

MISSION: WORK TO BUILD COMMUNITY, A SENSE OF PLACE, AND CIVIC PRIDE THROUGH FUNDING BEAUTIFICATION PROJECTS FOCUSED ON THE AESTHETICS OF VALDEZ, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO DESIGN, LANDSCAPING, AND PUBLIC ART.

2026 Beautification Matching Grant Program



IMPORTANT DATES:

THURSDAY, JANUARY 1, 2026 - APPLICATION PERIOD OPENS

MONDAY, JANUARY 12, 2026 - GRANT APPLICATION Q&A

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2026 - GRANT APPLICATION HELP SESSION

FRIDAY, MARCH 6, 2026 - APPLICATION ROUND 1 DEADLINE

FRIDAY, APRIL 3, 2026 - APPLICATION ROUND 2 DEADLINE

FRIDAY, MAY 1, 2026 - APPLICATION ROUND 3 DEADLINE

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2026 - DEADLINE FOR REIMBURSEMENT

SUBMIT APPLICATIONS:

BY EMAIL – COVBOARDS@VALDEZAK.GOV

BY MAIL – CITY OF VALDEZ, PO BOX 307, VALDEZ, AK 99686

IN PERSON – TO THE FRONT DESK AT CITY HALL

2026 Valdez Beautification Matching Grant Program

City of Valdez Beautification Commission Mission: Work to advocate for, promote, and enhance the aesthetics of the local human-built environment to reflect the beauty of the surrounding natural environment.

Valdez Beautification Matching Grant Program Mission: Work to build community, a sense of place, and civic pride through funding beautification projects focused on the aesthetics of Valdez, including but not limited to design, landscaping, and public art.

The Valdez Beautification Matching Grant Program offers a financial incentive designed to assist local businesses or commercial property owners in improving the business setting for investors as well as providing an overall upgrade in appearance for residents and visitors.

2026 will be the eleventh year of the program and continues with the expansion of eligible properties outside the core downtown district.

The 2026 matching grant program's goal is to improve the overall aesthetics of Valdez through:

- Encouraging businesses to invest in aesthetic and design improvements.
- Improving the overall quality of building/structure façades in order to attract more local residents and visitors to shop, eat, and do business in Valdez.
- Encouraging and incentivizing property/business owners to reinvest in our community.
- Encouraging grant applicants to strengthen the local economy through utilizing local vendors, contractors, and materials.

ELIGIBLE PROPERTIES:

Properties located in the following [zoning districts](#) are eligible to apply for funding: **Central Business District, General Commercial, Waterfront Industrial and Light Industrial.**

Properties may be mixed use but must be used primarily for a business purpose to be eligible for grant funding.

Properties must be up to date on their property taxes and may not have active code violations to apply.

INELIGIBLE PROPERTIES:

Properties located in the following [zoning districts](#) are not eligible to apply for funding: **Neighborhood Mixed Use, Rural Residential, Moderate Density Residential, High Density Residential, Heavy Industrial, and Conservation.**

Strictly residential properties, home occupation, and properties with delinquent property taxes are not eligible for the matching grant program. Buildings that are publicly owned or owned by a non-profit are not eligible to receive grant funding.

TIER ONE AND TIER TWO

Eligible properties will be designated in one of two tiers based on location and whether grant program funds have been received previously.

TIER ONE:

All other project types on properties located in the outlined area below or located within 100 feet of the Richardson Highway corridor.

TIER TWO:

Eligible properties located within Valdez city limits, but outside of the designated areas.
Eligible properties which have previously received a beautification matching grant.

Downtown Core Grant Target Area (note that Richardson Hwy corridor is eligible but not pictured):



GUIDELINES:

All projects must be approved before any work begins. Grants will not be awarded retroactively.

Property owners should be the applicant when possible. If an applicant is not the owner, they must obtain the property owner's written approval prior to applying.

Any changes to the project after grant approval must be approved before work commences or the grant will be forfeited.

Project funding is intended for use to make permanent and lasting improvements to the property. Eligible aesthetic improvements must be to the exterior of a building and may include, but are not limited to:

- Visible artwork or murals
- Significant overall architectural or design improvements.
- Permanent landscaping improvements.
- Removal of old signage and exterior clutter (including the removal of unsightly structures and shipping containers from properties).
- Facade improvements – signage upgrades, siding, etc.

