

## Downtown Vibrancy Grant

The Huntsville Main Street Program seeks to enhance the vibrancy and aesthetic appeal of Downtown Huntsville by providing financial assistance to commercial property and/or business owners for improvements that activate sidewalks and storefronts. These enhancements are designed to create a more colorful, welcoming, and engaging pedestrian experience, encouraging foot traffic, increasing business visibility, and strengthening the sense of place in the historic downtown district.

This reimbursement-based program complements the Downtown Historic Restoration and Life Safety Grant programs and is available to business and property owners within the nine-block Huntsville Main Street District.

The Downtown Vibrancy Grant is setup as a single payment reimbursement to property owners per building/business, and in some situations, tenants. **Grants are available on a 50/50 matching basis with a cap of \$2000 per grant (\$4,000+ total project costs).** There are no minimum requirements for project costs. Example \$200 total project, will qualify for \$100 reimbursement. Qualified applicants will be required to match the awarded grant funds dollar for dollar. Approved applicants will only receive one Downtown Vibrancy Grant annually per fiscal year.

The total funds available in the matching grant program at any given time may restrict the City's ability to fully fund a grant request. Matching grants shall be processed on a first come – first served basis, as grant monies are limited and can be competitive. Consideration will include the necessity of the repairs or improvements, and the benefit to the building and the general public. No grants will be awarded for work that has already been completed. All applications will be reviewed and approved by the Huntsville Main Street Advisory Board before any eligible work may begin. If awarded a reimbursement grant, any deviation from the approved grant project may result in the total or partial withdrawal of the grant. Any construction that begins before the approval of the Huntsville Main Street Advisory Board of grant proposals will void any reimbursements from being awarded.

1. **Eligibility:** Projects should focus on activating the sidewalk and storefront experience. Examples of eligible improvements include, but are not limited to: Planters and potted plants, landscaping, sandwich board or A-Frame Signs, window displays and lighting, outdoor dining and seating, public art (murals, sculptures, ect.)- design/locations require prior approval. This list is not exhaustive, please set a meeting with the Main Street Manager to discuss your project.
  - a. Property must be located within the Huntsville Main Street District
  - b. Applicants must be the property owner or business tenant with property owner's written consent.
  - c. Applicants must be in good standing with the City of Huntsville (no outstanding taxes, fees, or code violations).
  - d. Work must comply with all local and state regulations.
  
2. **Application Requirements:** All grant applications must include the following:
  - a. Completed application form
  - b. A current photograph of the exterior of the property focusing on the areas of proposed work

- c. Drawings/plans detailing the proposed improvements including color samples and/or final material selections
- d. Itemized cost estimates

The completed application and associated documents must be submitted to the Main Street Manager on the second Friday of each month to be reviewed the following week by the Huntsville Main Street Advisory Board. Any applications received after the second Friday of each month will not be reviewed until the following month.

3. **Approval Process:** The program applications will be reviewed by the Main Street Advisory Board to ensure all funds are awarded to viable improvements that are in compliance with the Main Street program's Community Transformation Strategic Work Plan & Downtown Action Plan. This work plan has been submitted, reviewed, and approved by the Texas Historical Commission & City Council. Please be aware that in an effort to assist as many applicants as possible with the limited program funds available, the City of Huntsville cannot guarantee that all matching grant requests will be funded. The Main Street Advisory Board will consider without limitations the following:
  - a. The property owner must comply with all local and state laws and regulations affecting the property, its rehabilitation and future use.
  - b. The property owner must be in good standing with the City of Huntsville. Any fines, fees or unpaid taxes owed to the City of Huntsville by the property owner must be paid in full, prior to the application being accepted.
4. **Project Process**
  - a. Applicants are required to obtain all City permits and City approvals required for construction if a grant is issued.
  - b. Restoration and/or improvements must comply with all state and local laws including all ordinances and regulations of the City of Huntsville.
  - c. Projects must begin within sixty (60) days from the date of grant approval and must be completed within the City's budget year, ending September 30.
  - d. The Main Street Manager must approve any changes made to the scope of work. Funding will not be awarded for any changes made under the construction without prior approval. Significant changes to the scope of work will require approval from the Main Street Advisory Board.
5. **Reimbursement:** Matching grant monies will be disbursed at the completion of restoration and/or improvements and with the acceptance of work by the City of Huntsville and the Main Street Advisory Board. Documentation and proof of cost must be submitted with a written request for reimbursement.