



City of Alpena Downtown Development Authority

DOWNTOWN RETAIL RECRUITMENT GRANT  
2021

PROGRAM INFORMATION & GUIDELINES

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Anne Gentry, Executive Director

City of Alpena Downtown Development Authority  
DOWNTOWN RETAIL RECRUITMENT GRANT—PROGRAM GUIDELINES

**1. Program Background**

The City of Alpena Downtown Development Authority (the “DDA”) established its Retail Recruitment Program to ***encourage existing established businesses to relocate or expand into the Downtown Alpena DDA district.*** The program offers grants up to \$10,000 per business that can be used towards eligible expenses such as capital improvements, moving costs, signage, rent differential, and utility switchovers to their new location in Downtown Alpena. Businesses must have been established for five or more years with a proven track record of success to be eligible for the program. Preference will be given to businesses that add to the diversity of businesses located in Downtown Alpena and fall in categories that align with the Alpena DDA’s strategic priorities. In its 2017 Strategic Plan & Market Analysis and 2004 Development Plan No. 1 & Tax Increment Financing Plan No. 1, the Alpena DDA identified establishing a Business Recruitment process as a strategic priority to recruit diverse and viable businesses to the downtown district.

Please note that applicants must complete the application process before incurring eligible expenses through the Recruitment Grant program. Any expenses incurred before a Grant Agreement is executed will be ineligible for reimbursement through the grant program.

**2. Available Awards**

The DDA has committed a total of \$40,000 from its Economic Development Fund to the program, with a maximum grant award of \$10,000 per business. Applications will be reviewed, and funds will be awarded on a rolling basis.

**3. Eligibility Requirements**

**3.1 Type of Business**

Preference will be given to businesses that fall in the categories listed below:

- Entertainment / Family
- Apparel & Shoes
- Sporting Goods
- Bakery / Coffee Shop
- Ice Cream, Candy, Fudge, Popcorn Shop
- Full Service / Fine Dining, Grab and Go Lunch Stop, Bar, Craft Beer
- Food Store, Organic Foods & Gourmet Goods
- Convenience Store
- Home Goods & Gift Store
- Non-Chain/ Non-Franchised Businesses

### ***3.2 Years of Operation***

Businesses must have been established and in operation for a minimum of five years.

### ***3.3 Downtown Alpena Location***

Businesses must be relocating or expanding into a property that is located within the legal boundary of the Alpena DDA. Business must either be purchasing property or be entering into a lease with a minimum of three years.

### ***3.4 Hours of Operation***

Business must remain open and accessible to the public at a minimum of 48 hours per week unless an exception is sought.

## **4. Eligible Expenses**

Businesses may apply for up to \$10,000 in funding to contribute to the following eligible expenses:

- Moving costs, including movers and moving supplies
- Costs to change over or add utilities in new location
- Signage and awnings for new location (must be reviewed by the DDA Design & Beautification committee)
- Leasehold / capital improvements in new location, including construction costs and fixtures
- Rent differential (up to 24 months based upon same square footage as site being vacated). If business is expanding into the Alpena market, this element does not apply.
- Permit fees

Please note that if awarded funding, the reimbursement amount will be based on receipts submitted.

## **5. Application Process**

### ***5.1 Pre-Application Meeting***

The applicant should review all Program Guidelines to ensure eligibility before beginning the application process. After reviewing all program documents, interested applicants must contact the DDA Executive Director before beginning the application. The prospective applicant may be asked to set up a time with the Executive Director to review the program guidelines and discuss the business's expansion or relocation into Downtown Alpena. The Executive Director may provide the prospective applicant as to whether the proposed project may fit within the guidelines of the program. Any such information provided by the Executive Director and any opinions or suggestions that may be conveyed as to suitability of the project are preliminary only and are not binding on the Economic Development committee or DDA and should not be relied upon by the applicant as a final determination of award status.

