

**ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL  
VILLAGE OF MORTON, ILLINOIS**

**Subject:** Building Façade Improvement Grant Program

**Number:** 3-02-01-02

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**Section One: Introduction**

The Building Façade Improvement Grant Program (hereinafter referred to as the "Program") of the Village makes funds available to owners of properties and businesses located within the Morton Business District (hereinafter referred to as the "District") to provide financial assistance for the rehabilitation of the exterior of commercial buildings located within the District. It is expected that such rehabilitation will promote commercial redevelopment activities within the District, improve the aesthetics of commercial buildings located within the District, and enhance the overall quality of life for residents of the community.

Funds for the Program are made available through the imposition of a Business District Retailers' Occupation Tax and a Business District Service Occupation Tax within the District. The Program is part of the Village's economic development efforts and is administered by the Village through its Business District Development and Redevelopment Commission (hereinafter referred to as the "Commission"). The decision to fund projects is made by the Corporate Authorities.

**Section Two: Program Goals and Objectives**

The goals and objectives of the Program are to:

- A. Stimulate private investment in the District.
- B. Generate additional revitalization by focusing investment on improvements visible to customers, neighboring businesses, and the general public.
- C. Increase business activity by making the District and individual businesses more attractive.
- D. Meet the goals of the Morton Business District Development and Redevelopment Plan (hereinafter referred to as the "Plan").
- E. Enhance and improve the visual quality of commercial buildings located within the District.
- F. Enable historical or architecturally-significant buildings to be preserved.
- G. Attract sound and stable commercial growth.
- H. Create a strong, positive image of the District and the community through attractive and high-quality building aesthetics.
- I. Increase and enhance the property tax base and the sales tax base of the Village.
- J. Increase the attractiveness of the Village as a place to do business.

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**Section Three: Eligibility Requirements for Program Participation**

In order to be eligible to participate in the Program, the following requirements must be met:

A. The applicant must be:

1. The owner of the property. Owner of the property shall mean a person, partnership, corporation, association, or other legal entity having an ownership interest in the property.

OR

2. An occupant of the property who has the express written consent of the owner of the property to participate in the Program. Written consent shall be in the form of documentation of the property owner's agreement to and authorization of the proposed project.

Application may be made directly by the owner or occupant of the property or by an agent authorized in writing to act on behalf of the owner or occupant of the property.

B. The property must be:

1. Located within the District;
2. An existing, improved, commercial or mixed-use property whose entire ground-level floor space is devoted to commercial use; and
3. Current on any and all property tax and mortgage payments.

C. The specific building address and applicant (partnerships will be considered one applicant) must not have been the subject of a grant awarded for physical improvements to and/or maintenance, preservation, protection, reconstruction, and/or rehabilitation of buildings under this Program within the past two (2) years. The building structure is permitted to have been the subject of a grant awarded for architectural, design, and engineering services under this Program within the past five (5) years.

D. The total project cost must be a minimum of \$1,000.00.

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**Section Four: Eligible Projects**

A. In order to be eligible for funding under this Program, work must be that which results in the preservation or rehabilitation of the exterior of a building that is readily visible from public rights-of-way, including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Awnings.
2. Brick Cleaning/Washing.
3. Bulkheads.
4. Canopies.
5. Chimneys.
6. Cornices.
7. Doors and doorways.
8. Entrances and entranceways.
9. Exterior building walls.
10. Fascias.
11. Foundation repair.
12. Guttering.
13. Lighting.
14. Masonry work.
15. Painting.
16. Parapets.
17. Reconstruction of original architectural elements based on historic documentation.
18. Removal and/or replacement of inappropriate architectural elements.
19. Reversal of prior, inappropriate alterations.
20. Roofs.
21. Sealing.
22. Shutters.
23. Signs.
24. Stairs and steps.
25. Tuck pointing.
26. Wall cleaning.
27. Wall coverings.
28. Windows.

B. In addition to the work items listed above, any architectural, design, and engineering services that may be necessary to perform the work items listed above shall also be eligible for funding under this Program; however, the main objective of the Program is to achieve actual physical improvements to and/or maintenance, preservation, protection, reconstruction, and/or rehabilitation of buildings.

