

City of Tecumseh DDA Façade Incentive Grant Program Guidelines

Background

The Façade Incentive Grant Program is a program of the Tecumseh Downtown Development Authority (DDA).

Program Purpose

The grant program was created to encourage private investment through the historically sensitive rehabilitation and dramatic improvement of façades in downtown Tecumseh, to encourage good design that will serve as quality examples, and to preserve the architectural character distinctive to Tecumseh. By improving the appearance of the building facades, the program serves to improve the economic vitality of the downtown.

Source of Funding

This program is funded by the Tecumseh Downtown Development Authority. Recommendations for funding grant applications will be made by the DDA's Design Review Committee; however, the DDA will make all final grant funding decisions.

Eligible Applicants

1. Properties located within the DDA District (map is attached) are eligible to apply.
2. Applications for projects must be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission and approved by the Design Committee and DDA Board prior to commencement of construction. Work begun prior to receiving a formal Notice To Proceed letter from the DDA will NOT be considered for the façade grant incentive. Owners or tenants may request grant funds; however, tenant must submit a notarized letter from the property owner granting permission with the application.
3. Preference will be given to first-time Applicants.

Eligible Improvements – as a stand alone project or as part of a larger project

Façade rehabilitation and/or improvement
Exterior masonry cleaning and/or repair
Pointing of brick/mortar joint repair
Storefront repair or rehabilitation
Patching and painting of façade walls
Exterior painting
Window and/or door replacement/repair
Cornice repair and/or replacement
Other improvements, considered on a case-by-case basis

Funding Guidelines

1. Grants will reimburse 50% of the project costs up to a maximum of \$5,000.
2. Grant funds cannot be used for any of the following: interior improvements or furnishings, financing or refinancing debt, loan origination fees, property acquisition, permits or development review fees, property appraisals, legal fees, landscaping, interior maintenance, or signs and awnings with signage (see Sign Incentive Program).

3. All rehabilitation projects must meet City of Tecumseh zoning and building codes.
4. Any grant for surface cleaning must ensure the gentlest means of cleaning are used and environmental permits are obtained if removing lead based paint or discharging paint materials into the City's storm sewer. Cleaning methods that damage the historic building materials, particularly sandblasting, shall not be undertaken.
5. Projects funded by grant monies must be completed within one year of the date the grant is awarded.
6. Any improvements that have been made through the Façade Incentive Grant Program must be maintained by the Applicant and may not be removed or significantly altered for a minimum of five years, according to the Façade Grant Maintenance Agreement that must be executed following the approval of a grant award.
7. All Applicants must have all property (real and personal) taxes and utilities bills paid to date.
8. No grant will be awarded until the project is 100% complete and all City approval processes completed (i.e. final inspection on all building permits and final inspection of grant work.) The grant is awarded on a reimbursement basis.

Application Process

The following information must be submitted with your application to ensure quick processing:

1. Project improvement plans drawn to scale, if applicable
2. Samples of paint colors to be used on façade improvements
3. Photograph(s) of existing condition of property
4. Proposed budget and detailed cost estimates for work
5. Three (3) written estimates for proposed work. Estimates must be from three independent companies without any relationship with each other. If any relationship exists between the contractor and applicant, this must be disclosed at the time of application.
6. Written permission by property owner, if tenant
7. Proof of payment of taxes (available at City Hall, 309 E. Chicago Blvd.)
8. \$50 Non-refundable Application Fee (Checks payable to "Tecumseh DDA")
9. Proof of property and liability insurance

A one-on-one meeting will be required with DDA staff to review program guidelines and discuss grant requirements.

The Applicant certifies and agrees to the terms and conditions set forth below:

1. The Applicant is owner or tenant of a property in the Tecumseh DDA District (see DDA District Boundary Map – Exhibit A).
2. The Applicant is in good standing with the City of Tecumseh in terms of payment of taxes and utilities.
3. The Applicant agrees to be bound by the rules as outlined in the Program Guidelines and should consult the Downtown Design Guidelines (available at the

DDA/Economic Development Office, 309 E. Chicago Blvd., Tecumseh, MI) when making decisions regarding the aesthetic quality of the façade design.

