

# MAIN STREET AREA FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (FIP)

## **General Guidelines**

### 1.0 Purpose

Design or property appearance guidelines exist to assist building owners, in Lufkin's downtown Central Business district (CB), in preserving the architectural and cultural integrity of the district. Guidelines identify character-giving architectural elements of a building's façade and street front appearance that are considered important in maintaining a desired look. These guidelines are to serve as a standard for evaluating façade improvement projects within the downtown area of Lufkin which are being done with financial assistance from the City of Lufkin. By identifying the architectural features and appearances valued in the downtown we may direct development in the area without limiting property owner's options.

### 2.0 Eligibility

The Architectural Design Standards apply only to the exterior of buildings for certain properties located in the Central Business Zoning district (CB). The properties affected are as represented in Appendix "A".

### 3.0 Process

For properties within the eligible area, a Façade Application is used for interested parties within the CB district. Façade plans can be reviewed in conjunction with a building permit for the property, if a building permit is required. Scaled elevation drawings (including any available color swatches / sample material boards) are submitted for review along with a standardized application form to the Main Street office. Include a set of pictures (on disk and prints) with the application showing the entire effected façade area.

Reviewable components of a façade plan include but are not limited to the expression of parapets / rooflines, entryways, and siding - veneer components, neighboring buildings, and styles of windows, color schemes, and similar features. Awnings and signage are another section of the façade review process.

## **Façade Improvement Program (FIP)**

- 1.0 Goal: The primary goal of the FIP is to encourage the enhancement of the exterior of buildings in Lufkin's Downtown Central Business district.
- 2.0 Objectives: Through the granting of money to qualified applicants, the City of Lufkin will encourage the improvement of facades within the designated area shown in Appendix "A". Grants will be awarded according to the following:

Grants may be awarded to properties, within the designated area, with an approved façade plan, on a dollar for dollar basis up to a maximum \$10,000 per project. Payment is by reimbursement.

3.0 Administration: This program will be administered by the Façade Review Committee.

4.0 Eligibility: All of the following eligibility criteria must be met:

- Eligible property must be located within the area shown in Appendix “A”.
- Eligible property must have a façade plan approved by the Façade Review Committee (a representative from Engineering, Economic Development, Planning and Zoning, Chief Building Official, Inspection Services and Main Street).
- The project must be within the following areas:
  - The project is feasible from a cost and schedule basis.
  - The project is permanent (with the exception of signs and paint) and there is a plan for future care and or additional improvements.
  - The project uses original materials in all areas where feasible and fits within the architectural and historic distinctiveness of Lufkin’s downtown appearance.
  - The project complies with Appendix “B” for signs and awnings.
- Property owners (Corporations, joint ventures, partnerships, etc.) or business owners (tenants) are eligible for funding. Property owners do not have a time of ownership limitation.
- The applicant, whether a tenant or owner, must be current with all property taxes.
- Property can not be subject to an Order for Demolition.

5.0 Policy and Conditions of the Grant Program: Qualified applicants may be granted matching funds for approved façade projects. A façade is interpreted as the complete surface plane of a building that fronts on a public street viewable to the public. Guidelines are as follows:

5.1 Matching grant amounts may be awarded to selected applicants on a dollar for dollar basis (\$1 from the applicant can result in a grant of \$1 from the FIP) up to \$10,000. Grant monies will only be awarded for qualifying expenses (see section 6 through 8).

5.2 Reimbursement checks will only be issued to the owner of the property, and/or the qualified tenant, or a designated financial institution.

- 5.3 Grants will not be provided for work that is already in progress or is completed prior to the approval of the application.
- 5.4 The total funds available for grants in the FIP account at any given time may restrict the City's ability to meet a grant request. Funding priority will be given to members of Main Street Area Program and those projects which result in permanent improvements.
  
