
VILLAGE OF WESTMONT



Downtown Incentive Program (DIP) FY2024 TIER 1 Application Packet

Purpose

To provide grants to owners of properties and businesses in the Central Business District (“Downtown”) for building renovation projects that will significantly improve properties, enhance the viability of existing businesses, and encourage new businesses to locate in Downtown Westmont.

Eligibility for Grants

- The subject property must be located within the Central Business District Tax Increment Finance District (Exhibit A - CBD TIF and Zoning Districts), with priority given to projects in the B-1 Limited Business District.
- Applicants may be the owner of a commercial or mixed-use building, and/or the owner of a commercial business.
- If the applicant is a tenant, the tenant must have written approval from the property owner supporting the proposed improvements and both the tenant and the owner must agree to the terms and conditions of the grant award. All tenants must have an executed lease agreement with at least a three (3) year duration remaining.
- All rehabilitation work and design features must comply with all applicable Village codes, ordinances, relevant design guidelines, and zoning regulations.
- The property and/or business shall not have an active Notice of Violation for property maintenance.
- Applicants must ensure that all project permits are obtained.
- Eligible properties are limited to existing buildings, not redevelopment or new construction that expands the existing building footprint by more than 20%.
- The applicant must be in good standing with the Village, with no outstanding and unpaid taxes, fines and/or fees, and with a valid business license, if applicable.



Program, Amounts and Payment of Grants: TIER 1

General Program Description

- **Tier 1** (Minimum \$5,000 project cost; Maximum \$20,000 grant award):
 - Lowest entry project cost and grant award of all Tiers;
 - Eligible activities target building facade improvements, life safety issues including fire suppression, ADA accessibility into buildings, and business signage;
 - Targets straightforward improvements and single activities;
 - May require scoring mechanisms if grant requests exceed budgeted funding.

The grant program utilizes a method of matching a portion of costs for eligible activities. Each eligible activity has a specified percentage of matched funds, ranging from 10 to 50% of costs, and typically represents the minimum eligible grant. Additionally, many of these activities are eligible for increased amounts of matched funds (“incentive bonus”) when the project meets higher standards.

Tier 1 Program Parameters

TIER 1		
Min Project Total Cost	\$5,000	(combined activities)
Max Grant (per application)	\$20,000	
Repayment/Clawback	None	

Funded Activities	Type	% Base Funded	% Cap Match*
Facade Improvements	Any	20%	50%
Signage	Any	10%	30%
ADA (exterior)	Exterior Entry Accessibility	25%	
Fire Life Safety	Any	25%	50%

Incentive Bonus *	Type	Add % Match
Facade Improvements	Exterior Lighting	5%
	Brick / Stone	10%
	Architectural Detailing (improvements that contribute to a creative design, and higher quality interest in the building façade)	15%
Signage	Backlit Wall	10%
	Projecting	10%
Fire Life Safety	Water Line / East Side of Cass	25%

* To achieve the maximum percentage match, the applicant would need to apply for all incentive bonuses. For example, for a façade improvement the maximum grant is 20% of project cost. With all bonuses applied for, the maximum grant will be increased to 50% of the project costs.

It is anticipated that additional Tiers will be added in future years. The additional tiers will accommodate larger projects.



Tier 1 Program Description

- Minimum Project Total Cost: No application will be considered if the project cost for eligible activities is less than \$5,000. The intent is to encourage more significant improvements that will have a greater impact on the tax base and viability of the Downtown.
- Maximum Grant per Application: The total amount of money that the Village will award to any given applicant for all eligible funded activities in a given program year. Tier 1 has a maximum of \$20,000; however, this maximum may be increased based on incentive bonuses as discussed below.
- Repayment Provisions: Tier 1 grants do not require repayment once completed and approved.
- Approval Process: The review and approval processes vary based on the grant request and is outlined in the Program Administration section below.
- Funded Activities: Includes all eligible projects.
 - Percentage % Base Funded: The maximum amount awarded to each project without incentive bonuses. For example, a \$20,000 façade improvement would be eligible for a \$4,000 grant (20%).
 - Percentage % Cap Match: To achieve the maximum percentage match or grant amount, the applicant would need approval for all incentive bonuses. For example, for a façade improvement, the base maximum grant is 20% of the project cost. With all bonuses applied for, the maximum grant will be increased to 50% of the project costs. For a \$20,000 façade project, this would increase the grant amount to \$10,000 (50%). All requested incentive bonuses will be confirmed with application review.
- Incentives: Many eligible activities have incentive bonuses which give an applicant the opportunity for grant awards above the base funding percentage. To qualify for the bonuses, design over minimum standards and/or other locational factors must be met. Applicants are encouraged to design projects to qualify for these bonuses, which can significantly increase both the grant award and improve scoring when in a competitive process.
 - Incentive Bonus: Incentives serve one of several purposes:
 - To encourage an improved design or higher quality material standard in accordance with design guidelines, which can often have a higher cost of construction;
 - To benefit select properties burdened with additional construction costs due to adverse location;
 - To promote investment in targeted activities.
 - Calculation:

% Base Funded	(minimum amount of financial assistance)
+ % Match	(additional incentive bonuses)
= % Cap Match	(maximum percentage of total financial assistance)



- **Grant Bonus:** The Village recognizes that the high cost of construction will often achieve the Maximum Grant award when no additional incentive bonus match is requested. In order to continue to promote the purpose of the incentive bonus, the Maximum Grant award may be increased by \$1,000 for each incentive bonus. For example, a facade improvement project may have a project cost of \$120,000 and be eligible for the Maximum Grant award of \$20,000. If the project meets the incentive bonus conditions for the three (3) listed bonus types, the grant may increase by \$3,000 to \$23,000.

Qualifying Expenditures

General Requirements

- Exterior rehabilitation projects should consider the design requirements of both the [Commercial Area Design Guidelines](#) and the [Westmont Main Street Design Guidelines](#).

TIER 1 Fundable Activities

- **Facade Improvements:**

- Any construction activity that improves or enhances the appearance, function, or longevity of the facade of a building;
- Bonus Incentives - facade improvement details that can be eligible for additional match funding:
 - **Exterior Lighting:** Appropriate lighting of facades can improve the atmosphere of the downtown in addition to highlighting building details and improving safety. Lighting and fixtures both sensitive to the character of the building and neighborhood ambiance can be funded; however, this does not include temporary lights such as strings of lights placed above patios or on tops of buildings.
 - **Masonry Details:** Addition of brick or stone details to compliment the look of existing facades. Any modification beyond required tuckpointing can be considered.
 - **Architectural Detail:** Many building facades have been stripped of architectural details over time. Technical detailing can include many aspects of design, from the addition of high quality windows on an otherwise blank facade, to lintels, cornices, caps, mullions, trim, and features that can cast light and shadow. Each can contribute to a higher quality facade. This can also include quality materials that exceed construction minimums. Qualification for this incentive shall give extra consideration to design guidelines and may require coordination between staff and design professionals.

- **Signage:**

- Any permanent business Wall, Ground or Projecting signage as permitted in [Appendix A, Article XI](#) of the municipal code.
- Bonus Incentives - signs eligible for additional match funding:
 - **Backlit Wall Signs:** All new wall signage within the Village is required to be individual letter signage, either pinned to the facade or attached to a color-matched raceway. Backlit signage casts “halo-lit” illumination onto the building, and is generally considered higher-quality with softer illumination than traditional internally illuminated letter signs.
 - **Projecting Signs:** Defined in [Appendix A, Sec. 11.07\(D\)\(6\)](#) as a sign and associated structure which extends out from a building facade or wall in a perpendicular manner, a projecting sign is intended to be seen by pedestrians on the sidewalk and can enhance the walkability of the Downtown.



- **ADA (exterior):**
 - Any improvement to an existing front facade entrance of a building that eliminates an impediment to compliance with accessibility standards;
 - Improvements could include the removal of steps, addition of ramps or railings, or enlargement of doorways to meet ADA requirements.

- **Fire Life Safety:**
 - Installation, upgrade or expansion of fire suppression systems, alarms, exiting signage, emergency exiting, or similar upgrades to improve the fire safety of a building;
 - This can include the costs attributed to the upgrade needed to any servicing water lines, but not to include tapping fees.
 - Bonus Incentives:
 - The primary water distribution main is located on the west side of Cass Avenue. Properties that tap on to the water main from the east side of the street must install the water lines under Cass Avenue, which increases costs substantially. These properties are eligible for an additional percentage of match funding.

