



## Village of Spring Lake Downtown Development Authority Façade Grant Program

### **Purpose**

It is a fundamental goal of the Village of Spring Lake (hereafter "Village") and Village of Spring Lake Downtown Development Authority (hereafter "DDA") to promote economic growth and vitality in the downtown. To that end, the Village of Spring Lake Façade Grant Program has been created to encourage business and property owners to improve and maintain building facades to facilitate economic activity and promote a positive image of downtown.

The intent of the DDA's Grant program is to provide an incentive for downtown business owners and operators to invest in older facilities within the DDA district by providing matching grants to businesses to make exterior improvements or to provide design and planning assistance for these improvements as required. It is the intention of the DDA that work done with grant money should be a visible improvement to the exterior of buildings in the DDA district and contribute to the overall aesthetics of the downtown district.

Spring Lake's commercial areas, particularly its core downtown district, are vital to the economic health of our community. Any deterioration of buildings creates an image of a deteriorating community with a declining economic base and lack of pride among its citizens and business owners. Over the years significant investment has greatly upgraded the condition of public areas. A number of owners have also invested in the renovation of their properties. The Village and its' DDA Board seek to build upon these important investments and encourage new redevelopment and development. As such, this program has been developed to provide financial assistance without repayment and the opportunity for improvements that might not otherwise occur.

Grants are available for any property in the DDA district of the Village of Spring Lake; however, special focus is on the Core Central Business District (CBD-1). The intent of this grant program is to assist business owners in the exterior upgrade of their properties. The immediate goal of the program is to retain and attract businesses to the downtown district and well cared for and aesthetically pleasing buildings that play a predominant role in achieving these goals.

### **Source of Funding**

The program is sponsored by the Village of Spring Lake and the DDA. The source of funding for the program is tax increment financing revenue made available under Michigan Public Act 197 of 1975 and Ordinance No. 153 as adopted by Village Council in 1983. Annual funding allocations for the program are recommended by the DDA for approval by Village Council. The grant program described herein is contingent upon availability of budgeted funds and will be awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis.

### **Grant Funding**

Financial assistance is available in the form of a reimbursement matching grant to the property owner/applicant after work is completed. A single distribution of funds will occur per applicant once work is complete. Grants of up to \$5,000 per building are available for eligible activities and are limited to two per year or until the funds for the fiscal year have been expended. **Applicants must provide at least 50% matching funds for their project.** Program funding and grant amount will be reviewed annually.

Applicants are eligible to receive one (1) grant per building each fiscal year. If during the course of a fiscal year there are no applications from an individual who has NOT received a grant, then special consideration to issue a grant would be considered to an individual property owner that has received a grant in the last granting period.

Eligibility of grant money is typically granted within the first six months of the DDA's fiscal year. The first grant award will be made after July 1<sup>st</sup> of a fiscal year. Grants will only be available if the DDA Board and Village Council approve funding for this program each fiscal year beginning July 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **Eligible Program Projects and Requirements**

1. A property must be located within the boundaries of the Village DDA district as identified by the Village of Spring Lake.
2. The building must meet a basic condition text, which indicates that the property appears to be structurally sound, the roof intact and meets the basic public safety and property maintenance codes. Proposed façade improvements must also comply with all applicable building and zoning codes.
3. Only buildings with retail, commercial or professional uses consistent with the DDA land uses as defined in the current Village Zoning Ordinance are eligible. Buildings with second story residential units may be considered if the primary use of the building (on the ground floor) is a permitted use for the DDA district.
4. Special credit will be given for work that enables second floor offices/dwellings or improves rear access from parking areas and creates a second architecturally relevant entrance on the rear of the building facing the parking area
5. Building owners or tenants are eligible for assistance. If a tenant applies for assistance, they must provide written proof that the building owner has authorized the proposed improvements.
6. Property tax and Village utility payments must be current. The applicant shall not be in any other default to the Village nor involved in any other litigation with the DDA or Village.
7. Work must be performed by licensed and insured contractors.

### **Eligible Uses of Program Funds**

Eligible improvements must be a visible improvement to the exterior façade of the building, visible to the public and meet the Downtown Design Manual standards. The Downtown Design Manual can be found online at [www.springlakevillage.org](http://www.springlakevillage.org) or by contacting the Village Manager at [christine@springlakevillage.org](mailto:christine@springlakevillage.org)

Such improvements may include, but are not limited to:

- Architectural assistance
- Painting as part of a larger façade project
- Masonry repairs or tuckpointing as a part of other façade improvement activities
- Restoration to stone or brick exterior finishes and materials
- Exterior lighting
- Awnings (if those features are compatible with the original building design and complement the buildings architectural features)
- Doors/Entryways
- Second floor entryways/exits and exterior stairs for residents
- Window repair/replacement
- Storefront rehabilitation
- Carpentry
- Handicap accessibility
- Non-historic façade removal
- Labor for the project
- Monument signs and projecting signs may be eligible on a case by case basis **if they comply with the Downtown Design Manual**. Wall signs, awning signs and re-facing nonconforming signs such as pylon signs are not eligible for façade grants.

