

Village of Ravenna  
Downtown Development Authority  
Façade Improvement Program  
Guidelines

Overview:

The Village of Ravenna 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 Ravenna. The DDA is adopting a plan for façade improvements in cooperation with private property owners to enhance the appearance of individual building, storefronts and Business signs that improve the visual character of the downtown and plays a major role in the marketing success of the business district.

Purpose:

The purpose of the façade improvement grant is to encourage improvements to commercial facades visible from the public right of way. 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 Ravenna by improving the exterior physical appearance of a building. The public perception of the downtown retail district 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:

- Owners of real property within the Ravenna DDA district.
- Owners of business establishments within the DDA district.  
Tenants need written approval from the property owner.

## Conditions of Eligibility:

- Property taxes and other city accounts must be current.
- Project components must have a useful life of at least 10 years.
- Projects will be funded to the extent that budgeted DDA facade improvement program funds are available.
- Projects may not have begun.

*\* all work done must change the overall appearance of the structure.*

Note: All work performed in association with a façade improvement grant application shall be performed by licensed contractors. Any work that requires the use of scaffolding lifts or other construction equipment in a public area must be effectively barricaded to protect the public from danger.

## Ineligible Cost

- Expenses incurred prior to approval of site plan by the DDA
- Property Acquisition
- Mortgage or land contract financing
- Loan Fees
- Site plan, building permit fees
- New Construction
- Appraiser, attorney, interior decorator fees
- Wages paid to applicant, relatives, or friends for work associated with the façade improvement (e.g. payments under the table)
- Furnishings, trade fixtures, display cases, counters, or other items taxed as personal property
- Reusable or removal items

- Any portion of 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:

- New Projects
- Projects identified on corner lots
- Projects in which the building is owner-occupied
- Projects containing a high ratio of private to public dollars
- Projects designed to remove/replace boarded windows or doors.
- Projects designed to resolve deteriorated/inappropriate/unsightly conditions that have existed for many years (boarded windows, deteriorated electrical fixtures, ect)
- Awnings that relate to shape and color of the building.

Note: All projects must meet zoning and building code requirements.

The Ravenna Downtown Development grant program reserves the right to change, alter, enhance, amend or suspend this granting process at any time. Furthermore design guidelines may also be changed, altered, amended or enhanced by the Ravenna DDA at any time.

## Grant Amounts:

Maximum Façade Grant Amount: \$4,000.00 per project

Maximum Doors, Awnings and Sign Grant Amount: \$1,000.00

Minimum Grant Application: \$500.00

Façade Improvement Grants payments will be made to the applicant once the improvements have been completed and inspected by all parties including the Ravenna DDA and must have paid receipts for supplies and labor.

## Processing of Grant Requests:

- A façade improvement application can be obtained from the Village of Ravenna 12090 Crockery Creek Drive. Ravenna, MI 49451 or from [www.ravennami.com](http://www.ravennami.com) / Ravenna DDA page.
- The application is completed by the property owners or tenant of the building with owner's written consent and returned to the Village of Ravenna where it will be reviewed for accuracy and issues of compliance and logged into the records of the DDA.
- There is a \$100.00 application fee, due when the application is submitted. This fee will be refunded if a project is not approved, or if the project is approved and completed. Applicants who receive a grant award and do not complete the project will forfeit this application fee.
- The application will be reviewed to verify it meets all requirements set forth by the DDA and how well the project meets the program objectives.
- If the application meets program objectives the applicant will be notified that his/her project has been accepted for consideration.
- The applicant must submit a current photo of the building and a detailed plan illustrating proposed improvements. (including but not limited to type of materials and colors to be used)
- In addition to the plan, a detailed break out of all cost, including a signed estimate from a qualified licensed contractor, will be submitted by the applicant.
- Once the plan is submitted it will be taken before the DDA for review.
- If approved then project construction may commence. If plan is inconsistent with program goals it will be returned with request for modifications.
- Grant funds for Façade Improvement Projects will be awarded to the extent that funds for such projects are available in the DDA budget.

Note: The DDA reserves the right to recommend grant awards it deems to be in the best interest of the Village of Ravenna, the DDA

and the façade improvement program. The DDA reserves the right to nullify grant awards that are found to be non-compliant with the conditions of this program. Non-compliant may not re-apply for a period of one year following the DDA's decision.

#### Post-Approval Procedures

- Any changes in the scope of work must be approved by the DDA prior to construction/installation.
- All approved projects must be completed with-in 6 months of the project approval by the DDA. Only under extenuating circumstances a single extension of time to complete the project can be requested in writing and may be awarded by the DDA.
- Upon completion of the project the DDA will photograph the new façade to ensure that all components of the site plan are met.
- After final inspection the DDA will review and approve the project, and the applicant will be reimbursed for the approved grant amount.

Questions and comments regarding the Façade Improvement Program and these guidelines should be directed to the President of the DDA Phil Annis at 231-853-2828.