Ineligible Activities

- Normal maintenance, such as painting, cleaning, and tuck-pointing;
- Awnings that include signage or message on the awning;
- Refinancing of existing debt or private funding;
- Resurfacing, sealcoating, or striping of parking lots, unless attributed to a larger project;
- Replacement of private sidewalks, unless attributed to a larger project;
- Architectural design fees or other plan preparation costs;
- Village fees (Zoning Entitlement, Building Permits, Tap Fees, etc.).

Schedule for Completion of Project

- All award requests must be submitted and grants approved before any work is started by the applicant. Any work started or completed before Village Board of Trustee (“Board”) approval is at the applicant’s risk.
- Monetary payment of grant awards will be formally issued after all approved improvements are completed and all requested documentation is received and reviewed by the Village to verify completion.
- Grant awards are only valid if all approved projects are completed within **one** (1) year of the date of the award approval. Extensions may only be granted as outlined in Program Administration.



Program Administration

Application and Approval Process

Required submittals with the application:

- Current photos of any portion of the structure which will receive improvements;
- A schematic drawing with enough detail to depict the proposed improvements;
- Signed vendor contract(s) with detailed costs for each proposed improvement (excluding ineligible portions of improvements). All estimated costs must be formatted to the corresponding eligible activity and shall include an itemization of both labor and materials. All contractors must be registered with the Village's Community Development Department before a building permit is issued;
- Consent from the building owner for proposed improvements;
- Completed IRS Form W-9 Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification;
- A narrative as outlined below:
 - Description of proposed work including information about the proposed building materials and methodology for proposed changes.
 - Description of the business and the related industry.
 - Features and advantages of the project and how improvements sought will improve the business and/or the Downtown.
 - Credentials and experience of business owners and/or a business plan.
 - Any unusual or expected difficulties or hardships in making the proposed improvements.

Grant Funding Cycle

Initial applications will be considered and scored within an application window. The initial application window will open on **Monday, November 13, 2023**, with applications being accepted until **December 8, 2023 at 4pm**. Applications may be submitted after this initial window, but would be subject to remaining funds, if available.

Application Schedule and Scoring

Applications will typically be considered in the order in which they are received. However, if application requests exceed the available funding in any grant cycle, not all requests can be funded. In these instances, a scoring mechanism will be utilized to evaluate projects based on the business type, targeted funding activities, and grant program evaluation criteria. Scoring parameters will be published with the grant cycle application materials to aid applicants in project planning. The Village Board may elect on an annual basis to prioritize scoring for targeted activities or establish minimum scores for grant awards. A sample scorecard for Tier 1 is attached as Exhibit C for reference, and may be modified as necessary.

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Approval Procedure. Upon receipt of an application, Village staff will review the application to determine eligibility and compliance with applicable Commercial Design and Main Street Guidelines, Stormwater, Building, Zoning, and Fire Codes and notify the applicant as to the eligibility of the project.

- If it is determined that the project is eligible and **does not require** further zoning approvals, the application will be reviewed by the Westmont Economic Development Partnership (WEDP). WEDP will then forward a recommendation to the Village Board of Trustees for their review and final decision. Applicants will be notified of the WEDP recommendation and invited to present their project to the Board of Trustees.
- If it is determined that the project is eligible and **requires** further zoning approvals from the Planning and Zoning Commission (such as a Site and Landscape Plan or Special Use approvals), the applicant will be notified and provided the necessary information and documents for submitting the application for zoning review and approval. The applicant must submit the zoning approval application within 30 days of notification or the DIP application will be considered null and void. The Planning and Zoning Commission will review the zoning application and forward its recommendation regarding the zoning and DIP applications to the Board of Trustees for their review and final decision.
- If it is determined that the project is not eligible for DIP funding, the applicant will be notified and informed of the reasons for being ineligible. Resubmittals may be submitted but will only be considered if sufficient funds are available after review of other applications received during the initial application window.
- An application will not be considered filed until all documents and all necessary information has been received. An applicant may resubmit but if not received within the initial application window, the application will only be considered if there are remaining funds available.

The authority to approve grant awards resides with the Village Board. Applications that meet the minimum standards will be presented by Community Development staff to the Village Board with a summary of the request, analysis of eligible activities, cost estimates and scorecard if applicable. The determination of eligibility and priority for assistance is at the discretion of the Village Board and is subject to funds availability.

