



**FROM:** City of Victoria Communications Office  
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## **Victoria Main Street Program offers grants for historic properties**

*PHOTO #1: The old federal building, 210 E. Constitution St., received a Façade Grant through the Victoria Main Street Program in fiscal year 2023.*

*PHOTO #2: Greek Bros. Oyster Bar & Grill, 205 E. Constitution St, received a Façade Grant through the Victoria Main Street Program in fiscal year 2023.*

Applications have reopened for two Victoria Main Street Program grant opportunities designed to help downtown business owners make improvements to historic properties.

Property owners, or renters who have the property owner's permission, can visit [www.victoriatx.gov/mainstreet](http://www.victoriatx.gov/mainstreet) to apply for the Façade Grant Program or the Building Improvement Grant (BIG) Program.

To be eligible for either program, a property must be listed on Victoria Preservation Inc.'s Historic Resources Survey or be at least 30 years old.

### **A two-way approach to preservation**

Main Street Manager Kate Garcia explained that each of the grant programs serves a different aspect of historic preservation. The Façade Grant Program helps to preserve or restore a property's appearance, while the BIG Program is focused on maintenance projects that may be needed to repurpose older buildings or bring them up to modern standards.

"Victoria's downtown master plan emphasizes the importance of preserving and celebrating downtown's history as part of the development process," Garcia said. "These programs are an excellent tool for encouraging business development that authentically highlights our historic downtown."

### **How it's funded**

Both programs are funded through the Victoria Sales Tax Development Corporation, which oversees the allocation of Type 4B sales tax revenue for community development projects.

A total of \$100,000 will be distributed through each program. Residents can apply for matching grants up to \$10,000 and must fund at least 50% of the total project cost; in other words, the maximum award amount is \$10,000 if the applicant funds at least \$10,000 of the project cost.

The grant funding will be provided as a reimbursement after the project is completed.

BIG Program projects are subject to approval by the Victoria Sales Tax Development Corporation board.

### **Façade Grant Program**

The Façade Grant Program covers exterior improvements related to a property's appearance. Projects that are eligible for this program include (but are not limited to):

- Preserving or restoring historical architectural elements
- Removal of newer elements that are not compatible with the original design
- New construction that is compatible with the original design
- Exterior murals
- Major cleaning

### **Building Improvement Grant (BIG) Program**

The BIG program covers interior or mostly interior improvements related to functionality or historic preservation. Projects that are eligible for this Program include (but are not limited to):

- Improving accessibility and ADA compliance
- Plumbing, electrical, and major structural/foundation repairs
- Addressing mold, asbestos and other hazards
- Restoration of interior historic murals or ghost signs

### **Tips for a successful application**

Garcia shared advice for improving a project's chances of being selected:

- Submit a complete application
- Include bids or estimates for the project
- Include site plans or sketches, if applicable

Applicants for the BIG Program should also attend a **predevelopment conference**. A predevelopment conference is a meeting with City staff to discuss a project and learn about code requirements, such as fire safety features and wastewater treatment.

To schedule a conference, contact Development Services at 361-485-3360.

### **Learn more**

To apply for a grant and to view the full list of eligibility requirements for each program, visit [www.victoriatx.gov/mainstreet](http://www.victoriatx.gov/mainstreet).

The Victoria Main Street Program and Building Brands Marketing will host a Main Street Meetup at **5:30 p.m. Oct. 16 at Building Brands Marketing, 120 S. Main St., Suite 500**, where new and prospective business owners can network and learn more about the grant programs and other resources.

Residents who have questions about the programs or the application process, or who are unsure if their properties are listed on the Historic Resources Survey, should contact Garcia at 361-485-3122 or [kgarcia@victoriatx.gov](mailto:kgarcia@victoriatx.gov).

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