



# Marshalltown Central Business District Façade Improvement Program (Downtown TIF District #4)

## Checklist of Façade Improvement Program Application Items:

### Please complete application process in the order listed below:

- Three (3) drawings of the proposed work (to scale).
  - Tim Reinders and Mike Wagler of Iowa Main Street provide free architectural drawings.
  
- Brief narrative description of the project.
  
- Picture(s) of façade and particular area(s) to be enhanced.
  
- One (1) original completed façade improvement program application form.
  
- See City Zoning Office - City Site Plan Review Board – Signature of City Staff  
 Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Not Applicable \_\_\_\_\_
  
- One (1) contractor’s estimate.
  - Estimate must include only the work proposed for the façade.
  - The estimate must include a brief description and methodology of the work to be done (include drawings if necessary), it can not simply be a list of items.
  - Contractor resume of prior experience.
  
- City Building Permit – Signature of Building Inspector \_\_\_\_\_
  
- Color/material samples, if requested by the MCBD.
  
- Required signatures
  - Signature of owner is required, if the applicant is not the owner.
  
- Meet with MCBD, Main Street Downtown Incentive Committee to review application.
  
- The Downtown Incentive Committee will recommend approval or disapproval to the City Council – request is subject to approval by the City Council.



# Marshalltown Central Business District Façade Improvement Grant (Downtown TIF District #4)

## **PROGRAM PURPOSE**

The Marshalltown Central Business District Façade Improvement Program Committee is designed to promote the continued use and maintenance of commercial buildings in the downtown area by helping property owners and tenants rehabilitate and restore eligible buildings. Reimbursement grants are provided to owners or tenants in recognition of the positive impact that individual building improvements can have on the overall appearance, quality, and vitality of the downtown.

## **GRANT ELIGIBILITY**

To be eligible for a Façade Improvement Program reimbursement grant, a building must be used in whole or in part for commercial purposes and must be located within the target area. The target area coincides with the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district #4 located in the historic downtown.

Grants are available to make certain improvements to a building's facade. A facade is defined as any highly visible building or structural elevation fronting a public roadway, for the purposes of this program. Extra funding may be granted if side and/or back of building is publicly exposed.

Property owners or business tenants who will make at least \$5,000 in qualifying improvements are eligible to receive a matching grant. (A description of qualifying and ineligible improvements is provided under the "Eligible Improvements" section of this document.) The grant reimburses up to 25% of the cost or up to \$8,500.00 whichever is less of construction improvements. Funding amount can be influenced by the scope of the project, facade orientation, building use, and other factors.

Tim Reinders and Mike Wagler of Iowa Main Street provide free architectural drawings; please contact Marshalltown Central Business District for contact information. All drawings submitted (see checklist with application form) shall be to scale and show a reasonable degree of detail to allow easy identification of the work proposed. One cost estimate, along with a contractor's brief description and proposed methodology, will be required with any application. These items, as well as the others listed in the application checklist, are required to obtain grant funds.

Upon Committee and City Council approval, the applicant and the Committee/City enter into a formal agreement, called a Façade Improvement Agreement, establishing the scope of work and approved reimbursement amount. The Agreement is signed by the Committee and the applicant, after the Committee has approved the project. If costs exceed the original estimates, the applicant will be responsible for the full amount of the

excess. The Committee cannot reimburse more than the total amount specified in the Agreement. If the costs are less than the proposed amount, the Committee shall only pay 25% or \$8,500, whichever is less.

Reimbursement grants are subject to Federal and State taxes, and are reported to the Internal Revenue Service on Form 1099. Property owners and tenants should consult their tax advisor for tax liability information.

