



# **2015 Building Exterior Improvement Grant Program Guidelines and Application**

Department of Community Development  
(815) 235-8221  
(815) 599-5819 fax

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**Guidelines and Procedures**\_\_\_\_\_ 1

**Application Form** \_\_\_\_\_ 6

**Appendix A: Freeport Downtown Historic District Map** \_\_\_\_\_ 8

**Appendix B: Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation** \_\_\_\_\_ 9

**Appendix C: City of Freeport Design Guidelines** \_\_\_\_\_ 10

**Appendix D: Project Completion Report/Request for Reimbursement** \_\_\_\_\_ 11

**Appendix E: Application Checklist**\_\_\_\_\_ 13

**Appendix F: Final Inspection Certificate** \_\_\_\_\_ 14

**Appendix G: Reimbursement Request Checklist** \_\_\_\_\_ 15

**CITY OF FREEPORT  
2015 BUILDING EXTERIOR IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM  
GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES**

This program is designed to provide financial incentives to preserve, restore, and rehabilitate the exterior features of buildings located within the Downtown Tax Increment Redevelopment (TIF) Area. The grants are provided in recognition of the positive impact that individual building rehabilitations can have on the longevity, structural stability, and overall appearance and quality of downtown buildings.

**Description:**

The City has allocated of \$150,000 for Building Exterior Improvement Grants for 2015. Funds not expended within the given year may be carried over and available in future years. The grant fund balance shall not exceed \$150,000.

The Building Exterior Improvement Program is intended to assist with the costs of rehabilitating the exterior elements and enhancing the outward appearance of downtown buildings. Under the program, property owners or business owners within the Downtown TIF area are eligible to apply for **grants of up to 50 percent of the total cost of qualified exterior rehabilitation, repair, or restoration work, for grants up to \$10,000.00, or \$15,000 for buildings with two street-facing facades.** All grant awards are subject to funds being formally appropriated by the City Council.

There will be one application period in 2015.

| <b>Milestone</b>   | <b>Deadline</b>      |
|--|----------------------|
| Outreach to downtown property owners                     | May 6 – May 15, 2015 |
| Applicants prepare project plans/drawings/estimates      | May 8 – May 22, 2015 |
| Historic Preservation review applications due            | May 28, 2015         |
| Public notices for Historic Preservation Review in paper | June 5, 2015         |
| Historic Preservation Review Hearings                    | June 24, 2015        |
| Grant applications due                                   | July 3, 2015         |
| Grant recommendations to City Council                    | July 20, 2015        |

*Note that this timeline is tentative and subject to change based on number of applications received and other factors.*

City of Freeport Community Development Director, with the assistance of Freeport Downtown Development Director, recommends applications to the City Council. The City Council administers the Building Exterior Improvement Program. Grant program compliance and the reimbursement of funds are overseen by the City of Freeport Community Development Director.

**Grant money will be payable as a reimbursement** after the Completion Report/Request for Reimbursement form and supporting documentation are submitted to the City of Freeport’s Community Development Department. Individual grant applications will be accepted for multiple buildings with the same owner. Multiple grants for phased rehabilitations will be considered and based on availability.

It is not the purpose of this program to finance ongoing improvements that may be considered part of a building's regular maintenance. Each eligible improvement will be funded by the program only once.

**Target Area:**

A map indicating the Historic Business and Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Districts is presented as Appendix A. The building for which grant assistance is sought is required to be located inside the TIF area.

**Eligible Properties:**

**An eligible applicant must be the owner of the building or a business owner who is a tenant of the building for which the rehabilitation is planned.** Tenant applicants must provide written consent from the building owner for all proposed improvements and a copy of a lease with at least five (5) years remaining.

If more applications are received than current funding levels allow, the Mayor and/or his designee reserves the right to prioritize applications. Preference will be given to the following structures:

- Historic properties (buildings deemed contributing to the downtown historic district within the Downtown TIF District). Properties considered contributing to the historic district must adhere to the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation (see Appendix B).
- Non-contributing buildings that are changed to reflect the time period in which the building was constructed (inside or outside the historic district, but within the Downtown TIF District).
- Non-contributing buildings, the redesign of which would significantly enhance the building and its surroundings (inside or outside the historic district, but within the Downtown TIF District).
- Major façade improvements greater in scope than items such as changing paint colors to a multi-color historic palette, adding or replacing a canopy, or replacing windows or doors.

