



Ann Arbor Downtown Development Authority
150 S. Fifth Avenue, Suite 301, Ann Arbor, MI 48104
www.a2dda.org

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ANN ARBOR DDA ENERGY CONSERVATION PROGRAM ENTERS SECOND YEAR

Ann Arbor, MI – In support of the City of Ann Arbor's Green Energy Challenge and the Ann Arbor DDA's goal to encourage a more sustainable downtown, the DDA Energy Saving Grant Program has accepted its second round of applications for the 2009/10 fiscal year.

The DDA Energy Saving Grant program has two phases. Phase I provides approved applicants with free energy audits for buildings or businesses within the DDA District. The energy audits are conducted by a qualified contractor, and provide a full report on the current energy use of the building. David Konkle, the DDA's program director said, "There are two goals for the energy audits. The first is to educate the building owner about their building, how energy is used and how much it is costing them each year for heating, lighting, air conditioning, computers, etc. The second goal is to provide them with a decision making tool on energy-saving measures that could be implemented to reduce their energy costs." The audit report provides grant recipients with a tailored list of recommended energy-saving measures and renewable energy opportunities as well as estimated installation costs, energy savings and payback periods for each measure.

Phase two of the DDA program provides rebates for the installation of improvements identified in the energy audit. These improvements may include more efficient lighting, insulation and air-sealing, new heating and cooling equipment, energy-efficient windows, etc. In this program phase, the DDA will match up to 50% of the total improvements with a maximum of \$20,000 rebate for each building or business.

In 2008/09, the first year of the program, 44 businesses were approved to receive a free energy audit. As of September 30, 2009, 34 of the audits have been completed, representing 378,000 sq ft of buildings with over \$700,000 in annual energy costs. The energy audits identified \$883,000 in recommended energy improvements with a savings of \$178,300/yr showing that these improvements will pay for themselves in 3.5 years. Most of these first year audit recipients are now moving forward with the installation of energy saving measures.

Curtis Commercial L.L.C. was one company that benefitted from DDA energy audits in 2008-09. This property management firm owns eight buildings on S. Main Street and had about 50,000 total square feet audited. After receiving the results of the audits, Curtis Commercial invested about \$45,000 in energy efficiency improvements for their properties, mostly by updating lighting and windows. Even though the firm has made energy efficient investments in the past, they credited the DDA's program for spurring these additional improvements. "We would not have



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done them ... had it not been for the support of the DDA," Curtis said. "There's no question that we have accelerated and prioritized the energy efficiency programs provided through the DDA as our capital improvement projects for this year and next."

The Neutral Zone Teen Center also participated in the first year of the program, and upon receiving their energy audit committed to investing in \$40,000+ in energy improvements. The improvements resulted in installation of insulation and more energy efficient heating and cooling equipment with an estimated energy savings of \$5,600/yr.

The DDA accepted applications for its 2009/10 program from July through September 2009, and at its October 14, 2009 meeting the DDA Partnerships Committee meeting approved 50 applications (for a total of 691,737 square feet).

New components added to the DDA program this year include a partnership with the City of Ann Arbor Energy Office to make zero interest loans available to participants through a federal grant and also, the DDA energy program will provide assistance to applicants to take advantage of the utility rebates now available from DTE Energy for energy improvements. These rebates can be added to the DDA rebates.

Clearly, interest in the DDA program to become more energy efficient and reduce energy costs is strong in downtown Ann Arbor.

More information on the Energy Saving Grant program can be found on the DDA website: http://www.a2dda.org/current_projects/downtown_energy_saving_grant_program/. If your business is located outside the downtown and you are interested in pursuing an energy audit of your own, call the City's Energy Office for more information at (734) 794-6430 x43711.

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