



CITY OF  
**MONTICELLO**

Building Improvement Grant Program

## **Overview-**

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A Business District is a special taxing district that is financed through an increase in the retail sales tax rate on the sales of eligible items within the district of up to 1%. These funds are to be used to help finance public projects, as well public/private projects by way of a redevelopment agreement, for eligible expenses as defined by the Illinois Business District Act (65 ILCS 5/1-74.3-5). The City of Monticello City Council approved the Monticello Business District (MBD) by Ordinance 2019-40 in 2019, and extended the district in 2023 (Ordinance 2023-17), to include the majority of the commercial and industrial areas within the community.

To accomplish the objectives of the Monticello Business District (MBD) and assist with public/private redevelopment efforts, the City has created a Monticello Building Improvement Grant (BIG) program. BIG projects are deemed “public/private”, in that public funds are used for reimbursement upon completion of privately constructed/invested projects. The City of Monticello City Council funds the BIG program as part of the annual fiscal budgeting process. Any remaining funds not expended annually for this program may be used towards achieving the MBD goals for public/private and public projects, subject to Council approval.

All existing business and industrial-zone classified properties within the boundary of the Monticello Business District, that are not primarily used as residential dwellings are eligible to participate in the BIG program. The BIG program provides financial assistance through a scoring system to aid in eligibility and project appropriateness of each application received. The program will be administered by City of Monticello Staff. Applications received will be reviewed and receive an average score by a review committee made up of a representative of the Monticello Main Street Design Committee, the Monticello Chamber of Commerce Executive Director and a representative from the Planning & Zoning Board, with City Staff support from the Permit Technician, Community Development Director, and City Administrator. The review committee will make a recommendation to the City Council to approve or deny eligible applications for a recommended amount. All grants awarded are subject to City Council approval of a redevelopment agreement.

Projects are identified as any qualified or eligible private improvements that benefit the district area, and are in line with the goals stated in the approved Monticello Business District Plan. Potential, qualified improvements that can be reimbursed are enumerated in this program overview. For public/private projects, the City of Monticello is establishing this program to give financial assistance to eligible businesses to help fund these qualified improvements. To be eligible, building and/or business owners must complete and submit a Monticello Building Improvement program application during the grant application schedule stated in this document. Applicants for projects representing historic properties are strongly encouraged to seek input from a Monticello Main Street or Monticello Historic Preservation Commission representative, and all eligible applications should plan to have a scheduled site visit from a City of Monticello representative. All applications will then be reviewed and selected primarily based on objective, project appropriateness, and weighted criteria. The awarded business(es) will be notified within thirty days after the close of the application review period, and a Redevelopment Agreement (RDA) between the awarded business and the City shall be executed by the City Council in a timely manner AND prior to work commencing. The BIG program is a reimbursement grant program, providing a reimbursement of up to 50% of approved eligible project costs, with a maximum reimbursement of up to

\$10,000. Additional or larger projects may be awarded upon request, subject to funding availability, appropriateness, and City Council approval. Any financial assistance awarded by the City of Monticello will not be provided until all work is satisfactorily completed and inspected by City Staff, all project costs have been paid, all RDA deadlines and terms have been satisfied, and the City has issued a full certificate of occupancy for the project (where appropriate). In the event a project has not been completed by the stated deadline, the applicant may request an extension prior to the deadline of the funds. If the extension is not requested by the stated deadline, the applicant forfeits the grant award and any assurances from the City of Monticello.

### ***Objectives of the MBI Program-***

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As stated in the Monticello Business District Plan, funds received from the Monticello Business District as it relates to the Monticello Building Improvement Grant program are to be used to achieve the following objectives:

1. Improve and reduce the blighting conditions within the District.
2. Facilitate the repair, renovation, rehabilitation and restoration of deteriorated structures.
3. Provide assistance in facilitating the highest level of public safety to the community.
4. Enhance the sales tax base of the District through small business retention and recruitment.
5. Enhance the property tax base of the District by encouraging redevelopment and investment.