Grant requests will be considered in the following weighted manner:

1. Commercial  
Zoning: B-1-1 through B-3
2. Manufacturing  
Zoning: M-1 through M-3

**Eligible Use of Funds:**

- Soft costs – design work, architectural, engineering, planning, and other professional fees
- Waste disposal

- Masonry work including restoration, gentle cleaning, and repointing
- Window and door restoration and window replacements that meet Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation
- Removal of non-original facing such as inappropriate siding, metal, etc.
- Restoration of existing architectural elements
- Painting, awnings, exterior lighting, window display areas visible from the street
- Roofing

**Improvements Not Eligible for Grant Funds:**

- Sandblasting of masonry surfaces will not be funded under the program nor will the program participate in any project which includes sandblasting
- The acquisition or creation of architectural elements which are not appropriate to the time period of the building
- Interior remodeling
- Improvements completed or in progress prior to notification of grant approval
- Purchase of furnishings or equipment that do not become part of the real estate

**Funding Requirements and Limitations:**

- Submitted information and project bid estimates (at least two bids for all work shall be submitted to the City) will be reviewed by the Community Development Department. The City reserves the right to reject any and all proposed work that does not meet the program guidelines.
- Projects must be completed within one year of the issuance of a Letter of Commitment from the City Council. The City Council reserves the right to allow a reasonable extension of this time limit upon receiving a written request from the applicant.
- Labor or sweat equity performed by the owner, friends, relatives, etc. cannot be used as a portion of the cost incurred in the improvement project.
- Labor costs will be reimbursed only if performed by a licensed and insured contractor. Proof of liability insurance as per city code and proof of workers compensation insurance are required.
- Soft costs incurred within one year prior to the issuance of the Letter of Commitment that directly relate to the façade project are eligible for reimbursement under the terms of this grant. Prior soft costs must be included in the original grant application for approval. Rehabilitation work started before written approval of the grant application is obtained from the City Council is ineligible for reimbursement.
- Properties must be up-to-date on property taxes in order to be eligible for a Façade Improvement Grant.
- Properties must pass a health and safety code inspection by the City Building Inspector and Fire Inspector in order to qualify for a Grant.
- All work must comply with applicable local, Federal and State laws and regulations, including those pertaining to the payment of Prevailing Wages. Submittal of documentation of prevailing wage compliance shall be a requirement for any reimbursement under this grant program.

## **Application Process:**

1. Receipt of a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) from the City's Historic Preservation Commission is a prerequisite to application for a Building Exterior Improvement Grant. COA applications are available from the City's Community Development Department. COA applicants must present their application at a public hearing held by the Historic Preservation Commission.
2. Applications for the Building Exterior Improvement Grant Program may be obtained from the office of the Freeport Downtown Development Foundation (FDDF) Director or the City of Freeport Community Development Office.
3. Prior to submitting a grant application, the applicant must schedule an interview with the Freeport Downtown Development Foundation (FDDF) Director or the Community Development Director. It is recommended that this meeting occur before final plans, estimates, and bids are made in order to avoid unnecessary changes and delays in the final approval.
4. To be considered, the applicant must submit a completed Façade Improvement Grant Application and a \$50 nonrefundable fee to the City of Freeport. In addition to the application, a detailed description of the proposed work, projected completion date, copies of estimates and costs involved in the project are required. If the proposed project is a part of a more extensive rehabilitation, only project costs included in the grant scope need be itemized. Designs with dimensions of the completed project including color and material samples must also accompany the application. Professional designs are recommended, but not required. All designs must follow the guidelines set forth by the Community Development Department. Please see Appendix C for an abbreviated list of guidelines, and The City of Freeport's *Historic Preservation Design Guidelines* for the complete set of guidelines.
5. The property must pass a health and safety code inspection conducted by the City's Building Inspector and Fire Inspector.
6. Recommendations for grant awards will be considered by the City Council.
7. Any changes or amendments, if any, necessary for grant request consideration will be discussed with the applicant within seven (7) days after the Council decision.
8. In the case of changes, the applicant must submit a revised application for final review and recommendations to the Community Development Director for resubmittal to the City Council.
9. After the final submission of revisions, the application will be considered for approval or denial by the City Council. Results will be communicated in writing in the form of a Letter of Commitment or a Letter of Denial.
10. Recipients of any program funds must agree to observe all applicable federal, state, and local laws pertaining to the use of grant funds.

