



HISTORICAL PRESERVATION GRANT PROGRAM GUIDELINES

ABOUT THE MERCEDES HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

The Mercedes Historic Preservation Commission is a seven-member advisory board for the City of Mercedes. It is the purpose and intent of this board to conserve any historical landmarks or districts for future generations to discover and enjoy. The commission has been created with the following purpose:

To protect and enhance the landmarks and districts which represent distinctive elements of Mercedes' historic, architectural, and cultural heritage.

To foster civic pride in the accomplishments of the past.

To protect and enhance Mercedes' attractiveness to visitors and the support and stimulus to the economy thereby provided.

To encourage stabilization, restoration, and improvements of such properties and their values.

ROOF, FAÇADE, AND LEVELING GRANTS

The City of Mercedes and the Mercedes Historic Preservation Commission recognize the importance that historical buildings have for the cultural and economic growth of the city. Recognizing the value of local historical buildings prompted the City and the Commission to create a matching grant program for the property owners of historical homes or businesses in a locally designated historic district. The roof, façade, and leveling grants are reimbursable grants, which means the property owner **must pay** for the restoration and maintenance **up front**, and then be **reimbursed for up to half of the cost**. Roof grants are reimbursable for up to \$10,000 matching, and the leveling and façade grants are reimbursable for up to \$5,000 matching. Grants are eligible to be awarded on a first come, first serve basis each fiscal year up to the amount of money the City Commission determines will be available for the program. Applicants may qualify for a grant of each kind once per fiscal year.

The application period will run from November 1 thru February 1. Grants will be reviewed and awarded by March 1.

It is important to note that **work cannot be done** prior to the grant application being approved by the Commission. Any work done prior to the approval **will not** qualify for the reimbursement.

NOTE: The Commission reserves the right to make recommendations to any project and the right to decline grants requests for any project, for any reason, at its own discretion.

CRITERIA

To qualify for a grant through the City of Mercedes program, you must meet the following criteria:

- The home or business must be a locally designated historic site; and
- The home or business must be at least 50 years of age and retain a high degree of their original historic fabric; and
- The applicant cannot be a member of the Mercedes Historic Preservation Commission; and
- The property being restored must remain under the current ownership for a minimum of two years after receiving the reimbursement from the grant. If the property is sold then the property owner will be responsible for returning the funds to the City of Mercedes. Hardship cases may be eligible to file an appeal with the Commission for circumstances such as the bankruptcy, job related relocation, the total time of ownership, or the untimely death of an owner. A notarized letter of appeasement needs to be submitted and approved by the board before the owner will be granted the ability to relinquish or transfer ownership of the property.

USE

Eligible homes or businesses may use the roof grant money for:

- Purchase and installation of new roof, or repairs to existing roof.
- Roof materials must be similar to original material or keep with historical style of the time.

Eligible homes or businesses may use the façade grant money for:

- Exterior lighting
- Installation of new doors or windows
- Painting
- Repair of exterior walls
- Facades must be repaired or renovated with material similar to the original and keep with the historical style of the time (Note this is not an all-inclusive list of eligible repairs).

Eligible homes or business may use the leveling grant money for:

- Materials and labor to complete pier and foundation leveling
- Other types of leveling typically accepted in the industry

APPLICATION STEPS

IMPORTANT: Do not begin repairs or improvements before the Historic Commission reviews and approves the plans. The City of Mercedes will not pay for work done prior to granting approval.

1. Contact the Mercedes Historic Preservation Commission city representative to confirm grant funds are available and eligibility. Grants may not be available for properties or businesses which are delinquent on any payments due to the city.
2. Submit a completed building application to the Commission for review along with the following:
 - Three written proposals from bonded and licensed contractors. Proposals must be itemized and the same scope of work should be listed in all three proposals. The proposal should be as specific as possible stating

colors, materials (samples of the materials are recommended), design, layout, dimensions, costs and the contact information of the contractors. Whenever possible one proposal should be from a Mercedes contractor.

- If the property owner is proposing doing the labor themselves then three quotes for materials must be presented to the commission. Furthermore, the grant will only cover material and not any estimated labor cost. A written proposal from the property owner specifying colors, materials, design, layout, and dimensions is still required.
 - A Current photo of the building emphasizing areas which will be repaired.
 - Current identification of the owner or owners
 - Proof of ownership – Title, Deed, or Tax Records
3. The Mercedes Historic Preservation Commission will review and vote on the proposed project. The applicant must be present during the review process to address any possible questions. If the proposed project fails to meet the commission's approval, the commission may make recommendations to help you qualify in the future.
 4. You will be notified in writing if your project has been approved and repair and renovation can commence.
 5. Notification of project grant approval does not constitute a building permit which must be obtained from the Building Inspection department prior to starting construction.
 6. The project must be completed within 3 months/90 days of receiving the written notification of the approval. An extension may be granted but a written explanation of the delay must be presented to the board for their approval.
 7. A monthly update of the project is recommended. The update should include photos, current costs, and projected completion date.
 8. Once the project is completed, receipts and a photo of the completed renovation will need to be submitted to the Historic Commission city representative for reimbursement. Reimbursement will take place within 30 days of receiving your payment receipt.