COUNCIL ACTION FORM

<u>SUBJECT</u>: DOWNTOWN FAÇADE GRANTS – 2013/14 SECOND ROUND AND 2014/15 FIRST ROUND AWARDS

BACKGROUND:

The City Council annually budgets \$50,000 for the Downtown Façade Grant Program. This program has an eligibility requirement for projects to be within the downtown area, which is generally described as from 6th Street to the railroad tracks and from Duff Avenue to Northwestern Avenue (see Attachment 1). The program includes up to \$15,000 of matching funds per façade and allows up to \$1,000 for architectural services. The program requires compliance with specified design guidelines, ground floor use of office or retail trade, and historic façade removal of non-compliant elements; and allows one year to complete the project after signing a grant agreement. In addition, the program includes preferences for façades that have not had previous funding, for front façades, and for façades along Main Street. The accompanying scoring criteria prioritize visual impact, financial impact, extent of improvements, and historic design (See Attachment 2).

In August 2013, the City Council awarded three Downtown Façade Improvement grants totaling \$56,000 from the program budget for the 2013/14 fiscal year and from unspent funds carried over from the previous fiscal year. The project at 328-330 Main Street (Town Centre) is underway, and the projects at 122 Main (Computers & More) and 402 Main (The Spice) will proceed soon. The program still has \$9,423 in 2013/14 funding that was not committed during the first round of grants last August. A second round is typically offered in the spring for the remaining funds.

The City Council again budgeted \$50,000 for this program in FY2014/15. The typical application process for FY2014/15 is to accept applications in May and bring applications to City Council for award in July or August. **Due to the late April timing of requesting grant applications, staff is recommending** that **grant awards be made for** <u>both</u> the remaining FY2013/14 façade grant funds and for the FY2014/15 grant funds. The available combined funds total \$ 59,423.

Grant Applications

On April 4, 2014, an invitation for grant applications was sent to all eligible property and business owners and was also publicized by the Main Street Cultural District. **The total requested amount of \$64,000 exceeds the combined FY2013/14 and FY2014/15 amount of \$59,423**. The following four grant applications were received:

Address	Business or Building Name	Amount Requested	Total Project	Average Score
413 Northwestern	Wheatsfield Cooperative Design Fees	\$ 15,000 \$ 1,000	\$85,000 \$5,000	72
400 Main	Lucullan's Design Fees	\$ 15,000 \$ 1,000	\$ 30,000 \$ 6,500	59
323 5th (Burnett Façade)	Triplett Building Design Fees	\$ 15,000 \$ 1,000	\$ 57,000 \$ 5,000	57
537 Main	Ames Insurance Center Design Fees	\$ 15,000 \$ 1,000 \$ 64,000	\$ 37,000 \$ 3,800 \$229,300	38

Two Main Street Cultural District representatives and three City staff members ranked the grant applications based on the City Council's adopted scoring criteria. Project summaries, a location map, and project design illustrations are also attached.

<u>Wheatsfields Cooperative</u> at 413 Northwestern is expanding into the east portion of the building. Among other changes, the kitchen and deli area are being expanded and the table area for deli customers is moving into the new section next to the east wall, with an outside dining area beyond that. In this area near the west end of Main Street, a new aluminum storefront system will be installed as well as a new canopy and taller parapet. Windows will be added into the currently blank exterior wall along Northwestern, which will also be faced with the same materials as the previous north façade and entrance improvement project in 2009. That project was completed with the support of a \$16,000 Façade Improvement Program grant.

While the current program preference is to not approve second grants in the first round for facades that have had a previous award, staff does not believe this was applicable in this circumstance. The proposed area of work is for a portion of the building that was not part of the Wheatsfield Cooperative at that time and is a different façade.

