

SWARTZ CREEK
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Façade Improvement Program Description

Eligibility Requirements

The Façade Improvement Program is available to business and/or building owners that are located in the designated Downtown Development Authority (DDA) district of the City of Swartz Creek.

Façade improvement renovation can be used on an exterior portion of the building that is visible to the public. This can include the front, back and sides of the building. Façade improvement money cannot be used for roof repair, traditional parking improvements, and routine maintenance. Improvement funds for interior improvements can be made only after successful application for exterior funds.

The goal of the Façade Improvement Program is to increase the attractiveness, function, and value of the overall DDA District. Façade Improvement Program funds are available on a grant basis and are paid as a reimbursement.

Any business may qualify for a Façade Improvement Program grant. However, in order for a façade project to be considered for grant dollars, the improvement must make every effort to honor the historical characteristics of the building or the DDA District. The applicant must show evidence of this.

The DDA Façade Improvement Program will provide a dollar for dollar match to business owners in the DDA District. The total maximum grant amount available for all projects is currently set at \$20,000, less funds used in the MDOT logo sign program, subject to change. This money may be awarded to multiple applicants or a single applicant. The DDA Board has the final say in who receives the funds based on an applicant's ability to meet the goals of the program. ***Grant dollars shall not be used to reimburse work completed before a project was awarded by the Board and a facade agreement has been executed.*** An exception to this requirement may be granted by the DDA Board for the Flint Art Project Mural program.

Application Deadlines

Awards will be made to eligible projects on a first-come, first-serve basis. Multiple applications may be funded in whole or in part based upon the competitiveness of the project. The DDA reserves the right to fund or deny any and all grant applications. If funds are not expended after the initial funding round, the DDA may open an additional round of funding.

Application Requirements

The improvement application must include a recent price quote for the proposed project from either an architect or a licensed contractor. This quote shall be utilized only for the purpose of determining the amount of improvement needed for the project and any costs

incurred in obtaining the quote shall be the responsibility of the applicant, not the City or the DDA of Swartz Creek.

If the improvement is awarded, two bids will need to be obtained and the project shall be awarded to the lowest responsible bidder. Receipts for all costs must be submitted for approval and reimbursement. If the applicant wishes to do the work him or herself, then the cost of materials will only be reimbursed.

Application Review

A Review Committee comprised of members of the Swartz Creek DDA may choose review improvement applications with consideration to the project merits, the impact on the downtown, conformance to existing plans, creativity, and value added.

Selected Projects

All work must be completed within the timeline established in the award or the Review Committee reserves the right to revoke the improvement. In the event that an improvement is awarded and the project does not meet the design standards, the Review Committee reserves the right to withhold the award. If a proposed project is not funded, the applicant may submit the project for reconsideration at a later date.

Payment of improvement funds shall be in the form of approved reimbursements to the building owner or lessee. Any improvements completed under the Façade Improvement Program shall become permanent fixtures of the building. The business owner or the building owner in the event of the closing or sale of the business or the sale of the building without the express written consent of the DDA may not remove them. This provision shall not apply if a future change is made to the building for the purpose of further renovation that will enhance the redevelopment of the downtown area.

Miscellaneous

The DDA reserves the right to approve or deny, in whole or in part, any and all applications. The scoring of project applications is an initial self-scoring by the applicant that serves as guidance on eligibility of the applicant. The DDA maintains the right to consider the project, as it stands alone and as it impacts the greater community, in the context of the design guidelines and with the input of their own designer.

Please read the guidelines and application carefully. Contact DDA staff at 810.287.2147 or azettel@cityofswartzcreek.org to hold an informal project consultation prior to design and submission of a grant project.

SWARTZ CREEK DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY Facade Program General Design Guidelines

Applicants for the program should consult with DDA staff at 810.287.2147 or azettel@cityofswartzcreek.org prior to design and application. The guidance of an architect or experienced contractor is highly encouraged. The goals of the program are to:

- Promote a pedestrian environment
 - Ground floor glass storefronts, recessed entrances, pilasters, columns, windows and/or other architectural elements that will promote interest and engagement of pedestrians.
- Use durable high quality materials
 - Brick, stone, lapboard siding, and related materials that retain building appearance and maintenance to ensure a positive impact within the community for many years.
- Well detailed and sympathetic to the existing built environment
 - Sympathetic or harmonious architecture that improves the quality of the surrounding architectural examples.
 - A façade or building that relate to its surroundings in form, scale, proportion, texture, materiality, and color. However, buildings should not simply copy the neighbors design.
- Should be inventive and unique
 - Insubstantial and flat facades typical of current day commercial storefront architecture are discouraged.
 - Renovations and new structures should have solidness, depth, integrity, texture and invention. It is left to the designer to thoroughly explore new forms, details and materials that will bring a sense of invention to the project.

