

DOWNTOWN MERCED FAÇADE MATCHING GRANT PROGRAM

A Program of the Merced Main Street Association

PURPOSE:

The objective of the façade program is to provide assistance for the maintenance, rehabilitation, and upgrading of existing commercial properties within the downtown Merced Business Improvement District (BID). The grant program is intended to stimulate building improvements while being mindful of the historical significance and uniqueness of downtown architecture. This program is designed to enhance the appearance of the district, and indirectly, make a positive statement about downtown Merced's business climate.

SPONSORS:

The matching grant program is funded by The Merced Main Street Association (MMSA) to stimulate building improvements and upgrade the appearance of commercial properties. The objective of this program is to promote joint public/private action and investment, which will complement and enhance other downtown revitalization efforts.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

All BID taxed commercial properties located within the boundaries of the Business Improvement District as, defined by the attached Project Eligibility Area Map (Appendix A) are eligible for this program. Applicants should meet with the City of Merced Planning Department to confirm that all city requirements have been met, prior to submission of any MMSA grant application. All properties must be in conforming use under the City's zoning ordinance. Properties will not be eligible if any property assessments are not paid to date. Only one grant per year, per property owner or tenant, per building or address will be allowed. All projects must be approved by Merced Main Street Association.

APPLICANTS:

Owners, tenants, or a joint venture of these two parties may submit an application under this grant program. Tenants must provide written approval of the property owner's consent to the improvements and vice versa, at the time of initial application.

GRANT TERMS:

Grants approved under this program shall be a minimum of \$250 and shall not exceed \$3,000 per building. The applicant is expected to provide a 50% match of his or her own capital to the total project cost. Maximum rebate grant amount will be determined at the time the application is approved, based on estimates, but final payment will not occur until Merced Main Street certifies project completion and cost. Applicant must submit the original receipts for all materials and labor incurred in the completion of the project. (Originals can be returned once verified.) Project approval and corresponding rebate grant amounts will be directly impacted by available funds.

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES:

Façade grant money shall only be used for exterior repairs and renovations on commercial storefronts and facades which front on public streets, alleys or parking areas. Professional, legal, architectural, and City permit fees may be included in the total storefront improvement costs.

For this program, “storefront” is defined as follows:

The exterior front surface of a building, which abuts the street from grade to the eave or fascia line. Improvements above the storefront level, including roof repairs and roof replacement, are only eligible when performed in conjunction with storefront improvements. Adding historic roof features will be considered storefronts if the Merced Main Street Design Committee determines that they are visible from a main commercial street, or significant in meeting the goals of the program. Decorative fencing and landscaping of adjacent parking lots will also be considered on an individual basis.

Exterior eligible expenses include but are not limited to the following (see Urban Design Guidelines found in the Merced 2010 plan for details):

- Façade improvements
- New windows and doors
- Decorative exterior lighting fixtures
- Canvas awnings (as appropriate to original building design; to be determined by Design Committee)
- Structural and surface repair of exterior walls and overhangs
- Signage
- Repainting
- Renovation/Replacement of exterior devices and lighting fixtures
- Fencing used to enclose outdoor dining areas (not located within public right-of-way)
- Screening of mechanical equipment visible from the street or parking lot (e.g. backflow devices, utility meters, air conditioning units, and exhaust vents)

DESIGN STANDARDS:

All improvements must conform to the Uniform Building Code, the Downtown Merced Architectural Design guidelines as found in the Merced 2010 plan, the Secretary of Interiors Standards for Rehabilitation, where applicable, general historic preservation practices as determined by the Design Committee, and other appropriate codes or ordinances.

APPLICATION SUBMITTAL:

To be formally considered for a grant request, an application (attached) must be completed in full and submitted to the MMSA office at: **Merced Main Street Association - C/O Design Committee 1640 N Street, #120B Merced, CA 95340.**

QUESTIONS:

Questions about the program can be referred to Joey Essig: joey.partisan@gmail.com

APPLICATION REVIEW:

Merced Main Street Design Committee shall review submittals to determine that all information is complete and to assure compliance with the general design recommendation. Applicant must proceed with procuring any and all required permits through the City of Merced and Merced County. If the proposed design does not meet the required guidelines, staff will meet with the applicant to discuss solutions to satisfy the grant eligibility requirements. Once the design is approved the applicant will receive notice from MMSA committing grant money to the applicant to be released after the project has been completed and approved.

If there are mitigating circumstances that do not allow an applicant to comply with the approved plan, the applicant may, with minor changes, receive approval for a modified plan from MMSA staff. More involved modifications of approved plans will have to be reviewed and approved by Merced Main Street Design Committee.

Once a plan is approved (with or without modifications), it must be adhered to. Should an applicant deviate substantially from the approved plan, Merced Main Street may elect not to release the grant money.

WORK INSPECTION AND COMPLETION:

Merced Main Street may inspect all work as needed during the period in which actual construction or repair work is being performed in accordance with all elements of eligibility and as agreed upon at the time of application approval.

Completion of the work shall be considered to take place upon the presentation to Merced Main Street a written Notice of Completion. The Notice will signify that the agreed upon work has been completed and, if required, the work has been approved by the Building Inspector and a Certificate of Occupancy is issued by the City of Merced Community Development Department. All work must be completed within the time period agreed upon or amended between the applicant and Merced Main Street. Documentation of Applicants matching investment must be supplied. Following receipt of the Notice, Merced Main Street will inspect the improvements and certify satisfactory completion.

DRAWING DOWN GRANT MONEY:

If all the following work inspection and completion conditions are met and certified, Merced Main Street will release a check within thirty (30) days, made out to the applicant.

PROGRAM CHANGES:

This program is subject to change for reasons of improvement and revision. Please make sure you are submitting the most recent version when submitting application. (most recent version can be found at mercedmainstreet.com) *Updated: September 2015*

MERCED MAIN STREET FAÇADE GRANT APPLICATION

Please fill out legibly

Applicant name: _____

Cell/home phone number: _____

Applicant E-mail address: _____

Applicant Mailing address: _____

Business name: _____

Business phone number: _____

Mailing address: _____

Address of property that work will be done on: _____

Owner's name of the submitted property: _____

Owner's address: _____

Property Owners Phone number: _____

What is the existing use(s) of the storefront in question? _____

How long have you been at business in this location? _____

Date the building was constructed? _____

Have you investigated the availability of Historic Tax Credits? _____

Will you be using the services of a design professional for this project? _____

If yes, who? _____

Please describe the work you propose for this project: _____

Please list the major components for this project, contractors who will be doing the work, and a breakdown of estimated costs (use additional sheets as necessary).

ITEM	CONTRACTOR	COST
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

What is the total estimated cost of this project? _____

Proposed starting date: _____

Proposed completion date: _____