- 6.0 Disqualifications: Projects that are not eligible for a grant include the following:
  - 6.1 Alterations giving the appearance of an earlier time period or an inaccurate variation (the appropriate time period for Lufkin is 1920's +).
  - 6.2 Any alterations proposing to cover transoms or second story windows.
  - 6.3 Alterations proposing to remove original wood doors or windows (provided they are not going to be replaced by an accurate facsimile).
  - 6.4 Projects proposing to convert or construct shingled mansard awnings, fake wooden moldings over doorways or windows, small paned windows, garage doors, residential style doors, or aluminum / metal framed doors not consistent with the time period of the structure's original construction,
  - 6.5 Projects proposing the construction of awnings or signs which are out of proportion with the building. Proposed awnings or roof projections not in keeping with the historic shapes of the façade (example, round awnings for rectangular windows).
  - 6.6 Projects proposing to construct shutters for the windows or burglar bars on windows or windows being fitted with reflective materials.
  - 6.7 Internally illuminated awnings, flashing signs.
  
- 7.0 Eligible Expenditures: Expenditures qualifying for reimbursement are limited to exterior building facades (portions that are in view of the public). The Façade Review Committee will evaluate alternative materials on an individual basis for eligibility. The following enhancements, repairs, replacements, and renovations will be considered:
  - 7.1 Brick or stone fascia
  - 7.2 Exterior cleaning, painting, and / or paint removal
  - 7.3 Architectural details or materials
  - 7.4 Canopies and awnings
  - 7.5 Window / door rehabilitation or replacement (where rehabilitation is not possible)
  - 7.6 Roof and gutter repair where necessary for structural integrity
  - 7.7 Slipcover or "false front" removal
  - 7.8 Restoration of historic signage or removal of signage inconsistent with Appendix "B"
  - 7.9 New signage in keeping with the Central Business district architectural character
  - 7.10 Weatherizing of openings on the structure

- 7.11 Limited demolition (for the enhancement of historic or architectural integrity), not more than 15% of the original façade, and cleanup related to demolition. Awards for demolition must accompany projects that include the reconstruction of the demolished façade.
- 7.12 Other improvements approved by staffs which are deemed to meet the objectives of this program.

8.0 Ineligible Costs: Ineligible costs shall include the following:

- 8.1 Overhead
- 8.2 Taxes
- 8.3 Supervisor payroll
- 8.4 Repairs of construction equipment
- 8.5 Tools
- 8.6 Mechanical equipment and heating / air conditioning systems
- 8.7 Any other items not directly related to the exterior appearance or the structural integrity or viability of the structure.
- 8.8 Improvements made prior to Grant Approval

9.0 Reimbursement Procedure: Matching grant payments will be dispersed at the completion of improvements and with the acceptance of work by the City of Lufkin. Acceptance shall be the final inspection, Certificate of Completion, Certificate of Occupancy (where required) or per the Façade Review Committee. Documentation of proof of payment must be submitted with written request for reimbursement. All requests shall be made through the Main Street Area Program. Acceptable proofs of payment for reimbursement include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Itemized contractor and / or sub-contractor's invoices with the corresponding receipts and / or cancelled checks.
- b. Paid invoices for materials and / or supplies with the corresponding receipts and / or cancelled checks, or proof of payments.
- c. A release of lien from contractors, sub-contractors, and / or suppliers.
- d. A set of pictures (on disk and prints) showing the improvements and the entire façade being effected.

The Owner of the property will supply any additional documentation as required by the City of Lufkin to confirm expenses. (See application packet).

Approved projects must begin construction within forty five (45) days from the date of the grant approval, and must be completed within 6 months (180 days).

All projects receiving reimbursement from the FIP shall display a City of Lufkin FIP plaque provided by the City of Lufkin in their doorway or in a prominent window location.

Requests for extensions on work shall be submitted to the Façade Review Committee for approval.

- 10.0 Changes to Approved Scope of Work: The City of Lufkin must approve any changes made to the scope of work. Funding will not be awarded for any changes under construction without prior approval. Significant changes to the scope of work will require the authorization of the City.