

The Downtown Newton Development Association
Façade Improvement Grant

On April 25th, 2000 the Downtown Newton Development Association (DNDA) was incorporated as a 501 (C)-3 non-profit created to foster economic growth and development in the Downtown Newton Service District, an area encompassing more than twenty blocks of the downtown business district including the City of Newton government complex, the Catawba County Historical Museum, professional and merchant businesses as well as residential properties.

As a member of the North Carolina Main Street Program, Downtown Newton Development Association is committed to bring life back to it's Main Street by building on Downtown Newton's inherent assets; rich architecture, personal service and traditional values. There are four key elements that combine to form the North Carolina Main Street Program Approach to downtown revitalization. They include: organization, design, promotion and economic restructuring.

- Organization involves building partnerships to create a consistent revitalization program. Developing effective management and leadership downtown is a vital part of the Main Street program. Diverse groups- merchants, bankers, public officials and others-must all work together to improve downtown.
- Promotion helps re-establish downtown as an attractive place for shoppers, investors and visitors. This means not only improving sales but also rekindling community excitement and involvement. Promotion ranges from street festivals to retail merchandising, from community education to public relations.
- Design works to enhance the visual quality of the downtown. Attention is given to all elements of the downtown environment-not just buildings and storefronts but also public spaces, rear entries, signs, landscaping, window displays and graphic materials such as banners, logos and posters.
- Economic Restructuring entails strengthening the downtown's existing economic assets while diversifying its economic base; this is the program's ultimate goal. Activities include market analysis and business recruitment.

Since becoming a member of the North Carolina Main Street Program in 1990, the City of Newton has strived to uphold the Four-Point Approach to downtown revitalization. The ultimate goal of DNDA is to create economic growth and development in the service district and to market Downtown Newton in such a manner as to promote tourism. DNDA fosters a positive image of downtown by increasing cooperation between private and public interest. Historic preservation is also important to DNDA's mission. DNDA feels the past is kept alive through promoting architectural restoration and preservation, and it is enhanced by streetscapes that share a consistent appearance paying reverence to the aesthetic character formed by Newton's historic facades.

Following the guidelines set forth as part of its incorporation, Downtown Newton Development Association now seeks to distribute funding to property owners and/or tenants of Downtown Newton in an effort to restore and preserve our historic downtown business district. Downtown Newton Development Association is currently accepting applications so that it can present monies to property owners and/or tenants that they might improve the current condition of their building facades. DNDA will only fund suitable projects presented by legitimate persons that strictly follow the guidelines set forth in the grant criteria. The DNDA Façade Improvement Grant is a competitive grant. Filling out an grant application does not ensure funding status. DNDA Façade Improvement Grants are given on a 50-50 matching basis with a maximum DNDA participation of \$1,000.00 per façade project as determined by the DNDA Design Committee.

Please be sure to complete the entire application with care and accuracy. Incomplete or improperly completed applications will be ineligible for funding consideration. Applications should be sent to the following address on or before December 31st to be eligible for funding in the coming year.

DNDA
Attention: Design Committee
P.O. Box 1201
Newton NC, 28658

For more information or to obtain an application packet, please contact the DNDA Coordinator at 828 466 8833.

Downtown Newton Development Association Downtown Design Guidelines

Introduction:

The architectural quality of Newton's downtown area is important to the entire town, its history, image and economy. Proper improvements to the exterior appearances of individual buildings will help develop the appropriate image. Therefore, it is important that an organized and coordinated approach to exterior improvements be followed in the downtown area.

The Downtown Newton Development Association of the City of Newton has developed the following guidelines to provide this coordinated approach. These guidelines should be followed by property owners, tenants, architects and contractors involved in exterior improvements or restorations to buildings in the downtown area. These parameters will be used by the Downtown Newton Development Association when considering which applicants merit the awarding of limited Façade Improvement Grant funds available for the downtown district. By following these guidelines, applicants can improve their chances of obtaining available downtown rehabilitation incentives and their efforts will enhance the image of downtown as a special place to work, shop and socialize.

Purpose:

Provide an economic incentive to:

- a) Properly renovate or restore building facades in Downtown Newton. Façade is defined as the face of a building; e.g. the front, side, or rear elevation of a building. First priority should be emphasized on the fronts of the building.
- b) Encourage good design projects which capitalize on the rehabilitation of existing properties paired with the introduction of sympathetic new design.
- c) Preserve the unique historic character of Downtown Newton.

Eligibility:

1. Owner or tenant of a building, structure, or site located within the boundaries of the City of Newton's Designated Municipal Service District
2. Owners and tenants may request Façade Improvement Grants separately; however any tenant must have the owner's written permission attached to the application.

Criteria:

Grants are given on a 50-50 matching basis with a maximum DNDA participation of \$1,000.00 per façade project as determined by the DNDA Design Committee. Please note, the Façade Improvement Grant is a competitive grant. It will be awarded each year to the applicant and/or applicants that the DNDA Design Committee feels best meet the design guidelines and criteria established for the grant.

Time Limitations:

Work must be completed on a timely schedule with the applicant stating the time frame of the work in the application subject to review by the DNDA Design Committee. Work not completed in a reasonable amount of time could be subject to withdrawal of funds.

Source of Funds:

The Façade Improvement Grant Program is made possible through an appropriation by the Newton City Council via a special façade grant appropriation.

Process of Receiving Grants:

1. Meet with the DNDA Coordinator, who will help determine if an application form of a proposed project is within the program guidelines.
2. Owner/tenant completes application, including design plans or sketches, and owner's written permission if necessary, and returns to the Main Street Coordinator. Design and technical assistance may be provided by the Main Street Program Architect. However, private architectural assistance contracted by the applicant is acceptable. (Work completed in accordance with architectural design drawings will be done on a 50-50 basis for consultant fees. Architectural fees will be deducted from the final grant amount. Architectural fees for work not executed will be the sole responsibility of the applicant.) Final inspection by a qualified representative of the DNDA Design Committee will be necessary prior to receipt of grants funds (see 8). Applications must be submitted by December 31 of each year and grants will be awarded in February.
3. Any member of the Downtown Newton Development Association submitting an application for a Façade Improvement Grant will excuse himself/herself from the discussion and selection process to alleviate any conflict of interest.
4. In February of each year, a Notification Letter will be sent to applicant as to whether the project has been accepted as described in the application, accepted with conditions, or rejected.
5. Submission of an application does not automatically guarantee grant awarding. The DNDA Design Committee will determine which applicants best meet the grant requirements, award grant amounts at their discretion and these recommendations must be approved by a majority of the DNDA Board.
6. An agreement must be signed prior to work commencing. Parties in the agreement will be the applicant and the Downtown Newton Development Association Board, Staff, Chair and Notary.
7. Upon project completion, copies of the paid invoices with copies of all cancelled checks must be submitted to the Downtown Newton Development Association within 3 months.
8. The Downtown Newton Development Association Design Committee and/or a qualified representative will inspect the completed work and request a check be issued for one-half of the actual project cost up to \$1,000.00 dependent on the amount of the grant award provided the work is accomplished in accordance with the agreement.
9. The grantee shall comply with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and all rules and regulations promulgated there under. The grantee shall agree to indemnify the DNDA from and against all claims, suits, damages, costs, losses, and expenses in any manner arising out of or connected with the failure of the grantee, its subcontractors, agents, successors, assigns, officers or employees to comply with provisions of the ADA or the rules regulations promulgated there under.

Design Guidelines:

The following guidelines are suggested by the Secretary of the Interior as standards for rehabilitation. Projects implementing these standards will be looked upon more favorably than those not adhering to the standards.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation:

1. The Standards are to be applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility.
2. 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.

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.

