



**BUILDING IMPROVEMENT AND
DESIGN & ENGINEERING
GRANT APPLICATION
VILLAGE OF MORTON, ILLINOIS**



The Building Improvement and the Design & Engineering Grant Programs of the Village of Morton make funds available to business owners and property owners located within the Morton Business District for the rehabilitation of commercially-zoned buildings located within the District. The goal of these programs is to promote commercial redevelopment activities within the District, improve the aesthetic elements of commercially-zoned buildings located within the District, and enhance the overall business landscape, thereby supporting the quality of life for residents of the community.

The Programs are part of the Village's economic development efforts and are administered by the Village through its Business District Development and Redevelopment Commission. The funds to support these programs are derived from the Business District Sales Tax of .25% which is charged on retail sales within the Business District.

The decision to fund a project is made by the Village Board of Trustees based upon the recommendation of the Commission. The Commission recommends applications based on the merits of the proposed project and the applicability to the Program's requirements.

The grant award cycle begins May 1 and runs through April 30 each year. Projects will be evaluated for funding based upon the date of receipt of the completed application and the availability of funds in the grant award cycle.

This application can be utilized to apply for one, or both, of the project needs.

STEP ONE – INITIAL ELIGIBILITY

Indicate below if you are applying for the Building Improvement Grant, the Design & Engineering Grant, or both.

Building Improvement Grant

Design & Engineering Grant

Basic Eligibility Checklist

5-Year Requirement:

Have you owned this property (based on parcel #) for 5 years or more? If so, have you received funding through this grant program in the past 5 years? *If both questions are yes, you are ineligible to receive funding until the 5-year period has passed.*

Other Initial Eligibility Requirements Which Must Be Met for Eligibility:

1. The property must be located within the Village of Morton Business District. (map shown in this document and is also available on our website at www.morton-il.gov.)
2. The project components must be eligible. (list of excluded items shown on page 10)
3. The project cost must be expected to exceed \$1,000.
4. You must be the owner of the property or its tenant with written consent of the owner.
5. The commercial usage of the building must be 51% or greater of the total square footage, unless it meets both of the following exceptions:
 - a. The business employs at least 3 full-time equivalent employees (30 or more hours per week).
 - b. The parcel must be zoned for commercial use.

If all of the other initial eligibility requirements are met, you may be eligible for the program and you should complete the remainder of this application.

APPLICATION FEE

A fee of \$250.00 must be submitted with this application. This fee will be returned if 1) the grant is not approved, or 2) the grant is approved and the work is completed within the allotted time frame. Make checks payable to the Village of Morton.

APPLICATION TIMELINE

Funds for the Building Improvement Program are approved on a first come, first served basis. The funds are allocated based on the Village fiscal year beginning May 1 and ending April 30 of the following year.

➤ SUBMIT APPLICATION

- By the 15th of the month at 5:00 pm to the Village Hall at 120 N. Main. If the 15th falls on a weekend or holiday, submission is required on the prior business day.
- Contact the Village Administrator at 309-266-5361, extension 284, to arrange for an in-person, 5 to 10 - minute project overview presentation for the Business District Development and Redevelopment Commission at their next regularly scheduled meeting. Meetings are normally held on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 4:00 pm at the Morton Police Station Training Room.
- Following presentation by application Commissioners score the application and forward a recommendation to the Village Board of Trustees.

➤ NOTIFICATION OF APPROVAL OR DENIAL

- Applicant should be notified by mail or email of a decision by 60 days from presentation date.

➤ BEGINNING PROJECT

- Applicant must not begin the portion of their project for which grant funds are requested until they receive a notice of approval. All work for which grant funds are awarded must be completed within one year of the date of the notice of approval.

➤ REIMBURSEMENT

- Following completion, the applicant must provide the following to the Commission for approval of the reimbursement of the amount granted:
 - Invoices from contractor(s) which completed work. If project completed by owner, invoices for materials purchased.
 - Proof of payment of invoices, in the form of paid receipts, cancelled checks or credit card statements.
 - Photographs of the completed project.
 - Upon receipt of the documents listed in item #5, the request for reimbursement will be presented at the next Business District Commission meeting for approval.
 - If approved, the Village will issue payment to the project owner within 30 days.

STEP TWO – APPLICANT & PROJECT INFORMATION

1. Applicant: (please print clearly)

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Email: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Address of Property: _____

If applicant is not the owner of the property, Section 2 must be completed and signed by the property owner.

