

Belleville Downtown Development Authority Facade Improvement Program Description

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the Belleville Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Facade Improvement-Program is to encourage visual improvements to commercial facades, and building and landscaping enhancement that are readily visible to the public and to improve the physical appearance of independent businesses in the Belleville DDA District consistent with the guidelines developed by the Belleville DDA, and as defined in the Downtown Overlay District. A financial assistance program has been developed to provide an incentive to business owners to make improvements in the DDA District. An evaluation process has been outlined to ensure that all applicants can be evaluated on the same criteria.

Currently, **DDA funding for approved projects would be a 50% grant plus a 50% zero interest loan, with a maximum DDA amount of \$10,000 (up to \$5000 grant and \$5000 loan).**

Approved applications would have one year from their approval date to complete their project.

ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES:

The Belleville DDA is committed to this program and will annually review the program and fund it at a level they deem appropriate.

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY:

In order to be eligible to participate in this program an applicant must meet the following criteria:

- Applicant must be the commercial property owner or the owner of property that is used by a recognized non-profit organization in the DDA district; and
- Applicant must be current on all real and personal property tax obligations; and
- Applicant must be current on all obligations to the city (water bill, etc).

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS:

Eligible enhancement projects must be in the DDA District, shall be limited to the following improvements, must be consistent with the Belleville DDA Design Guidelines, the City of Belleville Central Business District Clearzoning Ordinance, and all applicable laws, administrative codes and ordinances.

- Exterior renovations to the façade of a commercial building.
- Historical exterior restoration of a commercial building.
- Brickwork consistent with the Belleville DDA Design Guidelines and City' s Downtown Overlay District.
- Storefront and rear entry improvements, including ADA improvements.
- Addition or enhancement of landscaping may be considered only in conjunction with other façade improvements.
- Exterior painting and cleaning of bricks may be considered only in conjunction with other façade improvements.

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- Other items which may be eligible if they are improvements, not simply replacement for maintenance purposes include:
 - Cornices, eaves, parapets, windows and doors, lighting, awnings, etc.
 - Other similar improvements that may be necessary to improve the appearance of a building façade exterior may be approved by the Belleville DDA.

INELIGIBLE USE OF FUNDS

Façade Improvement program funds shall not be used for any of the following:

- Refinancing existing debt.
- Property acquisition.
- Interior improvements.
- Site plan, building or sign permit fee.
- Property appraisal cost, legal fees.
- Labor cost paid to the owner/applicant or relatives, (unless they are a licensed contractor).
- Cost paid by the applicant in merchandise or in-kind services.
- Work already performed.
- Mortgage or land contract financing or refinancing.
- Loan fees.
- Reusable or removable items.
- Any other use of funds that the DDA Executive Board determines is not eligible for funding.

EVALUATION PROCESS

A façade program review committee comprised of two (2) DDA members and one (1) Planning Commission member will review the application and design based on the following:

- Eligible Applicant.
- Eligible Property.
- Eligible and consistent design.
- Compliance with DDA District Guidelines, the Downtown District, local ordinances, and all applicable laws and regulations. The agency with regulatory authority shall have the final determination as to whether the proposed design is in compliance with the DDA District Guidelines, the Downtown Overlay District, local ordinances, and all applicable laws and regulations.
- Review of building location and neighboring structures.
- Percentage of façade improvement (How much of an improvement will be realized.).

APPROVAL PROCESS

Upon approval by the Façade Program Review Committee a conditional approval letter will be forwarded to the applicant along with a Façade Agreement, Façade Maintenance Agreement, a Promissory Note, and a Personal Guarantee of Promissory Note. As a condition of receiving funding, the applicant shall thereafter execute and submit to the DDA all of the applicable aforementioned documents and all other documents requested by the Façade Program Review Committee.

This program does not exempt applicants from obtaining all necessary permits and inspections from the City nor does it exempt applicants from the payment of those fees.

After the Façade Program Review Committee receives the above-mentioned documents, it shall make a recommendation with respect to funding to the DDA Executive Board. The DDA Executive Board shall act on the request for funding at the next regular DDA Executive Board meeting.

If the DDA Executive Board approves the request for funding, the DDA Executive Board Chairperson shall thereafter notify the applicant in writing of the approval. Upon receipt of the written notice by the DDA Executive Board Chairperson, the applicant is authorized to commence work on the approved façade project.

If the DDA Executive Board denies the request for funding, the applicant shall be notified by the DDA Executive Board Chairperson in writing that the funding for the proposed facade project was denied and the applicant will not receive any grant or loan funds.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The program provides financial assistance to qualified and approved applicants one time only.

The Belleville DDA will provide an equally apportioned grant to an interest free loan at a maximum municipal contribution of \$10,000. For example, the maximum municipal contribution for a project would be a \$5,000 grant and a \$5,000 interest free loan.

The minimum available municipal funds for any project may be \$1,000 (50% grant and 50% loan). The loan will be interest free with a maximum amortization period of up to 3 years. The loan is fully open and may be repaid in full at any time prior to the end of the term of the loan.

FAÇADE AGREEMENT AND FAÇADE MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT

A signed Façade Agreement and Façade Maintenance Agreement with the Belleville DDA sets the terms and conditions of the municipal grant /loan and approved application. The Agreements are entered into for the purpose of enabling the commercial property owner to construct, maintain, enhance and beautify its facade and fixtures located on their property with finding from the Belleville DDA as part of the goals and requirements of the Façade Improvement Program. The Façade Maintenance Agreement ensures that maintenance and repairs will be performed on the funded improvement for a period of five (5) years.