Lucullan's at 400 Main Street is expanding its use of ground floor and is adding windows on the east façade (along Tom Evans Plaza) to bring more daylight into the space. These windows will be in the same location and of the same type as the original construction. Other improvements to this east façade on Tom Evans Park include new steps and landing at the entrance and repairing and painting the exterior wall. The existing mural will remain and the repair work and painting will not affect it. The City Council's policy has been to award grants only for improvements to the front of the buildings, although buildings on the corner of two streets have been considered as having two front facades. Rear facades of buildings have not been eligible for the program in the past. Since the east façade is on a frequently used public plaza, staff believes that this façade should be eligible as a second front façade of the building.

In 2008 the Main Street façade of Lucullan's was improved with the support of a \$8,200 Façade Improvement Program grant. Therefore, the current application may be considered a second grant for the same business and building. In this case, staff has again viewed this as a separate façade that has not been awarded a grant previously, even though the front of the building previously received grants.

The <u>Triplett Building</u> at 313 - 5th Street proposes façade improvements making use of currently unused space fronting on Burnett Avenue for a brew pub and business services offices. This building has not received a prior grant. Existing fixed windows will be replaced with operable divided-light windows and existing overhead doors will be replaced with aluminum storefront entrances. Modular stone surrounds and parapets will emphasize two separate entrances and modular stone and brick will face the rest of the façade. The driveways in the right-of-way will be removed and the public sidewalk will be replaced. Since the building is not historically a retail space, the design is consistent with the Downtown Design Guidelines for "other buildings" and is being treated as general office space for openings and windows.

The building at <u>537 Main Street</u> proposed improvements are intended to facilitate the use of the second floor for offices by moving the second floor entrance to the front and expanding and updating the entrance porch and canopy. Improvements include a new, more visible metal railing and new facing materials on the roof overhand and canopy fascia. This building has not had a grant approved previously.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. The City Council can approve Downtown Façade Improvement Grants for the first three projects listed above, 413 Northwestern, 400 Main and 323 - 5th, for the requested \$16,000 each.

Approval of this alternative includes three grants totaling \$48,000 from the Downtown Façade Grant fund in FY2013/14 and FY 2014/15. Under this alternative, \$11,423 would remain for a second round of façade grants before July 1, 2015. This alternative would deny the grant application for 537 Main based on its low ranking through the scoring criteria.

2. The City Council can approve Downtown Façade Improvement Grants from only the second round of FY13/14 of \$9,243 for 323 - 5th (Burnett façade).

The alternative allocates all of the available funds for FY 2013/14 to the highest scored project that has not previously received a grant. This action does not fully fund their request of \$16,000. In addition, this alternative would also deny the grant applications for 537 Main, 413 Northwestern and 400 Main. Another application round of \$50,000 would be initiated later this summer for FY2014/15 grants for reconsideration of these requests with any new applications.

3. City Council can approve Downtown Facade Improvement Grants for all proposed projects with an average of \$14,810 per project where each requested \$16,000.

Approval of this alternative combines both FY2013/14 and FY2014/15 funding and provides most of the requested funding for all four proposed projects. There would be no leftover funds for a second round in the spring of 2015.

- 4. The City Council can approve an alternative selection of façade grants and amounts to those projects that the Council finds meet its priorities for downtown façades.
- 5. The City Council can refer this request to staff or the applicants for additional information.

MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

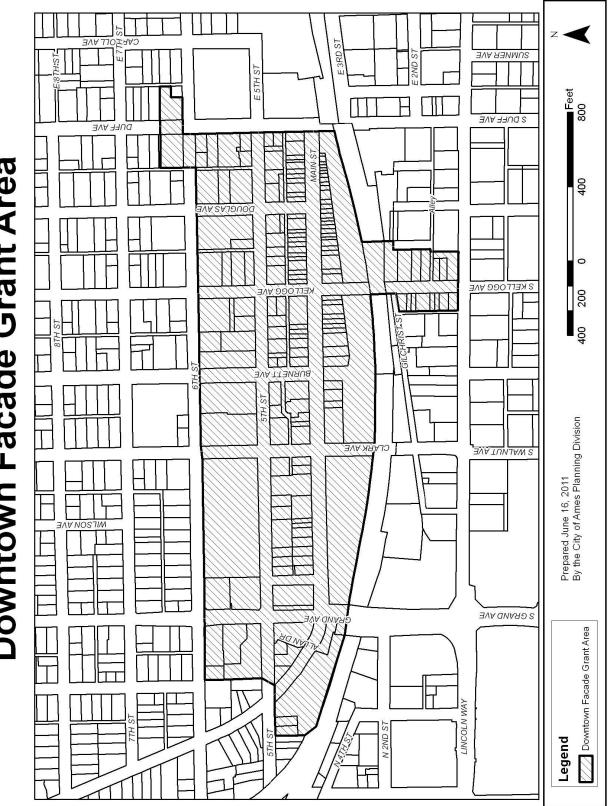
City staff has determined that the proposed Downtown Façade Improvement projects for the Triplett Building, Wheatsfield, and Lucullan's are consistent with the Downtown Design Guidelines. The grant scoring group agreed that these three projects have sufficient visual, financial impact, and extent of improvements to warrant support of the façade grant program. This finding of consistency is despite the fact that Wheatsfield and Lucullan's are second facades on buildings that have previously received grant awards for other facades and are not typically the first priority of the program.

City staff and the scoring committee concluded that the improvements proposed to the office building at 537 Main do not provide a great deal of visual or economic impact due to the location, building type, and minimal scope of improvements other than expansion of the front porch.

Staff is not aware of any other pending or active façade grant interests that were not submitted in April for the FY13/14 second round. With no other pending interest, Staff supports awarding FY14/15 first round funds at this time, rather than delaying consideration for two months. By combining the FY13/14 second round funding with FY14/15 first round funding, \$59,423 will be available for matching grants funds at this time.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council approve Alternative #1, thereby approving Downtown Façade Improvement Grants for the first three projects listed above – 413 Northwestern, 400 Main and 323 - 5^{th} – for \$16,000 each. This action will utilize \$48,000 of the available balance in the program, leaving \$11,423 dollars for a second round in the Spring of 2015. Funds will be available for all three approved projects on July 1, 2014.

Attachment 1



Attachment 2 - Downtown Façade Grant Review

Requirements for all Façade Grants

- The building must be located downtown within boundaries established by City Council.
- The ground floor must be Office Uses or Trade Uses as defined by the Ames zoning ordinance.
- The façade design must comply with Downtown Design Guidelines.
- Improvements to historic facades shall include replacing non-compliant elements with compliant elements.
- Residential structures and buildings owned by the government, churches and other religious institutions are not eligible.
- No façade grant shall exceed \$15,000.

Program Logistics

The following process for review of applications for façade grants provides time to inform all potential applicants of the opportunity, to work with applicants, applicants to prepare submittals and for staff to review applications and report to City Council. Two grant periods will be planned for each fiscal year.

First Grant Period

For this first grant period, preference for grant awards will be given to:

-facades that have not received any previous grant funding -front facades

Action Steps:

- Staff will inform all property and business owners of grant availability, process, and deadlines.
- Staff will work with applicants to define the project, ensure that it meets the guidelines, and assure that it is feasible and can be completed within the time frame.
- Applications will be accepted in May and June.
- Staff will review and score applications and report to City Council in July or August for awarding grants.
- Projects may then start in the fall and be potentially completed before the holiday shopping season.

Second Grant Period

If the entire budget is not committed in the first grant period in each year, a second grant period will begin in October for projects to be implemented the following spring. While facades on Main Street and facades for which no previous grants have been awarded will still receive first preference in this second grant period, all downtown grant requests will be considered and potentially approved if funds remain after all first-preference proposals are awarded.

