Legislation Text

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HLC#21-014: Discussion regarding Preservation Incentives

One of the duties of the Historic Landmark Commission (Commission) is to recommend programs that promote the preservation of Mansfield's historic resources. Preservation incentives encourage private property owners to preserve or rehabilitate historic buildings.

As the Commission is aware, the proposal for a Historic Preservation Façade Grant was not funded in this year's budget. The Historic Preservation Tax Exemption program is still in effect, but it is underutilized and provides a limited return to a property owner spread over a 10-year period. Staff has been researching different preservation incentive programs that do not rely on city funds.

One option is outside grants, where funds are provided through private, state or federal sources. Many of these grants can only be obtained for properties that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NR) or are eligible to be listed. This presents a difficulty for some properties in Mansfield where the historic fabric of the structure has been so altered that the building is no longer eligible for NR listing. An example is the Dennis Mahoney Building or the Gaulden House.

Another possibility is creating a preservation revolving loan fund either separately or in partnership with one of Mansfield's non-profit preservation groups. A revolving loan fund is a pool of capital used for preservation activities with the restriction that the monies are returned to the fund to be reused for another preservation project.

In particular, Staff is reviewing revolving loan funds for historic façade improvements. Under this type of program, the revolving fund provides no-interest or low-interest loans for exterior improvements that enhance the exterior appearance of historic buildings. In exchange, the borrower may be asked to seek local landmark designation, NR designation, agree to a façade easement or offer the lender first right of refusal to purchase the property. The loan is repaid in installments over a period of time, for example, in amortized monthly payments for 60 months. Some examples of revolving loan fund programs are attached.

Staff will provide more details about these programs at the meeting.

Attachments
Macon Façade Loan Program
Columbus Loan Program
Wichita Revolving Loan Program
Preservation Utah Low-Interest Loan Program
Dubuque Revolving Loan Program