Many of the documents involved in the Program are legal in nature and impose certain duties and restrictions upon the Applicant. ***Applicants are, therefore, advised to consult with an attorney prior to signing any of the documents required for participation in the Program***

Repayment of the Façade Improvement Program loan will be guaranteed by a personal guarantee, if applicable. Loan repayment will commence on the first anniversary of the Contract between the Belleville DDA and the owner and annually on the anniversary date thereafter until paid in full.

The loan will be interest free with a maximum amortization period of 3 years based on the following table:

Loan Amount	Years of Repayment
\$500-\$2,000	1 Year
\$2,001-\$4,000	2 Years
\$4,001-\$5,000	3 Years

Failure to make payments on time will result in a late fee assessed in the amount of \$25.00 Dollars or 5% percent of the payment amount, whichever is greater.

APPLICANTS PLEASE NOTE: The Belleville DDA reserves the right to promote the Façade Improvement Program and use approved and funded projects as examples, including pictures, in promotional materials.

DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS

The release of funds shall be subject to the prior inspection and approval of the work performed at that time by the city building Department and the DDA. Said construction must conform to all applicable building codes, zoning ordinances, state statutes and prior approved plans. Also evidence of payment for work performed for the facade improvement construction will be required to release funds.

Funds will be distributed on the following schedule

- A maximum of fifty (50%) percent of the grant funds (up to \$2,500) prior to the commencement of the construction on the façade project.
- The balance of the grant funds shall be distributed when the façade project construction has been completed and all inspections are approved and waivers presented.
- All loan funds shall be distributed when the façade project construction has been completed and all inspections are approved and waivers presented.

Funding approval will lapse if a notice of completion is not issued within six (6) months of the date of construction provided by the applicant. The Belleville DDA may grant an extension following review and approval of a written request by the applicant detailing the reasons for the extension and providing a new date of completion. Extensions shall be at the discretion of the Belleville DDA.

Belleville Downtown Development Authority Facade Improvement Program Application

Name of Applicant: _____
(Property Owner)

Property Address: _____

Business Name: _____

Mailing Address (if different from Above): _____

Phone Number(s): _____

Email Address: _____

Proposed Improvements (Please check all that apply):

- Exterior façade improvements
- Historical exterior restoration of buildings
- Brickwork/Stonework/Siding
- Storefront or rear entry improvements including ADA improvements
- Signage
- *Addition or enhancement of landscaping
- *Exterior cleaning and/or painting
- *Exterior Lighting
- *Restoration/Repair/replace windows, doors, trim
- Other: _____

** items may be considered only in conjunction with other façade improvements*

Please provide a description of work to be done. Attach preliminary designs and sketches of a professional quality in a minimum scale of one-eighth inch (1/8") for every one foot (1'), photos of the existing façade and any photos of facades similar to what the Applicant is proposing, samples of the proposed color and materials that are being proposed for the façade. These items will be used by the DDA assist in the evaluation of your application.

Belleville Downtown Development Authority
Facade Improvement Program Application

Total Estimated Improvement Cost: \$ _____
(Attach cost estimates and detailed breakdown)

Funding Request:

(A) Total Amount Requested: _____ (This amount shall not exceed \$10,000)

(B) Grant Amount Requested: _____ (maximum grant amount shall not exceed 50% of (A) above. This amount shall not exceed \$5,000)

(C) Loan Amount Requested: _____ (maximum loan amount shall not exceed 50% of (A) above. This amount shall not exceed \$5,000)

By signing this Application, I affirm that I am the property owner of the above Property. I further affirm that all the statements made on this application are true, and I understand that any falsification or willful omission will be sufficient cause to void my Application and any grant or loan awarded. In such a case that any grant or loan awarded by the DDA is voided due to any falsification or willful omission, I agree to repay the grant and/or loan to the DDA within sixty (60) days, plus all of the costs and attorney fees incurred by the DDA to collect the grant and/or loan proceeds if I fail to repay the DDA within the sixty (60) days.

I have read and understand and agree to comply with all requirements of the DDA's Façade Improvement Program (hereinafter the "Program"). I further understand that if my application is accepted by the DDA, I may receive a preliminary approval letter. After receipt of the preliminary approval letter from the DDA, I will be required to submit sealed plans, obtain all required permits, and execute all of the necessary forms given to me by the DDA in order to qualify for reimbursement of the project expenses pursuant to the limitations set forth in the forms.

I hereby acknowledge that this Application and all supporting documents are to submitted to the DDA Coordinator. I further acknowledge that I may be required to submit additional documentation or information that was not required on this application if requested by the DDA.

I further hereby acknowledge that the DDA's Executive Board reserves the right to reject any or all applications received pursuant to the Program.

Applicant's Signature

Date

The following documentation must be included with this Application when submitted to the DDA:

- Provide proof of ownership of the subject property.**
- Proof that all real and personal property taxes for the subject property have been paid.**
- Proof that all City Obligations are current, including, but not limited to, all water and sewer bills and all special assessment payments.**
- Provide three (3) detailed estimates from independent contractors that itemize all costs of the proposed improvements.**
- Provide a preliminary design and/or sketch of professional quality in a minimum scale of one-eighth inch (1/8") for every one foot (1').**
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- Provide photos of the existing façade and any photos of facades similar to what the Applicant is proposing.**
- Provide, if possible, samples of the proposed color and materials that will be used if the improvement is approved and funded by the DDA.**
- Provide a non-refundable application fee via check or money order in the amount of \$50.00, payable in United States Funds.**

APPLICANTS PLEASE NOTE: As a condition of receiving Façade Improvement Program funds from the DDA, the Applicant consents to the DDA using any of the materials submitted and any photos thereafter taken of the Applicant's improved façade in any type of promotion and marketing materials published or used by the DDA.