

CITY OF HANCOCK

DOWNTOWN FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM GUIDELINES

AUTHORITY

As authorized pursuant to the Recodified State of Michigan Tax Increment Financing Act 57 of 2018, the City of Hancock's Downtown Development Authority (DDA) administers and funds a Façade Improvement Program (FIP) administered by the city. Utilization of the (FIP) is limited to the DDA's boundaries as established within the City of Hancock.

PURPOSE

It is a fundamental goal of the Hancock Downtown Development Authority (DDA) to promote economic growth and vitality within Hancock's DDA District. In support of this objective, the DDA administers the Façade Improvement Grant Program to provide financial assistance to local business and property owners within its boundaries to upgrade their exterior building façades. Successful façade improvement projects promote a positive commercial image of downtown Hancock that can leverage additional investment in neighboring properties, facilitating continued economic growth and revitalization of the downtown district.

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

Eligible applicants include owners of commercial properties and business owners located within the boundaries of Hancock's DDA District ([see map](#)). 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 GUIDELINES

1. The project must be within the boundaries of the Hancock Downtown Development Authority District ([see map](#)).
2. Only buildings 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 building must meet basic public safety codes and a basic condition test, which indicates that the property appears to be structurally sound and the roof intact. Proposed façade improvements must also comply with all applicable building and zoning codes, including necessary permits.
4. Proposed façade improvements must be on any exterior face of an existing 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. Property taxes and property insurance must be current and available upon request.
6. The applicant shall not be in default to the City nor involved in any litigation with the DDA or City.
7. The project must be a permanent improvement.

8. The project must enhance or fit into the larger context of neighboring buildings.
9. If performed by a licensed contractor, material and labor costs can be considered eligible expenses. Property or business owners cannot charge labor for their own time or their employees' time; however, "do-it-yourself" expenditures on materials are eligible. If the building is owned by a Licensed Contractor, only supplies and materials are eligible, wages are excluded.
10. The applicant must submit a complete application packet as listed in APPLICATION PROCESS & SELECTION PROCESS, item #2.
11. The proposed project must meet the grant program guidelines and be approved by the Hancock DDA Committee.
12. If approved, the project must be completed within nine (9) months of grant approval.
13. Work completed prior to grant approval will not be reimbursed.
14. Changes to the scope of the project after grant approval must be submitted in writing and approved by the Hancock DDA.
15. The DDA will provide up to \$500 for design services to prepare project drawings or renderings consistent with applicable local, state, and federal laws and codes.

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

- 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, such as removal of elements which cover original architectural details
- Improvements which increase architectural integrity of business district
- Painting only as part of a comprehensive façade improvement project
- Signage or sign replacement as part of a comprehensive façade improvement project
- Doors and windows if part of a comprehensive façade improvement project

INELIGIBLE PROJECTS

- Physical or visual removal of architecturally important feature
- Installation of vinyl or aluminum siding
- Roofs
- Parking Lots

- Mechanical systems
- Landscaping
- Murals
- Routine general maintenance items that are part of normal property ownership
- Repair of any code violations
- Interior renovation projects not associated with exterior rehabilitation
- Properties that have received previous Downtown Façade Improvement Grant funding within the fiscal year

FINANCIAL MATCHING GUIDELINES

Grants require a 1:1 cash match on behalf of the applicant for all eligible expenses. The grant is reimbursable, with a minimum DDA reimbursement of \$1,000 and a maximum DDA reimbursement of \$15,000. If requested/required to complete the approved project, additional funding may be considered.

The DDA Board will allocate funding for the program on an annual basis and are considered on a competitive and rolling basis. There is a limit of one Downtown Façade Improvement Grant per property per every three years.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS & SELECTION PROCESS

1. The applicant may obtain a Downtown Façade Improvement Grant application through the DDA's website, <https://downtownHancock.org/> or the City of Hancock office, 399 Quincy Street, Hancock, MI 49330.

2. The completed Application Cover Sheet shall be submitted to the DDA along with attachments in this order:

Attachment A: Narrative - Detailed Description of Project

Attachment B: Photographs of the building's existing condition from all affected sides

Attachment C: Graphic Rendering of Proposed Improvements (drawings/photos)

Attachment D: Contractor Bids/Material and other estimates calculating the Total Project Cost

Attachment E: Evidence of up-to-date property taxes (if required).

Attachment F: Evidence of property and liability insurance (if required).

Attachment G: Completed W-9.

3. The application cover sheet and attachments shall be submitted to the DDA at least 20 days prior to the next scheduled DDA Board meeting. The DDA Board meetings are regularly scheduled for the first Monday of each month at 6:00 p.m.

4. The applicant may be required to make an informal presentation of the planned improvements to the DDA Board if so requested.

5. The improved building design and application will be reviewed by the DDA Committee and a recommendation for approval or disapproval will be made by the committee as soon as practical. Approval or disapproval by the DDA will be forwarded in writing to the applicant within five days after such is given.

6. 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.

7. If the above conditions are met, at completion of the project and upon presentation to the DDA of evidence of paid bills, and submitted before and after photos, the property owner will be reimbursed up to \$15,000 per façade improvement project as awarded.

DEFAULT AND REMEDY

The applicant will be in default if rehabilitation activities stated in the grant application are not completed within nine months of approval. The grantee may be considered in default if the scope of the project changes once approval is granted, without prior notification to and approval from the Hancock Downtown Development Authority.

RIGHTS RESERVED

- Priority will be given to those projects which incorporate identifiable historical architectural themes and color schemes.
- The final approval or disapproval rests with the DDA Committee.
- The DDA reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposed projects.
- The allocation of grants is based on available funding.

APPLICATION COVER SHEET

Hancock DDA Facade Improvement Grant Program Instructions: Please print neatly or type. Only completed applications with required attachments will be accepted. Applications should be sent to the Hancock Downtown Development Authority (DDA), 399 Quincy Street, Hancock, MI 49930 or emailed to dda@cityofhancock.net.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Business Name/Address: _____

Applicant Name: _____

Applicant Address: _____

Applicant Phone #: _____ Applicant Email: _____

If applicant is a lessee and not the property owner, please fill out the following information:

Property Owner's Name/Address: _____

Property Owner's Phone #: _____

Property Owner's Email: _____

PROJECT FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Brief Description of source of Applicant Contribution _____

Total Project Cost MUST exceed \$2,000. Grant Request may not exceed \$15,000.

PROJECTED TIMELINE (must be completed within nine months of grant agreement)

Projected Start Date: _____ Projected End Date: _____

Applicant Contribution (at least 50% of total project cost) \$ _____

Grant Request of DDA (50% of project cost, not to exceed \$10,000) \$ _____

Total Project Cost \$ _____

REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS CHECKLIST

___ Attachment A: Narrative - Detailed Description of Project

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___ Attachment F: Evidence of property and liability insurance

___ Attachment G: Completed W-9

AGREEMENT

I have read the Downtown Façade Improvement Grant Program Guidelines. I understand that if the proposed project is approved, I will make the agreed upon improvements to the property within the specified timeframe allowed.

Applicant Signature: _____ Date: _____

To be signed by property owner if other than applicant: I have read the Downtown Façade Improvement Grant Program Guidelines, reviewed the project proposal, and authorize the applicant to make the proposed improvements to my property if the project is approved.

Property Owner Signature: _____ Date: _____

Guidelines updated on May 1, 2024

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY DATE RECEIVED: _____

RECEIVED BY: _____

DATE REVIEWED BY DDA BOARD: _____

APPROVED OR DENIED: _____