Conditions of Grant Approval

- Grant projects must be completed within one year from award of grant.
- Any required building code and/or safety improvements to a structure must be completed before grant work proceeds or before grant funds are paid.

Attachment 2 (continued)

Scoring Criteria

For each category, the following criteria shall be used to award points:

VISUAL IMPACT

Maximum Score 30 Points

- Improvements apply to more than one story on one facade
- Improvements apply to more than one 25-foot wide bay 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

EXTENT OF IMPROVEMENTS

Maximum Score 20 Points

The number points granted in this category shall be based upon the number of elements from the Downtown Design Guidelines being improved. More improved elements deserve more points.

HISTORIC FACADES (such as Café Diem):

- Display windows
- Transoms
- Masonry (includes removing cover-up)
- Upper floor windows
- Parapet and cornices
- Awnings and canopies
- Entrance
- Kickplate

OTHER FACADES: (such as Wheatsfield)

- Quality materials
- Façade modulation
- Fenestration
- Roof
- Awnings
- Building entrances

HISTORIC DESIGN

Maximum Score 20 Points

- Project includes historically appropriate materials and restoration techniques
- Project goes beyond basic rehabilitation and re-establishes a more historically accurate appearance than other projects

413 Northwestern



Existing Façade at 413 Northwestern Ave.



Proposed New Façade for 413 Northwestern Ave,

413 Northwestern

SB&A ARCHITECTS, LLC

RE: Façade Grant Application for WHEATSFIELD COOPERATIVE EXPANSION located at 413 Northwestern Avenue in Ames

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

Description of the Proposed Project

Wheatsfield Cooperative is in the process of renovating an adjacent space to their current facility in the building located at 413 - 415 Northwestern as listed on the Application Form of this document to expand their "whole foods" grocery business into that new space Their expansion project consists of complete renovation of the interior of their leased space and expansion of their kitchen and deli areas. In an effort to improve their street frontage they desire to significantly improve the façade of the building which faces the main street, which has generated this application.

Special Background of the Building

Though this particular structure is of little historical significance relative to its architecture, it has an intrinsic value relative to understanding the development and growth of Iowa towns. It was originally built as a lumberyard, providing convenient access to building materials for the citizens of the community. Most lumberyards in the middle of growing Iowa towns have since left and moved to industrial areas based on land use plans. Though its use has been changed, this structure still stands as a reminder that Ames was once a small town adjacent to the first land grant college in the nation.

Materials on the Building

The portion of the building being improved is currently non-descript. The existing, painted, concrete block and wood siding will be enhanced with new split faced concrete block masonry as a wainscot and pier accent and face brick very similar, if not matching, the north façade that was improved during the time of their initial expansion in 2006. New aluminum storefront framing is being provided even though this will be a secondary entrance to the store. New windows along Northwestern Avenue will visually enhance the current façade along Northwestern Avenue which is currently a blank painted wall. It is anticipated at some future time that an outdoor seating area will be provided at this new entrance as it enters into the new deli eating area. In addition to matching materials and styles, a canvas canopy similar to the canopy at the existing entrance will visually tie the existing and new facades together which will visually "finish out" the entire structure as it appears from Northwestern Avenue and Main Street.

Project Budget

The anticipated cost for the façade portion of their store expansion project will range from \$70,000 - \$85,000 per the following breakdown:

	Low	High
Selective Demolition	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 4,000.00
New Aluminum Storefront Entrances	\$12,000.00	\$12,000.00
New Windows	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 7,000.00
Façade Construction	\$10,000.00	\$14,000.00
New Masonry	\$32,000.00	\$42,000.00
Canopies, Lighting & Miscellaneous	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00
TOTALS:	\$70,000.00	\$85,000.00

413 Northwestern

Project Schedule

It is anticipated that the construction on their expansion project will start on or about September of this year (2014) and be complete in 6 - 8 months pending weather and phasing (since the store must remain fully operational during construction.

