

Alton Main Street

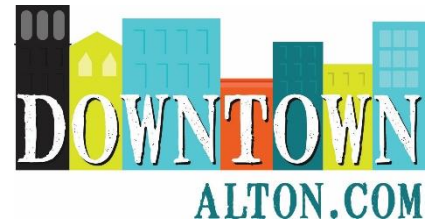
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Alton Main Street Façade Improvement Grant Program

Alton Main Street is excited to launch the Façade Improvement Grant (FIG) Program. This program is designed to assist property and business owners in rehabilitating the commercial facades of their buildings for the purpose of creating a positive visual impact, stimulating private investment, and complementing other community development efforts.

Our goal is simple. We want to provide you with the resources needed to improve the exterior appearance of your business. Research has shown that exterior building improvements result in an increase in sales in the year after the improvements are made (and this increase is often sustained for several years). Additionally, improvements will motivate owners and tenants of other properties in surrounding areas to make similar investments.

Eligibility Area

In order to be eligible for the FIG Program, your building must be located within the Alton Main Street district boundary. (see attached map)

Eligible and Ineligible Grant Uses

Eligible Improvement Examples:

- Signage
- Removal and/or installation of awnings, canopies or shutters
- Accent lighting
- Shopfront improvements
- Window graphics
- Removal of non-conforming elements of a building
- Replacement of deteriorated windows, doors and/or framing visible from the street
- Cleaning, preparation, and painting of exterior walls, shopfronts and trim
- Cleaning and/or re-pointing of brick, and other masonry
- Installation of siding materials
- Work on cornices, gutters and down spouts
- Outdoor dining fencing
- Trash can fencing
- All improvements must be visible from street

Ineligible Improvement Examples:

- Improvements not visible from public streets and sidewalks
- Interior improvements and modifications not related to building facades
- Non-façade improvements such as roofs, structural foundations, billboards, security systems, nonpermanent fixtures, parking lots, security bars, interior window coverings
- Items related to business operations (i.e. inventory, business equipment, etc.)

- New construction
- Property acquisition
- Expansion of building area
- Conversion of use
- Refinance of existing debt
- Payment of delinquent taxes
- Improvements to structures outside of the FIG boundary

FIG Process

- A business may apply for a grant from \$100 to \$2,000.
- The business must spend an equal amount or more on the project (applicants are required to contribute a 1:1 match, or greater, of the total grant awarded).
- A total of \$2,000 is available to be awarded in matching grant funding in any single period. The \$2,000 fund may be awarded to a single business, or divided between multiple businesses, depending on demand (the maximum a single business can receive is \$2,000).
- Owners/tenants can spend more than \$2,000 on a project but the grant will only match up to \$2,000.
- Interested owners and tenants should fill out an application (available at www.DowntownAlton.com).
- On-line applications will be submitted and will be conceptual. The FIG Committee will select projects based on the merit of the concepts presented and then will work with the selected applicants, if required, to help develop a final design.
- 50% of the approved funds will be given upon awarding the grant, and the remaining 50% of the approved funds will be given upon completion of the project.
- Projects must be completed within 6 months of approval.
- The completed work must adhere to the final design plans agreed to with the FIG Program Committee to ensure final payment.
- “Before” and “After” photos will need to be submitted prior to work beginning and upon completion
- This grant will not fund the costs of direct labor of the building / business owner, but volunteers may be available for some projects.
- Applications will be evaluated by the FIG Program Review Committee through an equitable process to ensure the application meets all FIG guidelines.
- Applicants will also be required to obtain all approvals/permits and adhere to all requirements as prescribed by the City of Alton, including review by the Appearance Review Commission and/or the Historic Preservation Commission prior to any work being done. AMS can provide some assistance in this process.
- All improvements must meet local, state and federal codes.

Note: The City of Alton has a separate façade grant program that you may explore to assist with funding the remaining cost of your project, up to 25% of the total cost. AMS can assist you in making the connection.

Alton Main Street – engaging our community in the continued renewal of our historic downtown district and Mississippi River heritage by cultivating an attractive center of economic and social activity.

DOWNTOWN BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES

Alton Main Street advocates/endorse the following guiding principles in rehabilitation, renovation, remodeling and new construction activities within the Downtown District. These guidelines are offered to help business/property owners and developers make sound investment decisions in the building improvements while enhancing the area's historic character. Building plans should be reviewed with a city building inspector to ensure substantial compliance with these guidelines.

Do — Recommendations for Historic Renovation:

- The traditional configuration of the storefront opening should be maintained, with the original storefront line along the sidewalk being maintained or restored.
- Storefront window display areas should be considered an important part of the retail marketing strategy in the downtown area. Large street level display windows should be retained as part of remodeling or new construction.
- If the storefront has been altered substantially, attempt to bring back original historic proportions throughout the use of design elements, even if they are not a restoration of the original. Avoid altering, concealing or removing historic details when renovating existing older buildings.
- The original facade, materials and ornamentation, should be maintained and/or restored. Missing facade elements should be replaced with new materials that match the original as closely as possible.
- Coverings that obliterate the size and shape of upper story windows should be removed.
- The horizontal alignments or architectural components such as store front windows, kick plates, first story cornices, parapet cornices and window sills should be recreated or restored.
- Unless damaged beyond repair, architectural designs on the parapet should be maintained.
- The mass, volume and height of new buildings should be compatible with existing buildings in the immediate area.
- Selected building materials should complement and be compatible with existing buildings in the immediate area.
- Exterior remodeling should be designed to consider the entire building facade. The ground floor exterior should be designed to harmonize with the upper stories.
- Existing buildings and structures should be recognized as products of their own time. Alterations which have no historical basis are discouraged.
- Color choices: As you choose colors to beautify your building, please consider ones that would also complement surrounding buildings and coordinate with the overall attempt to restore historical beauty to our district. Professional advice is available to offer assistance with color choices.

Don't — For Rehabilitation and Remodeling, the following are prohibited:

- Adding elements that are not original to the building, such as aluminum, vinyl, or fiberglass siding or roofing materials corrugated or beveled metal siding, highly tinted or mirrored glass, or corrugated fiberglass.
- Any material that attempts to mimic conventional building materials. For example: fiberglass panels that are molded to look like brick, or imitation metal rock work.
- Concrete block or brick larger than 4 inches in height, 12 inches in length
- New window openings or eliminating original window openings.
- Changing the roof design or style where visible from the ground
- Roof heating/cooling units visible from the street level
- Vinyl and metal screen/storm doors
- Astro turf, indoor-outdoor carpeting
- Removing or destroying original transom windows
- Removing, concealing or covering a cornice
- Removing, concealing or covering a parapet

Additional information and guidance on historical restoration is available from the Alton Main Street office.



Alton Main Street Façade Improvement Grant Program Initial Application Applicant

Applicant Name _____

Business Name or Building Name _____

Physical Address _____

Mailing address (if different from business address):

Email _____

Phone _____

Website (if applicable) _____

Type of Business _____

Date Business Opened _____

Brief description of the project _____

Total project cost _____ Amount requested _____

Date submitted _____

Signature of Applicant _____

(If the applicant is not the property owner)

Signature of Property Owner _____

Alton Main Street will follow up with you to discuss your project and other services we may be able to assist you with. If you have any questions, please contact Sara McGibany at Alton Main Street at (618) 463-1016 or email sara@altonmainstreet.org. You may email, mail, or hand deliver this application to the address below.

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