Projects and funded activities must be constructed as presented for approvals. Minor changes to approved plans may be processed administratively by Community Development staff, and shall not be as a result of value engineering, or the elimination of a funded activity. Any change request not administratively approved will be referred to the Village Board, and may result in a revocation of the grant award if the project has changed significantly.

Funding of Past Projects: If there are funds remaining after the initial application process, the Village will consider funding projects that were completed after conclusion of the previous incentive program (Spring, 2020) and commencement of the 2023-24 program. Funding of past projects will be limited to \$5000 for facade improvements and \$3000 for life safety improvements.

Frequency of Applications. The limitation on the frequency or how often an owner or business can submit an application for the same property is three (3) years. A second round of funding within the three (3) period may occur if the Village determines that the project has merit in

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accordance with the evaluation criteria and only if excess funds are available after new applications are considered.

Project Completion: Projects are required to start within three (3) months of approval and shall be completed within one (1) year of approval. Written requests for time extensions may be approved by the Community Development Director if unforeseen problems occur, such as supply chain delays, contractor delays, or other issues outside the control of the applicant. In the event the Director does not approve the extension, the applicant may appeal such a decision to the Village Board.

Application Evaluation Criteria

All applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria. Projects will be thoroughly assessed to these standards. In the event any projects result in a tie score, each application will be scored based on the attached Exhibit C.

1. Alignment with Policy Goals

- The proposed project should align with the goals of enhancing the sales tax and real estate tax base for the Village, creating a more attractive retail environment, contributing to the viability of the Downtown, and maintaining safe buildings.
- Businesses that do not directly contribute to the sales tax base of the Village may be approved for grant funding if they otherwise create the foot traffic necessary to support the retail and restaurant mix in the Downtown.
- The project should be consistent with and implement the recommendations contained in the Village of Westmont Commercial Area Design guidelines for Downtown. The previous Main Street Downtown Design Guidelines can be used as a supplementary document, as applicable.

2. Project Design

- The project should be well-planned and ready for implementation, with a clear description of the project's scope and cost.
- The project should be feasible and address any relevant codes, regulations, and guidelines.
- The project costs should be realistic and clearly described, with a breakdown of expenses and a clear explanation of how the grant funds will be used.

3. Project Impact/Need

- The project should respond to a recognized need or opportunity.
- The project should have substantial and lasting benefits, such as improving the overall appearance of the area, improving parking or access to parking areas, or creating jobs.
- Projects should improve the ability of owners to lease properties, with preference given to improvements to vacant buildings that will remain with the building and projects that have secured tenant leases.

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Required Documentation for Award Payment

- Once work is completed, the applicant shall submit copies of paid invoices from all contractors, proof of payment (copies of canceled checks and/or credit card receipts), and all required documentation verifying that work was completed in accordance with the grant award application.
- The Community Development Department, together with all relevant Village departments, shall review the completed project to ensure that work was performed as outlined in the application and in conformance with all applicable Village codes and regulations.
- Once all reviews are completed and the project approved, the grant award check will be delivered to the applicant. Final grant award will be issued based on actual cost of eligible activity improvements, not to exceed initial grant funding award.

Contact Information

For more information, contact:

Village of Westmont Community Development Department
31 West Quincy Street
Westmont, IL 60559

