

**Marquette Downtown Development Authority
Downtown Façade Improvement Grant Program**

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Downtown Façade Improvement Grant Program

GUIDELINES

Program Purpose

It is a fundamental goal of the Marquette Downtown Development Authority (DDA) to promote economic growth and vitality within the Downtown District. In support of this objective, the DDA created the Downtown Façade Improvement Grant Program to provide local businesses and property owners within its boundaries an opportunity to upgrade their exterior building façades with financial assistance from the Marquette Downtown Development Authority. Successful façade improvement projects promote a positive image of downtown and leverage additional investment in neighboring properties, which facilitates continued economic growth and revitalization of the downtown district as a whole.

Source of Program Funding

The source of funding for this program is provided by the Marquette Downtown Development Authority and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), on behalf of the Michigan Strategic Fund (MSF). The MEDC/MSF awarded the DDA \$300,000, as part of their pilot Façade Restoration Initiative, to strengthen and expand the positive impact of the DDA's local Downtown Façade Improvement Grant Program. Together with the DDA's commitment of \$30,000, these funds can be used to incentivize revitalization of properties within the DDA district boundaries. This is a 2-year program, and continuation of the program is contingent upon availability of funds.

Financing Guidelines

Financial assistance is available in the form of a reimbursable grant to the applicant after work is completed. Grant funding requires a 1:1 match, which means the DDA/MEDC will contribute up to 50% of total project costs, up to a maximum of \$50,000, while the applicant is responsible for the project balance. To be eligible for grant funding, façade projects must meet a minimum of \$5,000 in total costs (\$2,500 DDA grant award/\$2,500 applicant contribution). The maximum grant reimbursement is \$50,000. The DDA Board of Directors will allocate funding for the program on an annual basis. The grants are provided on a competitive, first-come, first-served basis. There is a limit of one Downtown Façade Improvement Grant per property per fiscal year.

Applicant Eligibility

Eligible applicants include owners of commercial properties and business owners located within the boundaries of Marquette's DDA District (see map, page 5). Business owners who are leasing a building for which improvements are proposed must obtain written consent and approval of project plans from the property owner.

Project Eligibility

1. The property must be within the boundaries of the Marquette Downtown Development Authority District (see map page 5).

2. Only buildings that contribute to the tax-base with retail, commercial, or professional uses are eligible for program funding. Buildings with second-story residential units may be considered if the ground level is an eligible use.
3. The project must constitute a permanent, exterior physical improvement to an existing building. Temporary or seasonal improvements are not eligible.
4. Proposed façade improvements must be on any exterior face of the building that is visible from any street, right-of-way, or parking lot. This includes the building's front, rear, entryway, or exposed side.
5. The project must enhance or fit into the larger context of neighboring buildings, with priority given to designs that are consistent with the Design Guidelines for Marquette, Michigan adopted by the Marquette Downtown Development Authority in February 1988, and/or the Third Street Corridor Sustainable Development Plan.
6. The building must meet basic public safety codes, the property be structurally sound, and the roof intact. Proposed façade improvements must also comply with all applicable building, safety, and zoning codes. All applicable permits must be obtained from the City of Marquette prior to the start of construction.
7. It is permissible for the applicant to perform the work themselves; however, labor costs are not eligible for reimbursement. Only the cost of materials can qualify for grant funding in such circumstances.
8. The applicant must provide proof that property taxes and City utilities are current and the property is properly insured. The applicant shall not be in any other default to the City of Marquette nor involved in any litigation with the DDA or City.
9. The applicant must provide detailed project financing information, including proof of available project funding in the form of bank/loan commitment letter(s) or personal equity.
10. The applicant must submit a complete application packet including: grant application, project drawings, photos of existing conditions, third-party cost estimates/budget, proof of financing, proof of property and liability insurance, evidence of paid taxes and utilities, and a completed W-9 form.
11. All grant requests must be submitted before any work is started. **Prior work not approved will not be eligible for reimbursement.**
12. If project is approved, construction must commence within 60 days of an executed Development Agreement with the DDA, and be completed within 180 days after start date. Requests for time extensions must be submitted in writing and may be approved, dependent on circumstances, upon written consent of the DDA.
13. Once a grant award is approved by the Board of Directors, any additional project costs incurred above and beyond the awarded amount will not be eligible for reimbursement.
14. The proposed project must meet all grant program guidelines and be approved by the Marquette Downtown Development Authority Board of Directors.