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C. Work not for funding under this Program includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Additions to existing buildings.
2. Any work performed on the interior of a building, including painting and work performed on electrical wiring, fire sprinkler systems, heating, ventilating, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems, and plumbing.
3. Fencing.
4. Landscaping.
5. New construction.
6. Parking lots.
7. Sidewalks.

D. In order for a sign to be eligible for funding under this Program, a color picture of the sign affixed to the existing façade, along with the material to be used and dimensions of the sign will need to be submitted to the Sign Review Committee.

E. Brand new start-up businesses the day after the due date of the last grant round, can be eligible for funding in arrears if they go through the sign review process, the sign meets the requirements and the applicant applies for the grant by the next grant round deadline.

**Section Five: Grant Amounts**

- A. Grants for physical improvements to and/or maintenance, preservation, protection, reconstruction, and/or rehabilitation of buildings may be awarded to eligible applicants for eligible projects on a reimbursement basis for not more than fifty percent (50%) of the total project cost or \$10,000.00, whichever is less.
- B. Grants for architectural, design, and engineering services may be awarded to eligible applicants for eligible projects on a reimbursement basis for not more than fifty percent (50%) of the total project cost or \$5,000.00, whichever is less. The reimbursement for these services is subject to completion of the project. If the project isn't completed, the grant will be forfeited.
- C. The Corporate Authorities shall set the total amount of grant funds available annually as part of the annual budget and appropriation process. The Corporate Authorities are in no way

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obligated to budget or appropriate any amount of money for the Program. The amount budgeted and appropriated for the Program may be amended at any time by the Corporate Authorities at their sole discretion.

**Section Six: Application Procedures**

- A. Applications for assistance shall be made using forms provided by the Village. Applications made in any other manner shall not be considered.
- B. There shall be up to two (2) grant rounds each year during which time applications for assistance may be submitted. Applications submitted at any other time shall not be considered.
- C. Applications for assistance may be made either for physical improvements to and/or maintenance, preservation, protection, reconstruction, and/or rehabilitation of buildings or for architectural, design, and engineering services.
- D. Applications must be properly completed and executed, must include all requested information and materials, and must be received by the Village prior to the deadline for submittal in order to be considered.
- E. Applications must be accompanied by an application fee of \$250. This fee will be reimbursed to the applicant if the application is denied, or upon completion of the approved project.
- F. Applications received shall be submitted to the Commission for its review and evaluation.
- G. The Village reserves the right to limit the number of grants awarded and the amount of grant awards approved based on the quality of applications received and the amount of grant funds available.

**Section Seven: Review, Evaluation, and Selection of Grant Applications/Projects**

- A. The Commission shall review and evaluate all applications and shall submit its recommendations for approval or disapproval to the Corporate Authorities for their consideration.
- B. The recommendation of the Commission to approve an application shall be based on the merits of the proposed project and the availability of program funds. In the event that application requests exceed the amount of available program funds, applications will be prioritized based on the following factors:

**Exhibit A**

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1. Amount of financial contribution by Applicant.
2. Amount of improvement to the visual appearance of the streetscape or an individually significant property.
3. Architectural and/or historical significance of building.
4. Demonstration of proper rehabilitation techniques based on historic preservation principles.
5. Extent of adherence to design guidelines and standards.
6. Overall effect of project on appearance of structure visible from public rights-of-way.
7. Past efforts (within past ten (10) years) to improve exterior of building.
8. Project's effect on, and visual harmony with, block in which it is located.
9. Stated need for financial assistance by Applicant.
10. Undertaking of critically needed improvements to and/or maintenance, preservation, protection, reconstruction, and/or rehabilitation of properties in the District.

C. All applications and recommendations of the Commission regarding same shall be forwarded to the Corporate Authorities for final action. All applicants shall receive written notification of the action taken by the Corporate Authorities on their application.

**Section Eight: Building Façade Improvement Grant Program Agreement**

Upon approval of an application by the Corporate Authorities, the successful Applicant shall be sent a Building Façade Improvement Grant Program Agreement to sign. The Agreement shall set forth the terms and conditions for participation in the Program. Failure by an Applicant to execute and return the Agreement shall result in the forfeiture of the grant award by the Applicant.