Attention: Joseph Hennerfeind
jhennerfeind@westmont.il.gov
(630) 981-6268



Exhibit A: CBF TIF and Zoning Districts

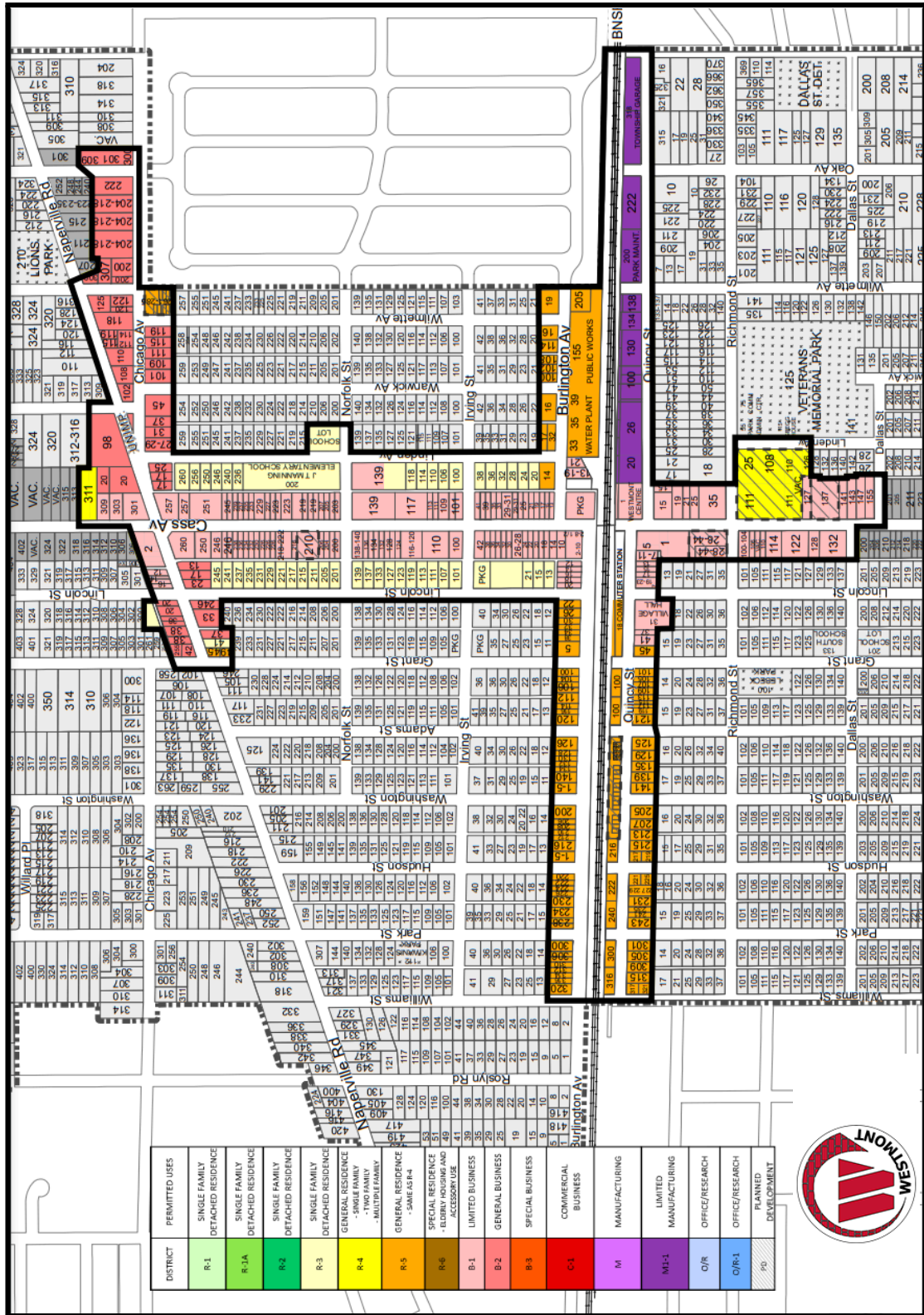


Exhibit C: Tier 1 Scorecard

PROJECT SCORE			
BUSINESS TYPE			
New Restaurant / Retail	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	CHECK ONE
Restaurant / Retail Retention	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Vanilla Box Vacant Space	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Office	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Service	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>Fills historically vacant space (vacant more than 1 year)</i>	1 <small>BONUS</small>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
BUSINESS TYPE SUBTOTAL			
CORE ACTIVITIES			
Facade Improvements	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	MARK ALL APPLICABLE
<i>Exterior Lighting*</i>	0.5	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>Brick / Stone*</i>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>Architectural Detailing*</i>	1.5	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Fire Life Safety	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>Includes water line installation to east side of Cass*</i>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	
ADA	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	
CORE ACTIVITIES SUBTOTAL			
<i>add subtotals</i>			
PROJECT SCORE TOTAL			
<i>*Incentive activities must be verified to meet minimum standards.</i>			





