

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: **FY 2019/20 CAMPUSTOWN FAÇADE GRANT (1st Round)**

BACKGROUND:

In May 2019, City Council voted to open an additional round of Campustown Façade Grant Applications during the summer of 2019 based on a request from a property owner within the district. Typically, the Campustown Façade program only accepts one round of applications that occurs each Spring.

The Campustown Façade Program was developed to enhance the appearance of Campustown commercial buildings, fulfilling the City Council's objective of supporting Campustown. The goal of this program is to promote diverse building styles and increased activity and commercial use. This program supports enriching the individual detail and character of each building within the context of a pedestrian oriented commercial district. The City Council identified the Campustown Service Center zoning district south of the ISU Campus and Neighborhood Commercial zoning district on West Street as the areas within which properties are eligible for project grants. (See Attachment A)

The grants are for up to \$15,000 of matching funds at a 1 to 1 ratio of eligible applicant expense to City expense. Each project may be awarded up to two façade grants when there are multiple facades with a project. The program also includes the allowance for up to \$2,000 in additional funding for design fees when a project includes a licensed design professional. Projects are scored on visual impact, financial impact, and consistency with the Idea Book concepts. (See Attachment B, Scoring Criteria) A project must have a commercial use on the ground floor, but upper floors of a building that includes residential or commercial uses may be included in a grant request. Façades eligible for funding must be street facing and improvements must be permanent improvements to the façades.

City Council budgeted \$50,000 in FY 2019/20 for the Campustown Façade Program. There was also \$105,020 remaining from FY 2018/19 that was rolled over to this fiscal year. The combined total of funds that may be awarded as part of this grant period is \$155,020.

City staff solicited grant applications for this program in June 2019. An invitation for grant applications was sent to all eligible property and business owners in the façade program area and was also publicized by Campustown Action Association and other media outlets. Two applications were submitted. Staff was working with one applicant, who has since decided to put the façade project on hold until further notice. The second application for 117 Welch Avenue was delayed and review stopped because work on the façade had begun. Per the Terms and Eligibility of the Campustown Façade Grant, starting work prior to grant approval and a Notice to Proceed has been given to the applicant is prohibited from eligibility. The applicant requested staff reassess the application and move it forward

for City Council review based upon work that had not yet been started. Staff has reviewed the proposed application in this context and asked the applicant for updated project costs to allow for City Council to consider the grant application.

That grant application is for the property at 117 Welch Avenue from the current property owner Anfu Wang. The building is currently vacant, but was recently occupied by a restaurant use (Fighting Burrito). The property owner started demolition work and partial façade improvements. The applicant requests a grant for the full amount of \$15,000 in façade improvements with an additional \$2,000 in design fee assistance. The building is planned to be a new restaurant. Project information and design illustrations are attached for the proposed project. (See Attachment C)

According to the approved Campustown Façade Program, each year project applications are reviewed for grant funding based on the design concepts of the Idea Book as noted below. **The Terms and Eligibility (Attachment C) of the Campustown Façade Grant explicitly state that grant money will not be eligible for projects where existing facades are already compliant with the design concepts of the *Campustown Idea Book* and that a proposal must have additive value of furthering the concepts of the *Campustown Idea Book*.**

Idea Book Design Concepts:

- *Transparent Campustown.* Visual transparency invites pedestrians to patronize the businesses inside. Physical access promotes cohesiveness within the district. Promoting more glass and larger physical openings show the commercial offerings in the district and encourage people to spend more time there.
- *Social Campustown.* Well-designed outdoor gathering areas create a positive social atmosphere. Small, unused, visible spaces can be transformed to expand commercial opportunities. It is not the intent of the program to fund sidewalk dining or other uses of the public right-of-way, although improvements to the building that are part of any outdoor gathering area project would be eligible.
- *Diverse Campustown.* The variety of building types and design styles contribute to the vibrancy, funkiness, visual interest, and diversity of businesses. Façades are encouraged to be distinct from their neighbors and unique in the district.
- *Identifiable Campustown.* High quality signs, graphics, and other design features that express the unique identity of local businesses can be part of a distinctive design for façade improvements.
- *Historic Campustown.* Some buildings in Campustown have potential to illustrate the historic development of Campustown over 100 years. Projects can include removing cover-up materials, restoring original storefronts/entrances, and restoring masonry.