### **APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS**

- Interested parties should schedule a pre-application meeting with the Marshalltown Central Business District director prior to preparing any materials for submittal.
- Following said meeting, the applicant may complete and submit a grant application form, available on the Marshalltown Central Business District's website [www.marshalltownmainstreet.com](http://www.marshalltownmainstreet.com) or in the M CBD office located at 16 E Main St, Marshalltown, 844-2001 or [director@marshalltownmainstreet.com](mailto:director@marshalltownmainstreet.com)
- Submittal requirements are set forth on the application form. Information provided by the applicant will be used as the basis for preparation of staff reports to the appropriate commissions and the Main Street Committee.
- The City/Main Street Downtown Incentive Committee retains the right to recommend approval of an entire request, to approve portions of a request, suggest and/or ask for changes/additions to a request before recommending approval, or to deny any request or portion thereof.
- The Applicant will prepare a report offering a brief introduction to the project, a review of the various aspects of the proposal, and a suggested recommendation.
- This report will first be presented to the Main Street Downtown Incentive Committee to review the elements of the Façade Improvement Project.
- The Main Street Downtown Incentive Committee will then meet with the applicant to clarify the request.
- The Downtown Incentive Committee will recommend approval or disapproval to the City Council – request is subject to approval by the City Council.

### **COMPLETION REQUIREMENTS**

- All improvements must be completed within 90 days of the date of the application approval, unless otherwise authorized or extended.

Any work commenced prior to Committee approval *and* signing of the Façade Improvement Agreement will be done at the applicant's own risk. Said work will not be eligible for reimbursement funding. Every project will be evaluated for its preservation value, extent/scope of work proposed, and its potential to contribute to the program purpose. The staff report will be presented and consider various aspects in the following method:

## **ELIGIBLE IMPROVEMENTS**

- **Exit doors (exterior)**  
Installation, repair, and replacement of exit doors and hardware which face public roadways, meet current building and fire codes, and/or improve the overall appearance of the building.
- **Painting**  
Painting of the exterior surface of the buildings.
- **Shutters and Awnings**  
Repair, replacement, or addition of exterior shutters and awnings (exceptions: backlit and/or plastic awnings are not eligible for funding).
- **Signs**  
Repair and replacement.
- **Stairs, Porches, Railings, Exits**  
Repair and replacement (including installation) of exterior stairs, porches, railings, and exit facilities.
- **Walls**  
Repair and rebuilding of exterior walls, including cleaning, sealing, tuck-pointing, painting, etc.
- **Windows**  
Repair of frames, sills, glazing, replacement of glass, and installation of new windows.
- **Cornices**  
Repair or construction of cornices in order to replicate building's original façade.

### **The following items are not eligible for reimbursement grants under the Façade Improvement Program:**

- Any work commenced prior to execution of a Façade Improvement Agreement;
- Building permit fees and related costs;
- Extermination of insects, rodents, vermin, and other pests;
- Sidewalks;
- Title reports and legal fees;
- Acquisition of land or buildings;
- Air conditioning and heating facilities;
- Electrical wiring or service upgrade, except electrical work necessary to illuminate an eligible sign;
- Elevator repair or installation;
- Interior floor or ceiling replacement and repair; and,
- Architect work; to include drawings

# Marshalltown Central Business District Façade Grant Application

<b>Property Information:</b>	
Address: _____	
Current Tenant (Business Name): _____	
Use: _____	Zoning: _____

<b>Applicant Information:</b>				
Name of Applicant: _____				
Mailing Address: _____				
	Street	City,	State	Zip
Phone: _____	Fax: _____	Cell: _____		

<b>Owner Information (If different from applicant information):</b>				
Name of Applicant: _____				
Mailing Address: _____				
	Street	City,	State	Zip
Phone: _____	Fax: _____	Cell: _____		

