

CASSOPOLIS MAIN STREET



SMALL BUSINESS FAÇADE GRANT PROGRAM

GRANT GUIDELINES



About

The appearance of buildings plays a major role in the economic success of a community. Improving the physical appearance of buildings promotes business attraction and retention, deters property value deterioration, improves public perception, and can preserve historic resources. Making energy efficient upgrades to a building is easy, saves energy and can greatly improve a small business's bottom line.

The purpose of the Cassopolis Main Street Business Façade Improvements Grant Program is to encourage small business owners located within the program areas to make exterior building façade improvements that will attract customers and extend the life of the building. This program is funded through Cassopolis Main Street Program and generous donations from Indiana Michigan Power and K & M Machine-Fabricating Inc.

Façade Grant Amounts and Participation

Façade grants will be given for projects with minimum eligible costs between \$500.00 and \$10,000.

This is a reimbursement-based program under which the applicant will be reimbursed \$.50 for each \$1.00 spent up to a maximum grant amount of \$5,000.00, except as noted below. The costs of all work and materials must be paid in full by the applicant before any grant funds will be paid to the applicant by Cassopolis Main Street, unless pre-approved by the Cassopolis Main Street Committee for early release of funds. **The applicant *may* be reimbursed for costs incurred for work completed prior to receiving final grant approval by Cassopolis Main Street with approval by Cassopolis Main Street.**

In limited situations, the maximum grant amount may exceed the amount of \$5,000 where the proposed façade improvements, in the sole opinion of Cassopolis Main Street, will result in a substantial and dramatic visual change and improvement to the exterior of the building involved.

Eligibility Criteria

To be considered eligible for the program, the business must meet the following criteria:

1. Must be a small business as defined herein. *Small Business* is defined as, privately-owned corporation, partnership, sole proprietorship, limited liability company, corporation, joint venture, association, trust or cooperative that has 50 or fewer employees. The business must be independently owned and operated.
2. Must be located in the defined program areas, which include:
 - *DowntownCassopolis* defined as Broadway Street from Reed Street to Cemetery Street.
 - Primary location is the building which the improvements will take place.



Who Can Apply?

- Building owners or tenants are eligible. If a tenant applies for assistance, he/she must provide written proof that the building owner has authorized proposed improvements.
- Only buildings with retail, commercial, or professional uses are eligible.
- Buildings with existing tenants will receive priority.

Eligible Project Sites

Any front, side or rear building façade abutting a public right of way or municipal parking lot are eligible projects.

Eligible Costs

Eligible Costs include, but are not necessarily limited to, labor and material for:

- Restoration, repair or replacement of windows, doors, exterior walls, chimneys or other architectural elements.
- Costs associated with work that is currently underway, where the work meets the program guidelines.
- Exterior painting.
- Signage, awnings, marquees and related lighting and electrical fixtures.
- Masonry repair or cleaning.
- Exterior work necessary for conversion to a retail or entertainment storefront.
- Removal of after-installed façades.
- Restoration of vintage elements.
- Other Costs as approved by the Cassopolis Main Street.

The following costs are not eligible:

- Costs incurred before final grant approval by Cassopolis Main Street Committee where the work does not meet the program guidelines.
- Work that does not meet the program guidelines.
- Costs paid by the applicant in merchandise or in-kind services.
- Labor paid to the applicant or a family member of the applicant or an employee of the applicant unless the applicant, family member or employee of the applicant is a recognized contractor for the particular labor being provided to the project.
- Costs incurred where the work fails to meet required municipal ordinances, building codes, and/or Americans with Disabilities Act guidelines.



Application Process

Cassopolis Main Street will consider and award Façade Improvement Grants between February 1 and August 1 of each year or, as funding becomes available.

Only complete applications will be considered. Incomplete applications will not be processed.

Applications will be made available online at cassopolismainstreet.com or in person at the Cassopolis Municipal Complex at the address below.

