

VOLGA DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

Volga Downtown Revitalization Program supported by Volga Nonprofit Development Corporation is in part by the City of Volga, SD and administered by the VDC Board. The number of grants awarded will be based on the availability of funds.

PURPOSE:

It is the objective of this matching grant program to provide assistance for the rehabilitation, and upgrading of existing commercial properties along Kasan Ave within the three blocks making up the 'target area'. The program's intention is to encourage business growth and to make a positive statement about the downtown business climate to the community, visitors, and existing and potential business tenants.

APPLICANTS:

Owners, building tenants, or a joint venture of these two parties may submit an application under the Downtown Revitalization Program. Tenants must submit written approval of the property owner and evidence of their leasehold interest.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

The Downtown Revitalization Program is available to businesses and/or building owners that are located in the designated target area of the City.

Only one grant per calendar year per property owner and/or tenant will be allowed. Affiliated property owners (with a common control person or common ownership) will be treated as the same owner. Only one grant per building or address will be allowed each calendar year, notwithstanding multiple tenants or owners. The grant application must be received and approved before work begins. No reimbursement will be made for expenses incurred prior to approval of the grant award.

Any work performed with grant funds must comply with applicable building codes, permit requirements and all zoning regulations. Each applicant is encouraged to contact the City's Building and Zoning Department before making application to insure plans meet all necessary requirements. If a building permit is required, it is the responsibility of the applicant to obtain the permit. Approval of the building permit is required prior to approval of this permit.

Grants will not be awarded for buildings with non-conforming zoning uses or outstanding building code violations, unless the violations are part of the project and the grant will reverse those code violations as a part of the work being performed.

ELIGIBLE IMPROVEMENTS:

Preference will be given to;

1. Renovations that address exterior appearance and result in a publicly visible improvement.
2. Buildings located in the "core" area of the City Commonly known as "downtown".

All work must begin within 90 days of the grant being awarded unless the approved construction project specifies otherwise. All work must be completed within the designated time period agreed upon in the grant award or amended between the applicant and the Downtown Revitalization Program Board. Extensions will be considered only if made in writing and progress towards completion has been demonstrated. The Downtown Revitalization Program Board reserves the right to revoke the grant if these requirements are not met.

INELIGIBILITY

Downtown Revitalization Program funds cannot be used for damages caused by collision, acts of nature or any occurrences covered by insurance.

Properties that are ineligible for the Downtown Revitalization Program include the following:

- Tax delinquent property
- Property whose owner or affiliate has another tax delinquent property in the City
- Property in litigation

- Property in condemnation or receivership
- Property owned by churches or non-profit organization on which taxes are not being paid
- Properties on which taxes are being paid but have nonprofit use, such as churches, schools, charities, clubs and organizations, etc.
- Exclusively residential buildings
- National franchises or retail chain stores
- Buildings with outstanding code violations unless these will be corrected with the grant funding
- If there are previous Downtown Revitalization Program funds that have not been properly and completely expended.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS:

The following documentation is required when submitting an application:

- A completed application form
- Written consent from the property owner giving permission to construct the improvements, if applicable
- Color photographs of existing conditions
- At least two recent proposals from either a licensed architect or contractor. These proposals should give detailed information about the work to be done, the costs, and the project completion schedule.
- If the building owner or tenant will be performing part of the work, they must submit their proposal and at least one additional proposal from a license architect or contractor.
- Any costs incurred in obtaining proposals shall be the responsibility of the applicant and not a reimbursable expense.

*Note: Owners, merchants, and employees may perform work on their own buildings. However they will not be reimbursed for their time while acting as contractor and/or installing material.

GUIDELINES:

Grant applicants shall be reviewed by the Volga Development Corporation. This group will work to review all applicants using a scoring system to determine the eligibility of the grant application.

Additional points shall be awarded to an application if the applicant proposed to pay a larger percentage of the project cost than what is specified as the minimum match.

In the event that a proposed project is not selected for funding, the applicant may re-submit the project for reconsideration after reasons for denial have been resolved. Decisions regarding funding of applications rest solely with the VDC and are not appealable.

Any improvements completed under the Downtown Revitalization Program shall become permanent fixtures of the building. They may not be removed by the business owner or the building owner in the event of the closing or sale of the business or the sale of the building without express written consent of the VDC. This provision shall not apply if a future change is made to the building for the purpose of further renovation that will enhance the redevelopment of the downtown area.

Any changes to the approved plan will require a written request from the applicant and approval by the Downtown Revitalization Program VDC Board in order to retain the funding.

GRANT TERMS:

Grants made under the Downtown Revitalization Program shall not exceed \$5,000.00 per building. The applicant is expected to provide at least a 50% (fifty-percent) match. Grants will only be given for projects that have a minimum investment of \$500.00 per business.

Grant monies will be reimbursed within three (3) to six (6) weeks after the project is completed and the following documentation is submitted and approved:

- Copies of all invoices and cancelled checks for all the work covered by the grant. These must equal at least the required matching amount plus the requested grant funds. All project expenditures must be paid by check. *Cash payments are not acceptable and will not be reimbursed.*
- Color photographs of completed project.

For further information, please contact Erik Schlimmer at (605)690-8665 or eschlimmer@yahoo.com.