

# City of Hart TIFA Property Improvement Grant Program Guidelines

## Background

The City of Hart TIFA Property Improvement Grant Program is a program of the City of Hart TIFA.

## Program Purpose

The grant program is to encourage private investment through the rehabilitation and improvement of commercial and mixed-use property within the City of Hart Tax Increment Finance Authority District, to encourage good design that will serve as quality examples, and to preserve the architectural character that is distinctive to the City of Hart. The program is also intended to support the City of Hart Master Plan, and Parks & Recreation Plan, as appropriate. By improving the appearance of commercial and mixed-use properties, the program serves to improve the economic viability of the TIFA District.

## Program Description

This program provides a matching grant for improvements within the TIFA District. It is a competitive grant program. For every dollar awarded the applicant must spend an equal amount. Individual grant amounts will be up to 50 percent of owner investment. A percentage of available TIFA funds shall be allocated to be awarded during each budget year. The total of funds allocated for this program shall be determined and published not later than July 1st of each year. The TIFA reserves the right to reallocate funds. The grant program is funded by the City of Hart TIFA with funds raised through its revenues. Grant applications will be reviewed by the City of Hart TIFA Board, and the Board will also make all final grant-funding decisions. There is no set minimum or maximum number of projects per year.

## Program Target Area

The target area for the City of Hart TIFA Commercial and Business Property Improvement Grant Program is the TIFA District.

## Eligible Applicants

Property owners or leaseholders of all commercial or mixed-use buildings within the TIFA district area are eligible to apply for grant funds. In the case a leaseholder applies they must submit a notarized letter of permission from the property owner with their application. Preference will be given to new applicants who have not received grant funding from the program.

## Eligible Improvements

All grant-funded improvements must be permanent and must meet all State, County and Local code requirements. Applications for projects must be reviewed and approved by the City of Hart TIFA Board. Eligible items include, but may not be limited to:

- Removal of siding that was used to cover original building materials
- Exterior brick or wall surface repair
- Pointing of brick/mortar joint repair
- Window and/or door replacement/repair
- Any architectural details in need of repair and/or replacement
- Painting the building
- Landscaping
- Construction, installation and/or renovation of awnings, marquees, doors, windows, or pavement between the business door and the sidewalk
- Other city-approved façade improvements

- Ineligible expenses include signage, and reimbursement for work that has already been completed.

### **Funding Guidelines**

Projects must be completed within one year of the date the grant is awarded. If requested, extensions of grant funds may be considered. Applications started or completed prior to application submission date will not be considered.

Improvements made through the Property Improvement Grant Program must be maintained by the applicant and may not be removed or significantly altered for a period of five years, according to signed agreements that must be executed following the approval of a grant award.

All applicants must be in good standing with the City of Hart which includes being current with all fees, permits and taxes.

No grant will be awarded until the project is 100% complete and all City approval processes completed (i.e., final inspection on all building permits and final inspection of grant work). For example, if the services of an architect are needed, reimbursement to applicant for architectural expenses will be paid to the applicant at the end of the project as part of the total grant award. The grant is awarded on a reimbursement basis.

### **Application Process**

- 1. Complete a grant application and submit to the City of Hart office on or before the posted due date. All applications must include design plans and estimates for the proposed work. A detailed description of the work to be completed along with building photos showing the areas where the work will be done must be submitted.**
2. Applications will be reviewed by the TIFA Board, which serves as the grant review committee. The final grant decision will be made by the City of Hart TIFA Board.
- 3. All grantees will be required to sign an agreement which guarantees the maintenance and preservation of the improvements for a period of five years.**
4. When the project is completed and “Before” and “After” pictures are submitted, City of Hart staff will verify work has been completed as specified in the grant application.
5. When completed the applicant must submit copies of invoices, receipts, and an itemized statement of the total cost of the project signed by the applicant. All documentation for payment must be provided at one time to the City of Hart TIFA for one payout. After receipt and verification of the information, the City of Hart TIFA will release the grant money to the applicant. The grant is awarded on a reimbursement basis.

### **Program Amendments**

The details of the City of Hart TIFA Property Improvement Grant Program may be amended subject to the formal approval of the City of Hart TIFA Board.

### **Contact Information**

For questions or to apply for the City of Hart TIFA Property Improvement Grant Program, contact the Hart Economic Development Director at [nsteel@cityofhart.org](mailto:nsteel@cityofhart.org) or 231-301-8449.