



## Town of Dallas

### Façade Improvement Grant Program

#### **Objective and Purpose**

The Town of Dallas has a primary goal of improving the appearance of the Central Business District (as defined by the Town's Future Land Use Plan) and promoting economic development. To aid in achieving that goal, the Façade Improvement Grant Program will assist new or existing businesses in maintaining and improving the appearance of building façades in the Central Business District.

The rehabilitation of structures in the Central Business District of Dallas should respect and reflect the architectural integrity and history of the entire building and retain those elements that enhance the building. Façades should be in harmony with the character of the downtown area and in coordination with the color and design of adjacent structures.

As a means of encouraging the maintenance and improvement of business building façades, the Town of Dallas has appropriated funds to a structured grant program to provide financial assistance to owners of businesses in the Central Business District. Awards through the Town-funded grant program shall comply with the following provisions, requirements, and guidelines.

The purpose of the program is to:

- ◆ Promote storefront rehabilitation in the Central Business District
- ◆ Preserve the unique character of the downtown's historic buildings
- ◆ Encourage aesthetic compatibility for improvements to façades of non-historic structures
- ◆ Encourage the use of quality materials, good design, and workmanship in the rehabilitation of downtown properties
- ◆ Make improvements that make a highly visible contribution to Dallas

#### **Guidelines**

1. All rehabilitation funded through grant awards under this program must be performed in accordance with *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* (Exhibit A); Town of Dallas Ordinances and Code Requirements, such as building codes, zoning regulations, etc.; and the following guidelines in making façade improvements under this program.
2. Approval for funds must be made prior to the beginning of the project. No awards will be given to a project begun or completed prior to application.
3. A brief summary of the business plan and the proposed renovation/rehabilitation project must be submitted with the application. Summary should be limited to no more than two pages. **The applicant must secure a two-year lease, if leasing.**
4. Funds are for fixed items only and not for inventory, furnishings, or non-fixed items. Grants are provided to help with correction of building code violations, building renovations, building rehabilitations, façade improvement, signage, etc.
5. The Business Incentive Grant program is not intended to provide financial assistance to fiscally unsound businesses.
6. Since each application will be different, and reviewed on a case-by-case basis, the applicant may be required to submit additional information. The intent of the Façade Grant Program application process is not to burden the applicant business with extensive research, but to provide the Review Committee with information to make appropriate recommendations and decisions.

7. Façade Grant Program applications will be reviewed by the Review Committee, and will depend on the availability of funds.
8. Ineligible properties and businesses:
  - ◆ Tax delinquent property or property not in good standing with the Town of Dallas Utility Billing
  - ◆ National franchises
  - ◆ Retail chain stores
  - ◆ Primarily residential properties or uses
  - ◆ Tax exempt organizations or properties

### **Eligibility**

1. A façade is defined as an individual storefront or commercial building side which faces a public right-of-way or is otherwise visible to the general public.
2. Commercial buildings must be located within the Central Business District or on Trade Street between N. Summey Street and the Hwy. 321 Interchange.
3. Owner or tenants of buildings are eligible to apply; however, the owner must sign the application.
4. If there is a building with multiple public-facing façades (ex. corner building), all public-facing sides must be rehabilitated and grant eligibility will be assessed per eligible side.
5. Only established businesses (those that have been in operation for more than two years) are eligible for a grant that includes new signage.

### **Grant Award**

1. Grant awards and amounts are at the discretion of the Grant Review Committee.
2. Decisions may be based upon such factors to size and scope of project, potential positive impact on the appearance of the district area, project costs, and availability of funds.
3. Qualifying projects are eligible for a grant at a minimum of \$500 and a maximum of \$20,000 per façade, on a 50/50 matching, reimbursement basis.
4. At least two project cost estimates must be submitted with the application. If both estimates are deemed equal in regards to quality of materials used, tec., only fifty percent of the lowest estimate will be considered in the amount of the award, regardless of which bid is accepted by the building owner.
5. The grant amount shall be determined at the time of application approval and paid when the project is completed.
6. The work must be completed within four months of application approval, but the owner may request one extension for two additional months based upon compelling reasons for the delay.
7. The façade improvements must remain in place for three full years from the date of completion. If not, the grant amount for that project must be repaid in full.

**Town of Dallas**  
**Façade Grant Program Fact Sheet**

**What is the Façade Grant Program?**

An incentive program to taxpayers who improve the appearance of their commercial property by retaining and preserving the historic character of the property.

Provides 50% of the total cost of approved projects up to \$20,000 maximum grant amount. Side or rear façades are eligible which face a public right-of-way or is otherwise visible to the general public. NOTE: If a building has more than one eligible façade, each façade is considered separately.

Encourages further private reinvestment in existing infrastructure and promotes appropriate and attractive design projects that preserve the architectural character found only in older buildings.

**Who may apply for the Grant?**

Building owners or tenants with building owner's consent.

**What buildings are eligible?**

Any commercial building greater than 50 years old located in the Central Business District (as defined by the Town's Future Land Use Plan) or on Trade St. between N. Summey St. and the Hwy 321 Interchange, with priority given to improvements that will make the greatest impact on the surrounding built environment.

