

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: **AWARD OF DOWNTOWN FAÇADE GRANT**

BACKGROUND:

The Downtown Façade Grant Program was introduced in 2000 to facilitate private improvements to downtown retail and other commercial storefronts. The City Council annually budgets \$50,000 as matching funds for eligible projects. The program allows for up to \$15,000 of dollar-for-dollar matching funds per front façade and up to \$1,000 for additional architectural services. This program is available to property owners within the area generally described as from 6th Street to the railroad tracks, Duff Avenue to Northwestern Avenue, and along Kellogg Avenue to Lincoln Way (Attachment 1).

The program requires compliance with specified Design Guidelines that can be found on the Planning Division website at this [link](#). The program requirements include a prerequisite of a ground floor use of office or retail trade. Additionally, grant eligibility includes a requirement for proposed improvements to retain the historic façade or for the removal of non-compliant elements consistent with the guidelines or pursue eligibility under the other façade guidelines.

The program does not allow for maintenance activities or replacement of compliant elements with new in-kind elements as eligible activities on their own. Proposed improvements are intended to have a significant positive visual impact on the building and the overall district. If grant requests exceed the available funding, the program criteria for front façades includes preference for façades that have not received funding in previous rounds. Attachment 2 provides an overview of the intent and process for the façade grant program, and Attachment 3 outlines the scoring criteria.

The program is designed to operate with two application cycles. The first cycle is typically in the summer and if there are funds remaining after awards are granted in the first round, then a second application round occurs in the winter. The summer grant round is intended to provide funding for new projects with one grant per building. The second round is intended to fund new projects and potentially second façades for properties that have already received a grant.

GRANT APPLICATION RECEIVED:

The City solicited applications for this the second round of FY 2021/22 funding in March and April of 2022. One eligible grant request was received for one property. A project summary, location map, and project design illustrations are attached. **The available funding for this second round of FY 2021/22 is \$34,000. The total requested grant funding is \$10,335.50.**

<u>Address</u>	<u>Business or Building Name</u>	<u>Amount Requested</u>	<u>Total Project</u>
410 Douglas Avenue	Ames History Museum (Pantorium)	\$10,335.50	\$44,831.62
		\$10,335.50	\$44,831.62

410 Douglas Avenue

This application is for the two-story building at 410 Douglas Avenue known as the Pantorium. The name comes from the prominent sign protruding from the second story façade. The archaic term refers to the use for which the building was constructed: laundry cleaning.

The façade is largely unchanged from when it was constructed in 1922. The Pantorium sign was not original to the building; it was added in 1937. The proposed, grant-eligible work is to replace the second-story windows (Attachment 4). The current configuration has six windows: four that closely match the original windows and two narrow ones on either side of the Pantorium sign (which is centered on the façade). The applicant intends to replace these windows with five windows, as originally constructed (Attachment 5). The new windows will not have the decorative muntins.

The Ames Historical Society owns the subject property and the property immediately to the north, which houses the Ames History Center. The subject property was purchased recently by the Historical Society with the intent to construct an addition and allow for the museum to occupy all ground-level space. The new museum entrance will be through the Pantorium.

Along with replacing the second-story windows, the Pantorium sign will be restored, the masonry will be repaired and cleaned, and new doors will be installed. The building had formerly been used by a radio station and interior work will include remodeling of the space for exhibits.

The total estimated cost for 410 Douglas Avenue is \$44,831.62, including design work. Of that amount, \$20,671.07 is estimated to be grant-eligible work (including \$730 for design). **The project is eligible for maximum matching funding of \$15,000 plus \$1,000 for design work.** At the time of reimbursement, the applicant will need to provide cost breakdowns to ensure only eligible activities are funded with the façade grant.

WORK	ELIGIBLE COST ESTIMATES	TOTAL COST ESTIMATES
New Windows	\$ 5,957	\$ 5,957
Associated Window Work (including labor)	13,984	13,984
Associated Ineligible Work		24,160
Design Work	\$ 730	\$ 730
Total Project Cost	\$ 20,671	\$ 44,831

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve a Downtown Façade Improvement Grant for 410 Douglas Avenue for up to \$10,335.50 of the \$20,671.07 in estimated eligible costs for the second-story window replacement.
2. Approve a grant award for a lesser amount.
3. Do not approve a façade grant award.

