



Downtown Signage, Awning, and Façade Improvement Grant Program Guidelines

The Hamilton Economic Development Corporation Downtown Signage, Awning, and Façade Improvement Grant Program is designed to improve the aesthetics of businesses in the Downtown District, which will result in additional business activity in the City of Hamilton.

For the purposes of this program, the Downtown District will be defined as commercially-zoned properties within two (2) blocks of the Hamilton County Courthouse. Projects that are not located in this area will not be considered for participation in the Downtown Signage, Awning, and Façade Improvement Grant Program. The Hamilton Economic Development Corporation Board of Directors may extend the geographic area at their discretion.

The Downtown Signage, Awning, and Façade Improvement Grant program is funded and monitored by the Hamilton Economic Development Corporation Board of Directors who may amend, adjust, or eliminate the program at any time. The grant award decisions of the Hamilton Economic Development Corporation Board of Directors are final.

The Hamilton Economic Development Corporation has determined that the Downtown Signage, Awning, and Façade Improvement Grant Program will provide for new and expanded business development in the following ways:

- Improve aesthetics of the City of Hamilton
- Increase business traffic to existing businesses through improved signage and visible improvements
- Encourage additional investment in Hamilton by business and property owners

Scope

The Hamilton Economic Development Corporation has allocated \$30,000.00 for the Downtown Signage, Awning, and Façade Improvement Grant Program for the FY 2017-18. Grants are competitive and will be awarded on a first come first served basis until funds are depleted.

Applications need to be submitted by 5 pm on the 1st Wednesday of each month to be listed on the next Board of Directors agenda for consideration. Applicants whose grant was denied may reapply in thirty (30) days, if their application has changed to address the reasons for grant denial.

Grants are to be used only for commercial property. If the property is zoned for both residential and commercial use, grant funds and matching funds may only be used for the commercial property portion of the property. Grants may not be used for the construction of new buildings.

Tenants must have authorization from the property owner to apply for a grant and for the improvements proposed for completion.

Two bids must be submitted. One bid must be from a local (76531 zip code) business.

A picture/sketch must be submitted with each application of the current and proposed signage, awning, or building facade.

Work must not commence on any projects seeking grant funds until the grant has been approved by the Hamilton Economic Development Board of Directors. The Hamilton Economic Development Corporation may terminate any grant project that has not been completed one hundred eighty (180 days) from the approval of the grant.

All grants are reimbursement grants, and will only be funded after completion of the project in compliance with specifications approved by the Hamilton Economic Development Corporation. Upon notification from the applicant that work has been completed in a satisfactory manner, and evidence has been provided that the contractors have been paid, the applicant may request a reimbursement.

Applications for Downtown Signage, Awning, and Façade Improvement Grants received within three years of a previous award may be denied.

Signage Grant Regulations

The Hamilton Economic Development Corporation will provide a grant in the amount of 75% of the cost of new signage, new signage installation, and removal of existing signage in a total grant amount not to exceed \$1000 per building.

New signage must be approved by the Hamilton Economic Development Board of Directors. The Hamilton Economic Development Corporation requires that all similar existing signage be removed. Applicants may request an exemption regarding the existing signage, which will be determined by the Board of Directors on a case by case basis.

Signage grant funds may be utilized for signage that is mounted flush along building facades, hanging signs that are attached to building facades, and window signage.

All signage must include a minimum of three different colors in a manner sufficient to attract the appropriate amount of business. Black and white signage will be required to include an accent color. Signage that is reflective of Hamilton's history and character is strongly encouraged over the usage of simple signage.

Awning Grant Regulations

The Hamilton Economic Development Corporation will provide a grant in the amount of 75% of the cost of a new awning, new awning installation, and removal of existing awnings in a total grant amount not to exceed \$5000.00 per building.

New awnings must be approved by the Hamilton Economic Development Corporation. The Hamilton Economic Development Corporation requires that all existing awnings be removed.

The purpose of the awning program is to improve the overall look of downtown Hamilton and create a more cohesive Downtown District.

Façade Improvement Grant Regulations

The Hamilton Economic Development Corporation will provide a grant in the amount of 75% of the cost of façade improvements in a total grant amount not to exceed \$5,000.00 per building.

Façade Improvements must be approved by the Hamilton Economic Development Corporation.

Façade grant funds may be utilized for the following purposes:

- Visible exterior improvements such as storefronts, display windows, or architectural lighting
- Exterior enhancements that improve or create additional outdoor space for customer use
- Removal of elements that cover original architectural design and details
- Overall replacement of architectural design elements that have structural deficiencies
- Demolition required to facilitate approved façade improvements
- Improvements that enhance access and address ADA compliance issues
- Painting
- Removal of paint to expose original façade
- Landscaping

Façade grant funds may not be utilized for the following purposes:

- Physical or visual removal of architecturally important features
- Installation of aluminum or vinyl siding
- Construction of new buildings
- Improvements to properties that are residential or improvements to any portions of property that are residential
- Statues, fountains, or planters



Downtown Signage, Awning, and Façade Improvement Grant Program Application

Please submit a separate application for each type of grant. Combined applications will not be accepted. Applications must include two bids from appropriate businesses/contractors and a picture/sketch of the current and proposed signage, awning, or building facade. Incomplete applications will not be presented to the Board of Directors for review. Applications must be completed in their entirety by the 1st Wednesday of the month to be considered on the next agenda.

Date: _____

Type of Grant: (Please circle one) Signage Awning Façade

Business Name: _____

Business Address: _____

Primary Contact Phone Number: _____

Primary Contact E-mail: _____

Property Owners: _____

Description of the Project:

If you have questions, or for assistance with your application, please contact Sarah Bauman at the HEDC (254) 386-5954 or edc@hamiltontexas.com Please return completed applications to the HEDC, 103 ½ North Rice, Hamilton, TX 76531.

I, _____, acknowledge that I am receiving a grant from The Hamilton Economic Development Corporation. I, _____, also acknowledge that I have read the requirements for receiving grant funds and will follow all the restrictions as required as part of the grant program. If I am found in violation of terms of the grant program, I understand that I will be required to repay all expended grant funds.

Signature, Grant Applicant

Date

Property Owner Authorization

(This portion of the application must be completed if Applicant is not the property owner)

I, _____, hereby affirm that I am the owner of property located at _____, Hamilton, TX, and give my authorization for _____ to make improvements outlined and described in the attached grant application.

Signature, Property Owner

Date

Acknowledgement of Repayment Penalties for Employing Undocumented Workers

Section 2264.051 of the Texas Government Code requires that Economic Development Corporations put certain language in any agreement involving public subsidies to businesses. The language must specify that the business does not and will not knowingly employ an undocumented worker. The language must also require repayment of the subsidy with specified rate and terms of interest if the business is convicted of federal immigrations violations under 8 U.S. Code Section 1324a(f).

I, _____, acknowledge that I am receiving a grant from the Hamilton Economic Development Corporation. I, _____, also acknowledge that neither my business nor I will knowingly employ an undocumented worker. If I, _____ or my business, _____, is convicted of federal immigrations violations under 8 U.S. Code Section 1324a(f) within three (3) years of receiving a grant from the Hamilton Economic Development Corporation, I will be required to repay the entirety of the grant funds plus interest at the annual interest rate of 6% from the date of violation until paid.

Signature Date

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY	Date Received:	Application 100% Complete ___ Two Bids Submitted___ Picture/Sketch of Project Design ___
Board Meeting Date:	Applicant Notified of Meeting Date:	Approved ___ Denied ___
Award Date:	Completion Deadline:	Date Completed: