

## **City of Newberry's Downtown Façade Improvement Plan for Fiscal Year 2023-2024**

**Intro:** People and businesses bring life to any location, but downtown districts in particular are defined and shaped by the quality and vibrancy of buildings. The City of Newberry's Downtown Façade Improvement Grant Program enlivens the built environment in the downtown core by significantly improving the appearance of buildings, adding value for downtown property owners and visitors.

**Purpose:** Recognizing the fact that the appearance of a downtown is largely determined by the condition of its buildings and forms the basis of the public's overall impression of downtown, the City of Newberry has developed the Downtown Façade Improvement Grant Program. The objective of the Façade Improvement Grant Program is to dramatically improve the facades of downtown buildings so that after completion of work, citizens will notice a marked improvement in the appearance of the buildings and the physical environment of downtown. The purpose of the program is to provide an economic incentive to:

- 1) promote storefront rehabilitation in Newberry's Historic Downtown area;
- 2) preserve the unique character of downtown's historic buildings;
- 3) encourage aesthetic compatibility for improvements to facades of non-historic structures;
- 4) encourage the use of quality materials in the rehabilitation of downtown properties;

Façade improvements should be those that are permanent and part of the building.

**Funds will be made available periodically on a first-come-first-served basis.**

- Eligibility:**
- 1) Owner or tenant of a business/commercial building located within one of the two Downtown historic district boundaries. (Main Street or Newberry Historic District)
  - 2) Owners or tenants may request the incentive grant; however, any tenant must have the owner's written permission attached to the application.
  - 3) If a property owner owns more than one building or facade in downtown, they will be eligible for only one grant per year as funds are limited.
  - 4) No more than one grant per location per year will be available. (*see "Additional or Future Grants"*)
  - 5) The property shall be classified as business/commercial.
  - 6) There must be no delinquent bills, business license, charges, or taxes due to the City

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- Grant Guidelines:**
- 1) Must meet all City of Newberry Architectural Review Board's guidelines and requirements.
  - 2) Rehabilitation work must conform to the City of Newberry's Building Codes.
  - 3) Rehabilitation of structures in the downtown district should respect the architectural integrity of the entire building and retain those elements that enhance the building.
  - 4) Façade grant applications may be made for structures within the defined boundaries, with priority\* given to renovation projects that visibly improve downtown facades, including buildings with inappropriately applied facades that cover windows, or that are unsightly, out-of-scale, or in need of general repair work.  
\*Funds are made available periodically on a first-come-first-served basis and priority will only be taken into consideration should applications be submitted at the same time.
  - 5) All properties classified as business/commercial within one of the two Downtown historic district boundaries. (Main Street or Newberry Historic District) may apply for grant funds.

6) Improvements may include, but are not limited to:

- Façade improvements
- Brick or wall surface cleaning
- Patching and painting of facade walls
- \*Signage or exterior lighting replacement/repair
- Structure or frame that contains or holds a sign
- Canopy, porch, awning installation/repair
- Window and/or door replacement/repair
- Mortar joint repair
- Railings, ironwork repair or addition
- Cornice repair and/or replacement

\*Only established businesses (3+ years) are eligible for sign replacement

Removal of inappropriate additions to buildings and non-compliant signs may qualify based on the effect the removal will have on the appearance of downtown.

Ineligible improvements include but are not limited to building maintenance including paint to match existing conditions and deferred general repairs; parking lot improvements; interior or roof improvements; removal of architecturally significant building features; purchase property, inventory, or operating capital; any activity completed prior to receiving grant funds.

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7) Any improvements that have been made through the façade improvement grant program and which become a part of the property may not be removed from the property unless they can be used (without significant alterations) on another property within downtown (e.g., awnings). See criteria point six (6) for details on improvement maintenance.

**Design Guidelines:**

- 1) Improvements should contribute to the pedestrian environment by enhancing the aesthetic impact of the facade by adding visual interest to the streetscape.
- 2) Improvements should provide a year-round impact
- 3) Improvements should be completed in ways that are compatible with the original design of the structure.
- 4) Improvements should not shield from public view nor cause the removal of architecturally significant features
- 5) Improvements should contribute to the building's character
- 6) Improvements should encourage other restoration or redevelopment within the downtown area.

**Additional or Future Grants (Previous grant holders only):**

- 1) A property may be eligible for an additional grant if:
  - a) At least three (3) years have elapsed since the last grant was awarded and the property is in need of further improvement (e.g., repaint, new awning); under extenuating circumstances an additional grant may be awarded prior to three years from the last grant, if deemed necessary by the City of Newberry's Architectural Review Board.
  - b) The existing business/property undergoes significant expansion which requires improvement to the property.