117 WELCH AVENUE PROJECT APPLICATION

The existing building at 117 Welch Avenue will remain as a brick façade with relocated and resized storefront windows and doors. The change in storefront windows and door will comply with the minimum 50% CSC zoning glazing standard and percentage brick requirement. A new flush-seam metal panel is proposed to wrap the existing overhang of the front facade and new commercial signage is proposed for the building.

The proposed façade changes include moving the current primary entrance door from the north to the south end of the façade, converting the existing entrance to sliding doors, and an updated storefront window arrangement. The proposed improvements would also include a small expansion of the existing patio area by three to four feet with a new metal and cable railing system.

The façade prior to the renovations appeared to comply with most of the goals of the Campustown Façade grant concepts due to the building materials, high levels of storefront glazing, and outdoor usable space. As described by the applicant, The *Social Campustown* design concept is met by "...creating a social and friendly atmosphere in the evening hours, and the lighting both within the space spilling onto the streetscape and over the outdoor patios area expands the perceived space of the street and sidewalk." **The applicant's proposed improvements are consistent with the Idea Book Concepts of transparency, social, and diverse Campustown, but result in only a slight improvement in the degree of consistency. The result of the work is a minor increase in visual significance, although it will result in a more contemporary and modern aesthetic look.**

The project estimate was updated to account for the work that has been done since the application was submitted. Therefore, the proposed estimated costs for the façade project have been reduced from \$46,725 to \$34,650 (See Attachment D). **Of this new project cost, Staff has determined that the eligible grant costs in this case are for four primary eligible features of the sliding specialty door, new metal siding for the upper façade, patio railing, and external lighting. Staff has calculated eligible project costs to be \$17,300 with an additional \$2,000 in design fees. Therefore, the applicant would be eligible for \$10,650 (\$17,300/2 + \$2,000).**

With City Council's decision to award the grant, the applicant is required to complete program requirements to proceed with the project. A Notice to Proceed will require the applicant to obtain a building permit and compliance with the City's zoning requirements before receiving grant funds. Additionally, an encroachment permit for the patio and canopy, or signage will be necessary if applicable and required before staff issues a Notice to Proceed. No work can restart until the official Notice to Proceed is granted if the applicant desires to receive any awarded grant funds!

ALTERNATIVES:

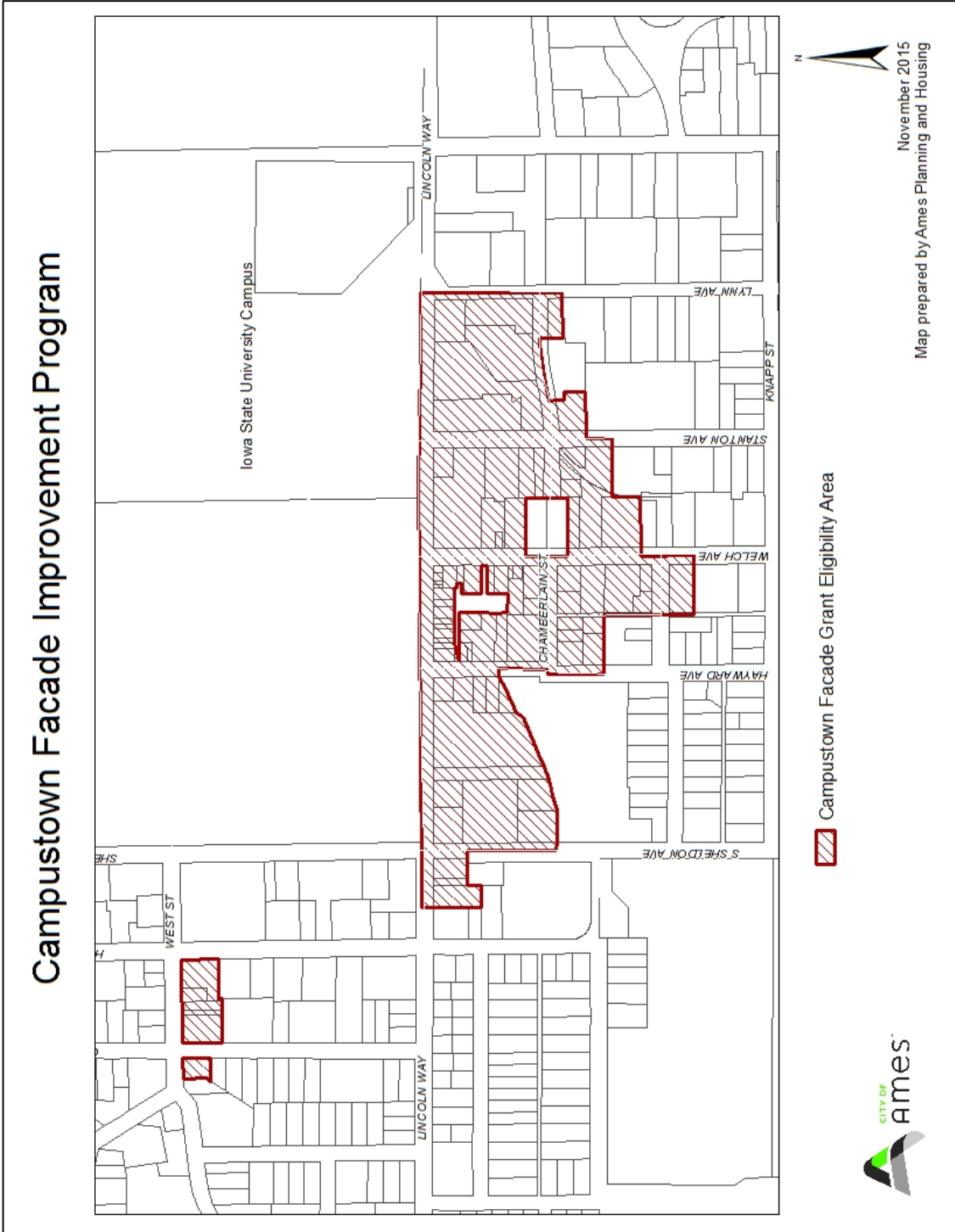
1. The City Council can approve a Campustown Façade Grant for the project at 117 Welch Avenue, awarding up to \$8,650 in grant funding for eligible features with an additional \$2,000 in design fees for a total grant award of \$10,650 for the overall project with the following conditions:
 - a. Submit patio and handrail details to verify the proposed patio improvements do not encroach into the proposed public sidewalk/right of way.
 - b. Approval of encroachment permits must be received for any canopy, patio or building projection, signage that may cross over the property line into the right of way prior to issuance of a Notice to Proceed.
 - c. Work cannot restart until a Notice to Proceed is granted.
2. The City Council can deny Campustown Façade Grant for the project at 117 Welch Avenue if the Council finds it does not meet the Terms and Eligibility of the Campustown Façade Grant program or that the building features are already consistent with many concepts of the Ideabook and the proposal does not substantially advance the concepts.
3. The City Council can refer this request back to staff or the applicants for additional information.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The Campustown Façade Grant fund has an excess of funds available due to the lack of applications during prior year. Although the applicant started the project prior to receiving grant approval, some remaining features of the project do meet the basic intentions of the Campustown façade program and the *Campustown Idea Book*.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council accept Alternative #1 as stated above.

Attachment A



Attachment B

Scoring Criteria for Campustown Façade Grants

To be used to evaluate competing grant applications and to advise City Council in awarding grants. **The purpose of the grant program is to promote investment that creates or expands use and interest within Campustown.** Higher scores will be given to projects that meet many of the Idea Book design concepts and create a significant visual or financial impact for the Campustown Area.