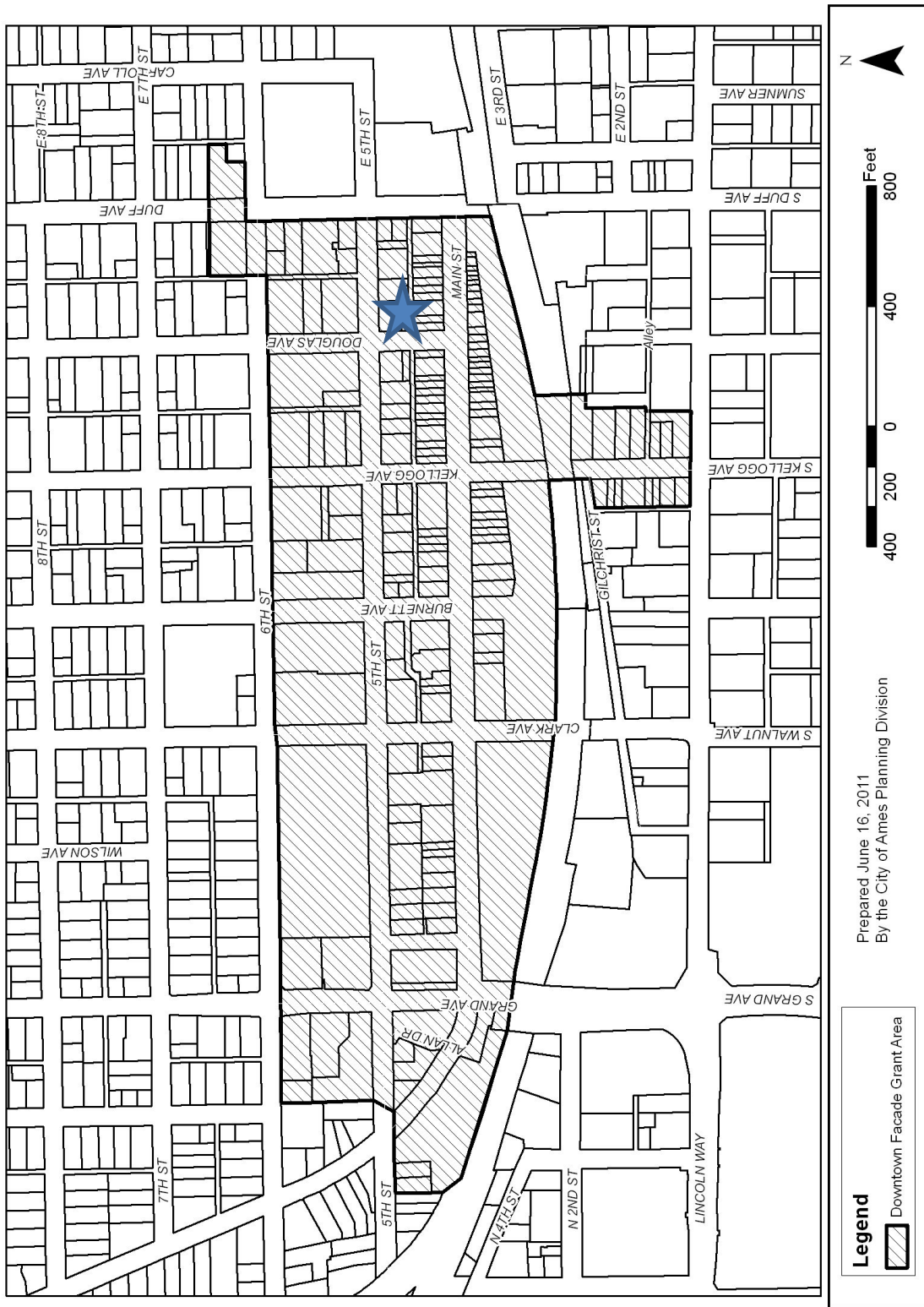
CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

This round of grant application solicitation resulted in one request involving one building in the amount of \$10,335.50. City staff has determined that the proposed Downtown Façade Improvement project for the building at 410 Douglas Avenue complies with the design requirements of the program as a replacement of a noncompliant window form. Although it removes a noncompliant feature, the visual impact of this change will be minimal. At this time there is funding available for the request as no other competing applications were submitted.

