

*City of Victoria*

# **Building Improvement Grant Program Guidelines**

## **Section 1-1. Purpose**

The City of Victoria finds that the protection, enhancement, and preservation of landmarks of historical importance and significance are necessary to promote the economic, cultural, educational, and general welfare of the public. The Building Improvement Grant is to provide financial support to commercial property owners, eligible businesses, and developers to improve existing buildings for expansion and site activation. This program is intended to:

- a) Provide financial assistance to enhance and/or activate a vacant or occupied building developing the building into residential space, retail, restaurant or night life venue.
- b) Stabilize and improve property values.
- c) Promote development of ADA compliant structures/fixtures in historic buildings.
- d) Strengthen the economy of the City by protecting and enhancing the City's attractiveness to residents and visitors, as well as provide support and stimulus to business.
- e) Meet 2021 Downtown Master Plan goal: Downtown will have a dedicated and sustainable incentive program to encourage development and redevelopment in the area.

In order to facilitate the preservation of downtown, the City of Victoria is offering incentives that will improve existing properties and businesses within the Downtown Business District and Main Street Program District.

## **Section 1-2. Administration**

The program is administered by the City of Victoria Main Street Program.

## **Section 1-3. Eligibility Criteria**

All of the following eligibility criteria must be met:

- a) Eligible property must be within the Main Street Program District or the Downtown Business District. See attached map.

- b) Applicants must agree to maintain the subject building in good repair for five years from the completion of the project. Applicants must agree not to change or alter property improvements funded through the Building Improvement Grant program for a minimum period of three years from the date of the final reimbursement check.
- c) Property must be deeded to the applicant or tenant-occupied. In the case of a tenant-occupied structure, the applicant must have the owner's consent. If leasing, the participant/applicant must
  - 1. have written approval for participation in the program from the property owner,
  - 2. have at least two years remaining on the lease and be in good legal and financial standing with the property owner. The participant/applicant must not have any major actual or pending criminal claims or bankruptcy filings.
- d) All taxes and other government fees and assessments must be current on the property.
- e) Property cannot be subject to an Order for Demolition.
- f) Applicant must complete Design Review Team consultation and approval prior to entering into a contract with the City of Victoria.
- g) Eligible Expenditures (mostly or exclusively interior)
  - 1. Architectural and engineering fees related to eligible expenses
  - 2. Elevator installation and/or repair
  - 3. Repairs of other fixtures or structures which bring the building into ADA compliance
  - 4. Fire suppression systems
  - 5. Underground petroleum/chemical tank remediation
  - 6. Foundation leveling/repair
  - 7. Hazardous materials mitigation/removal (example: Lead based paint remediation, asbestos survey, asbestos removal, etc)
  - 8. Grease trap repair, replacement or installation
  - 9. HVAC system repair, replacement or installation
  - 10. Major interior plumbing
  - 11. Major interior electric
  - 12. Structural repairs to improve safety and integrity of structures and or fixtures intended for pedestrian traffic
  - 13. Ventilation system repair, replacement, installation including duct work, vent hoods, etc.
  - 14. Removal/replacement of incompatible interior finishes or materials
  - 15. Restoration of interior historic murals or ghost signs
  - 16. Mold remediation
  - 17. Major interior cleaning
  - 18. Recessing or reconfiguring entrances for the purpose of ADA compliance

- h) Ineligible Expenditures (mostly or exclusively interior)
1. Appliances
  2. Capital equipment purchases
  3. Cleaning (minor)
  4. Decorative treatments
  5. Furniture
  6. Government fees
  7. Incompatible new construction
  8. Legal, financing, leasing, rental and other administrative and financing expenses
  9. Maintenance activities
  10. Owner and/or/tenant labor
  11. Paint, floor, wall, window or ceiling treatments
  12. Repair tools and equipment
  13. Security Systems
  14. Taxes
  15. Wall construction and partitions
  16. Other (as determined on a case-by-case basis)

