

DOWNTOWN FAÇADE GRANT SUMMARY

2024-2025 FY Grant Timeline

- October 3, 2024 – Applications available
- November 1, 2024 – Applications due
- November 2024 – City staff reviews and scores projects
- November (tent.) – City Council determines awardees
- November (tent.) – Final design documents due; Notice to Proceed issued
- Twelve months following Notice to Proceed – Project completed
- Immediately after Completion – Awardee submits payment application

Requirements for Façade Grants

There are *two* types of grants:

1. Modifications to bring facades into compliance with the Downtown Design Guidelines
2. Rehabilitation of historically significant, character-defining features.

Requirements for All Grants:

- The ground floor must be Office Uses or Trade Uses as defined by the Ames Zoning Ordinance.
- Structures used solely for residential purposes and buildings owned by the government, churches and other religious institutions are not eligible.
- Matching grants are available for up to \$23,000.
- Up to \$2,000 in professional design assistance is available for awardees.

Requirements for Downtown Design Guidelines Façade Grants:

- The façade design must comply with the Downtown Design Guidelines.
- Improvements to historic façades shall include the replacement of non-compliant elements with compliant elements.

Requirements for Rehabilitation of Historically Significant, Character-Defining Features:

- The work must retain and restore the architectural feature related to the building's historic significance. Examples include original windows, transoms, decorative cornices. Maintenance activities of a building are not eligible.
- The building must be a contributing structure to the National Register Ames Main Street Historic District or otherwise an individually listed Historic Resource on the National Register.

Considerations

- A façade that has not received any previous grant funding will receive preference.
- Façades on Main Street will receive preference.
- The City of Ames Planning staff will work with applicants to define the project, ensure that it meets the guidelines, ensure that it is feasible, and that it can be completed on time.

- If the entire grant budget is not committed in the first round, a second round will be awarded in the fall.

All façade improvements must comply with existing building codes. Grant approval may be conditioned on correcting any pre-existing code defects in the building façade and/or any structural or safety defects in the building before grant work proceeds or before grant funds are paid.

Applicants may also be eligible for City of Ames tax exemption under the Downtown Urban Revitalization program if the project meets the eligibility criteria (a separate application will be necessary).

The applicant may also be eligible for Main Street Iowa Design Assistance. Contact the Main Street Cultural District for further information.