



CITY OF HASTINGS
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
FACADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
GUIDELINES

OVERVIEW

The City of Hastings Downtown Development Authority (DDA) has determined that a portion of the revenues collected by the DDA should be used to enhance the building facades found in downtown Hastings. The DDA Downtown Development and Financing Plan, adopted in 1986 and last revised in 2001, includes “façade improvements in cooperation with private property owners” among the improvements to be carried out under the plan.

The appearance of individual buildings, storefronts, signs, alleys, window displays, parking lots, and sidewalks establishes the visual character of the downtown and plays a major role in the marketing success of the business district.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the facade improvement grant is to encourage improvements to commercial facades visible from the public right-of-way. The grant money is intended to provide financial incentives for quality facade development.

It is also the intent of the program to strengthen the economic viability of downtown Hastings by improving the exterior physical appearance of buildings. The public perception of the downtown retail district has a great deal of influence on its economic success. By improving its physical appearance, the downtown will have a

much greater potential for attracting and retaining business, as well as creating an image of strong economic health and vitality.

According to a report by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the following are benefits realized when façade improvements are made in historic downtowns:

- Increase in sales in the year following the completion of the improvements and were sustained for several years
- Sales increase surpassed increases in local taxes
- The improvements attracted new businesses and shoppers to the area
- Participants were often motivated to make additional improvements to their buildings
- Owners/tenants of surrounding properties were motivated to make improvements to their buildings also.

ELIGIBILITY

- Owners of real property within the Hastings DDA district.
- Owners of business establishments within the DDA district. Tenants need written approval from the property owner.
- The proposed project must result in the enhancement or preservation of the historic elements of the building, if any.

CONDITIONS OF ELIGIBILITY

- Property taxes and other city accounts must be current.
- Project components should have a useful life of at least 10 years.
- Projects will be funded to the extent that budgeted DDA façade improvement program funds are available.

ELIGIBLE COSTS (Exterior Improvements Only)

- Repair or replacement of windows, doors, walls, or other appropriate architectural elements (windows shall be transparent and non-reflective glass. Only clear or lightly tinted, non-reflective glass in windows and doors shall be considered transparent).
- All construction and building materials shall be commercial grade. Residential grade materials are not eligible for reimbursement.

- Exterior painting (Non-Maintenance)
- Awnings (Historic in appearance that reflects the character of the downtown)
- Exterior Lighting
- Masonry repair or restoration
- Restoration of vintage elements
 - ✓ Removal of historically unsuitable facade treatments
 - ✓ Removal/replacement of historically unsuitable signs and/or lighting (new signs/lights must be compatible with existing architecture and the character of the downtown)
 - ✓ Repair or restoration of original brick and woodwork
- Architectural fees (Up to \$1,000.00)
- Materials and labor for work performed in association with above-mentioned improvements.
- Patios (Permanent Hardscape)
- Fencing and Screening
- ALL improvements must be historically appropriate. The applicant should closely follow the Downtown Design Standards which are available from the Community Development Office. The DDA Board is empowered to make exceptions to those standards if warranted due to structural deficits of the building or project feasibility in the Board's sole discretion.

Note: All work performed in association with a facade improvement grant application shall be performed by licensed contractors. Contractors will be asked to submit a copy of their license. Any work that requires the use of scaffolding lifts or other construction equipment in a public area must be effectively barricaded to protect the public from danger and a right-of-way permit from the city is required.

INELIGIBLE COSTS

- Expenses incurred prior to approval of site plan by the DDA
- Property Acquisition
- Mortgage or land contract financing
- Loan fees
- Site plan, building permit fees
- Appraiser, attorney, interior decorator fees
- Wages paid to applicant, relatives, or friends for work associated with the

- facade improvement (e.g., payments under the table).
- Furnishings, trade fixtures, display cases, counters, or other items taxed as personal property
- Reusable or portable items
- Any portion of expenses for which applicant pays contractor in merchandise or in-kind services
- Landscaping (Softscape)

PROJECT PRIORITIES

Applications containing the following characteristics will have priority in the appropriation of project funds: **(12 Points available)**

