawings, renderings, or sketches that will clearly illustrate to the Board the intent and extent of improvements being proposed. Paint chips are required for consideration in any application involving painting or stucco projects. These exhibits do not need to be fully designed or engineered at this point in the process. Applications will be reviewed for completeness and compliance with program criteria. Projects that do not comply with the program criteria and conditions will not be eligible for funding.

3. Submittal to Planning & Development: Upon approval of funding by the Board, Applicants shall have until Thursday, December 13, 2018 to submit to the Planning & Development department any additional detailed drawings, color schemes, and specifications of proposed improvements. Building improvements will require the seal and stamp of a design professional properly licensed in the State of South Carolina in the proper field(s) where improvements are being made. The Planning & Development department will require any relevant permits to be submitted for review and approval prior to commencing any work associated with this funding program.

4. Improvement Activities: All relevant work documented in the application shall be completed within 120 days of the issuance of approval of funding. Certain improvements may require inspections by City Staff or their designees. It is the responsibility of the applicant to schedule those inspections when required. The applicant may request one extension of up to 60 days in the event of unforeseen delays that were beyond the control of the applicant. All requests shall be forwarded to the Program Coordinator for consideration and approval.

Progress reports are required to be submitted by the 1st of each month to document progress of improvements approved by the Board of Appearances.

5. Completion: Once improvement activities are complete, the Program Coordinator will visit the project to ensure that it complies with the approved application. If the project is compliant, the City shall issue a Certificate of Completion and the applicant will then be provided with a one-time reimbursement for the approved amount.

PROCUREMENT

Applicants are strongly encouraged (but not restricted) to using in-town and locally-owned businesses. Any contractors and subcontractors must have a City of Hardeeville business license prior to performing the work. They must also have all relevant and up-to-date state-issued licenses that certify their particular scope of work.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible Applicants: Owners of commercial properties, owners of multi-family residential properties, AND owners of businesses that are located on commercial-use properties. Properties must 1) have at least one [1] structure that is clearly visible from a public right-of-way; 2) are located in Downtown Hardeeville within a 1.25 mile radius of Hardeeville City Hall; and 3) have no present property liens, delinquent taxes, or other restrictions that would prohibit improvements. In the event of a dispute, the Planning Director shall determine if a land use deems it to be a commercial-use property. Eligible properties must also be in compliance with all City Code requirements.

Only one (1) grant per property per fiscal year. When an entity owns multiple properties that are adjacent, applications for grant funding shall include a unified improvement plan.

Eligible Expenditures & Activities: Property improvement activities must involve the general upgrading of a property's external appearance. Grant funding is to be used for permanent exterior visual improvements. Funding may be used for repairs only if the repair work can be visually noticeable from a public right-of-way and it is deemed by the Board of Appearances to be a visual upgrade.

Eligible expenditures and activities include:

- masonry repairs and tuck-pointing
- stucco restoration
- repair/replace/preserve historically significant architectural details
- storefront reconstruction
- cornice repair & exterior trim work
- exterior painting and repairs to the finishes of original buildings
- new or replacement awnings and canopies
- surfacing (or resurfacing) and striping of parking areas visible from the right-of-way
- demolition of existing structures
- window/door repair or replacement
- permanent exterior signage
- permanent exterior lighting
- repair/replacement or installation of new gutters or down spouts
- side facades where improvements will serve to remove blight and are visible from the right-of-way
- fencing
- landscaping
- hardscape improvements

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

All work shall be completed in accordance with any applicable design guidelines in addition to all applicable local, state, and federal codes, rules, and regulations. Any renovation work undertaken prior to the issuance of relevant permits is not eligible for assistance under this program. Any improvement work outlined in the application that exceeds the approved financial assistance will be the responsibility of the applicant. Any improvement work that occurs concurrently that is not outlined in the application will be ineligible for funding. If applicants do not submit proper paperwork to the Planning & Development department within 30 days of the funding approval by the Board of Appearances, the application shall be considered void.

Reimbursements: All assistance is on a reimbursement basis following completion of the project. The total reimbursement for all forms of property improvement assistance shall not exceed the amount awarded for the project. Applicants who qualify for funding must document all expenditures and provide the City with proof of payment (receipts, paid invoices, etc.) for all eligible improvements within 30 days of completion. Upon receipt of the aforementioned documents and the issuance of a Certificate of Completion, the applicant shall be entitled to receiving a reimbursement check. Reimbursement checks will be issued by the City of Hardeeville.

Record-Keeping: All records supporting the costs and components of program-assisted improvements shall be maintained for a period not less than three (3) years following completion of the program agreement period, agreement termination, or default, whichever shall first occur.

Default: A receipt shall be considered in default and the balance of financial assistance immediately due and payable upon failure to properly maintain the property after improvements are completed, delinquent property taxes, or failure to operate in compliance with all applicable local, state, and federal codes, laws, and regulations.

Remedies of Default: The City may take whatever action at law, or in equity, as may appear necessary or desirable to collect any outstanding balance or to enforce the performance/observation of any other obligation/agreement of the recipient.

