MAIN STREET FAIRMOUNT

Façade Grant Program

Design Guidelines

Historic Charm. Modern Momentum.

Fairmount, Indiana • 2026 Edition

Walk down the 100 block of South Main Street and look at the brick — some of it laid more than a hundred years ago, during Indiana's Gas Boom, when Fairmount believed its future was limitless. Those buildings were built to last. And they have.

These Design Guidelines establish the design standard for all work funded through the MSF Façade Grant Program. They define what good rehabilitation looks like for Fairmount's Gas Boom-era buildings: what to protect, what approaches respect the building's history, and what materials and practices will produce lasting results.

How This Document Fits

These guidelines are one of three program documents. The Façade Grant Program Guide introduces the program and how to apply. The Policy & Application contains eligibility requirements, the scoring rubric, the application checklist, and the application form. All three are available at www.mainstreetfairmount.org/facade-grant-program.

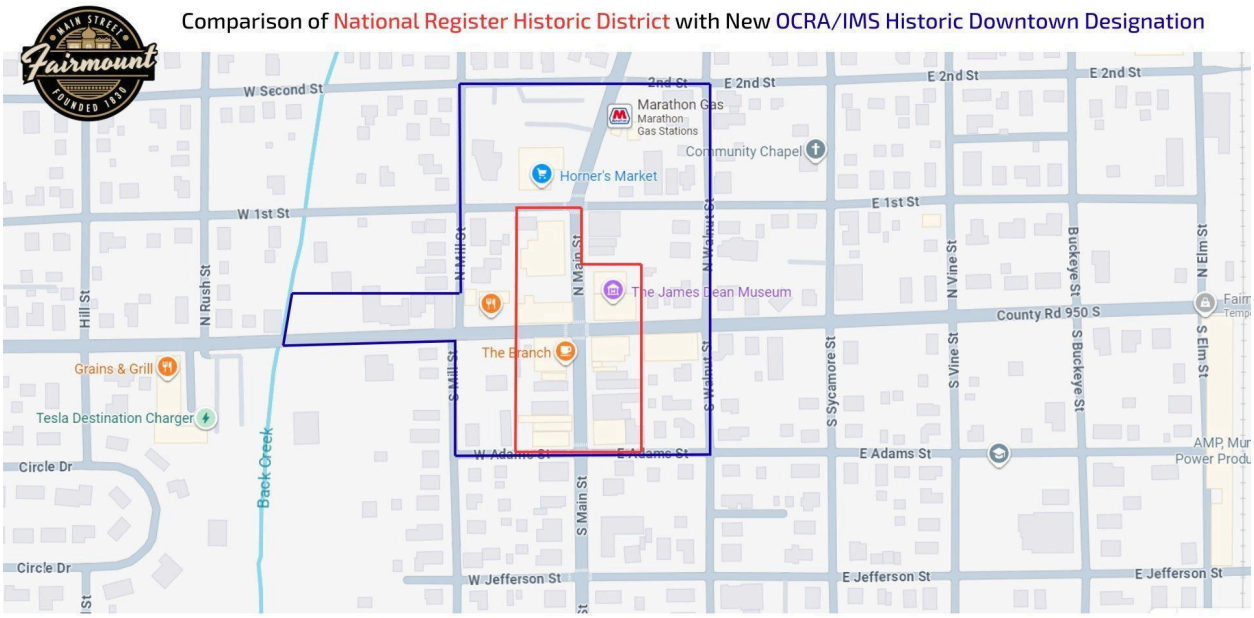
Façade Grant Program Team (FGP Team) — Your First Call

Questions about your building, your project scope, or whether your contractor qualifies? Reach out before you invest time in a full application.

Website: www.mainstreetfairmount.org/facade-grant-program
Email: contact@mainstreetfairmount.org
In person: David Crouse, Fairmount State Bank

District Map

The map on the next page shows the Fairmount Commercial Historic District (National Register boundary, in red) and the OCRA/IMS Historic Downtown Designation (in blue), established after IMS Director Tereasa Camin walked the boundary in person. Properties within either boundary are eligible for Façade Grant funding.



IMS Director, Tereasa Camin, visited Fairmount to walk the boundary for adjustment consideration and named a new Historic Downtown area as recognized by IMS and OCRA.

