

Main Street Murfreesboro Property Enhancement Grant

Program Guidelines

About the Grant

The Main Street Murfreesboro Property Enhancement Grant is designed to encourage investment in properties located within the Main Street Murfreesboro district (see Exhibit A). The grant provides financial assistance for projects that serve a clear public purpose and benefit, particularly those that preserve and enhance the character of our historic downtown.

Eligible projects include exterior building renovations and improvements that contribute to public safety. Priority is given to work such as replacing or repairing awnings and windows, enhancing storefronts and upper-level facades, and repainting or removing paint from previously painted buildings. These enhancements support the district's historic charm while stimulating revitalization.

Research shows that improved building appearance can increase property values, enhance the marketability of interior spaces, and attract new businesses, residents, and visitors—helping to ensure a vibrant, thriving downtown.

This is a reimbursement-based grant program and requires a dollar-for-dollar match from the building owner or tenant. The maximum grant award is \$5,000, unless an exception is approved by the Grant Committee.

Timeline

Applications open in April and are due by May 11, 2026. If you are waiting for the necessary documentation that may delay your application, please contact Sarah Callender in advance to discuss your situation.

Grant recipients will be announced by the Main Street Design Committee no later than June 8, 2026. All approved work must be completed within one year from the date the award is issued.

Please note: This is a reimbursement-based grant. The applicant (either the building owner or the tenant) must be prepared to fully fund their proposed improvements upfront. Reimbursement from Main Street Murfreesboro will only occur once the project is complete, all contractors have been paid in full, and receipts and cleared checks are submitted as proof of payment.

Eligibility

To qualify, the building must be located within the Main Street Murfreesboro footprint (see Exhibit A). **Applicants must either be the property owner or a tenant with the property owner's written consent for the proposed improvements.**

While Main Street membership is not required, Downtown Business Members will receive additional points during the application review process.

Eligible exterior improvements include (but are not limited to):

- Awnings
- Painting (excluding unpainted masonry, unless pre-approved)
- Paint removal (sandblasting is not permitted)
- Storefront renovations
- Window and door repair or replacement
- Signage
- Exterior lighting
- Masonry repair or tuckpointing
- Cornice repair or replacement
- Gutter and downspout repair or replacement
- Parapet wall repairs

Eligible interior improvements are limited to items that provide a clear public safety benefit, such as:

- Fire sprinkler systems
- Fire separation improvements

Other safety-related interior enhancements may be considered upon request.

Projects should go beyond routine maintenance and meaningfully contribute to the building's historic character and safety.

Ineligible expenses include:

- Landscaping
- Parking lots
- General interior renovations
- Temporary or non-permanent fixtures
- New construction
- Property acquisition
- Debt refinancing
- Delinquent tax payments
- Projects already in progress or completed prior to grant approval
- Professional and permit fees

Grant recipients must wait one year before applying again for this program.

All improvements should reflect the building's architectural integrity and complement the surrounding traditional streetscape. Highly visible side facades (e.g., those facing public streets or parking areas) are encouraged to be included in the scope of work.

Administration

The Main Street Murfreesboro Property Enhancement Grant is administered by the Main Street Murfreesboro Board of Directors, with applications reviewed and approved by the Main Street Design Committee. Priority will be given to projects that offer the highest impact toward the district's enhancement goals. For any inquiries, please contact: sarah@downtownmurfreesboro.com

Application Process

Step 1 – Application Submission:

- Complete the application and include all required attachments as listed.
- Provide detailed descriptions of your proposed project to maximize scoring.
- Include photographs and attach contracts or letters from contractors and designers if available.

Step 2 – Mailing or Delivery:

- Email your completed application by 4 p.m. on May 11, 2026.

- Alternatively, hand-deliver the application to:
Sarah Callender, Executive Director
Main Street Murfreesboro
225 West College Street
Murfreesboro, TN 37130
- You will receive a confirmation email once your application is received.

Step 3 – Review and Notification:

- The Main Street Design Committee will evaluate and score applications, and all applicants will be notified of the decision by email by June 8, 2026.

Step 4 – Project Execution:

- Approved projects must be completed within one year of grant approval.
- Any modifications required during construction must be pre-approved by the Main Street Murfreesboro Design Committee.
- All construction work must comply with applicable building codes.
- It is the applicant's responsibility (or that of their designee) to secure any necessary permits and manage construction.

Step 5 – Project Verification:

- Completed improvements will be inspected to ensure compliance with the submitted plan.
- You must submit photographs that clearly document the finished work.

Step 6 – Reimbursement Submission:

- Prior to reimbursement, the applicant must provide the Main Street Murfreesboro Design Committee with all project receipts and proof of payment.

Open Records

Main Street Murfreesboro, or its duly authorized representatives, will have access to all books, documents, papers, and records related to the grant program for monitoring, auditing, and examination purposes. Documentation supporting all costs and components of the improvements must be retained for a minimum of three (3) years following project completion.

Main Street Murfreesboro reserves the right to reject any or all applications or to request additional information from applicants.

Zoning

All projects are subject to relevant State, Federal, and local zoning or building codes, as well as design guidelines. It is the contractor's responsibility to verify and comply with all such requirements before commencing work.

Main Street Murfreesboro Property Enhancement Grant Application
****Projects must be completed one year from acceptance of the grant.***
****Project must not have already been started before grant submission.***

Main Street Murfreesboro Property Enhancement Grant Application – 2026

*Projects must be completed within one year of acceptance of the grant. The project must not have begun before the grant submission. This is a reimbursement-based grant.

Section 0 – Eligibility & Applicant Certifications

I certify the building is located within the Main Street Murfreesboro district footprint.

I certify that no work has begun on the proposed project prior to this application.

I certify that I am either the property owner or have written permission from the property owner to undertake these improvements.

