

City of Freeport  
**2008 FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**  
Guidelines and Procedures

This program is designed to provide owners of properties financial incentives to preserve, restore, and rehabilitate the exterior features of buildings located within the Downtown Tax Increment Redevelopment (TIF) Area. The grants are provided in recognition of the positive impact that individual façade rehabilitations can have on the overall appearance and quality of storefronts. A façade is the front or main face of a building that is visible from a public street.

**Description:**

The City has a proposed budget of \$10,000 for 2008. Funds not expended within the given year will be carried over and available in future years. The grant fund balance shall not exceed \$150,000.

The Façade Improvement Program is intended to assist with the costs of enhancing the outward appearance of downtown buildings. Under the program, property owners or business owners within the Downtown TIF area are eligible to apply for **grants equal to 50% of the total cost of qualified façade rehabilitation, repair, or restoration work up to \$10,000 for a single primary façade and \$10,000 for buildings rehabilitating two primary facades** (for example: corner properties). For purposes of this grant a primary façade is defined as one facing the street.

The City of Freeport Community Development Director, with the assistance of the Freeport Downtown Development Foundation (FDDF) and the Freeport Downtown Development Director recommends applications to the City Council. The Council administers the Façade Improvement Program. Grant program compliance and the reimbursement of funds are overseen by the City of Freeport Community Development Director.

**Grant money will be payable as a reimbursement** after the Completion Report/Request for Reimbursement form and supporting documentation are submitted to the City of Freeport. Individual grant applications will be accepted for multiple buildings with the same owner. Multiple grants for phased rehabilitations will be considered and based on availability.

It is not the purpose of this program to finance ongoing improvements that may be considered part of a building's regular maintenance. Each eligible improvement will be funded by the program only once.

**Target Area:**

A map indicating the Historic Business and Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Districts is presented as Appendix A. The building for which grant assistance is sought is required to be located inside the TIF area.

**Eligible Properties:**

**An eligible applicant must be the owner of the building or a business owner who is a tenant of the building for which the rehabilitation is planned.** Tenant applicants must provide written consent from the building owner for all proposed improvements and a copy of a lease with at least 5 years remaining.

If more applications are received than current funding levels allow, the City of Freeport Community Development Office reserves the right to prioritize applications. Preference will be given to the following structures:

- Historic properties (buildings deemed contributing to the downtown historic district within the TIF area). Properties considered contributing to the historic district must adhere to the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation (see Appendix B).
- Non-contributing buildings that are changed to reflect the time period in which the building was constructed (inside or outside the historic district, but within the TIF district).
- Non-contributing buildings that redesign would significantly enhance the building and its surroundings (inside or outside the historic district, but within the TIF district).
- Major façade improvements greater in scope than items such as changing paint colors to a multi-color historic palette, adding or replacing a canopy, or replacing windows or doors.

Grant requests will be considered in the following weighted manner:

1. Commercial  
Zoning:
  - B-1-1 Restricted Business
  - B-1-2 General Retail Business
  - B-2-1 Limited Service Business
  - B-2-2 Limited Service Business
  - B-3 Commercial and Wholesale
2. Manufacturing  
Zoning:
  - M-1 Limited Manufacturing
  - M-2 General Manufacturing
  - M-3 Heavy Industry

### **Eligible Use of Funds:**

- Soft costs including design work, architectural, engineering, planning, and other professional fees
- Waste disposal
- Masonry work including restoration, gentle cleaning, and repointing
- Window and door restoration.
- Removal of non-original facing such as inappropriate siding, metal, etc.
- Restoration of existing architectural elements
- Painting, awnings, exterior lighting, window display areas visible from the street
- Primary facades (Side of building facing the street)

### **Improvements Not Eligible for Grant Funds:**

- Sandblasting of masonry surfaces will not be funded under the program nor will the program participate in any project which includes sandblasting
- Sealing of masonry surfaces without prior approval by the Façade Advisory Board
- Roofs
- The acquisition or creation of architectural elements which are not appropriate to the time period of the building
- Interior remodeling
- Improvements completed or in progress prior to notification of grant approval
- Purchase of furnishings or equipment that do not become part of the real estate

### **Funding Requirements and Limitations:**

- Submitted information and project bid estimates will be reviewed by the City Council. The City Council reserves the right to reject any and all proposed work that does not meet the program guidelines.
- Projects must be completed within 1 year of the issuance of a Letter of Commitment from the City Council. The City Council reserves the right to allow a reasonable extension of this time limit upon receiving a written request from the applicant.
- Sweat equity or unpaid labor performed by the owner, friends, relatives, etc. cannot be used as a portion of the cost incurred in the improvement project.
- Labor costs will be reimbursed only if performed by a licensed and insured contractor. Proof of liability insurance as per city ordinance #1024.33 and proof of workers compensation insurance are required.
- All labor is subject to Davis-Bacon wage requirements as per City of Freeport Ordinance 2002-40.
- Soft costs incurred 12 months or less, prior to the issuance of the Letter of Commitment that directly relate to the façade project are eligible for reimbursement under the terms of this grant. Prior soft costs must be included in the original grant application for approval. Rehabilitation work started before written approval of the grant application is obtained from the City Council is ineligible for reimbursement.