Red = National Register Historic District (1999). Blue = OCRA/IMS Historic Downtown Designation.

If you are uncertain whether your property falls within the eligible area, contact the FGP Team before applying.

Part 1: Understanding Fairmount's Buildings

Every project in this program begins with the same foundation: understanding what was actually built here, and why it matters. The Fairmount Commercial Historic District (National Register, 1999) contains buildings constructed almost entirely between 1884 and 1904 — a concentrated burst of construction driven by cheap natural gas and the glass and industrial industries it attracted.

These are not grand county-seat buildings. They are practical, working-class structures built primarily for commercial use — some of which today house businesses, nonprofits, civic organizations, and residences within the district. Their character comes from:

- Two-story load-bearing brick construction, typically red or buff brick from local clay
- Modest lot widths (20–30 feet), creating a rhythmic, cohesive streetscape
- Flat roofs with parapets, often with corbelled brick detailing at the cornice line
- Large ground-floor storefront openings with transoms and display windows
- Simple upper-story windows, typically paired or in triplets, with segmental arches or flat lintels
- Minimal ornamentation reflecting rapid, practical construction
- Consistent setbacks creating a continuous street wall at the sidewalk

Italianate and Romanesque Revival commercial styles are the most common. Post-war alterations — metal siding, mansard false fronts, infilled transoms, oversized signs — have obscured the original character of many buildings. Removing these alterations is the highest-priority work this program funds.

> *Fairmount's buildings are distinguished by their simplicity and cohesion. Over-restoration that adds details never present in the original construction is as inappropriate as the metal siding we're removing. The standard is authenticity, not decoration.*

Building Types in the District

If you are unsure of your building's type or historic status, contact the FGP Team or Indiana Landmarks Eastern Region before applying. Contributing structures — those identified in the National Register nomination as retaining historic character — receive priority scoring. Knowing your building's status before you apply is worth the conversation.

Italianate Commercial (1880s–1890s)

The most common building type in Fairmount's downtown.

- Tall, narrow proportions; flat roofs with corbelled brick or pressed metal cornices
- Arched or segmental-arched window openings on upper floors
- Cast iron or wood storefronts, many now altered or missing
- Brick pilasters dividing facade bays; hood moldings or stone lintels over windows

Examples: Bogue Block (1889), J.W. Dale Block (1889)

Romanesque Revival Commercial (1890s–1904)

- Heavy masonry with textured brick patterns; round or segmental arches over large openings
- Rusticated stone at corners or bases; recessed entry bays; corbelled belt courses

Examples: Scott Opera House (1884), Masonic Temple (1904), Odd Fellows Block (1902)

Commercial Vernacular (1890s–1920s)

- Plain brick boxes with minimal ornamentation; flat parapets
- Regular fenestration on upper floors; large ground-floor storefront openings

Many examples along Main Street. These buildings are often overlooked — but their simplicity is authentic. Resist the temptation to over-design.

Post-War Alterations (1950s–1970s)

Many buildings were 'modernized' in ways that damaged or concealed original character. These alterations are the primary targets for removal under this program:

- Metal or vinyl siding over original brick
- Mansard-style false fronts; covered or removed cornices
- Infill of transom windows; oversized cabinet signs

Grant selection prioritizes buildings that retain original historic fabric — brick masonry, storefront proportions, transom windows, cornices, and other character-defining features from Fairmount's Gas Boom era. Buildings with less historic significance may apply but will receive lower scoring. See the Policy & Application for the full scoring rubric.

Part 2: Preservation Approach

Why Rehabilitation

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards identify four treatments: Preservation, Rehabilitation, Restoration, and Reconstruction. For the Façade Grant Program, Rehabilitation is the required treatment for nearly all projects.

Rehabilitation means making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values. It acknowledges that buildings need to serve real businesses in the real economy — while protecting what makes them worth preserving.

Restoration — returning a building to one specific documented moment — is rarely appropriate here. Fairmount's buildings evolved over decades, and most have layered histories worth respecting, not erasing. Reconstruction — rebuilding a lost feature without physical evidence — is not eligible under this program.

> *The guiding question for every project: does this work retain and protect what makes the building historically significant, while allowing it to serve its current use — whether commercial, nonprofit, civic, or residential — as a contributing part of Fairmount's downtown?*

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

All Façade Grant projects must comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. The FGP Team and Grant Committee evaluate every application against them. These are the national benchmark for appropriate work on a historic building — not suggestions, and not unique to this program.