### ***MBI Program Application Guidelines-***

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To participate in the Monticello Building Improvement (MBI) program, the application must be completed and submitted during the application period stated in the policy schedule below. After the close of the application period, City Staff will conduct site visits, applications will be reviewed, and the projects will be awarded primarily based on objective, need and impact. Proposed projects for properties deemed “contributing” to the Courthouse Square National Historic District may have additional criteria to meet based upon appropriateness and impact of the improvements on the surrounding areas and overall District. If awarded, a redevelopment agreement between the awarded party(ies) and the City of Monticello must be executed by the City and the applicant and the City before any proposed work begins.

The following are minimum requirements that all applicants must meet to be eligible to participate in the BIG program:

1. The applicant must be the property owner or business tenant of an existing or incoming business (signed lease required) of a commercial or industrial-zoned property within the Monticello Business District. If the applicant is a tenant of the subject property, applicant must include the signed written consent form of the property owner for the project improvements.
2. Local and State taxes, permit fees, and City of Monticello licenses and service accounts must be current at the time of application, with no fines or ordinance violations unresolved. Proof of sales tax payments may be requested. Where applicable, the business must be in good standing with the State of Illinois.
3. A plan adequately describing the improvements to be performed along with official estimates or proposals for the work must be submitted at the time of application. The plan should include a project budget and construction schedule. The budget should identify total project costs,



funding sources, and proof that applicant has contingency funds (typically 10% of total project cost) available to address unexpected issues.

Additional Information:

1. If the grant is awarded, a Monticello Business District Redevelopment Agreement (RDA) must be executed between the applicant and the City Council prior to project commencing.
2. Applicant is limited to one application per two (2) years and applications are limited to one building/property per application, per round. If a reimbursement has been previously provided to a building project or an applicant within the last three (3) years, priority will be given to new applicants.
3. Preference will be given to locally owned, independent and non-franchised or non-chain businesses. Applicants of franchise or chain restaurants are eligible to apply, but may receive fewer points towards the overall score.
4. Applications for projects already under construction will not be considered. Projects already under construction are defined as projects specifically separate from the project proposed as part of this program. For example, a roof replacement that is already under construction would not be eligible, however façade work of the same building that has not commenced would be considered separate.
5. Sufficient funds must be available in the Monticello Business District fund of the City to be awarded.
6. Program application submittal does not guarantee program award.

***Eligible Reimbursable Costs for Public/Private Projects-***

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The Business District Development and Redevelopment Act (65 ILCS 5/1-74.3-1, *et seq.*) only allows Business District funds be used for eligible expenses. Reimbursement is authorized through an approved redevelopment agreement between the applicant and the City of Monticello City Council.

Examples of eligible project costs include, but are not limited to:

- Demolition and reconstruction of all or part of an existing building or structure
- Cost of materials affiliated with an improvement project for a structure
- Cost of labor affiliated with an improvement project, if labor is performed by someone other than property owner and/or applicant\*
- Façade reconstruction or improvements, including painting and tuckpointing
- Signage, murals and awnings (no billboards)
- Patio, landscaping or sidewalk improvements (private property only)
- Roof replacement or repairs
- Window or door replacement
- Life-safety improvements (fire suppression, firewall, sprinkler systems, etc.)
- Electrical or plumbing upgrades
- Mechanical improvements/ HVAC
- Interior and exterior ADA compliance



# BUILDING IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM

*\*Labor paid or reimbursed with the applicant’s use of Monticello Business District funds through the Monticello Building Improvement Program may be subject to the Prevailing Wage Act. Applicant agrees to follow all regulations as they relate to Prevailing Wage Act when securing labor for said project. Applicant must indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the City of Monticello and its employees and Council, from any Prevailing Wage Act claims that arise from the applicant’s use of the funds. For more information on the laws surrounding Prevailing Wage Rates, visit <https://www2.illinois.gov/idol/FAQs/Pages/prevailing-wage-faq.aspx>. Certified payroll may be requested of the applicant.*

