

TOWN OF GIBSONVILLE

◆ DOWNTOWN FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM ◆

GRANT GUIDELINES

■ WHAT IS A FAÇADE?

A facade is defined as one side of a building regardless of the number of stories. Each storefront of a building can be considered a façade. The rear of a building may also be considered for a façade grant, with priority given to the front of a building.

■ WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Any Property/Business owner located within the Gibsonville Downtown District (see attached 8" x 11" map) is eligible for this grant program.

- ❖ Any commercial property owner or business tenant in the Gibsonville Downtown District is eligible.
- ❖ Private dwellings are not eligible unless they originally functioned as commercial buildings and were later converted.
- ❖ Only one application may be submitted for each façade per fiscal year (July 1, XXXX – June 30, XXXX). Either the property owner or the business tenant of a building may submit an application, or an owner and tenant may apply jointly.
- ❖ If a building has multiple units, each tenant with a separate entrance may apply. Where a single tenant occupies multiple units the tenant is eligible for one application per façade.
- ❖ A business tenant applicant must obtain the property owner's written consent for façade renovation, and must submit that permission with the application.
- ❖ The property owner(s) takes full responsibility to ensure all work and reimbursements are done in the manner and spirit in which this program was intended for.

■ PURPOSE OF THE DOWNTOWN FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM

The Town of Gibsonville's Downtown Façade Improvement Grant Program is an incentive-based measure intended to encourage and provide economic inducement for the:

- ❖ Renovation of commercial building facades in the Gibsonville Downtown District;
- ❖ Implementation of appropriate design standards for the rehabilitation of historic properties that meet all zoning and Town of Gibsonville Ordinances; and
- ❖ Encourage aesthetic compatibility for improvements to facades of non-historic structures and

- ❖ Encourage the use of quality materials in the rehabilitation of downtown properties and
- ❖ Preservation of the unique architectural and commercial character of the Gibsonville Downtown District.

■ **EXAMPLES OF IMPROVEMENTS:**

Improvements may include, but are not limited to the following:

- ❖ Removal of false fronts, metal canopies, and additions that detract from a building's historical and architectural character;
- ❖ Safe cleaning of brick storefronts – chemical stripping, scraping, and water wash. Power washing is not recommended. (Method of cleaning must be pre-approved).
- ❖ Exterior painting/repainting. No initial painting of unpainted masonry is covered.
- ❖ Historic reconstruction – storefront, door, or window repair or replacement, masonry re-pointing, etc.
- ❖ Approved awning installation
- ❖ Structural repairs – except roof
- ❖ Approved sign and/or exterior lighting installation. Simple sign changes are eligible but by themselves will be given low priority.
- ❖ Address information – numerals, building name
- ❖ Landscaping installation and maintenance are eligible but by themselves will be given low priority.
- ❖ Design services (architect, etc.) for façade rehabilitation

■ **CRITERIA:**

- ❖ All façade design proposals must:
 - meet applicable zoning and building code requirements of the Town of Gibsonville,
 - must comply with these Façade Improvement Grant Program guidelines,
 - must receive Façade Improvement Grant Program application approval from the Town of Gibsonville Downtown Design Committee prior to beginning work;
 - and must adhere to the guidelines and suggestions set by the Town of Gibsonville Downtown Design Committee.
- ❖ Only exterior façade renovations are eligible.
- ❖ A property does not have to be occupied at the time a Façade Improvement Grant Program application is submitted.
- ❖ Priority consideration will be given to proposals that make highly visible and significant design contributions, and which contribute to the program goal of preserving the architectural, historic, and commercial character of the Gibsonville Downtown District.
- ❖ The following criteria will be used in reviewing applications:
 - Project will create or expand a business
 - Project will sustain jobs or create new jobs
 - Aesthetic impact of the renovation on character of Downtown
 - Degree of the improvement(s) enhancement on building's architectural assets

- Other building improvements completed beyond those funded
 - Project demonstrates collaboration/partnership
 - Proposed renovation will stop serious deterioration of the building's façade
- ❖ A building or rental unit may receive more than the maximum for major projects. The extra funds would have to be approved by the Gibsonville Board of Aldermen and could only be done in extreme cases.

■ **FUNDING:**

- ❖ Façade Improvement Grants will be given on the basis of a 50/50 match between the Town of Gibsonville and the property owner/tenant. The normal maximum amount awarded in this program is \$2,000 per facade per fiscal year (July 1, XXXX – June 30, XXXX) from the Downtown Façade Improvement Grant Program. A minimum of \$100 must be spent.
- ❖ The final award amount is based on documentation of actual costs.
- ❖ Façade Improvement Grants are paid only when approved project is completed in accordance with the approved plans and specifications submitted with the application. The Town of Gibsonville Downtown Design Review Committee will inspect and sign-off on completed work prior to issuance of grant award.
- ❖ Reimbursement checks will be made by the Town within thirty (30) days of sign-off of completed work and documentation of payment of said work.
- ❖ **IF APPLICABLE** -- Completed work that differs from the approved application will be disqualified for reimbursement.