At the Pre-Application Meeting if it seems that the proposed project may fit within the guidelines of the program, the potential applicant will be encouraged to complete the application and return it with the required additional materials for review.

### **5.2 Application Contents**

An application for the program must include all of the following:

- Downtown Retail Recruitment Application Form
- Retail Recruitment Grant- Expenses Worksheet
- A copy of lease agreement (minimum 3 years) or proof of purchase of property
- Two years of Income Statement projections
- Last three years of business income statements and most recent balance sheet
- Renderings, mock-ups, or architectural plans for new location
- Business plan

### **5.3 Submission of Application**

The application and all required materials must be submitted to the DDA Executive Director in either print or digital form. Applications are reviewed on a rolling basis. Applicants are encouraged to submit materials as soon as completed.

## **6. Review Process**

### **6.1 Time of Review**

Applications are reviewed on a rolling basis and reviewed by the DDA Economic Development Committee, which meets regularly on the third Friday of the month. All applications will be reviewed at the regularly scheduled meeting of the committee. A special meeting of the committee may be held to review applications at the committee's discretion.

### **6.2 Substantive Criteria**

The DDA Economic Development Committee will screen each application based on the following criteria before making a recommendation regarding the application to the DDA Board of Directors:

- Completeness of application
- Type of business (preference will be given to businesses that add to the diversity of businesses downtown and align with the DDA's strategic priorities)
- Business's history and experience
- Viability of expansion into Downtown Alpena
- Proposed location in Downtown Alpena (visibility and plans for improvement)
- Economic viability of business' expansion or relocation based on financial information submitted and reviewed by the committee

### **6.3 Notification of Recommendation**

The applicant will be notified in writing of the Economic Development Committee's recommendation regarding the requested grant to the DDA Board of Directors. The applicant will also be notified of the date, time, and location of the DDA Board of Directors meeting at which the committee's recommendation regarding the application will be discussed. The applicant will be invited to attend the meeting and address the Board of Directors regarding their application. The committee may postpone a recommendation on an application if additional information is requested or the application is incomplete.

### **6.4 Board of Directors Approval**

After the Economic Development Committee makes a recommendation regarding the application, the recommendation will be placed on the next DDA Board of Directors meeting agenda. The applicant will be invited to attend the meeting and address the Board of Directors regarding their application. The DDA Board meets regularly on the first Tuesday of the month at 3:00 pm. The applicant will be notified in writing of the DDA Board of Directors decision regarding their application.

### **6.5 Conflict of Interest**

Members of the DDA Board of Directors or any of its committees who are in a position to influence decisions regarding grants awarded under this program shall not have a financial interest, either directly or indirectly, in any person or entity applying for a grant through this program, unless that interest has been fully disclosed in writing and the board member/committee member involved has removed him/herself from the decision-making process, including all deliberations. For purposes of this provision, "financial interest" includes any ownership interest, stock, membership interest, partnership interest, lease, financial obligation, right or option to purchase, or share in profits, or employment relationship by the board member/committee member or a family member of such board member/committee member with the person or entity applying for the grant. "Family Member" includes the following relatives of the Board Member or Committee member: spouse, children, spouse(s) of children; parent(s)/guardian(s); sisters and brothers of self or spouse; and the spouse(s) of brothers and sisters of self or spouse, nieces, and nephews of self or spouse. All laws of the State of Michigan and all policies of the City of Alpena with respect to Conflicts of Interest shall apply to the interpretation of this provision.

## **7. Denial of Applications**

Following the recommendation of the denial of an application by the Economic Development committee, the DDA Executive Director shall so notify the applicant in writing, stating reasons for the recommendation as communicated by members of the Committee, and including, if applicable:

- Requests for additional documents or other information which, if submitted by the applicant, may result in a grant award based on a future application; or
- Suggestions as to changes in the proposed application which may result in a grant award based on a future application.