Proposed use of funds (Check all that apply)	Est. Cost
___ Awning _____	\$ _____
___ Awning with façade project _____	\$ _____
___ Brick cleaning and tuckpointing _____	\$ _____
___ Exterior lighting _____	\$ _____
___ Painting of exterior surface _____	\$ _____
___ Preservation of architectural elements _____	\$ _____
___ Removal of inappropriate elements _____	\$ _____
___ Signage _____	\$ _____
___ Storefront rehabilitation/restoration _____	\$ _____
___ Window and/or door repair _____	\$ _____
___ Other; explain _____	\$ _____
Total estimated cost	\$ _____
Grant amount requested	\$ _____
Low Interest Loan amount requested	\$ _____

(Low Interest Loan Available with Participating Banks – See overview)

*Note: Applicant must provide a copy of all proposed materials and design drawings for estimated scope of work and, upon completion, a copy of the contractor's waiver of lien for evidence of payment. The Main Street Downtown Incentive Committee/City reserves the right to request additional information.*

I hereby affirm that I have full legal capacity to authorize the filing of this application and that all information and exhibits herewith submitted are true and correct to the best of my knowledge. The owner invites MCBBD representatives to make all reasonable inspections, investigations and take pictures of the subject property during the processing period of this request.

I understand that this is a voluntary program. I also understand the Main Street Downtown Incentive Committee/City has the right and discretion to approve or deny any project portions thereof.

I authorize the use of any pictures involving this project by the Main Street Downtown Incentive Committee/City

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Signature of Applicant

Date

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Signature of Owner

Date

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**Return to:**  
**Marshalltown CBD, Director**  
**16 E Main St., Suite 280, P.O. Box 159**  
**Marshalltown, IA 50158**  
**Phone: 641-844-2001 Fax: 641-844-2002**

**Work commenced prior to approval of the Façade Grant Application is not eligible.**

**Marshalltown Central Business District/  
Façade Grant Application**

# **Marshalltown Central Business District – Guidelines for Building Facade Maintenance and Renovation**

## **Masonry**

### **Moisture**

Brick and stone are exceptionally durable building materials, but they can and do deteriorate. Most often water infiltration is responsible. Moisture can enter through the top of a wall or where the wall meets the roof. Check roof, flashing, and wall copings periodically for soundness. Gutters and downspouts should also be inspected periodically for leakage.

### **Tuckpointing**

The sand and high lime mortar commonly used in older masonry buildings gradually erodes as water runs over the wall surface and with freeze/thaw cycles. Joints should be inspected periodically for crumbling or missing mortar. If mortar joints have recessed more than about 2 inch, they should be repointed with new mortar to prevent water infiltration and ensure the integrity of the wall. New mortar joints should match the original in style, size, mortar composition, and color. It is especially important to repoint with a mortar of the same hardness as the original. The softer historic mortar compresses as the bricks expand in warm weather and flexes as they contract in cold weather. It is by design the sacrificial element of the wall and gradual erosion is to be expected. Harder modern mortars with a high content of portland cement will resist the warm weather expansion of the brick, causing cracking and spalling of the brick surface. In cold weather this same inflexibility may cause cracks to open up as the historic bricks contract.

### **Cleaning**

Masonry cleaning can have a dramatic impact on the appearance of a building. Most historic masonry buildings have never been cleaned and accumulated dirt may be obscuring the original masonry color. Dirt may also hold airborne pollutants which can erode the surface of the masonry.

Masonry should always be cleaned by the gentlest possible method. In many cases low pressure water washing (no more than 250 psi), together with scrubbing with a natural bristle brush may be sufficient.

If paint or heavy grime must be removed, a chemical cleaner may be required. There are a wide range of chemical cleaners available and a qualified cleaning contractor should be consulted to evaluate your building and recommend a treatment. Whatever treatment is selected, a test patch should first be tried and allowed to weather for a few weeks or months. If the results of the test are satisfactory and no damage is observed, it should be safe to proceed.

### **Sandblasting**

Sandblasting is especially harmful to brick surfaces, eroding the hard outer layer to expose a softer, more porous surface that will weather rapidly. You should be aware that sandblasting will disqualify a project from consideration when applying for federal tax credits.