4. All improvements to be undertaken will be consistent with all applicable zoning and building codes. Further, if review is necessary by the Tecumseh Planning Commission in accordance with the Tecumseh Zoning Ordinance, the review will be conducted prior to any work being done on the façade. The Applicant must pay the fee for the Planning Commission.
5. Only the work that is outlined on the application will be eligible for reimbursement.
6. The project must be completed within one year of approval of the application. An extension may be granted with written consent from the Design Review Committee if substantial progress can be documented.
7. Funds are awarded on a reimbursement basis. Disbursement of funds shall be made only after the entire project is complete and certified by City staff and the grant inspector to be in compliance with the approved design. The work must also adhere to any required inspections (e.g. Lenawee County) before funds are disbursed for reimbursement. The Applicant must submit copies of invoices showing (at minimum) that the Applicant's matching portion has been paid in full, receipts and an itemized statement of the total cost of the project, signed by the Applicant. All documentation for payment must be submitted at one time to the DDA for one payout, and the receipts must be provided no later than fifteen (15) months after approval of application. Payment will be made to the Applicant by the City of Tecumseh within 4-6 weeks. The City will only make checks payable to the Applicant.
8. The Applicant understands that he/she is responsible for the construction management for the entire project.
9. The grant money awarded will be in keeping with the Program Guidelines and shall not exceed the amount as outlined in the application.
10. It is expressly understood and agreed that the Applicant shall be solely responsible for all safety conditions and in compliance with all federal, state and local safety regulations, building codes, ordinances and other applicable regulations.
11. The Applicant shall, at his/her own expense indemnify, protect, defend and hold harmless the City and/or its agents and employees, from all claims, damages, lawsuits, costs, and expenses, for any property damage, personal injury or other loss relating in any way to the Tecumseh DDA Façade Incentive Grant Program.
12. The Applicant understands that he/she is responsible for the maintenance of the façade improvements described here for a period of five years from the project completion in accordance with the Façade Grant Maintenance Agreement that will be executed in the event this application is approved.

Applicant Signature _____ Date _____

Property Owner Signature _____ Date _____

Please complete and return to City of Tecumseh DDA/Economic Development Office, 309 E. Chicago Blvd., Tecumseh, MI 49286.

Step-by-Step Application Process

1. A grant application must be completed and submitted to the Tecumseh DDA/Economic Development Office. Applications will be accepted at any time during the calendar year. Funds for this program will be allocated based on funding availability. Estimates, which are to be outlined in the application for the work to be performed on a façade, must be submitted on letterhead from a professional qualified to do the work. Three separate estimates must be obtained from three independent companies without any relationship with each other. The amount of funding requested from the Applicant shall be based on the estimate submitted, and the exact amount of the grant request should be outlined in the application. If, or when, items specified within the approved construction estimate are not completed, the amount reimbursed by the DDA will decrease accordingly. Changes to project scope must be approved by DDA staff or reimbursement may be affected. In the event the cost of the project exceeds the amount in the initial estimate, the Applicant will only be eligible for the amount requested and approved. If an Applicant wants to phase in the improvements, he/she may do so, however, the Applicant will be required to submit a new application and outline the work to be performed in connection with each new phase of work.
2. If an Applicant is requesting funding for more than one noncontiguous place of business, the Applicant must complete a separate application for each building. Each eligible building will be considered a separate project for the purposes of grant funding.
3. A non-refundable \$50 application fee must accompany the completed application form made payable to the "Tecumseh DDA". If the application is denied, DDA staff will provide in writing, an explanation as to the reasons for rejection, and what, if any, steps can be taken to receive approval.
4. DDA staff will forward the application to the City of Tecumseh Building Department to ensure the work complies with the City's zoning and building codes. If the work does not comply with zoning/building codes, the Applicant will be contacted for a meeting with the Building Department to work through the discrepancies between the codes and proposed work. A revised application may be required. No grant may be awarded for proposed work that does not meet City of Tecumseh zoning/building codes and the Michigan Building Code. This preliminary review will not replace City requirements for obtaining zoning approval or building permits.
5. Proposed improvements to properties located within the Historic District must be reviewed by the Tecumseh Historic Preservation Commission (HPC).
6. Once an application is returned to DDA staff, the DDA Design Review Committee, who serves as the grant review committee, will review it. The Design Committee will use the Downtown Design Guidelines and a project rating system to recommend approval of grant awards. Applicants will be notified of the Design Committee's recommendation by DDA staff in writing. The final grant decision will be made by the Tecumseh DDA Board. Once the DDA Board has approved