## **8. Post Award Process**

### **8.1 Grant Agreement**

Upon approval of the grant award by the DDA Board of Directors, the applicant will be notified in writing and will be sent a Grant Agreement that will need to be signed by the applicant before relocation expenses can be incurred. Any expenses incurred before the Grant Agreement is executed will be ineligible for reimbursement through the grant program.

### **8.2 Post-Award Amendments to Project**

Following the award of a DDA Recruitment Grant, if the applicant desires to make any changes or modifications from what was approved in their application, the applicant must submit to the Economic Development Committee for review:

- Written description of the changes proposed
- Any updated renderings, mock-ups, or architectural plans for new location

NOTE: Failure to obtain approval for any changes in relocation activities after awarding of the original grant will result in the disqualification of the applicant from the program and the loss of the entire grant funding.

### **8.3 Meeting with Committee**

If awarded funds, the applicant will be required to meet with the DDA Economic Development Committee or its designee(s) twice in the first year and once a year for the two subsequent years.

## **9. Distribution of Grant Funds**

### **9.1 Payment Request**

The applicant may request payment of funds in one payment upon completion of relocation *or* request up to three reimbursement payments as relocation is occurring. To request payment of funds the applicant must submit the following to the DDA Executive Director:

- Affidavit that all work completed and expenses incurred match what was included in the submitted application
- All receipts from eligible expenses seeking to be reimbursed

### **9.2 Compliance with Approved Application**

If all submitted documentation is in compliance with applicant's approved application and the program parameters, the DDA Executive Director will request a reimbursement check to be issued. Checks will be issued within 30 days of request.

### **9.3 Non-Compliance**

If any of the relocation activities are found to be in non-compliance with the approved application or the program requirements, the applicant will be ineligible to receive grant funding or liable to pay back grant funding already received.

### **9.4 Final Report**

Once relocation is complete, the applicant must complete a Final Report and submit to the DDA Executive Director for review before final payment is issued. If applicant has requested reimbursement during the relocation process, 25% of grant award will be withheld until the Final Report is submitted.



**City of Alpena Downtown Development Authority**

**Downtown Recruitment Application**

Applicant Information

Application Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Business/Industry: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Role at Business: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Amount Requested (maximum \$10,000): \_\_\_\_\_

Total Project Cost (capital investment): \_\_\_\_\_

Brief description of what funds will be used for (please see Program Guidelines for eligible expenses):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Anticipated Timeline (estimated start and end dates): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Business Information

How long has your business been established? \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe your business, including products and services offered and a brief history of operations.

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\_\_\_\_\_

Current Primary Business Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please list any additional locations: \_\_\_\_\_

Downtown Alpena Property Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you plan on purchasing or leasing the property? \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Landlord (if leasing): \_\_\_\_\_

Current number of employees: \_\_\_\_\_ Jobs created with new location: \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated hours of operation in new location: \_\_\_\_\_

Why are you interested in re-locating or expanding your business into Downtown Alpena?

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How do you plan on marketing your new location? \_\_\_\_\_

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Please describe your current community involvement as a business. \_\_\_\_\_

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#### Additional Materials

The following materials must be included with your application:

- A copy of your lease agreement (minimum 3 years) or proof of purchase of property
- 2 years of Income Statement projections
- Last three years of business income statements and most recent balance sheet
- Renderings, mock-ups, or architectural plans for new location
- Business plan (if opening/expanding business)

Applicant Agreement & Signature

I have read the program requirements and reviewed them with the Executive Director of the Alpena DDA, and I understand that my participation in the Downtown Retail Recruitment Program is contingent upon my full compliance with all requirements. I understand that all grant funds must be used to cover eligible expenses as outlined in the program document and will be reimbursed after submission of receipts. I understand that if awarded funds, I am required to meet with the Economic Development Committee or its designee(s) twice in the first year and once a year for the two subsequent years. My application includes all the materials listed above.

Applicant Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Landlord Signature (if lease) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_