

Staff Report

SPRING FY 2024/25 DOWNTOWN FACADE GRANTS

June 10, 2025

BACKGROUND:

The Downtown Facade Grant Program was introduced in 2000 to facilitate private improvements to downtown retail and other commercial storefronts (Attachment A). City Council has modified the program requirements multiple times within the past several years, mostly recently last year to allow for a new type of grant for exterior building maintenance and rear facades of historic buildings. **The program has two funding rounds with different priorities, a fall round for primarily front facade improvements and a spring round for front facades, historic rehabilitation, maintenance, and rear facades.**

The City Council annually budgets \$75,000 as matching funds for eligible projects. The program has allowed for up to \$23,000 of dollar-for-dollar matching funds per front facade and up to \$2,000 for additional architectural services for standard facade grants. For the spring 2024/25 fiscal year, the remaining available funding for the Downtown Facade Grant Program is \$146,216. Projects that were previously approved, but not yet started or completed are not included in the available funding amount.

The program requires compliance with specified Design Guidelines that can be found on the [Planning Division webpage](#). 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 facade or for the removal of non-compliant elements consistent with the guidelines or to pursue eligibility under the Other facade guidelines.

The program was modified recently to allow for the rehabilitation of historically significant, character-defining features of contributing historic resources in the National Register Downtown Historic District. This work includes restoration of original windows or distinct architectural features such as parapet walls. Further program modifications made exterior walls, roofs, and foundations eligible for maintenance and allowed for rear facades to receive grant funding in compliance with the Design Guidelines.

Proposed improvements are intended to have significant positive visual impact on the building and the overall district. If grant requests exceed the available funding, the program criteria for front facades includes preference for facades that have not received funding in previous rounds. Attachment B provides an overview of the intent and process for the facade grant program, and Attachment C outlines scoring criteria. Attachments D, E, and F are the current applications.

GRANT APPLICATIONS RECEIVED:

The City solicited applications for the second round of FY 2024/25 funding in April 2025. Three complete applications are being considered for this second round. (An additional application, not included, was deemed incomplete.) **All three of the proposed grants are related to maintenance rather than the traditional facade improvement grants to remove noncompliant features.** A project summary, location map, and project design illustrations are attached. **Staff calculated the total request of eligible grant funding to be \$52,926.**

Address	Business or Building Name	Staff Recommended Award	Total Project (applicant estimates)
136 & 138 Main Street	Little Woods Herbs & Teas	\$18,625	\$39,250
202 Main Street	P. Frangos Building	\$24,294	\$53,000
313 Main Street	Cooks' Emporium	\$10,007	\$22,014
TOTAL		\$52,926	\$114,264

136 & 138 Main Street:

The building at 136 and 138 Main Street is home to Little Woods Herbs and Teas. The two-story structure was constructed in the mid-1880s and, like most of the buildings on Main Street, had its original, Victorian facade replaced between the 1920s and 1940s. The facade is little changed since then. The building is located in the National Register Historic District as a contributing resource.

The applicants are requesting grant funding for the following work:

- repointing the mortar and repairing cracks on the front facade
- repairing and replacing windows lintels on the front facade
- repair to the parge coating on the rear facade (a parge coat is the thin coat of mortar over the bricks)

This work qualifies as a maintenance grant as supporting the exterior structural elements of the building.

The applicant is proposing to remove a chimney on the roof of the building, which staff determined is not an eligible cost as it does not maintain an existing feature of the building nor is it removing a non-compliant feature from an eligible facade. No other design changes are proposed.

Work	Eligible Cost Estimates	Total Cost Estimates
Front Facade Brick & Mortar Repair	\$12,750	\$12,750
Window Lintel Restoration	\$12,000	\$12,000
Rear Facade Repair	\$8,500	\$8,500

Ineligible Work (including contingency)		\$4,000
Professional Design Fees	\$2,000	\$2,000
Total	\$35,250	\$39,250

The City's match is \$16,625 plus \$2,000 in design fees for a total of \$18,625.