You do not need to master all ten Standards before applying. The FGP Team will guide you through compliance as part of the pre-application conversation. Understanding them, however, will help you design a project that moves efficiently through review.

1. Use the property as it was historically used, or give it a new use that requires minimal change to character-defining features.
2. Retain and preserve the historic character of the property. Avoid removing historic materials or altering features that define its character.
3. Recognize that each property is a physical record of its time, place, and use. Do not create a false sense of historical development.
4. Retain and preserve changes to the property that have acquired historic significance in their own right.
5. Preserve distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize the property.

6. Repair rather than replace deteriorated historic features. Where replacement is necessary, match the old in design, color, texture, and visual qualities.
7. Use the gentlest cleaning and treatment methods possible. Avoid chemical or physical treatments that damage historic materials, including sandblasting.
8. Protect and preserve significant archeological resources.
9. New additions and exterior alterations must not destroy historic materials and must be compatible in massing, size, scale, and architectural features.
10. Ensure that any new additions could be removed in the future without impairing the essential form and integrity of the historic property.

Full text, illustrated guidelines, and reference PDFs are in Part 5: References, or at www.mainstreetfairmount.org/facade-grant-program.

Part 3: Plan Before You Build

Before designing any façade project, make sure your building is structurally sound. A beautiful new storefront on an unstable building is not an investment — it is a delay. The Program Guide covers building condition in detail. The FGP Team will connect you with Indiana Landmarks Eastern Region for structural guidance and contractor referrals before you apply.

You will also need a contractor with demonstrated historic preservation experience. General contracting experience alone is not sufficient for most scopes in this program. Contractors must be verified through Indiana Landmarks' approved contractor list or provide equivalent documentation. The FGP Team and Indiana Landmarks can assist with referrals. Start this conversation before you seek quotes.

Phased Improvement Plans — Worth the Effort

A Phased Improvement Plan — a simple written description of how this project fits within a larger sequence of improvements for your building — is optional but worth preparing. It accounts for up to 20% of your application score. The sequencing steps below will help you build one.

The Sequence of Preservation Work

Preservation has a natural order. Doing work out of sequence wastes money and can compound damage. The sequence below reflects sound investment order for your building overall — not a list of grant-eligible scopes. Contact the FGP Team to confirm which elements of your specific project qualify for reimbursement.

Step 1 — Stabilize and Waterproof

Address everything that allows water into the building first. No visible façade improvement will last if water continues to enter through the roof, parapet, or failed masonry.

- Repair or replace parapet caps and coping
- Clear and repair gutters and downspouts
- Flash all roof-to-wall junctions correctly
- Repoint deteriorated mortar with lime-based mix matching the original
- Address any structural instability

Step 2 — Restore Envelope Integrity

Once the building is dry, restore the envelope: windows, doors, and storefront openings protect the interior and define the building's character.

- Repair or replace upper-story windows
- Restore or replace storefronts in appropriate materials
- Address transom windows: repair glazing, remove inappropriate infill

Step 3 — Remove Inappropriate Alterations

With the building stabilized and weathertight, remove post-war alterations that obscure original character:

- Metal or vinyl siding over original brick
- Mansard false fronts; covered or infilled cornices
- Cabinet signs and internally illuminated boxes

Step 4 — Restore Character-Defining Features

With original surfaces exposed and the building stable, address visible character-defining features: cornice reconstruction, masonry cleaning where appropriate, decorative detail repair.

Step 5 — Finishing and Presentation

Paint, signage, awnings, and lighting are the finishing layer — not the starting point. Projects that begin here without completing earlier steps rarely achieve lasting results.

▸ Kendallville's Sequenced Approach

When Kendallville received its $2M PreservINg Main Street grant in 2021, the city scored 25 applications on a tiered priority basis — weighing building condition, project appropriateness, and strategic location within the district. Selected property owners received consultation with architects and engineers before any funds were committed. This planning-first model ensured money flowed to projects most likely to succeed and most likely to catalyze neighboring investment.MSF's Grant Committee applies the same logic. Projects that address structural or moisture problems first, and that lay the groundwork for subsequent improvements, receive priority consideration in scoring.

