

2015-2016  
PORTLAND MAIN STREET  
FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT  
PROGRAM

Sponsored by:

THE CITY OF PORTLAND  
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Revised: February 19, 2015

## **CITY OF PORTLAND DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY/ MAIN STREET- FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

### **PURPOSE**

The City of Portland Downtown Development Authority (DDA) has determined that a portion of the revenues collected by the DDA should be used to enhance the building facades found in downtown Portland. The DDA's Downtown Development Plan, adopted in 1988 and most recently amended in 2002, promotes property acquisition and renovation with an emphasis on historic preservation, as stated in the City's Master Plan, recognizing the historic qualities of the buildings and encouraging renovations that are consistent with and appropriate to this character.

The appearance of individual buildings, storefronts, signs, alleys, window displays, parking lots, and sidewalks establishes the visual character of the downtown and plays a major role in the marketing success of the business district.

The purpose of the façade improvement grant is to encourage historically accurate improvements to commercial facades visible from the public right-of-way or other city owned property that is accessible to the general public such as a public parking lot or walkway. The grant money is intended to provide financial incentives for quality façade development.

It is also the intent of the program to strengthen the economic viability of downtown Portland by improving the exterior physical appearance of buildings. The perception of downtown has a great deal of influence on its economic success. By improving its physical appearance, the downtown will have a much greater potential for attracting and retaining business as well as creating an image of strong economic health and vitality.

### **ELIGIBILITY**

A property must be located within the legal boundaries of the Main Street District (please see attached map) to be eligible. A building façade is eligible for assistance funds only once. An owner or tenant with multiple buildings or buildings with multiple facades may apply once for each building facade. The following criteria will also apply:

1. Only buildings with retail, commercial or professional uses consistent with desired downtown land uses are eligible.
2. Properties must be structurally sound, roof intact, and meet basic public safety codes.
3. If the DDA determines that the subject property has historically significant features, it may require consultation with a historic engineer or the State Historic Preservation Office to ensure historically accurate improvements are made.

4. Awnings and signs are eligible expenses under program guidelines, as long as they are part of a comprehensive facade restoration project and meet program goals and guidelines.
5. Only facades abutting a public right-of-way or other city owned property that is accessible to the general public such as a public parking lot or walkway are eligible projects. This includes rear and side facades for through lots and corner properties.
6. Building owners or tenants are eligible. If a tenant applies for assistance, he or she must provide written proof that the building owner has authorized proposed improvements. All City of Portland volunteers, committee, board or council members are eligible to apply for program funds.
7. Applicants will be required to complete an application form provided by the Main Street Design Committee. Applicants are also required to either attend, or have attended, a Michigan Main Street "Building Basics" seminar.
8. All required municipal/ governmental permits must be obtained prior to the start of any construction.
9. **All applications must be complete upon submission. Incomplete applications will not be considered for review.**

### **CONDITIONS OF ELIGIBILITY**

Along with the completed application, the following information must be provided:

1. Proposed budget for project.
2. A signed lease agreement which leases the first 12" of the facade of the building to the City of Portland DDA for a period of time--equal to the paint warranty and not to exceed 10 years--for the amount \$1.00 total. This agreement will be recorded with the County Register of Deeds.
3. Applicant will provide a copy of his or her current insurance coverage to ensure that the subject property is properly insured. The City must be named as an additional insured on insurance for the length of the above mentioned lease, and receive copies of insurance coverage stating such.
4. A copy of the registered property deed with the legal description of the property
5. Proof that all property taxes paid to date.
6. Copies of any leases associated with the property.
7. If the tenant is applying, a signed letter from the owner expressing approval of the project must be provided.