\*Materials and paint for **simple maintenance is not eligible for reimbursement**

## **Ineligible Uses of Program Funds**

- Refinancing existing debt
- Property acquisition
- Interior improvements
- Interior furnishings
- Site plan, building or sign permit fees
- Property appraisal costs, legal fees, or loan origination fees
- Permit and inspection fees
- Roof repairs
- Labor costs paid to the owner/applicant
- Expenses incurred prior to approval of application
- New building construction
- Purchase of personal property (equipment, machinery, other)
- Mechanical and HVAC systems
- Payment of taxes, special assessment or utility bills
- Routine maintenance that is not part of an eligible façade improvement project

## **Downtown Façade Grant Process**

1. DDA Staff and/or Village Manager will work closely with property owners and tenants to determine initial eligibility under program guidelines.
2. Once the initial scope of work has been determined, the applicant will complete the necessary application and required supporting documents and submit to DDA staff and/or Village Manager.
3. Once the application has been submitted the application will receive a preliminary review by DDA/Village staff for completeness and adherence to the program objectives and requirements. Staff will review proposed façade projects and evaluate whether or not the project satisfies the following conditions:
  - a. Enhance the aesthetics of the principal building?
  - b. Meet the requirements of the Downtown Design Manual?
  - c. Contribute to the overall aesthetics of the downtown district?
  - d. Is the building/business owner sufficiently funded to match the DDA's matching grant request?
  - e. Has the business owner done sufficient cost analysis of the proposed project?
4. If appropriate, the applicant will be notified that the project has been accepted for consideration and notified when they should attend the DDA Board meeting to present their project.
5. Applicant must attend the DDA meeting and be prepared to review and summarize the proposed project for the DDA Board discussion and action.
6. The DDA will meet and review the project details. At this time, the DDA may accept, decline or table the application if more information or amendments are requested.
7. Upon DDA approval an award letter will be issued to the applicant.

## **Rights Reserved**

The DDA and Village reserve the right to reject any and all applications including applications for a building which, in the Board's evaluation, is in such a condition that the proposed renovation would not reverse the deterioration. The specific program guidelines detailed herein are subject to revision or amendment by the DDA. The DDA and Village may discontinue this program at any time, subject to the availability of program funding and goals. The DDA and the Village reserve the right to revise or end these programs at any time and in no way guarantee availability of funding for any specific project at any given time.

The DDA Board shall not use race, sex, age or religion as grounds for refusing a loan to an eligible business/building owner.

## **Application Requirements**

Projects that meet the design guidelines and zoning requirements are selected for funding on a first come, first served basis. Applications must be complete to be considered for the program and placed in the queue, including an accurate sketch or drawing of the proposed improvements, as well as written construction estimates from qualified contractors and vendors. Funds are limited and must be spent within the fiscal year they are granted (July 1-June 30). Once funds are exhausted for the fiscal year, any remaining applications are kept for consideration when more funds become available unless the applicant opts to remove their application from consideration.

The following information must be submitted by program applicants on the forms provided:

1. Description of proposed use of building after completion of the project
2. Project design plans including type of design or architectural treatment
3. Timeframe for completion of project, not to exceed the Village's fiscal year of June 30<sup>th</sup>
4. Proof of property liability insurance
5. Written consent for program participation by property owner, if applicant is tenant
6. Photographs of buildings before initiation of project; original photographs if available
7. Estimated cost of project to include itemized bids from eligible contractors. Total match by DDA not to exceed \$5,000 (private contribution must be equal to at least 50% of the total project costs)
8. Evidence that the personal property taxes on the **applicant's or tenant's** property have been paid and are current as of the application date.

## **Disbursement of Grant Funds**

If the grant is awarded, the DDA will **reimburse** applicants for eligible improvements at the completion of the project as follows:

- Once the DDA staff/Village Manager confirms that the project is completed the grant recipient must provide a reimbursement summary page outlining all invoices, expenses and receipts. The DDA staff/Village Manager shall be responsible for assuring that any work done on an approved project is consistent with the application.
- The grant recipient must submit final invoices from contractors/suppliers marked "Paid in Full" along with copies of the checks made payable to the contractor/supplier or receipts showing payment made to the contractor/supplier if using a credit card. Reimbursement will occur at the next bill payment cycle (usually within 3 weeks).
- All work for which the grant was awarded must be completed by the end of the fiscal year (June 30) in which the grant was awarded. The business owner may request a one month extension in writing if the project has been started but is not yet completed. If the project is not done and has not been started in the fiscal year, the business owner may reapply for another grant when ready to begin the project, but there is no guarantee that funds will be available or that the grant will be awarded again.