Part 4: Building Element Guidelines

This section establishes the design standard for each major façade element. Each section covers what to protect, what is recommended, what is not acceptable, and — where relevant — practical steps for the most common rehabilitation scenarios.

Most applicants come to this program with a specific scope in mind. Use the numbers below to go directly to the element you are working on. All ten sections establish the design standard regardless of project scope.

Masonry → 1 | Storefronts → 2 | Windows → 3 | Cornices → 4 | Details → 5
Awnings → 6 | Paint & Color → 7 | Signage → 8 | Lighting → 9 | Accessibility → 10

Where "documented justification" is noted, contact the FGP Team before proceeding. You will need to submit written explanation and supporting evidence — photographs, historic documentation, or a professional assessment — for Grant Committee review prior to approval.

---

1. Masonry — Brick, Mortar, and Stone

Masonry is the foundation of every building in Fairmount's historic district. Brick walls are not just structural — they define the character of the building. Treating masonry correctly is the most consequential decision you will make for your building's long-term health.

WHAT TO PROTECT

- Original brick: color, texture, bonding pattern, and tooling
- Corbelled brick detailing at cornices and parapets
- Belt courses, decorative brickwork, and quoins
- Historically unpainted brick surfaces

RECOMMENDED

- Inspect for water infiltration first — address gutters, downspouts, parapet caps, and flashing before any cosmetic work
- Clean masonry only when necessary to halt deterioration or remove heavy soiling
- Use the gentlest cleaning method: low-pressure water wash with natural-bristle brushes and mild detergent; always test on an inconspicuous area first
- Repoint mortar joints only where deteriorated — not as a cosmetic update
- Match repointing mortar to the original in strength, color, texture, and joint profile; use lime-based mortars for pre-1900 brick
- Remove mortar by hand-raking; use mechanical tools only with skilled masons on horizontal joints
- Repair damaged brick by piecing in salvaged or new brick matching the original in size, color, and texture

NOT ACCEPTABLE

- Sandblasting or any abrasive cleaning — permanently destroys the protective surface of historic brick
- High-pressure water washing
- Repointing with hard Portland cement mortar — stronger than the brick, causes spalling
- Applying waterproof sealers or coatings that trap moisture inside the wall
- Covering original brick with vinyl siding, EIFS, aluminum panels, or any surface cladding
- Painting historically unpainted brick without documented justification and Grant Committee approval
- Removing corbelled brick cornice details

> *The NPS Standards are explicit: "chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used." Abrasive cleaning of Fairmount's soft historic brick is irreversible damage — not a cleaning option.*

IF YOUR BRICK OR MORTAR IS DETERIORATED

11. Identify the cause first — usually moisture from inadequate drainage or incorrect past repointing
12. Address drainage before any cosmetic repairs
13. Repoint only where mortar is actually failing; match the original lime-based mix
14. Replace severely spalled brick with salvaged or carefully matched new brick
15. If siding has been removed to expose brick, document conditions at each step with photographs before proceeding

▸ **What Kendallville Found Under the Siding**

When Kendallville property owners began removing post-war metal and vinyl siding as part of their PreservINg Main Street program, they consistently found original brick in better condition than feared — in part because the siding had sheltered it from weathering. The lesson: don't assume the worst before you look. Remove a small section carefully, document what's underneath, and then plan the full scope. Fairmount's brick, largely protected by similar alterations, likely tells the same story.

---

2. Storefronts

The storefront is the face of a downtown building and the most frequently altered element. Restoring traditional storefront character is the most common eligible project type under this program.

HISTORIC STOREFRONT COMPONENTS

- Transom windows — glazed horizontal band above the display windows, often with prism glass to direct light into deep interiors

- Display windows — large plate glass for merchandise visibility
- Bulkhead panels — solid base below display windows in wood, tile, or metal
- Recessed entry — set-back entry door providing weather protection and visual interest
- Corner posts or piers dividing the facade bays

RECOMMENDED

- Investigate original storefront configuration before designing replacements: look for ghost marks, filled holes, paint lines, and structural evidence
- Remove inappropriate modern infill: metal siding, EIFS, oversized canopies, aluminum snap-in systems
- Restore recessed entries; maintain traditional proportion of glazing to solid
- Preserve or restore transom windows — do not cover, infill, or remove
- Use clear or lightly tinted glass in display windows
- Repair and restore original entry doors; replace with compatible wood or historically appropriate materials
- Keep new storefront design simple and consistent with Fairmount's modest commercial character