IDEA BOOK DESIGN CONCEPTS

Maximum Score 40 Points

The number of points granted in this category shall be based upon the strength of the proposed improvement project to be consistent with the Design Concepts as identified in the Campustown Idea Book. Projects identifying compliance with more of the design concepts deserve more points.

VISUAL IMPACT

Maximum Score 30 Points

- Improvements apply to more than one story on one facade
- Improvements apply to more than one storefront on one facade
- Improvements will create more visual significance because:
 - key, highly visual elements of the building are being improved
 - the building is prominently visible due to its location (e.g., it serves as a focal point from a street, is at a prominent intersection, or is larger than other buildings around it)

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Maximum Score 30 Points

- Matching funds exceed the minimum dollar-for-dollar match
- The project includes improvements being made to
 - ensure public safety,
 - establish or preserve the building's structural integrity
 - resist water and moisture penetration
 - correct other serious safety issues
- The façade project is part of a larger project that improves other exterior or interior parts of the building
- The project helps to make use of space that has been unoccupied or used only for storage

Attachment C



Last Updated: January 14, 2016

Campustown Façade Grant

Terms & Eligibility

1. Eligibility Requirements

- Eligible participants include the owners and/or tenants of buildings located inside the boundaries of the project area for the *Campustown Façade Grant Program*, which contain Office Uses or Trade Uses as defined by the Ames zoning ordinance.
- Ineligible participants include the owners and/or tenants of residential structures and buildings owned by the government, churches and other religious institutions.
- Concurrence of the property owner is required, in writing, before improvements proposed by the tenant can be considered for approval.
- Improvements must be made to one or more of street facing facades of a building and the design of such improvements must comply with the current *Campustown Idea Book*.
- For Historic Facades, grant money will be provided for replacing existing compliant elements only when the proposed project also includes replacing non-compliant elements with compliant elements.
- Grant money will not be eligible for projects where existing facades are already compliant with the design concepts of the *Campustown Idea Book*. A proposal must have additive value of furthering the concepts of the *Campustown Idea Book*.
- Grants may be offered if all non-compliant elements of the entire façade or of all facades intended to be improved are not to be improved under one grant project. However, the improvements must contribute to a project that, when complete, will be generally consistent with all design standards. To determine this, an application must include elevation plans for all facades intended to be improved showing how they are intended to look when complete.
- For all projects for which all improvements will not be completed under the grant, the scope of proposed improvements for the grant shall be visually significant in the context of how the whole building is intended to look when all improvements to the façade are complete. The City may approve a grant based upon a proposed improvement's contribution to the finished product, and may deny a grant for improvements that, while compliant in part, are not visually significant in terms of how the overall building is intended to ultimately look when all improvements to the façade are complete.
- If a project is phased, a grant shall be offered only to those improvements that are done in correct sequence of construction. For example, a finished project may require installing or changing windows, in some cases siding is installed after windows are in place. In such cases the windows would need to be replaced before grant monies may be expended on siding materials.
- Proposed façade improvement must not substantially conflict with one of the design concepts. For example, creating identity cannot obscure transparency.