11. Recipients agree to submit a project Completion Report/Request for Reimbursement form (Appendix D) to the City of Freeport Community Development Office, including copies of all building permits, bills, receipts and cancelled checks prior to the release of any funds. In addition to the report, recipients must submit photographic or other evidence that the project for which the grant is awarded is 100 percent complete. A final on-site inspection of the completed project will be made by the City of Freeport to certify that the eligible work was completed in a workmanlike manner according to the information submitted in the application. It is the applicant's responsibility to contact the City of Freeport's Community Development Department to schedule progress inspections and final inspections for the project. Upon certification by a City official that all work has been satisfactorily completed, a reimbursement will be processed and issued.



- Photographs of existing building exterior (all areas part of proposed project)
- A detailed description of proposed work
- Designs of completed exterior improvement including color and material samples and dimensions
- Copies of estimates and costs (include at least two cost estimates for each project element)
- Copy of lease agreement, if applicable

**7. Statement of Understanding**

The Applicant (undersigned) agrees to comply with the design guidelines and procedures of the City of Freeport Building Exterior Improvement Program and the conceptual design and outline specifications as agreed to by the applicant and the Historic Preservation Commission.

The Applicant understands that the Applicant must submit a Project Completion Report/Request for Reimbursement form, along with cost documentation, copies of building permits, receipts, invoices, certified payrolls, and contractor’s final waivers of lien upon completion of the approved improvements.

Applicant’s Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

If the applicant is other than the owner, the following line must be completed:

I certify that I, the owner of the property at \_\_\_\_\_ do authorize the applicant to apply for reimbursement under the City of Freeport, Building Exterior Improvement Program and undertake the approved improvements.

Owner’s Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Owner’s Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

-----  
**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY**

Case Number \_\_\_\_\_

Date application received: \_\_\_\_\_

Ck# \_\_\_\_\_

Application fee paid: \_yes \_no

Grant approved:

Grant denied:

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Total estimated project cost \_\_\_\_\_