2. Owner of Property (if same as Applicant, read the bottom paragraph and sign below)

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Email: _____

Telephone Number: _____

I certify that as the owner of the property located at:

I agree to and authorize the Applicant to apply for a grant under the Building Improvement Grant Program and to perform the proposed exterior work described in this application. I further certify that I am current on any and all property tax and mortgage payments.

Signature of Property Owner

Date

Printed Name of Property Owner

3. Subject Property

Address: _____

Property Index Number (PIN): _____

Date of Original Construction: _____

Current Use of Property: _____

Total Square Footage of Location: _____ Commercial Use Square Footage: _____
(square footage is calculated by multiplying the width times the length of a space)

Proposed Use of Property (If Different Than Current Use of Property):

4. If Applicant Is Not the Property Owner, Does Applicant Have a Lease?

Yes No(circle one)

If Yes, what is the expiration date of the lease? _____

5. Description of Project

Provide an overall description of the proposed exterior work for this project.
Use additional paper if required.

STEP THREE – PROJECT COST

Required – submit **2** current (dated within 60 days of application) estimates from qualified contractors for all work to be performed.

Specifications for Estimates:

1. Estimates must be from companies normally engaged in the area of work to be performed.
2. If the company providing the estimate is owned by the applicant or entity, or a relative thereof, the work will be considered to be self-performed. See below for self-performed work.
3. Estimates need to be detailed, including the cost of each segment of the project. If a segment isn't considered eligible, the cost needs to be identified. If a portion of the project isn't eligible and isn't able to be separated from the cost of the entire project, the entire project application *will be denied*.
4. If the project is related to a franchise-mandated update and the franchisor specifies the contractor to be used then only that contractor's estimate is required. In all other cases, failure to provide 2 estimates will be cause for denial.
5. Estimates from Morton businesses are encouraged.

Self-performed work – If the project, or portion thereof, is to be completed utilizing the labor of the applicant owner of the business, its employees, or any related entity, the grant will reimburse the cost of materials only.

Itemized list of project segments – List below the individual segments of the project and the costs from the estimates included. Itemized estimates are essential in case there are ineligible item(s) included. If so, an itemized estimate will allow us to separate those costs. Without itemization the entire application could be denied due to the ineligible item(s).

	Line Item	\$ Estimate #1	\$ Estimate #2
a.			
b.			
c.			
d.			
e.			
f.			
g.			

Include Photographs of the Existing Building – Please attach photographs which demonstrate the need for proposed improvements.

Include a Sketch of the Proposed Conceptual Design – Please attach a drawing of the proposed improvements.

Description of Color and Material Samples – Describe below the colors to be used or attach samples.

STEP FOUR – GRANT INFORMATION

Amount of Grant Funds Requested:

\$ _____ Building Improvement Grant (B.I.G.)

\$ _____ Architectural, Design, or Engineering Services (A.D.E.)

Building Improvement Grants for eligible costs may be awarded to applicants on a reimbursement basis for not more than fifty percent (50%) of the total project cost or \$10,000.00, whichever is less.

Architectural, Design and Engineering Grants may be awarded to eligible applicants for eligible projects on a reimbursement basis for not more than fifty percent (50%) of the total project cost or \$5,000.00, whichever is less.

Grant Amount if property purchased within 5 years of receipt of grant by prior owner:	B.I.G.	A.D.E.
One year from receipt	\$2,000	\$1,000
Two years from previous receipt	\$4,000	\$2,000
Three years from previous receipt	\$6,000	\$3,000
Four years from previous receipt	\$8,000	\$4,000

What is the Estimated Time Necessary to Complete the Project?

Start date: _____

Completion date: _____

The work for which grant funds are awarded is required to be commenced following notice of approval and completed within 12 months of the date the applicant is notified of the approval of the grant application.

Describe how the Proposed Project is to be Financed:

Will the Proposed Exterior Work Be Performed if the Grant Is Not Awarded?

Yes No

Explain Your Answer:

Past Improvements

To the best of your knowledge, describe any past efforts to improve the exterior of the building which has been performed within the past ten (10) years:

STEP FIVE – GRANT PROCESS

Commencement and Completion of Work

If this application is approved by the Village Board of Trustees, the applicant will receive a Notice of Approval from the Village. Any work that is included in the Grant Application, whether funded by the Village or the Applicant, must not commence prior to the receipt of the notice of approval from the Village. If grant funds are requested for work which is a portion of a larger project, the project may permissibly commence prior to receipt of the notice of approval from the Village, but the portion of the project for which grant funds are required may not have started or commenced prior to the receipt of the notice of approval from the Village.

