

# DDA grant program helps spruce up storefronts

Leslie Bethel | January 17, 2018



*The Downtown Development Authority (DDA) is a tax-funded district in downtown Glenwood Springs. Revenues earmarked to the DDA are used exclusively for downtown vitalization. The board wishes to continue to share our progress and projects in the works with a monthly article, this is the fourth edition.*

In 2018, the DDA has visionary and transformational projects in the planning process: Finishing the details on and around the Grand Avenue Bridge, confluence planning, Seventh Street and under bridge improvements, infill lot redevelopment and Sixth Street corridor and roundabout planning and landscape installation.

These projects are large undertakings and take years to raise funds, develop partners and execute.

I wanted to highlight one of our ongoing programs that is accessible year-round and offers tangible benefits to the look and feel of downtown, the Façade Improvement Grant Program. All businesses within DDA boundaries are encouraged to apply.

The DDA's Façade Improvement Program is designed to enhance the quality and vitality of downtown Glenwood Springs. Each calendar year, the DDA offers financial assistance to businesses in the district to identify exterior building projects that enhance and update their building façades. Even simple changes are welcome, such as the removal of nonhistoric materials, repairs, or a new paint job that calls attention to the building's original architectural details signal positive change and often stimulate similar improvements in neighboring buildings.

The end goal of the Façade Improvement Program is to strengthen our locally owned businesses, while enhancing the overall downtown street environment, which helps keep dollars in the local economy and ultimately creates an inviting, healthy and attractive downtown.

Matching grants for financial assistance are awarded chronologically as the applications are received, on a "first come, first served" basis.

## **FUNDING**

Applications are reviewed for funding prior to work being done in sums between \$500 and \$5,000. Businesses are eligible for one grant per calendar year. If multiple businesses exist within one property, each business is eligible for grant funds. In addition, the property owners and business owners may also apply separately for grants. Our total annual budget for the Façade Grant Program is \$25,000.

## **MATCHING REQUIREMENTS AND FUNDING PROCESS — SKIN IN THE GAME**

The program, within the funding limitations set forth above, awards up to one half of the total approved projects costs. Actual amounts awarded may be less than amounts requested by the applicant. The total project cost will be evidenced by paid invoices.

Payment will be made in the form of reimbursement to the awarded business following completion of the project and final inspection.



## **APPLICATION PROCESS**

Applicants are encouraged to get conceptual approval by the DDA board before submitting an application. This can be done by submitting renderings, or a conceptual plan to the DDA board at its monthly meeting, which occurs on the third Tuesday of each month. All projects must also complete the necessary review and approvals associated with construction from the city of Glenwood Springs.

Applicants are requested to submit a Façade Improvement Grant Application and Grant Reimbursement Agreement. Applicants will be notified in advance of the meeting day, time and location during which the application will be reviewed.

The DDA's Façade Grant Program is designed to assist property and business owners in re-energizing the commercial façades of their properties. The hope is to create a positive visual impact, stimulating private investment, and complementing other community development efforts.

Recent Façade Improvement Grant recipients include Treadz and Book Train.

*Leslie Bethel is executive director of the Downtown Development Authority. You can follow the DDA on Instagram (@downtownglenwoodsprings) and Facebook. Early design conceptual sketches are periodically posted on Facebook and Instagram.*

<https://www.postindependent.com/news/local/dda-grant-program-helps-spruce-up-storefronts/>