Reason \_\_\_\_\_

Percent applied for grant \_\_\_\_\_

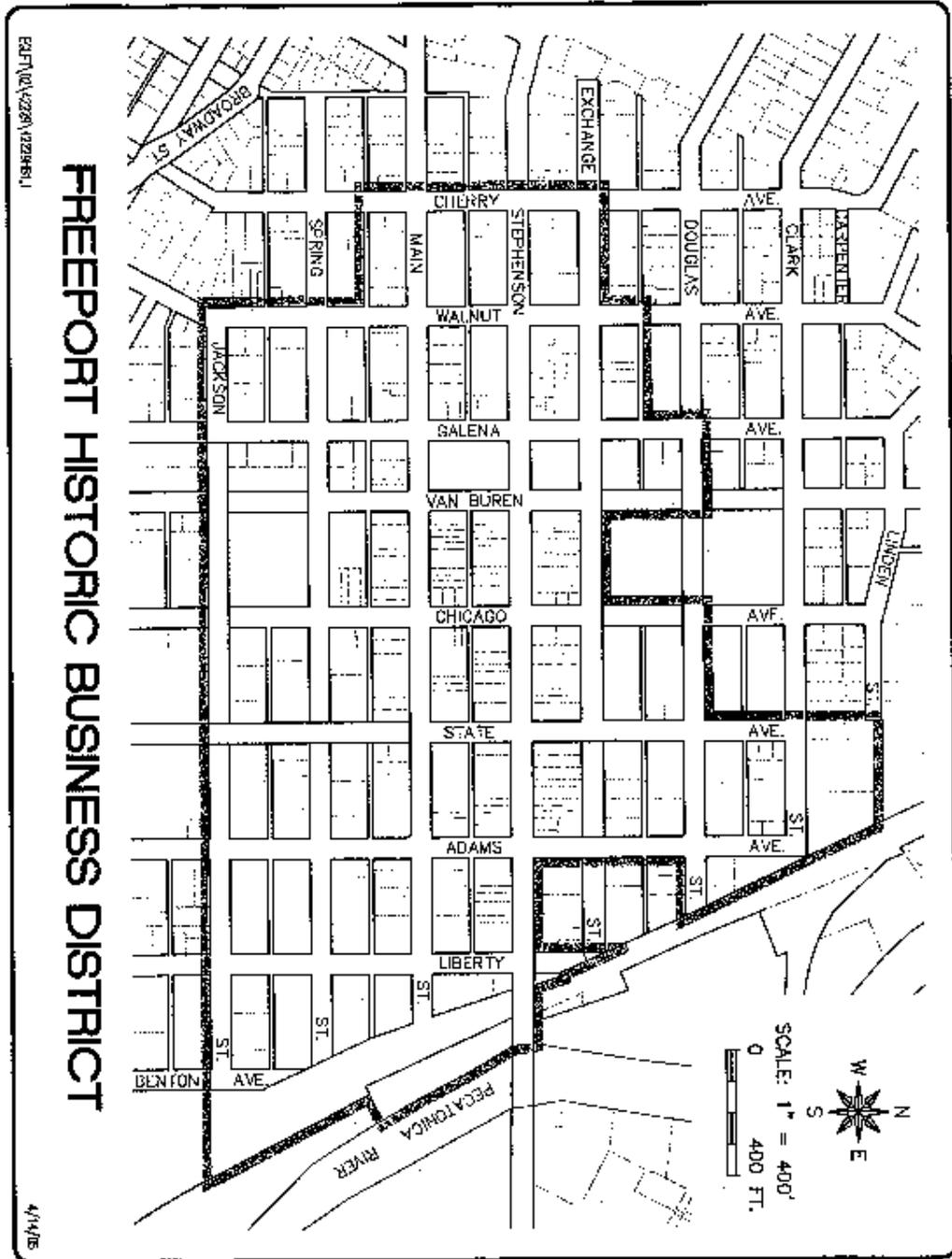
\_\_\_\_\_

Total amount of grant \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX A

FREEPORT DOWNTOWN HISTORIC BUSINESS AND TIF DISTRICT MAP



## APPENDIX B

### SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION

(Applicable to properties identified as contributing to the Freeport Downtown Historic District)

#### **Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation**

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of the property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize the property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features of architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
3. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.
4. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of the deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
5. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
6. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
7. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
8. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

## **APPENDIX C**

### **CITY OF FREEPORT BUILDING EXTERIOR IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM DESIGN GUIDELINES**

(All projects receiving funding from the City of Freeport are required to adhere to design guidelines. Designs will be reviewed and approved by the Historic Preservation Commission.)

1. Height – The height of any proposed alteration or construction should be compatible with the style and character of the structure and with surrounding structures in the historic district and directly adjacent to the district.
2. Proportions of Windows and Doors – The proportions and relationships between doors and windows should be compatible with the architectural style and character of the subject and with surrounding structures within the historic district and directly adjacent to the district.
3. Relationship of Building Masses and Spaces – The relationship of a structure within a historic to the open space between it and adjoining structures should be compatible.
4. Roof Shape – The design of the roof should be compatible with the architectural style and character of the structure and surrounding structures in the historic district and directly adjacent to the district.
5. Landscaping – Landscaping should be compatible with the architectural character and appearance of the structure and of surrounding structures and landscapes in the historic district and directly adjacent to the district.
6. Scale – The scale of the structure after alteration, construction, or partial demolition should be compatible with its architectural style and character and with surrounding structures in the historic district and directly adjacent to the district.
7. Directional Expression – Facades in the historic district and directly adjacent to the district should blend with other structures in regard to directional expression. Structures in the historic district should be compatible with the dominant horizontal or vertical expression of surrounding structures. The directional expression of the structure after alteration, construction, or partial demolition should be compatible with its original architectural style and character.
8. Architectural Details – Architectural details including materials, colors, and textures should be treated so as to make the structure compatible with its original architectural style and character and to preserve and enhance the architectural style or character of the structure and the historic district.