Applicants must complete a Cassopolis Main Street Grant application and return it and all required attachments in person or by mail to:

Cassopolis Main Street
Façade Grant Program
121 N Disbrow
Cassopolis, MI 49031

Application Requirements

A completed application will consist of the following required documentation:

1. A completed application form.
2. Proof that the business is a “Small Business” as defined herein.
3. Renderings of the proposed work.
 - Building Façade Work: A rendering of the proposed work must be submitted. The rendering must be neat, detailed and scaled, including window locations, door locations, any existing and/or proposed signs or awnings.
 - Building Signs: Where a new building sign is proposed, a scaled rendering/elevation accurately depicting all existing and proposed wall signs must be submitted.
 - Freestanding Signs: Where a new freestanding sign is proposed, a formal site plan must be submitted. The plan must be drawn with a straight edge and to a standard engineering scale. The site plan must include the following information:
 - Lot lines
 - North arrow
 - Streets labeled
 - Driveway location(s)
 - Existing structures
 - All known easements
 - Natural features (lakes, creeks, floodplain, or wetlands)
 - Proposed location of freestanding sign(s), with setbacks from property lines



- If the project cost exceeds \$10,000.00, renderings and site plans must be completed by an architect licensed in the state of Michigan.
4. A written description of the project plans must be submitted including any information that will assist in understanding the scope of the project, including:
 - Building materials
 - Colors (paint chips, brick/stone color, etc.)
 - Exterior lighting
 - Window and door types
 - Architectural detailing
 - Sign specifications
 - Awnings
 - General renovation details
 5. For projects up to \$5,000, provide two (2) recent price quotes (“recent”=dated within past 45 days). For projects over \$5,000, provide three (3) recent price quotes or bids for the proposed project. Cassopolis Main Street is not responsible for any costs incurred in obtaining the quote.
 6. Proof that Property Taxes are current.
 7. Proof of business ownership or tenancy (lease agreement).

Cost Estimates and Contractors

For projects up to \$5,000, the applicant must submit two (2) cost estimates for the work to be completed as an attachment to their application. For projects over \$5,000, the applicant must submit three (3) bids or cost estimates for the work to be completed as an attachment to their application.

All contractors must be licensed in the state of Michigan (as applicable), bonded, and insured.

Upon signing the Façade Grant Agreement, the applicant will identify the contractor or contractors who will perform the work and disclose if any such contractor is a family member or employee of the applicant.

Where the applicant received multiple bids and the applicant chooses the highest bid, Cassopolis Main Street will reimburse for costs not to exceed the lowest bid. The applicant will be responsible for the difference between the highest bid and the lowest bid.

For Example:

Applicant receives two bids for a project: Bid #1 is \$5,000 and Bid #2 is \$7,000. The applicant chooses to use the contractor who submitted Bid #2. Cassopolis Main Street would reimburse the applicant 50% of the lowest bid amount (in this case, \$2,500) for the work and the applicant would pay the remaining \$4,500 out of pocket.

Application Review

Initial Application Review

Within 30 days of receipt, Cassopolis Main Street will perform an initial application review to determine whether the application is complete. Applications will be reviewed in the order that they were received by Cassopolis Main Street and they will notify the applicant whether the application is complete and will be accepted for consideration.



Only fully completed applications (including all required attachments) will be reviewed for consideration.

Application Review Committee/Final Review

An application review committee consisting of Cassopolis Main Street and/or their designated representatives will review completed applications. The review committee will review applications on an as needed basis.

Cassopolis Main Street will notify the applicant in writing as to whether their application was approved, approved with modifications, or denied.

Application Evaluation Criteria

Design Guidelines

The following represents Cassopolis Main Street's general design guidelines and will be used in reviewing projects. However, the Village of Cassopolis has their own design guidelines as found in the municipality's code of ordinances. Check with your municipal building or code enforcement department to determine whether design guidelines apply to your building **BEFORE** designing your project. Where these design guidelines deviate from the required municipal design guidelines, the municipal design guidelines will take precedence.

Painting. The use of color should be harmonious with the neighboring properties and the surrounding neighborhood. Separate paint colors for building walls and architectural details are encouraged. The goal is to enhance the architectural details of the building and not suppress them.

New walls and siding, and repair of same. Use suitable materials which are compatible in texture, scale, and color with those already found in the surrounding area and on the structure.

New awnings. Awnings should have coordinating colors to match building façades and details. Canvas/cloth awnings are strongly recommended over vinyl.

Exterior storefront and/or storefront display lighting. All exterior building or storefront display lighting must be in compliance with local lighting ordinances. Fixtures should be compatible with the existing structure in scale and design. Lighting must not throw off more light than is necessary to show a sign or storefront. To reduce excess light pollution, downcast directional lighting is preferred. Lights must face the façade and bulbs should not be visible from the street.

Cleaning of building façade. Appropriate cleaning techniques should be used which will not mar building façades or contribute to building decay.

