



## 2022 City of Hopkins Façade Improvement Program Guidelines

### PURPOSE

The City of Hopkins is offering a Façade Improvement Program for downtown businesses. The purpose of this program is to provide technical and financial assistance to commercial property and business owners within the core of Downtown Hopkins in order to upgrade and improve the facades and appearance of commercial/retail buildings. The goal of this program is to strengthen the vitality of Mainstreet by improving the pedestrian experience, increasing building transparency, preserving historically significant architecture, and beautifying buildings through façade revitalization efforts which will have a lasting impact on downtown Hopkins.

### ELIGIBILITY

Businesses located on commercial properties in Downtown Hopkins between 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue and between 1<sup>st</sup> Street North and 1<sup>st</sup> Street South (see map below) are eligible.



All improvements must result in permanent, external building improvements that add to the goals listed in the section above.

### *Eligible Applicants/Projects*

- The applicant must be the property owner or a commercial tenant with written permission from the property owner to make façade improvements to commercial or retail buildings
- There must be no delinquent bills, charges, or taxes due to the City
- Projects must be located in the designated area of eligibility
- All projects must result in permanent, external building improvements
- Property must have conforming uses under the zoning code
- All façade improvements must follow the requirements of the Hopkins Building Code, Hopkins Zoning Code, and the Façade Improvement Program

*Eligible Improvements:*

- Exterior painting or re-siding
- Restoration of exterior finishes and materials
- Masonry repairs and tuck pointing
- Removal of architecturally inappropriate or incompatible exterior finishes and materials
- Restoration of architectural details or removal of materials that cover architectural details
- Repair, replacement, or installation of windows and doors (replacements must be architecturally appropriate)
- Window and cornice flashing and repair
- Canopy or awning installation or repair
- Murals, subject to City approval of the design
- Installation or repair of exterior signage in conjunction with other eligible façade improvements
- Removal of barriers to access the building from outside for people with disabilities
- Exterior lighting

*Ineligible Improvements/Activities include any improvements not listed in eligible improvements above, including, but not limited to, the following:*

- Improvements in progress or completed prior to preliminary approval
- Routine maintenance that is not part of an eligible façade improvement project
- Signage only, without other eligible façade improvements
- Billboards
- Roofing
- Mechanicals and HVAC systems
- Interior work
- New construction
- Pylon, temporary, or roof signs
- Interior window displays
- Security systems (including metal roll down gates, window bars, cameras)
- Trash and mechanical enclosures
- Fencing
- Landscaping
- Improvements to parking areas
- Purchase of property

**FORGIVABLE LOAN TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

Commercial property owners, or business owners with the approval of the property owner, may apply for financial assistance of up to 50% of the cost of improvements, with the remainder paid by the applicant. Financial assistance awards shall be no less than \$5,000 and no greater than \$25,000. The minimum cost of the improvements must be at least \$10,000 (\$5,000 forgivable loan and \$5,000 applicant match). There is no maximum limit on project cost, although the forgivable loan is capped at \$25,000.

**Example:**

<b>Scenario</b>	<b>Total Project Cost</b>	<b>Forgivable Loan Amount</b>	<b>Applicant Pays</b>
1	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
2	\$50,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
3	\$65,000	\$25,000	\$40,000

The Façade Improvement Program will be structured as a 10-year loan with no payments, with 10% of the original loan amount being forgiven each year for 10 years. If the building is sold before 10 years, the balance of the loan must be repaid by the property owner.

The final design of improvements is subject to the review and approval of the City of Hopkins. The City of Hopkins reserves the right to require all property owners to comply with city ordinances.

The City of Hopkins has the right to terminate any agreement under the Façade Improvement Program if a participant is found to be in violation of any conditions set forth in these guidelines. In addition, the following requirements apply:

- All work must be done in accordance with all local, state, and federal building codes, Hopkins Zoning Code, and the rules and regulations for the Façade Improvement Program
- Labor costs are only eligible through the program if the labor is done by a third party who has no financial interest in the building (i.e. the building owner may not receive funds for labor that he/she completed on the project)
- All construction must be completed in strict compliance with approved plans and applicable local, state, and federal rules and regulations.
- All work must be completed within 12 months from the date the forgivable loan is approved by the City and any applicable agreements, as required by the City, are executed.