- New Projects (1st Time Applicant) **[3 pts]**
- Projects identified on corner lots **[1pt]**
- Projects in which the building is owner-occupied **[1pt]**
- Projects containing a high ratio of private to public dollars 51-75% **[1pt]**
76% and > **[2pts]**
- Projects designed to resolve deteriorated/inappropriate/ unsightly conditions that have existed for many years (boarded windows, deteriorated electrical fixtures, etc.) **[1-3pts]**
- Projects that enhance pedestrian movement from the rear to the front of buildings **[1pt]**
- Projects that will complete the improvement of a block or portion of a block (ex. replacement of an inappropriate facade that exists on a block containing many appropriate, well-preserved, or improved facades) **[1pt]**

GRANT AMOUNTS

Maximum Grant Amount: \$10,000.00 per project

Maximum amount available for architectural rendering design in addition to grant: \$1,000.00 (does not require board approval).

Facade Improvement Grants will be made up to a 50%-50% ratio on eligible expenses. The applicant must invest at least 50% of the total project cost to receive the remaining 50% grant from the DDA. The 50% granted by the DDA is not to exceed \$10,000. (For example, a project totaling \$4,000 may receive \$2,000 from the DDA. A project totaling \$25,000 may receive the maximum of \$10,000 even though it does not equate to 50% of the total project cost.)

PROCESSING OF GRANT REQUESTS

- A facade improvement application can be obtained from the City of Hastings, Community Development Department, 201 East State Street, Hastings, MI 49058 (269) 945-2468.
 - The application is completed by the property owners or tenant of the building with owner's written consent and returned to the City of Hastings where it will be reviewed for accuracy and issues of compliance and logged into the records of the DDA.
 - There is a \$100 non-refundable fee due when the application is submitted.
 - The application is reviewed by City staff to verify that it is located within the DDA district. Staff will provide a preliminary review outlining how well the project meets the program objectives.
 - If the application meets program objectives the applicant will be notified that his/her project has been accepted for consideration.
 - The applicant must submit an architect's detailed plan illustrating proposed improvements. All applications must be accompanied by an architect's rendering unless it meets one of the following exemptions: 1) The project is for door or window replacement only, 2) the project is for exterior painting only, or 3) the total project cost is less than \$2,500.
 - In addition to the plan, a detailed break out of all costs, including a signed estimate from a qualified contractor, will be submitted by the applicant (including a project budget illustrating both private and public expenditures).
 - Once a plan is submitted it will be taken before the Downtown Development Authority for review.
 - If approved, project construction may commence. If plan is inconsistent with program goals it will be returned with request for modifications.
 - Façade improvement projects exceeding the 50%-50% capped grant limit of \$10,000 (\$10,000 DDA - \$10,000 private investment) may be constructed in phases during different calendar years. Each phase will then be considered by the DDA as a separate 'project' for the purposes of this grant program,

with each 'project' eligible for up to \$10,000 in DDA funds.

- Grant funds for Façade Improvement Projects will be awarded to the extent that funds for such projects are available in the City Council approved DDA budget.
- The DDA may limit the number of building addresses to be considered by an applicant to one (1) every two (2) years.

Note: The DDA reserves the right to recommend grant awards it deems to be in the best interest of the City of Hastings, the DDA, and the facade improvement program. The DDA reserves the right to nullify grant awards that are found to be non-compliant with the conditions of this program. Non-compliant's may not re-apply for a period of one (1) year following the DDA's decision.

The Downtown Development Authority reserves the right to revise or end these programs at any time and in no way guaranties availability of funding for any specific project or at any given time.

POST-APPROVAL PROCEDURES

- Any changes in the scope of work must be approved by the DDA prior to construction/installation.
- All approved changes in work verification shall be attached to the original site plan in the form of an addendum and dated.
- City staff may conduct periodic inspections to ensure compliance with the site plan and adopted eligible activities.
- Projects must be completed within one (1) year of notification of project approval by the DDA. Only under extenuating circumstances, a single extension of time to complete the project can be requested in writing and may be awarded by the DDA.
- Upon completion of the project improvement City staff will photograph the new facade to ensure that all components of the site plan are met.

- After final project inspection, City Staff will review and approve the project, and the applicant be reimbursed for the approved grant amount.