## **Application Process:**

1. Applications for the program may be obtained from the office of the Freeport Downtown Development Foundation (FDDF) Director or the City of Freeport Community Development Office.
2. An interview with the Freeport Downtown Development Foundation (FDDF) Director or the Community Development Director, on the project site is required before filing the application. It is recommended that this meeting occur before final plans, estimates, and bids are made in order to avoid unnecessary changes and delays in the final approval.
3. Submit a completed Façade Improvement Grant Application and a \$50 nonrefundable fee to the Freeport Downtown Development Foundation (FDDF). In addition to the application, a detailed description of the proposed work, projected completion date, copies of estimates and costs involved in the project are required. If the façade improvement is a part of a more extensive rehabilitation, only façade improvement costs need be itemized. Designs with dimensions of the completed façade including color samples must also accompany the application. Professional designs are recommended, but not required. All designs must follow the guidelines set forth by the Community Development Department. Please see Appendix C for an abbreviated list of guidelines, and The City of Freeport's *Historic Preservation Design Guidelines* for the complete set of guidelines.
4. Completed application packages will be considered by the City Council at the next scheduled meeting.
5. Any changes or amendments, if any, necessary for grant request consideration will be discussed with the applicant within 7 days after the Council decision.
6. Submit revised application for final review and recommendations to the Community Development Director for resubmittal to the City Council.
7. After the final submission of revisions, the application will be considered for approval or denial at the next scheduled City Council meeting. Results will be communicated in writing in the form of a Letter of Commitment or a Letter of Denial.
8. Recipients of any program funds must agree to observe all applicable federal, state, and local laws pertaining to the use of grant funds.
9. Recipients agree to submit a project Completion Report/Request for Reimbursement form (Appendix D) to the City of Freeport Community Development Office, including copies of all building permits, bills, receipts, and cancelled checks prior to the release of any funds. In addition to the report, photographic or other evidence that the project for which the grant is awarded is 100% complete. A final on-site inspection of the completed project will be made by the City of Freeport certifying that the eligible work was completed in a workmanlike manner



properties with two facades facing streets)

**5. Estimated Project Completion Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Supporting Documentation**

Please attach the following supporting documentation:

- Photographs of existing facade
- A detailed description of proposed work
- Designs of completed facade improvement including color samples and dimensions
- Copies of estimates and costs
- Copy of lease agreement, if applicable

Number of attachments \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Statement of Understanding**

The Applicant (undersigned) agrees to comply with the design guidelines and procedures of the City of Freeport, Facade Improvement Program and the conceptual design and outline specifications as agreed to by the applicant and application review team.

The Applicant understands that the Applicant must submit a Project Completion Report/Request for Reimbursement form, along with cost documentation, copies of building permits, receipts, invoices, and contractor’s final waivers of lien upon completion of the approved improvements.

Applicant’s Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

If the applicant is other than the owner, the following line must be completed:

I certify that I, the owner of the property at \_\_\_\_\_ do authorize the applicant to apply for reimbursement under the City of Freeport, Facade Improvement Program and undertake the approved improvements.

Owner’s Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY**

Case Number \_\_\_\_\_

Date application received: \_\_\_\_\_

Ck# \_\_\_\_\_

Application fee paid:   yes   no

Grant approved:

Grant denied:

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Total estimated project cost \_\_\_\_\_  
Percent applied for grant \_\_\_\_\_  
Total amount of grant \_\_\_\_\_

Reason \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX A**

**FREEPORT DOWNTOWN HISTORIC BUSINESS AND TIF DISTRICT MAP**

## APPENDIX B

### SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION

(Applicable to properties identified as contributing to the Freeport Downtown Historic District)

#### **Secretary of the Interior's Standards for *Rehabilitation***

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of the property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize the property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features of architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
3. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.
4. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of the deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
5. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
6. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
7. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

8. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

## **APPENDIX C**

### **City of Freeport Façade Improvement Program Design Guidelines**

(All projects receiving funding from the City of Freeport are required to adhere to design guidelines. Designs will be reviewed and approved by the Façade Advisory Board)

1. Height – The height of any proposed alteration or construction should be compatible with the style and character of the structure and with surrounding structures in the historic district and directly adjacent to the district.
2. Proportions of Windows and Doors – The proportions and relationships between doors and windows should be compatible with the architectural style and character of the subject and with surrounding structures within the historic district and directly adjacent to the district.
3. Relationship of Building Masses and Spaces – The relationship of a structure within a historic to the open space between it and adjoining structures should be compatible.
4. Roof Shape – The design of the roof should be compatible with the architectural style and character of the structure and surrounding structures in the historic district and directly adjacent to the district.
5. Landscaping – Landscaping should be compatible with the architectural character and appearance of the structure and of surrounding structures and landscapes in the historic district and directly adjacent to the district.
6. Scale – The scale of the structure after alteration, construction, or partial demolition should be compatible with its architectural style and character and with surrounding structures in the historic district and directly adjacent to the district.
7. Directional Expression – Facades in the historic district and directly adjacent to the district should blend with other structures in regard to directional expression. Structures in the historic district should be compatible with the dominant horizontal or vertical expression of surrounding structures. The directional expression of the structure after alteration, construction, or partial demolition should be compatible with its original architectural style and character.
8. Architectural Details – Architectural details including materials, colors, and textures should be treated so as to make the structure compatible with its original architectural style and character and to preserve and enhance the architectural style or character of the structure and the historic district.

**APPENDIX D**

**PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT/REQUEST FOR REIMBURSEMENT**

(To be submitted after completion of the project)



Number of Attachments: \_\_\_\_\_

I/We hereby certify that the Final Cost Breakdown items have been completed at the indicated address and that they have been paid in full.

Participant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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**REIMBURSEMENT AUTHORIZED**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature & Title Date \_\_\_\_\_