

A Step-By-Step Guide to the Village of Frankfort

Downtown Retail Grant Program (DRGP)

Review Process Outline

- Applicant contacts the Village of Frankfort Community Development Department for program information, program eligibility, permit requirements and applications.
- Applicant files complete application.
- Village staff reviews application for completeness and program eligibility.
- Village staff determines if Plan Commission or Zoning Board of Appeals (PC/ZBA) review is required based on the application documents.
- Applicant files complete PC/ZBA application. (if applicable)*
- Village staff reviews PC/ZBA application for completeness. (if applicable)*
- Village staff schedules a meeting of the Downtown Retail Grant Review Committee (DRGRC), displays and publishes public notice of the meeting.
- DRGRC holds meeting and evaluates the application.
- DRGRC makes a recommendation for approval / denial which is forwarded to the Village Board for consideration.
- Village Board reviews application and recommendations of the DRGRC.
- Village Board adopts a resolution to approve and authorize project funding.
- Applicant obtains necessary business license, building permits, etc.
- *Business opens and begins operating**
- Applicant files certified reimbursement request form with required attachments.
- Village processes reimbursement check(s) up to approved funding level. (14-30 days)

What recourse do I have if the Village Board denies my application?

1. Amend application to address concerns/comments within 15 days;
2. Appeal the denial to the DRGRC.

How long is the grant application review process?

You should anticipate the review of your grant application to take 30 - 45 days after the application is confirmed as eligible and complete. Extensions may be necessary to accommodate revisions or to process an appeal.

DRGP Eligibility Checklist

- I/We plan to open a new business in Frankfort or plan to expand our existing business located within the H-1 Historic Zoning District by 50%.
- I/We fit the criteria defining “new retail business.” or “expanding retail business” located within the H-1 Historic Zoning District
- The business owner is the applicant and:
 - is the Sole Proprietor.
 - is a Partnership, Corporation or Limited Liability Company and has disclosed its directors, partners, and shareholders or members holding 7.5% or greater interest.
 - holds a majority interest in a Partnership and partners holding 7.5% or greater interest are disclosed.
 - is the individual authorized by corporate resolution to act on this application and the directors and shareholders holding 7.5% or greater interest are disclosed.
 - holds a majority membership in a Limited Liability Company and its members holding 7.5% or greater interest are disclosed.
 - is the managing member of the Limited Liability Company and its members holding 7.5% or greater interest are disclosed.
- The proposed business is located within the H-1 Historic Zoning District.
- I am making a three (3) year commitment to Downtown Frankfort and I understand that grant assistance is repayable in whole or in part if I fail to honor my three-year commitment.
- My business is identified on the *List of Eligible Retail Categories*.
- All itemized project activities are *Eligible Uses*.
- The requested grant funding does not exceed \$10,000.
- Grant funding is not required to complete the proposed improvements and open the business.
- The Village President and Board of Trustees of Frankfort approved funding of new projects in the current annual fiscal year budget.

Downtown Retail Grant Program (DRGP)

Purpose:

The goal of the Village of Frankfort DRGP is to strengthen the downtown retail mix by attracting new retail businesses and restaurants in targeted categories in the identified H-1 Historic District.

Assistance Available:

The DRGP provides up to \$10,000 to attract qualifying retailers who open a new business in the H-1 Historic District.

Eligible Applicants:

Business owner with a project that meets the eligibility and requirements detailed in this grant program are invited to submit an application. Applicants/Recipients of assistance through the Low-Interest Loan Program are eligible for grant funding under the DRGP. The two programs are considered separately.

Eligible Retail Category and Location:

All applications must involve a new retail business to Frankfort which is consistent with the list of Eligible Retail Categories (see attachment) and is located within the H-1 Historic District (refer to current zoning map).

Operating Requirement:

Funding shall not be conveyed by the Village of Frankfort until such time as the business is open and in operation.

Eligible Uses:

This program funds permanent tenant build-out and building code related improvements required to open a qualified retail business.