ELIGIBLE COSTS (WITH APPROPRIATE DOCUMENTATION):

- Materials and shipping costs for approved improvements.
- Costs from appropriately licensed third-party vendors or contractors.
- Architectural and engineering services.
- City or State fees and permits directly related to the project.

INELIGIBLE COSTS:

- Improvements commenced prior to application approval or issuance of notice to proceed.
- Improvements not specifically noted in the award letter.
- Improvements which are considered routine maintenance (examples include replacement of light bulbs without an associated facade improvement, pavement replacement without an associated landscaping improvement, etc.)
- Improvements that are not permanent in nature - seasonal or temporary improvements)
- Simple replacement of like items, such as a replacement of a sign with the exact same sign.
- Improvements made to previous work funded by a Beautification Matching Grant, unless the work is part of a phased beautification project.
- Repairs caused by damage to a building, structure, or property that should be completed through an insurance claim.
- Partial or full roof replacement.
- Construction of a new building.
- Applicant or property owner labor.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR PUBLIC ART AND MURAL PROJECTS:

While the Beautification Commission hopes to encourage additional public art and murals in the target areas of to improve overall community aesthetics, these projects are unique. Art specific projects require careful planning, professional expertise and an understanding of the challenging environment.

Due to this art specific proposals merit careful review by the commission and additional planning on the part of the grant applicant.

Art specific project applications must include a narrative outlining answers to the following questions:

- Is this new or existing artwork?
 - If it is existing artwork, how does the project substantially improve community aesthetics?
- What is the future maintenance plan for the art installation?
- What is the plan for executing the work?
- Do materials used take into account the weather and climate of Valdez?
- What expertise does the artist or group of artists have with this type of project?
- How does the project enhance the aesthetics of the local human-built environment to reflect the beauty of the surrounding natural environment?
- How does the project related to Valdez culture, environment or history?

SELECTION PROCESS:

Total funding available for the Valdez Beautification Matching Grant Program is determined by the Valdez City Council. Due to limited funding, projects meeting the criteria of this program will be presented to the City of Valdez Beautification Commission for selection.

Applications will be considered in the order received and subject to available funds. There are three rounds of application consideration scheduled in 2026.

A complete grant application may be submitted to the City Clerk's Office by email, mail or in-person at city hall. This application must include:

- Detailed written description of proposed work.
- Sketches or drawings of proposed improvements, including samples/photographs of paint colors or materials to be used (do not need to be professionally drawn, but are required for application consideration).
- Color "before" photographs of the area or areas to be improved (submitted electronically if possible).
- Bids for contracted work (if applicable).
- Budget breakdown – including itemized list of estimated costs associated with the project.
- A letter and narrative addressed to the Beautification Commission how the proposed project

enhances the aesthetics of the local human-built environment to reflect the beauty of the surrounding natural environment.

The City may require more detail in order to issue permits after application approval.

Please note: Depending on available funding for the grant program, awarded matching grants may be less than the full amount requested in the project application.

Eligible projects will be scored by the Beautification Commission during their regular meeting after receipt.

Projects will be given higher priority if they make substantial visible improvements, are high visibility projects, result in improvements to surrounding properties, utilize locally procured materials, labor and contractors, or fall into Tier One as centrally located art projects.

Removal of exterior clutter, landscaping projects, and building facade improvements will also be given higher priority in the selection process. Plans for ongoing upkeep of the proposed improvements will also be considered by the commission.

The Beautification Commission will then forward the recommended list of grant awardees and grant amounts to the Valdez City Council for final funding approval at the next available regular Council meeting.

Once grant projects are approved, City Clerk's Office staff will mail matching grant award letters which include a "Notice to Proceed" for the project. The Notice to Proceed document must be signed by the grant recipient and returned to the City Clerk's Office before construction on the grant project begin

PROJECT EXECUTION:

Following approval, the applicant must secure all required federal, state, and municipal permits. **Projects that fail to obtain proper permitting shall forfeit their grant funding.**

If an applicant enters into an agreement with a contractor for the completion of specified eligible improvements, the applicant is solely responsible for the payment of services rendered on said project.

