

## **Whitehall Tax Increment Finance Authority Façade Grant Program**

The City's commercial areas, particularly its history laden downtown district, are vital to the economic health of the community as well as an attraction for future economic development. Any deterioration of buildings in the downtown district creates an image of a declining economic base and a lack of pride among its citizens and business owners.

The TIFA Façade Grant Program provides financial incentive to downtown property owners to improve their facilities. Grants will be awarded on a dollar per dollar basis to commercial properties within the Downtown Blueprint district with a maximum award of \$5,000 subject to annual budgetary funding. While the primary purpose of the grants is to improve the exterior appearance of a building structural repairs will be considered. Properties are eligible to receive a grant every two years. Applications can be submitted at any time and approved on a first come basis. All work must be completed and invoices submitted for reimbursement to the City no later than June 30 of the fiscal year for which the grant was approved. Reimbursement for project which extends into a new fiscal year cannot be guaranteed.

*All property taxes, municipal bills, assessments, and any other fees owed to the City or Muskegon County must be paid in full prior to submittal of any application.*

Completed applications will be submitted to the TIFA Director then forwarded to the Board for review and approval or denial. Action will be taken by the Board during one of its regularly scheduled quarterly meetings. The TIFA Board reserves the right to reject any application in its sole discretion. The Board shall not use race, sex, age, or religion as grounds for refusing a grant to an eligible business owner.

Typical eligible improvements include, but are not limited to, lighting, signs attached to the building, painting, awnings, entranceways, windows, energy conservation, masonry work, and associated labor. The project should comply in general terms with the 2008 Hooker DeJong Façade Improvement Plan. Use of local contractors is encouraged.

Ineligible costs include any expenses incurred prior to Board approval; property acquisition; mortgage or loan fees; site plan, sign, or building permit fees; professional fees including architectural fees; wages paid to applicant, their relatives or employees for work associated with the grant; or any items taxable as personal property.

The TIFA Board must approve any changes which substantially deviate from the original plan as determined by the TIFA Director. All approved changes shall be attached to the original application in the form of an addendum, dated and signed by the TIFA Director. Projects that deviate without such prior approval may be disqualified from reimbursement.

### **DOWNTOWN BLUEPRINT (FAÇADE) DISTRICT**