NOT ACCEPTABLE

- Fully enclosing the storefront with solid panels
- Residential-style doors or windows in commercial openings
- Mirrored or highly reflective glass
- Removing the recessed entry to gain interior floor space
- Modern stock aluminum storefront systems with contemporary profiles
- Adding false historic details without documented evidence they existed on this specific building

IF YOUR STOREFRONT IS ALTERED OR MISSING

16. Look for physical evidence of original configuration: filled holes, paint lines, structural members
17. Research historic photographs — Fairmount Historical Museum, the Library, Jake Roth's collection
18. Base reconstruction on documented comparable Fairmount buildings or historic photographs
19. Maintain traditional proportions: high glazing percentage, transom, recessed entry
20. Keep design simple — resist adding elaborate details with no documented precedent on this building

▸ Kendallville's Storefront Approach — "Demonstration Blocks"

Kendallville concentrated early PreservINg Main Street investments on "demonstration blocks" — contiguous sections where multiple storefront improvements would be visible together, creating transformation that catalyzed neighboring owners. The Strand Theatre anchored one such block as a commercial centerpiece.MSF's Grant

Committee considers geographic clustering when prioritizing early awards. A block where two or three adjacent properties improve their storefronts simultaneously creates visible momentum that no single isolated project can achieve.

---

3. Upper-Story Windows

Upper-story windows define the rhythm of a façade. In Fairmount's Gas Boom buildings they are typically paired or in triplets, with segmental arch or flat lintel tops, and original wood sash. The NPS guidance is clear: retain and repair first.

RECOMMENDED

- Retain original windows whenever possible — historic wood windows can be repaired and weatherized cost-effectively
- Repair deteriorated wood members using consolidants, dutchman repairs, or selective replacement of deteriorated sections
- Maintain original window profiles, dimensions, and muntin patterns
- Add interior or exterior storm windows for energy efficiency (removable type only)
- If replacement is necessary, match original materials — wood windows should be replaced with wood; replicate original profiles, sight lines, and operation type
- Never resize or reconfigure original window openings

NOT ACCEPTABLE

- Vinyl replacement windows in any contributing historic building in the district
- Modern snap-in muntins creating fake divided lights over insulated glass
- Residential slider or picture windows in upper-floor commercial openings
- Bricking in or covering original window openings without documented justification

IF YOUR WINDOWS ARE DETERIORATED OR MISSING

21. Document existing conditions photographically before any intervention
22. Assess whether repair is feasible — wood consolidants and weatherstripping can extend window life significantly
23. If replacement is required, engage a contractor with window restoration experience to specify matching profiles
24. Never change the size or shape of the opening to accommodate a stock window unit

---

4. Cornices, Parapets, and Rooflines

The cornice and parapet define the top edge of a building — the element most visible from across the street. Many Fairmount buildings lost original corbelled brick or pressed metal cornices during mid-century 'modernizations.' Restoring this line is one of the most impactful improvements possible.

RECOMMENDED

- Research original cornice profiles through historic photographs: Fairmount Historical Museum, the Library, Jake Roth's collection
- Examine neighboring buildings for similar ghost marks and cornice evidence
- Maintain parapet height and profile; repair parapet caps to prevent water infiltration
- Ensure proper flashing at all roof-to-wall junctions

NOT ACCEPTABLE

- Removing remaining cornice details
- Adding simplified or generic 'historic' cornices without physical documentation
- Changing parapet height or profile

IF YOUR CORNICE IS MISSING OR SIMPLIFIED

25. Research original profiles: Fairmount Historical Museum, the Library, Jake Roth's collection, neighboring buildings with similar ghost marks
26. Contact Ball State University Center for Historic Preservation — CHP can develop cornice reconstruction drawings from documentary evidence
27. Reconstruct corbelled brickwork from physical evidence; for pressed metal cornices, engage a sheet metal craftsperson to replicate from photographs
28. Where documentation is limited, keep designs simple and consistent with Fairmount's modest detailing — the standard is authenticity, not invention

---

5. Architectural Details and Ornamentation

Fairmount's buildings have modest ornamentation. What they do have — corbelled brickwork, belt courses, simple pilasters, pressed metal panels — is character-defining and must be preserved.