The applicant acknowledges the following:

- a. They are responsible for selecting the firms and contractors who will complete the work.
- b. They are responsible for financing all of the work.
- c. All work will be performed in compliance with the Policies and Procedures of the Building Improvement Grant Program.
- d. All work will comply with all applicable Village codes, policies, and procedures.
- e. The building and the activities within the building must be in compliance with all applicable Village codes, policies, and procedures.
- f. The applicant is responsible for applying for and obtaining any and all licenses and permits necessary to perform the work.

The date of the Notice of Approval triggers the following deadlines:

- The project must be completed within one (1) calendar year from the date that the Notice of Approval is issued.
- Documentation stated below must be provided to the Village within 18 months in order to receive reimbursement.

Failure to meet these deadlines shall result in the forfeiture of the grant award by the Applicant. Extensions of these deadlines may be granted by the Commission, at their sole discretion, due to extenuating circumstances.

Disbursement of Funds

Upon completion of the project, the Applicant must request reimbursement.

Required for reimbursement:

- Photographs of the completed project
- Itemized bills, invoices, or statements
- Proof of payment in the form of copies of cancelled checks and/or receipts

Process for reimbursement:

- Items stated above submitted prior to the end of the month
- Review and approval of the request for reimbursement by the Commission at its next regular meeting
- Approval of payment by the Village Board
- Check released for payment

Maintenance of Completed Improvements

The applicant agrees to reasonably maintain the improvements funded by the Program for a period of at least five (5) years following completion of the work. Failure to maintain improvements in good order or to repair such improvements following a 30-day notice by the Village shall require the Applicant to reimburse the Village the amount of the grant award.

Permission to Use Photographs of the Project “Before” and “After” Completion

The applicant agrees to allow the Village of Morton to use the photographs provided, and those which are taken by the Village independently, of the project site before and after renovations are completed. These photographs will be utilized solely for the promotion of the Building Improvement Grant Program.

Grant Application Signatures:

The undersigned certifies that all of the information provided in this application, and all of the supporting documentation is true and complete to the best of the applicant's knowledge and belief and that the applicant will abide by all of the provisions of the Building Improvement Grant Program policies and procedures.

If the applicant is not an individual, the undersigned certifies that he/she is a duly-authorized representative of the applying entity with the authority to legally bind and commit the entity.

Signature of Applicant or
Applicant's Authorized Representative

Printed Name of Applicant or
Applicant's Authorized Representative

Title (If Applicant Is Not an Individual)

Date

Non-Eligible Items for Grant

Items not eligible for funding under this Program include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Any improvements performed or in progress prior to notification of approval.
2. Labor for any project work performed by the applicant, by the employees of a business owned by the applicant, or related party. Only materials can be reimbursed for self-performed work.
3. Work to be performed on the interior of a building, unless it is a code required improvement that is part of an expansion or new location.
4. Fencing.
5. Landscaping which is planted in containers or otherwise moveable.
6. New construction or improvements to building less than ten years old, except for demolition costs to prepare site for new construction which is evidenced by a building permit for the new construction, signage or code enforcement requirements that is part of an expansion or new location.
7. Parking lots repairs, including any areas which receive motorized traffic.
8. Sidewalk repairs, which are defined by use as a pedestrian right of way. This would not include direct customer access to your location.
9. Tools or equipment (either purchased or rented).
10. Digital signage is not eligible if the location is within the downtown district, as indicated on the map on the following page. It is eligible in all other areas of the Business District.
11. Improvements which are considered maintenance or upkeep will be evaluated on a case by case basis and must be part of a larger overall project.

Building Improvement Grant Standards

All improvements must comply with the Village of Morton Municipal Code (a copy of which is available on our website www.morton-il.gov)

FINAL CHECKLIST

Prior to submitting your application, please be sure the following are completed and included:

- Review of the Project with the Planning & Zoning Officer, Village of Morton
- All fields completed on form
- \$250 application fee included
- Two estimates for work to be completed included
- Photographs of the Existing Building included
- Sketch of the Proposed Design included

