Gardiner Façade Grant Steering Committee Description

In August of 2016, Gardiner was notified of its successful application to the Maine Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Microenterprise Grant to develop and execute a façade improvement program in its historic district. In order to comply with state and federal standards, the City of Gardiner must develop an ad-hoc committee for the purpose of overseeing the public process, considering sub-grant awards, and ensuring that the process follows the requirements of the grant. The committee will be comprised of no less than five and no more than seven members, and may include residents and non-residents. Members of the committee shall be appointed by the Mayor and approved by City Council. City staff may support the committee, and may also serve on the committee. Members of the committee shall be governed by the City of Gardiner's conflict of interest policy, and the committee shall abide by the best practices set forth by the City for all citizen committees, and by the laws of the State of Maine that govern municipalities. The Façade Grant Steering committee will make recommendations for council, except for the specific decisions granted them by council, and enumerated below.

1. The committee will consider, finalize, and publish the DRAFT Gardiner Façade Grant Program Guidelines, and update the guidelines as needed throughout the program and manage the schedule.

2. The committee will oversee the public input phase of the environmental review and all other requirements of the CDBG grant. The committee, with staff, will submit required documentation and certifications on behalf of the City.

3. The committee will publicize the availability and progress of the project.

4. The committee will develop and implement a policy for hearing and resolving complaints about the project.

5. The committee, with staff, will make sure that the project is completed in a satisfactory and timely fashion.

6. The committee will hold at least one informational meeting with potential applicants.

7. The committee will consider applications to the program, and will make decisions on funding projects.

8. The committee will ensure that "spot blight" designations are appropriate, and will ensure that historic preservation review of projects is completed.

9. The committee will oversee bid documents and make awards to contractors for both architectural support for the project and make sub-grant award notifications for completion of projects. Note that awards will go to the lowest most responsive and responsible bidder, and must be reviewed by Maine DECD.

10. Ensure that City Staff is following grant protocols for awards, reporting, and release of funds.

11. Provide input for grant close-out reporting.

DRAFT 9/28/16

Gardiner Façade Program - 2016/17 Guidelines

All funds are subject to State and local Historic Preservation approval.

Funds will be awarded through a competitive application process, and project payments will be made directly to contractors following an open bid process.

I. Program Summary

The City of Gardiner has established a Façade Improvement Grant Program to provide financial assistance to property owners within Gardiner's historic district who are considered "spot slum and blighted" to make physical improvements to the exterior of their building.

A Façade Improvement Grant may be used for a variety of building façade rehabs, including painting, window or door repairs or replacements, signage, awnings or other façade improvement projects outlined under the "Eligible Project" section of this package.

II. Funding and Administration

Funding for Façade Improvement Grants will come from the CDBG Community Enterprise Grant awarded to the City of Gardiner. The 2016/17 Façade Committee, which is comprised of the City's Historic Preservation Commission, will review applications and, along with City Staff, carry out the administration of the Façade Improvement Grant Program according to the procedures and guidelines outlined in this document. The administration and operation of the Program shall conform to all federal, state, and local codes. Gardiner City Council approved the creation of this ad-hoc committee and its duties on Sept. 21, 2016.

III. Program Guidelines and Eligibility

1. February 24, 2017 is the deadline for round one. Any applications received after this date will be held until it is determined that there is funding available for a second round of funding. There is no guarantee of a second round of funding. Subsequent rounds of funding will be announced on the City of Gardiner's website and through the City's official listserv. Any applicants denied in round 1 of funding will be notified of round 2 funding if a second round takes place.

2. An approved application will have funds "reserved" for its use. The applicant, the city, and an architect hired from the grant, will work to put together bid specifications for the project. Actual funding will be awarded through a public bid process to the "lowest responsive and responsible bidder". The City will pay the bidder directly. The bidder must follow the approved scope of work, and be in compliance with all applicable codes and grant requirements.

3. Grants are available for up to a maximum of $25,000.00 per round, and $50,000 total per

applicant between both rounds (if a second round is warranted).

4. All projects will require a minimum $1:$1 match. See below for details on match

5. Property owners who are not current on real estate and personal property taxes are not eligible for funding.

6. Each applicant may be awarded only one grant per funding round.

7. The grant applicant may be the property owner or tenant. Tenants must have the property owner's signed authorization for the proposed building improvement.

8. A façade improvement grant may only be made to a commercial, mixed-use property, or Non-profit located within Gardiner and identified by individual spot slum and blight within the Downtown Historic District. No purely residential buildings are eligible.