#### **Section 1-4. Grant Assistance**

- a) Program assistance is available for two different types of projects:
- 1) Building Restoration – As listed in Section 1-3. Grants are available with a cap of \$50,000. (For example: Applicant must provide a \$50,000.00 dollar match if awarded the cap amount of \$50,000.00 thus making it a total cost of \$100,000.00)
  - 2) The Building Improvements Grant administrators reserve the right to issue a grant greater than \$50,000 but no greater than \$100,000 on a case-by-case basis dependent on how great the economic impact will be to the downtown business district and the Main Street Program district. Applicants requesting more than \$50,000 may be required to present their request and project scope to the Victoria Sales Tax Development Corporation for final approval.
  - 3) Other improvements may be allowed on a case-by-case basis that are necessary to stabilize a structure, improve energy efficiencies and/or meet building code requirements.
- b) Grants are provided on a 50/50 matching basis up to the maximum grant amount.
- c) Grants will not be provided for work that is already completed.
- d) The maximum grant assistance available per property is limited to available funds as established by the Victoria Sales Tax Development Corporation.
- e) The grant is set up as a single payment reimbursement to the applicant upon completion of the project.

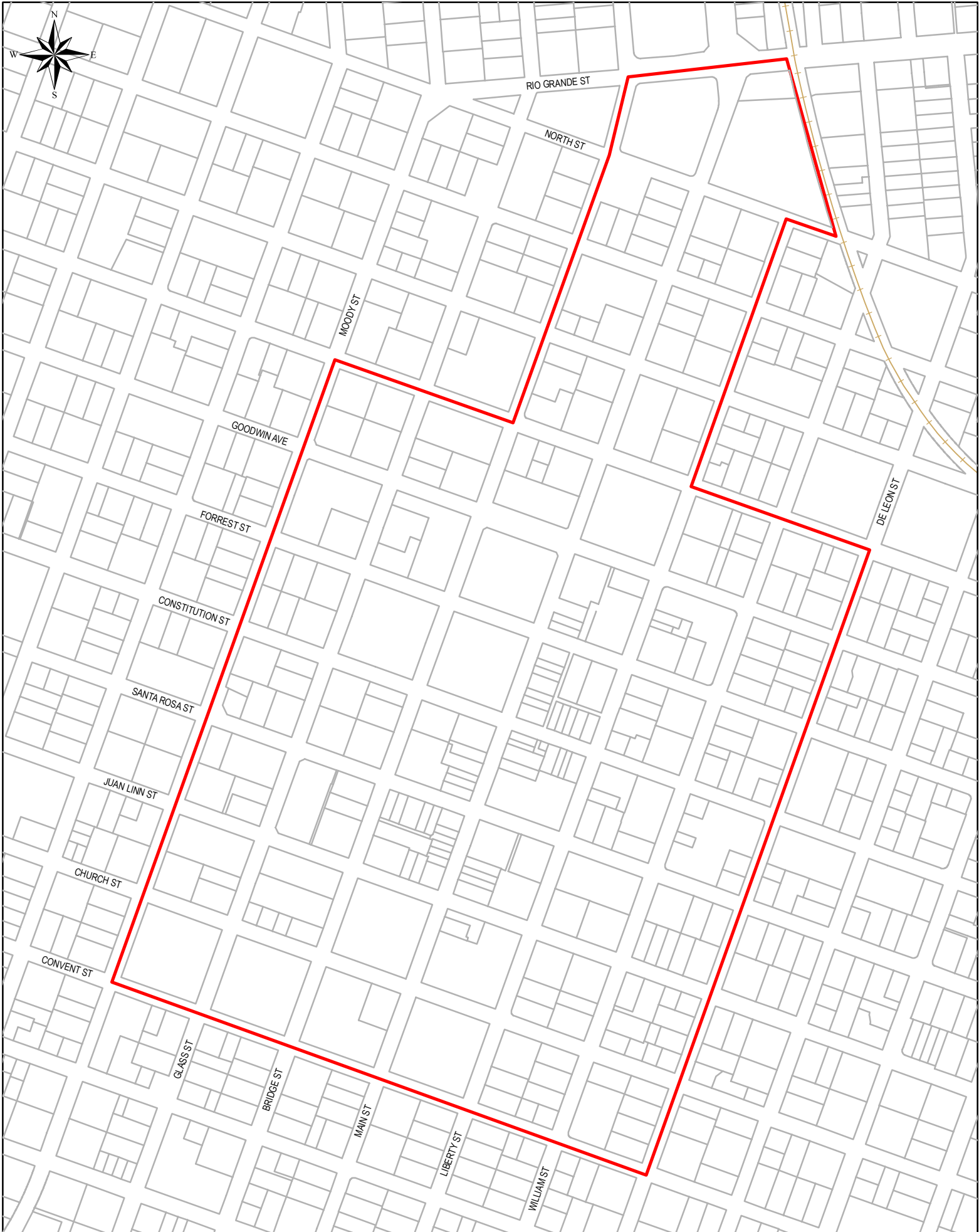
## **Section 1-5. Grant Application Procedure**