Color Photographs

(See Attachments)

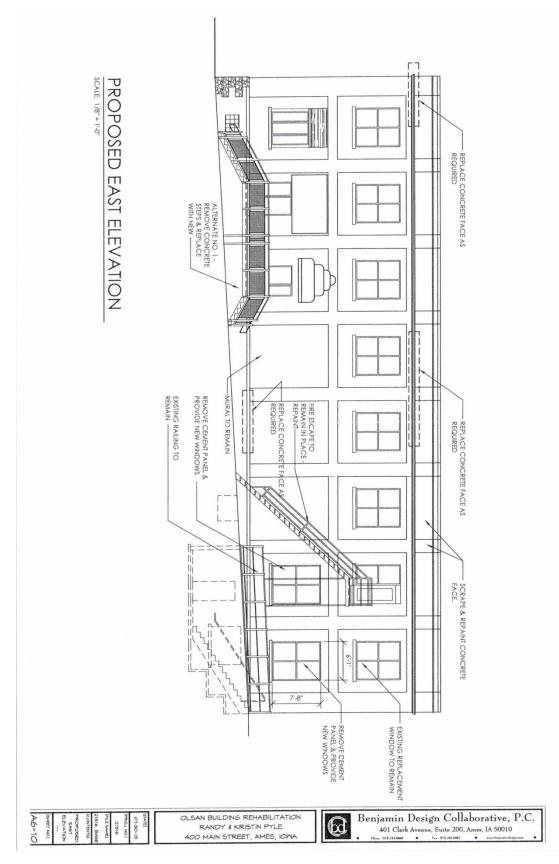
Description of the Types of Proposed Materials for this Project:

Entrances: Aluminum storefront with mullions consistent with their existing north entrance Windows: Fixed aluminum with mullions consistent with the character of downtown windows Masonry: Split faced-concrete block and modular face brick to match the existing North façade Canopy & Fixtures: Canvas Canopy and fixtures/signage consistent with the existing North façade.

Cost of Design Services

It is anticipated that the Architectural and Engineering Services for this portion of their project will range from \$3,000.00 - \$5,000.00.





Benjamin Design Collaborative, P.C. 401 Clark Avenue, Suite 200 Ames, Iowa 50010 515-232-0888 Fax 515-232-0882



Downtown Façade Grant

400 Main Street / Pyle Building Rehabilitation - East and South Façades Randy and Kristen Pyle

May 8, 2014

Compliance Statement

The original structure located at 400 Main Street was built in 1912, by F.J. Olsan. According to the Ames Historical Society, the Olsan building was the first all concrete building built in Ames. It earned much of its notoriety from its claim as the first "Totally Fireproof" building in town. It was built out of poured concrete instead of the more typical masonry by W.A. Jennings who worked for Olsan at the time, and who went on to start the Economy Forms Company in Des Moines.

Over the past century the exterior face of the concrete structure has held up well to the elements, with only minor areas of repair needed at this time. This is due in large part to having the exterior face painted throughout the life of the building. Because it has been a number of years since it was last painted, water intrusion has begun to degrade the outer concrete surface and through the freezing and thawing of the seasons many hairline cracks have opened up and started to separate small areas of the outer surface causing them to spall off. These areas of deformity need to be cleaned and patched, and the void portions filled back in with concrete mixed with a bonding agent. Once repaired, the entire surface needs to have a fresh coat of paint, possibly back to its original two tone motif.

