



Staff Report

December 12, 2017

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the Town Council
FROM: Sean Rabé, Town Manager
DATE: December 12, 2017
RE: Façade Improvement Grant Program

Recommendation

Staff recommends the Town Council approve the attached resolution establishing a Façade Improvement Grant Program for the Downtown Master Plan area and amending the Fiscal Year 2017/18 budget to appropriate \$50,000 for the program.

Issue Statement and Discussion

As Council knows, the Town hosted nationally-recognized downtown revitalization expert Michele Reeves in November for a one-day workshop aimed at giving the Town, our business owners and property owners a toolkit to facilitate a successful downtown. That workshop was very successful, with about 75 or so attendees. Ms. Reeves' advice really provided staff with practical steps to facilitate the ongoing downtown revitalization project.

One program that staff discussed with Ms. Reeves was a façade improvement grant program. There are several businesses in the Downtown Master Plan area that could use a catalyst to begin improving their storefronts, and a grant program is a common way to provide that assistance. The intent is to keep the program as simple as possible, with the Town Manager shepherding projects through the process.

The parameters of the program are spelled out in the attached document (Attachment A, which includes the application). To summarize the program, however:

1. A total of \$50,000 is being requested for the initial program
2. The program is only for business owners or commercial property owners, and can only be used for improvements to the façade of the building.
3. There are two grant programs – the first is a straightforward grant of up to \$2,000, which the Town Manager has the authority to award. The second program is a 50/50 matching program, with a maximum grant amount of \$5,000, which the Council would need to award. Council retains discretion on the ability to allow more than \$5,000 for projects of higher value to the Town. Grants falling under this category can also receive no-cost architectural services, upon approval by Council.

The Town had a similar program in the past. My understanding is that program wasn't overly successful, partially due to its complexity.

Staff is prepared to answer any questions you may have.

CEQA Requirements

There are no CEQA implications associated with the recommended action.

Financial and/or Policy Implications

Funding for the program will come from the CDBG Loans Repaid Fund (Account number: 319.200-1000-80720; Account title: Community Projects). This fund has a balance of \$184,880. The attached resolution also includes the budget amendment needed to appropriate the funding.

Attachments

- A. Façade Improvement Grant Program and Application
- B. Resolution

TOWN OF LOOMIS



FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The Town of Loomis has set aside \$50,000 into a Façade Improvement Grant Program to encourage investment and upgrades to commercial properties in the Downtown Master Plan area. There are two components to the program – a no-match grant of up to \$2,000 for small-scale improvements and a 50/50 matching grant program for larger projects (maximum grant amount is \$5,000, or as determined by the Town Council for high-priority projects).

The Town Manager has authority to award grants up to \$2,000; matching grants must be approved by the Town Council. Grants are awarded upon completion of the project. Arrangements can be made for partial awards upon completion of specific project phases, if applicable. Applicants approved for funding through either program will contract their own labor for construction and installation.

Matching grant projects may also be eligible for Façade Improvement Design Assistance, upon Town Manager recommendation and Council approval. This assistance is completely free to eligible applicants and is available on a “first come, first served” basis. Design assistance will include 5–10 hours of architectural design services. The architect will meet with property and business owners to discuss objectives for the building’s façade. Final results will include design drawings and an estimate of project cost.

Applications for all projects will be reviewed by the Town Manager. Projects requiring matching funds will receive final approval from the Town Council. The following factors will be considered in selecting projects for matching funding:

- The degree of visible and substantial improvement on the property
- The potential for positive impact on the commercial corridor
- Maximizing private investment (ratio of public funds to private funds)

ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS

Businesses and commercial property owners within the Downtown Master Plan area. Business lessees must have written authorization of the property owner.

INELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS

National franchises, government offices and agencies, residential properties.

ELIGIBLE WORK

Rehabilitation of building facades visible to the street, including storefronts; cornices, gutters and downspouts; signs and graphics; exterior lighting; canopies and awnings; painting and masonry cleaning; interior window display lighting; permit and design fees.

INELIGIBLE WORK

Maintenance improvements; roofs; structural foundations; billboards; security systems; non-permanent fixtures; interior window coverings; vinyl awnings; personal property and equipment; security bars; razor/barbed wire fencing; landscaping, sidewalks, and paving.

GRANT PERIOD

Proposals will be reviewed two times during the fiscal year. The first application deadline is July 31; the second deadline is January 31. Expect a minimum of a 30-day review period for grants requiring Council approval. Therefore, applications received in July will be placed on the September Town Council agenda, and applications received in January will be placed on the March Town Council agenda. Projects must be completed one year from the project approval date. Applicants receiving funding through this program within the last 12 months are not eligible to apply the following fiscal year. Grant awards are not transferrable. The Town retains the right to approve or deny any application for grant funds for any reason.

