



# ***DOWNTOWN FAÇADE GRANT PROGRAM***



## **PROGRAM GUIDELINES AND APPLICATION PROCESS 2024**

### **ELIGIBILITY**

- Who:** Applicant must be the property owner or a tenant with permission from the property owner.
- What:** Improvements must meet all standards in the Princeton Zoning Ordinance and State Building Codes.
- Where:** Improvement site must be within the Downtown Business Improvement District.

The program objective is to provide financial incentives to business and property owners to assist them in façade preservation and restoration that demonstrates enhanced appearance, makes visual aesthetic improvements, or adds attractive signage to the Princeton Downtown Business Improvement District.

## Review & Approval

- 1<sup>st</sup> Step: Town staff reviews application for completeness and eligibility.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Step: Princeton Board of Commissioners reviews application, staff comments, and renders decision.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Step: Town Staff notifies applicant of award decision.

## Eligible Exterior Improvements:

- Exterior lighting
- Repair or purchase of new awnings
- Exterior painting
- Storefront or façade repair
- Window repair or replacement
- Masonry repair
- Transom glass repair/replacement of architectural details or materials
- Adding lighting to existing signage to enhance the pedestrian experience with preference given to signage that is visible at night and that is aesthetically pleasing
- Building signage that enhances the pedestrian experience and clearly identifies the business
- Costs related to the design, fabrication and installation of signs.

## Application Checklist

- Completed and signed grant Downtown Façade Grant application.
- Detailed and itemized project budget with cost breakdowns.
- Application support documents (Estimates, drawings, pictures)

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## **Grant Objective:**

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## **Eligible Exterior Improvements:**

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For the downtown façade grant program, façade is defined as an individual storefront or building side which faces the public right-of-way or is otherwise visible to the general public. For the purpose of this grant program, separate addresses within a single building may qualify as separate facades of one or more of the spaces tenants are applying for a grant(s) subject to the guidelines of the program.

**NOTE:** Projects completed prior to submittal of application are not eligible; however, a project can begin prior to application approval.

## **Who Can Apply:**

1. Property Owner
2. Commercial Tenants with the Property Owner's written permission

## **Grant Deadline:**

The grant deadline will be on a monthly basis. Applications may be submitted on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of each month. Applications are accepted on a first come, first served basis. Applications submitted on or before the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month will be reviewed by the Princeton Board of Commissioners at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

An applicant/business may submit an application up to twice per year. If awarded, the applicant/business cannot reapply for the remainder of the fiscal year. This provision will not prohibit a new business owner from applying for a façade grant for the same property within the same fiscal year.

## **Grant Amount:**

The grant amount is up to \$1,000 per downtown façade based on 50/50 match. Applicant project costs must total more than \$2,000 in order to receive the maximum grant amount. Grants will be awarded throughout the fiscal year until allocated funds are exhausted. Funds not awarded in the current fiscal year will carry over into the next fiscal year. The continuation of the façade grants program will be based on allocated funds available in the budget.

## **Application:**

The application will be one page in length and made accessible to the public. Completed applications will consist of: 1) completed and signed application; 2) detailed and itemized project budget with cost

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breakdowns; and 3) Photos of property/project area. Applications may be submitted via email to [m.ashworth@myprincetonnc.com](mailto:m.ashworth@myprincetonnc.com).

## **Application Review Process:**

1. Town Staff will review the application for compliance and completeness.
2. Princeton Board of Commissioners review application and Town Staff recommendations prior to award decision.
3. Town Staff notifies applicant of award decision.
4. Grantee secures any necessary permits, if applicable.
5. Upon work completion, grantee must complete a Payment Requisition Form with copies of cancelled checks and/or contractor paid invoices as well as pictures of the completed project. Pictures of the completed project will also be required.
6. Town Staff will visit review request and perform a site visit to ensure compliance with all rules and permits.
7. Grant reimbursement will be mailed to grantee within 30 days of receipt of Payment Requisition Form.

## **Decision Factors for Grant Approval:**

1. Project Review Checklist:
  - a. Completed application due by 15<sup>th</sup> of the month
  - b. Project proposes eligible exterior improvement(s)
2. Extra consideration shall be provided to:
  - a. New commercial businesses;
  - b. Removal of metal awnings and/or replacement of fabric awnings
  - c. Recently expanded businesses; and/or
  - d. Projects that are creative or offer enhanced improvements or aesthetic appeal or translates to increased customer visitation or experiences in the downtown area.
3. Site visit and review of existing conditions;
4. Strength of the application and support materials submitted with the application will be judged against other applications received in the same month;
5. Project costs;
6. Available program funds;
7. Grants previously awarded to property.

## **Overall Guidelines:**

1. General maintenance guidelines may not be included in the grant application.
2. All improvements not listed under eligible improvements shall be considered ineligible improvements.
3. Projects must begin no later than three months after approval of the grant and completed within six months of grant award.
4. Work shall conform to all applicable ordinances and building codes. Grantees are required to secure any required permits.
5. All work must be in keeping with the specifications approved as part of the grant application.
6. Approval or denial of all applications by the town will be submitted in writing to the applicant within two weeks of the decision.