



## **PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

The City of Fort Wayne created the **Downtown Revitalization Grant** Program to help improve downtown Fort Wayne's competitiveness in attracting and retaining businesses, encourage private commercial and residential reinvestment, stimulate redevelopment and increase downtown property values.

## **PROGRAM OBJECTIVES**

The primary objectives of the Downtown Revitalization Grant Program are to advance the goals of the Downtown Fort Wayne Blueprint, the Plan-It Allen Comprehensive Plan, and subsequent community planning initiatives. The program provides grant funding in order to:

- Create a compelling and authentic downtown experience for residents, visitors and employees by encouraging historic building rehabilitation, increased building occupancy and quality urban design.
- Overcome obstacles to downtown redevelopment by partnering with the private sector to address challenges related to fire and building code compliance in the rehabilitation of existing buildings.
- Support re-activation of obsolete and under-utilized downtown building stock by encouraging a mix of retail, residential and hospitality/entertainment uses.

## **PROGRAM BOUNDARIES**

Property must be located within the Downtown Economic Development Target Area (EDTA) – Exhibit A attached.

## **PROGRAM CRITERIA**

1. **Eligible Applicants:**
  - a. A property owner who occupies or leases space to eligible tenants, or
  - b. A tenant with a leasehold interest in the property pursuant to a lease agreement with the property owner and subject to property owner approval, or
  - c. A property owner of vacant space
2. **Vacant Space Improvements:**
  - a. Applicants must provide documentation that 100% of first floor space will be occupied or in a tenant-ready condition; and that 50% of the entire property building space will be occupied or in an tenant-ready condition upon completion of the proposed improvements.
  - b. Applicants must demonstrate there will be a minimum of one tenant on the first floor for a period of one year.
3. **Owner approval.** If the applicant is not the owner of the building, the legal owner must give consent for the improvement project as shown on the grant application.

4. **Matching Grant.** Approved projects will receive grant funding based on a dollar for dollar (50%) match up to the maximum allowable grant amount. Applicants will be required to submit proof of payment for all eligible costs in order for grant funds to be released as reimbursement for costs incurred and paid.
5. **Minimum / Maximum Grant Amount.**
  - a. The minimum grant will be \$1,000.
  - b. The maximum grant will be \$20,000.
  - c. The city may consider grant amounts up to \$40,000 in consideration of the following:
    1. The project involves a multiple-tenant building.
    2. The level of private investment leveraged over and above the required match.
    3. If the (proposed) use of the property is a targeted focus of the Downtown Revitalization Grant Program i.e. retail, hospitality/entertainment and residential projects.
    4. Proximity or adjacent to existing or proposed catalytic development projects.
6. **Cost Estimates.**
  - a. In order to be properly evaluated for potential funding, applications must include two cost estimates covering the identical scope of work.
  - b. Any improvements not eligible for Downtown Revitalization Grant funding should be bid separately or itemized so total eligible project costs can be easily determined.
  - c. While approved applicants may select either of the bidders to complete the project, grant funding will be based on the lowest qualified bid. Example: Bid #1 = \$10,000, and Bid #2 - \$12,000. If both are qualified comparable bids and the project is approved, the grant would be based on Bid #1 with the maximum grant equal to \$5,000, regardless of which firm the applicant chose to complete the work.
7. **General Contractor Requirement.** A general contractor must be retained for projects with a total project cost over \$40,000.
8. **Property Taxes.** Must be current.
9. **Local Plans and Codes.** As indicated in the program objectives, projects receiving funding will serve to enhance downtown in accordance with the goals adopted by various community comprehensive planning initiatives. The project must comply with zoning ordinances, building codes and fire codes.
10. **Local and State Permits.** Applicant is responsible for obtaining any local and /or state permits, encroachment agreements, or other approvals required by City Code.
11. **Downtown Design Manual.** All projects receiving a grant award must comply with the standards described in the Downtown Design Manual.
12. **Historic Districts.** Applicants are strongly advised to consult with the City's Historic Preservation Review Board on design requirements and guidelines before drawing up plans for work on a building located within the Landing Historic District, a building designated as a Local Historic District, or a building potentially eligible for designation as a Local Historic District. Work that is potentially damaging to the integrity of the building will not be reimbursed. The application should be submitted with a Certificate of Appropriateness, or a written recommendation for approval from the City's Historic Preservation office.
13. **Application Fee.** A one-time non-refundable application fee of \$40.00 will be paid by the applicant at the time of application.
14. **Grant Agreement.** Grants will be documented by an agreement between the applicant and the City of Fort Wayne requiring repayment or cancellation of the grant if conditions of approval are not met.