9. The completed design or proposal for the improvement project must be submitted to review by the Gardiner Historic Preservation Commission. **Any work done before written Historic Preservation Commission approval is received will not be eligible for funding or match.**

10. All Projects must be completed by December 31, 2017. This includes all required documentation.

IV. Eligible Activities

Use of grant funds is restricted to eligible improvements to the exterior of buildings/structures. Eligible activities are listed below. Because it is likely that façade improvement requests will exceed the available funds, individual projects will be prioritized on the criteria listed in section VII.

The following activities are eligible activities for grant.

- Awnings
- Storefront improvements
- Restoration of original/historic windows, doors, and trim where possible
- Removal of "modernization" efforts and/or inappropriate non-historic alterations/additions
- Repair or replacement of windows, doors, and trim
- Cleaning and/or painting of wood surfaces
- Historically appropriate cleaning and repair or installation of approved siding
- Historically appropriate cleaning and/or re-pointing of surface brick or stone
- Removing paint from brick or stone improvements visible from street level
- Coming into ADA or Life Safety compliance
- Signage
- Roof repairs or replacement

Ineligible activities:

- Interior repair of any kind
- Purchase of commercial property/equipment
- New building construction

Match requirements:

- Each project shall require a match of at least $1 of applicant investment for each $1 of grant funds.
- Match may be achieved in one of two ways:

  1 - Applicant may pay at least half of the entire project. In this case, applicant will pay first half of project directly to the bidder, and the City will pay the second half upon completion or in a payment schedule set out by the contractor and the City. In this case, project dollars spent prior to approval are not eligible for match

  2 – Other projects on exterior of building may count as match as long as the property owner provides invoicing paid showing value that is at least as much as the project approved, but only if the matching expenses were incurred after July 1, 2016. Any money spent on improvements to the exterior of building shown above can be counted as match. For example, if the applicant seeks grant funding to replace windows, and is also doing a roof repair, roof repair may count as match.

- Material or other hard costs ie. dumpsters, rental equipment for projects done by volunteers or owner may be counted as match, but volunteer or owner labor may not.

V. Application Process and Timeline

To apply for a Façade Improvement Grant, you must first attend a **MANDATORY** orientation meeting, which will take place on or about **January 25, 2017**. Limited design support will be provided through the grant by an authorized architect to be chosen by the City. After orientation and design consult (if needed), complete the application form and return it to the Economic and Community Development Department by **February 24, 2017**. Be sure to include any available photos, drawings, and descriptive information on the design of the project and products to be used. If your changes include changes to the dimensions of the building, the property line(s) must be depicted. You must also provide both material and labor cost estimates for each item.

The City Façade Program is federally funded program with monies coming from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). All contracts of $2,000.00 or more will be **subject to Davis-Bacon and Related acts requiring that the prevailing federal wage rates be paid for all employees of the contractor(s)**. The Program Administrator will provide the most current wage determination to the applicant and/or contactor(s) to ensure compliance with this requirement. **Please be sure that your cost estimates reflect the use of the wage determination.**

Please Note:

- **All projects will go out to public bid the lowest responsive and responsible contractor or supplier must be used.**
- **All contractors must supply payroll records for time on project on weekly basis.**
- **Owners must have a preconstruction meeting to ensure that contractors have proper paper work.**
- **All projects must have met insurance and compliance requirements before any funding is paid out.**

The Façade Committee will review and score each application and will make announcements of grant awards within 21 days of the application deadline as stated in Section III, Item 1, above.

Commencement of Improvements

Any construction or other proposed improvements to be funded in part by the City façade program must not commence prior to the applicant achieving all of the following:

- **Has Spot Slum & Blight Declaration from Code Officer**
- **Written Historic Preservation Approval**

No project is guaranteed funds until the CDBG grant has been accepted by The City and the Facade committee approves of each individual project.

