



TOWN OF SNOW HILL

MD Department of Housing & Community Development:

Community Legacy Rehabilitation Grants for
Commercial & Residential Capital Improvements

July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022 (FY2022)

Grant Application Guidance Document

Snow Hill Incorporated Area

Town of Snow Hill
103 Bank Street
Snow Hill, Maryland

Phone: (410) 632-2080

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DHCD FY2021

Introduction

The Town of Snow Hill has received funding from the Community Legacy program of the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). These funds will be utilized toward rehabilitation grants to business and residential property owners located in the incorporated limits of Snow Hill for interior and/or exterior improvements to permanent structures.

This program is designed to aid in the revitalization of Snow Hill by fostering the growth of new businesses and assisting expanding businesses, as well as reducing blight, improving the value and aesthetic or historical character of residential or business structures, and improving accessibility and the health and safety of its inhabitants. Its objectives are to improve the physical structure of both the interior and exterior of commercial and residential buildings. This program also helps to preserve historical structures which are architecturally significant and to address any health and/or safety issues by eliminating code deficiencies.

This activity will directly impact property owners in Snow Hill by providing them with grant funds for approved building rehabilitation projects.

Snow Hill is committed to advancing and modeling equity, diversity, accessibility, and inclusion in all aspects of our community. Snow Hill is committed to embracing equity and non-discrimination regardless of race, religious creed, color, age, gender expression, sexual orientation, class, language, and/or ability.

Application Process

1. Grant applicants must own the property they are proposing to rehabilitate. Commercial tenants who wish to apply for these rehabilitation funds must have written signed/notarized approval from the owner of the building.
2. **All applicants must be aware that Community Legacy grant funds are generally awarded on a reimbursement basis:**
 - Grantees must have sufficient operating funds available to allow them to expend those funds on project expenses, provide the Town with copies of paid invoices, cancelled checks, and any other requested documentation, and then wait to be reimbursed for those expenditures. This can sometimes take up to 45 days, so each applicant must be aware that this is a condition of the award.

- – **However, based on circumstances and need, a direct payment of contractors can be arranged.** As outlined in this document, applicants who do not have the resources to perform the project and be reimbursed after the fact, may be eligible for a zero-out-of-pocket option whereby the Town directly pays the costs of the project after demonstration of acceptable completion of each phase is provided.
- All payments by the Town will be directly to the contractor, and based on a phased approach (if applicable), such that acceptable progress must be verified before the next payment is made available.
- A payment schedule for the project must be made available prior to initiation of work.
- All advancements will be paid directly to the contractor following successful and verifiable completion of the project or each phase of the project.

The maximum amount any applicant may request in any competitive funding round is \$20,000. However, due to limited funding for this fiscal year (ending June 30, 2022), current requests are limited to **\$10,000 or less.**

3. Matching Requirements:

- The default minimum matching requirements under this grant program is 50%. That is, the owner will match the Town one for one on the total cost of the project up to \$20k, or the approved amount of the grant.
- However, this program can provide grants from 50% (or less) up to and including 100% of the project, depending on need, circumstances, urgency and impact.
- Any degree of match above 50% will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the Project Review Committee.
- Applicants who wish >50% match are required to demonstrate through providing income information or otherwise the need for greater than the default match.

4. Prospective applicants must contact the Town of Snow Hill to obtain the necessary grant application paperwork. Applications are available on the Town's website at snowhillmd.gov.

5. Applicant must review all grant guidelines, conditions, and forms prior to submission of a grant application.

6. THE GRANT APPLICATION MUST INCLUDE:

- A complete description of the project, including how the Scoring Elements and Enhancement Factors (if applicable) presented below apply to the project or applicant,
 - Pictures that show the current conditions of the building or item,
 - Drawings or a detailed description showing what the proposed renovation will look like when completed,
 - A completion schedule for the project including milestones,
 - Estimated costs of the project (must be obtained by a qualified professional licensed in the state of Maryland),
 - “Before” and “After” pictures are required for reimbursement.
7. If the building contains any code deficiencies, these deficiencies must be corrected before any other improvements are made with the Community Legacy grant funds. The internal review committee will check all applications with the Snow Hill Code Enforcement Officer.
8. All approved project applications will be sent to the Maryland Historic Trust (MHT) for their approval prior to a green light for initiation of the project. Therefore, all project applications should attempt to keep the integrity of the historical structure(s) intact (where applicable) in order to speed approval from the MHT.
9. Should grant funds be available following each year’s initial grant application deadline and Project Review Committee determinations, subsequent application opportunities will be made available until all grant funding is utilized for reach fiscal year’s budget cycle.
10. If grant funds are awarded for a specific renovation project, any modifications or change to the scope of the project requires written permission from the Town of Snow Hill.
11. No reimbursements will be made until all paperwork, including receipts, proof of payment and after pictures, have been completed and submitted to Town Hall.

Improvements that Qualify for Funding

The target area is defined as the incorporated Town of Snow Hill. Please review the map shown in Exhibit 1 for the boundaries of this area. Only capital projects may be funded through this grant program. A capital project is a project that helps maintain or improve a physical asset – land, structures, bricks and mortar, major equipment purchase. Examples include

property acquisition, new construction, rehabilitation, architectural & engineering drawings, site development, demolition, and deconstruction. See below for examples of eligible projects.