a project, the Applicant will be sent a formal “Notice to Proceed” letter with improvements. No work shall commence prior to the applicant receiving the “Notice to Proceed” letter, authorizing the work. Any work undertaken prior to this time will be ineligible for grant funding.

7. Once the façade design has been approved, the Applicant will be notified in writing and the amount of the grant will be clearly stated in the letter. The program participant will then sign a Façade Grant Maintenance Agreement (please see sample in Exhibit B), which ensures the maintenance and preservation of the improvements for a period of five years.
8. If, or when, items specified within the approved construction estimate are not completed, the amount reimbursed by the DDA will decrease accordingly. Changes to project scope must be approved by DDA staff or reimbursement may be affected.
9. “Before” and “after” pictures must be taken by the Applicant and submitted to the DDA/Economic Development Office upon completion of the project.
10. When a façade improvement project is completed and “before” and “after” pictures are submitted, it will be examined by DDA staff and a Building Department staff member to ensure the work has been completed as specified in the grant application, as approved by the Design Committee and DDA Board.
11. Once staff has verified completion of the façade improvement project, the Applicant must submit copies of invoices, receipts and an itemized statement of the total cost of the project signed by the Applicant. All documentation for payment must be provided at one time to the Tecumseh DDA for reimbursement. Receipts must be provided no later than fifteen (15) months after the application has been approved. After receipt and verification of the information, the Tecumseh DDA will release the grant money to the Applicant.

Project Rating and Approval Criteria

The Design Committee will base their recommendations for grant awards on the following:

1. Applicants must submit all items specified in the grant application.
2. The property owner must agree to adhere to the Tecumseh DDA Façade Incentive Grant Program Guidelines.
3. The project’s conformance with the Downtown Design Guidelines (available by contacting the DDA /Economic Development Office at 424-6003, 309 E. Chicago Blvd., Tecumseh, MI.)
4. Changes to the façade of the buildings should not remove, alter, damage or cover up significant architectural features of the building that are original to the building or that reflect a major alteration that is itself architecturally significant.
5. Changes to the façade of buildings should either:
 - a) Partially or fully restore the historic appearance of the building based on actual evidence, including photographs, written documentation, data on the building or site or other data.
 - b) Represent a treatment that blends into and is compatible with the building and adjoining buildings.
6. In general, the Design Committee will encourage repair and preservation of existing features of facades, unless alterations to facades have resulted in an

incoherent, unattractive or inharmonious appearance. While encouraging correction of such alterations, the committee will advocate minimal alterations of harmonious features.

7. For facades that have previously been substantially altered and for which a new treatment is chosen, such a treatment should conform with the features, materials, rhythms, color and general appearance of the building, and those adjoining, particularly if the building is one in a row of buildings with identical or similar design features.
8. Paint colors should either be based on original colors obtained from paint samples from the building, historic color samples, or be compatible with adjoining buildings and colors in downtown Tecumseh. Trim colors, which highlight building details, are encouraged. Spectacular colors should be avoided.
9. Projects exhibiting the highest level of impact on the building and surrounding buildings will receive the highest priority for funding.
10. Projects with the highest amount of private investment will receive a higher priority for funding.
11. Projects for buildings with first-floor retail use will receive a higher priority for funding.

Contact Information

For questions or to apply for the Façade Grant Incentive Program, please contact the Tecumseh DDA/Economic Development Office.

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