**Ineligible Project Costs:**

1. Construction and repairs that have already been permitted, or that are ongoing, or have commenced prior to the BIG application and RDA approval.
2. Temporary Signage
3. Permit Fees
4. Proposed improvements that are not in compliance or keeping with the City’s comprehensive plan, the existing building’s character, or the character of the Courthouse Square Historic District.
5. Labor fees paid to property owner and/or applicant.
6. Unapproved or unauthorized changes to an approved project
7. Improvements that do not comply with all federal, state and city laws.
8. Furnishings, fixtures or equipment specific to an individual business’s operation
9. Working capital expenses (payroll, utilities, rent/mortgage, inventory, etc.)
10. Parking lot construction, resurfacing or striping

*NOTE: The City of Monticello shall not be responsible for the planning, design or construction of the improvements to subject property. No warranties or guarantees are expressed or implied by the description of, application for, or participation in the BIG program. Where appropriate, the applicant is advised to consult with licensed architects, engineers, building contractors, and attorneys before proceeding with the final plans or construction. Professional building plans may be required by the City as part of grant program approval. Construction must be completed in compliance with the adopted City regulation, including, without limitation, building codes. The City Council reserves the sole right to amend, modify, add, or delete any part or subpart of this program.*

**Application Schedule\*:**

	Round 1	Round 2
<b>Applications Accepted</b>	December 1 – 15	June 1 – 15
<b>Application Review/Inspection</b>	December 16 – January 15	June 16 - 30
<b>Award Announced</b>	January	July
<b>Redevelopment Agreement</b>	Council meeting, January	Council Meeting, July
<b>Project Completion Deadline**</b>	June 30	November 30
<b>Reimbursement</b>	Council meeting, July	Council meeting, December

*\*Dates are exact or the first business day thereafter.*

*\*\*Project Completion includes final inspection and submittal of all paid invoices to the City of Monticello. Timelines are subject to project feasibility, funding availability, and council approval. Additional deadlines may be considered pending council approval.*



# BUILDING IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM

## **Application –**

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To participate in the Monticello Building Improvement Grant program, a business owner must complete this application with all required information.

Pursuant to the program, the City will award the grant with reimbursable funds to eligible applicants determined by project impact, applicability, and score. Grant awards are made at the sole discretion of the City Council, funding availability, and impact on public infrastructure goals and objectives. Properties which are designated contributing properties to the Courthouse Square National Historic District are encouraged to follow the advice and recommendation from Monticello Main Street and the Historic Preservation Commission, and strongly advised to connect with these organizations for insight and advice prior to application submittal.

If a determination is made that the answers on this form are untrue, incomplete or deceptive, the application may be denied.

Completed applications should be returned to:  
City of Monticello  
c/o Director of Community Development  
210 N. Hamilton  
Monticello, Illinois 61856

## **Applicant Information –**

Applicant's Legal Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Project Information-**

What is the address of the proposed improvements? \_\_\_\_\_

Is the premise owned or leased?  Owned  Leased

If leased, it is mandatory that the owner of the premises, in his/her individual capacity, or if a business, by an authorized representative of the business, must sign and provide their information and consent to the improvements proposed to be performed through completion of the building owner consent form.

What type of business will this grant be impacting? (ex. Restaurant, retail, service?) If the property is vacant, list potential uses.

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Description of desired improvements: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What are your long-term goals for this location? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How will this improvement help your business? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Have you reached out to a representative from Monticello Main Street or the Monticello Historic Preservation Commission regarding this project? If so, who?

\_\_\_\_\_

Anticipated Start date for Project: \_\_\_\_\_ Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*\* Project completion includes final inspection and submittal of all paid invoices to the City of Monticello, and must be on or before the completion deadline stated in the application schedule.*

Estimated Cost of Improvements: \_\_\_\_\_ (Land and real estate improvements only)

Contractor(s) or individual(s) to perform the project: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\*Attach any architectural design plans, engineering plans, construction drawings, bids from contractors and/or other plan specs to this application.

