

Ontario Downtown Facade Grant Program and Grant Criteria and Guidelines

July 15, 2015

The Revitalize Ontario and the City of Ontario are in partnership for a revitalization program which is mirrored after the nationwide Main Street Program. The Main Street Program is based on the preservation of historically significant structures and is designed to bring economic revitalization to downtown areas. To this end, the Ontario Downtown Facade Grant Program has been established to encourage property owners in their restoration and preservation efforts by providing financial incentives.

The Facade Grant Program is specifically designed for the preservation and/or restoration of historic building facades. The program utilizes public funds to entice private investment by property and business owners interested in rehabilitating and restoring downtown commercial structures, stressing and highlighting their historic significance. The goals of this program are to encourage historic preservation through restoration of downtown structures, and to abate any continued deterioration of downtown by restoring the uniqueness, character and integrity of downtown structures to the period of their construction. The city is looking into the establishment of a Certified Local Government Commission (CLGC) which will consist of five (5) Commissioners who will eventually review facade projects.

Pending the establishment of the CLGC, to qualify for assistance, an applicant must comply with the Historic Downtown Facade Improvement Program guidelines, and projects must be approved by the City/Facade Committee.

All property owners of existing commercial/residential buildings located in Revitalize Ontario's boundaries are eligible for this program. The boundaries of Phase I are from East and West Idaho Avenue, South to SE and SW 4th Avenue, and from the railroad tracks on the East side to SW 1st Street on the West side. The boundaries of Phase II are from East and West Idaho Avenue North to NE and NW 4th Avenue, and from the railroad tracks on the East side to NW 1st Street on the West side. The boundaries of Phase III are from SE & SW 4th Avenue, South to SE and SW 4th Avenue, and from the railroad tracks on the East side to SW 1st Street on the West side and from NE and NW 4th Avenue, North to NE and NW 8th Avenue, and from the railroad tracks on the East side to NW 1st Street on the West side. The boundaries of Phase IV are from SW 4th Avenue, North to NW 4th Avenue, and from SW and NW 1st Street on the East side to SW and NW 4th Street on the West side.

Eligible Activities: *(items included, but not limited to)*

1. Repair to building exterior facades
2. Masonry repair
3. Cleaning of building exterior
4. Exterior painting
5. Repairing or replacing cornices, entrances, doors, windows, decorative detail, awnings
6. Signage and sidewalks
7. Other repairs that may improve the esthetic quality of the exterior of the building

Ineligible Activities: *(items included but not limited to)*

1. Interior Improvements
2. Roofing
3. Inappropriate cleaning methods, repairs, replacements or alterations

Program Implementation:

- Applications and guidelines for the program are available at the City Hall Planning Annex Building located at 458 SW 3rd Street.
- Applicants can request up to \$5,000, with a match of \$5,000. All projects will be assessed a \$150 administrative fee.
- The facade improvement program is an on-going grant program with limited funds. Completed application packets will be submitted to the City Planning Annex Building and date/time stamped. Funds will be distributed on a first come/first served system. Application packets must include: a completed application; drawings and plans of the building which illustrate all proposed work, including any structural repair; awnings, to include a sample of the awning material; a cost estimates; the proposed construction schedule; and paint colors.
- The City Planning/Facade Committee will consider all applications which comply with the design guidelines.
- Applicants requesting funds must sign an agreement with the City of Ontario. Applicants will be required to abide by the City Downtown Facade Grand Guidelines and rules regulating the use of Oregon Labor Standards.
- Grant funds will be distributed to the applicant upon completion of the approved phases and inspections conducted by the City Planning/Facade Committee (CP/FC).
- Applications must be completed and approved prior to any construction activity.
- During the course of construction, the CP/FC will monitor the progress of the project.
- Changes in originally approved work specifications must be approved by the CP/FC prior to any changes being made to the building facade.
- Approved changes in the work verification will be attached to the original applications dated and signed by the CP/FC.
- Deviations from an approved plan may disqualify the applicant from this grant program.