## **ELIGIBLE EXPENSES**

1. Facade improvements including awnings and signage.
2. Site improvements including: landscaping, private sidewalks, parking, lighting, fencing, and furniture for outdoor dining.
3. Internal building improvements related to bringing an existing building into compliance with the city's building codes, fire codes, or American's with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. Examples include sprinkler systems, fire-walls, additional egress, etc.
4. Minor roof repair if being done in conjunction with other facade improvements.

## **INELIGIBLE EXPENSES**

1. New building construction.
2. Complete re-roofing.
3. Proposed projects that do not meet occupancy or lease-up requirements for this program.

## **INELIGIBLE PROJECTS**

The following businesses are ineligible to apply for the Downtown Revitalization Grant Program:

1. Any business not within the program boundaries defined for this program.
2. Any business not legally allowed by the City of Fort Wayne Zoning Ordinance or otherwise approved by the city's Planning Commission or Board of Zoning Appeals.
3. Non-conforming uses per the city's zoning ordinance.
4. The following businesses are ineligible to apply for the Downtown Revitalization Grant program unless they were established prior to January 01, 2008: tobacco discount stores, pawn shops, check cashing or pay day loan stores, gun stores, sexually oriented businesses, astrology or palm reading or massage parlors (unless licensed).

Buildings for faith-based organizations used inherently for religious activities such as worship, religious instruction, or proselytization are ineligible for facade or internal building improvements but will be eligible for exterior site improvements.

## **APPLICATION PROCESS AND FUNDS DISBURSEMENT**

Working with the Redevelopment Department the applicant submits the application, the project plans and all other required documentation (see Exhibit B – Supporting Data Checklist).

### **Upon receipt of application:**

- ◆ The application will be reviewed for completeness
- ◆ The Company will provide a completed IRS Form W-9 with the application materials
- ◆ The project is reviewed by a Design Review Committee, with members from the City Departments of Planning, Redevelopment, Urban Design, Historic Preservation and Development Plan Services.
- ◆ Applicants will be notified of grant decision within 45 days after a completed application is submitted. If the proposed improvements meet the Program Criteria described in this document, the project will be approved for a specified amount. If the proposed improvements do not meet the Program Criteria, the applicant will be notified of what changes are required to meet eligibility criteria.

### **Upon approval for grant funding:**

- ◆ An agreement will be drafted between the Company and the City of Fort Wayne.
- ◆ The Company will be asked to sign two original copies and return to the City for authorized signatures.
- ◆ One executed original agreement will be returned to the Company. No work should begin on the funded project until fully executed agreement is received.
- ◆ Work may begin on the project supported by the grant.
- ◆ The project must be completed within 6 months of signing the agreement. Extensions may be granted for unusual circumstances on a case by case basis.

### **When the project is completed:**

- ◆ Grantee is responsible for notifying the Redevelopment Department and providing verification the work has been completed. Final inspection may be required.
- ◆ Photographs of the completed project are required.
- ◆ The Grantee submits proof of payment for all eligible costs of the project.
  - **PLEASE NOTE:** "proof of payment" MUST include copies of cancelled checks.
- ◆ The Grantee issues an invoice to the City requesting reimbursement for expenses as described in the agreement
- ◆ The grant funds will be disbursed in a check issued to the Grantee for the agreed upon amount. Grant payment processing will be three to four weeks after submitted proof of payment receipts have been reviewed and approved.

## **CHANGES TO THE PROJECT**

**Once the Grant Agreement is executed, any material changes to the project must be approved by the City of Fort Wayne in order for the agreement to remain in effect. This includes, but is not limited to, changes in choice of paint palette, design features, or choice of construction materials.**

## **ADDITIONAL INCENTIVES**

Downtown businesses may be eligible for additional incentives including tax abatement, Community Development Corporation (CDC) loans, Brownfield grants, or the Commercial Barrett program. Interested businesses should make appropriate contacts prior to submitting the Downtown Revitalization Grant application.