■ **APPROVAL:**

- ❖ Applications, with accompanying "before" photographs/proposed plans/sketches/specifications/color choices/method of cleaning brick/property owner approval signature and copies of at least two cost estimates covering labor and material, must be submitted to the Town Manager at 129 West Main Street, Gibsonville, NC 27249 or e-mailed to bbaxley@gibsonville.net.
- ❖ The Town of Gibsonville Downtown Design Committee will review Façade Improvement Grant Program Applications and the Town Manager will make the final decision concerning grant awards.
- ❖ All rehabilitations on buildings over 50 years old are encouraged to follow the "**Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation**" of commercial buildings.
- ❖ All applicants' proposals must meet the building code requirements for the Town of Gibsonville and the applicant will obtain all needed permits.
- ❖ Each applicant is encouraged to seek design concept assistance from the Town of Gibsonville Downtown Design Committee (said assistance may include storefront renovation renderings and design sketches if approved by the committee) before an application is completed and designs are formulated.
- ❖ Each applicant will receive a letter notifying him/her of approval (or denial) of application, and notifying of any permit requirements. Applicants have 90 days to then apply for required permit(s), if applicable, or begin work.

■ APPEAL PROCESS:

- ❖ Any application rejected by the Town of Gibsonville Downtown Design Committee and Town Manager shall be entitled to review by the Town of Gibsonville Board of Aldermen. The applicant shall submit a written request to the Town Manager no later than ten (10) days from the date of the application is denied by the Downtown Design Committee and Town Manager. The request for review by the Gibsonville Board of Aldermen shall state reasons why the applicant believes the application was improperly refused by the Downtown Design Committee and Town Manager and the reasons why the applicant believes the application should be approved. The written request shall be furnished by the Town Manager to the Chairman of the Downtown Design Committee. The Chairman of the Downtown Design Committee shall, within ten (10) days of receipt of the applicant's written request from the Town Manager, furnish the Town Manager Downtown Design Committee's reasons for refusing the application and shall state reasons why the application should not be approved by the Town of Gibsonville Board of Aldermen. Review by the Town of Gibsonville Board of Aldermen will be scheduled within the time restraints and business issues of the Town of Gibsonville Board of Aldermen, but in no event later than ninety (90) days from the date the written request for review is received by the Town Manager from the applicant. The Board of Aldermen shall review the application and consider the action taken by the Downtown Design Committee and Town Manager regarding the application. The Town of Gibsonville Board of Aldermen shall not be required to reverse the Downtown Design Committee and Town Manager unless the Town of Gibsonville Board of Aldermen determines the Downtown Design Committee and Town Manager did not act in substantial compliance with the application request and applicable policies relating to the Town of Gibsonville Façade Improvement Grant Program. The Town of Gibsonville Board of Aldermen determination shall be deemed final action regarding the application.

■ POST-APPROVAL:

- ❖ All approved work must be completed within six (6) months of application approval.
- ❖ If more time is needed the applicant must provide written statement requesting extension for review and approval.
- ❖ Upon completion and sign-off of work, copies of the approved application along with documentation of paid statement, canceled checks, receipts, etc, must be submitted to the Town Manager in order to claim grant payment.

■ RECOMMENDED STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION:

The following standards are to be applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility.

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.

2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

▣ RECOMMENDED CONSTRUCTION AND MATERIALS

- A. Scale and Proportion: The height, width and general proportions of a building should conform generally to other buildings in the district. Ratio of wall surface to openings and the ratio of the width and height of windows and doors should also be consistent with the district. Buildings should remain “pedestrian-scaled” in order to protect views, sunlight and street character.
- B. Awnings: Awning design should relate to the shape and color of the building and be appropriate for its architectural style. In addition, they should be in harmony with the character of the Downtown and in coordination with the shape, color, and design of the adjacent awnings. All awnings must meet town code requirements for size, materials, and projections and shall be well maintained.

- C. Building Codes: All work must conform to existing Town and State Building, Zoning, and Fire Codes.
- D. Building Material: Use natural materials that relate to the building's original construction and are allowed by code. Imitation or synthetic materials such as aluminum or vinyl siding, imitation brick or stone, or plastic will generally be deemed inappropriate. Any use of these materials will require specific approval. Removing all inappropriate materials and coverings is strongly encouraged.
- E. Cleaning: Cleaning a building's exterior must be undertaken with great care. Use the gentlest means possible and never sandblast. Testing the results of a chosen method on an inconspicuous place is highly recommended.
- F. Masonry and Cornices: The re-pointing of masonry should be done carefully. Mortar and tooling techniques should match the original as closely as possible. Mortar should never be spread over the face of brick. Re-pointing should be done following exterior cleaning. The retention and repair of existing cornices is strongly encouraged. The re-creation of missing cornices should be done with care by using the building's existing cornices as a guide.
- G. Exposed Roofs: Wood, slate or asphalt shingles are appropriate. Roll roofing, built-up tar and gravel, plastic or other fiberglass roofing materials are not appropriate. On flat roofs that are not visible from the public area, other roof materials may be considered. The nature of the roofline should be compatible with existing buildings.
- H. Painting: Use high quality and appropriate paint for each situation. Avoid covering unpainted brick or stone unless it is necessary to hide existing defects or mismatching materials. Use colors that are compatible with other buildings in the area and that are true to the style and age of the structure. Avoid strong and bold colors.
- I. Storefronts: Facades are major elements of the overall streetscapes of downtown Gibsonville. Try to re-create as much of the storefront's original shape and configuration as possible. Good design incorporates the following elements: (1) bottom bulkhead, (2) large open and airy display windows, and (3) transom sign panel and cornices.
- J. Windows: Repair or replace all broken windows, glass, sash and frames. Retain existing windows where possible or replace with similar material. Boarding up windows is inappropriate. Interior blinds, shades or curtain should be clean and in good repair.

Gibsonville Downtown District