### **ELIGIBLE COSTS (Exterior Improvements Only)**

1. Repairs or replacements of windows, doors, walls, or other appropriate architectural elements.
2. Exterior painting
3. Architectural and engineering fees for design and site plan.
4. Building permits and site plan fees.
5. Awnings
6. Exterior Lighting
7. Masonry repair or cleaning
8. Conversion to retail or entertainment storefront (must be compatible with historic architecture).
9. Restoration of vintage elements
  - a. Removal of inappropriate “modern” façade treatments
  - b. Removal or replacement of inappropriate signs or lighting (new signs or lights must be compatible with existing architecture).
  - c. Repair or restoration of original brick and woodwork
10. Materials and labor for work performed in association with above-mentioned improvements.
11. All work performed in association with a façade improvement grant application must be performed by licensed contractors.

### **INELIGIBLE COSTS**

1. Expenses incurred **before** approval of application by the City of Portland’s Downtown Development Authority.
2. Property acquisition
3. Mortgage or land contract financing
4. Loan fees
5. New construction
6. Wages paid to applicant, relatives, or friends for work associated with the façade improvement.
7. Furnishings, trade fixtures, display cases, counters, or other items taxed as personal property
8. Reusable or removable items
9. Any expenses for which applicant pays contractor in merchandise or in-kind services.

## **PROJECT PRIORITIES**

Applications containing the following characteristics will have priority in the appropriation of project funds:

- Highly visible projects.
- Projects on corner lots
- Projects in which the building is owner occupied
- Projects containing a high ratio of private to public dollars
- Projects preserving community institutions (banks, theaters, etc.)
- Projects designed to remove or replace boarded windows
- Projects designed to resolve deteriorated, inappropriate, or unsightly conditions that have existed for many years (inappropriate modernization, deteriorated electrical fixtures, etc.)
- Projects which enhance pedestrian movement from the rear to the front of buildings
- Projects designed to restore the historic condition of the building façade or posterior (see eligible costs: Item No. 9)
- Projects which will complete the improvement of a block or portion of a block (e.g., replacement of an inappropriate façade).

## **GRANT AMOUNTS**

The total amount available for grants will be determined annually by the DDA.

Maximum Grant Amount: \$5,000.00 per façade

Minimum Grant Amount: \$500.00 per facade

Façade Improvement Grants will be made on a 50%-50% ratio. The applicant must invest at least one half of the total project cost to receive a grant for the other half from the DDA. The grant by the DDA is not to exceed \$5,000.00 per facade. Please note that this is a “reimbursement grant.”

(E.g., a project totaling \$4,000.00 may receive \$2,000.00 from the DDA. A project totaling \$20,000.00 may receive the maximum of \$5,000.00. A project totaling \$25,000.00 may receive the maximum of \$5,000.00, but will have a higher priority because of the additional private investment).

*(\* Note – If more than 4 of the project priorities are met then the DDA reserves the right to adjust the grant amount up to \$10,000.00.)*

## **PROCESSING OF GRANT REQUESTS**

- **The applicant must attend a Michigan Main Street Design Workshop reviewing the importance of historic integrity.**
- A façade improvement application is obtained from the City of Portland DDA.
- The application must be completed by the property owners, or tenant of the building with owner’s consent, and returned to the City Clerk’s office where it will be reviewed for accuracy and compliance and logged into the records of the DDA.

- **All applications must be complete upon submission. Incomplete applications will not be considered for review.**
- The application will be reviewed by Main Street Staff to verify that it is located in the Main Street District district. The Main Street Design Committee will provide a preliminary review outlining how well the project meets the program objectives.
- If the application meets program objectives, the applicant will be notified that the project has been accepted for consideration.
- In addition to the site plan, a detailed break out of all costs including a signed estimate from a qualified contractor must be submitted by the applicant (i.e., a project budget illustrating both private and public expenditures).
- Once a plan is submitted, it will be taken before the Design Committee for review. The Design Committee will seek input from the State Historic Preservation Office and rely on their representation of preservation.
- If approved, the project construction may commence; if the plan is inconsistent with program goals, it will be returned with request for modifications.
- The Main Street Design Committee will review applications and make recommendation to the Main Street Board, which will recommend the project awards to the DDA. The DDA will award the grants. Please note that this grant is a “reimbursement grant.”

