

PLEASE HELP US BEAUTIFY DOWNTOWN FROSTPROOF!

We'd like to let all of you know about a project which we're undertaking for the beatification of downtown Frostproof, on behalf of the Frostproof Chamber of Commerce. We have the centerpiece of a revitalized downtown Frostproof in place, with the Ramon Theatre, and we are attracting people sometimes from all over Polk County to the Ramon. What we'd like to see is a Wall Street that complements and improves on the Ramon, making downtown a truly attractive place to be. Our vision is to have several benches placed on the sidewalk along Wall Street, extending one block on each side of Scenic Highway, and to install large flower pots on the street next to each bench. We are also planning to place banners on each of the light poles, both on Wall Street, and on Scenic Highway, which can be rotated out for different times of the year. This project is NOT a charitable project, but true ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT—encouraging citizens to enjoy downtown more, to spend more time here, to spend more money here, to encourage new businesses to open up downtown and to remain economically viable once they are open. Having the downtown area more attractive and inviting helps the downtown merchants, certainly, but it helps everyone who calls Frostproof home to take pride in their home town, and encourages them to shop here and spend money here.

THE PROJECT

1. THE BENCHES—

Since there is less room on that side of the street, we anticipate placing backless benches on the Ramon side of Wall Street, and benches with backs on the Citizens side of the street. We hope to be able to place most of the benches in spots where they could be in the shade at least for some of the day, to enable people to get the most use out of them. We have the consent of the City to install the benches along Wall Street, and hopefully they will assist in some of the labor to get everything in place. We anticipate that Diamond level sponsors will receive recognition with a plaque on one of the benches, recognizing their contribution.

2. THE BANNERS--

An easy and somewhat inexpensive way to spruce up the downtown would be to purchase banners for the light poles. Eventually, we would like to have a few different banners so that we could switch them out of a seasonal basis, but we would probably start with banners that say "Frostproof, the Friendly City", or something to that effect, and then purchase additional banners, as funds became available. Banners could be the first phase of the project completed, as the turnaround time on the banners could be as little as next day shipping to around a week.

3. THE FLOWER POTS—

Our plan is to purchase large flower pots, probably in concrete or a fired clay pot. The vision is that the flowers would be replaced on an approximate quarterly basis, as they would need to be kept looking nice, as nothing looks worse than flower pots with dead, straggly or unkempt flowers in them. We'd like to see summer flowers during the summer, and other seasonal flowers as the seasons change, and hopefully we would be able to do some shorter term changes of flowers, like poinsettias at Christmas time, Easter lilies at Easter, etc. We'd like to get the benches and the flags in place first, to determine how many pots would look best, as we don't want to overwhelm the area. Gold sponsors would receive a plaque on a pot to recognize their contribution.

One major issue with placing flowers on the street is WATERING the plants. Watering the plants is ESSENTIAL if the project is to survive. Totally separate from any FINANCIAL contributions, we will be seeking 'water sponsors' for the individual pots, hopefully by a business in that immediate area. We will be seeking a one year commitment from businesses or individuals, possibly with local organizations who need community service hours to fulfill volunteer hour obligations. We also would be seeking assistance from local organizations to assist in the labor of quarterly switching out of the plants.

SO—WHERE TO BEGIN??

Regardless of financial contributions to the project, we'd like to see all the businesses downtown get rid of weeds and grass and unsightly things in front of their buildings, and ensure that the general outside of their business is attractive. Then, we'd like to begin with the banners and the benches, and proceed with the flower pots, once those are in place. We could get some really quick results with installing the banners, and make a big difference in a short amount of time, to get the project kick started.

Contributions would be made payable to the Chamber of Commerce, and designated for the Downtown Beautification Project. We'd like to assure people that any funds contributed for this project will be used for this project and not for general Chamber functions. We have arranged that we will open up a separate savings account with Citizens to deposit your contributions in. The Chamber is also now able to accept credit cards.

Citizens Bank has kicked off the project with a generous donation, and we anticipate that we shortly will have in place donations from several other businesses.

If you have any questions about the project, please contact Sherri Macklin at Citizens Bank at 635-2244 or Carol Hill at 635-4400 or Kaye Hutzelman at the Chamber office, at 635-9112. We would also welcome if anyone else wants to volunteer to be on the Committee with us. We are attaching a pledge notes so that you can make your contribution. We are looking forward to seeing this project come to fruition and making downtown Frostproof one of the real jewels of Polk County!

Sherri Macklin
Carol Hill
Kaye Hutzelman