

# FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT GRANTS (FIG)

The Baltimore Development Corporation (BDC) is a non-profit organization, which serves as the economic development agency for the City of Baltimore. Our mission is to retain and expand existing businesses, as well as attract new opportunities to spur economic growth that creates jobs.

The goal of BDC's façade program is to aesthetically improve the look of commercial corridors while making revitalization efforts affordable for small business owners. Projects eligible for financing include exterior painting, window treatments, siding, awnings, transoms, signage, lighting and other exterior improvements.

For more information, please contact BDC at (410) 837-9305 or at [info@BaltimoreDevelopment.com](mailto:info@BaltimoreDevelopment.com).



## City-wide Grant

City-wide grants provide a “dollar for dollar” match, up to a maximum award of \$7,500, on a single property. Work cannot begin until the agreement letter is signed and returned to BDC. This grant is for commercial and industrial properties.

## Main Streets Grant

This grant is only available to businesses located in designated Baltimore Main Streets. It provides a “dollar for dollar” match, up to a maximum of \$10,000, and includes design services in reimbursement only. Approval from the Baltimore City Commission on Historical and Architectural Preservation (CHAP) and Maryland Historical Trust may be required.

## Casino Area Grant for Industrial Properties

The South Baltimore Gateway Industrial Façade Improvement Grant (SBGI-FIG) provides up to a \$25,000 grant for a single industrial property. Grants of up to \$10,000 are provided with no match required. Grants beyond the initial \$10,000 require a “dollar-for-dollar” match up to an additional \$15,000. This grant can be used for paint, signage, awnings, lighting, fencing/security upgrades and other urban design improvements and are limited to industrially-zoned properties that are located within the Casino Impact District. (These grants are limited and available on a first come first serve basis.)

BDC has streamlined its FIG program to simplify the process and all three grants use the same application, which can be found at <http://baltimoredevelopment.com/incentives/facade-grant/>.

Industrial property owners and businesses are eligible. Buildings must be currently occupied or a newly signed lease will be required with the application.



Baltimore Development Corporation
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(410) 837-9305

(Please submit application with a \$25 application fee made payable to: Baltimore Development Corporation)

Façade Improvement Grant Program ("FIG") Application

Applicant Name: Council/Legislative District:

Are you an MBE or WBE (circle one or both) \*Use/Occupancy Permit #

\*Tax ID # \*Business License #

Applicant Mailing Address: Sq Ft

Phone: Fax: E-Mail:

Owner Tenant If Tenant, Date of Lease Expiration:

Address and business name for which this application applies:

Number of current employees? Possible new jobs?

Describe your business and/or property. If vacant, describe plans for future occupancy and attach approved use & occupancy permit and signed Lease:

Describe the proposed improvements (e.g., signage, windows/doors, exterior finishes, awnings, fencing, painting, repairs, etc.), and the materials you plan to use.

Attach current photo of property; cost estimates (two quotes) showing details of project and renderings to show what is being proposed.

Applicant Signature: Date:

Name (Print):

Owner, if other than applicant: I hereby certify that I am the owner of this building/land on which the proposed FIG project is situated, and that the foregoing applicant, in filing a FIG application for approval by the FIG Committee, is acting with my knowledge and consent.

Owner Signature: Date:

Name (Print):

\*Information required for all commercial/retail businesses. If you do not have a use/occupancy permit at the time of application, you must have one prior to reimbursement. Please note that proposed work may require permits and minor privilege approval which is solely your responsibility. No reimbursement will be made at anytime if the applicant/business is not in good legal standing with Federal, State and Local authorities.

## Façade Improvement Grant Information

Congratulations on your decision to apply for a Façade Improvement Grant (FIG). Before you proceed, make sure that your proposed project qualifies:

- The goal of the FIG program is to leverage public dollars with private investment in an effort to spur continued neighborhood revitalization.
- If you are located in a Baltimore Main Streets district, you MAY also need to submit this application to the local Design Review Committee. Main Streets districts are indicated below with an (\*).
- The FIG program is generally targeted to the following areas, but any commercial or industrial business may apply:

\*Belair-Edison

\*East Monument Street

\*Federal Hill

Fells Point

Govanstowne

\*Hamilton

\*Lauraville

Market Center

Mt. Washington

Old Town

\*Pennsylvania Avenue

\*Pigtown

Pimlico

\*Waverly

- The FIG program cannot be used more than once in a one-year period for the same property. The one-year period begins at the close of the current FIG project.
- The FIG program cannot be used for new construction, acquisition, interior work, residential properties, rear facades or on vacant commercial properties without a signed lease agreement.
- The FIG program cannot be used for work begun prior to receiving a commitment letter from BDC.
- The FIG program cannot be used for properties that are not in compliance with applicable zoning laws and urban renewal plans, unless the FIG will bring the property into compliance.
- The FIG program will not reimburse an applicant/business which is not in good legal standing with Federal, State or local authorities.

### **Design Guidelines:**

1. The project should make a noticeable contribution to the revitalization of the commercial district.
2. If the business district is pedestrian-friendly, where people enjoy walking, then the project's design should be in harmony with the character of the area. If the surrounding district is not pedestrian-friendly, then the project should begin to transform the area. Signs, awnings, ground floor windows and doors, lighting, and other decorative elements should be designed to appeal to pedestrians.
3. The distinguishing original qualities and character of the building shall be preserved; removal of historical or distinctive architectural features may disqualify a project. Deteriorated architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced; if replacement is necessary, the new materials should match the materials being replaced in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities.
4. Contemporary design for alterations to existing properties is acceptable if such alterations do not destroy significant historical, architectural, and cultural materials of the building and if such design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material, and character of the property and adjacent buildings.

**Permitting and code requirements:** Contractors must secure required building permits and minor privilege permits and complete the project in accordance with all applicable codes, ordinances, and standard engineering practices. Contractors must be properly registered, licensed, insured, and pass a debarment check as required by law.

**Timeframe:** Construction must begin within 30 days after the contract is executed and be complete within 60 days thereafter, unless otherwise approved in writing by the FIG committee.

**Extension Request:** The Grant Administrator MUST receive all extension requests in writing, at least 1 week prior to the project expiration date. Approval of extension requests will be mailed.

**Change in Project Proposal:** The committee MUST approve all changes made to the scope of work originally agreed upon prior to work being done. Approval of changes does not alter the original amount of the grant.

**Maintenance of improvements:** As part of the grant acceptance process, the applicant agrees to maintain all improvements made per the approved plans in their finished state.

The grant will be provided as a **match up to 50%** of the total approved project cost. The applicant pays for all of the work; BDC reimburses the applicant after the work is completed, consistent with the scope of work agreed upon in the application.