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

Downtown Facade Grant Area

Attachment 1: Eligibility Map



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 façades 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:

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

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 façades on Main Street and façades 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 3: 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 façade
- Improvements apply to more than one 25-foot wide bay on one façade
- 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 FAÇADES (such as Café Diem):

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

OTHER FAÇADES (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

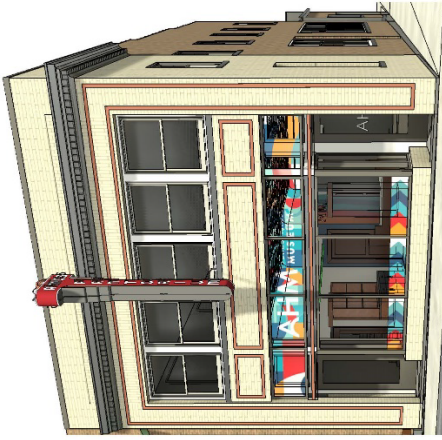
Attachment 4: 410 Douglas Avenue



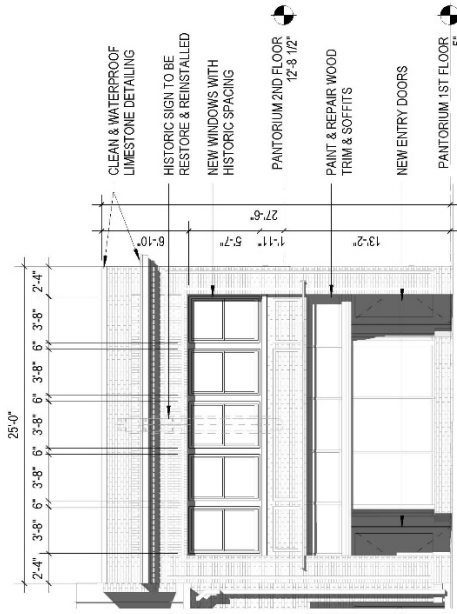
Pantorium in 1922



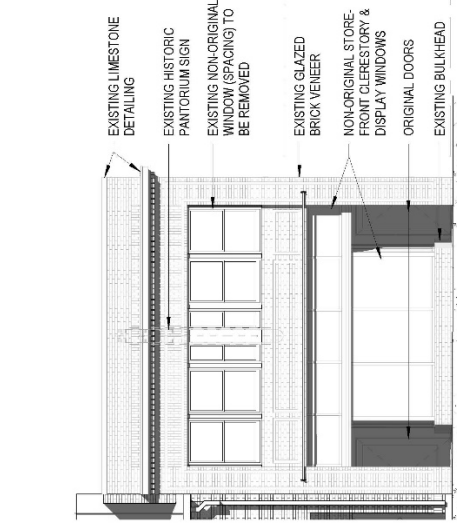
Pantorium in the present



3 SOUTHWEST PERSPECTIVE
SCALE:



PANTORIUM - WEST
2 EXTERIOR ELEVATION
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



PANTORIUM - WEST - EXISTING
1 EXTERIOR ELEVATION
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

CLEAN & WATERPROOF LIMESTONE DETAILING
HISTORIC SIGN TO BE RESTORE & REINSTALLED
NEW WINDOWS WITH HISTORIC SPACING
PANTORIUM 2ND FLOOR 12'-8 1/2"
PAINT & REPAIR WOOD TRIM & SOFFITS
NEW ENTRY DOORS
PANTORIUM 1ST FLOOR 5'

EXISTING LIMESTONE DETAILING
EXISTING HISTORIC PANTORIUM SIGN
EXISTING NON-ORIGINAL WINDOW (SPACING) TO BE REMOVED
EXISTING GLAZED BRICK VENEER
NON-ORIGINAL STORE FRONT CLERESTORY & DISPLAY WINDOWS
ORIGINAL DOORS
EXISTING BULKHEAD

Existing & Proposed Façade for 410 Douglas Avenue

DOWNTOWN FACADE GRANT
April 4, 2022



AVEC Design+Build
131 Main Street
Ames, IA 50010
515-233-4641

AMES HISTORY MUSEUM - ADDITION & REMODEL
AMES HISTORY MUSEUM
410 DOUGLAS AVENUE
AMES, IOWA 50070