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## Sign Incentive Grant to encourage creative downtown signage

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**Ionia Sentinel Standard**

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PORTLAND, Mich. — To help bring creative signs to Portland’s downtown, the first Sign Incentive Grant is being offered to spark creativity.

Portland’s Downtown Development Authority and Main Street’s Design Committee boards are offering downtown businesses the opportunity to show their creative side by offering the signage grant.

“We have a lot of great creative businesses downtown, and we would love to see some new creative designs,” said DDA Director and Main Street Manager Patrick Reagan. “It’s a program that is done in other communities as well, and we wanted to try and help out by getting some really nice signage to add to the creative businesses.”

The grant will help selected downtown businesses by paying 50 percent of a total cost up to \$1,000 for businesses in the Main Street district.

Sign applications will be reviewed by the Design Committee, and the top scoring applications will then be submitted to the Portland Main Street Board of Directors and then the DDA Board of Directors for final approval.

The grant comes from the Design Committee budget, and there is \$2,500 worth of funds set aside.

“The amount of grants that we make will be based on the applications that we receive and the cost associated with each of the approved projects,” said Reagan.

The Design Committee has created a set of sign design guidelines for businesses interested in applying for this grant, which will help business owners think outside the box for their design.

“There is a set of design guidelines which will focus on creativity,” said Reagan. “We are not looking to fund backlit signs or Plain Jane (designs) — we want to maximize the downtown and the entrepreneurial spirit.”

Applications will be accepted between Dec. 20 and Jan. 31. Applications can be downloaded at [www.portlandmainstreet.org](http://www.portlandmainstreet.org) or at City Hall, located at 259 Kent St.

For more information, contact Patrick Reagan at 517-647-5027.

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