

Downtown Development Authority of City of Madison Heights

Memorandum

Date: February 8, 2024

To: Downtown Development Authority Board Members

From: Giles Tucker, Community Development Director

Subject: Façade & Sign Grant Guidelines & Application Updates

Discussion surrounding the consideration of recent façade and sign grant applications submitted to the DDA in the end of 2023 prompted the Economic Vitality Committee to meet and discuss possible revisions to the DDA Façade and Sign Grant Guidelines and Applications. The Economic Vitality met on November 1st, 2023, and on January 9th, 2024, to consider and recommend numerous changes to the existing grant program guidelines. Attached to this memo are the original and the proposed version of the Façade and Grant Guidelines & Applications. Beyond changes to language and formatting below I have summarized what I believe to be the substantive changes to these programs important for consideration prior to adopting the updated guidelines for these programs:

Proposed Changes to the Façade Grant Program

1. Edited and reformatted the document for conciseness and allowed for fillable application.
2. The limit for façade grant was increased to \$10,000 from \$5,000.
3. Removed requirement of Property owners to be an existing business for one year to be eligible.
4. Business tenants in business less than a year may be approved on a case-by case basis, but not received reimbursement funds until one year of continuous operation.
5. Past Eligible Activities Removed
 - Cleaning building exterior as a part of a more extensive project.
 - Exterior painting of the building as a part of a more extensive project.
 - Masonry Repair.
 - Fence/Wall removal or replacement.
6. Eligible Activities Added
 - Activities that create or expand upon outdoor seating or similar uses, that are more permanent in nature.
7. Past “Not Eligible” Activities Removed
 - Inappropriate cleaning methods, repairs, or replacements.
8. “Not Eligible” Activities Added
 - Routine façade and building cleaning, maintenance, replacement, or repair.
9. Removal of “Category System” replace with stating grant consideration priorities.
10. Clearer grant procedure including Grant Commitment Letter, proof of payment requirements and Waiver of Lien.

Proposed Changes to the Sign Grant Program

1. Edited and reformatted the document for conciseness and allowed for fillable application.
2. Removed requirement that signage be 90% or less than the area allowed by City Ordinances.

3. Removal of "Category System" replace with stating grant consideration priorities.
4. Clearer grant procedure including Grant Commitment Letter, proof of payment requirements and Waiver of Lien.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends the DDA board adopt the updated Façade Grant Application and Guidelines and Sign Grant Application and Guidelines as presented.

Attachments

1. Proposed Façade Grant Application and Guidelines
2. Proposed Sign Grant Application and Guidelines
3. Original Façade Grant Application and Guidelines
4. Original Sign Grant Application and Guidelines
5. Sample Letter of Grant Commitment Letter
6. Sample of Waiver of Lien