2. Terms of the Grant Agreement

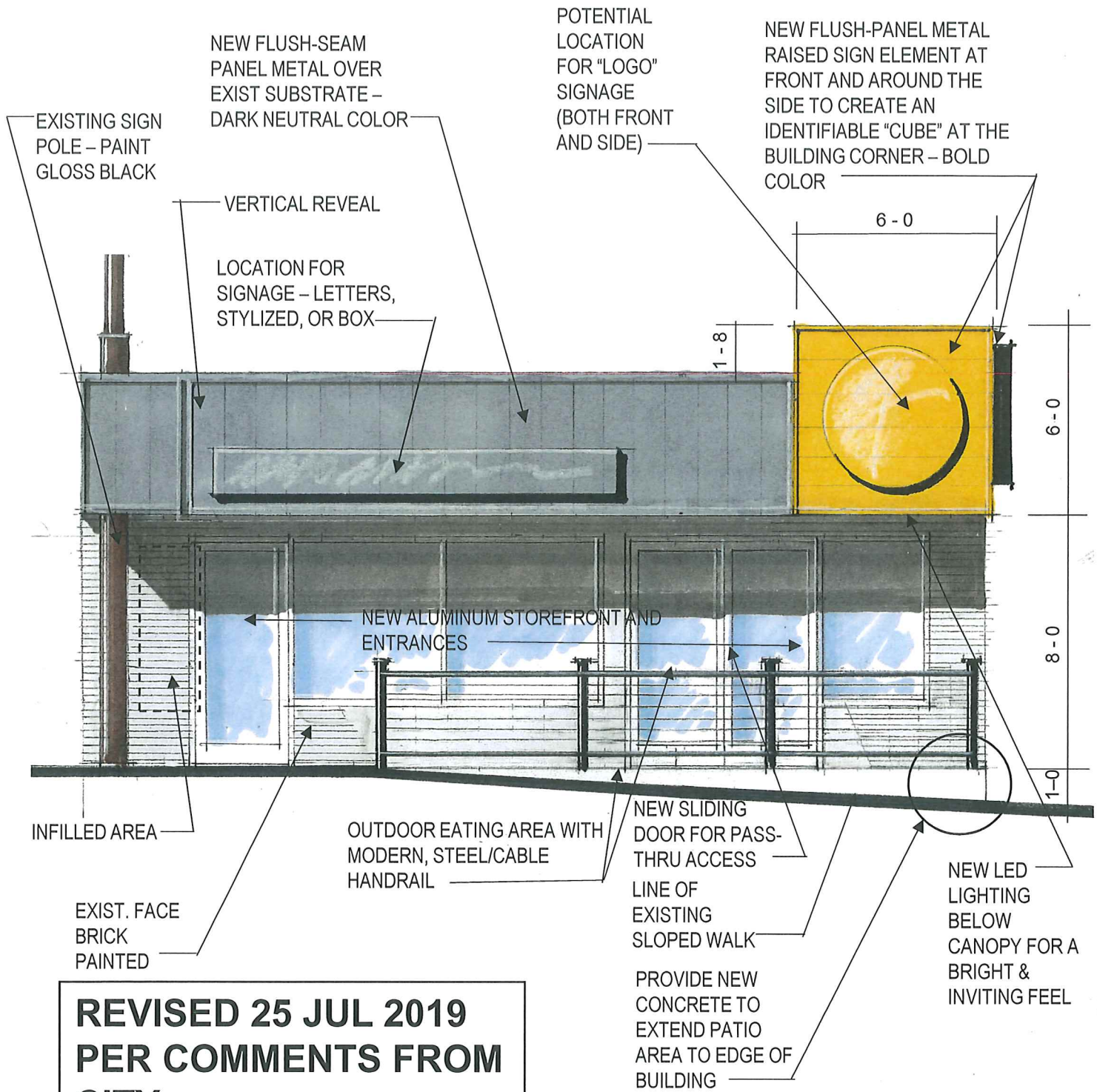
- **Accounts and Records.** The grant recipient shall maintain books, records, documents, and other evidence pertaining to all costs and expenses incurred and revenues acquired under the grant to the extent and in such detail as will properly reflect all costs, direct and indirect, of labor, materials, equipment, supplies, services, and other costs and expenses of whatever nature for which payment is made with the proceeds of the grant. The grant recipient will retain these records for three years from the date City makes payment of the grant.
- **Administrative Costs.** No grant proceeds shall be used for administrative expenses.
- **Amendments.** These Program guidelines, terms and conditions may be amended from time to time by the Director of the Planning and Housing Department for reasons of operational efficiency or unforeseen circumstances that may arise or conflict with applicable City or State regulations affecting the administration of the Program.
- **Amount of the Grant.** The maximum amount of a single improvement grant will be \$15,000. (Exceptions may be approved by the City Council on a case-by-case basis; allowing for a maximum of \$30,000 in grant funding to be granted for either a project that includes improvements to a second street facing façade on a corner building, or a project that includes improvements to more than one tenant space within the same building.)
- **Cost Sufficiency.** The City does not make any warranty, either expressed or implied, that the proceeds of the grant available for payment of the costs of the project will be sufficient to pay any specific portion of the costs that will be incurred in that connection. The City is under no obligation to advance funds in addition to those specified in the grant approval by City Council.
- **Disbursement of Grant.** Grant funds shall be disbursed to the grant recipient only upon the satisfactory completion of the project in accordance with a design for the project that has been approved by the City. The amount of the payment to the grant recipient will be one-half of the total cost of the work approved for the grant as documented by the bills submitted by the grant recipient, but shall not exceed the total grant amount approved by the City Council.
- **Fees of a Design Professional.** When included in the grant application, the City shall make a grant of up to \$2,000 to reimburse the grant recipient for the documented fees of a design professional other than the grant recipient or family member of the grant recipient.
- **Inclusions and Omission.** The requirements and regulations for Program administration are designed to supplement and amplify the provisions as set forth in the applicable zoning and building code regulations administered by the City of Ames. These regulations, utilized together with the Idea Book and the eligibility and terms, provide the basis for program administration. The lack of any item to be included in the program shall not relieve or release the grant recipient(s), property owner(s), consultant(s), contractor(s) or City from the responsibilities under the provisions outlined in the applicable zoning and building codes and program terms and conditions.
- **Matching Funds.** The grant recipient's expenditures for the project from sources other than the proceeds of the grant shall equal the amount of the grant proceeds.



