



BRAINERD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Exterior Improvement Grant Program

PURPOSE

The Brainerd Exterior Improvement Grant Program provides incentives to stimulate external and visible investment in Downtown and Corridor properties. Property owners and business owners are encouraged to consider improvements incorporating aesthetic, environmental, cultural, and historical elements that enhance the character and architecture of Brainerd. These improvements should create a cohesive, attractive environment. The program provides a 50% matching grant for actual construction costs up to \$5,000 per property on a pay-for-performance basis. Eligible projects include permanent exterior building and landscape improvements visible from a public right-of-way. The EDA will allocate up to \$20,000 in 2024 to fund eligible projects.

- **Eligibility - Property must be a commercial use, mixed-use, or industrial use and must be permitted in the respective zoning district.**
 - All work must be done on the property/building exterior and result in a publicly visible improvement.
 - All work must be done in compliance with the Brainerd City Code and necessary permitting. Work must include the correction of any known exterior building code violations.
 - Work already in progress or performed prior to project approval will not be eligible for funding.
 - Funds may be used for construction of permanent exterior building improvements, awnings, signage, windows, doors (including front/back door accessibility), brick repair and/or site landscaping resulting in a publicly visible improvement. Other uses may also be eligible if prior approval is granted by the Brainerd Economic Development Authority.
 - Operational or ongoing maintenance expenses will not be considered (Ex. roof repair).
 - Properties must be taxable existing structures occupied by commercial or mixed-use tenants in a commercial zoning district.

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- Properties may not include properties with delinquent taxes or special assessments, in litigation, condemnation or receivership.
- **Application Guidelines** - The Executive Director and President of the Brainerd Economic Development Authority (EDA) is responsible for grant approval. BLAEDC is responsible for program oversight and administration of the grant. Applicants must comply with the following guidelines:
 - Only fully completed applications will be reviewed.
 - Only one application per person/business will be reviewed.
 - Business owners under a lease submitting applications must include written consent of the property owner.
 - Projects must be completed in a timely manner from the date of approval (within one year with a maximum extension of six months). As indicated by the pay-for-performance model, funds will be distributed after the project's completion and reimbursement is requested.
 - No applications will be accepted for retroactive projects.
- **Grant Disbursement** - Awarded funds will be dispersed as a reimbursement to the applicant upon submittal of receipts and/or invoices for supplies purchased and inspection which certifies the work completed is in accordance with the EDA approval and other City ordinances. The business must operate for two years after the grant disbursement or repayment is required.
- **City Code and Permit Requirements** - Recipients must comply with all requirements of State law, City Code, and EDA policy and program guidelines. Applicants agree to work cooperatively with the EDA and City as follows:
 - Provide design drawings, proposed work specifications, and architectural materials in a timely manner.
 - Attend various meetings, reviews, etc. with representatives of either the City or EDA to expedite various stages of the project.
- **Recipient Responsibility** - All work to be completed shall be the sole responsibility of the property owner. The EDA/ BLAEDC administers the grant program herein and the EDA/ BLAEDC are not responsible for any work undertaken as a result of the grant. The owner hereby holds the City and BLAEDC harmless for any and all liability commencing out of any work constructed and paid for the façade improvement grant herein.