



City of Columbia
Building Façade Program

Purpose:

Historic Main Street Columbia and other Columbia Shopping Centers face stiff competition from strip malls and outlying areas where transportation-oriented retail developments thrive. The City of Columbia desires Columbia to be a destination and seeks to attract visitors.

This program will provide matchings funds and encourage both Historic Main Street Columbia building owners and other business owners throughout the community to improve their “curb appeal” with improvements like painting, shutters, address plaques, window boxes and step and sidewalk work.

General Requirements:

For the purpose of this program a “Façade” is defined as the front part of a building, adjacent to public right of way.

The improvements to be made will be reviewed by the Heritage and Preservation Committee for certain aspects (such as color, style, veneer, etc.).

The improvements will be completed within six months of application approval.

The City of Columbia will match approved façade improvements 50% up to \$5000.00 if money is available in the Façade Program. Only expenses incurred are reimbursable.

Eligibility Requirements:

The building must be located in Columbia City limits.

Building owners only are eligible to apply.

The building owner must fill out a complete application.

The building must house a business in a ground floor space at the time of the improvement request.

The building owner is responsible for maintaining the improvements. An owner that has not maintained the improvements funded by this Façade Program will be ineligible for future funds.

Any project undertaken prior to receiving City of Columbia approval are not eligible.

Only the principal structure of a property is eligible. Outbuildings or accessory buildings such as garages and barns are not eligible.

Colors will be as approved – generally no unusual or inappropriate colors will be allowed.

All improvements must adhere to the Columbia Municipal Codes.

Eligible Improvements:

Painting:

Applies to the Façade of a building.

Must be harmonious in color.

If the building is natural brick, it will remain. If painted brick or any other material, it can be repainted or restored to natural brick. Soft brick can be painted for protection.

Paint will be of high quality and must be approved.

Separate paint colors for the building walls and architecture details is encouraged.

Address Plaques:

Type specific.

Mounted prominently on façade.

Window Boxes, Windows, Doors & Exterior Treatments:

Type specific, size and location appropriate.

Replacement windows and/or doors must be historically accurate and compatible.

Exterior Treatments/replacements must conform with current applicable codes. Program not used to further or continue non-conformity on masonry codes.

Shutters:

Type specific.

Concrete & Repointing of Brick:

Appropriate techniques that will not contribute to future decay or damage.

Exterior Storefront and/or Storefront Display Lighting:

Compatible in scale and design.

No more light than necessary, downcast directional, bulbs not visible from street.

New Signage:

Must follow Sign Ordinances, be compatible with façade, and attached to facade.

Small hours of operation sign to be visible.

Other Improvements Upon Approval.

Application Instructions and Review Process:

Include in your application:

- A. A vivid description including all details. Include helpful diagrams and photos of improvements elsewhere as examples.
- B. Official cost estimates from contractors and vendors for façade work only.
- C. Two photos of the existing building and conditions.
- D. If your project requires, submit and architectural, sign or site plans.

All applications will be reviewed for completeness. The Façade Grant Committee will ascertain and make recommendations to the City of Columbia City Council within sixty (60) days. Upon completion, a Façade Grant Committee representative will perform a site visit and review the project. Invoices paid demonstrating approved costs will be submitted at this time and the fund reimbursement will be processed for payment, usually withing 10 business days.

Should an application fail to gain approval, they may request a written record of deficiencies and reapply for the program pending available funds.

Taxes and Other Obligations by Law:

All tax obligations by law relative to the building owner must be current as a condition for receiving funding from this program.

Contact Information:

For questions regarding the City of Columbia Façade Program, please contact:

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