



Village of Grass Lake DDA Grant Guidelines

Revitalization Grant Program

Program Goals

The primary goals of the Revitalization Grant Program are to reduce blight and building deterioration in the Grass Lake Downtown District, and to strengthen the economic viability of the Village. Project proposals may include improving the physical appearance of buildings and/or maintaining historical façade elements. They may also include updating structural elements, electrical, plumbing and HVAC systems to levels reasonably required by any building tenant (i.e. not business specific) and transferable in any later sale of the building.

Other program goals include:

1. Restoration of building façades for historically significant structures.
2. Renovation improvements which are sensitive to historic details and materials.
3. Beautification of private lots or structures providing a continuity of landscape design for the downtown district.
4. Incentives to fill vacant buildings or private lots, especially with quality retail operations in street-level spaces and residential uses of upper-floor spaces.
5. Support and expansion of the tax base in the Central Business District.

Program Eligibility

A property must be located within the legal boundaries of the DDA District to be eligible. Both owners and tenants (with owner permission) are eligible. All property taxes on a property must be paid in full at the time of application. Any DDA District properties are eligible for assistance under the program, but tax paying properties shall receive priority consideration.

Limits On Assistance and Matching Requirement

There shall be a limit of \$20,000 maximum grant awarded in a given year, and a total of \$30,000 in program funds per property during a five-year period. New retail businesses are eligible for an additional \$5,000 grant with a total of \$35,000 in the five-year period. In cases where property ownership is changed, the DDA reserves the right to reconsider any pending grants.

The standard matching requirement is 100 percent per project; in other words, matching funds are to equal at least the amount of the funds provided by the program. However, the match requirement can be reduced or eliminated for special considerations such as improvements that the building needs but may not improve the businesses financials

(i.e. façade improvements or addressing structural needs); improving/addressing accessibility or safety; or including lighting compliant with dark skies criteria.

Eligible Uses of Program Funds

The following expenses are eligible for funding consideration when included within the scope of an overall building revitalization project:

1. Building exterior: painting; non-historic facade removal; exterior lighting; doors and windows (repair or replacement); awnings; storefront rehabilitation (especially increasing ground floor transparency)
2. Building interior: structural elements; electrical; plumbing; HVAC systems
3. Signage (new, repair, or replacement)
4. ADA compliant designs and upgrades
5. Site improvements: landscape; hardscape; sidewalks; walkways; adjoining streetscapes
6. Permanent community art elements (murals, sculptures, etc.)

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. All proposed projects are expected to meet building codes and comply with all local ordinances. All proposed projects are expected to benefit any future tenant and the general downtown, regardless of future building use(s).

Ineligible Uses of Program Funds

The following expenses are ineligible for grant funding:

1. Expenses incurred prior to notification of intent to apply for DDA grant funding
2. Mortgage or land contract refinancing; loan fees; appraiser and/or attorney fees; tax payments
3. Wages for work done or directly managed by the applicant
4. Repairs covered under insurance
5. Items taxed as personal property; real property or equipment acquisition
6. Franchise fees

Program Selection Criteria

The following factors will be considered by the DDA Properties Committee and the DDA Board of Directors:

1. Impact on building occupancy
2. Building historical designation or significance, and restoration to period-authentic design
3. Timeframe for project completion
4. Enhancement of property value
5. Expectation of job(s) creation
6. Accessibility considerations
7. Business hours
8. Availability of DDA matching funds

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Proposed projects will be evaluated for their expected benefit to the downtown and prioritized for overall value to the community.

Application Requirements

All recipients are expected to operate in an open and transparent manner, during the application process as well as during any follow-on audit requests. The following information must be submitted by program applicants:

1. Proof of building ownership or owner approval of proposed project
2. Proposed use of building and a description of the project; business plan, if available
3. Project design plans
4. Detailed project cost estimates, two or more estimates/quotes are preferred
5. Timeframe for completion of project
6. A narrative describing how this project will benefit the DDA District

You may be asked to present your funding request to the DDA Board at a regularly scheduled DDA Board meeting.

Funding Process

Annual funding allocations are recommended by the DDA Board of Directors as funds are available each year. Targeted completion date for approved projects is one (1) year after funding approval. If there are delays that are out of the control of the grantee, the schedule changes are to be communicated to the DDA Executive Director.

Review Panel

The DDA Properties Committee will review all applications and make recommendations to the DDA Board of Directors for final project approval. The DDA Executive Director will communicate application status changes to the applicant. Modification to the plan or approved application must be referred back to the Executive Director. During the project, the DDA Executive Director or appointed designee must authorize any changes to the approved scope of work or the DDA may rescind the funding commitment.

Payment Procedures

Applicants must pay a minimum of 50% of the cost of the eligible improvements prior to the Revitalization Grant funding disbursement. After approved project completion, distribution from the Grant Program will be paid to applicant upon submittal of copies of paid invoices for approved work to the DDA Executive Director. After submitted invoices are reviewed and approved, the distribution will be approved by the DDA Board, and a check issued by the DDA Treasurer.

Rights Reserved

The specific program guidelines detailed herein are subject to revision by the Village of Grass Lake DDA Board of Directors. The DDA and the Village of Grass Lake may discontinue this program at any time. All grants are subject to DDA budget fund availability.

Upon completion of the project the DDA reserves the right to:

1. Place a commemorative plaque on the building structure (in a location approved by the owner) to recognize the contribution of funding from the DDA.
2. Coordinate a ribbon cutting ceremony with the local Chamber of Commerce to highlight the completed

- improvements.
3. Include pictures and updates on the DDA website and/or other community / social media as the project evolves.

New Retail Business Grants

New retail business grants are available to DDA businesses to help cover costs associated with starting up a new retail business. Businesses are eligible to receive up to \$5,000 within the first six months of startup. Funds may be used for any expenses associated with starting up a business.

Funds are not guaranteed and are disbursed on a first come/first serve basis. Application may be submitted “pre-opening” or up to 6 months after opening the business. Proof of licensure or certification (if applicable) is required.

All other guidelines are as described for the Revitalization Grant Program.

For further information or questions, contact the Interim DDA Executive Director,
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