



River Falls Main Street BID Board **Façade & Sign Grant Agreement and Application**

Objective:

To encourage business improvement and development by offering façade and sign grants to businesses and property owners in the River Falls Downtown Business Improvement District (BID). More information is available at rfmainstreet.com

Program Description:

This fund is intended to help business and property owners make critical investments to improve the exteriors of their buildings including, but not limited to, awnings, signs, windows, and facades.

Annual grant limits are as follows;

- Signs and awnings – 35% of the cost up to a maximum grant of \$1,000 per business
- Building facades and exteriors – 35% of the cost up to a maximum grant of \$6,000 per building
- This is a reimbursable grant program, whereby the project is coordinated and paid for by the business/owner. The BID Board then reimburses the business/owner for approved grant expenses.

The participants agree to follow all River Falls City Ordinances and BID Board's Program Criteria. When applicable, the River Falls Downtown Design Review Committee (DRC) will have full control of the design process and make recommendations to the BID Board, which will vote for approval or denial of the grant.

Program Criteria:

1. Grant must be for exterior renovations by business and/or property owner currently located in the BID or by those who intend to locate in the BID. Examples of qualifying expenditures include but are not limited to exterior (front or rear façade) renovations (including store signage, awnings, windows, patios, entries, built-in planters) and other expenditures as defined by the applicant and approved by the BID Board. (No mechanical, HVAC, roofs, or electric systems.) All improvements must be of a permanent nature.
2. Grants may not be used for refinancing existing loans, working capital, or for purchase of inventory or interior renovations.
3. Grants under this program are offered on a first come first serve basis, subject to fund availability and **must be used** within 12 months of approval.
4. The BID will start reviewing grant applications on February 1st of each year, and applications will be accepted year round. A request is considered received when all required documentation has been submitted. If money runs out, applications received will be held until February of the following year when applications will again be reviewed and considered.
5. Preference will be given to businesses/entities that have not had prior funding through the BID program, if two applications are received at the same time.
6. A complete application must be submitted and BID Board decision will be rendered prior to work commencing. Projects in process or completed, prior to a complete application being submitted to the BID, may be awarded 50% less of the grant limits noted above upon review of the BID Board.
7. **It is recommended that the applicant be present at the BID Board meeting to answer any questions the Board may have.**

Application Process:

1. The Community Development Department and possibly the DRC will review the application for compliance with the Downtown Overlay District Ordinance.
2. The BID Board will review the proposed request to determine if the project falls within the program guidelines and verify compliance. All financial information will be held confidential.
3. The BID Board will notify the applicant of their decision.
4. The approved grant monies will be paid at the completion of the project and upon the BIDs receipt of the paid invoice and a photo of the completed project.
5. The BID Board assumes no liability for workmanship, design and is not responsible for payment of the final project costs.
6. A building permit or sign permit **must be obtained** from the City of River Falls prior to the commencement of all projects.

Required Submission Items:

Prior to Project Start	
	Agreement and Application
	Funding Documentation
	Contract Estimate/Bid
	Drawings/Plans
	Before Photos
	Certificate of Insurance
Upon Project Completion	
	Paid Invoice/Cancelled Check
	After Photos

Example Grant Scenario:

Building owner A is planning to complete façade upgrades. The owner meets with City staff to discuss the project and staff completes the Design Review process, providing a few recommendations to the owner. The owner is amenable to the recommendations and staff provides approval of the project. The owner has also submitted a completed BID application for the façade improvements as well as a new sign. Estimates come in as follows:

Work	Estimate	Grant Request
Tuckpointing	\$5,500	
Painting	\$6,250	
Windows	\$7,500	
Door	\$1,750	
Awning	\$3,100	
Sign	\$4,500	\$1,000
Total Project	\$28,600	
Project minus Sign	\$24,100	\$6,000

The Sign and Awning grant limit is 35% of the cost up to a maximum grant of \$1,000. 35% of \$4,500 is \$1,575, so the maximum sign grant is \$1,000. The awning is then added into the façade project for a total project cost (minus the sign) of \$24,100. 35% of \$24,100 is \$8,435, so the maximum grant is \$6,000. Total grant request is then \$7,000 for the full project.

Questions:

Joleen Larson, BID Board President 715-426-7776

Amy Peterson, City of River Falls, Community Development Staff Member 715-426-3425; apeterson@rfcity.org

Submit Application To:

City of River Falls – Community Development Department

Attention: River Falls Main Street BID Board

222 Lewis Street

River Falls, WI 54022

Hours: Monday – Friday, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm

River Falls Main Street BID Board
Façade & Sign Grant Application

Owner's Name: _____ Phone #: _____
Applicant/Agent's Name: _____
Business/Building: _____
Address of Project: _____
Daytime Phone: _____ Fax: _____
Email: _____

1. Project Description:

2. Goal of Project:

3. Project Time Frame:

4. Estimated Cost of Project: _____

5. Grant Amount Requested

Signs & Awnings	\$
Building Façade & Exteriors	\$
Total	\$

6. Have you contacted the City of River Falls and received approval from the Community Development Department or Design Review Committee? YES / NO
7. Name of your Architect, Designer, and Contractor: (if applicable)

8. Certificate of Insurance (with the City of River Falls as a notified party) must be obtained and submitted **before** the project is started, with a minimum liability limit of \$300,000.

The application must be completed and signed. ALL related documentation must be submitted prior to consideration.

I understand and agree to comply with all applicable codes, conditions of the Grant Agreement and conditions of approval. I certify that the above and attached information is accurate.

Applicant Signature _____ Date: _____

Print Name _____

For City and BID use:
Date complete application received: _____
City or DRC approval date: _____
BID Board approval date: _____ Amount Approved: \$ _____
Conditions of Grant Approval: _____