- **Project must start no more than two months after the date of the approved grant, or grant monies shall be forfeited.**

The ultimate goal of this program is to encourage improvements, which stress and highlight the historic significance and uniqueness of downtown structures through building restoration and beautification.

CITY DOWNTOWN FACADE GRANT GUIDELINES

1. BASIC PRINCIPLES

The purpose of design guidelines for Revitalize Ontario and the City of Ontario Facade Grant Program shall heretofore be known as CDFG (Phases I, II, III & IV) areas, and is to protect and enhance the unique, irreplaceable architectural, visual and historic character of this area.

The Ontario City Council and Revitalize Ontario have each stated their purpose and intent to preserve the character of the CDFG area in the best interest of the entire community. These guidelines carry out that intent by defining the most important elements of that character and by stating the best means of preserving and enhancing them.

The basic principle, in respect to existing buildings, is to preserve and enhance their original design, material and architectural detail, specifically the exterior.

The basic principle, in respect to new or infill construction, is to preserve the unity of scale, material, set-back, roof-line and proportion of window/door space to wall space as shown in the original buildings.

2. APPLICATION OF THE GUIDELINES

- A.** The guidelines apply within boundaries: the Revitalize Ontario area beginning with the C3 Zone Central Commercial in Ontario, Oregon.
- B.** The guidelines apply to commercial, commercial/residential mixed-use, and to multiple unit residential buildings.
- C.** The guidelines apply to rehabilitation, remodeling, addition or demolition, changes to exterior appearance, and new or infill construction when the land, the building or the work receives financial assistance through the Ontario Facade Grant Program.

- D. These guidelines are not hard and fast regulations. They are flexible criteria. They assure property owners that design review will be based on clear, public and uniform standards. Consideration will be given to the amount and quality of original materials and design remaining in the building. Consideration will also be given to clear cases of economic hardship or deprivation of reasonable use of the owner's property. Current International Existing Building Codes along with any existing Historical Building Codes and the current Oregon and Fire Codes, along with any existing Historical Building Codes, shall apply.

3. GUIDELINES

A. For Preservation and Rehabilitation of Structures and Materials

1. **The original features of a building should not be destroyed.** The removal, alteration, or covering-up of original material or design shall be avoided.
 - a. The original material and design can be determined by physical inspection, old photographs, consultation with prior owners, and building records.
 - b. In some cases, alterations have been made with materials or designs which become irreplaceable or representative of unique architectural style or period. Such alterations shall be respected.
 - c. Alterations which have totally removed the original material, but not done with irreplaceable materials or representative of a unique style, may be removed, replaced or covered.
2. **Deteriorated features should be repaired rather than replaced.**

Repairs should maintain the design, texture, material and other appearances of the original.
3. **Alterations which conceal the original design and materials, or which are not appropriate for the age of the building, should be removed.**
4. **Missing material or features should be replaced if possible.**

Replacement should be based on evidence from historic, physical, or pictorial sources. Only if evidence for the specific building is not available, may replacement be based on similar buildings of the same age. The replacement material or feature should duplicate the design, material texture, and appearance of the original, to the extent possible.
5. **Clean original materials as gently as possible.**

Chemical stripping rather than sandblasting shall be the preferred method of paint removal from masonry. Unpainted masonry should be cleaned with low pressure water and soft bristle brushes. Heat guns or StepEze should be used on painted wood.

6. **Mortar should be repointed only when there is evidence of water standing in joints or a significant amount of mortar is missing.** Replacement mortar should match the color, texture, coefficients of expansion and contraction, and ingredient ratio of the original mortar. **Original joint size, method of application and profile shall be duplicated.**
7. **The original or early color and texture of masonry surfaces should be retained.**
 - a. Unpainted masonry should not be painted but can be sealed with a water proofing which breathes.
 - b. Masonry surfaces may have been painted for maintenance or appearance. Paint should not be removed *if the building was originally painted, or if the removal will damage the surface.* Most paint traps moisture inside soft bricks. Special masonry paints should be used.
 - c. Cement based paint or tinted slurry may be used to protect deteriorated masonry.
 - d. The roofing, parapet, cornice, coping, scuppers and gutters should always be inspected, cleaned and repaired before painting or performing masonry work.
8. **Original window and door openings should be retained.**
 - a. New windows and doors should not be added, particularly on the major or visible sides of the building.
 - b. Original windows and door openings should not be expanded, reduced or in filled.
 - c. Original windows and doors should be retained. If the original is gone, or must be replaced, the replacement should closely match original pane size, mullions, sash and frames. Replacement should completely fill the original opening.