### **POST-APPROVAL PROCEDURES**

- Any changes in the scope of work must be approved by the Main Street Design Committee prior to construction and installation.
- Verification of all approved changes in work will be dated and attached to the original site plan in the form of an addendum.
- Main Street staff may conduct periodic inspections to ensure compliance with the site plan eligible activities.
- Project completion must be on or before a date designated by the committee as a condition of award. A single extension of time to complete the project can be requested in writing and may be awarded by the Design Committee only under extenuating circumstances.
- On completion of the project, Main Street staff will photograph the new façade and submit it to the Design Committee to ensure that all components of the site plan are met.
- After final project inspection, the Main Street Design Committee will recommend to the Main Street Board and DDA that the applicant be reimbursed for the approved grant amount.

**CITY OF PORTLAND DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT GRANT APPLICATION**

**APPLICANT INFORMATION**

1. Property/Business Owner Name: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Property Address: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Phone Number (Home) \_\_\_\_\_ (Work) \_\_\_\_\_
5. Is the building owned by the applicant? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

*If “No”, please attach a signed letter from the property owner approving the proposed project.*

**PROJECT INFORMATION**

On separate sheets of paper, please describe your project in detail. Please include the following information:

- a. What you want to accomplish – drawings are especially helpful and strongly encouraged.
- b. How this project meets the Purpose and Priorities of the Portland Main Street Façade Improvement Program as listed in the Guidelines
- c. Who will do the work and the reason(s) for your selection.
- d. A preliminary timetable for accomplishing the work.
- e. A detailed expense budget and estimates for this project.

*(Though not required, it is highly recommended that applicants provide pictures or illustrations of project concepts with their applications)*

6. The project will involve (Please check all that apply):
  - Repairs or replacement windows, doors, walls, or other appropriate architectural elements.
  - Exterior painting (only in conjunction with other major improvements; painting is not to exceed 50% of total project cost)
  - Awnings and or signs.
  - Exterior Lighting
  - Masonry repair or cleaning
  - Conversion to retail or entertainment storefront (must be compatible with historic architecture).
  - Restoration of vintage elements, for example:
    - Removal of inappropriate “modern” façade treatments
    - Removal/replacement of inappropriate signs and/or lighting (new signs/lights must be compatible with existing architecture)

- Repair or restoration of original brick and woodwork

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7. Total Project Budget: \$\_\_\_\_\_
8. Grant Request (Not to exceed 50% of #7 or \$5,000, whichever is lower):  
 \$\_\_\_\_\_
9. Proposed Starting Date (May Not be Prior to grant approval) : \_\_\_\_\_
10. Proposed Completion Date (May not be later than June 30, 2015): \_\_\_\_\_
11. What is (are) the existing use(s) of the building:  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
12. Will the proposed project result in a change in the use(s) of the building (*check one*):  
 \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**THE UNDERSIGNED APPLICANT (S) AFFIRMS THAT:**

- ❖ The information submitted is true and accurate to the best of my (our) knowledge.
- ❖ The property contained in the application is located in the Portland Main Street District.
- ❖ I (we) have read and understand the conditions of the Portland Main Street’s Façade Improvement Program and agree to abide by its conditions and guidelines.
- ❖ If I (we) do not implement improvements submitted by me (us) on the professional site plan and approved by the Design Committee, I (we) will not be eligible for reimbursement of any costs associated with these improvements.
- ❖ I (we) understand that if I (we) do not comply with the conditions of this program; the Design Committee may nullify the grant award. Signature of Applicant(s):

\_\_\_\_\_  
 SS#: \_\_\_\_\_ SS#: \_\_\_\_\_

Federal Business Tax ID #: \_\_\_\_\_



**The applicant certifies that all information set forth in the attached application is a true representation of the facts pertaining to the subject property for the purpose of obtaining funding under the Facade Improvement Program.**

**The applicant further certifies that he/she has read and understands the Facade Improvement Guidelines. It is understood that grant commitments are contingent upon the availability of program funds.**

Signed this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20 \_\_\_\_\_.

*Applicant* \_\_\_\_\_ *Title* \_\_\_\_\_