\*Attach any current condition pictures, as well as renderings or examples of proposed improvements to this application.

Have you received funding from any City of Monticello program within the last 2 years? If so, when and for what? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



Please list any community involvement you have or currently participate in. (Volunteerism, organizational membership, event participation, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

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# BUILDING IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I, \_\_\_\_\_, (full name printed) swear or affirm under penalty of law that I have read and understood all of the conditions and questions in this Application and that all of the foregoing information and statements submitted in this Application are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, and that all responses to the questions are full and complete, omitting no material information.

The undersigned applicant also agrees to indemnify and hold the City of Monticello harmless from any losses, claims, damages, liabilities, and related expenses (including the fees, charges and disbursements of any counsel or consultant for the City) incurred by the City or asserted against the City by the undersigned or any third party arising out of, in connection with, or as a result of (i) the information submitted by the applicant for this Application, (ii) the processing of this Application, (iii) the issuance or denial of a permit, or (iv) any actual or prospective claim, litigation, investigation or proceeding relating to any of the foregoing, whether based on contract, tort or any other theory, whether brought by a third party or the applicant, and regardless of whether the City is a party thereto. Furthermore, it is the understanding of the applicant that labor paid or reimbursed with the applicant's use of Monticello Business District funds through the Monticello Building Improvement Program may be subject to the Prevailing Wage Act. Applicant agrees to follow all regulations as they relate to the Prevailing Wage Act when securing labor for said project. Applicant agrees to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the City of Monticello and its employees and Council, from any Prevailing Wage Act claims that arise from the applicant's use of the funds.

Monticello Building Improvement Program application submittal does not guarantee program award.

Subject to City of Monticello City Council approval, this application, together with the attached Building Improvement Program description, shall become a binding Agreement for which the undersigned hereby warrants full authority to both execute this Agreement and to bind the entity in which they are signing on behalf of.

Any material misrepresentation of information in this document will be grounds for denial of a permit.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Applicant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



# BUILDING IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM

**Monticello Business District  
Building Improvement Grant Program  
Building Owner Consent Form**

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Building Owner Name

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Mailing Address (Street, City, Zip)

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Phone Number

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Email Address

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Property Address

As the legal owner of the property above, I hereby grant authorization for the above tenant of said property to complete the improvements as indicated on this application and to seek reimbursement assistance related to that work. I understand my responsibilities and obligations as the property owner under this application. I agree to indemnify and hold the City of Monticello harmless from any losses, claims, damages, liabilities, and related expenses (including the fees, charges and disbursements of any counsel or consultant for the City) incurred by the City or asserted against the City by the undersigned or any third party arising out of, in connection with, or as a result of (i) the information submitted by the applicant for this Application, (ii) the processing of this Application, (iii) the issuance or denial of a permit, or (iv) any actual or prospective claim, litigation, investigation or proceeding relating to any of the foregoing, whether based on contract, tort or any other theory, whether brought by a third party or the applicant, and regardless of whether the City is a party thereto. Furthermore, it is the understanding of the property owner and applicant that labor paid or reimbursed with the applicant's use of Monticello Business District funds through the Monticello Building Improvement Program may be subject to the Prevailing Wage Act. Applicant agrees to follow all regulations as they relate to the Prevailing Wage Act when securing labor for said project. Owner and applicant agree to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the City of Monticello and its employees and Council, from any Prevailing Wage Act claims that arise from the applicant's use of the funds.

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Building Owner Signature

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Date

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Tenant Signature

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Date



***Application Checklist***

In order for the application to be accepted, please include the following attachments:

Completed Application

Professional estimate(s) for work to be completed with rendering of completed project, and project schedule. (Include color samples, material list, etc.)

