



# *Downtown Facade Grant Program*

## Purpose and Description

The purpose of this program is to stimulate downtown revitalization and development in Hiawassee. The facade grant program is one component of the Hiawassee Main Street Program that is administered and managed through the Hiawassee Downtown Development Authority (DDA).

Program funds are an incentive for current owners and potential buyers of vacant and occupied properties used for commercial purposes to restore, renovate, and repair the exteriors of their property.

The DDA will provide up to a 50/50 investment match ratio up to \$1,500 per property, as a reimbursement once pre-approved project(s) has been completed and inspected. Work must begin within 90 days and be completed within six (6) months of the date of the DDA approval letter.

## Eligibility

The program is open to all private businesses located within the DDA boundaries, that must be in good standing with the City, and current on utilities and taxes. Once available facade grant funds are pledged, no more applications will be accepted until additional funds are available. Funding for this program comes through the DDA General fund, private donations and a portion of the collection donation tubes at Mayors Park and Lloyds Landing.

The awarded funds are for exterior improvements to properties used for commercial and /or mixed use purposes. Facade improvements may be applied to a front, side, or rear facade, provided the facade faces a public street, parking area, or has lake access with dock availability. Government entities, properties owned by the Hiawassee DDA, churches and national franchises of all types are excluded. If the property is leased, the tenant must include the contact information of the property owner and a letter from the property owner authorizing the applicant's facade renovations.

The money is in the form of a grant, not a loan, and is available as follows:

- ◇ First time rehab under this program: Up to 50 percent match basis
- ◇ After 5 years under this program: A second rehab of the same facade may receive up to 25 percent on a match basis.
- ◇ After 10 years under this program: A second rehab of the same facade may receive up to 50 percent on a match basis.

## Guidelines for Façade Improvements

From minor improvements to full-scale facade restoration, a wide range of investment proposals will be considered, including:

- ◇ Exterior painting
- ◇ Basic facade improvements (excludes landscaping and roofs)
- ◇ Canopies and awnings (without business name, address is permitted)
- ◇ Gutters and downspouts
- ◇ Exterior door & window repair/replacement and exterior treatments (examples shutters, window boxes, lighting)
- ◇ Decorative exterior architectural features
- ◇ Other restoration/renovations, which meet National Parks Historic Preservation guidelines and goals of revitalization will be considered.

Hiawassee Downtown Development Authority, Rebuilding Downtown: The Heart and Soul of Hiawassee

50 River Street, Hiawassee GA 30546 . 762-294-0864. email: lponitz@hiawasseeega.gov

## **Application Process**

Applications will be coordinated by the Economic Development Director. The Facade Grant Committee (FGC) and DDA Board will review each application for final approval within four weeks of receipt and in the order received. Only complete application packages will be reviewed. Incomplete application packages will be returned to the sender within two weeks of receipt.

The Application process includes: Complete the application

- ◇ Include appropriate permits (if applicable)
- ◇ If applicant is not the property owner a letter of approval from the property owner, and contact information must be submitted with the application
- ◇ The FGC will review the application and make a recommendation to the DDA Board of Directors

## **Application Review Process**

The Economic Development Department and FGC shall:

- Review each application package for completeness.
- Determine eligibility.
- Each application package will be judged by the following standards for review:
  - ◇ Priority will be given to buildings that are visually prominent, and/or buildings with inappropriately applied facades that are unsightly or in need of repair.
  - ◇ Extent to which the project advances the goals of improving building appearance.
  - ◇ Extent to which the project is compatible with design standards for the targeted area.
  - ◇ Extent of the project's impact upon the overall streetscape and pedestrian atmosphere.
  - ◇ Original condition of the building and the need for the changes of the proposed project.
  - ◇ Quality of the work proposed.
  - ◇ Level of match participation by the applicant.
  - ◇ Range of projects completed and proposed as part of the Facade Grant program.
  - ◇ Any other relevant factors deemed by the Economic Development Department to be applicable.

Recommendations for facade grants will then be given to the DDA for approval. Within two weeks of a DDA meeting, each applicant will receive confirmation via email indicating the grant award decision, or in some cases a request for additional information. In the instance of a decision to deny or table an application, the email will indicate the board's reasoning.

The DDA reserves the right to table, deny, or request modifications in any or all application packages, in whole or in part, and to negotiate changes in the proposed project. In the case of denial by the DDA, the applicant can address any issues identified and reapply for a grant.

## Grant Awards and Disbursement

Approved projects will be funded at up to 50% of the approved project's total cost not to exceed \$1,500.

Many factors are considered when determining grant awards. Such factors include grant funds available, the project budget, number of applicants, financial considerations, applicant match, mixture of proposed projects, and the extent to which projects fulfill the goals and standards for eligible projects as set forth above.

- ◇ Upon approval of the application work may begin.
- ◇ Work must begin within 45 days of notice of award and be completed within six (6) months.
- ◇ **Submit copies of paid receipts, canceled checks, completed W9, and photos within 60 days of completion to:**

City of Hiawassee  
ATTN: Economic Development Office  
Ref: Façade Grant Program  
50 River Street  
Hiawassee, GA 30546

- ◇ Reimbursement issued within 30 days of receiving grant closing documents.

**NOTE:** The Economic Development Department and the Downtown Development Authority reserves the right to increase or decrease a grant award in accordance with receipt of actual expenditures.



## Application for the Facade Grant

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Address of the Project: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone numbers: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please attach a detailed description of the proposed work and high quality pictures of building in existing conditions.

*Note: To receive payment, project must be completed as described.*

Estimated cost: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount of Grant Funding Request: \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that the incentive match must be used for the project described in this application and that the project must be fully completed before the payment will be considered.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Application Check List

- \_\_\_\_\_ Completed Application
- \_\_\_\_\_ Detailed description
- \_\_\_\_\_ Budget Summary
- \_\_\_\_\_ Letter of consent from property owner (if leasing)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Photograph of building with existing condition
- \_\_\_\_\_ Paint and awning samples (if applicable)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Copy of City permits (if applicable)

### Internal Use Only

Date Received \_\_\_\_\_

Date Applicant Notified Decision \_\_\_\_\_

Date Application Closed: \_\_\_\_\_

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