Office of the DDA Director

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SECTION I – GENERAL PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The City of Port Huron Downtown Development Authority (DDA) created the Downtown Façade Improvement Grant Program (Defined as the "Program") to encourage private investment in the business district.

Each fiscal year, the DDA considers the allocated funds in their budget for the Program. The Program seeks to provide funding for projects that will enhance the aesthetics and character of the DDA District and assist property owners in rehabilitating and upgrading their buildings' façades and exterior features.

SECTION II – GRANT GUIDELINES

1) Program grant funds are available for exterior work on buildings in the DDA District.
2) Façade improvements include painting, masonry work, signage, awning, windows, and door replacement and/or repair.
3) Funding is available as a 50% match up to $10,000 per property.
4) Funding for partial projects is available. However, grant funding increases when the entire façade is included in the work to be completed.
5) No grant applications will be accepted for work that has already been started or completed or for work that is covered by insurance.
6) Façade Grants are for existing commercial buildings only. Buildings may have upper-floor residential component, but the first floor must be for commercial use.
7) Participants must be current with the City of Port Huron for all real or personal property taxes at the time of application and payment.
8) Projects must receive approval from the City of Port Huron DDA, Building Dept., and the Historic District Committee (if applicable) for reimbursement.
9) Grants are awarded on a reimbursement basis once completed work has been verified by DDA staff as compliant with the plans proposed in the approved application. Any deviation from the approved grant project may result in the total or partial withdrawal of the grant. Grants are awarded as a single payment to the applicant.
10) Reimbursements are for labor and materials only. Permit fees and other expenses do not qualify for grant dollars.
11) Similar or repeat projects that have received funding through this Program within the last three (3) years are not eligible.
12) A single owner of multiple properties may apply for grant funds for each property owned but may not receive more than $10,000 per property within a five (5) year period.
13) Suppose an applicant is awarded a Program grant for a sign, awning, or facade, and the sign, awning, or facade is altered in a manner that is not consistent with the program guidelines within one (1) year from receipt of façade funds. In that case, the applicant may be required to reimburse the DDA immediately for the full amount of the grant.
14) All projects that utilize the Program funding must adhere to all City codes and ordinances.
15) Major projects (which could include $100,000 + investments, business retention, business recruitment, or business expansion projects) are eligible for larger grants. Please see DDA Director at 810-984-9718 for more information if your project fits into this category.

SECTION III – GRANT APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Applicant submits plans and required documentation to Historic District Committee (if applicable) and the Building Dept.
   a. The Historic District Committee meets on the first Tuesday of every month.
   b. The Building Dept. can be reached at 810.984.9733.
2. Complete grant application form. Return the completed application of the proposed work to the DDA Office, 100 McMorran Blvd 4th Floor, City of Port Huron, MI, including:
   a. Drawings of all proposed grant work to be done.

b. Color samples of final paint selections and/or final building material selections.
c. Itemized cost estimates are required per project element. Each element must be listed separately with an estimated cost. (E.g.: 12 windows $500.00, tuck pointing $600.00). Licensed or approved contractors must provide these. The Committee reserves the right to request TWO or more bids from qualified contractors.
d. Photos of the building's exterior, including all areas where work is to be performed.
e. Owner Consent Form.
f. City of Port Huron Sing and/or Building Permit.
g. Copy of HDC meeting minutes confirming project approval (if applicable).

3. The approval process will include without limitation the following:
a. Application deadlines occur on July 18, September 19, November 14, and February 15.
b. All projects must meet current State of Michigan building standards and codes, as well as building permit requirements, and must be approved by the City of Port Huron Zoning Administrator.
c. The DDA Board will review the recommended project and will have final approval of the grant fund allocation. If the DDA Board requests changes to the project, the project shall revert to DDA Façade Committee for further revisions. The Committee may take the amended project back to the DDA Board for approval. The Committee does not reserve the ability to allocate grant funding.
d. Applicants receiving approval shall commence construction described within the application within ninety (90) days from the date the grant is awarded. All applicants must complete the construction described in the application within one (1) year from the date the grant is approved. Suppose the applicant is unable to commence construction within ninety (90) days from the date the grant is approved or complete construction within one (1) year from the date the grant is approved. In that case, the applicant may submit a written request for an extension for the commencement date or completion date, provided the extension request is made before the ninety (90) day or one (1) year time limit. The DDA shall not be obligated to allow extensions but may do so for good cause determined solely by the DDA Board, pursuant to a recommendation from the Façade Grant Committee. If granted, the extensions shall be for the term and the conditions determined exclusively by the DDA.
e. No applicant has a proprietary right to receive grant funds. Each request will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
f. The applicant shall be required to furnish photographs of the building's exterior after the construction is completed as a condition of final grant reimbursement.
g. The applicant is required to obtain all applicable permits and approvals needed for the construction if a grant is awarded.

4. Reimbursement:
a. When the grant project has been satisfactorily completed and reviewed, the applicant shall present the DDA office with copies of all paid invoices, including copies of canceled checks and/or credit card receipts, and W9 for a single payment reimbursement of the approved funding.
b. Note: This Program is a 50% match up to $10,000 per property.

SECTION V – PROGRAM APPROVAL TIMEFRAME

This approval process typically takes between six (6) and eight (8) weeks but may, in some circumstances, take longer depending on the scheduling of the applicant to meet with the Program Committee to review the project.

SECTION VI – CRITERIA FOR PROGRAM AWARD

Projects are reviewed with the following criteria in mind:

1. The project MUST be located in the core Downtown District.
2. The project MUST meet all zoning codes and receive Zoning and Historic District Committee (if applicable) Approvals from the City of Port Huron.
3. Project results in an increase in property valuation and generates sales tax revenue.
4. Project rehabilitation reflects historical accuracy.
5. Project results in a significant increase in downtown foot traffic (retail, residence on second floor, night life, etc.)
6. Total investment dollars as provided in the grant application.
7. Investment in structure construction or renovation (excluding purchase price).
8. Complements existing buildings and improve aesthetic appearance.
9. Promotes redevelopment of City of Port Huron DDA District and vitality in Downtown Port Huron.
10. Property owners that are property tax exempt may not qualify subject to the discretion of the DDA Board.