Examples of eligible uses* include:

- Walls
- Ceilings
- Floors
- Permanent shelving and cabinets
- Permanent fixtures
- Carpet
- Tiles
- Display window enhancements
- Interior lighting
- Signage required by law
- Life safety upgrades (sprinkler and fire alarm systems)
- Utility related improvements (heating, air conditioning, plumbing, electrical)

Ineligible Uses*:

- Acquisition of land or buildings
- Other equipment
- Product inventory
- Rent or mortgage payment
- Media marketing and advertising
- Payroll
- Day-to-day operation expenses (utilities, taxes, maintenance, refuse)
- Moving expenses
- Business consulting expenses
- Elevators
- Exterminator services
- Landscaping
- Improvements in programs or completed improvements

**Projects not listed above will be considered on a case-by-case basis*

Application Requirements:

1. ***Complete DRGP Application.***
2. ***3-Year Commitment for New Business.*** Business owners must commit to a 3-year term with potential penalty of repayment for all or a percentage of funding for early withdrawal.
3. ***Property Owner Consent.*** All applications must be signed by the property owner to indicate consent for the proposed improvements.
4. ***Signed vendor quotes/contracts.*** Any request for grant assistance must be accompanied by signed vendor quotes/contracts in support of the proposed improvement(s) and funding.
5. ***Credentials and experience of business owner and management assistance.***
6. ***Business Development, Operation and Contributions Statements.*** The following business information must be submitted on a separate typed sheet:
 - a. Description of your business and the related industry.
 - b. Description of your business status and tasks including difficulties, risks and costs.
 - c. Operational considerations including business location, facility requirements, needed physical improvements and labor force.
 - d. Projected tangible benefits to Downtown Village of Frankfort from the business activity, including how the business will contribute to the downtown retail mix, shopper traffic, extended store hours, number of jobs created, etc.
7. ***Business Plan.*** The following business information must be submitted on a separate typed sheet:
 - a. Market research and analysis including a definition of your customers and markets, and estimated market share.
 - b. Marketing strategy.
 - c. Financial Plan.
 - i. Profit and loss forecasts for 3 years (first year monthly).
 - ii. Cash-flow projections for 3 years.

Evaluation Criterion:

1. The business is consistent with the List of Eligible Retail Categories;
2. A complete application form with all required information was submitted;
3. Hours of operation;
4. Contribution of the business to the retail mix;
5. Quality of the retail product;
6. Timeframe for completing proposed improvements;
7. Expected opening date;
8. Development of the business plan (sole responsibility of the applicant);
9. Reasonableness of profit expectation;
10. Number of jobs created;
11. Size, type and term of business impact on the overall downtown H-1 district;
12. Other criterion as determined appropriate by the DRGRC.

Application and Approval Process:

Contact the Village of Frankfort Community Development Department for program information, to determine eligibility of the project, permit requirements and applications.

Submit a formal Retail Grant Program application to the Village of Frankfort Community Development Department for assistance.

Staff review of application and supporting documentation for consistency with program requirements.

Application is reviewed by the Downtown Retail Grant Review Committee at a public meeting. The recommendations of the Committee are forwarded to the Village Board for action.

Village Board reviews the application and recommendations of the DRGRC and takes action on the grant request.

NOTE: The determination of eligibility and priority for assistance is at the discretion of the Frankfort Village Board and is subject to fund availability.

The applicant must secure any required Village permits prior to starting any improvements.

Reimbursement Process:

Once work is completed, applicant submits copies of all eligible paid invoices from contractors, releases from all contractor liens, proof of payment and a signed reimbursement request form (provided by the village) to the Village of Frankfort. Proof of payment must include copies of canceled checks and/or credit cards.

The completed work must comply with Village codes and be accepted by the Village of Frankfort prior to disbursement of grant assistance.

Consistent with the Operating Requirements detailed above, the Village of Frankfort will only be obligated to reimburse applicants for any charges against work completed for which reimbursement requests are received within one year following the date of the original approval by the Frankfort Village Board.

DRGP List of Eligible Retail Categories

1. The Arts
2. Apparel Boutique
3. Clothing Accessories
4. Crafts/hobbies
5. Electronics
6. Ecologically Friendly Products
7. Entertainment – non-dining
8. Garden
9. Home Furnishings
10. Home Décor
11. Kitchen Wares
12. Leather Goods & Luggage
13. Music
14. Produce Market
15. Restaurant
16. Outdoor/Sidewalk Café (in connection with a restaurant)
17. Specialty Foods
18. Specialty Retail
19. Sporting Goods
20. Toys

Other retail businesses may be reviewed on a case-by-case basis