



Downtown Improvement Grant Application

Application Submission Deadline: June 1, 2025 by 2:00 P.M.

APPLICANT/PROPERTY OWNER INFORMATION

Name : _____

Address : _____

City : _____ State : _____ Zip : _____ Years Owned _____

Phone : _____ E-Mail : _____

Current Use of Building : _____

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENT COSTS

Please include a contractor's written estimate and supporting documents with this application to include photographs and scope of work. Grantees will be required to complete their project as defined in the scope of work. It is suggested the estimate be increased by 10-20% when determining the total project cost.

Select project type:

☐ General Facade Improvements (max \$50,000) OR ☐ Minor Facade Improvements (max \$2,000)

Total Project Cost : _____

Grant Request (maximum \$50,000 or 75% of total cost) : _____

Matching Funds (minimum 25% of total cost) : _____

***Projects must meet all eligibility requirements to be scored.**

OFFICE USE ONLY

Date of Application : _____ Approval Date : _____

Amount of Grant : _____

More Information :

📍 400 Clinchfield St., Suite 100
Kingsport, TN 37660

📞 423-392-8822

🌐 www.downtownkingsport.org

Robin Cleary, Senior Director

THANK YOU - ROBIN CLEARY



Downtown Improvement Grant Guidelines

Program Overview

The objective of the Downtown Kingsport Association Downtown Improvement Grant (DIG) is to provide incentives to improve the facades of commercial buildings within the Downtown Redevelopment District in downtown Kingsport. By improving the appearance of building facades, the program serves to increase the economic vitality of this area. Improved aesthetics also increase property values, enhance the marketability of space within the buildings, and draw businesses and residents to the area.

Approximately \$265,000 is available for general facade improvement projects and \$15,000 for minor facade improvement projects.

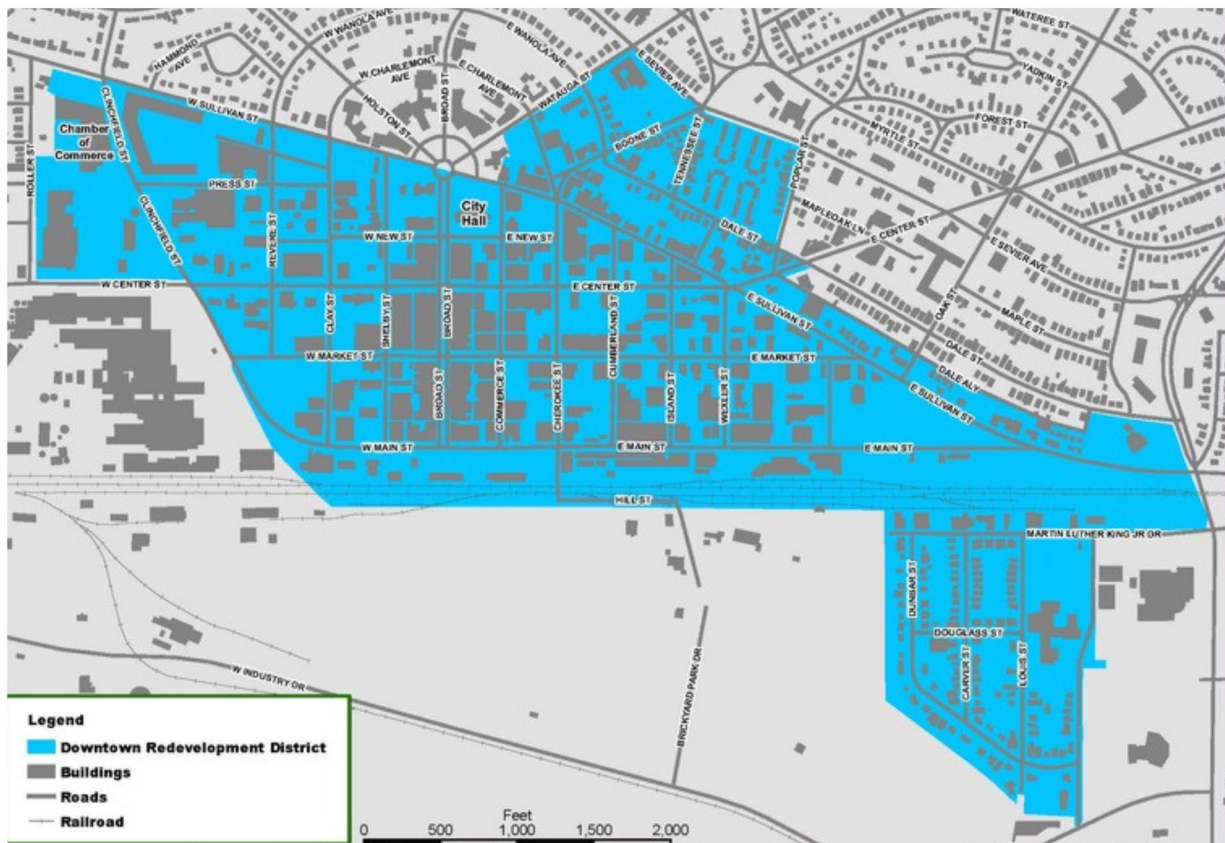
The Downtown Kingsport Association DIG Program is administered by Downtown Kingsport Association with the assistance of the First Tennessee Development District (FTDD) and the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development (TNECD).