**Ineligible properties or businesses:**

- \* Tax delinquent properties
- \* Properties not in good standing with Town Utilities
- \* National franchises
- \* Retail chain stores
- \* Properties used primarily for residential purposes

**What storefront rehabilitation expenditures qualify?**

Eligible expenditures include: exterior painting of previously painted surfaced and/or paint removal; appropriate exterior cleaning; masonry repair and tuck-pointing; repair of architectural details or materials; repair of windows or window framing; removal of siding, false façades and in-fill brick; removal of inappropriate/out of date signs; rehabilitation of compatible reconstruction of storefront; new canvas awnings/frame; replacements of transom glass and business signage with full compliance of the design standards.

Signs and awnings may be included as eligible expenses providing they represent good design, meet the design ordinance and standards of the Town of Dallas Code of Ordinances.

Ineligible expenditures include: general maintenance; construction of false fronts; painting of previously unpainted surfaces; blocking up of windows or installing storm/vinyl windows or doors; interior rehabilitation; electrical work; roof and chimney repairs; installation of aluminum, vinyl, stone, stucco, brick veneer; or other inappropriate building materials; demolition of historic features; sandblasting; improvements made prior to grant approval.

Rehabilitations must meet the Secretary of the Interior's "Standards for Rehabilitation" program standards that are attached.

Colors used on exterior surfaces, signage, awnings and related items must relate to natural material colors found on neighboring historic buildings and nearby buildings.

**Who makes the decision to approve or reject a request?**

A Review Committee comprised of the Town Manager, Electric Utility Director, Public Works Director, Development Services Director, a member from the Board of Aldermen Community Development Committee; as well as a representative from the Small Business Center at Gaston College.

**What is the process for applying for a grant?**

1. Meet with the Town of Dallas Development Services Staff.
2. Complete an application, including the required support materials.
3. A review will be completed by the Review Committee.
4. Applicant will be notified by mail of acceptance, acceptance with conditions, or rejection of application.
5. Any changes to approved work during construction must be approved by the Development Services Staff in writing.
6. Upon completion of project, applicant sends copies of paid receipts/statements to Development Services Staff.
7. Development Services Staff will inspect completed funds and authorize disbursement of grant funds, provided work was completed in accordance with the application.

**What other conditions apply?**

1. Grants are based on the entire scope of the project. All work must be eligible and approved expenditures; or the total grant award is void.
2. All applications must be approved prior to commencement of work.
3. Each building façade is considered separately to meet the 50% matching rule.
4. Submission of a project does not ensure the project will be approved to receive funds. Grant awards are determined by recommendation of the Review Committee and the availability of funds.
5. Grant approval or changes to the scope of work in an approved project will be conveyed in writing.
6. Only one façade grant will be awarded per building façade per calendar year.

**Examples**

1. A property owner applies for a façade grant for an improvement to a commercial building storefront. The planned improvement costs \$1700. The applicant receives a matching grant of 50%, which equals \$850.
2. A property owner applies for a façade grant for an improvement to a commercial building storefront and the planned improvement costs \$900. The applicant receives a grant of \$500, as the minimum grant amount for a qualified improvement is \$500.
3. A property owner applies for a façade grant for an improvement to a commercial building storefront. The planned improvement costs \$50,000. The applicant receives a grant of \$20,000; as the maximum grant amount for a qualified improvement is \$20,000.
4. A property owner renovates a commercial building storefront. The owner may apply for another façade grant for a different eligible side of the same building during the same calendar year. However, the owner will need to wait until the next calendar year to apply for another façade grant for the same storefront side.

**Exhibit A**

# **Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation**

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for the treatment of historic properties were written by the National Park Service and revised in 1990. The guidelines recommend responsible methods and approaches and list treatments that should be avoided.

## **The Standards**

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 historic 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.

**TOWN OF DALLAS****Façade Grant Agreement**

THIS AGREEMENT is entered into this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, by and between the TOWN OF DALLAS (Town) and \_\_\_\_\_ (Grantee), whose address is \_\_\_\_\_.

**WHEREAS**, the Town has approved a façade improvement grant to Grantee subject to the execution of this Agreement, and Grantee desires to accept the grant and to abide by the terms of this Agreement; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town has approved a grant in an amount not to exceed Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000.00) for façade improvements at \_\_\_\_\_, Dallas, NC.

**NOW THEREFORE**, the parties agree as follows:

1. Grantee reaffirms that all information provided to the Town in its Façade Grant Application is correct and accurate.

2. Grantee has read and agrees to abide by the provisions and requirements of the Town of Dallas Façade Grant Program.

3. All work performed by Grantee will be consistent with the approval by the Town. If Grantee desires to make any changes in the project, Grantee will obtain written approval from the Town before implementing such changes. Grantee understands that the Town is not required to approve any changes.

4. Grantee agrees to complete the improvements within four (4) months from the date of this agreement and understands that failure to complete the improvements within such period will result in forfeiture of the grant.

5. Grantee understands that the grant will be paid to Grantee only upon completion of the work, submission of all dated statements or invoices to the Town, and approval by the Town of the completed work.

6. Grantee will notify the Town immediately if Grantee's interest in the subject property changes in any way. This Agreement is not assignable by Grantee without prior written approval of the Town, which will not be unreasonably withheld.

7. Grantee hereby grants to the Town the right to use pictures, renderings, or descriptions of the work any and all promotional purposes desired by the Town.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, the parties have signed this Agreement on the day and year first written above.

WITNESSES FOR THE TOWN

TOWN OF DALLAS

\_\_\_\_\_  
Town Manager

WITNESSES FOR THE OWNER

OWNER

\_\_\_\_\_  
Owner

WITNESSES FOR GRANTEE

GRANTEE (if other than Owner)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Grantee