

City of Youngstown Façade Program Guidelines

The City of Youngstown (the “City”) Façade Program is a grant fund in the amount of \$1,000,000.00 contributed by City of Youngstown American Rescue Plan Act (“ARPA”) Funds to Valley Economic Development Partners, Inc. (“Valley Partners”). The Program was created by the City of Youngstown in order to assist small businesses through the City of Youngstown with the financial help in upgrading the façade of their commercial properties. The below guidelines establish the businesses eligible for funding, the type of business expenses that can be paid with grant funds, the application and award process, and the process for administration of program funds.

I. General Description of the Program

Eligible businesses will be able to apply for a match of up to Fifty percent (50%) of a façade project with a maximum of Twenty Thousand and 00/100 Dollars (\$20,000).

Applicants must submit an application to Valley Partners which will review the same for completeness and compliance with these guidelines. The first round of funding for which applications will be taken will commence January 16, 2023 and run until all funds are depleted. All complete applications submitted during that time, that are in compliance with the eligibility criteria set forth below, will be reviewed by Valley Partners and a recommendation made to the Grant Review Committee.

II. Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for the Façade Program funds, City of Youngstown businesses must meet the following requirements:

- A. The business may operate as a for profit or Not-for-profit entity.
 - a. The business may be a sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation (both S and C), professional association, limited liability company, limited partnership or limited liability partnership, the business must be registered with the Ohio Secretary of State to do business in the State of Ohio. If sole proprietorship, the business shall provide documentation of its existence as a business, including, but not limited to income tax returns for the business, trade name registrations, business banking or credit accounts, or similar documents. If a partnership, the business shall either be registered with the Ohio Secretary of State to do business in the State of Ohio, or, if not registered, shall provide documentation similar to that required for a sole proprietorship.
 - b. The business must be privately held.
 - c. The principal place of business for the business must be a Commercial Property located within the City of Youngstown.
 - d. The business must not be in receivership or bankruptcy.
 - e. The business must not have any outstanding City of Youngstown municipal income tax obligations.
 - f. Businesses must be open and operating at time of application or operating within 90 days of receiving the Façade Program funds.
 - g. Recipients shall sign a loan agreement upon approval. Said agreement will have a five (5) year term. The business must (i) Remain in business and (ii) Remain at the approved location within the City of Youngstown during the loan agreement term. Each year, twenty percent (20%) will be forgiven on the amount granted. If the Business closes or relocates, the agreement is defaulted on and will become a loan due and payable into the City of Youngstown Façade Program account held by Valley Partners.

- B. The businesses shall not be one of the following:
 - a. Adult entertainment establishment, Bank, savings and loan or credit union or Franchised business not locally owned and independently operated. Determination of an eligible business is at the discrepancy of the City.

III. Eligible expenses

- A. Each applicant must include an itemization of the expenses submitted as a part of the project. Eligible expenses include costs associated with updating the exterior façade of a building. Costs typically include painting, siding, fencing, landscaping, signage and paving. Roofing is ineligible.
- B. Applicants portion of the project must be paid for before Façade Program dollars are paid directly to Vendors.

IV. Application and Award Process

- A. Businesses that wish to apply for the Façade Program from the Program shall submit to Valley Partners the following documents by email in electronic format:
 - A fully complete application on the form prescribed by the City of Youngstown. A complete application must include the following documents:
 - a. Corporate Business documents; Articles of incorporation or organization from State of Ohio; Code of Regulations, By-Laws or Operating Agreement naming who is authorized to sign on behalf of the Company.
 - b. Two years of business tax returns or two years of projections for a startup
 - c. Itemized list including estimates/quotes from Vendors for the proposed project.
 - d. Evidence that applicant has funds to cover the remaining costs of the project above the Façade Program amount applied for.
 - e. Rendered drawings/description of project to be presented to the City's Design Review Committee for approval per the Design Review Regulations provided.
 - f. \$350 application fee made payable to Valley Partners
- B. Upon receipt of each application, the Valley Partners will examine the same for completeness and ensure that all items required by Section IV(A) are included. In the event the application is incomplete and/or the applicant fails to include all information required by Section IV(A), above, then Valley Partners will notify the applicant by email of the incomplete submission and missing information. Failure to respond within seven business days with the required information to the satisfaction of the review team will result in the company losing its place in the queue.
- C. All applications that are complete and contain all information required by Section IV(A), above, will receive a sequential Façade Program application number indicating the order that the complete application was received. This number will factor into the review as a way of prioritizing distribution of funds in the event all funds have been expended.
- D. All complete applications that receive a Façade Program application number and required documentation will be considered for funding and a recommendation made to the Design Review Committee. To be funded, an application must receive approval from the City's Design Review Committee.

- E. After approval from the Design Committee and prior to receiving any Façade Program funds, the business shall sign a loan agreement between itself and Valley Partners. At a minimum, the loan agreement will (i) require the business to use all Façade Program funds for the purposes set forth in these Guidelines and its application, (ii) require the business to follow and comply with all other provisions of these Guidelines, (iii) be conditioned on the business providing all information on the application, accompanying documents and verification of expenses in a true and accurate manner, (iv) require the business to be subject to audit and reimbursement of funds in the event it fails to comply with items (i) to (iii), and (v) require the business to indemnify and hold harmless Valley Partners and all contributors of Façade Program funds.
- F. The Recipient will pay for its portion of the project BEFORE Façade Program funds will be disbursed. Façade Program funds will be disbursed directly to Vendors and not to recipients.
- G. Valley Partners will hold any and all documents, track Façade Program applications and closings, maintain accurate listing of Façade Program loans funded and forgiveness amounts and send monthly reports to the City.
- H. Nothing contained herein is intended to obligate or bind, nor shall it be construed to obligate or bind, Valley Partners or any grantor of funds to the Program, to make, award, or fund any grant to any entity whatsoever, and no entity shall have any claim, action, or cause of action against Valley Partners or any grantor of funds for failure to make, award, or fund any grant. All determinations will be made with the best efforts of Valley Partners and the Grant Review Committee and in the spirit of meeting the objectives of this program. The decisions of the Grant Review Committee are final, not subject to appeal and fully within the discretion of the Grant Review Committee subject to whatever process modifications they find necessary in the dispatch of their work to meet the guidelines of the program. A statement to this effect shall be included in the application.