Eligible Properties

Certain commercial and mixed-use properties located in the Downtown Redevelopment District are eligible for DIG program (see map below). Please note that in the event that the District boundaries change, the Downtown Kingsport Association DIG Program boundaries will change as well.

Procurement Requirements

Projects selected for DIG funding must adhere to a procurement process dependent upon the total project cost. For projects totaling \$49,999.99 and below, the grantee must obtain three quotes. If three quotes cannot be obtained, documentation must be provided showing an attempt was made to obtain three quotes. For projects totaling \$50,000.00 and above, sealed bids must be received. DKA and FTDD will assist grantees with the procurement process to ensure requirements are met.





Downtown Improvement Grant Guidelines

Eligibility Requirements

Work that does not comply with the eligibility requirements are subject to reduction or retraction of award.

General Facade Improvements may be done within these areas:

- Masonry repairs/repainting brick
- Repair/replace/preserve historically significant architectural details
- Storefront reconstruction
- Removal of false facade
- Cornice repair
- Exterior painting and stucco (if currently painted)
- Awnings and canopies
- Window and door repair or replacement
- Permanent exterior signage integrated into the storefront design
- Permanent exterior lighting
- Repair/replacement of gutters and downspouts
- Deckings and stairs
- Visible electrical/mechanical equipment enclosures

All work must adhere to the Kingsport Design Review Guidelines found at: kingsporttn.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Final-Kingsport-Design-Guidelines-Manual-September-9-2019.pdf

Minor Facade Improvements may be done within these areas:

- Repair/replacement of awnings and canopies
- Repair/replacement of gutters and downspouts
- Permanent exterior lighting
- Visible electrical/mechanical equipment enclosures

- All work must be on the exterior of the building and result in a publicly visible improvement. Work on the roof is not eligible.
- Only work begun **after** approval by the DIG Committee will be eligible for reimbursement.
- Work should begin within 90 days of the grant award.
- Work must be complete by **June 30, 2026**.

DIG funds cannot be used to correct outstanding code violations, for property damaged by collision, acts of nature or occurrences covered by insurance.

The following types of property are not eligible for DIG consideration:

- Tax delinquent property
- Property who owner has any other tax delinquent property.
- Property in litigation.
- Property in condemnation or receivership.
- Property owned by religious groups.
- Property owned by 501(c)3 non-profit organizations on which taxes are not being paid.
- Properties on which taxes are being paid, but have non-profit use, such as schools, charities, clubs or organizations, etc.
- Properties exclusively used as residential.
- Daycare centers
- National Franchises or Retail Chain Stores
- Funeral Homes



Downtown Improvement Grant Guidelines

Application Review

Applications will be reviewed for completeness and recommended for consideration by the DIG Committee. These factors may give priority to project that meet the following criteria:

- Is the project in a historic district or is it in an individually eligible historic building?
- Will the project positively contribute to downtown Kingsport's redevelopment efforts?
- Will the project ameliorate a blighting influence?
- Will the project substantially leverage more investments than the required matching amount of the grant?
- Will the grant result in an improvement that would not be made otherwise?
- Does the property comply with the outlined DIG Design Guidelines?

Award Reimbursement

Reimbursement shall be limited to no more than 75% of the total cost of eligible improvements. The maximum amount of the grant is \$50,000 per grantee for general facade improvements and \$2,000 per grantee for minor facade improvements. Grant awards will be made on a case by case basis by the DIG Committee. Necessary government approvals, building permits and taxes are not eligible items for reimbursement.

The DIG Committee reserves the right to refuse reimbursements in whole or in part for work that:

- Does not conform to the program design guidelines
- Does not conform to the proposals submitted with the application and authorized by the DIG Committee.
- Are not commensurate with the workmanship and cost customary to the industry
- Are not completed by **June 30, 2026**. Since the DIG cannot reserve funds indefinitely, your grant may be subject to cancellation if not completed by the June 30, 2026 date.
- Request for extension must be made early in the project phase to be considered. Please contact Robin Cleary for further information.
- All work will be inspected to ensure compliance with approved plans. Any changes to the approved plan will approval by the DIG Committee.

Required Materials for Reimbursement

Reimbursement can be expected in approximately 1-2 months after all of the following documentation has been submitted. Once items are submitted to Downtown Kingsport Association, all items will be submitted to the State of Tennessee for reimbursement subject to their standards.

- Copies of all paid invoices and corresponding canceled checks (proof of payment) for all work covered by the DIG. All project expenditures must be paid by check, money order, or credit card. The invoices must be marked paid, signed, and dated by the contractor/vendor. Cash payments are not accepted.
- Color photographs of completed work.