**APPENDIX D**

**PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT/REQUEST FOR REIMBURSEMENT**

(To be submitted after completion of the project)

Case Number \_\_\_\_\_

**CITY OF FREEPORT  
BUILDING EXTERIOR IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

**PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT/REQUEST FOR REIMBURSEMENT**

This completion report, including copies of all building permits, bills, receipts, and cancelled checks, contractor’s final waivers of lien, prevailing wage documentation, and photographs associated with the restoration or historic rehabilitation project shall be submitted by the participant to the Community Development Director prior to the release of any funds. In addition, such report shall include evidence that such project has received a Final Inspection Certificate from the City’s Building Department to demonstrate that such project for which the grant was awarded is 100 percent complete. The Building Inspector shall make a final on-site inspection of such completed project prior to the release of any funds for such project.

**Property Address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Participant’s Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Participant’s Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Final Cost Breakdown** (Attach addition sheets, if necessary)

Example: Painting, Masonry repointing, Carpentry, Design fees, etc.

| <b>Work Description</b> | <b>Contractor</b> | <b>Labor</b> | <b>Material</b> | <b>Cost</b> |
|-------------------------|-------------------|--------------|-----------------|-------------|
|                         |                   |              |                 |             |
|                         |                   |              |                 |             |
|                         |                   |              |                 |             |
|                         |                   |              |                 |             |

Total final project cost \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Amount of reimbursement** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

(50% of project costs not to exceed \$10,000, or \$15,000 for buildings with two street-facing facades)

I/We hereby certify that the Final Cost Breakdown items have been completed at the indicated address and that they have been paid in full.

Participant’s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**REIMBURSEMENT AUTHORIZED**

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature & Title

**APPENDIX E**  
**CITY OF FREEPORT**  
**BUILDING EXTERIOR IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM**  
**APPLICATION CHECKLIST**

- Completed Building Exterior Improvement Grant application
- Copy of Certificate of Appropriateness issued by Historic Preservation Commission
- Written consent from building owner (only if applicant is a tenant)
- Certificate of inspection from Building Inspector and Fire Inspector
- Copy of lease with at least five years remaining (only if applicant is a tenant)
- On-site meeting with FDDF Director and Community Development Director  
\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Initials
- \$50 nonrefundable application fee received by City of Freeport
- Detailed description of proposed work
- Estimated project completion date submitted
- Copies of contractors estimates (at least two for each project element)
- Photographs of existing building (all affected exterior elements)
- Design of project including dimensions, color and material samples

**APPENDIX F**

**CITY OF FREEPORT  
BUILDING EXTERIOR IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM**

**FINAL INSPECTION CERTIFICATE**

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Property Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Owner's Name** \_\_\_\_\_

- Work completed by licensed, qualified contractor(s)
- Work completed under authority of valid City of Freeport building permit
- Work completed meets all applicable building codes as adopted by the City of Freeport
- Work completed fully conforms with project description submitted with the Owner's (or Tenant's) application for a City of Freeport Building Exterior Improvement Grant Application

**Comments** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of City Inspector

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of City Inspector

\_\_\_\_\_  
Inspector's Title

**APPENDIX G**  
**CITY OF FREEPORT**  
**BUILDING EXTERIOR IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM**  
**REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST CHECKLIST**

- Work was completed within one year of the City Council's award of grant
- Copies of all building permits
- Copies of all bills
- Copies of all receipts
- Copies of all cancelled checks
- Copy of final inspection report
- Photographs of completed project
- Documentation of compliance with prevailing wage requirements
- Final lien waivers for all contractors and sub-contractors