Project Guidelines

Eligible Projects

Eligible uses of program funds include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Front and rear building façade improvements (not regular maintenance items)
- Side facades to the extent that they are visible to the public eye
- Enhanced entryway and storefronts (both front and rear)

- Americans with Disabilities Act related building upgrades
- Aesthetic improvements (such as awnings and outside attached lighting)
- Improvements which restore historical significance to buildings, including removal of elements which cover original architectural details
- Improvements which increase architectural integrity of business district
- Addition and/or replacement of doors and windows
- Restoration of brickwork, masonry, stucco, wood, or siding
- Painting as part of a comprehensive façade improvement project
- Signage or sign replacement, when in conjunction with other façade work. Signage must be compliant with zoning code and not require a variance.

Ineligible Projects

Program funds cannot be used for the following:

- Physical or visual removal of architecturally important feature
- Installation of vinyl or aluminum siding
- Roof repairs or replacement
- Parking Lots
- Mechanical systems
- Landscaping, unless integral to the overall façade improvement project
- Routine general maintenance items that are part of normal property ownership
- Repair of any code violations
- Interior renovation projects
- Property acquisition
- Site plan, building or sign permit fees
- Property appraisal costs, legal fees or loan origination fees
- Permit and inspection fees
- Expenses incurred prior to approval of application
- New building construction
- Purchase or upgrade of personal property (equipment or machinery)
- Payment of taxes, special assessment or utility bills
- Properties that have received previous Downtown Façade Improvement Grant funding within the fiscal year

Application & Selection Process

1. Interested applicants shall contact the DDA to schedule an initial meeting to discuss the proposed project, review application procedures, and obtain grant application materials.
2. A complete application packet shall include:
 - a. Application provided by the DDA
 - b. Drawings of planned improvements to the building, including architectural notations on materials, colors etc.
 - c. Color photographs of the building's existing condition (front, rear, and sides)
 - d. Written consent for program participation by property owner, if applicant is a tenant
 - e. Third-party cost estimates/detailed budget and proof of project funding in the form of bank/loan commitment letter(s) or personal equity

- f. Proof that property is insured and taxes and utilities are paid
- g. Completed W-9 form
3. **The application deadline is Friday, April 26, 2019.** Application packets must be complete to be considered for the Downtown Façade Improvement Grant Program. Application packets received after that date will not be considered for the initial round of grant funding. The DDA *may* announce an additional round of grant applications at a later date dependent on availability of funds; however, a second round is not guaranteed.
4. The applicant may be required to make an informal presentation of the planned improvements to the DDA Design & Maintenance Committee.
5. Applications will be reviewed by the DDA Design & Maintenance Committee and a recommendation for approval or disapproval will be made to the DDA Board of Directors. Approval or disapproval by the DDA Board will be forwarded in writing to the applicant within five days after such is given.
6. Projects are selected for funding on a competitive basis, based upon an evaluative scoring matrix that assesses visual and economic impact, historic significance, and the viability of the project proposal. Submission of an application does not guarantee grant funding.
7. Any changes to the originally approved scope of work must be approved in advance by the DDA Design & Maintenance Committee. Failure to receive written approval may invalidate the grant award.

Disbursement of Grant Funds

1. Grant funds will be disbursed in the form of a reimbursement to the applicant after work is completed within the designated time frame and in accordance with the grant guidelines and executed development agreement.
2. Within 60 days of project completion, the applicant must submit evidence of paid contractor/supplier invoices and proof that all required licences, permits, and inspections have been received. Color photos of the completed project must be submitted prior to reimbursement of grant funds.
3. The DDA or its agent will inspect the work at completion of the project to determine if the work is complete as agreed upon and in compliance with approvals given by the DDA Board of Directors.

Default and Remedy

An Event of Default shall consist of any misrepresentation or failure to comply with the terms and provisions hereof by either party. In additions, an Event of Default shall include any misrepresentation made in the grant application. Upon the happening of an Event of Default, the non-defaulting party shall be entitled to seek all remedies available at law or in equity. In the event of suit, the prevailing party shall be entitled to recover its costs and attorney fees.

Rights Reserved

The specific program guidelines are subject to revision or amendment by the DDA Board of Directors and/or the Design & Maintenance Committee. The DDA may discontinue this program at any time, subject to the availability of program funding, and does not guarantee availability of funding for any specific project at any given time. The DDA reserves the right to reject any and all applications, and final approval or disapproval rests with the DDA Board of Directors.

ANATOMY OF A BUILDING FAÇADE

FAÇADE: The face of a building; especially the principal front that looks onto a street or open space.