Protecting the Investment

It is not the intent of the program to allow the selling of property and profiting from DIG funded improvements. The owner(s) must repay the program if the property is sold within five (5) years of the project's completion. A deed restriction document to this effect will be recorded at the county register of deeds. Part of the owner's obligation is forgiven each year as follows:

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| • 0-12 MONTHS | 100% REPAYMENT |
| • AFTER 1 YEAR | 80% REPAYMENT |
| • AFTER 2 YEARS | 60% REPAYMENT |
| • AFTER 3 YEARS | 40% REPAYMENT |
| • AFTER 4 YEARS | 20% REPAYMENT |
| • AFTER 5 YEARS | 0% REPAYMENT |



Downtown Improvement Grant Questions

I. **PROJECT SCOPE (1-10 points)** - Please provide a description of the proposed improvements, cost estimate from a licensed contractor, and /or quotes from material suppliers. Include drawings or photographs to illustrate the work that is proposed. If funded, the project must be completed exactly as proposed in the project scope. The project must be completed within one year of the grant being awarded.

II. **PROJECT IMPACT - VISUAL (1-25 points)** - Describe the impact the improvements will make on the overall appearance of the building. Will the project significantly alter the building's appearance (i.e. removal of false facade, re-opening bricked up windows, etc.)? Projects that are more visually significant will receive more points.



Downtown Improvement Grant Questions

_____ **III. PROJECT IMPACT - ECONOMIC (1-25 points)** - How will the proposed improvements positively impact the city's economy? Does the building currently contain a business or will contain a business at the completion of the project? Will any jobs be created as a result of the improvements? If so, how many? If no jobs will be created as a direct result of the improvements, describe what other economic benefits will result.

IV. PROJECT IMPACT - HISTORIC

Approximately what year was your building constructed (0 points)

_____ Can you provide a brief history of the building including any major modifications since construction? For example: prior uses, significance in city history, prior significant owners. (1-5 points)



Downtown Improvement Grant Questions

V. FINANCIAL COMMITMENT

Although a 25% match is required, would you be able to contribute more than 25% if it improved your chances of selection? If so, how much about 25% would you be able to provide? *(1-10 points)*

Grant recipients will be expected to maintain their properties in the future. What is your plan to ensure the building exterior remains in good condition? *(1-20 points)*

VI. DOWNTOWN KINGSFORT ASSOCIATION SUPPORTER

Were you or your business a Downtown Kingsport Association financial supporter for the year 2023-2024 or 2024-2025? *(5 points for "yes")*

VII. PHOTOGRAPHS

Please include photographs of the outside building facade and the proposed area to be improved. Provide a detailed description of each photograph.

VIII. TOTAL INVESTMENT (FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY)

What is the total investment you are making in your building? Please report grant funds, matching funds, and any additional investments in both the exterior and interior to include work performed by the building owner/building lessee.



Downtown Improvement Grant Questions

***Project must meet all eligibility requirements to be scored.**

*By signing below I/we hereby acknowledge that I/we have read and understand the Downtown Kingsport Association Downtown Improvement Grant Program Overview and Guidelines and that all information provided with the Downtown Kingsport Association Downtown Improvement Grant Application. The application is complete and factual to the best of my/our knowledge. Misrepresentation may result in the rescission of the grant funds.

Building Owner Signature(s):

Date:





Downtown Improvement Grant Scoring Rubric

***Project must meet all eligibility requirements to be scored.**

PROJECT SCOPE

- 1-3 points: Low impact or non-eligible property with low aesthetic improvement
- 4-7 points: Non-structural elements (i.e. mechanical improvements)
- 8-10 points: Repair/Replace/Preserve historically significant architectural details

PROJECT IMPACT: VISUAL

- 1-8 points: Minimal visual impact.
- 9-15 points: Moderate impact.
- 16-25 points: Full transformation of existing facade.

PROJECT IMPACT: ECONOMIC

- 1-8 points: No/little economic impact. 0 jobs created.
- 9-16 points: Moderate economic impact. Less than five (5) jobs created.
- 17-25 points: Significant economic impact. Five (5) or more jobs created.

PROJECT IMPACT: HISTORIC

- 0 points
- 1-3 points: Lack of evidence or little evidence of historical owners or history.
- 4-5 points: Documented and verified information on past tenants/owners/historical significance.

FINANCIAL COMMITMENT

- 1-5 points: Non-verified or weak financial information
- 6-10 points: Verified financial information
- 1-7 points: Unestablished maintenance plans.
- 8-14 points: Partially drafted with only short-term goals.
- 15-20 points: Fully designed plans with financial resources to accomplish.

DOWNTOWN KINGSFORT ASSOCIATION SUPPORTER

- No: 0 points
- Yes: 5 points

Total Points: _____

Grant Award Date: _____

Grant Award Amount: _____