APPLICANT/OWNER INFORMATION

APPLICANT NAME:	E-MAIL:
BUSINESS NAME:	
APPLICANT MAILING ADDRESS:	PHONE:
CITY, STATE, ZIP:	FAX:
PROPERTY OWNER NAME (if applicable):	E-MAIL:
MAILING ADDRESS:	PHONE:
CITY, STATE, ZIP:	FAX:

SITE INFORMATION

SITE ADDRESS:

CITY, STATE, ZIP:

OWNER OCCUPIED OR LEASED?

CURRENT USE OF BUILDING:

GRANT REQUEST INFORMATION

TOTAL PROJECT COST: \$

GRANT REQUEST AMOUNT: \$

AMOUNT AND SOURCE OF PRIVATE MATCHING FUNDS (i.e., savings account, line of credit, etc.):

AMOUNT & SOURCE OF ADDITIONAL GRANTS OR FUNDING (should not include private match):

ANTICIPATED START DATE OF CONSTRUCTION:

ANTICIPATED FINISH DATE OF CONSTRUCTION:

ARCHITECT INFORMATION (IF REQUIRED)

APPLICANT'S ARCHITECT:

E-MAIL:

MAILING ADDRESS:

PHONE:

CITY, STATE, ZIP:

FAX:

PROJECT SUMMARY

IN THE SPACE BELOW PROVIDE A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED PROJECT (UP TO 300 words)

A DETAILED PROJECT PROPOSAL MUST ACCOMPANY THIS APPLICATION AND INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING. THESE DETAILS WILL HELP THE TOWN BETTER UNDERSTAND THE PROPOSED PROJECT. PLEASE USE THIS LIST AS A CHECKLIST OF ALL ITEMS THAT MUST BE PART OF YOUR APPLICATION PACKAGE.

For All Funding Requests:

- A completed application
- A detailed written description of proposed improvements for the project.
- Project costs/budget.
- Photos of proposed project area.
- Construction schedule for project.
- Competitive bids from a licensed and bonded trades/professional for projects up to \$2,000.
- Three formal written bids on all grant work over \$2,000, unless work includes architectural services to be provided by the Town.
- Evidence of ownership of property (including but not limited to a deed of trust) or copy of lease. Lessees must have written authorization from the property owner.
- Copy of current Town of Loomis Business License (if conducting business at time of application).
- Applicant must provide a statement on source of project funding that includes the required 50% private match for projects exceeding \$2,000, and other funds that may be applicable to undertake the balance of the work not funded by the Façade Improvement Grant. This could include a letter from bank or lender, account balance statement, or other as approved.

The applicant understands that the proposed improvements must be evaluated by the Loomis Town Manager and that changes or modifications to the project may be required prior to funding approval. The Town Manager has authority to award grants up to \$2,000; matching grants must be approved by the Town Council.

CERTIFICATION OF APPLICANT

The applicant certifies that all information in this application and all information furnished in support of this application is given for the purpose of obtaining a grant and is true and complete to the best of the applicant's knowledge and belief.

If the applicant is not the owner of the property to be rehabilitated, or if the applicant is an organization rather than an individual, the applicant certifies that he/she has the authority to sign and enter into an agreement to perform the rehabilitation work on the property. Evidence of this authority is attached.

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE:

DATE:

TOWN OF LOOMIS

RESOLUTION NO. 17 - XX

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF LOOMIS APPROVING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM AND AMENDING THE 2017-18 OPERATING BUDGET

WHEREAS, the Council of the Town of Loomis has adopted the 2017-2018 Annual Budget, and;
WHEREAS, Strategic Direction #3 of the Town Council Strategic Plan calls for the Town to partner with downtown businesses to assist with painting, awnings, and signage, and;

WHEREAS, staff has prepared a Façade Improvement Grant program to facilitate improvements to the Town's downtown businesses, and;

WHEREAS, \$50,000 is needed to fund the program, and;

WHEREAS, the Town has adequate funding set aside for such a program in the CDBG Loans Repaid Fund.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED by the Town Council that the 2017-2018 Operating Budget be amended to allocate \$50,000 from the economic development funds of the CDBG Revolving Funds fund number 319.200 for use for the Façade Improvement Grant Program.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 12th day of December 2017 by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

Mayor

ATTEST:

Town Clerk