I understand this is a reimbursement-based grant and that I (or the property owner) am responsible for funding the full project cost upfront.

I understand this program is intended for property enhancements, not routine maintenance, and that my project must provide a visible improvement to the building and/or public safety.

Applicant Initials: _____ Date: _____

A. Applicant & Property Information

Street Address where work will be performed (must be in the Historic Downtown footprint):

Year Built (approximate if unknown): _____

Applicant Name: _____

Name of Business (if applicable): _____

Type of Business: _____

Mailing Address (if different from street address): _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Property Owner (if different from applicant): _____

Owner Mailing Address: _____

Owner Telephone: _____

Owner Email: _____

If the applicant is not the building owner, please attach a letter from the owner approving the proposed project.

B. Project Scope

(This section corresponds to "Project Scope" in the scoring rubric – Max 10 points)

B-1. Overall Description of Proposed Improvements

Provide a brief but clear description of the scope of work. Include which parts of the building will be affected (e.g., storefront, upper façade, side façade, signage, windows, doors, lighting, safety systems).

B-2. Detailed, Itemized Cost Estimate

Attach itemized contractor estimates/bids. In the space below, summarize the major line items:

Contractor Name(s): _____

Summary of Work & Estimated Costs (you may attach a separate itemized sheet):

B-3. Enhancement vs. Routine Maintenance

Explain how this project goes beyond routine maintenance (such as simple cleaning or minor repairs) and results in a true enhancement of the property:

C. Project Impact – Visual

(This section corresponds to “Project Impact – Visual” in the scoring rubric – Max 20 points)

C-1. Impact on Building Appearance (Max 10 points)

Describe the current condition of the building façade and what issues will be addressed (e.g., peeling paint, failing windows, non-historic materials, false fronts, covered windows, etc.). Then describe how the project will change the appearance of the building.

C-2. Impact on Downtown Streetscape & Business (Max 10 points)

Describe how the proposed improvements will positively affect:

- The appearance of the downtown streetscape
- The visibility and curb appeal of your business
- Customer or visitor experience, city morale, and/or potential retail sales

Is this building on a corner or a highly visible side façade (e.g., facing a parking area or major pedestrian route)?

Yes No If yes, briefly describe the visibility: _____

D. Project Impact – Historic

(This section corresponds to “Project Impact – Historic” in the scoring rubric – Max 20 points)

D-1. Building History & Significance (Max 10 points)

Provide a brief history of the building, including:

- Approximate year constructed (if not already provided above)
- Prior uses (e.g., types of businesses or functions)
- Any known significance in Murfreesboro’s history
- Any notable or long-term owners or tenants

You are encouraged to attach any supporting documentation (such as historic photographs, Sanborn maps, newspaper clippings, or information from local archives) if available.

D-2. Preservation of Historic Architectural Elements (Max 10 points)

Will the project preserve any exterior historic elements (e.g., original windows, doors, transoms, cornices, brick details) or restore elements that were previously removed or covered?

Describe which historic elements will be preserved or restored, and the materials and methods to be used (e.g., gentle paint removal methods; in-kind repair; historically appropriate replacement materials; preservation guidelines followed).

E. Summary of Proposed Improvements

(0 points – for reviewer information and documentation)

- Repainting
- Paint Removal (non-sandblasting methods only)
- Storefront Renovation
- Awnings
- Windows
- Doors
- Signage
- Exterior Lighting
- Masonry Repair / Tuckpointing
- Cornice Repair / Replacement
- Gutter / Downspout Repair or Replacement
- Parapet Wall Repairs
- Fire Sprinkler System (interior – public safety)
- Fire Separation Improvements (interior – public safety)
- Other: _____

F. Project Budget & Funding

1. Estimated Total Cost of Improvements: \$ _____
2. Total Reimbursement Requested (up to 50% of eligible costs, max \$5,000 unless exception approved): \$ _____
3. Source(s) of Matching Funds (briefly describe): _____

G. Project Timeline & Contractor Information

1. Proposed Project Start Date: _____

2. Proposed Completion Date (must be within one year of grant approval): _____

3. Contractor Information (may attach additional contractors on a separate page):

Contractor Name: _____ Phone / Email: _____

Has this contractor worked on historic properties before? Yes No Not sure

H. Main Street Business Membership

(This section corresponds to Membership in the scoring rubric – Max 5 points)

Is your business a 2026 Main Street Murfreesboro Business Member?

YES (5 points) NO (0 points)

If yes, please list the business name as it appears on your membership:

I. Required Attachments

A. Proof of Owner Permission (if applicant is not the owner)

B. Color Photo(s) of Existing Building Façade(s)

C. Proposed Building Elevations or Renderings (if available)

D. Color Samples, Materials Board, or Product Specifications (paint, windows, doors, awnings)

E. Itemized Cost Estimates / Contractor Bids

F. Any Historic Documentation (photos, articles, maps, etc.) – optional but encouraged

J. Statement of Understanding

I (We), as applicant/owner of record, make this application to the Main Street Murfreesboro Property Enhancement Grant Program for matching grant funds to be used for eligible improvements to the building listed in this application. I understand that participation in the program requires me to follow program guidelines that govern improvements made under the program, including improvements made with my portion of the project cost.

I am willing to comply with all program guidelines and timelines and to execute any required documents. I understand that these guidelines are in addition to, and do not replace, local, state, or federal regulations. I further understand that this is a reimbursable grant program, meaning that successful applicants must undertake and incur the full cost for grant-funded projects prior to receiving grant funds, that all work must be completed consistent with the approved scope of work before reimbursement is issued, and that I must remain an active participant in the program process from beginning to end.

Applicant Signature: _____ Date: _____

Owner Signature (if different): _____ Date: _____