- a) At the start of the fiscal year (October 1<sup>st</sup>), the City will publish an announcement of funding availability and hold a Building Improvement Grant workshop
- b) If funds are still available after the initial application period, grants will be awarded on a first come, first serve basis until total funds are depleted.
- c) Property owner submits an application along with any required supporting documentation (i.e. drawings, photographs, contractor bids, tax certificate, etc.). Application will be reviewed by Victoria Main Street, Development Services and Fire Marshall Staff for completeness.
- d) After submittal of a grant application, a preliminary site visit will be made by Victoria Main Street and Development Services staff. The site will be photographed, and repairs/maintenance reviewed with the property owner. Applicant must obtain approval from the Design Review Team before they are able to proceed with the grant process.
- e) Property owner and City will execute a contract outlining the scope of work eligible for reimbursement.
- f) Work must be completed within one year from the date of the contract.
- g) Grants will be set up as a single payment reimbursement to the applicant upon completion of the project. Applicant must provide all necessary paid receipts/invoices in order to receive payment.
- h) If at any time problems occur relating to the quality of work or work is not completed in accordance with the specifications outlined in the application and approval can not be granted, the contract can be terminated, and the City will have no further obligation to the owner.

## Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (36 CFR 67)

Grant recipients shall comply with the following standards when rehabilitating properties:

1. Every reasonable effort shall be made to provide a compatible use for a property which requires minimal alteration of the building, structure or site and its environment, or to use a property for its original intended purpose.
2. The distinguishing original qualities or character of a building, structure, or site and its environment shall not be destroyed. The removal or alteration of any historic material or distinctive architectural features will disqualify any building from this program.
3. All building, structures, and site shall be recognized as products of their own time. Alterations that have no historical basis and which seek to create an earlier appearance may disqualify any building from this program.
4. Changes which may have taken place in the course of time are evidence of the history and development of a building, structure, or site and its environment. These changes may have acquired significance in their own right, and this significance shall be recognized and respected.
5. Deteriorated architectural features shall be repaired rather than replaced, wherever possible. In the event replacement is necessary, the new material should match the material being replaced in composition, design, color, texture, and other visual qualities. Repair or replacement of missing architectural features should be based on accurate duplications of features, substantiated by historic, physical, or pictorial evidence.
6. The surface cleaning of structures shall be undertaken with the gentlest means possible. Sandblasting and other cleaning methods that will change or damage the historic building materials shall not be undertaken.
7. Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties shall not be discouraged when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant historical, architectural or cultural materials, and such design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material, and character of the property, neighborhood, or environment.
8. Wherever possible, new additions or alterations to structures shall be done in such a manner that if such additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the structure would be unimpaired. New additions should be compatible to the present structure.



Main Street Program Boundary Map