

City of Avoca
Grant Program for Façade Improvements and Rehabilitation of Downtown Buildings

Overview

In May, 2007, the Iowa West Foundation funded a community visioning project in Avoca. Representatives of the American Institutes of Architects, Iowa Chapter conducted the visioning charrette with a committee of civic and community leaders. The committee recommended that the City devote significant resources toward preserving historic architectural elements and developing business in the downtown district.

Recognizing the challenges of the downtown development plan, the City has created a grant program to offer an incentive to rehabilitate and restore historical elements to downtown buildings.

The program will encourage the use of a licensed architect on projects in the downtown area.

Major Restoration and Improvement Grants

Major restoration and improvement grants are the focus of the grant program. Features of major restoration and improvement grants are as follows:

- Projects will be led by a licensed architect.
- The priority of the program is to enhance building façades. All projects will be required to bring the building façade into substantial conformance with the downtown plan. Applicants will be required to replace or repair the existing roof as part of the project, unless the existing roof is approved by the architect. All other building redevelopment costs will be eligible for grant funding once the façade and roof requirements have been met.
- Eligible applicants can receive up to \$1,250 per linear feet of building frontage facing Elm Street. For instance, a building twenty (20) feet wide will be eligible for up to \$25,000 in grant money. Grant funds may be approved for enhancement of building sides facing side streets intersecting with Elm Street.
- All projects will require at least a 25% match from the applicant.

Grant awards will be made to projects based upon their conformance with the downtown plan. If the applicant provides a larger matching percentage, the applicant will receive greater consideration. Funding for these projects will be at the discretion of the City Council.

Architectural Assistance Grant

Applicants may submit grants for up to \$5,000 in assistance toward architectural and professional planning fees for each project.

Minor Restoration and Improvements Grants

Minor restoration and improvement grants will also be available. Applicants may apply for up to \$2,000, with a required 50% match for expenses related to enhancements, such as painting, signage, awnings, and ornamental lighting which conform to the goals of the Comprehensive Plan and Downtown Master Plan.

Eligibility Guidelines

Properties identified in the Downtown Master Plan will be eligible to receive grant funding.

Ineligible Activities

Routine exterior maintenance, landscaping, and new construction are not eligible projects for funding. If a project fails to satisfy the goals of both the Comprehensive Plan and Downtown Master Plan, it will be ineligible to receive grant funds. Projects not led by an architect will be ineligible for funding, except for qualifying minor grants for restoration and improvements.

Availability and Compliance

Grants will only be made as funding is available. Conformance with criteria will not necessarily guarantee an award. Funds will be distributed to the applicant after finished work has been inspected and payments have been verified for conformance with the submitted project application.

Contact Us

Contact Clint Fichter, City Manager for more information at (712) 343-2424 or avoca@walnutel.net