



DOWNTOWN KIRKWOOD FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Fiscal Year 2027: April 1, 2026 – March 31, 2027

I. INTRODUCTION

The Façade Improvement Program is a matching-grant program established to stimulate exterior building improvements in targeted areas, consistent with the design principles contained in the Urban Design Plan (UDP). The program is administered by the Downtown Kirkwood Special Business District (SBD), which provides the funds utilized for the grant portion of projects approved under the program. Applicants must comply with all requirements deemed necessary by the SBD and the City of Kirkwood.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of the program is to provide grant resources sufficient to produce visible changes to commercial building façades and to restore buildings as close to the original design as is reasonably possible. Since funding sources are limited, priority will be given to projects demonstrating the most substantial impact on building and district aesthetics.

III. TARGET AREA

The Façade Improvement program is available to all businesses and property owners within Downtown Kirkwood Special Business District.

IV. ELIGIBILITY

A. BUILDING

Funds must be used for façade rehabilitation of existing commercial buildings within the SBD. All properties must conform to uses under the City of Kirkwood's zoning ordinance. A commercial use that is non-conforming with respect to lot, bulk, or yard requirements and for which a variance has been granted may, at the discretion of the SBD, be ineligible for funding. For this program, income-producing residential properties are not considered commercial properties. Properties are not eligible if any special assessments, real estate taxes, or personal property taxes are delinquent. Only one grant per property is allowed within any consecutive five-year period. Buildings with multiple tenants must be improved in a unified manner.

B. APPLICANTS

Owners, tenants, or owner/tenant joint ventures may submit applications under this program. Tenants must submit written approval from the property owner and evidence of their leasehold interest and must comply with requirements and standards as deemed necessary by the UDP and the SBD.

C. ACTIVITIES

1. ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

Eligible activities shall include but are not limited to the following:

- a. Repair and/or replacement of original building's materials and decorative details which are deteriorated or missing
- b. Repair of non-original materials which cannot be removed due to deterioration of the underlying original building material
- c. Design and maintenance improvements made to front, rear or side building elevations
- d. Tuckpointing and masonry repair relating to renovation or improvements
- e. Painting only as part of a major renovation project
- f. Repair, replacement or addition of entrances, doors, store front, transoms, or second story windows

- g. New signs and awnings compatible with program design guidelines
- h. Engineering surveys, Design fees on completed projects
- i. Landscape construction as part of a larger project and consistent with the Urban Design Plan
- j. Dumpster enclosures
- k. Sidewalk replacements/improvements/City of Kirkwood program
- l. Christmas lights on exterior façade
- m. Murals
- n. Walk-up order windows

2. INELIGIBLE PROJECTS

The following are not eligible for inclusion in this program:

- a. Roof repairs
- b. Construction of new buildings
- c. Structural additions to existing buildings
- d. Purchase of property and/or buildings
- e. Equipment
- f. Fixtures and furnishings
- g. Routine painting
- h. Inventory or operating capital
- i. Any eligible program activity completed prior to receiving final approval of an application
- j. Maintenance projects

V. PROGRAM FUNDING

All grant funds are allocated and administered by the SBD.

GRANT FUNDS

Buildings are eligible for grant funding one time within any five-year period, with the exception of business-specific signage. Grant funds are allocated to specific projects based on the criteria below:

A. Single-Building Projects

Approved projects are eligible for up to \$5,000 in matching funding at 50% of the project cost. Two bids are required for all projects.

Total maximum grant per business = \$5,000. If a business or property owner does not receive the maximum funding in the year they begin their project, additional funds up to the \$5,000 limit may be available in the next consecutive year to complete or expand the project based on the formula above. An additional application for year-two funding is required.

Upon completion, the applicant follows the Post Application Procedure, submits an invoice and photos to the Downtown Kirkwood business office for the completed project cost and the business owner will then be reimbursed for 50% of the approved project costs under this program.

Funds are available up to the amount budgeted annually by SBD; and are distributed based on availability of funds. Grant amounts and formulas are subject to change.

VI. DESIGN STANDARDS

All applicants shall utilize The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (Revised 1990) as a guide for designing improvements to buildings. Plans should be generally consistent with The Secretary's Standards and the Kirkwood Urban Design Plan. Historic building renovations could also require approval by the Kirkwood Landmarks Commission. Projects could also require approval by the Architectural Review Board.

VII. DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE

The Downtown Kirkwood Special Business District Advisory Commission will review and award all grant applications. All projects must meet standards required by the City of Kirkwood and be approved by the appropriate board and/or commission acting for the City. Most awnings require approval by the Architectural Review Board (ARB).

VIII. APPLICATION PROCESS

- A. Applicant obtains application and guidelines from the SBD to develop ideas for improvements.
- B. Based upon the proposed project, the applicant obtains at least two preliminary cost estimates from contractors selected by the applicant.
- C. If an application is not approved by the SBD Advisory Commission, the Commission will explain in writing the reasons for rejection and what, if any, steps can be taken to gain approval.
- D. Approved grant applicants execute agreements with the SBD. Projects must be completed by the assigned deadlines or an approved extension of the deadline.
- E. Applicant must be current on applicable City of Kirkwood business licenses and property taxes.

IX. POST APPLICATION PROCEDURE

- A. SBD staff will monitor the progress of the project.
- B. Changes in the approved work specifications must be approved by the SBD Advisory Commission.
- C. Approved changes in work verifications will be attached to the original application, dated and signed by the SBD Executive Director.
- D. Deviations from an approved plan may disqualify the applicant from the program.
- E. Paid receipts and/or lien waivers must be presented before distribution of grant funds.

X. IMPORTANT DATES

MAY 29, 2026: Applications & all supporting materials due to SBD Office

JUNE 10, 2026: SBD Advisory Commission Reviews Applications

JUNE 17, 2026: SBD Staff will notify all applicants of grant decisions

MARCH 19, 2027: Those awarded grants must submit all documents and must complete all work for reimbursement.

XI. APPLICATION MATERIALS

To obtain materials, or for more information, contact the Downtown Kirkwood Special Business District office at 314-822-0084 or cmpaske@downtownkirkwood.com.