Awardees must complete the eligible improvements and submit the reimbursement packet by December 11, 2026, as outlined in the Notice to Proceed, unless otherwise extended in writing by the City of Valdez.

Extensions may only be granted one time, on a case-by-case basis, for exceptional circumstances. An extension may only be made for one additional grant cycle. **Extension requests must be submitted to the City Clerk's Office in writing prior to December 11, 2026 or will not be considered.** Extensions may be approved by City Clerk's Office staff if they meet criteria determined by the Beautification Commission. If the City Clerk's Office does not grant an extension, the applicant may appeal to the Beautification Commission.

In the event the grant reimbursement package is not submitted by the deadline and a time extension has not been granted, the City of Valdez reserves the right to terminate the grant award without any liability to the applicant, so that those funds may be dedicated elsewhere.

GRANT AMOUNTS:

Applicants can apply for a grant rebate to pay for up to 50 percent of the cost of improvements, with a maximum reimbursement of \$12,500 per building. Projects involving corner buildings or spanning more than one parcel may request larger grant amounts, not to exceed a maximum reimbursement of \$25,000.

Please note: Depending on the number of applications and available funding for the grant program, awarded matching grants may be less than the full amount requested in the project application.

GRANT REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS:

Once the eligible improvements have been completed, the awardee shall notify the City through completion of a grant reimbursement request package. The applicant must submit documentation to the City as outlined in the reimbursement package below, including associated receipts and paid invoices for verification of eligible costs, copies of permits and inspection reports, the appropriate business W-9, and if a contractor was used, proof that the contract was paid. Applicants must also submit color before and after photographs when requesting grant reimbursement (preferably in electronic form).

After reviewing the accuracy of receipts and/or invoices for the eligible improvements, and upon verification that the eligible improvements have been completed in accordance with the grant award scope and project design drawings, plans, or specifications; the City will reimburse the applicant the matching grant amount within 30 days.

Only those improvements outlined in the grant award letter will be eligible for reimbursement.



Valdez Beautification Matching Grant Program 2026 Application

1. PROJECT LOCATION

Address to be improved: _____

Assessor Parcel ID Number(s): _____

Name of Business or Organization: _____

Is this property (check one): _____ Tier One _____ Tier Two

2. APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name: _____

Address: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Email Address: _____ Phone: _____

Do you: _____ Own _____ Rent (month to month) _____ Lease

If leased, date of lease expiration: _____

Name of Property Owner(s): _____

Property Owner Email Address: _____

Property Owner Phone: _____

3. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

Please attach the following to this application for consideration:

- Detailed written description of proposed work.
- Sketches or drawings of proposed improvements, including samples/photographs of paint colors or materials to be used (do not need to be professionally drawn, but are required for application consideration).
- Color “before” photographs of the area or areas to be improved (submitted electronically if possible).
- Bids for contracted work.
- Budget breakdown – including itemized list of costs associated with the project.
- A letter/narrative addressed to the Beautification Commission detailing how the proposed work adds to the aesthetics of your property and our community.

Applications missing any of the above items will not be considered.

4. ESTIMATED TIMELINE FOR PROJECT COMPLETION:

5. ESTIMATED COSTS

TOTAL ESTIMATED PROJECT COST: \$ _____

TOTAL MATCHING GRANT REQUESTED: \$ _____

Depending on available funding for the grant program, awarded matching grants may be less than the full amount requested in this project application. Could and would you proceed with this project if you are awarded less than the full matching grant amount requested?

Circle one: YES NO

Please explain. _____

By signing below, I confirm I have read and understand the requirements and process for the 2026 Beautification Matching Grant Program. The information submitted in this application is true and complete to the best of my knowledge.

Property Owner Signature: _____ Date: _____

Applicant Signature: _____ Date: _____



Valdez Beautification Matching Grant Program

City of Valdez
Beautification Commission
Attn: City Clerk's Office
PO BOX 307
Valdez, AK 99686

PROPERTY
OWNER PO Box
XXX
Valdez, AK 99686

Dear _____,

Congratulations! The Valdez Beautification Commission selected XXXXXXXX as a recipient of a 2026 Valdez Beautification Matching Grant.