RECOMMENDED

- Restore sheet metal, wood, or pressed metal cornices; match original profiles and detailing
- Repair or replicate decorative elements (brackets, dentils, belt courses) in original materials
- Preserve corner quoin detailing and cast iron storefront elements

NOT ACCEPTABLE

- Adding elaborate Victorian or Colonial ornament with no historical basis on the specific building
- Replacing original cast iron or pressed metal with plastic or fiberglass facsimiles
- Removing surviving belt courses, pilasters, or decorative brickwork patterns

---

6. Awnings and Canopies

RECOMMENDED

- Canvas or vinyl fabric awnings in historically appropriate configurations: fixed or retractable
- Scale awnings to window and door openings; mount to avoid obscuring architectural details
- Limit to 2–3 coordinated colors consistent with the building's palette

NOT ACCEPTABLE

- Mansard-style metal canopies covering significant portions of the façade
- Backlit or internally illuminated awnings used as primary signage
- Bubble or dome awning styles

---

7. Paint and Color

Fairmount's downtown buildings are modest Gas Boom structures. Whether your property houses a business, a nonprofit, or a residence within the district, color choices should reflect this character: grounded palettes that complement the brick and do not compete with the architecture. Color choices should reflect this: grounded palettes that complement the brick and do not compete with the architecture.

FOR BRICK BUILDINGS

- If historically unpainted, brick should remain unpainted — preferred
- Previously painted brick may be repainted using breathable masonry paint
- Conduct paint analysis on significant buildings to identify historic color layers

FOR WOOD STOREFRONTS AND TRIM

- Body/field: darker, subdued tones — deep greens, browns, burgundies, dark reds
- Trim: lighter contrasting color for window frames and doors — cream, tan, light green
- Storefront: traditionally darker to minimize dirt and wear appearance

COLORS TO AVOID

- Bright primary colors (fire engine red, bright yellow, royal blue) with no historical precedent
- Purple, pink, orange, or other colors inconsistent with Gas Boom commercial architecture
- High-contrast painted-lady Victorian schemes
- Colors chosen primarily for corporate branding rather than building character

Submit actual painted board samples with your application — not paint chip cards. A painted board sample is a physical piece of wood or similar material, at least 4" x 6", painted with the proposed color. Show where each color will be applied on an elevation drawing or photograph.

▸ **Indiana Peer Programs on Color**

Kendallville's Certificate of Appropriateness process, administered by Indiana Landmarks, requires color review for any visible exterior paint change. Colors must be

drawn from documented historic palettes appropriate to the building's type and period — not chosen for brand visibility or personal preference. The MSF Grant Committee applies the same discipline: color review is part of every application, and board samples are required.

---

8. Signage

Signage should complement the architecture, not compete with it. Scale, material, and placement matter as much as content. Sign grants are available as a separate application component — see the Program Guide for the Sign Reimbursement track and eligibility.

PREFERRED SIGN TYPES

- Hanging or projecting signs perpendicular to the building face
- Window signs: gold leaf or quality vinyl lettering on glass, maximum 30% coverage
- Awning signs: painted or sewn letters on the valance only
- Wall signs: painted directly on the façade or individual letters mounted to the surface
- Transom signs: the traditional location for a business name

SPECIFICATIONS

- Materials: wood, metal, gold leaf, high-quality vinyl
- Illumination: external fixtures preferred; halo-lit individual letters acceptable
- Mounting: minimize new penetrations; use existing holes or mortar joints where possible

NOT ACCEPTABLE

- Internally illuminated plastic cabinet signs
- Electronic message boards or LED displays
- Roof signs; freestanding pole signs in the pedestrian district
- Signs that obscure architectural features or cover transom windows

IF YOUR SIGNAGE IS INAPPROPRIATE OR OVERSIZED

29. Remove large cabinet signs and internally illuminated boxes first
30. Design replacement signage at a scale appropriate to Fairmount's pedestrian streetscape
31. Use traditional sign locations: transom windows, painted wall signs, hanging signs
32. Coordinate colors with the building palette; submit board samples with your application
33. See the Program Guide for the Sign Reimbursement component — signs have a separate application and funding track

