



CITY OF ALPENA DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

DOWNTOWN ALPENA ACTIVATION GRANT

PROGRAM INFORMATION & APPLICATION

City of Alpena Downtown Development Authority

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The City of Alpena Downtown Development Authority (the “DDA”) established its Downtown Alpena Activation Grant to support the **creation and growth of businesses within Downtown Alpena** and **activate underutilized commercial space within the DDA district**. Business owners or property owners are eligible to apply for grant awards up to \$10,000 with a 1:1 cash match. Applications are reviewed on a rolling basis. Funding renews each July 1 and is based on availability as determined by the DDA Board of Directors.

The proposed project should meet at least one of the following goals:

- Support the creation and growth of economically viable businesses located within the DDA district
- Add to the diversity of businesses located within the DDA district
- Activate underutilized commercial space within existing buildings located in the DDA district
- Activate underutilized outdoor space and create additional outdoor dining options within the DDA district

AVAILABLE AWARDS

Each applicant may request up to \$10,000 in funding through the program for eligible expenses that align with the goals of the program. Applicants must demonstrate proof of 1:1 cash match to any award. All grant awards are reimbursed; actual award amount is based on actual receipts submitted for reimbursement.

Eligible expenses incurred before a Grant Application is submitted are ineligible for reimbursement. Any expenses incurred before a Grant Agreement is in place are at the applicant’s own risk. Submission of application does not guarantee a grant award through the program.

ELIGIBILITY

Applicants may be:

- A property owner whose property is located within the DDA district
- An owner of an existing business looking to relocate or expand into the DDA district
- An owner of a new business looking to launch in the DDA district

The following businesses will receive priority for funding:

- Food & Drink: full-service restaurant, farm-to-table restaurant, lunch place, café, breakfast spot, deli, bakery, tasting room
- Food retail: locally owned grocery store, organic market
- Retail storefronts: unique and specialty goods

The following businesses are ineligible to apply for funding:

- Professional offices, including finance, accounting, attorney, real estate, and insurance companies
- Medical related services or offices
- Hair salons

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

Eligible expenses include:

- Interior renovation expenses including:
 - Rehabilitation of floors, walls, and ceilings
 - Mechanical, plumbing, and electrical upgrades
 - Purchase and installation of kitchen or bar equipment
 - Installation of fire suppression systems
- Expenses related to permanent or semi-permanent activation of an outdoor space such as a dining area or beer garden including:
 - Purchase and installation of pavers, patio, or porch
 - Lighting upgrades
 - Electrical upgrades for food trucks
 - Outdoor seating, tables and chairs
- Signage, awnings, and exterior lighting if part of larger request (must abide by all City of Alpena zoning requirements)
- Purchases essential to business start-up or creation, including:
 - Point-of-sale system
 - Display fixtures
 - Furniture for public-facing space

NOTE: Any projects involving construction or renovation may require permits through the City of Alpena. Please reach out to the Planning, Development, Zoning & Building Safety Department at 989-354-1760 before submission of Grant Application to ensure compliance.

APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Pre-Application Meeting

Interested applicants should contact the DDA Executive Director before beginning the application and set up a time to review the program guidelines and discuss the business's creation, expansion, or relocation into Downtown Alpena. Any opinion shared by the Executive Director regarding the suitability for a grant award is not binding and should not be relied upon by the applicant as a final determination of award status before official review has occurred.

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.

2. Prepare & Submit Application

The applicant must submit the following:

- Application Form
 - Narrative Questions
 - Budget Form
- Third-Party Cost Estimates
- Business Plan (if less than 12 months old)
- Proforma income statement (financial projections for business)*

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.

**The DDA Economic Development Committee may request additional financial information before a grant award is determined to ensure the financial viability of the business.*

3. Committee Review

The DDA Economic Development committee will review all submitted applications and make a recommendation on an award. The committee will review each application with regards to the following criteria:

- 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, including:
 - Food & Drink: full-service restaurant, farm-to-table restaurant, lunch place, café, breakfast spot, deli, bakery, tasting room
 - Food retail: locally owned grocery store, organic market
 - Retail storefronts: unique and specialty goods
- Proposed location in Downtown Alpena
 - Preference will be given to sites identified by the DDA as a priority
- Economic viability of business's creation or expansion into Downtown Alpena

4. Board of Directors Approval

All recommendations will be placed on the next DDA Board of Directors meeting agenda. The applicant will be invited to attend the meeting and address the DDA Board regarding their application. The DDA Board meets regularly on the first Tuesday of the month at 3:00 pm.

5. Grant Award & Agreement

Following the approval of an award from the DDA Board, the applicant will be notified in writing. A grant agreement will be sent to the applicant for signature. At this point, any work may begin on the project. Any work completed after the application is submitted and before a grant is determined is at the risk of the applicant.

6. Grant Reimbursement



Projects and improvements funded through the program must be complete within 180 days following written notification of the grant award. A written extension may be specifically requested and approved by the DDA Economic Development Committee.

The applicant may request payment of funds in one payment upon completion of the project OR request up to three reimbursement payments as the project is occurring. To request payment of funds the applicant must submit all receipts (shown as paid by the contractor/vendor) related to the reimbursement requested to the DDA Executive Director. 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.

All required permits issued through the City of Alpena must also be finalized and inspected for reimbursement to be issued. If an applicant fails to receive the appropriate permits for the project through the City, reimbursement will not be issued to the applicant.

COMPLIANCE WITH APPROVED APPLICATION

Following the award of a Downtown Alpena Activation 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
- Updated cost estimates

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.

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.

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.



**DOWNTOWN ALPENA ACTIVATION GRANT
APPLICATION FORM**

Application Date: _____

Business Name: _____

Type of Business: _____

Downtown Alpena Property Address: _____

Will you be leasing or purchasing the property? _____

Landlord name (if leasing): _____

Mailing Address (if different): _____

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

Total Project Cost: _____

Contact Name: _____

Role at Business: _____

Contact Email: _____

Contact Phone: _____

NARRATIVE QUESTIONS

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



2. Please list any previous experience you have with starting or running a business.

3. Why are you interested in locating or expanding your business in Downtown Alpena?

4. What will these grant funds be used for?



5. How will this grant encourage the economic growth of your business?

6. How will this grant activate underutilized commercial space within the DDA?

7. How does your business add to the diversity of businesses within Downtown Alpena?



8. If you are awarded funding, how will you cover costs until grant reimbursement is issued?

BUDGET FORM

Third-party cost estimates must be attached to this application form for consideration. For each vendor/ contractor, please enter below. Add additional lines if needed.

| Contractor/ Vendor | Description | Cost |
|--------------------|---------------------|------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | TOTAL PROJECT COST= | |



ATTACHMENTS

- Grant Application Form
 - Narrative Questions
 - Budget Form
- Corresponding Cost Estimates
- Business Plan (if less than 12 months old)
- Proforma income statement (financial projections for business)*

Please submit all documentation:

In person: DDA Office, 124 E Chisholm St., Alpena, MI 49707

Via email: Anne Gentry, anneg@alpena.mi.us

APPLICANT AGREEMENT & SIGNATURE

I have read the program requirements and reviewed them with the Executive Director of the Alpena DDA. I understand that by submitting this application:

- I am not guaranteed funding through the program
- All grant funds must be used to reimburse eligible expenses as outlined in the program parameters and will be reimbursed after submission of receipts
- Any award is based on actual receipts submitted (up to \$10,000 with 1:1 cash match)
- Any expenses I or my business incurs after submission and before a grant award is determined is at my own risk

Applicant Signature _____ Date _____

Landlord Signature (if lease) _____ Date _____