

## **City of Afton**

### **Downtown Building Facades Incentive Program**

The City of Afton in 2022 created a grant program for property owners in downtown Afton. This program provides up to \$5,000 per year per facade in reimbursable grants to property owners who make approved improvements to their street-facing facades. For the sake of this program, an individual façade is one street address. A multiple-bay building may be considered two or more facades, as is a corner building. Exposed back-side façade improvements will be considered on a rare and compelling basis. Grants are limited to one per façade per 2 years unless there is a change in ownership and/or use and the need is compelling. The funding decision is entirely of the City of Afton. There is a limited amount of funding available each year. Applications are due February 1<sup>st</sup> and projects must be completed between July 1 of the same year through June 1 of the next year.

The following requirements must be met in order to receive the grant funds:

1. Property owners must complete and sign an application by any deadline date and must include all attachments required.
2. Work must be consistent with design standards established by the City, as confirmed by architectural review (see below). City will pay architectural review fee.
3. Quality materials must be used.
4. Work must not unnecessarily cause damage or hinder access to neighboring properties.
5. Completed work must be inspected by our architect and be found to conform substantially to the approved plan.
6. Work must be complete during the program year (July 1-June 1) in which funding is granted.
7. All payment requests must be in writing and accompanied by proof of payment of invoices (such as copies of receipts) for labor and/or materials used in the project. Final report must also include project photo(s) showing completed work.

#### **Architectural Review**

The City of Afton has retained a preservation architect to review project applications. Upon receipt of the application, the City will involve the architect in the project review. The review will be to determine that the project meets the design standards, is consistent with the best use and design of the building. Any project, in part or in whole, that substantially deviates from the plan approved by the architect and the city council shall be deemed ineligible.

#### **Basic Design Standards**

The City of Afton has drafted the following standards for the design of façade improvements. Work performed on any National Trust of Historic Places listed or eligible properties must meet the Secretary of Interior Standards. These standards can be found at <https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/treatment-guidelines-2017.pdf>. However, all work shall substantially follow the standards on the following pages.

The program will not fund additions to building structures. The façade program is also limited to improvements to the façade where verifiable deterioration or damage exists. It is not designed, for example, to add a new business sign on an otherwise viable structure where no sign exists. It is also designed to improve the property holistically. That means the City will not fund only one minor component to a façade if there is not viable plan to improve other highly deteriorated elements.

Additionally, the following guidelines prevail:

- When possible, focus on maintaining the building envelope to protect the structure from weather, moisture, and deterioration.
- Use appropriate treatments for preserving and maintaining historic materials.
- Retain historic materials and features in place and repair them if damaged. Replace historic features only if they are too damaged to feasibly repair.
- Avoid covering historic features and materials with synthetic or other inappropriate materials in lieu of appropriate repair.
- When replacing materials and features that are beyond repair, match the original design and materials.
- When features are completely missing, replace them with materials based on the design of the original features.
- When possible, as part of the project, remove newer materials that conceal the historic fabric.

#### **Standards for Masonry and Exteriors**

- Replace damaged or missing bricks and blocks with new material that matches the original in color, size, texture, and hardness.
- All tuckpoint work on brick shall be of the type of mortar consistent with the type of brick and existing mortar. Tuckpoint work shall be thorough and consistent throughout the façade.
- Do not paint bricks unless they were painted historically.
- Use only appropriate waterproofing, water repellent, and other synthetic coatings on surfaces.
- No slip-covers or other cover treatments are allowed.
- Protect wood and metal features from deterioration and maintain protective coverings.
- Use substitute materials must match the historic materials in appearance and texture.
- The new paint scheme should be historically appropriate and consistent with the building.
- Avoid sandblasting and other harsh techniques that damage substrates.

#### **Standards for Cornices, Roofs, and Parapets**

- Preserve and paint or cover with appropriate materials when preserving the historic materials is impossible.
- Front gabled roofs are not allowed.
- Ensure parapets are level and there is no risk of failing materials.

#### **Standards for Windows and Doors**

- Infill windows and doors that modify the historic openings are not allowed.
- If new windows or doors are installed, they should go back to the historic opening size and dimensions.
- Avoid use of residential style doors and windows.
- When possible, retain existing frames, sashes, and other materials.
- When not possible to retain existing, install windows and doors of same material, type, configuration, size, and appearance as any historic windows and doors.
- Creating new window and door openings that were not historically there is not allowed.

#### **Standards for Storefronts**

- Original building materials and openings should be preserved when possible to allow maximum light into the structure. Do not fill in display windows with a solid wall and install smaller windows.
- Transoms should be opened. If opaque windows are desired, they opaque material should be on the inside of the windows. They should look like normal windows from the street.
- When adding an awning, a retractable one is preferred. Any awnings must be cloth or canvas and easy to maintain. In some situations, when appropriate for the building style, metal awnings are allowed.
- When possible, preserve the historic location and configuration of storefront entrances and entrances to upper stories.
- Where original mosaic tiles exist at the entrance floor, retain and repair the tile.

### Standards for Signage and Electrical Work

- Use traditional sign types. Generally, internally lit sign types are not allowed.
- Design and locate signs so they are complimentary to the building architecture.
- Use appropriate size, proportion, and quantity of signs for the building façade and downtown area.
- Uses colors that are historically appropriate and compatible with the building color.
- Lighting should not overpower the façade and should come from a metal gooseneck fixture.

The following image, from the Osceola Historic District Design Standards Guidelines, illustrates key building façade components. It is provided for reference.