Based upon your application, program guidelines and available grant funding, the Valdez City Council approved your award as follows:

XXXXXXXX Aesthetic Improvements (As outlined in application) _____ \$XXXX

Total Award: \$XXXX

Only approved work, based upon your original application and up to the funding level and scope above, will be reimbursed. Any changes to the project after grant approval must be authorized by the Beautification Commission before work commences or the grant will be forfeited.

All grant eligible improvements must be completed, and your grant reimbursement package submitted by December 11, 2026. Time extensions may only be granted on a case-by-case basis and for exceptional circumstances. **Requests for time extension must be made in writing and submitted prior to the grant reimbursement deadline.** In the event the improvements are not completed by the deadline, the City of Valdez reserves the right to terminate the grant award without liability to you, so that those funds may be dedicated elsewhere.

Please note, if you enter into an agreement with a contractor for the completion of specified eligible improvements, then you are solely responsible for the payment of services rendered on said project. Additionally, failure to obtain proper municipal, state, and federal permits for your project will result in ineligibility for grant funding reimbursement.

Grant funding is only awarded after all project work is complete and the required grant documentation submitted to the City.

Please carefully read and follow the steps outlined below to ensure grant reimbursement:

1. **Sign and return the attached ‘Notice to Proceed’ before beginning any work.**
2. Apply and secure all permits required by the City of Valdez, State of Alaska, or other regulatory bodies.
3. Save all original receipts associated with grant-eligible project related work, including materials purchased, payment to third party vendors, contractors, architectural or engineering services, and paid fees and permits.
4. Schedule and receive any building or other inspections required by the City of Valdez, State of Alaska, or other regulatory bodies.
5. Take color “after” photographs of the area(s) improved as part of the grant award once project work is complete.
6. Submit the following to the city in one documentation package for review:
 - Completed Beautification Matching Grant Reimbursement Form.
 - A copy of this letter.
 - Copy of your completed Notice to Proceed.
 - Color “before” and “after” photographs (submitted electronically if possible).
 - Copies of all permits and inspection reports associated with the project.
 - Document itemizing all expenses related to the project.
 - Originals of all receipts associated with the project (all invoices must indicate they have been paid prior to submission).
 - Proof of contractor payment (if applicable).
 - Copy of your business’ IRS W-9.

City of Valdez
Beautification Matching Grant Program
Attn: City Clerk’s Office
PO Box 307
Valdez, AK 99686

Email: COVBoards@valdezak.gov

After reviewing the accuracy of receipts and/or invoices for the eligible improvements, and upon verification that the eligible improvements have been completed in accordance with the design drawings, plans, specifications, or grant application; the City will reimburse you up to the grant award amount outlined in this letter. Reimbursement will be provided within 30 days.

Sincerely,

XXXXXXX
Beautification Commission
Chair



Valdez Beautification Matching Grant Program NOTICE TO PROCEED

Date: _____

Project: Valdez Beautification Matching Grant Program

To: XXXXXXXX

In accordance with the Agreement dated _____, you are to complete the WORK not later than December 11, 2026.

Summary of WORK:

- XXXXXXXX
- XXXXXXXX

Total estimated project costs are \$XXXXXX. A maximum reimbursement of \$XXXXX has been approved.

By:

Date: _____

ACCEPTANCE OF NOTICE

Receipt of above NOTICE to proceed is hereby acknowledged by _____

_____ this, the _____ day of _____, 20____.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____ Title: _____



Valdez Beautification Matching Grant Program **REIMBURSEMENT FORM**

Name of Grantee:

Mailing Address:

Phone Number:

Email:

Item(s) to be Reimbursed (Attached itemized list which must match submitted receipts):

Total Project Costs: \$ _____

Total to be Reimbursed: \$ _____

Submit the following to the City Clerk's Office with this form and before the established deadline to be eligible for 50/50 grant reimbursement:

- Completed Beautification Matching Grant Reimbursement Form.
- A copy of this letter.
- Copy of your completed Notice to Proceed.
- Color "before" and "after" photographs (submitted electronically if possible).
- Copies of all permits and inspection reports associated with the project.
- Document itemizing all expenses related to the project (typed or handwritten).
- Originals of all receipts associated with the project (all invoices must indicate they have been paid prior to submission).
- Proof of contractor payment (if applicable).
- Copy of your business' IRS W-9.

I declare under the penalty of perjury that the information I have provided herein is true and correct.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____ Title: _____