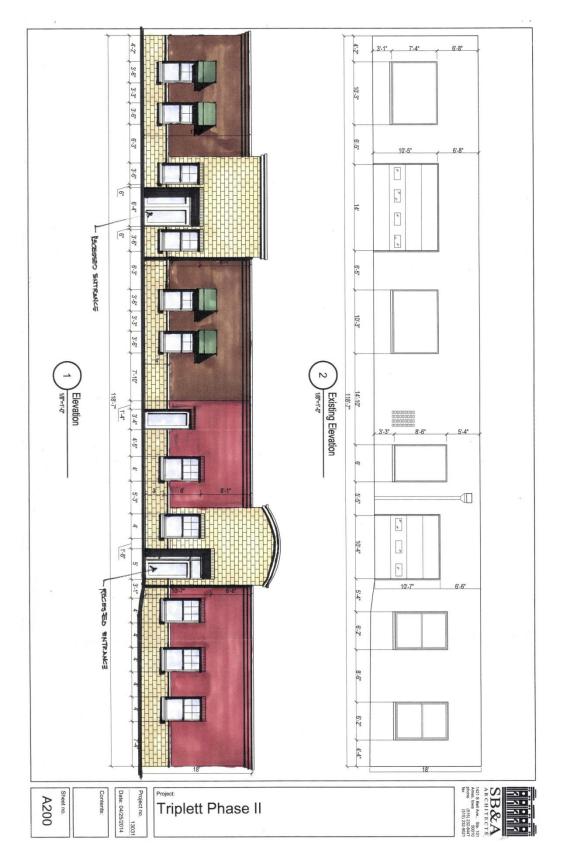
Several years ago a previous owner of the building replaced almost all the existing windows on both the first and second floors. Even though these newer windows are not historically accurate to the type of windows they replaced, their overall size and color are appropriate for the overall appearance. The only exceptions to this is the second floor windows on the south elevation facing the alleyway, a bay window facing east at the southeast corner, and the single storefront glazing and transom panels for The Spice restaurant. (See the accompanying photograph)

With the east face of the building facing Tom Evans Plaza, this building effectively has two front façades facing the public. The necessary work needed to bring each face up to standard is identified separately, as identified on the drawings. The intended repairs are as follows:

East Façade

- 1. Reinstall front windows in Northeast Corner: These windows were blocked in many decades ago. We will install new windows to match those on the northeast corner of the lower north façade, and upper windows on the east and north façades.
- 2. Remove and Reinstall Entry Steps into Lucullan's: These concrete steps are degrading quickly, and are placed 8" below the threshold causing a tripping hazard. We intend to replace these steps by extending the painted steel platform from The Spice's entrance and installing new metal steps.
- 3. Repair and Repaint Existing Wall: We intend investigate the existing surface, fill and repair all areas where spalling has removed sections of the concrete surface, fix hairline cracks that are allowing water to enter, and then repaint the exterior wall in its entirety, back to the two tone motif.

323 - 5th



323 - 5th

STOTT BARRIENTOS & ASSOCIATES ARCHITECTS

RE: Façade Grant Application for 323 5th Street in Ames.

WRITTEN STATEMENT(S)

The proposed project at the above-mentioned address includes improvements to the Burnett Street façade of the existing building. The "other facades" set of guidelines will most likely apply to this project. Per the map illustration included in the application packet, the subject property is located in the façade grant program area.

The proposed project will include removal of the existing windows and overhead service doors along Burnett Street. These areas will then be in-filled with entrances and fenestration in harmony with the Design Guidelines. Improvements are being studied as well to enhance the existing older masonry on this façade.

HISTORY AND CONTEXT

As it appears today, there are three distinct facades along Burnett Street beginning at the corner of 5th street and continuing for $\frac{1}{2}$ of the block. The southernmost façade is not included in this application. The two "service bay" facades north of the corner façade are the subject properties to be improved. Until the mid-1990's this facility served as a car dealership with the showroom on the corner of 5th and Burnett and the service bay immediately adjacent on Burnett. It appears that as the dealership grew more service bays were needed thus prompting the northernmost building addition. In the time since the dealership moved to another location this building (all three parts) has housed multiple business. Upon purchase of the building by the current Owner, the two service bays have remained largely unchanged and have been leased, short term, to various small business. It is the goal of the Owner to rehabilitate these two spaces into viable Class A office space, effectively eliminating the "service bay" look of the building and bringing these two facades in harmony with other buildings downtown. Whether these two additions are treated as one main façade or as two separate smaller facades is yet to be determined by the Owner and the design team. Either approach would be in harmony with other structures in the area.