---

9. Exterior Lighting

RECOMMENDED

- Downlighting from cornices or awnings; gooseneck, globe, or lantern-style period-appropriate fixtures
- LED sources in warm color temperatures (2700K–3000K) for energy efficiency
- Dark-sky compliant fixtures; conceal conduit and junction boxes wherever possible

NOT ACCEPTABLE

- Glaring flood lights that create harsh shadows on the façade
- Neon or LED strips applied directly to historic masonry or trim
- Fixtures that require invasive penetration of historic masonry

---

10. Accessibility

ADA compliance and historic preservation can be achieved together. The goal is the highest level of access with the least impact on the historic building.

- Explore ramped access options that preserve historic character; use compatible materials
- Consider side or rear accessible entrances if the primary entrance cannot be sensitively modified
- Widen doorways from the interior where possible to preserve exterior appearance
- Document consultation with SHPO for Section 106 compliance on significant buildings
- Consult Indiana DHPA and the ADA Standards for Accessible Design regarding historic building exceptions

Part 5: References and Resources

Façade Grant Program Team (FGP Team)

Your first call for any question about this program — your building's history, your project scope, design compliance, contractor qualifications, or partner connections.

- Website: www.mainstreetfairmount.org/facade-grant-program
- Email: contact@mainstreetfairmount.org
- Mail: PO Box 257, Fairmount, IN 46928
- In person: David Crouse, Fairmount State Bank

Program Documents

- Façade Grant Program Guide — plain-language introduction: program purpose, grant amounts, eligible work, and how to apply
- Façade Grant Policy & Application — complete program policy, scoring rubric, application checklist, and application form

All documents: www.mainstreetfairmount.org/facade-grant-program

Technical Assistance Partners

Indiana Landmarks — Eastern Region

Indiana Landmarks is the FGP Team's primary structural resource partner. Grant County falls within Indiana Landmarks' Eastern Region. Contact Stevie Meyer for Standards compliance review, contractor referrals, structural stabilization guidance, and Indiana Historic Tax Credit assistance.

indianalandmarks.org

Ball State University Center for Historic Preservation

BSU's CHP provides building condition documentation, facade improvement plans, cornice reconstruction drawings, National Register nominations, and design assistance. MSF has an existing partnership with CHP. Contact the FGP Team to initiate an engagement.

- Director: J.P. Hall

bsu.edu/academics/centersandinstitutes/centerhistoric

Indiana Division of Historic Preservation & Archaeology (DHPA)

Indiana's State Historic Preservation Office. Relevant for Section 106 compliance, Historic Preservation Fund grants, and Indiana Register status.

in.gov/dnr/historic-preservation

OCRA / Indiana Main Street

Administer the PreservINg Main Street grant program and provide guidance and design resources to Indiana Main Street communities.

in.gov/ocra/preserving-main-street

National Standards

All Façade Grant projects must comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (NPS, 2017). Full text and illustrated guidelines:

www.mainstreetfairmount.org/facade-grant-program

nps.gov/orgs/1739/secretary-standards-treatment-historic-properties.htm

Part 1 PDF (Preservation & Rehabilitation):
nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/treatment-guidelines-2017-part1-preservation-rehabilitation.pdf

Part 2 PDF (Restoration & Reconstruction):
nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/treatment-guidelines-2017-part2-reconstruction-restoration.pdf

NPS Preservation Briefs

Free technical publications from the National Park Service, available at nps.gov/tps. Particularly relevant for Fairmount:

- Brief #1: Assessing Cleaning and Water-Repellent Treatments for Historic Masonry Buildings
- Brief #2: Repointing Mortar Joints in Historic Masonry Buildings
- Brief #9: The Repair of Historic Wooden Windows
- Brief #11: Rehabilitating Historic Storefronts
- Brief #45: Preserving Historic Wooden Porches

Fairmount Local Resources

- Fairmount Historical Museum, 104 N. Main Street — historic photographs and Gas Boom documentation
- Fairmount Public Library, 217 S. Main St. — local history collection
- Jake Roth (Lion's Club) — historic Fairmount photograph collection available for research

National Register Nominations

The Fairmount Commercial Historic District and the Baldwin Addition Fairmount Commercial District are both listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The original nomination documents — which identify contributing and non-contributing structures, describe the district's historical significance, and provide architectural documentation — are available through the National Archives catalog. PDFs can be downloaded directly from each record.

