

Center City Development Corporation

Board Meeting

To: Center City Development Corporation (CCDC)
From: DMC Staff
Date: July 8, 2026
RE: Exterior Improvement Grant Request, 64 S. Front St.

The enclosed Exterior Improvement Grant application has been submitted for consideration at the July 15, 2026, CCDC Board Meeting.

Project: **64 S. Front St.**

Applicant: Seth Arnett
DSSA Properties, LLC
233 Wilson Pike Circle Suite 2C
Brentwood, TN 37027

Property Owner: Same as above

Applicant's Request: Exterior Improvement Grant in an amount up to \$60,000.

Project Description: The subject property is a vacant three-story commercial structure (built ca. 1875) located on the east side of Front Street, between General Washburn's Escape Alley to the north and Union Avenue to the south. The historic building was recently acquired by the applicant, with plans for a full renovation for office use. It is anticipated that JSI Consulting, an entity affiliated with the ownership group, will occupy the building after renovation.

Proposed Scope of Work: Façade improvements are planned on both the front (west) and rear/alley (east) sides of the building. The focus of the EIG grant will include the following major components:

- Masonry Repair and Tuckpointing:
- Masonry restoration and stabilization will include pressure washing the front and rear elevations; chemically removing existing paint from the lower portion of the front elevation; performing masonry restoration on the front elevation; and applying a masonry dye/stain and sealer to both the front and rear elevations to achieve the closest feasible match to the building's historic appearance. Restoration work on the rear elevation is anticipated to be minimal due to prior brick replacement and limited deterioration.

Historic Window Replacement:

- Replacement of 13 windows on the front elevation and 6 windows on the rear elevation.

Painting and Coatings:

- Preparation and painting of exposed metal elements on the front and rear elevations, including lintels, columns, stair treads, doors, and exterior metal components.

Project Timeline:

The applicant intends to complete building stabilization and façade renovation in advance of the opening of the nearby Memphis Art Museum (MAM), scheduled for early December 2026. Full interior renovation will follow.

EIG Program:

The Exterior Improvement Grant (EIG) is limited to exterior improvements and requires a minimum 1:1 private investment match. The maximum grant for this location is \$60,000.

EIG Budget:

The façade restoration and building stabilization work includes the following sources of funding:

CCDC EIG Grant	\$60,000	(11%)
Owner's equity	\$480,850	(89%)
Total	\$540,850	(100%)

Work Eligible for Grant:

The budget estimates are preliminary in nature and are intended solely as conceptual allowances. These estimates will be refined as design development progresses and the full extent of required restoration work is more clearly defined.

Given the current blighted condition of the structure, it is anticipated that the applicant will fully leverage the 1:1 matching requirement and qualify for the maximum Exterior Improvement Grant of \$60,000. Based on existing conditions, it is expected that exterior rehabilitation costs will substantially exceed the \$120,000 total budget threshold necessary to secure that full grant amount of \$60,000.

DMC Staff suggests that the following items are considered potentially eligible for this grant, subject to reimbursement based on approved receipts after project completion and receipt of a valid Use & Occupancy Permit:

Historic window replacement	\$209,650	(39%)
Painting & coatings	\$86,250	(16%)
Tuckpointing & masonry	\$244,950	(45%)
Total	\$540,850	(100%)

Design Review:

The project will be submitted for review and approval at an upcoming meeting of the Design Review Board (DRB). Exterior work may not commence prior to DRB approval in order to ensure compliance with program requirements and maintain eligibility for Exterior Improvement Grant (EIG) reimbursement. In addition to DRB review, approval from the Memphis Landmarks Commission (MLC) will also be required due to the property's location within a locally-zoned historic district.

Staff Evaluation:

Supporting the repositioning of this property from a long-term vacant and blighted structure to an active office use is highly consistent with the Downtown Memphis Action Plan. This property has been an anti-blight priority for the DMC for several years, prior to the announcement of the Memphis Art Museum being located directly across the street.

The subject property is a vacant, deteriorated three story historic structure that remains underutilized despite its prominent Front Street location. The proposed scope of exterior stabilization and rehabilitation including masonry restoration, window replacement, and metal facade repairs directly addresses visible deterioration, boosts curb appeal, and contributes to the removal of blight from a key block.

Beyond physical improvements, the project returns the building to an active and productive use. Occupancy by JSI Consulting will introduce new daytime population to the block, strengthening economic activity, adding more "eyes on the street," and increasing daily foot traffic. This investment is particularly timely given anticipated increases in visitor activity associated with the opening of the Memphis Art Museum. As visitation increases, Front Street, Monroe, and Union are expected to experience greater visibility and demand for active commercial uses. The rehabilitation of this property supports that transition and adds to the growing momentum Downtown.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends approval of an Exterior Improvement Grant in an amount up to \$60,000, based on approved receipts and subject to all standard closing requirements and conditions.