**GENERAL MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS**

Approved projects may be subject to general maintenance requirements as needed, including:

- Painting of trim may be required if peeling, fading, and/or flaking conditions exist
- Staining of wood surfaces may be required if fading
- Tuck pointing may be required if loose mortar or brick exists
- Stucco repair may be required if cracked, falling, or discolored conditions exist
- Awning replacement or removal may be required if faded, torn, or otherwise in disrepair
- Windows should be in good repair, caulked, and sealed as necessary

These activities may be included in the total project costs.

**DESIGN ASSISTANCE**

Applicants with projects selected for the Façade Improvement Program are strongly encouraged to work with an architect to develop concept plans for the facade improvements. The City of Hopkins will pay up to \$2,000 for the preparation of façade concept plans if the applicant uses one of the

Hopkins architectural firms listed on page 6. This funding is outside of the forgivable loan maximum amount of \$25,000. Therefore, projects may receive a maximum total amount of \$27,000.

### **APPLYING FOR THE PROGRAM – Deadline October 31 at 4:30 p.m.**

The following documents are required to be submitted to apply for the Façade Improvement Program:

1. Completed application form, including description of proposed improvements.
2. Proof of property ownership or lease.
3. Written consent from the property owner to make façade improvements if the applicant is a commercial tenant.
4. Clear and color electronic photos of the existing building façade.
5. Other supporting documentation deemed necessary by the City of Hopkins.

All applications and plans are subject to the review and approval by the City. Submitting an application and plans does not guarantee approval.

### **APPLICATION REVIEW**

Due to the limited amount of funds for the Façade Improvement Program, all applications are subject to a competitive selection process. City staff will review applications and evaluate them based on the following criteria:

- **Impact to the vitality of downtown Hopkins (15 points)**
  - Project is pedestrian oriented and enhances the pedestrian experience by providing a design that is inviting and on a human scale
  - Project increases pedestrian traffic and activity
  - Project helps preserve the small-town, unique character of downtown
- **Impact to the aesthetic character of downtown Hopkins (15 points)**
  - Project preserves and enhances or complements the historically significant architecture of downtown
  - Project increases the curb appeal of the property
  - Project creates visual significance by improving highly visual elements of the building
- **Economic impact (5 points)**
  - Extent to which the project leverages private investment in the building
- **Readiness (5 points)**
  - Applicant has required matching funds and can start the project in a timely manner

Projects must score a minimum of 25 points to move forward in the selection process. Projects will be selected based on their point ranking and the availability of funding.

## **PROCESS**

1. Complete application and submit all required materials to the City of Hopkins Planning and Economic Development staff by October 31, 2022 at 4:30 p.m.
2. If the project is selected, meet with City staff and a licensed design professional/architect to develop preliminary plans and a project budget for your façade improvements. The City of Hopkins will pay up to \$2,000 for the preparation of façade concept plans if the applicant uses one of the Hopkins architectural firms listed on page 6.
3. Once completed, review façade design concept with City staff and if staff approves then move into construction plans.
4. Work with an architect of your choice to prepare final design and construction plans of the project. These final plans will then be used to submit to the City for final review and approval and building permits. Depending on the extent of the proposed improvements, site plan approval may be required by the Hopkins Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council. The property or business owner is responsible for the cost of final design and preparation of construction documents. Fees for site plan review and building permits are also the responsibility of the property or business owner.
5. Enter into a forgivable loan agreement with the City. The City will require a promissory note and a mortgage that will be recorded against the property. The City will cover any costs associated with filing and title work. The funds from the agreed upon forgivable loan amount will be put into an escrow account, along with the property/business owner's 50% match, to be drawn down during construction. Any fees associated with the escrow account will be paid by the City. Construction may commence once any necessary permits are issued.
6. Payments from the escrow account will be made directly to vendors once the program requirements are met and after submittal of invoices to the City. Alternatively, payments may be reimbursed to the applicant after submittal of invoices and proof of payment.

## ARCHITECTURAL FIRMS IN HOPKINS

10K Architecture  
525 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue South, #7826  
Hopkins  
952-594-3143  
[10karch.com](http://10karch.com)

Brunton Architects  
1040 6<sup>th</sup> Street South  
Hopkins  
507-386-7996  
[Bruntonarchitects.com](http://Bruntonarchitects.com)

HTG Architects  
1010 Mainstreet, Suite 100  
Hopkins  
952-278-8880  
[htg-architects.com](http://htg-architects.com)

Wilkus Architects  
15 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue North  
Hopkins  
952-941-8660  
[wilkusarch.com](http://wilkusarch.com)