



Guidelines and Policies

The Building Restoration and Improvement Grant Program is designed to stimulate improvements to existing historically significant buildings in the Downtown Business District of the City of Texarkana, Texas, to promote tourism, to enhance the physical appearance and economic vitality of downtown Texarkana, and to promote joint public/private investment to complement ongoing historical revitalization efforts.

Program Objectives and Available Assistance

- To make positive, high-impact visual improvements to historically significant commercial buildings by providing an overall enhanced image for downtown Texarkana, thereby attracting visitors to shop, dine, and do business in the Downtown Business District.
- To provide a maximum of \$5,000.00 per project as a matching monetary incentive to the owners of historically significant commercial properties in the Downtown Business District for high-quality improvements to their properties.
- In all cases, the applicant must provide matching funds at a ratio of one to one (1:1); meaning that, for every \$1.00 the applicant invests in the renovation or improvement of the subject property, the City will reimburse \$1.00 of qualified expenditures, up to the maximum grant authorized by the City Council not to exceed \$5,000.00 per project.

Eligibility Requirements

- Historic buildings within the downtown improvement area (map attached) that are of a commercial, retail, service, or professional use are eligible to participate in the program.
- For mixed-use historic buildings, only the portion of the building that is commercial, retail, service, or professional is eligible.
- The building to be improved must have historical significance either from an architectural point of view or a historical use or event that would tend to attract tourists to the building's location.

Minimum Guidelines

- A review board consisting of representatives from Main Street Texarkana and the City of Texarkana will make project recommendations to the City Council. **The City Council will have final approval on all applications.**
- Building improvements should maintain the character of the downtown area; and the design drawings must be approved by the City in order to access funding for improvement.
- Improvements to be undertaken shall conform to the City's Codes and any other policies and regulations applying to the subject property.



- **Retroactive applications will not be accepted.** Applicants must consult with City staff before work begins to define a project scope.
- Program funds shall be made available only to projects that enhance and are sensitive to the historical nature of the structure.
- For properties with multiple storefronts, it is recommended that the façade treatment provide a cohesive theme while also allowing for some distinctive design elements to the various businesses, such as signage, exposing transom windows, lighting, flower boxes, murals, etc., to provide better street visibility and promote economic development downtown.
- For corner buildings fronting more than one street, improvements must be made to each frontage if determined necessary by City staff.

Application Prioritization

Funding is limited, and project applications will be prioritized on a first-come, first-served basis.

Eligible Improvements

To enhance your application it is encouraged that applicants follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Rehabilitation. Located at: <http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/TPS/tax/rhb/stand.htm>

Eligible improvements must be permanent in nature as determined exclusively by the City of Texarkana, Texas. All improvements must be consistent with the City of Texarkana, Texas, Zoning Ordinance, Building Regulations, and other applicable laws. Eligible costs include the cost of materials, equipment, and contracted labor to complete eligible improvements, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Repair of exterior walls, including cleaning, sealing, tuck pointing and painting
- Permanent commercial site (exterior) improvements including murals & artwork with historical relevance
- Installation, repair, and replacement of exit (exterior) doors and hardware
- Repair, replacement, or addition of exterior shutters and awnings/canopies
- Repair, replacement or purchase of signs (when performed as part of an overall façade improvement)
- Repair or replacement of frames, sills, glazing, replacement of glass and installation of new windows
- Installation of permanently affixed landscaping, such as stone or brick planters

The City will prioritize projects. Consideration will be given to (1) importance of the structure to the overall goals of the program, (2) structural integrity and condition, and (3) cost effectiveness of the proposed work. In determining the grant amount, the City will also consider the time required to complete the project. Applicants are requested to limit their requests to projects that can be completed in a twelve (12) month period.

Ineligible Improvements

- No structural addition that would enlarge the residential (livable) space of the project is to be financed with these funds – nor an area not originally a livable space made livable.
- Residential structures
- Real estate or building purchases
- Furnishings and equipment purchases
- Working capital, inventory financing, title reports and legal fees
- Professional fees such as architects, engineers, and solicitors



- Labor provided by the Applicant or tenant of the building
- Extermination of insects, rodents, vermin and other pests
- Expenses incurred prior to grant application approval. Improvements cannot be undertaken before grant application approval.

Application Process

Program Application and Agreement forms are available in the Community Redevelopment and Grants Office in City Hall, 220 Texas Blvd. Texarkana, Texas 75504, Telephone (903) 798-3900. The application process is as follows:

- After reviewing the program guidelines, the Applicant will meet with City staff to discuss the desired work to be undertaken. If the proposed work is within the program guidelines, as determined exclusively by City staff, a completed application is submitted to the City. Written bids, sketches, color samples, and material supplies should be included. It is encouraged that all applicants contact Main Street Texarkana (903) 774-2120 for information on available resources for design consultations and project renderings if needed.
- The City Council will consider the recommendations made by the City staff and will make its decision in a public meeting. The Council's decision will be made by adopting a resolution, which will authorize the City Manager to enter into a grant agreement with the Applicant.
- With the Council's authorization, the City Manager will cause the necessary documents to be drawn up and will sign the grant agreement.
- The Applicant may proceed with the planned building improvements pursuant to the approved design and issued permits. All payments for the work should be made by the Applicant and supported by clearly defined invoices outlining eligible work. Work shall commence within ninety (90) days of the approval date of the building permits. Extensions may be granted solely at the discretion of City staff.
- City staff will monitor the ongoing progress during construction to ensure that the work is performed according to the approved application and plans. No changes to work shall be made without the written consent of both the Applicant and the City. Approved "Change in Work" forms will be attached to the original application, dated and signed by the City Manager. Deviations from approved plans and specifications may disqualify the Applicant from this grant program.
- Funds will be disbursed upon completion of the project. City staff will conduct a final inspection before the grant funds will be disbursed to the Applicant. A Certificate of Approval will be issued to the Applicant.
- Reimbursement claims for all eligible expenses must be submitted with the following supporting documents.
 - A completed Rebate Claim form supplied by the City of Texarkana, Texas
 - Any applicable planning and building permits
 - Cancelled checks and paid invoices/receipts for eligible work
 After final approval of the improvements, the rebate reimbursement will be processed. Allow thirty (30) days for receipt of the rebate check.
- After the work is completed, Applicant shall display a sign or banner (provided by the City) indicating participation in the City of Texarkana, Texas Downtown Historic Building Restoration and Improvement Grant Program. The sign or banner shall be displayed either on the exterior or in the front window of the building for a period of thirty (30) days.

All applications must be made on forms provided by the City of Texarkana, Texas. For further information, please contact: City of Texarkana, Texas, 220 Texas Blvd, Texarkana, Texas 75504 Phone (903) 798-3900
 Craig Lindholm, Director, Community Redevelopment and Grants or David Orr, Sustainability and Quality Assurance Coordinator