General Recommendations

Below are some general design recommendations that will help the designer understand the intent and direction of the Guidelines. The 2022 Master Plan Design Guidelines should be the baseline for all improvements. The DDA and designers are encouraged to utilize the Secretary of the Interiors standards for historic preservation on structures over fifty years old as a guide. This is not required. *All applicants should consult with DDA staff prior to design and submission.*

Encouraged:

- Pedestrian scaled openings and details.
- Ground floor storefronts with at least 75% glass.
- Interesting and special entry doors, preferably recessed.
- Improve curb appeal, landscape, and lighting
- Combine traditional and contemporary forms and materials in creative and harmonious ways.
- Outdoor spaces for dining, resting, recreation, or reflection
- Durable materials (masonry, composite lapboard, glass, accent metals, etc.)
- Little or no front yard setbacks

Discouraged:

- False facades or slip covers. A false façade is a façade that is applied to the actual structure and has little relation to the essential structure behind.
- Standard aluminum storefront as the only element of a ground floor façade.
- Excessively themed architecture. For example a Chinese restaurant that looks like a pagoda.
- Auto based features, such as drive throughs, pickup windows, and front yard parking

Sign Design Guidelines

The current City of Swartz Creek Sign Ordinance must be followed. Below are some general design recommendations that can help the designer understand the intent and direction of the guidelines.

Encouraged:

- Signs that are simple and easy to read.
- Signs that complement the building's character
- Front lit signs from independently mounted lighting
- Historic signs
- Free-hanging signs, perpendicular to the roadway
- Creative graphics
- Metal letters

Discouraged:

- Signs that overwhelm the façade
- Back-lit box signs
- Flat vinyl lettering
- Picture boxes applied to the façade

Awning Design Guidelines**Encouraged:**

- Simple flat awnings
- High quality matt finished canvas
- Metal and Glass awnings
- Simple geometric shapes
- Single solid colors

Discouraged:

- Bubble type awnings
- Shiny plastic awnings
- Back lit awnings
- Large signage on the awning

SWARIZ CREEK
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Façade Improvement Application

Applicant: _____

Property Address: _____

Mailing Address (if different): _____

Contact Person: _____

Title: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Applicant is: ____ Building & Business Owner ____ Business Owner ____ Building Owner

If applicant is not the building owner, please provide the following:

Building Owner Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Important: If applicant is not the building owner, please include a letter from the building owner providing endorsement and permission for the proposed façade renovations.

How long has the current business been in the DDA? _____

How long has the present building owner owned the property? _____

____ **0-5 Years (0 pts)** ____ **6-10 Years (5 pts)** ____ **10+ Years (10 pts)**

Has any interior improvement been made to the building in the past 3 years or do you plan on making any interior improvements at the same time as the exterior?

____ **YES (10 pts)** ____ **NO (0 pts)**

If yes, please give a brief description and approximate cost _____

____ **\$0 - \$1,000 (0 pts)**

____ **\$1,000 - \$2,500 (10 pts)**

____ **\$2,501 - \$5,000 (15 pts)**

____ **+\$5,000 (25 pts)**

Description of Proposed Façade Work: (please attach required quotes, a picture of the current façade, and any drawings or elevations that are available.)

Estimated Total Cost of Project: \$ _____

Please explain how this improvement will attempt to honor the historical characteristics of the building or the DDA district: (if additional space is needed, please attach as an additional page)

Approximately how many square feet of the façade will be done? _____

What percentage of square feet of the exterior will be done?

___ **0 – 25% (5 pts)**

___ **26 - 50% (10 pts)**

___ **51 - 75% (15 pts)**

___ **+76% (25 pts)**

Portion of project that applicant proposes to pay? _____

Must be at least the minimum match (50%) as specified in the program

___ **50% (0 pts)**

___ **>51-75% (15 pts)**

___ **75% or greater (30 pts)**

Estimated start date _____ Estimated completion date _____

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Certification

I certify to the City of Swartz Creek and DDA that ALL of the information contained in this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that I must comply with all the regulations of the City of Swartz Creek.

Applicant Signature: _____ Date _____