EXISTING BUILDING MATERIALS

Both structures are concrete block or masonry structures with steel joist roof structure. The facades appear to be mix of terra-cotta masonry and clay face brick. The existing windows are single pane steel windows which were common in the 1940s – 1960s. The existing facades have no historical significance architecturally or stylistically. With the approval of the façade grant the Owner desires to improve them both architecturally and stylistically.

PROJECT BUDGET

The anticipated construction cost for this project could range from \$35,000 – \$55,000 per the following breakdown:

	Low	High
Selective Demolition:	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 4,000.00
New Aluminum Storefront Entrances:	\$12,000.00	\$20,000.00
New Aluminum Windows:	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 8,000.00
Additional Masonry work	\$10,000.00	\$19,200.00
Canopies and Lighting (Optional)	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00
TOTALS:	\$38,000.00	\$57,000.00

323 - 5th

SB&A ARCHITECTS, LLC

PROPOSED MATERIALS:

Entrances: Aluminum storefront with mullions consistent with Main Street professional building facades

Windows: Operable divided lite windows to break up the façade and provide a pedestrian scale to the façade, thus moving further away from the visual impact of the building's former use as a garage.

Masonry: Combination of modular stone and modular brick. The building will still maintain their own identity through color of brick but be tied together through the use of the stone and cornice details.

COST OF DESIGN SERVICES:

It is anticipated that the Architectural and Engineering Services for this portion of their project will range from \$3,000.00 - \$5,000.00.

IMAGE ILLUSTRATING THE FAÇADE CHANGES:

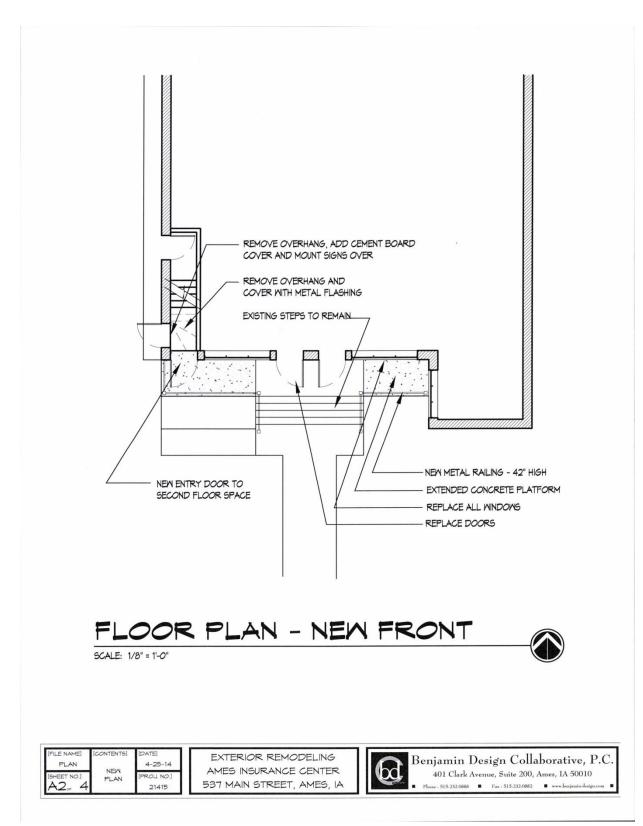
(See Attachments)