- Fairmount Commercial Historic District: catalog.archives.gov/id/132003133
- Baldwin Addition Fairmount Commercial District: catalog.archives.gov/id/132003129

If you are uncertain whether your building is a contributing structure, these documents are the primary reference. The FGP Team and Indiana Landmarks Eastern Region can also help you interpret your building's status.

Indiana Peer Programs

- Kendallville (Historic Downtown Kendallville) — PreservINg Main Street pilot community (2021); developed local historic district, preservation commission, design guidelines, and Certificate of Appropriateness process with Indiana Landmarks. Achieved National Main Street Accreditation in 2023. kendallvillemainstreet.com/historic-preservation
- Brookville (Main Street Brookville) — second PreservINg Main Street pilot community; leveraged Opportunity Zone funding alongside historic tax credits to turn $2M into $4–6M in district investment.

Appendix: Prohibited Materials and Practices

This appendix serves as a quick-reference checklist for applicants and contractors. All items below are ineligible for grant funding and will not be approved by the Grant Committee. Part 4 contains the full design standards and context for each element.

Prohibited Practices

- Sandblasting or abrasive cleaning of historic brick — permanent, irreversible surface damage
- Repointing with hard Portland cement mortar on soft pre-1900 brick — causes spalling
- Applying waterproof sealers to historic masonry — traps moisture, accelerates deterioration
- Painting historically unpainted brick without documented justification and Grant Committee approval
- Removing corbelled brick cornice details
- Installing EIFS on any contributing historic building in the district
- Removing original window or door openings without documented justification
- Creating historically inaccurate false fronts or adding features never present on the specific building

Prohibited Materials

Material	Why It's Prohibited
Vinyl or aluminum siding over historic brick or wood	Conceals original character, traps moisture, incompatible with Gas Boom architecture
EIFS (Exterior Insulation and Finish System)	Traps moisture, incompatible with historic masonry, risk of irreversible damage

Vinyl replacement windows on primary facades	Incompatible profile and material; not appropriate in NPS-compliant historic districts
Reflective or dark-tinted glass in storefronts	Incompatible with traditional commercial character; impairs display function
Plastic or fiberglass architectural elements	Cannot match historic material quality; inappropriate substitute for wood, cast iron, or masonry details
Split-face concrete block	Not used in Gas Boom period; incompatible with district character
Faux brick or stone panels	Imitative materials that misrepresent the building's construction
Modern metal panels on primary facades	Incompatible with historic character
Internally illuminated plastic cabinet signs	Incompatible with historic commercial character
Chain-link security gates	Incompatible; decorative metal gates acceptable with Grant Committee approval

Some modern materials may be acceptable in limited applications — rear facades, non-historic additions, or outbuildings. Fiber-cement siding, aluminum-clad wood windows, standing-seam metal roofing, and low-e glass units may be considered where traditional materials are not feasible. These require written Grant Committee review and documentation of why traditional materials cannot be used.

These buildings have stood for over a hundred years.

The brick on South Main Street was laid by people who believed in Fairmount's future. That belief is still here — in the buildings themselves, in the community members who funded this program, and in every property owner willing to invest in what makes this downtown irreplaceable.

These guidelines exist to make sure that investment lasts. When the work is done right — in the right sequence, with the right materials, by contractors who understand what they're working with — it compounds. One restored storefront makes the next one more likely. One revealed brick facade proves what's possible. That is how downtowns come back.

The best first step is a conversation. Reach the FGP Team before you apply — before you seek quotes, before you design your scope. We will help you understand your building,

connect you with the right contractors and partners, and make sure your project is well-positioned from the start.

Ready to Get Started?

Website: www.mainstreetfairmount.org/facade-grant-programEmail: contact@mainstreetfairmount.orgIn person: David Crouse, Fairmount State BankMail: PO Box 257, Fairmount, IN 46928

Version: 2026.5 • Status: Draft for Review • Supersedes: 2026.4

This document establishes design standards only. Program structure, eligibility, application requirements, scoring, and payment terms are in the Façade Grant Program Guide and Policy & Application.