Disbursement of funds:
Funds will not be disbursed until:

- **Project has passed inspection and project has been completed as submitted**
- **All copies of paid receipts are submitted**
- **All payroll documentation is submitted and reviewed**

Following approval of an application and prior to the disbursement of funds, the applicant will be required to enter into a written Project agreement. This agreement will set forth the scope of work to be performed as part of the project and the date by which the project will be completed. Buildings rehabilitated under this grant program will be subject to inspection by the City's Code Enforcement Officer. Construction specifications and work completed shall comply with all applicable building and occupancy codes. Prior to reimbursement of expenses, the applicant must present the Program Administrator with copies of paid receipts for authorized work as estimated in the application and as documented in the approved scope of work. In the event of disputes, the City of Gardiner and the City Façade Program reserve the right, at its sole discretion, to deny validity of previously paid match expenses, or for expenses that were not authorized in the application and contract. **Cost overruns or change orders will be borne 100% by applicant or the contractor.**

VI. Inspection of Work
Buildings rehabilitated under this grant program will be subject to inspection by the local building code enforcement office. Construction specifications and work completed shall comply with all applicable building and occupancy codes. The City Façade Program will advise building owners, their architects, or engineers in planning the construction, if required.

VII. Scoring Criteria

Each Façade Improvement Grant Application will be scored according to the following criteria.

Each project will be judged in the context of the size of the request:

- Does the proposed project has a positive impact on the attractiveness of the downtown, the streetscape, and the particular building (up to 20 points)
- Does the proposed project maintain or improve a pleasing aesthetic quality of design, including historic accuracy and architectural integrity? (up to 20 points)
- Does the proposed project improve the building owners' ability to attract and/or retain full tenancy on all floors? (up to 20 points)
- Does the proposed project replaces or repairs building attributes that are missing, rotten, damaged, or otherwise detrimental to the building envelope's performance? (up to 20 points)
- Does the project improve energy efficiency to the point where the project makes the building more economically feasible to maintain? (up to 20 points)

The City anticipates that there will be more demand than available funds. Funding will be provided to those applications receiving the overall highest score until the grant fund is exhausted. The Façade Committee reserves the right to deny funding to any applicant who does not comply with the required guidelines, or who does not provide sufficient detail of presentation to appropriately score application. Should there be a lack of qualified applications, all remaining grant funds may not be awarded. The committee may, at its discretion, award projects contingent upon applicant providing more information, or by putting other contingencies upon the project, which shall be reflected in the project agreement with the applicant.

Timeline

Step	Item	Category	Start Date	Completed date
1	1st Public Notice for Floodplain , Kennebec Current	Environmental Review	9/9/2016	9/27/2016
2	City Council	City Council	9/21/2016	
3	Evaluation of public comments	Environmental Review	9/24/2016	9/30/2016
4	EO 11988 Process	Environmental Review	10/11/2016	10/25/2016
5	2nd Public Notice for Floodplain Kennebec Current	Environmental Review	11/11/2016	11/21/2016
6	Evaluation of public comments	Environmental Review	11/26/2016	11/30/2016
7	Public "Notice of Intent to Request a Release of funds"	Phase II paperwork	12/9/2016	12/19/2016
8	Submit ERR	Environmental Review	12/2/2016	
9	Community Input	Public Hearing	12/21/2016	
10	Legislative Body Approval	City Council	1/4/2017	

11	Accept CDBG grant	Sign Contract w/ DECD	12/12/2016	12/16/2016
12	Bid for Architect	Design Support	1/2/2017	1/20/2017
13	Mandatory Meeting	Mandatory Meeting	1/25/2017	
14	Applications Open	Application Period	1/26/2017	2/24/2017
15	Applicants Accepted	Round 1	3/3/2017	
16	Finalize Cost Estimates-Budget Summary	Phase II paperwork	2/27/2017	3/6/2017
17	Spending CDBG Funds	CDBG Funds	March-17	
18	Projects Begins	Project Administration	November-17	
19	Program Income Plan	Phase II paperwork	April-17	
20	Grant Close Out: Compliance wrap-up	Program Ends	December-17	
21	Round II Applications considered, if funding available	Round II	Sep-17	

Administrative Roles

Gardiner Main Street – Writing CDBG grant, preparing all application forms, project descriptions, working with building owners and businesses to identify possible projects, coordinating orientation meeting, working with Finance Director to ensure that all requirement of grant are being met, assisting in communicating with grantees to ensure smooth projects and documentation.

City Finance Director – Handling DECD drawdown, setting up appropriate accounting measures, accepting and inspecting payroll records for Davis-Bacon compliance, ensuring City meets all other grant compliance requirements, reimbursing applicants after ensuring that match has been spent, CEO has inspected.

Historic Preservation Commission – Reviewing and scoring applications, notifying winners, determining if 2nd round is needed.

Planning and Development Administrative Staff – Accepting applications, answering basic questions about program, supporting Historic Preservation Commission.

Code Officer – Issuing spot slum and blight declarations, field inspection on completion prior to reimbursement, supporting Historic Preservation Commission.