**Criteria:**

- 1) For the purposes of the façade improvement grant program, a façade is defined as an individual storefront, rear, or side of a building that faces a public street or alleyway or which is otherwise visible to the general public.
- 2) Qualifying projects are eligible for a grant match of up to 90% on projects, with a maximum grant award of \$9,000: matching basis as funds are available.
- 3) Project proposals are not capped at \$10,000. Applicants are encouraged to strongly leverage their grant funds to get the most from their investment.
- 4) **Any** work done before a grant application is approved is **not** eligible.

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5) The grant match will be reimbursed to the grant recipient after the work is completed and all bills relating to said work are paid in full.

6) The property owner must agree to maintain the facade improvement as set forth in the application for a period of three (3) years or until the property is sold. *(Example: if an awning is installed as part of a project and then rips within a three-year period, it must be repaired or replaced by the owner.)*

Application Process: 1) Applicant will complete application and return to the City of Newberry's Administrative Services Office in City Hall, along with proposed improvement plan. **APPLICATION DEADLINE: October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023, at 12 pm**

2) Two qualified and professional estimates of cost are to be included with the application.

3) Applications will be reviewed and signed by the City's Building Official for building code compliance.

4) Applications will be presented and reviewed by the City's Architectural Review Board (ARB). **Applicant must be present at review.**

5) An agreement must be signed **BEFORE** any work begins. Parties to the agreement will be the applicant(s), building owner(s), ARB, and the City of Newberry.

6) A copy of the fully executed and approved application will be made available to the grant recipient upon request.

7) Upon project completion, copies of fully paid statements must be submitted to the City of Newberry's Planning and Development offices to claim grant reimbursement.

8) The City's Building Official will then inspect work completed and request checks be issued for the amount approved in grant application. Provided all work is accomplished in accordance with the agreement.

2023-24 Grant Timeline:     **Applications Accepted Starting: July 10, 2023**  
  **Application Deadline: October 31, 2023, at 12 pm**  
  **ARB Application Approval by: November 16, 2023**  
  **Project Completion on or Before: May 31, 2024**

**\*While the application deadline is October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023, funds will be allocated on a first-come-first-served basis.**

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**Office Use Only: Received By:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ **Time:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City of Newberry's: FACADE IMPROVEMENT GRANT APPLICATION  
FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023-2024**

APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED WITHOUT THIS FORM AND CHECKLIST, FULLY COMPLETED, AS LISTED BELOW

Applicant's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Owner \_\_\_ Tenant                      Business/Building Name \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant Address \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_

Property Owner's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_

Length of Time at this location \_\_\_\_\_ Length of remaining lease term (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

**Description of Project** (attach additional pages as needed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Total Estimated Cost of Improvement \$** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please Check- ALL POINTS ARE REQUIRED FOR YOUR APPLICATION TO BE COMPLETE:**

- I have attached project plans, specifications, or other appropriate design information. *A professional architectural plan is not required.*
- I have attached samples of paint colors to be used on facade improvements or signage.
- I have attached a photograph(s) of existing condition of the property.
- I have attached copies of cost estimates for the project (minimum of two (2) estimates required)
- I have attached written permission from the property owner, if applicable (please check or mark not applicable).
- I understand that grant funds must be used only for the project described in this application. The work must be completed by May 31, 2023. All work must be completed according to state and local building codes and ordinances and approved, when necessary, by the proper authorities.
- I also understand that this application must be reviewed before any work is done on the project and that no projects will be funded if work was started/completed prior to the application's approval.

**PLEASE SUBMIT THIS PAGE AS PART OF YOUR APPLICATION**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ understand that I am responsible for the maintenance of the facade improvements described here for a period of three (3) years from the date of project completion or until such time as the building is sold.

I understand the improvement grant must be used for the project described in this application and that the City's Architectural Review Board (ARB) must review the application and must approve it prior to beginning construction. I understand that failure to comply with the approved application may result in losing my eligibility to receive funds.

I acknowledge that the City of Newberry is obligated only to administer the grant procedures and is not liable to the applicant, owner or third parties for any obligations or claims of any nature growing out of, arising out of, or otherwise related to the project or application undertaken by the applicant and/or owner.

I acknowledge that this application must be accepted, and all prerequisite rules and regulations must be complied with before the application can be considered for acceptance.

I have attached the project plans and specifications or other appropriate design documentation.

The undersigned acknowledges and has read all facade grant policies as listed above and agrees to adhere to them.

Applicant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*(if different from above)*

Property Owner \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete and return to: City of Newberry, Attn: Jeff Wicker, PO Box 538, Newberry, SC 29018  
Applications may be hand delivered to City Hall, 1330 College St., Newberry, SC 29108

This application has been approved by the following:

Signature, City Building Official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature, City Manager \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature, ARB Committee Chair \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Conditions/Comments:**

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