## **Painting**

In general, exposed masonry should never be painted. Unless the surface was painted from the first C as was sometimes the case with very soft brick C cleaning and tuckpointing of the masonry is always preferable. A previously painted surface should be chemically cleaned. Only if chemical paint removal proves impracticable (due to a cementitious paint coat, for example) should previously painted brick or stone be repainted.

## **Wood**

Storefronts, cornices, brackets, and other decorative facade elements were often made of wood. These original exterior woodwork elements should be retained wherever possible. Regular maintenance will prevent deterioration. Check periodically for soft, rotted areas, splits, and dampness. Damaged or decayed sections can usually be repaired by re-nailing, caulking, and filling. Epoxy pastes and epoxy consolidants can also be very effective in repairing even seriously rotted wood. When painting, use an oil-based primer followed by two final coats of oil-based paint.

Severely rotted or missing pieces may be reproduced by a good carpenter or millwork shop. Try to match or at least complement the existing details when replacing woodwork.

## **Metal**

Decorative elements of cast iron and sheet metal were frequently applied to brick and stone facades. The ease with which intricate detail could be reproduced in cast iron or stamped sheet metal ornament permitted the appearance of expensive carved or turned work at a fraction of the cost. Needless to say, this kind of architectural ornament became quite popular.

These architectural elements are essential to the character and appearance of your building. They should not be removed unless absolutely necessary.

Cast iron was used extensively for storefront columns and window lintels and is quite permanent. A sound paint coat is essential, though, to prevent rust and corrosion. Rust or paint build-up may be removed by chemical treatment or low pressure dry grit blasting (80-100). If parts are missing, they can be reproduced in fiberglass or aluminum using existing pieces to make a mold. If the missing pieces are relatively free of ornamental detail, wooden pieces might be substituted.

Pressed or stamped sheet metal was most often used to create the sometimes very elaborate cornices that crowned many 19th century commercial buildings. This thin metal cornice was typically nailed to a wooden framework attached to the building.

Stamped metal ornamentation may be of sheet copper, which requires no surface protection, or of sheet iron, usually coated with zinc or lead to retard rusting. Galvanized or lead-coated sheet metal should always be kept painted. If stamped metal is to be cleaned, a chemical paint remover should be used. Dry grit blasting, while usually safe for cast iron, should never be used on the thinner, more flexible pressed metal.

Reproductions of missing pressed metal ornaments can often be made by a sheet metal shop. In some cases, pressed metal decorative items, stamped in the original molds, are available commercially.

All metals requiring painting should first be primed with a commercial metal primer followed by two finish coats of oil-based paint.

## **General Storefront Design Considerations**

Whether you are restoring your storefront or considering a more contemporary treatment, your plan should be based on a traditional storefront design. One characteristic of the traditional commercial facade is a well-defined frame for the storefront. This area is bounded by a pilaster or pier on either side, the sidewalk below and the storefront cornice above. It is important to contain the storefront within this frame. When the storefront is allowed to extend beyond its frame, it may no longer appear as an integral part of the overall facade design; rather it may appear tacked on.

Look at historic photographs of your building or of similar buildings to learn the original configuration of your storefront.

Following are some ideas to consider when planning your storefront renovation. Each originates on the design of the traditional storefront; however, they are not solely historical concepts. They represent sound design principles aimed at enhancing both appearance and accessibility.

### **Contain the storefront**

A storefront should be designed to fit within the original facade opening and not extend beyond it. The storefront might be set back slightly (perhaps 3 inches) from the plane of the facade to accentuate this sense of containment.

### **Transparency**

Large display windows were a prominent feature of the traditional storefront. As a design element, they are integral to the overall proportioning of the facade. Functionally, the large glass area provides maximum light and display area, while visually opening the facade to the street. As a rule, the storefront should be composed primarily of glass, while the upper facade should be more solid and contained with smaller, evenly spaced windows.

