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Town of Wendell
EXPANDED DOWNTOWN FAÇADE
GRANT PROGRAM
Guidelines

Grant Objective:

To provide financial incentives to business and property owners within the core of the downtown to assist them in façade preservation and restoration that demonstrates enhanced and superior appearance and aesthetic improvements to a business, neighborhood and/or frontage on the public right-of-way.

Eligible Exterior Improvements:

Exterior lighting; repair or purchase of new awnings; exterior painting; storefronts or facades repair or replacement; window repair or replacement; masonry repair; transom glass repair/replacement of architectural details or materials, and relocation of electrical wiring.

For the expanded downtown façade grant program, facades are 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: Project cannot be completed prior to submittal of application; however, it can be started prior to application approval.

Who Can Apply:

1. Property Owners within the defined Downtown Façade Grant Boundary; and/or
2. Commercial Tenants within the defined boundary, with the Property Owner's written permission

Grant Deadline:

The Town's Expanded Downtown Façade Grant Program was made possible through funding allocated by the NC Department of Commerce, via the 2018 Budget Act. The 2018 Budget Act allocated \$50,000 to the Town of Wendell to use for Downtown Development Revitalization.

In order to ensure that all State Funding is put to use, the Town's Expanded Downtown Façade Grant program will have an open application period through June 1, 2019. In order to receive reimbursement from the Town, approved projects must complete all described work and submit all required invoices/documentation by August 30, 2019. Applications are accepted on a first come, first served basis. All submitted applications will be reviewed during the next Appearance Commission meeting (applications must be received at least 7 days before scheduled meeting date to make it on meeting agenda).

Grant Amount:

The typical grant amount is up to \$10,000 per downtown façade based on a 1:1 match. Larger grant amounts may be approved for projects of significant impact based on matches greater than 1:1, demonstration of increased property value, job creation, and/or prominent location. The total match provided by the Town for all expanded façade grants approved through June 1, 2019 may not exceed \$45,000. Thus, in the event that

more than \$35,000 of façade grant funds have been previously approved, subsequent applicants' requests shall be limited by the remaining balance.

Application:

Application will be one page in length and made accessible to the public. Copies of the Design Façade Grant Program Guidelines will be made accessible to the public. Marketing of the downtown façade grant program is encouraged. Completed applications will consist of: 1) completed and signed application; 2) detailed and itemized project budget with cost breakdowns is required as part of the application. All aspects of the project shall be included; and 3) Photos of property/project area.

Application Review Process:

1. Planning Department Staff (completeness review)
2. Appearance Commission (recommendation to Board of Commissioners)
3. Board of Commissioners (final review and approval)

Upon completion of work, copies of applicants canceled checks and contractors paid statements must be sent to Planning Department. Inspectors ensure work is in conformance with all applicable plans and ordinances. Completed paperwork is forward to the Finance Department for grant disbursement to applicant and is mailed to the applicant within two weeks of receipt of completed paperwork.

General processing and approval timeframe for all qualified applications will be a maximum of 45 days from receipt of qualified applications.

Decision Factors for Grant Approval:

1. Project Review Checklist:
 - a. Completed application by application deadline
 - 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 or seeking renovation; and/or
 - d. Projects that are creative or offer enhanced improvements or aesthetic appeal or translates to increase customer visitation or experiences in a neighborhood.
3. Site visit and view of existing conditions;
4. Strength of the application and support materials submitted with the application will be judged against applications during the grant deadline cycle;
5. Project costs;
6. Available program funds.
7. Grants previously awarded to property.

Overall Guidelines:

1. General maintenance expenses may not be included in the grant application.
2. All improvements not listed under eligible improvements shall be considered ineligible improvements.
3. Approved projects must complete project and submit required invoices/documentation by August 30, 2019 in order to receive reimbursement by the Town.
4. Work shall conform to all applicable ordinances and building codes and permits shall be applied for when required. Applicants 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 should be submitted in writing to applicants.