



ELEVATE GRANTS

DOWNTOWN FACADE GRANT PROGRAM

Elevate Goals:

The mission of this façade restoration program is to provide funding to downtown property and business owners for revitalizing the exteriors of their buildings. Properties must be located within the downtown district.

Elevate Benefits:

This program will provide grants up to a maximum amount of \$20,000 for historic buildings, and \$10,000 for non-historic buildings, at no more than a 50/50 match for eligible expenses. **All successful applicants must meet the program requirements and go through the approval process prior to beginning any construction work.**

Preference will be given to historic buildings. This program has been made possible by Downtown Mainstreet, Inc. (DMI) and the City of La Crosse, through the generous support of the La Crosse City Council, Economic Development Commission, Heritage Preservation Commission and the Planning Department.

Eligible Properties and Scope of Work:

Eligible Properties

- Properties must be located within the designated downtown district.
- Buildings shall have been constructed 50 years ago or more.
- Applicants must be property owners or building tenants with written permission from the building owner.
- Project must meet all state and local codes and zoning ordinances.
- Project must conform to the Downtown Commercial Historic Design Standards for the City of La Crosse and be reviewed by the Heritage Preservation Commission or the Commercial Design Standards, whichever is applicable.
- Buildings listed in the National Register of Historic Places individually or as contributing to an historic district shall comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties

Ineligible Properties

- Buildings containing a dwelling unit on the first/ ground floor
- Properties with back taxes or other unpaid fees to the City or County
- Building or business owners with back taxes or other unpaid fees on other properties
- Properties and/or owners with outstanding citations/orders from the Fire Prevention and Building Safety Department, unless this grant is being used to correct those violations

Eligible Work

- Front (street) facade
- Side (street/alley) facade
- Rear (alley/parking lot) facade
- Restoration of architectural, historic, or ornamental features
- Lighting attached to the building
- Awnings and signage will only be eligible for a maximum of a \$1,000 grant

Eligible Expenses (Priority shall be given to front facades)

- Exterior wall restoration/rehabilitation
- Front entry work
- Masonry restoration
- Ornamental details including but not limited to metalwork, stone, wood, terra cotta, stained glass, and hardware

- Doors, windows and storefronts
- Exterior lighting
- Up to \$1,000 for architecture and engineering fees to generate construction documents

Ineligible Work

- Interior improvements
- Roofing
- Exterior portions of the building not visible from a public street/alley
- Removal or insensitive alterations to historic or architecturally significant building features
- Activities completed prior to receiving written conditional approval from the committee

Ineligible Expenses

- Furniture, interior fixtures and equipment
- Purchase of property
- Marketing/Advertising
- Inventory/Overhead
- Fees for government approvals, taxes, permits, etc.
- New additions

Grant Selection Criteria:

Buy Local

While not required, it is strongly recommended to hire local contractors and craftsmen to help support and strengthen the local economy.

Applicant Checklist

The following items shall be completed and submitted to have their project reviewed by the Downtown Mainstreet, Inc. Facade Grant Committee. Applications are reviewed on a bi-monthly basis.

- Facade Grant Application Form
- Colored, rendered elevations drawing(s) to scale
- Photos with a key plan illustrating existing conditions
- Historic photos with dates listed (if available)
- Contractor's Opinion of Probable Cost
- Anticipated construction start and completion date

How to Apply

- First and foremost an applicant must define the scope of work to be done. This will often require retaining the services of an Architect for the "Rendered Elevation(s)" and could also include a Contractor to assist in preparing the "Opinion of Probable Cost."
- Fill out all requested information on the application form. Please provide current contact information. Delays in processing of the application may occur if the committee cannot reach the Applicant for questions and clarifications. If a section of the application does not apply to the project simply write "N/A".
- Rendered elevations should be 2-dimensional line drawings with color and notes clarifying materials, finishes. Shadows and other features are optional. Drawings are preferred at 1/4"=1'-0" scale, but 1/8"=1'-0" scale drawings are acceptable for larger buildings. All submitted images may be used by DMI and/or the City of La Crosse at their discretion for advertising and educational purposes. Renderings may be done on any standard paper size.
- Submit electronic copy of photographs depicting the existing condition of the building. These photos shall be numbered 1 of 20, 2 of 20 and so on. All photos will be keyed to a plan where the number of the photo is shown with an arrow pointing in the direction the photo is taken. Photos illustrating the overall facade(s) as well as detail shots shall be included. (Please keep in mind that photos taken at the same location after project completion will be required prior to final disbursement of funds.)
- Submit one copy of any historic photographs of your building. Photos should list the location of the photograph and the approximate date if available. Please note that not all buildings have historic photos

available. Two of the best places to search for historic photos locally are the La Crosse Public Library Archives and the University of Wisconsin - La Crosse Murphy Library Special Collections. If using these resources please call ahead and inform the staff of the property you wish to research.

- The "Opinion of Probable Cost" may best be compiled by a Contractor, but an Architect could also provide this document. Costs shall be broken down by discipline, i.e. masonry, carpentry, doors/windows, overhead and profit etc. This breakdown shall also list the specific work to be performed in each category; for example, the "masonry" section may have cleaning, tuckpointing and new masonry installation work specified.

Award of Funds

- After the complete submittal has been received, it will be reviewed and voted on a bi-monthly basis by the DMI Façade Grant Committee.
- Applicants will be notified if their project is "Approved", "Conditionally Approved", or "Denied." Applicants who are conditionally approved may see items requiring action on their part. Any requested corrections should be addressed in writing and may require the elevation drawing(s) to be resubmitted.
- Portions of work on the project utilizing these funds can only begin after receiving a Conditional Approval Letter from the City of La Crosse.
- When all construction work is COMPLETE, submit a request for final inspection. The final submittal shall include the reimbursement form, along with color photos showing the completed project and shall be taken from similar angles/locations as the original submitted photos. All receipts and invoices paid in full must also be submitted (invoices should have an itemized breakdown of work done and show the cost of each item, such as X square feet or tuckpointing \$5,000).
- After final review by the City of La Crosse, if the completed project has met the requirements, the City of La Crosse will release funding to the building owner or applicant.

Other Program Specifics

- All photos, drawings and other documents shall be able to be used by DMI or the City of La Crosse for marketing and advertising purposes without any compensation to the applicant or other parties involved.
- The project may be rejected for not conforming to the Downtown Commercial Historic Design Standards of the Commercial Design Standards, whichever is applicable.
- Work that does not conform to the proposal submitted, reviewed and approved by the DMI Façade Grant Committee and the City of La Crosse may be partially or totally rejected.
- Work done that does not comply with building codes and zoning will be rejected.
- Projects not completed within 12 months of the date on the conditional approval letter may have part or all of the funding denied.
- Applicants may be encouraged to resubmit in the future if their project is believed to be eligible, but funding has been exhausted for the year.
- Building owners may apply once annually for this program. Owners may not apply for an additional grant/loan until the project currently eligible to receive funds is 100% complete.

For questions and more information:

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