New signage. Signage must comply with local sign ordinances and may require a municipal sign permit. Sign design should be compatible with the building façade. Use coordinating colors to match building façades and details, as well as, using an appropriately sized sign to fit the scale of the building. New signage should not cover any significant architectural details.

Window and window treatments. Replacement windows and window treatments must be consistent with scale and design of the structure. Replacement windows should be historically accurate in design in relationship to the structure.



Application Scoring

Applications will be reviewed by the Application Review Committee using the scoring system below. A maximum of 30 points is available. Applications receiving a score of 21 or higher will be eligible for funding.

Category	Maximum Points
Applicant has never received a grant of any type from Cassopolis Main Street	5
The applicant is the owner of the property (and is not a building tenant).	1
The existing building condition visually appears to be structurally sound with roof intact.	4
The façade project is part of a larger planned building renovation project.	2
The proposal meets Cassopolis Main Street Guidelines and/ or the municipal design guidelines.	5
The extent to which the proposed work will compliment or enhance the appearance of the surrounding area.	10
The extent to which the proposed work will improve the appearance of the property.	10
Whether the grant will leverage additional funding for the project.	3
TOTAL	40

Discretion of Cassopolis Main Street

Cassopolis Main Street may, in its sole and absolute discretion, approve or reject any application or request modifications of the proposed project and may require that façade improvements meet specific descriptions, concepts, and utilize specific materials. **Cassopolis Main Street** reserves the right to change these guidelines at any time.



Municipal Approvals

Approved applications **must** be reviewed by the appropriate municipal building department for design/appropriateness/building permit approval prior to the start of any work. Depending on the project scope of work, other municipal approvals may be required, i.e. sign permit, planning commission or city council review, etc.

The applicant is responsible for ensuring that all required municipal approvals are obtained.

Cassopolis Main Street will assist the applicant in facilitating the process wherever possible, as time allows.

The applicant will be responsible for providing **Cassopolis Main Street** with proof of municipal approval, as applicable.

Façade Grant Agreement

At a convenient date and time, the applicant (and the building owner, where the applicant is a tenant) will be required to sign the Façade Grant Agreement.

The applicant will also sign a consent form that gives permission to Cassopolis Main Street to use any pictures, renderings or descriptions of the work for promotional purposes.

Grantee will be required to have placed in the front window of their business for 1 year promotional material regarding the grant as provided by the Cassopolis Main Street Committee.

Changes in Scope of Work

Cassopolis Main Street must approve any changes in the scope of work in writing before construction or installation.

Project Completion and Reimbursement

The approved work must start within thirty (30) days and be completed within six (6) months from the date the Façade Grant Agreement was signed by the applicant, building owner, and Cassopolis Main Street

Upon completion of the work and **prior** to the release of grant funds, the applicant must:

1. **Notify Cassopolis Main Street once the work has been completed.** An authorized Cassopolis Main Street representative must inspect and approve the completed project.
2. **Submit to Cassopolis Main Street** proof of completion of the energy audit with Indiana Michigan Power.
3. **Submit to Cassopolis Main Street a written request for reimbursement.** The Request for Reimbursement will be on a form provided by Cassopolis Main Street certifying that the work has been completed in accordance with the approvals and certifying that all project expenses have been paid in full. The costs of all work and materials must be paid in full by the applicant before any grant funds will be paid to the applicant by Cassopolis Main Street.
4. **Submit to Cassopolis Main Street evidence that any required municipal building inspections have occurred and that all required approvals have been obtained.** The municipal building inspector(s) shall



make a final on-site inspection of such completed project *prior* to the release of any grant funds for the project.

5. **Submit to Cassopolis Main Street a project completion report, including copies of all bills, receipts, and cancelled checks associated with the project.** In addition, the report shall include evidence that the façade improvement project is 100% complete.

Improvements Shall Become Permanent Fixtures

Any improvements completed under the Cassopolis Main Street Grant program shall become permanent fixtures of the building. They may not be removed by 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 Cassopolis Main Street. This provision shall not apply if a future change is made to the building for further renovation that will enhance the redevelopment of the surrounding area.

Promoting the Program

Cassopolis Main Street will prepare communications announcing the grant program, grant awards and the availability of funding. Communications can be found on Cassopolis Main Street's social media platforms:

- Cassopolis Main Street website at: www.cassopolismainstreet.com
- Cassopolis Main Street Facebook page at www.facebook.com/CassopolisMSC
- Village of Cassopolis website at: <http://cassopolis-mi.us/government/main-street/>