**Village of Westmont
2024 Downtown Incentive Program Application**

1	APPLICANT INFORMATION			
	FULL NAME	Last:	First:	
	BUSINESS CORP / LLC / DBA	CORP / LLC / DBA:		
	ADDRESS	Number, Street and Unit:		
		City:	State:	Zip Code:
	PHONE	Main:	Ext:	Cell:
	EMAIL			
	PROPERTY OWNER INFORMATION (when not Applicant)			
	FULL NAME	Last:	First:	
	BUSINESS CORP / LLC / DBA	CORP / LLC / DBA:		
ADDRESS	Number, Street and Unit:			
	City:	State:	Zip Code:	
PHONE	Main:	Ext:	Cell:	
EMAIL				
PROPERTY INFORMATION				
PROPERTY ADDRESS				
PIN(s)				
ZONING DISTRICT*	B1	B2	M1	Other:
*The B1 District is a targeted priority for grant funding; however, existing commercial and mixed-use properties within the Business District TIF are eligible to apply.				
			Central	

2	FUNDABLE ACTIVITIES		Eligible Match %	
	Facade Improvements	<input type="checkbox"/>	20%	<i>base percentage match</i>
	<i>Exterior Lighting</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	+5%	<i>add Bonus Incentive*</i>
	<i>Brick/Stone</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	+10%	<i>add Bonus Incentive*</i>
	<i>Architectural Detail</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	+15%	<i>add Bonus Incentive*</i>
	TOTAL REQUESTED MATCH % (sum of all)			BOX1 <i>total match with incentives (max 50%)</i>
	Signage	<input type="checkbox"/>	10%	<i>base percentage match</i>
	<i>Backlit Wall</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	+10%	<i>add Bonus Incentive*</i>
	<i>Projecting</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	+10%	<i>add Bonus Incentive*</i>
	TOTAL REQUESTED MATCH % (sum of all)			BOX2 <i>total match with incentives (max 30%)</i>
ADA Accessibility (exterior)	<input type="checkbox"/>	25%	<i>base percentage match</i>	
TOTAL REQUESTED MATCH %		25%	<i>no available incentives (max 25%)</i>	
Fire Life Safety	<input type="checkbox"/>	25%	<i>base percentage match</i>	
<i>Installation (Properties located on east side of Cass)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	+25%	<i>add Bonus Incentive*</i>	
TOTAL REQUESTED MATCH % (sum of all)			BOX4 <i>total match with incentives (max 50%)</i>	
*Incentive activities must be verified to meet minimum standards.				

3	SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS	Required submittals with the application:		
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Current photos of any portion of the structure which will receive improvements;	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	A schematic drawing with enough detail to depict the proposed improvements, and can include:	
			<input type="checkbox"/>	Site Plans when exterior site work is performed;
			<input type="checkbox"/>	Building Plans and Elevations for exterior building improvements;
			<input type="checkbox"/>	Schematic Plans for infrastructure when necessary;
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Signage Plans and Elevations.
			Signed vendor contract(s) with detailed costs for each proposed improvement:	
			<input type="checkbox"/>	Exclude or discount any ineligible portions of improvements;
			<input type="checkbox"/>	All estimated costs must be formatted to the corresponding eligible activity and shall include an itemization of both labor and materials;
			<input type="checkbox"/>	Permits must be obtained when applicable; permit fees may not be included in project estimates;
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All contractors must be registered with the Village's Community Development Department before a building permit is issued;
			<input type="checkbox"/>	All construction estimates will be evaluated for accuracy in accordance with Chapter 18, Sec. 18-487(1)(b).
			If a Tenant:	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Consent from the building owner for proposed improvements;
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Proof of an executed lease agreement with at least a 3 year duration remaining.		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Completed IRS Form W-9 Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification;			
<input type="checkbox"/>	A narrative as outlined below:			
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Description of proposed work including information about the proposed building materials and methodology for proposed changes.		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Description of the business and the related industry.		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Features and advantages of the project and how improvements sought will improve the business and/or the Downtown.		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Credentials and experience of business owners and/or a business plan.		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Any unusual or expected difficulties or hardships in making the proposed improvements.		

4	\$ REQUEST	ELIGIBLE ACTIVITY	\$ Amount (from Cost Estimates)	multiply	% percentage match	TOTAL \$ Requested*
		Facade Improvements		X	BOX1	
		Signage		X	BOX2	
		ADA Accessibility		X	0.25	
		Fire Life Safety		X	BOX4	
		= Total MATCH Requested* (subject to maximum grant limits)				

5	SIGNATURES	PRINTED NAME OF APPLICANT		
		SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT		
		DATE		
		PRINTED NAME OF PROPERTY OWNER (when not Applicant)		
		SIGNATURE OF PROPERTY OWNER		
		DATE		