

**Menasha Landmarks Commission  
Facade Improvement Grant/Loan Policies**

The City of Menasha façade improvement grant and loan policy is created to provide financial assistance for capital improvements on exterior facades of commercial properties, zoned C-2 Central Business Zoning District located within historic districts. Residential homes shall not be eligible for this façade/loan dollars. Improvements to any façade must be in accordance with furthering the landmark’s mission of safeguarding and promoting a historic atmosphere within the historic districts as outlined in City of Menasha Ordinance Section 2-4-8(b)(2).

For the purpose of this policy, a façade is defined as the face or exterior of a building, facing a public street or space open to the public gathering including facades facing back alleys and rear of buildings. Public gathering is further defined as an exterior space where people are assembled for public worship, entertainment, athletic events, educational or scientific purposes, government event, or a political convention, or other similar Application for facade/grant loans shall be made to the Community Development Department on forms provided by the department.

**I. Preliminary Application**

In order to apply for the façade improvement grant/loan, the Applicant must be the owner of the commercial property. The Applicant shall submit a preliminary application including a description of the proposed work including a timetable with a projected start/completion date.

Such description shall include a listing of the number and type of improvements, the type of material, method of construction and color(s) of materials to be used and a rough cost estimate for completing the work. All colors will comply with the “Approved Paint Colors for the Downtown Menasha Historic District”.

**II. Initial Consultation**

The applicant shall consult with the Community Development Director and/or Principal Planner, to review the preliminary application and details of the project. A preliminary assessment will be made of project eligibility and the appropriateness of materials and/or finishes to be used using The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties or other standards, as may be adopted pursuant to the Landmark’s Commission Ordinance, as a guide for how historic improvements should be conducted. The Director of Community Development, and or designee may consult with the Landmark’s Commission Chairperson, the State Historical Society, or others of recognized expertise in conducting such assessment.

**III. Application**

Following the initial consultation the Director of Community Development, and/or Principal Planner, may authorize proceeding with the application for façade grant/loan

funds. Such application shall include a detailed description of the project including those elements described in Section II.

For projects over \$1,000 two written estimates from bona-fide contractors or suppliers shall be submitted. All work must be completed by a professional contractor.

All projects must have a minimum value of \$5,000 and each building is eligible for façade/loan dollars every five (5) years.

The completed application will be scheduled for review at the next available Landmarks Commission meeting.

#### IV. Financial Assistance

##### A. Grants

Grants are available for approved projects on a dollar for dollar match basis up to a maximum of \$2,500 per building façade.

*For projects related to the implementation of the TID #7 Project Plan, the grant amount may be increased to a maximum of \$10,000 per façade on a dollar for dollar match basis upon recommendation by the Director of Community Development and the available funding within the district.*

Grant funds will be reimbursed upon submission of an itemized invoice or itemized paid receipt by the applicant and verification of completion of the work by the Director of Community Development, and/or designee.

#### V. Loans

Loans are available for approved projects. Applications shall be reviewed by the Director of Community Development, and/or Principal Planner, in consultation with the City Finance Director and City Attorney. Such review shall consider the financial capacity of the applicant to repay the loan, and any other considerations relevant to the project or loan program. The applicant may be required to submit corporate and/or personal financial statements, tax returns or other evidence of financial capacity. The applicant may be required to execute a mortgage or provide other means of securing the funds borrowed.

Approved loans will bear interest at the rate of 1% less than the prime lending rate, not to exceed 4% per annum and have a maximum term of one year per \$1,000 borrowed. The maximum loan amount is \$20,000 per project, with a maximum term of ten years.

*For projects related to the implementation of the TID #7 Project Plan, loans will bear no interest and repayment of the principal amount shall be deferred until the property is sold or transferred or through the life of the TIF district, whichever comes first. The*

*maximum amount of the loan shall be \$30,000 per façade upon recommendation by the Director of Community Development and the available funding within the district.*

VII. Ineligible Projects

1. Signs or other improvements specific to the present/proposed business.
2. Temporary improvements or improvements that do not have a useful life of 15 years or more.
3. Facades with a ground floor that is not directly abutting a public street or space open to the public gathering.
4. Owners with outstanding debts owed to the City of Menasha.
5. Properties that are not taxable.
6. Properties with open code violations, unless the funds are being used to correct code violations.