

# City of Alma

## Grant Façade Improvement Program

### **PURPOSE**

The Alma Downtown Development Authority (DDA) has determined that a portion of its fund balance should be utilized to enhance the building facades found in downtown Alma. The DDA looks to focus historic preservation, recognizing the inherent qualities of the buildings so the historic character of the building is retained.

The appearance for individual buildings, storefronts, signs, alleys, window displays, parking lots, and sidewalks establish the visual character of the downtown and plays a major role in the marketing success for the business district.

The purpose of the facade improvement grant is to encourage historically accurate improvements to commercial facades visible from the public right-of-way. The grant money is intended to provide financial incentives for quality façade development.

The perception of downtown has a great deal of influence on its economic success. By improving its physical appearance, the downtown will have a much greater potential for attracting retaining business as well as creating an image of strong economic health and vitality.

### **ELIGIBILITY**

1. Owner of real property within the DDA district.
2. Owner of business establishments within the DDA district. Tenants need approval from the property owners.
3. Projects must be a minimum of \$5,000.

### **CONDITIONS OF ELEGIBILITY**

1. Property taxes and other city accounts must be current.
2. Applicants must commit to making capital improvements or repairs on items that have a useful life of at least 10 years.

### **ELIGIBLE COSTS** (Exterior Improvements Only)

1. Repairs or replacement of windows, doors, walls, or other appropriate architectural elements.
2. Exterior painting (only in conjunction with other major improvements)
3. Masonry repair or cleaning
4. Conversion to retail or entertainment storefront (must be compatible with historic architecture)
5. Restoration of vintage elements
  - Removal of inappropriate “modern” façade treatments
  - Removal/replacement of inappropriate signs (new signs must be compatible with existing architecture)
  - Repair or restoration of original brick and woodwork
6. Materials and labor for work performed in association with above mentioned improvements.

**INELIGIBLE COSTS**

1. Expenses incurred prior to approval of site plan by the Façade Improvement Committee
2. Property Acquisition
3. Mortgage or land contract financing
4. Loan Fees
5. Site plan, building permit fees
6. New Construction
7. Appraiser, attorney, interior decorator fees
8. Wages paid to applicant, relatives, or friends for work associated with the façade improvement
9. Furnishings, trade fixtures, display cases, counters, or other items taxed as personal property
10. Reusable or removal items
11. Any portion of expenses for which applicant pays contractor in merchandise or in-kind services
12. Signage

**ALMA DDA PROGRAM PRIORITIES**

- Applications containing the following characteristics will have priority in the appropriation of project funds:
  - Projects designed to restore the historic condition of the building façade
  - Overall project containing a high ratio of private to public dollars outside and/or inside
  - Projects preserving or developing retail space and/or upper story apartments
  - Projects designed to remove/replace boarded windows
  - Projects designed to resolve deteriorated/inappropriate/unsightly conditions that have existed for many years.
  - Project which enhance pedestrian entrances at the rear of buildings

**GRANT AMOUNTS**

Grant Amount: \$500-\$1500

# Alma Downtown Development Authority Façade Improvement Grant Program

## APPLICANT INFORMATION

1. Property/Business Owner Name: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Property Address: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Phone Number: Home: \_\_\_\_\_ Work: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Is the building owned by the applicant? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

(If No, please attach a signed letter from the property owner expressing approval of the proposed project.)

## PROJECT INFORMATION

6. The project will involve work on:
  - \_\_\_\_\_ rear and street side entrances
  - \_\_\_\_\_ rear and street side windows
  - \_\_\_\_\_ exterior painting
  - \_\_\_\_\_ masonry repair or cleaning
  - \_\_\_\_\_ conversion or maintaining storefronts for retail and/or entertainment uses
  - \_\_\_\_\_ second story apartments part of overall project
  - \_\_\_\_\_ restoration of the original façade ie restoration of brick and/woodwork
7. Estimate Project Budget: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(\*Note: a detailed item by item list of expenditures will be required at a later date)
8. Grant Request: \$ \_\_\_\_\_
9. Proposed Starting Date: \_\_\_\_\_
10. Proposed Completion: \_\_\_\_\_

11. What is (are)the existing use(s) of the building:

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12. Will the proposed project result in a change in the use(s) of the building:                    \_\_\_yes    \_\_\_no

If yes, explain:

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**THE UNDERSIGNED APPLICANT (S) AFFIRM THAT:**

The information submitted herein is true and accurate to the best of my (our) knowledge.

The property contained in the application is located within the Alma Downtown Development District.

I (we) have read and understand the conditions of the Downtown Development Authority's Façade Improvement Program and agree to abide by its conditions and guidelines.

If I (we) do not implement improvements submitted by me (us) on a professional site plan and as approved by the Façade Improvement Program, I (we) will not be eligible for reimbursement for any costs associated with said improvements.

**Signature of Applicants:**

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_