### **Appropriate materials**

The color and texture of the storefront materials should be simple and unobtrusive: (1) The storefront frame can be wood, cast iron, or aluminum with a baked enamel finish; (2) the display windows should be clear glass; (3) transom windows may be clear or stained glass; (4) the entrance door should have a large glass panel and can be made of wood, steel, or aluminum; (5) the aluminum-clad plywood panels; (6) the storefront cornice can be made of wood, cast iron, or sheet metal or sometimes the horizontal supporting beam can serve as the storefront cap; (7) the side piers should be of the same material as the upper facade.

Certain materials and design elements should never be used on a traditional commercial building. A mansard roof with wooden shingles, rough textured wood siding, metal siding, fake bricks or stone, and gravel aggregate materials are not appropriate.

Inappropriate historical themes should also be avoided. Small window panes, a colonial door, and storefront shutters are 18th century elements that do not belong on most 19th or 20th century facades.

### **Simplicity**

Whether you are renovating an existing storefront or designing a new one, remember that the emphasis should be on transparency. The fundamental design should include large display windows with thin framing members, a recessed entrance, a cornice or a horizontal sign panel above the storefront to separate it visually from the upper facade, and low base panels to protect the windows and define the entrance.

This same basic arrangement will be equally appropriate whether constructed using traditional or modern materials.

### **Windows and Doors**

Windows and doors are essential design elements in the historic commercial building. Upper story windows establish a rhythm in the streetscape that ties the facades together. The storefront with its large glass area links the facade to the pedestrian scale of the street.

Always retain original doors and windows if possible. Often normal maintenance C replacement of broken panes, caulking, and a good paint job C will be all that is necessary to preserve them. Uncover boarded-up windows and repair or replace the original sash as necessary. Small areas of rotted wood can be repaired using an epoxy paste filler. If a window or door is missing or has deteriorated too severely, replacements should be sought that closely match the originals in material and configuration. Openings should never be enlarged or partially blocked to accommodate a replacement window or door.

### **Replacement windows**

If more energy efficient double-glazed wood or aluminum windows are to be used for replacement, they too should match the original wood windows in size and profile. Never replace a multi-pane window with a single large pane of glass. Aluminum windows should be in a baked enamel finish rather than the color of clear unfinished aluminum.

### **Storm windows**

Storm windows may be desirable on upper story windows for energy conservation. When mounted on the exterior, they should match the size and shape of the existing sash and they should be painted to match. Interior storm windows are a good option where original windows might be obscured by the addition of exterior storm sash.

### **Shutters**

Shutters are seldom an appropriate window treatment for historic 19th and 20th century commercial buildings. In general they should be avoided unless they were an original feature of the building. Shutter panels should exactly match the size and shape of the window opening.

### **Awnings**

Canvas awnings were a familiar feature of 19th century storefronts. Apart from their primary function of sun and glare protection, they also offer shelter to pedestrians and

can be an attractive addition to the storefront. Additionally, the valance can serve as a sign panel for your business. Naturally, if your building faces north, they will be of lesser practical benefit.

Select awnings that closely follow historical precedents in shape and design. They may be either operable or fixed. Always fit the awning within the storefront opening. Awnings should never extend continuously across several storefronts. Choose a water-repellent canvas or vinyl-coated canvas material; aluminum awnings or canopies are generally inappropriate. A wide variety of canvas colors are available and you should pay special attention to choosing a color or color combination that coordinates with your building and its surroundings. Back-lighting of awnings is not acceptable.

### **Storefront entry doors**

Storefront entry doors should present an attractive appearance and should be visually appropriate for your storefront. Original doors should be retained if possible. Wood panel doors with large glass panels were typical of the turn-of-the-century commercial storefront. If a new door is to be installed it should closely resemble the design and proportions of the original door.

Wood is the preferred material, but steel or aluminum with a baked enamel finish may also be used. Colonial or Early American style aluminum doors and other very decorative door designs should be avoided.

