



North Monroe Façade Improvement Program

Program Information Guidelines and Requirements

INTRODUCTION

The City of Spokane is engaged in an effort to enhance the safety and appearance of the business district along North Monroe Street from Indiana Avenue to Kiernan Avenue (the “North Monroe Business District”) in 2018. In order to achieve the City’s goal of enhancing the appearance of the North Monroe Business District, the City is making certain funds available to purchase façade easements from property/business owners who voluntarily enhance their building facades.

PROGRAM GOALS

The goals of this program are to:

- 1) Enhance the appearance of the public realm within the North Monroe Business District.
- 2) Abate deterioration of exterior features that impact the appearance of the public realm.
- 3) Augment the natural assets of the business district by restoring the uniqueness, character and integrity of structures contributing to the public realm. All minor and significant improvements are important. Improving the appearance of buildings by painting or repairing awnings increases the beauty and vitality of a business district, which further encourages private investment.

FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM - HOW IT WORKS

Funding is a matching grant offered on a first come, first served basis (funding is limited) in which the City will pay property/business owners for a temporary façade easement in an amount equal to 50% of eligible expenses. For the City to invest in these projects and provide funding requires a property interest of sorts. The temporary easement serves that purpose.

In order to qualify for these funds, applicant must comply with program guidelines and requirements and match the grant funds at least \$1 for \$1 and must convey to the City a façade easement upon completion of eligible façade improvements to the City’s satisfaction. The City will provide a minimum match of \$500 to a maximum of \$10,000.

The applicant’s match may be in the form of direct investment; financing received from other sources (banks), or verified in-kind expenses. Payment by the City will be conditioned upon: (i) satisfactory evidence that the applicant has paid their contractor/s, and/or vendor(s) in full; (ii) completion of agreed upon façade improvements in accordance with program guidelines and requirements and to the City’s satisfaction; and (iii) the applicant’s execution and recording of a façade easement conveying to the City a legal interest in the façade of the applicant’s building.

City of Spokane staff can provide design guidance on improvements specific to individual storefronts. Staff will also monitor the progress of the project to ensure compliance with the program guidelines and requirements. Meetings with staff are available to answer questions. Applicants are encouraged to contact staff with questions in order to avoid misunderstanding as to the eligibility of proposals. For questions regarding this program, please contact Boris Borisov at (509) 625-6300 or northmonroe@spokanecity.org.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- Eligible properties/businesses will be located along the North Monroe Corridor between Indiana Avenue and Kiernan Avenue.
- Applicants must be property owners or commercial tenants and have the legal authority to convey a façade easement.
- Commercial tenants must have written approval from property owners.
- Façade must be visible from the Monroe Street right-of-way; improvements proposed for facades/building visible only from alleys are excluded.
- Property owners and commercial tenants (with the property owner's approval) who have two or more businesses occupying a single building/property, with each business having its own entrance, are eligible for a grant for each business.
- Property owners must be up to date on all property and municipal taxes and utilities prior to business participation.
- Proposed project must meet applicable code requirements, follow all local and state laws, and follow all current design standards and guidelines.
- Generally no active code enforcement violations. Feel free to contact staff if you have questions.
- Grant funds can be used to cover professional design/architectural fees.

CANNOT BE:

- Exclusively a single- family residential building
- Government-owned office or agency (non-governmental tenants are eligible)
- Newly constructed buildings within the past 5 years

EXAMPLES OF FAÇADE IMPROVEMENTS

Examples of Minor Improvements:

- Exterior painting and repair
- Brick & Masonry - cleaning and repair
- Exterior Carpentry - maintenance and repair
- Repairing, replacing or adding decorative functional awnings, signage and/or lighting
- Affixed building decorative elements (permanent)
- Enhancements or changes to trim materials of the building
- Other improvements may be proposed

Examples of Significant Improvements (more likely to require professional design services and building permits)

- Door and window - maintenance, repair, replacement, and restoration of window sashes, exterior doors; installation of storm windows is allowable in conjunction with other significant façade improvements
- Brick & Masonry - structural repairs, repointing, and resurfacing

- Exterior Carpentry – rehabilitation and restoration of sills, window and door frames, bulkheads, storefront and roof cornices, window hoods, and decorative molding
- Awnings – maintenance, installation, repair, or replacement of fabric awnings
- Removal/replacement of inappropriate or incompatible exterior finishes or materials
- Façade material upgrade (could include framing)
- Recessing/reconfiguring entrances
- Significant lighting upgrades
- Murals or other permanent, affixed artwork – based on review and approval
- Significant carpentry/molding/trim improvements
- Other improvements may be proposed

Ineligible Improvements (included but not limited to):

- Interior improvements
- Cleaning using inappropriate methods
- Finance charges (for example interest on borrowed funds used as match)
- Prior improvements made before receiving notice to proceed
- Floor area additions to existing structures
- Billboards
- Non-permanent fixtures (freestanding planters, stands, holders, etc.)
- On-site or off-site paving
- Purchase of furnishings, equipment, or other personal property
- Roof repairs/replacements
- Structural foundations

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

- This program is on a first come, first served basis with limited funding. This will be achieved via a date/time stamp for both email and hand delivered applications.
- Completed Commercial Façade Improvement program application packet.
- Planning Department will review application for compliance with Centers & Corridors guidelines and other applicable City code/s. If not approved, the team will provide written reasons for rejection and, if appropriate/feasible, steps that can be taken to receive approval.
- Applicant may meet with City of Spokane Urban Design staff for guidance on design related to the project.
- Applications must be completed and approved prior to any construction activity.
- Applicant must inform the Planning Department of any changes to originally approved work specifications. Approved changes in the work verifications will be attached to the original applications dated and signed by Planning Department staff.
- Grant monies will be distributed only upon completion of an approved project to the City's satisfaction, evidence that all contractors/suppliers have been paid, and recording of a façade easement granting the City a legal interest in the building façade. The applicant will be required to submit copies of all receipts.
- Applicant must sign a façade easement after project is complete to ensure the improvement is maintained and not altered or impaired for a period of two years.

PROCEDURE CHECKLIST

- Applicant submits an application (see attached) describing proposed improvements, along with detailed plans.
 - Applications can be submitted starting on April 9, 2018, at 8:00 a.m.
 - Applications must be submitted in person or email (see program application for details).
- Staff conducts a completeness review of application and evaluates project eligibility; if staff determines that the project is eligible then preliminary approval is issued, subject to availability of funds.
 - During this review, staff will identify any necessary permits or approvals.
- Staff will issue an approval letter setting forth the approved scope of work. Applicant agrees to complete work by April of 2019, and adhere to program guidelines and requirements.
- The owner hires licensed contractor(s), obtains all necessary permits or approvals (if required), and completes project work.
- The property owner, along with staff, conduct a final inspection and certify the project complete.
- Owner submits receipts, proof of payment and 3-5 before & after photographs.
- Owner executes and records a façade easement, satisfactory to the City.
- City pays Owner for the façade easement.