Examples of Eligible Projects (Not a complete list)

- Exterior and/or interior painting.
- Removal and replacement of inappropriate or incompatible exterior finishes and/or materials.
- Reconfiguring of existing doors and entrances.
- Repairing or replacing existing window systems.
- Floor treatments
- Electrical
- Plumbing
- Lighting
- Permanent fixtures
- Walls and Ceilings
- Interior doors
- ADA compliance changes
- Rehabilitation of vacant properties
- Signage – new, repairing, removing and replacing.
- Exterior building and sign lighting, display area lighting.
- Awnings – new, repairs, or replacement of existing.
- Sidewalk repair and rehabilitation
- Fencing
- HVAC

All funded projects must convey with the building upon change of ownership.

Ineligible Expenses

- Expenses incurred prior to receipt of project approval.
- Labor/sweat equity costs put in by building owner and/or applicant

Project Scoring and Ranking

All project applications will be scored by a Project Review Committee (PRC) comprised of non-governmental community members that will use the following as a guide. All eligible projects will be funded in the order of their score as long as funds remain available. The following is an outline of aspects that the PRC will use to prioritize eligible projects.

- Categories (equal weight):

- Commercial – 70% of available funds
 - Residential – 30% of available funds

 - Project Scoring Elements (in order of priority):
 - Environmental, Health and Safety
 - Pedestrian access, Americans with Disabilities Act compliance
 - Blight removal/beautification/repair/expansion
 - Commercial signage
 - Historic restoration/preservation
 - HVAC/plumbing other internal non-public-facing projects.

 - Scoring Enhancement Factors (in order of weighting factor)
 - Urgent/exigent/new-to-town business – 40%
 - Low-income applicant (evidence of income level is required) – 30%
 - External/public facing/business expansion – 20%
 - Advances one of Six Core Strategies in the TOSH Strategic Plan – 20%
 - Improves accessibility – 20%
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Application Form

The project application form can be found on the Snow Hill website at www.snowhillmd.gov.

Please direct any questions to:

David Burt, Grants Administrator

103 Bank Street

Snow Hill, Maryland 21863

410-632-2080

General Conditions

1. Applicants must be up to date on their water/sewer bills in the Town of Snow Hill, and all real estate, and personal property taxes.
2. The Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) must review the project for its impact on all structures, and, if required, approve the architectural plans and specifications for the project.
 - *No work may be initiated prior to approval of MHT and the Town Hall staff.*
 - Town Hall staff will seek this approval on behalf of the applicant.
3. Applicants must understand that this is a competitive funding process, and that submission of a grant application is NOT a guarantee of approval for funding. Grants will be awarded based upon the merits of the individual projects that are proposed and their adherence to the guidelines mentioned in the application paperwork.
4. Completed grant applications and all the required attachments must be received by the Town of Snow Hill as stipulated by the Town Hall. Once received, the applications will be reviewed by the Projects Review Committee.
5. It is expressly understood and agreed that the applicant shall be solely responsible for all safety conditions and compliance with all safety regulations, building codes, ordinances, and other applicable regulations. If required, a building permit must be obtained from the Code Enforcement Officer in Town Hall of Snow Hill.

6. All work initiated prior to final grant approval will be ineligible for funding.
7. It is expressly understood and agreed that the applicant will not seek to hold the Town of Snow Hill, its agents, employees, officers and/or directors liable for any property damage, personal injury, or other loss related in any way to the approved project.
8. The applicant shall be solely responsible for hiring and executing an agreement with a general contractor who is licensed to operate in the State of Maryland. Applicant shall ensure that said contractor provides insurance coverage for comprehensive public liability, property damage liability / builder's risk, and workers' compensation.
9. Applicant must certify that there are no hazardous materials located on the property, that it will not cause or allow any hazardous materials to be placed on the property, and that the property is in compliance with all applicable Federal and State environmental laws and regulations.
10. Upon completion of the project, all debris and construction materials are to be removed from the property and disposed of properly. The applicant agrees to maintain the property and improvements, including but not limited to promptly removing graffiti, sweeping and shoveling in front of the property, and otherwise complying with the Code of the Town of Snow Hill.
11. The applicant agrees to return a pro-rated amount of the grant money received if the improvements are ever removed within 5 years, while the property is under their ownership.
12. The applicant authorizes the Town of Snow Hill to promote an approved project including but not limited to displaying a sign at the site, during and after construction, and using photographs and descriptions of the project in their materials and press releases.
13. The Town of Snow Hill shall have the right to refuse reimbursement to the property/business owner if the Town believes the work is unsatisfactory or the improvements are not being completed according to the approved application.
14. The Town of Snow Hill will not pay more than the approved grant amount should the scope of work and/or cost increase due to unforeseen circumstances.

15. The Property/Business Owner shall provide evidence of payment(s) made to each contractor/vendor by providing a copy of the invoice and a copy of the cancelled check or other proof of payment for that invoice for each payment request to be reimbursed by the Town of Snow Hill.
16. The Town will only provide reimbursement upon completion and inspection of the renovation project.
17. At the Project Review Committee's discretion, exceptions to any of the guidelines may be approved due to special conditions or situations, as long as said exceptions do not conflict with any of the terms of the grant agreement between the Town of Snow Hill and DHCD.