### **Architectural Ornament**

Architectural ornament includes a variety of decorative features characteristic of early commercial storefronts. Window hoods, cornices, columns, brackets, and decorative moldings are examples of the ornamentation most often seen in Downtown Marshalltown. These features are often crucial to the historic and architectural character of the building. Given the similarity of many downtown commercial facades, these elements were often the architect's or designers only opportunity to express an architectural style and to give the building a unique appearance. These ornamental features should never be removed or altered unless it is absolutely necessary. If they have already been removed, every effort should be made to replicate them.

### **Color Selection**

Painting can have a dramatic visual impact on your building. A carefully considered color scheme can unify the facade and enhance the streetscape. Color choice is a matter of personal preference, but you should generally choose colors that were available at the time your building was constructed and that complement the natural brick or stone color. Earth tones (greens, dark reds, pale yellows and browns) were popular in the latter half of the 19th century; lighter shades predominated in later decades. The Marshalltown MCBBD can recommend businesses that have historical color samples available to help you with your selections. If you are restoring your building, you will want to take paint samples from the major facade elements in order to duplicate the original colors. Even if you are not restoring, the original colors are always appropriate. Pay special attention to the relationship of your color scheme to those of adjacent buildings.

Keep your color scheme simple. A typical color scheme might use 2 or 3 colors: a base color, a second color for major trim, and sometimes a third color to highlight the minor trim. Most often the base color will be the natural brick or stone of your building. The

major trim color should be chosen to complement the base color. If your facade has natural stone or terra cotta trim, the major trim color might match these. The minor trim color should enhance the effect of the base and major trim colors, serving as an accent on minor trim details. Often a darker or lighter shade of the major trim color is an effective choice.

When painting wood or metal, always prepare the surface by removing all loose paint and sanding all rough edges that remain. Prime the surface with a high quality oil-base primer and follow with two finish coats of oil-base paint.

### **Signs and Graphics**

Signage is an essential element in any commercial district. Anonymity is clearly not good for business. Unfortunately, signage has often been one of the most disfiguring element in the urban landscape. A visual clutter of over-large and ill-positioned signs presents a negative image for the entire street.

A business's sign is important not only as an identifier, but equally importantly as an expression of an image for the business. Don't underestimate the value of quality signage. A clear message, stylishly presented, will encourage passers by to venture in. Money spent on quality signage is usually money well spent. When thinking about signage, consider the following:

#### **Size and placement**

In a densely built downtown area, signage should be directed at and scaled to the pedestrian. Don't assume that the largest sign is the best. Pay particular attention to how your sign relates to your building. Look for logical signage locations on your facade. Continuous flat wall areas above display windows or above upper story windows are typically good choices. Don't cover windows, doors, or architectural ornament. A good sign looks like it belongs where it was placed. It should be an extension of the overall design of your facade.

#### **Message and design**

A good sign is simple and direct. Don't be tempted to say too much. Choose a letter style or graphic treatment that projects your image and is clear and easy to read. Coordinate sign colors with the colors of your building. Remember that visual clutter will only dilute your message.

A good sign can take many forms. It may be painted on a flat panel, or it might have a sculptural quality. Individual letters might be applied to the facade. Logos or lettering can be painted, stenciled, or engraved on windows. Even the valance of an awning can be an excellent signboard. Neon signs inside shop windows are usually appropriate and possess a charm that can be very attractive, if not overused. Neon signage is not appropriate on the building exterior, however, unless it was an original feature of the building. Lighting for other kinds of signage should be limited to direct illumination by incandescent lamps.

Certain sign types are generally considered inappropriate in an historic commercial district. These would include large projecting signs, rooftop signs, and internally illuminated signs and awnings. Replacement of these kinds of signs should be strongly considered in planning for rehabilitation. To address this issue, the City of Marshalltown has adopted a sign ordinance that restricts oversized signs within the historic district.