

VILLAGE OF NEW LOTHROP DDA BUSINESS REVITALIZATION GRANT PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Background

The Business Revitalization Grant Program is a program of the New Lothrop Downtown Development Authority (DDA).

Program Purpose

By improving the appearance of the businesses, the program serves to improve the economic vitality of the downtown.

Source of Funding

This program is funded by the Village of New Lothrop DDA. Recommendations for funding grant applications will be made by the DDA's Design Review Committee; however, the DDA will make all final grant funding decisions.

Eligible Applicants

1. Properties located within the DDA District are eligible to apply.
2. Applications for projects must be reviewed by the Design Committee and DDA Board prior to commencement of construction. Any applicant submitting an application after commencement of exterior demolition or construct does so at the risk of becoming ineligible to receive a grant.
3. Owners or tenants may request grant funds; however, tenant must submit a notarized letter from the property owner granting permission with the application.
4. Preference will be given to first-time Applicants.

Eligible Improvements – as a stand alone project or as part of a larger project

Façade rehabilitation
Exterior masonry cleaning and/or repair
Painting of brick/mortar joint repair
Storefront repair or rehabilitation
Patching and painting of façade walls
Exterior painting
Window and/or door replacement/repair
Cornice repair and/or replacement
Exterior signage including detached structures
Hardscape Materials such as pavers, retaining walls and landscape rocks

Funding Guidelines

1. Grants will reimburse 50% of project costs up to a maximum of \$1,500.00.
2. Grant funds cannot be used for any of the following:
 - a. interior improvements or furnishings,
 - b. financing or refinancing debt,
 - c. loan origination fees,
 - d. property acquisition,
 - e. permits or development review fees,
 - f. property appraisals,
 - g. legal fees, or
 - h. interior maintenance.
3. All projects must satisfy Village of New Lothrop building codes.
4. Any grant for surface cleaning must ensure the gentlest means of cleaning are used. Environmental permits must be obtained if removing lead based paint or discharging paint materials into the Village's storm sewer.
5. Projects funded by grant monies must be completed by _____.
6. Any improvements that have been made through the Business Revitalization Grant Program must be maintained by the Applicant and may not be removed or significantly altered for a minimum of five years. All Applicants must have all property (real and personal) taxes and utilities bills paid to date.
7. No grant will be awarded until the project is 100% complete and all Village approval processes completed (i.e. final inspection on all building permits and final inspection of grant work.) The grant is awarded on a reimbursement basis.

Application Process

The following information must be submitted with your application to ensure quick processing:

1. Project improvement plans drawn to scale, if applicable.
2. Samples of paint colors to be used on improvements.
3. Photograph(s) of existing condition of property.
4. Proposed budget and detailed cost estimates for work.
5. Three (3) written estimates for proposed work
6. Written permission by property owner, if tenant.
7. Proof of payment of taxes
8. \$50.00 Application Fee (Checks payable to New Lothrop DDA) refundable upon proof of completion of project.
9. Proof of property and liability insurance.

Please complete and return to Village of New Lothrop DDA Office

Step-by-Step Application Process

1. A grant application must be completed and submitted to the New Lothrop DDA Office. Estimates, which are to be outlined in the application for the work to be performed on a business, must be submitted on letterhead from a professional qualified to do the work. The amount of funding requested from the Applicant shall be based on the estimate submitted, and the exact amount of the grant request should be outlined in the application. In the event the cost of the project exceeds the amount in the initial estimate, the Applicant will only be eligible for the amount requested and approved.
2. If an Applicant is requesting funding for more than one building, the Applicant must complete a separate application for each building. Each eligible building will be considered a separate project for the purposes of grant funding.
3. If the application is denied, DDA staff will provide in writing an explanation as to the reasons for rejection, and what, if any, steps can be taken to receive approval.
4. Once an application is returned to DDA staff, the DDA Design Review Committee, who serves as the grant review committee, will review it. Applicants will be notified of the Design Committee's recommendation by DDA Staff in writing. The final grant decision will be made by the New Lothrop DDA Board. Once the DDA Board has approved a project, the Applicant will be sent a letter allowing them to proceed.
5. Once the design has been approved, the Applicant will be notified in writing and the amount of the grant will be clearly stated in the letter. The Design Committee must approve changes in approved work specifications subject to approval by the DDA Board. Deviations from an approved plan may disqualify the Applicant from the grant.
6. "Before" and "after" pictures must be taken by the Applicant and submitted to the DDA Office upon completion of the project.
7. When an improvement project is completed and "before" and "after" pictures are submitted, it will be examined by DDA staff member to ensure the work has been completed as specified in the grant application, as approved by the Design Committee and DDA Board.
8. Once staff has verified completion of the improvement project, the Applicant must submit copies of invoices, receipts and an itemized statement of the total cost of the project signed by the Applicant. All documentation for payment must be provided at one time to the New Lothrop DDA for reimbursement. After receipt and verification of the information, the New Lothrop DDA will release the grant money to the Applicant.

The Applicant certifies and agrees to the terms and conditions set forth below:

1. The Applicant is owner or tenant of a property in the Village of New Lothrop DDA District (see DDA District Boundary Map – Exhibit A).
2. The Applicant is in good standing with the Village of New Lothrop in terms of payments of taxes and utilities.
3. The Applicant agrees to be bound by the rules as outlined in the Program Guidelines and should consult the Downtown Design Guidelines (available at the DDA Office) when making decisions regarding the aesthetic quality of the design.
4. All improvements to be undertaken will be consistent with all applicable zoning and building codes. Further, if review is necessary by the Village Planning Commission in accordance with the Village Zoning Ordinance, the review will be conducted prior to any work being done on the façade. The Applicant must pay the fee for the Planning Commission.
5. Only work outlined on the application is eligible for reimbursement.
6. The project must be completed by December 31 of the calendar year of the application. An extension may be granted with written consent from the Design Review committee if substantial progress can be documented.
7. Funds are awarded on a reimbursement basis. **Disbursement of funds shall be made only after the entire project is complete and certified by Village staff and the grant inspector to comply with the approved design.**
8. The work must adhere to any required inspections (e.g. Shiawassee County) before funds are disbursed for reimbursement. The Applicant must submit copies of invoices showing (at minimum) that the Applicant's matching portion has been paid in full, receipts and an itemized statement of the total cost of the project, signed by the Applicant. All documentation for payment must be submitted at one time to the DDA for one payout, and the receipts must be provided no later than fifteen (15) months after approval of application. Payment will be made to the Applicant by the Village of New Lothrop within 4-6 weeks. The Village will only make checks payable to the Applicant.
9. The Applicant understands that he/she is responsible for the construction management for the entire project.
10. The grant money awarded will be in keeping with the Program Guidelines and shall not exceed the amount as outlined in the application.
11. It is expressly understood and agreed that the Applicant shall be solely responsible for all safety conditions and in compliance with all federal, state and local safety regulations, building codes, ordinances and other applicable regulations.

12. The Applicant shall, at his/her own expense indemnify, protect, defend and hold harmless the Village and/or its agents and employees, from all claims, damages, lawsuits, costs, and expenses, for any property damage, personal injury or other loss relating in any way to the Village DDA Business Revitalization Grant Program.
13. The Applicant understands that he/she is responsible for the maintenance of the improvements described here for a period of five years from the project completion in accordance with the Business Revitalization Grant Maintenance Agreement that will be executed in the event this application is approved.

Applicant Signature _____

Date _____

Property Owner Signature _____

Date _____