202 Main Street:

The building at 202 Main Street, the P. Frangos Building, is home to Chic Beauty Salon on the ground level. The two-story structure was erected in the mid-1880s and had its original, Victorian facade replaced between the 1920s and 1940s. The building is located within the National Register Historic District as a contributing resource.

The facade is largely unchanged since the current facade was constructed and the two windows on the second story are original to that streamlined facade. The windows are 4 panes wide by 5 panes tall with steel muntins (the horizontal and vertical pieces holding the panes). The casement windows each open on the left and right sides.

The applicant is requesting grant funding to restore and repair the original windows, which qualifies as a rehabilitation grant for character-defining, historically significant features. The repair of the original window is an example of work that was previously ineligible but is now eligible after Council's recent changes to promote historic preservation. The work also includes repairs to the exterior of the west wall, which includes repairing the mortar and replacing missing bricks, which qualifies as maintenance. This wall, which was originally shared with a now demolished building, now faces Cynthia Duff Plaza, which cuts through the south side of the Main Street block to the municipal parking lot. No design changes are proposed.

Work	Eligible Cost Estimates	Total Cost Estimates
Window Repair & Associated Work	\$39,588	\$39,588
Repair to West Exterior Wall	\$5,000	\$5,000
Ineligible Work (including contingency)		\$3,412
Professional Design Fees	\$2,000	\$5,000
Total	\$48,588	\$53,000

The City match is \$22,294 plus \$2,000 in design fees for a total of \$24,294.

313 Main Street:

The building at 313 Main Street was built in the mid-1920s and is home on the ground level to Cooks' Emporium. The structure has two stories and its facade is likely original. The building is located within the National Register Historic District and is a contributing resource.

The facade is largely unchanged since it was built. The applicant is proposing to repair the mortar and brickwork where damage has occurred, which qualifies for the maintenance grant. No design changes are proposed.

Work	Eligible Cost Estimates	Total Cost Estimates
Front Facade Brick & Mortar Repair	\$16,014	\$16,014
Ineligible Work (contingency)		\$4,000
Professional Design Fees	\$2,000	\$2,000
Total	\$18,014	\$22,014

The City match is \$8,007 plus \$2,000 in design fees for a total of \$10,007.

OPTIONS:

1. Approve the Downtown Facade Improvement and Maintenance Grants as proposed by the applicants for:
 - a. 136 & 138 Main Street for up to \$16,625 in estimated eligible costs for facade repairs and \$2,000 in design fees.
 - b. 202 Main Street for up to \$22,294 in estimated eligible costs for the restoration of original windows and repair to an exterior wall and \$2,000 in design fees.
 - c. 313 Main Street for up to \$8,007 in estimated eligible costs for the facade repairs and \$2,000 in design fees.
2. Modify the award amounts, conditions, or decline to award a grant to any or all of the applicants based upon the finding that any of the proposed projects do not meet the intent of the program or its requirements.
3. Defer action and ask staff or the applicant(s) for additional information.

STAFF COMMENTS:

The Downtown Facade Grant application solicitation has resulted in three requests for a total of \$52,926. A fourth request was submitted for maintenance, but it did not include a required assessment of the building conditions to be a complete application. Staff responded to the applicant and requested additional information, but it was not ready to be reviewed consistent with the three complete applications.

City staff has determined that the proposed Downtown Facade Improvement projects for the buildings at 136 & 138 Main Street, 202 Main Street, and 313 Main Street comply with the requirements of the program. There is adequate funding available for the requests. Therefore, is it the recommendation of the City Manager that the Council approve Alternative #1, as described above.

ATTACHMENT(S):

[Attachment A - Eligibility Maps.pdf](#)

[Attachment B - Program Overview.pdf](#)

[Attachment C - Scoring Criteria.pdf](#)

[Attachment D - 136 & 138 Main Street.pdf](#)

[Attachment E - 202 Main Street.pdf](#)

[Attachment F - 313 Main Street.pdf](#)