## **Additional Important Notes**

1. It is NOT the intent or purpose of the program to subsidize routine building maintenance projects. Rather, the purpose of program assistance is to alter and improve the overall appearance of the building's façade and maintain/restore historic characteristics.
2. All improvements are to be approved by DDA Board. Any changes in the scope of work must meet administrative approval in **advance** by DDA/Village staff to be eligible for reimbursement. Staff may require further review and approval by the DDA Board based on the extent of changes proposed.
3. All approved changes shall be attached to the original application in the form of an addendum, dated and signed by the DDA staff/Village Manager.
4. Deviations from approved plan, without approval, may disqualify the applicant from receiving disbursement of grant funds and future grant applications will not be considered for review or approval.
5. ***If the façade improvements begin prior to grant funding approval, an applicant will not be eligible for the grant funds.***

6. All grant-funded improvements must be permanent and fixed in type and/or nature.
7. **Property/business owners applying for grant on a building they have received DDA façade grant funds for in a previous grant cycle is ineligible to apply/receive funding.** The façade grant program is not meant to facilitate phased projects with applicants receiving approval for multiple grants over multiple years for the same building.

For additional information please contact Chris Burns, Village Manager via email at [christine@villageofspringlake.org](mailto:christine@villageofspringlake.org) or by phone at 616.842.1393

### **Helpful Tips for Village of Spring Lake Façade Grant Applicants**

A common list of activities that should/should not be done based on questions raised during past façade projects has been compiled below.

#### **Downtown Façade Projects:**

- DO**
- Meet with the DDA/Village staff before submitting an application
  - Have an open process to select properties
  - Focus on quality, not quantity
  - Ensure the budget matches the estimates
  - Have renderings that match the estimates
  - Focus on “high impact” properties
  - Put matching funds in escrow before executing any contracts
  - Use a licensed contractor
- DON'T**
- Over inflate the need/match
  - Randomly decide on properties
  - Submit properties that don't need it
  - Submit a program concept
  - Use substandard or inappropriate materials
  - Apply for grant until you are ready to move forward with the project
  - Submit a grant for items that would be considered general maintenance unless it is associated with a larger façade improvement (i.e. painting, one window, tuck pointing, a door, etc.)
- START ANY WORK!!**

**Village of Spring Lake  
Downtown Development Authority  
Downtown Façade Grant Program Application**

**APPLICANT INFORMATION**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Property Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**PROJECT INFORMATION**

Business(es) Located in Building: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant is:     Property Owner     Tenant

**Note:** *If you are not the property owner, owner must co-sign this application where indicated below and provide a letter of permission (sample provided).*

**Scope of Project:** Provide **detailed** description of the scope of work related to the proposed improvements, including drawings, renderings, quotes from qualified builder/contractor/architect and type of design or architectural treatment. Please submit a minimum of two quotes. Use additional sheets as necessary.

**Total Planned Project Cost \$** \_\_\_\_\_ **Total Grant Funds Requested: \$** \_\_\_\_\_

**Estimated Completion Time** \_\_\_\_\_

\* Please include evidence that the personal property taxes on this property have been paid and are current

**APPLICANT SIGNATURE**

I understand that my submission of an application does not constitute a guarantee for funding under the Village of Spring Lake DDA Façade Grant Program. I certify that all information is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and, if approved, work will be completed.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Owner Signature (if other than applicant)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Send completed application to:**

**Village of Spring Lake DDA, Attn: Village Manager  
102 W Savidge Street, Spring Lake, MI 49456**



## SAMPLE LETTER OF PERMISSION

**(Property owner must create and sign this letter)**

Date

Village of Spring Lake DDA  
102 W Savidge Street  
Spring Lake, MI 49456

RE: Façade Grant Application for Property Address)

ATTN: Christine Burns, Village Manager

I hereby grant my permission to (Applicant Name) to make application under the Village of Spring Lake DDA Façade Grant Program. I certify that I have received a copy of the application for funding from the applicant and am fully aware of what is being proposed. I also certify that I am the legal owner of record and that I have authority to grant this permission to (Applicant Name).

Sincerely,

(Signature)

Type Name Here