

City of Ferris Façade Improvement Program

Application Guide

The following information is intended to assist you in preparing and submitting application to the Façade Improvement Program. The Ferris Main Street Office (MSO) is available to provide further assistance, lead you through the process, and obtain professional guidance from the Texas Historical Commission (THC) and the Façade Improvement Review Committee.

As a locally-funded Texas Main Street Program initiative, the Façade Improvement Program is intended to assist building owners and business owners in stabilizing and improving their property consistent with locally established guidelines. A few simple steps can help insure a successful result:

1. Assess existing conditions

- a. The MSO can tell you if your building is within the Historic District eligible for funding.
- b. The Ferris Downtown Design Guidelines identifies the approximate age of structures and “age-appropriate” maintenance and improvement recommendations.
- c. Document existing conditions with photographs, including problem areas you intend to repair and areas you expect to change.
- d. Take an interest in your property. Researching old photographs and other records may help determine past changes and original details to be renovated. Identify any old alterations you may want to remove.
- e. Professional inspections, engineer’s evaluations, and professional design work are eligible for reimbursement. They can help determine a plan of action.

2. Determine desired improvements

- a. Eligible improvements are generally those which can be seen by the general public and include: storefront and entry renovation, canopy reconstruction, window and façade renovation, and primary signage design, fabrication, and installation.
- b. A current edition of the Ferris Downtown Design Guidelines provides useful advice on “do’s and don’ts” for potential improvements. Roof, electrical and plumbing repairs are examples of improvements ineligible for reimbursement.
- c. You DO NOT have to restore your building exactly as it was originally, but, you SHOULD retain historic material in your renovation to be eligible for reimbursement.

3. Seek additional advice

- a. The Texas Historic Commission (THC) provides design services to Texas Main Street Program cities. The MSO can submit a request for Design Report based on information on the existing structure and your intended improvements.
- b. The MSO and Ferris Façade Improvement Review Committee can assist you by helping to interpret the Ferris Design Guidelines applicable to your structure and intended improvements.
- c. Depending on intended improvements, work may require a building permit and compliance with applicable codes. Check with the City Building Official.

4. Develop a plan for improvements

- a. Prepare a detailed plan. Refer to THC Design Report, specific items in Ferris Downtown Design Guidelines, photos or samples of improvements, professional studies prepared.
- b. Obtain a detailed Estimate for improvements from a reliable contractor (see sample).
- c. Identify labor and material costs as necessary to support your application.
- d. Confirm improvements that are eligible and non-eligible with MSO.
- e. If your improvements are estimated to be under \$500, you may apply for expedited application review.
- f. Set aside a contingency for any “surprises” that may occur during the renovation.
- g. The Program provides 50% reimbursement of eligible costs at project completion to up the allowed maximum.