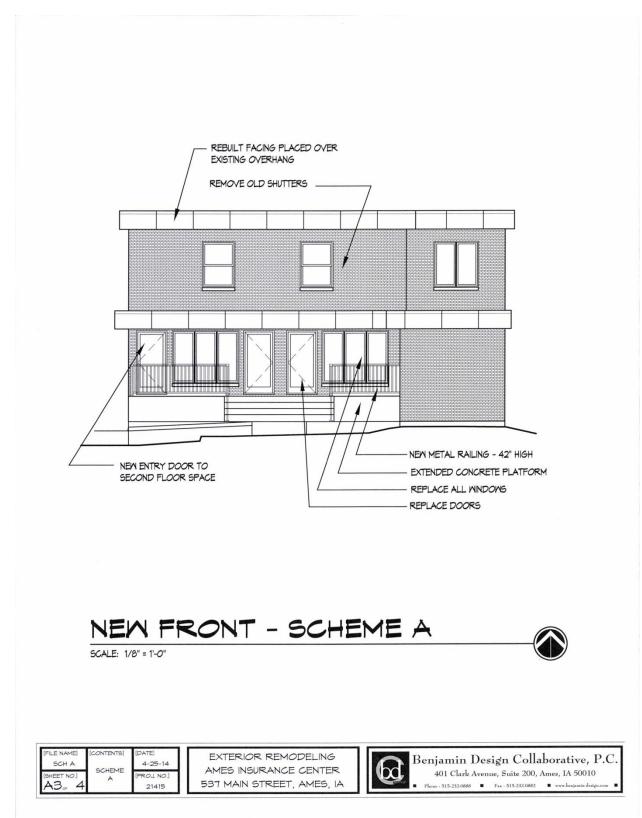


Existing Main Street Façade



Proposed Main Street Façade





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Downtown Façade Grant

537 Main Street, Ames Insurance Center JMMR, LLC.

April 25, 2014

Compliance Statement

The original structure located at 537 Main Street was built as a single family home, at some time near the beginning of the 20th century. The only listing included in the Ames Historical Society's database is a statement in the 1914 Ames Directory listing Mrs. B Brintnall as the owner a house on that site. This matches the review of the existing property and its condition. The original building appears to be built similar to the American Four Square design, with four bedrooms and bath above and living spaces below. The original house was changed extensively at some part of its history when it was "modernized" for commercial use. Changes that can be identified with that time period are removing the pitched roof in favor of a flat more commercial looking roof, a single story addition of offices along the rear of the building, and the changeover to a brick façade. Presumably further changes were made the property changed over to an attorney's office and new offices and reception were constructed next door directly attaching to the east façade, with the addition of a small conference room on the front right corner. It doesn't appear that any major changes have been made to the exterior since the last new construction was completed in the late 70's.

The major theme of this remodeling is to "spruce up" the dated materials that are beginning to degrade on the exterior, and place the building into good serviceable use for many years to come. See the accompanying photographs. Overhangs that were constructed outlining the first and second floors have a painted plywood sheeting for coverage. The existing windows around the main floor are past their life expectancy, with single pane glass, worn out seals and dry rot along the base. The upper floor windows have already been replaced. The existing doors are of similar age, serviceable but without weatherstripping, thermal breaks or updated hardware. The intent is to address all of these issues at one time and improve the overall look of the building.

The intended repairs are as follows:

South Façade

- Remove the existing faded wood shutters from either side of the second floor windows.
- Remove the existing wood posts, remove the existing wood facing from the overhang fascia.
- Remove the existing non-compliant metal handrails.
- Replace the main floor windows, replace the existing entry doors.
- Sawcut a new door opening through the wall to create a new entry into the stairwell leading to the upstairs office / tenant space.

- Construct a concrete extension to the existing stoop to extend it along the building front.
- Install a new code compliant metal guardrail and handrail to be placed along the perimeter of the concrete stoop and steps.
- Rebuild the existing overhangs on first and second floors to be 30" deep, self supporting, and add new fascia and soffit out of composite metal panels.

West Façade

- Continue the refurbishment / rebuilding of the existing overhangs.
- Close off the existing door to the second floor stairway and cover with a color matched metal panel.
- Replace the existing first floor windows on this side.
- Repaint the existing doors that are to remain.