CITY OF FORT WAYNE  
DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION GRANT PROGRAM

**Application Form**

**Please submit a complete application package in order for your project to be reviewed promptly**

Application Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**APPLICANT INFORMATION**

Name of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Federal ID# or Social Security # of Business Owner: \_\_\_\_\_

**BUSINESS INFORMATION**

Type of business: (For multi-tenant building indicate all that apply)

\_\_\_ Retail \_\_\_ Restaurant/Entertainment \_\_\_ Residential \_\_\_ Service \_\_\_ Professional

\_\_\_ Not-for-Profit \_\_\_ Other – please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

Has applicant received grant funds in the past? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

If yes please indicate the amount and the date when funds were disbursed

How much: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date business was established at current address: \_\_\_\_\_

**PROPERTY INFORMATION**

Name of Property Owner: \_\_\_\_\_

Property Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Are the property taxes current? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

Is property located within the Downtown EDTA boundaries (Exhibit A)? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

**PROJECT INFORMATION**

Describe the scope of work for the proposed improvement project:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Does the project adhere to the Downtown Design Standards? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

Expected start date: \_\_\_\_\_ Expected completion date: \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated cost of work: (Attach all pertinent quotes, renderings, spec sheets, etc., so each bid can be reviewed independently)

Bid#1: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Bid #2: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Amount of Funding Requested (Maximum = 50% of the lowest bid): \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**PROPERTY OWNER APPROVAL:**

As the legal owner of the property described above, I hereby grant authorization to complete the improvements indicated in the scope of work attached to this application

\_\_\_\_\_  
Property Owner Signature Date

**APPLICANT ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:**

- ◆ All statements provided in the application are true and any misrepresentation will void subsequent grant agreement.
- ◆ I understand the Downtown Revitalization Grant is meant to reimburse the applicant for actual project costs described in this application, and that a signed Grant Agreement must be received by the applicant before beginning construction. I understand that failure to comply with the Grant Agreement may result in loss of eligibility to receive funds.
- ◆ I acknowledge that the City of Fort Wayne Department of Redevelopment is obligated only to administer the grant, and is not liable to the applicant, owner, or third parties for any obligations or claims of any nature arising out of or otherwise related to the project or application undertaken by the applicant and/or owner.
- ◆ I acknowledge that acceptable proof of payment for eligible project costs includes both an invoice and a copy (front and back) of a cancelled check in payment of same.
- ◆ Any unapproved changes to project plans as stated in the Scope of Work will void the grant and result in nonpayment of funds. If changes to the Scope of Work are necessary, it is the responsibility of the Grant Recipient to immediately contact the Department of Redevelopment for additional project review before continuing work on the project. Funding awards cannot be increased once the agreement is in place, regardless of approved changes to the Scope of Work. Work completed prior to grant approval is not eligible for funding. Reimbursement will occur after project completion and upon submission of appropriate documentation as indicated above.
- ◆ I understand that all required permits are the responsibility of the applicant / owner to obtain.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant's Signature Date

***Return application to:***

***Downtown Revitalization Grant Program  
City-County Building - Room 840  
Redevelopment Department  
Attn: Sharon Feasel  
One East Main Street  
Fort Wayne IN 46802***