Current pictures of project area

Pictures or examples of proposed improvements

Design Plans (as directed by the City of Monticello)

Signed Acknowledgement

Signed Building Owner Consent (if applicant is not the owner)

**Scoring Scale**

The following are components that may contribute to recommending award of a Building Improvement Grant. Some categories carry a larger weight than others. A minimum average application score of 70 may be required in order to be eligible for funding.

<b>IMPACT:</b> <i>Certain buildings and businesses are important to the community's character because of their location, size, and/or architectural details.</i>	<b>Points</b>			
Key, highly visible elements of the building will be improved.	1	2	3	4
The building is highly visible due to its location (prominent intersection, larger than surrounding properties, etc.)	1	2	3	4
Improvements will significantly impact revitalization efforts in the community	1	2	3	4
Improvements apply to more than one story of one façade or storefront	1	2	3	4
Net Points				
X 2				
<b>Total Points</b>				

<b>DESIGN:</b> <i>Some changes may impact a property's aesthetics significantly.</i>	<b>Points</b>			
The plan is reasonably consistent with the character of the neighborhood	1	2	3	4
Proposed improvements will enhance the aesthetics of the building	1	2	3	4
The proposed work complements neighboring properties.	1	2	3	4
A professional designer or consultant from Monticello Main Street or the Monticello Historic Preservation Commission contributed to the plan.	1	2	3	4
Historic characteristics are enhanced and/or restored. <i>(leave blank if N/A)</i>	1	2	3	4
Net Points				
X 2				
<b>Total Points</b>				

<b>SUSTAINABILITY/PERMANENCE:</b> <i>Some improvements have a greater, lasting value than others and will remain relevant to the property over time.</i>	<b>Points</b>			
Improvements are more than temporary. Improvements have a lasting value and will secure the integrity of the property	1	2	3	4
Project includes a maintenance plan for the improvements	1	2	3	4
Applicant owns the building or is a tenant and plans to invest in additional projects for the subject building	1	2	3	4
<b>Total Points</b>				

<b>LIFE SAFETY/ ADA COMPLIANCE: (COMPLETED BY CITY STAFF)</b> <i>The improvements address a significant life-safety issue (wiring, plumbing, fire suppression) or provide ADA compliance.</i>	<b>Points</b> (1- no; 2- yes)	
Project address a potential life-safety threat (electrical, plumbing, HVAC, fire suppression)	1	2
Project will address a documented safety concern by City Staff	1	2
Project will provide improvements in accordance with ADA accessibility standards	1	2
Net Points		
X 2		
<b>Total Points</b>		

<b>COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTIONS:</b> <i>Businesses that focus on the community as a whole build a better place for people to live, visit, work, and enjoy. Priority will be given to businesses that are active in the community.</i>	<b>Points</b>			
Applicant participates in downtown organizations and events that promote the community.	1	2	3	4
Applicant actively promotes the community and their business.	1	2	3	4
Applicant keeps area around the business clean and free of debris on a consistent basis.	1	2	3	4
Applicant is a good neighbor; little to no violations, problems, etc.	1	2	3	4
<b>Total Points</b>				

<b>NEW BUSINESS, OR EXISTING BUSINESS RETENTION OR EXPANSION:</b> <i>Projects that focus on the development of a vacant or underutilized property will receive priority.</i>	<b>Points</b>			
Business type is new to downtown and is fitting for the district.	1	2	3	4
New or existing is rehabilitating a vacant and/or underutilized property.	1	2	3	4
New or existing business increases interest in downtown and the amount of traffic (vehicular and pedestrian)	1	2	3	4
<b>Total Points</b>				

<b>Miscellaneous:</b>	<b>Points</b>			
The business is locally owned and independent, non-franchise or chain-affiliated.	1	2	3	4
The project overwhelmingly positively impacts economic activity in the Monticello Business District area.	1	2	3	4
The project uses green technology and/or sustainable building materials that still follow all regulations, provisions and guidelines.	1	2	3	4
<b>Total Points</b>				

**Total Points:** \_\_\_\_\_ / 122