B. For Design of Restoration or Remodeling

1. **In general, it is recommended that buildings will be restored to their original or early appearance.**
 - a. All buildings should be recognized as products of their own time. Remodeling should not borrow designs, materials or colors from other eras.
 - b. When complete restoration to original appearance is not possible, or extensive replacement is not necessary, remodeling for compatibility with the character of downtown should be considered.

- 2. In general, it is expected that restoration or remodeling will contribute to the visual unity of the building, neighboring buildings, and the neighborhood.**
 - a. Restoration or remodeling should not exclude or isolate portions of the building. The entire front, sides and back should be considered as a whole design.
 - b. Contemporary design for replacements, additions, or remodeling should not be discouraged when such designs do not destroy or cover original material and are compatible with the building and its neighbors in the respect to size, scale, color, and material or character.
- 3. The traditional elements of a commercial building should be retained, restored or replaced.**
 - a. The decorative cornice should be repaired and maintained, or replaced if necessary.
 - b. Window sills and hoods should be repaired and maintained.
 - c. Decorative patterns of masonry should be repaired and maintained.
 - d. Windows should fill the entire opening.
 - e. The lintel should be uncovered.
 - f. Transom panes should be uncovered.
 - g. Storefronts should have the largest possible window area in keeping with the original opening.
 - h. The bulkhead should be no more than approximately two (2) feet high. Original bulkheads were wood panel, not brick. Those may be replaced with wood or painted metal to simulate wood panels.
 - i. The entrance should reflect the original design, when possible.
 - j. The door should be commercial in style and typical for the period.
- 4. Historic paint colors appropriate to the age of the building should be used.**
- 5. Canvas or treated cloth awnings are recommended where they are compatible with the age of the building and the character of downtown.**
 - a. Aluminum or plastic material and flat, horizontal canopies are not consistent with the appearance of older buildings.
 - b. Colors should complement the colors of the building.
 - c. Awnings should not cover distinctive architectural details. However, awnings may be used to cover alterations which are not original to the building.
 - d. Awnings may be fixed or retractable. They should be appropriate to the shape of the window or storefront.

6. **Grills, air conditioners, and exhaust fans should not be mounted on the front of the building if it can be avoided.** They should be incorporated in filler panels and painted the same color as the panel. They should not extend over the sidewalk or entrance to the building.

C. For New and Infill Construction

New construction means totally new structures, moved-in structures and new additions to existing structures undergoing restoration and rehabilitation.

1. **Generally, any new construction should be consistent with the character of the immediate surrounding area.**
 - a. The important elements of the character of the area are defined by the following guidelines.
 - b. The reproduction of historic design is recommended only for infill on a small scale or for additions to the original building.
 - c. Contemporary design for new construction is not discouraged. These guidelines focus on general rather than specific elements in order to encourage new designs compatible with the character of the area.
2. **The height and width of the facade should reflect the average proportions of the surrounding buildings in the specific area.**
3. **The new facade should be flush with the sidewalk, or if adjacent buildings are not, then flush to its neighbors.**
4. **Where located in the area containing older, historic buildings, the exterior material should be brick or stone masonry, similar in color or texture to older buildings.**
5. **Infill buildings should reflect some of the detailing of neighboring buildings in window shapes, cornice lines and brick work.**
6. **Where possible and reflective of the surrounding historic flavor, infill buildings should retain a similar proportional amount of solid wall to window and door openings on the facade.**