Last Updated: January 14, 2016

- **Notice of Award.** An approved recipient of grant funds must enter into a signed grant agreement with the City within a reasonable time after notice of award by the City. Failure to complete and sign a grant agreement may result in forfeiture of the grant award.
- **Tax Payer Identification Number.** After City Council awards grants, all grant recipients are required to provide to the City a copy of Internal Revenue Service Form W-9 Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification. The City will only issue a Notice to Proceed after it receives the W-9 Form.
- **Notice to Proceed.** After the City has approved all design elements, all required permits and received the W-9 form, the City will issue a Notice to Proceed. No work funded by the grant shall proceed until on or after the date of the Notice to Proceed. No reimbursement from grant funds will be made for work carried out before the date of the Notice to Proceed.
- **Statement of Work and Services.** The grant recipient will perform the work in a satisfactory and proper manner, as determined by the City conforming to the approved application, project budget, and project schedule.
- **Permits.** All pertinent permits must be obtained and all work must comply with City, State, and Federal regulations.
- **Report of the City Building Official.** The City Building Official shall determine if the work conforms to all applicable codes and regulations, and that any and all pre-existing code defects in the building façade have been corrected to conform to all appropriate codes.
- **Request for Payment.** The grant recipient shall submit to the City on a form provided by the City a listing of all bills for the materials and work completed and a statement that all work under the approved grant has been completed and that the listing is complete. The grant recipient shall also submit evidence as may be reasonably required to substantiate all payments that are requested, such as lien waivers or conditional lien waivers.
- **Time of Project Completion and Fund Request.** The work approved for the grant shall be completed within six months of the date of the "Notice to Proceed." The grant recipient shall request grant funds only after the project has been completed in accordance with the approved application. Staff may grant one additional 6 month extension.
- **Use of Grant Funds.** The grant funds shall not be spent on any other purpose(s) than the activities approved in the application.

WIDTH OF FAÇADE = 28'-8"



**REVISED 25 JUL 2019
PER COMMENTS FROM
CITY**

Prepared: 26 Jun 2019

117 WELCH AVENUE - AMES, IOWA

City of Ames - Campustown Façade Grant Application





REMOVE EXISTING
SIGN LETTERS &
SILVER PERFORATED
METAL

EXISTING SIGN
POST TO REMAIN

THE FIGHTING BURRITO

EXISTING ACCESSIBILITY TO BE
MAINTAINED

REMOVE
BRICK THIS
AREA

EXISTING ALUMINUM
STOREFRONT (GLAZING AND
DOOR) TO BE REMOVED

HANDRAIL AND CONCRETE
NORTH OF HANDRAIL TO BE
REMOVED

6' X 6' AREA OF
CONCRETE TO BE
REMOVED

Prepared: Jun 26, 2019

117 WELCH AVENUE - AMES, IOWA

City of Ames - Campustown Façade Grant Application



Describe how the proposed design incorporates the Campustown design concepts:



