

# **Madison Heights Downtown Development Authority Façade Grant Program Guidelines**

**Program Goal & Description:** The City of Madison Heights Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Façade Program is intended to assist commercial and industrial property owners to fund physical redevelopment improvements to their existing properties. This program will encourage private investment, reduce blight, provide incentives to current businesses and property owners, and improve the overall image of the DDA District. The purpose of the program assistance is to alter and improve the overall appearance of a building facade or property site, not to subsidize routine building maintenance. Subject to funding availability, the DDA may approve and provide reimbursement of up to 50% of the costs of eligible improvements downtown area properties up to a maximum grant of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00).

**Who is Eligible?** Property owners and/or businesses meeting all the following requirements are eligible to apply for the DDA Façade Grant:

- **Business in continuous operation at least one (1) year.** Property owners may receive one façade grant, per parcel. Business tenants must be an existing, presently operating business within the DDA area boundaries in continuous operation for at least (1) year. Tenants must obtain permission from the owner of the property and submit an “Owner’s Authorization Form” along with their application. Applicants in operation less than one year may apply, and be awarded, on a case-by-case basis, but may not receive reimbursement until reaching one year of continuous operation.
- **Current taxes & operating in compliance with local ordinances.** Must be current with all property taxes, utility payments, have a valid Certificate of Occupancy and a current business license through Madison Heights Clerks Office.
- **Project has not already started or pulled permits.** Any projects that have begun prior to DDA board approval are ineligible.
- **One (1) façade grant per parcel.** Applicants are eligible to receive up to \$10,000 per parcel on a one-to-one (public to private fund) matching basis. PLEASE NOTE: If a property owner has been awarded a previous grant of less than \$10,000 in matching Façade Grant funds, the property owner may reapply, not to exceed \$10,000 for the combined grants later.

**What Activities May be Eligible?** Items include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Demolition is required to facilitate approved façade improvements.

- Activities that create or expand upon outdoor seating or similar uses that are more permanent in nature.
- Replacement of doors, windows, decorative details as a part of a greater façade project.
- Improvement to all sides of a building's exterior facades that are visible from the main commercial street).
- Costs for architectural and civil engineering assistance related to the improvement project.
- The DDA board reserves the right to determine the eligibility of other improvements that improve the aesthetic quality of the building on a case-by-case basis.

**What is Not Eligible?** Ineligible items include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Interior improvements
- New construction
- Roofing
- Routine façade and building cleaning, maintenance replacement, or repair.
- Statues
- Underground work such as irrigation lines, wells, water lines, pipes, sewer connections
- Any façade treatment that would accelerate the deterioration of the existing structure or result in a non-durable/high-maintenance façade will be deemed an ineligible use.

**Design Guidelines:** All designs, plans, construction, installation, and demolition must conform to the City of Madison Heights Ordinances, the Michigan Building Code and the DDA Façade Grant Program Design Guidelines.

**Application Submission Deadline:** Applications will be accepted on an ongoing basis. However, application must be submitted at least two (2) weeks prior to any Regular DDA meeting to be considered. Only complete applications will be accepted.

**Approval Criteria:** Applications will be considered on a first come first served basis and approval of applications shall be based on the availability of funds. The DDA board will evaluate applications based on the scope of project and give the highest priority given to projects that remove and replace blight and existing nonconforming items. Priority will also be given to businesses that have not already received a façade grant from the DDA. The DDA board will also take into consideration the visual impact the project has on the district. The DDA Board uses discretion in awarding these grants and reserved the right not to approve any application for any reason.

**How to Apply & Approval Process:** Contact the Madison Heights DDA by calling the Community Development Department at 248-583-0831, to receive a Façade Grant Application *before* applying for a permit, any work is done, or any structure is demolished or installed. The process for grant consideration is as follows:

1. **Submit your complete application.** After discussing your project with the DDA Director submit a complete façade grant application and include all attachments to

Community & Economic Development Dept. located at 300 W. 13 Mile Rd, Madison Heights, MI.

2. **Projects \$1,000 or less may be approved administratively.** The DDA Director may grant approval for grant application requests of \$1,000 or less if they determine there are no issues requiring consideration of the DDA board. All other requests must be reviewed and approved by the DDA board.
3. **Staff Review.** Application is reviewed for completeness and compliance with local ordinances by the DDA Director and Building Official and then referred for recommendation to the DDA's Economic Vitality Committee.
4. **Economic Vitality Recommendation & DDA Board Consideration.** Application is then sent to the Economic Vitality Committee for recommendation. This recommendation and any requested revisions are provided to the applicant and included in the agenda item presented to the full DDA board meeting for consideration.
5. **DDA Board Consideration.** DDA board members will consider a façade grant application at a meeting open to the public and either approve, deny, or send the application back for revisions. Applicants are encouraged to attend this meeting to answer any questions.
6. **Grant Approval & Project Completion Limit.** Approved façade grant funds are available to the applicant for one year after grant approval, however the project must be started within six (6) months after approval is given. If no request for payment has been received following this period, the applicant forfeits any claim to the grant and may not reapply for a period of ten (10) years.
7. **Staff sends out Façade Grant Commitment Letter.** If the project is approved by the DDA board, the applicant will receive a Façade Grant Commitment Letter from the DDA. Upon receiving this letter, the applicant (or their contractor) can pull all necessary permits and begin work.
8. **Project may proceed according to the design and plan approved by the DDA board.** PLEASE NOTE: The DDA must authorize any changes to the approved design in advance, in writing, or the DDA may withdraw its funding commitment.
9. **Awardee notifies staff the project complete & paid for.** Upon completion of the project, notify the DDA that the work has been completed and provide a copy of the paid invoice(s) and canceled check or other form of proof of payment acceptable to the DDA board. Applicant must also provide the attached Waiver of Lien from the licensed contractors. This proof would serve as your request for payment.
10. **Grant funds disbursed to Awardee.** The DDA will disburse Façade Grant funds directly to the applicant following an inspection to verify that the project is consistent with the approved grant application plans, and verification that the Community

Development Department has approved the construction in full compliance with all permits.