**Section Nine: Commencement and Completion of Work**

Upon receipt by the Village of the signed Building Façade Improvement Grant Program Agreement, the Village shall issue a Notice to Proceed to the successful Applicant. Any work that is included in the Grant Application, whether funded by the Village or the Applicant, must not commence prior to the issuance by the Village of a Notice to Proceed. The Applicant must commence the project within ninety (90) calendar days of the date that the Notice to Proceed is issued. The Applicant must complete the project within one (1) calendar year from the date that the Notice to Proceed is issued. Failure to commence the project within ninety (90) calendar days of the date that the Notice to Proceed is issued or to complete the project within one (1) calendar year from the date that the Notice to Proceed is issued shall result in the forfeiture of

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the grant award by the Applicant. Extensions of these deadlines may be granted by the Corporate Authorities, at their sole discretion, due to extenuating circumstances.

**Section Ten: Disbursement of Funds**

Upon completion of the project, an Applicant may request reimbursement. Applicants must submit itemized bills, invoices, or statements, photographs of the completed project and proof of payment in the form of copies of cancelled checks and/or receipts for work completed in order to receive reimbursement. Village staff shall inspect and approve all completed work prior to reimbursement. The Village shall determine, at its sole discretion, whether or not a project is complete and in accordance with the Applicant's Grant Application and these Policies and Procedures. The Village shall not be obligated to reimburse the Applicant if it determines that the project has not been completed in accordance with the Applicant's Grant Application or these Policies and Procedures. After review and approval of the request for reimbursement, and the inspection and approval of the completed work, funds shall be disbursed to the Applicant.

**Section Eleven: Maintenance of Completed Improvements**

Improvements funded by this Program shall be reasonably maintained in good order for a period of at least five (5) calendar years following completion of the work. Failure to maintain improvements in good order or to repair such improvements following a 30-day notice by the Village shall require the Applicant to reimburse the Village the amount of the grant award.

**Section Twelve: Miscellaneous**

- A. The Applicant shall be responsible for selecting the architectural, design, or engineering firm(s) and the contractor(s) and for the financing of all work.
- B. All work must be performed in compliance with these Policies And Procedures and all applicable Village codes, ordinances, resolutions, policies, procedures, rules, and regulations. The building and the activities conducted within the building must be in compliance with all applicable Village codes, ordinances, resolutions, policies, procedures, rules, and regulations.
- C. The Applicant shall be responsible for applying for and obtaining any and all licenses and permits necessary to perform the work.

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**Section Thirteen: CY 2012 Grant Round**

For the CY 2012 grant round, the following shall apply:

- A. The Commission may accept, and the Corporate Authorities may approve, applications for assistance for physical improvements to and/or maintenance, preservation, protection, reconstruction, and/or rehabilitation of buildings begun July 1, 2010-December 31, 2011. Such applications for assistance for physical improvements to and/or maintenance, preservation, protection, reconstruction, and/or rehabilitation of buildings begun July 1, 2010-December 31, 2011 shall be considered:
  - 1. After full consideration has been given applications for assistance for physical improvements to and/or maintenance, preservation, protection, reconstruction, and/or rehabilitation of buildings made in accordance with the other provisions of these Policies and Procedures; and
  - 2. Provided that sufficient funding is available after full consideration has been given applications for assistance for physical improvements to and/or maintenance, preservation, protection, reconstruction, and/or rehabilitation of buildings made in accordance with the other provisions of these Policies and Procedures.
  
- B. In the event the Commission accepts and the Corporate Authorities approve any applications for assistance for physical improvements to and/or maintenance, preservation, protection, reconstruction, and/or rehabilitation of buildings begun July 1, 2010-December 31, 2011, the provisions of Sections Eight and Nine of these Policies and Procedures shall not apply. All other provisions of these Policies and Procedures shall be in full force and effect.

**Adopted:** August 15, 2011

**Revised:** May 5, 2016

**Exhibit A**