The proposed façade improvements for 120 Welch Avenue incorporate parts of a number of the design concepts referenced in the “*Campustown Façade Improvement Program Idea Book*.” With the opening of the façade using bi-fold doors, and keeping the large expanses of storefront glass, the design highlights principles of a *transparent campustown*.

Additionally, both pedestrians and passing motorists will be able to view activity inside the business at night, which will be well-lit and inviting. The façade will provide “open-air” access, creating interaction between pedestrians and the business with sidewalk activity (outdoor patio) and lighting.



With its variety of lighting sources and unique signage opportunities, the façade design also nods toward the *social campustown design concept*. It “creates a more social and friendly atmosphere in the evening hours”, and the lighting both from within the space spilling onto the streetscape and over the outdoor patio area “expands the perceived space of the street and sidewalk.”

However, probably the most exciting opportunity here is to enhance the *diversity in campustown* and create an *identifiable campustown*. Given that this structure deviates in its architectural style from the surrounding buildings, we are proposing modern, iconic elements including a sleek, modern façade and an identifiable “cube”, that provides a sense of location, and expresses a “unique brand of identity for this individual business.”



Description of the types of materials that exist on the front façade of the building:

Building Type: Retail – Food Service
Address: 117 Welch Ave.
Lower level: Metal canopy
Lower level: Aluminum storefront windows & entrance
Lower level: existing face brick

Structural integrity and constructability of the project:

The façade of the subject property is structurally sound. Visual inspection yielded that this is a well-built masonry building. Infill materials are non-load bearing.



The original brick on the façade of the building is in good condition, but dated. The color and texture of the masonry is not reminiscent of the surrounding storefronts, however it is intact and does not require tuck-pointing or repair. No water damage was detected on the interior of the façade due to penetration from the wall itself.

Structural integrity and constructability of the project:

Structural modifications necessary for the proposed project:	None
How does our proposed façade renovation handle water and ice related to maintenance issues?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Façade is currently intact, and presenting no water and ice-related maintenance issues. 2) New materials on façade will be installed to shed water and sealed. 3) New entrances will provide thresholds and a new stoop provided a the new “South” entrance.
If your building is a historic building, what efforts are being taken to maintain or preserve the historic character of the building.	Not applicable.
Has a contractor or design professional (architect or engineer analyzed your proposed façade modifications for constructability? Is your project build-able?	Yes. Yes.
Has a contractor or design professional (architect or engineer) weighed in on the feasibility of your proposed façade modifications? Does the scope of proposed work match the available funds?	Yes. Yes.

Attachment E

The applicant's architect has determined that the following work has been done on the façade thus far (these items have been omitted from the original Project Budget):

1. Selective Demolition
2. Dump Fees
3. Safety fencing & pedestrian protection
4. Modification of the façade to receive new storefront entrances
5. New aluminum storefront (windows)
6. Painting at the façade
7. New concrete & tile at patio
8. Painting at lower portion of sign post

Please see the **REVISED PROJECT BUDGET** numbers below:

1. Install Storefront door (entry)	\$2,100
2. Install specialty storefront door (patio) – Eligible Cost	\$4,500
3. Guardrail at patio (fabrication & installation)–Eligible Cost	\$4,800
4. Prep and paint upper portion of the steel sign post	\$1,450
5. New flush panel siding on existing upper façade – Eligible Cost	\$4,000
6. Signage (allowance)	\$7,000
7. New LED lighting (including installation) – Eligible Cost	\$4,000
TOTAL FOR REMAINING CONSTRUCTION	\$27,850
8. Contingency (10%)	\$2,800
9. Professional Fees	\$4,000
TOTAL REMAINING PROJECT COST	\$34,650