Questions and comments regarding the Facade Improvement Program and these guidelines should be directed to City of Hastings Community Development Department (269) 945-2468. Application is available online at hastingsmi.org/dda/



City of Hastings

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

FAÇADE & FENCING/SCREENING IMPROVEMENT GRANT APPLICATION

APPLICANT INFORMATION

1. Property/Business Owner

Name: _____

2. Business

Name: _____

3. Property

Address: _____

4. Phone Numbers: Home: _____

Work: _____

Email: _____

5. Is the building/property owned by the applicant? YES NO

If No, please attach a signed letter from the property owner expressing approval of the proposed project.

6. Is this the first time applying for a façade grant? YES NO

7. Is this project on a corner lot? YES NO

PROJECT INFORMATION

On separate sheets of paper, please describe your project in detail. Tell:

- a) What it is you want to accomplish - drawings are required.
- b) How this project meets the Purpose and Priorities of the DDA Façade Improvement Program as listed in the Guidelines.
- c) Who you have identified to do the work and the reason(s) for your selection, and
- d) What is the preliminary timetable for accomplishing the work? Also enclose a detailed expense budget/estimate for this project.

8. The project will involve (please check all that apply):

- _____ Repairs or replacement of windows, doors, walls, or other appropriate architectural elements
- _____ Exterior painting (Non-Maintenance)
- _____ Awnings (Historic in appearance or reflects the character of the Downtown)
- _____ Exterior Lighting
- _____ Masonry repair or restoration
- _____ Restoration of vintage elements, for example:
 - Removal of historically unsuitable façade treatments
 - Removal/replacement of historically unsuitable signs and/or lighting (new signs/lights must be compatible with existing architecture and the character of the Downtown)
 - Repair or restoration of original brick and woodwork
- _____ Fencing/Screening
- _____ Conversion to retail or entertainment storefront

9. Additional grant up to \$1,000 for architectural rendering.

_____ Name of architectural firm: _____

10. Total Project Budget \$ _____

11. Grant Request (Not to exceed 50% of project budget and not to exceed \$10,000 plus #9 for maximum of \$11,000 \$ _____

12. Proposed Starting Date: _____

13. Proposed Completion Date: _____

14. What is (are) the existing use(s) of the building/property:

15. Will the proposed project result in a change in the use(s) of the building/property:

Yes No

If yes, please explain:

NOTE: There is a \$100 non-refundable application fee due at the time this application is submitted.

THE UNDERSIGNED APPLICANT(S) AFFIRMS THAT:

- The information submitted herein is true and accurate to the best of my (our) knowledge.
- The property contained in the application is in the Hastings DDA District.
- I (we) have read and understand the conditions of the Downtown Development Authority's Façade Improvement Program and agree to abide by its conditions and guidelines.
- If I (we) do not implement improvements submitted by me (us) on a plan approved by the Façade Improvement Program I will not be eligible for reimbursement of any costs associated with said improvements.
- I (we) understand that if I (we) are found to be non-compliant with the conditions of this program, the DDA may nullify the grant award and that I (we) may not apply to this program again for a period of one (1) year following the DDA's decision.

Signature of Applicant(s):

I.D.#: _____

I.D.#: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____

Federal Business Tax ID#: _____

If a tenant, signature of property owner(s):

_____ I.D.#: _____

Date: _____

Staff Use Only

Scoring: 12 Points Available

_____ New Projects (1st time applicant) [3pts]

_____ Projects Identified on Corner Lots [1pt]

_____ Projects in which the Building is Owner Occupied [1pt]

_____ Projects Containing a High Ratio of Private to Public Dollars 51-75% [1pt]
> 76% [2pts]

_____ Project designed to resolve deteriorated/inappropriate/ unsightly conditions that have existed for many years (boarded windows, deteriorated electrical fixtures, etc.) [1-3 pts]

_____ Project enhances pedestrian movement from the rear to the front of buildings [1pt]

_____ Project will complete the improvement of a block or portion of a block (ex. replacement of an inappropriate facade that exists on a block containing many appropriate, well-preserved, or improved facades) [1pt]

_____ **Total Points Awarded**