SCORING CRITERIA

The Board of Appearances will evaluate applications for eligibility and how effectively they meet the program criteria. The criteria areas are as follows:

Visual Impact

- Overall impact of the project for Downtown Hardeeville
- Improvement to the appearance of the site
- Consistency of proposed design with Downtown Design Guidelines
- Will serve as a catalyst for redevelopment

Financial Impact

- Amount of additional contribution to the project by the Applicant
- The project includes improvements being made to
 - Ensure and improve public safety
 - Establish or preserve building's structural integrity
 - Correct other serious safety issues
- The project is part of a larger effort to improve other exterior or interior parts of the building/property

DISCLOSURES

The Board of Appearances (BOA) expressly reserves the right to reject any and all applications or to request additional information from any and all Applicants and Grantees. The BOA retains the right to amend the program guidelines, agreements, and application procedures. The BOA also retains the right to display and advertise properties that receive funds under this program.

PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Katie Woodruff, Long-Range Division Manager
PO Box 609 (205 Main Street) / Hardeeville, SC 29927
Phone: 843-784-2231 / kwoodruff@cityofhardeeville.com

Application Checklist

- _____ ***Application Form***
- _____ ***Narrative (Briefly outlining the scope, size, intention, timeline, and objective of the proposed project)***
- _____ ***Color Photographs of the Site***
- _____ ***Owner's Affidavit***
- _____ ***Project Plans and Architectural Renderings***
- _____ ***Contractor's Bid/Estimates for all Proposed Work***
- _____ ***Material Samples, Paint Chips, and/or Specification Sheets (Pre-fabricated elements, signage, fixtures, materials, etc)***
- _____ ***List of Potential Vendors and Contractors***



Application

applicant name: _____ business: _____

phone #: _____ e-mail: _____

applicant is (circle all that apply): **business owner business manager property owner owner's agent other**

NOTE: if the applicant is not the property owner, please submit Owner Authorization (next page)

property street address: _____ Hardeeville, SC 29927

is property on a street corner? (circle one): **no yes**, and the other street is _____

building type on property (circle one): **single-unit building multi-unit building vacant land**

current land use of property (circle one): **vacant / no activity commercial multi-family residential**

List the exterior improvements you plan to work on, along with an estimated cost per improvement. Only provide total expenses for the each general improvement (do not itemize). For a list of eligible expenditures or activities, see page 4.

EXTERIOR IMPROVEMENT	ESTIMATED COST
-----------------------------	-----------------------

- | | |
|----------|-------|
| 1. _____ | _____ |
| 2. _____ | _____ |
| 3. _____ | _____ |

<i>if more improvements are planned, list those on a separate sheet</i>	total estimated project costs: _____	
	applicant's funding: _____	
	amount requested for assistance (up to \$8,000): _____	

REVIEW: Applications are due to City Hall no later than noon on **Wednesday, November 7, 2018**. Applicants (or a representative) are required to appear at the Board of Appearances meeting scheduled on **Thursday, November 15, 2018** at 10:00 a.m. at City Hall. Staff will present the application to the Board. The Board will give applicants a chance to discuss details or answer any questions about the application. The Board reserves the right to approve, alter, table, or reject applications.

SUBMITTAL: I have completed this form to the best of my knowledge and authorize the City of Hardeeville, its Staff, and the City Board of Appearances [City] to process this application and review the submittal according to the *Program Details* and all governing standards. I acknowledge that the City reserves the right to require additional information if requested. I acknowledge that the submittal of this application shall not guarantee approval or awarding of funds. I acknowledge that I have reviewed the *Program Details* and agree to follow those guidelines and applicable governing standards. Furthermore, I acknowledge that the City of Hardeeville Board of Appearances and/or Staff shall not be a party to, nor be accused of, nor be held liable for any legal or financial disputes that may result between me and any other parties acting upon this application.

_____	_____	_____
<i>applicant name</i>	<i>applicant signature</i>	<i>submittal date</i>

Owner Authorization

owner name(s): _____

ownership type: *individual sole proprietor LLC corporation trust non-profit other:* _____

mailing address: _____

phone #: _____ e-mail: _____

OWNER: I/we certify that I/we are the legal owners of the property in question. _____ (*owner initials*)

I/We hereby authorize _____ (Applicant) to submit this application on my/our behalf.

I/We certify that we have reviewed the *Program Details* and the proposed improvements to my/our property and am/are in formal agreement with the intentions described in this application. I/We acknowledge that any legal actions or repercussions that may result from the activities carried out on behalf of this application shall be assessed to me/us. Furthermore, I/we acknowledge that the City of Hardeeville Board of Appearances and/or Staff shall not be a party to, nor be accused of, nor be held liable for any legal or financial disputes between me/us, the Applicant, or any other parties acting upon this application.

_____ _____ _____
owner name *owner signature* *date*

_____ _____ _____
owner name *owner signature* *date*

APPLICANT: I acknowledge that any legal actions or repercussions that may result from the activities carried out on behalf of this application shall be assessed to the property owner, though I may ultimately be held responsible by a court of law. Furthermore, I acknowledge that the City of Hardeeville Board of Appearances and/or Staff shall not be a party to, nor be accused of, nor be held liable for any legal or financial disputes between me/us, the Applicant or any other parties acting upon this application.

_____ _____ _____
applicant name *applicant signature* *date*