# EXHIBIT A

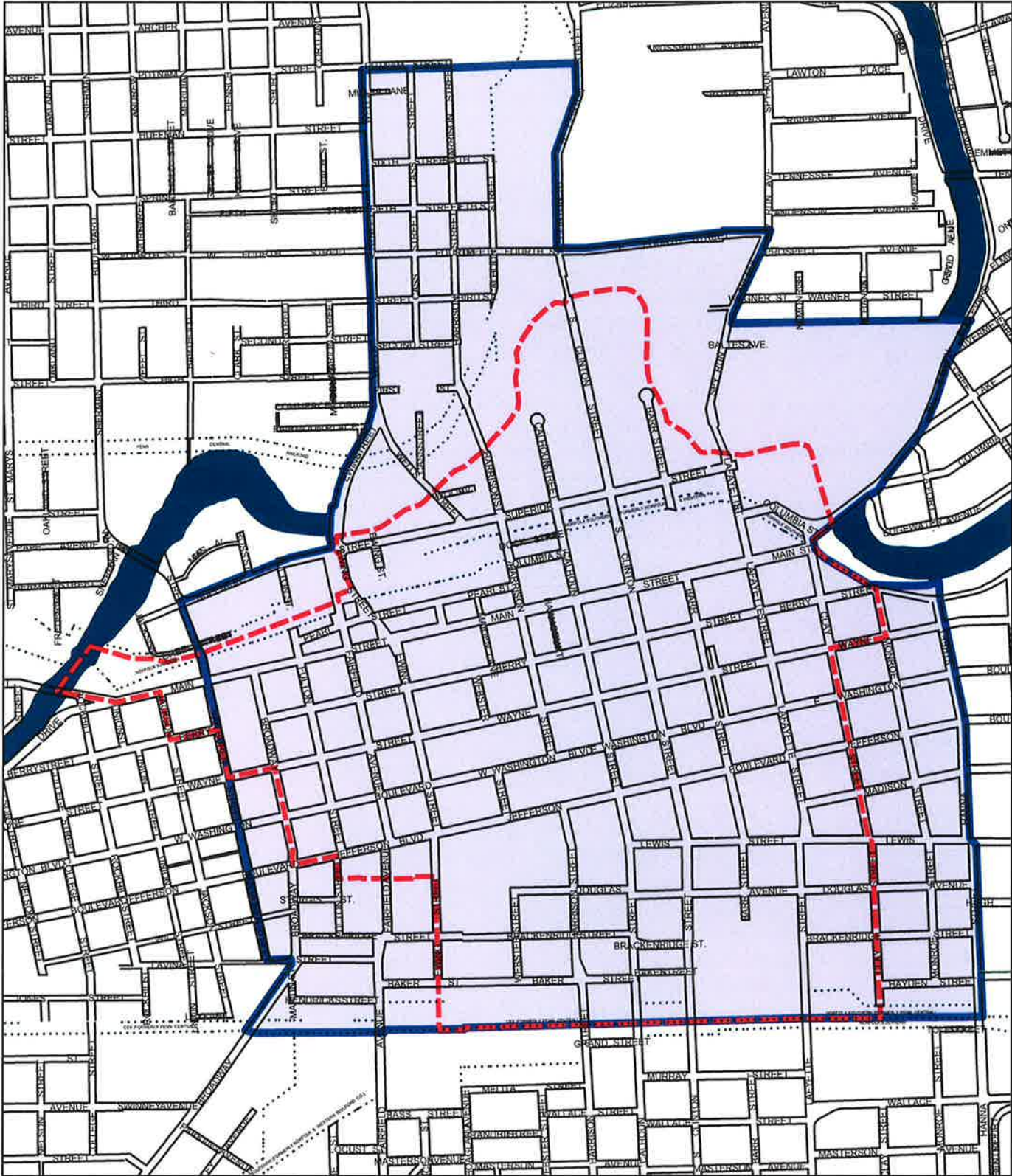
## DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION GRANT PROGRAM BOUNDARY



Created on February 22, 2010  
FILENAME: tc\_downtownedta.gws  
LAYOUT WINDOW: downtown edta-my  
Prepared By FW Com Dev Special Projects/GIS

### Legend

- Downtown EDTA
- DID
- Railroad



**CITY OF FORT WAYNE****Downtown Revitalization Grant – Supporting Data Checklist**

Please submit with your application. If items do not apply to your project, print "N/A".

**General Documentation:**

- Completed application form
- Completed IRS form W-9 (see [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) )
- Current photograph of property to be improved
- Two Itemized estimates of project costs by a licensed contractor of construction
- Property Owner Approval section of application completed - if applicant is tenant
- Proof of financial ability to undertake project. Bank statement or letter from financial institution
- Documentation of Annual Sales (Income Statement or Business Plan for start-up businesses)
- Check attached for \$40 non-refundable application fee payable to: City of Fort Wayne

**Facade Renovation / Repair:**

- Provide a rendering of major changes, including paint and awning colors where applicable.
- Submit written estimates from licensed contractors

**Signs:**

- Provide a color rendering of the design chosen
- Include specifications as to size
- Note how and where the sign will be hung on the building
- Submit written estimates from sign companies

**Paint:**

- Provide samples of the colors chosen
- Indicate main color and accent colors
- Submit written estimates from paint contractors / companies

**Awnings:**

- Provide information about color and style chosen
- Note where awning will be placed on the building
- Submit written estimates

**Furniture / Fencing:**

- Provide a detailed description or photo of product chosen
- Include quotes from dealers

**Internal Building Improvements:**

- Documentation of identified ADA, building and/or fire code issues, along with description of proposed improvements to bring building into compliance.