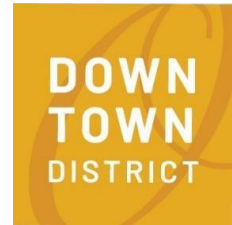




Downtown District Façade Improvement Program Overview



The Central City Façade Improvement Program is a matching grant initiative administered by the City of O'Fallon. The purpose of the program is to encourage and assist property and business owners to improve the exterior appearance of their buildings. Properties must be within the Central City TIF District and eligible facades must be readily visible from a public street. Rear facades of properties on the south side of State Street and on 1st Street will also be considered eligible, since they are highly visible.

Applicants are eligible to receive up to 50% of the project cost up to a maximum of \$14,999, based on fund availability. Funds are limited and winning projects will be selected as part of a competitive application process. This is a reimbursement program; grant dollars are disbursed at the time of project completion for approved projects that have submitted all required documentation. A building owner/eligible business can only participate in the Façade Improvement Program with a maximum of two projects per application cycle.

Eligible costs include, but are not limited to:

- Restoration of architectural details in historic buildings and removal of elements covering any such architectural details, including false facades
- Replacement/installation of appropriately scaled doors and lighted window areas for retail displays or for visual access into a retail or service business or a restaurant
- Installation of decorative lighting for the purpose of illuminating the exterior and/or signage of a building
- Replacement/installation of awnings, canopies, or shutters
- Architectural/engineering/design fees associated with an approved façade project
- Improvements that bring “grandfathered” signage into conformance with current codes and the Downtown O'Fallon Design Guidelines
- Installation of solid vinyl privacy fencing (or other materials as approved by staff) to conceal existing/approved outdoor storage or dumpsters.
- Murals*

* Murals shall not include signs for the business, either directly or indirectly (for example, flowers painted on the side of a florist). Projects involving murals will be required to submit additional information regarding the artist who will complete the project and may require review from the Arts Commission or other recommending bodies.

Items that are considered general building maintenance may be considered for the program, however will generally score much lower than projects incorporating recommendations from the Downtown O'Fallon Design Guidelines.

Applicant/Property Owner Qualifications:

- An applicant/property owner under a TIF agreement with the City are not eligible for the façade improvement program for their active project. Once the work associated with the TIF agreement is complete the property would be allowed to apply for a façade improvement project.

- Must be current in the payment of real estate taxes to St. Clair County
- Must be current in any amounts or accounts due to the City of O'Fallon
- No significant code violations (present or pending) within the City of O'Fallon and no adjudications for violating an order of the O'Fallon Building Division
- Has never been in a lawsuit for deficient performance under a contract
- A property is limited to \$14,999 per 3-year period of time

Applicant's Responsibilities and Submission Requirements:

- Applicants are encouraged to schedule a pre-application meeting with City staff
- Conceptual design plans (hand drawn, computer drafted, and/or photoshopped images)
- Summary of proposed improvements, including a materials list
- Two to four photographs of current façade(s) condition including overall and close up shots
- Detailed cost estimates/bids from at least two licensed construction professionals
- Letter from bank, or a bank statement, that shows applicant has sufficient funding to cover full project costs
- Written approval from building owner (if leasing)
- Proof of current property and casualty insurance
- Signed Conflict of Interest Statement indicating that no elected official or employee of the City of O'Fallon has an interest in the applicant's business or subject property.

Evaluation Criteria and Approval Process:

- A Façade Improvement Jury will rank completed applications using factors including, but not limited to, the following:
 - Conformance with the Downtown O'Fallon Design Guidelines
 - Overall visual impact of the project
 - Total projected budget
 - Involvement of architect or other design professional
 - Property maintenance history of the site (including recurring code violations)
- The Façade Improvement Jury will provide the City Administrator with their recommended projects.

The City reserves the right to reject any project or request additional information at its sole discretion. Once approved, projects must be completed within 6 months, unless the City agrees to extend the timeline due to extenuating circumstances. All projects will need to secure any required building permits. A licensed architect or engineer may be required depending on the type/scope of the project.

Central City TIF District Boundaries