1. 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.
2. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
3. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.
4. 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 design, color texture and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical or pictorial evidence.
5. 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.
6. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
7. 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.

Construction Methods and Materials:

All work must conform to existing building codes and ordinances of the City of Newton, County of Catawba, and the State of North Carolina.

Height:

Additions or new construction should fall within a range of 10% of mean building height found in the block. Buildings at the ends of blocks should be similar in height to buildings adjoining corners.

Width:

Additions or new construction should respect the primacy of established width by designing a rhythmic division of the façade to maintain existing progression.

Setback

Additions or new construction should maintain the uniform setback of buildings and align with facades.

Proportion of Openings:

New construction, additions, and remodeling of existing buildings should maintain established proportion and spacing of window openings.

Materials:

The quality of building materials varies widely, and it is the quality of the finish materials and their application that determines compatibility. Use the highest quality facing materials possible. Materials that are compatible in quality, color, texture, finish, and dimension to those existing in the project area are encouraged.

Roof Forms:

Gabled and/or residential roofs are not appropriate; historically, downtown buildings have flat roofs. The roof plane should be hidden from view on the front façade. Decoration of the roofline by use of special materials, forms, or decorative details, using examples from surrounding buildings as a guide is encouraged.

Color:

Colors should coordinate with neighboring buildings. The more intense hues of a color are discouraged. The use of more than one vivid color per building is discouraged. The use of colors that are disharmonious with other colors used on the building or found on the adjacent buildings is discouraged. Contrasting colors which accent architectural details and entrances are encouraged.

Cornices:

1. The retention and repair of existing cornices is strongly encouraged wherever possible.
2. The re-creation of missing cornices should be done with care, using surrounding existing cornices as a guide.

Side Elevations and Rear Facades:

1. Side elevations and rear facades should be treated as main façade.
2. The development of rear or side entrances with appropriate design is encouraged.

Signs:

1. Sign guidelines for the central downtown business district have been developed to prevent visual clutter in the downtown areas and to improve the general visual quality of downtown. Individuality and creativity are encouraged within the framework of quality. Signs should relate to each other through quality, not necessarily through uniform materials, lettering or size. All signs are controlled by the Sign Ordinance of the City of Newton.
2. Good signs have the following characteristics: legibility, clarity, attractiveness, durability, and good placement.
3. Most buildings are designed with a defined sign space. The location of signs of appropriate size in these spaces is strongly encouraged.
4. Plastic, illuminated signs are strongly discouraged. Consider attached, flat, or hanging signs lit with outside indirect lighting.
5. All signs must meet zoning and building code requirements.
6. Hanging or projecting signs or hand-painted window signs of good quality are encouraged.

Awnings:

1. Awnings should relate to shape and color of the building.
2. Metal canopies are strongly discouraged, except when historically appropriate, and their removal and replacement with a fabric awning is strongly encouraged. If installed or retained, they should be designed or treated in a manner that adds to the visual quality of the building.
3. All awnings must meet zoning and building code requirements.

For additional information, please contact:

DNDA Coordinator
Downtown Newton Development Association
P.O. Box 1201
Newton, NC 28658
828 466 8833

Downtown Newton Development Association
Façade Improvement Grant Application Form

Proposed Project Address: _____

Description of Current Use: _____

Proposed Use (If Different) _____

Applicant Name: _____
Mailing Address: _____

Contact Number: Work: _____
Cell: _____

Please provide detailed project proposal including photos, drawings, paint colors, awning fabrics, swatches, etc...Please specify any direct efforts to adhere to design guidelines (i.e. awning is being redesigned to match original historic awning).

Estimated Completion Date: _____
Total Estimated Project Cost: _____

I have attached project plans, specifications and an itemized worksheet or other appropriate design documentation. I understand that the Façade Improvement Grant must be used for the project described in the approved application. Any changes to the approved project must be resubmitted to the DNDA Design Committee for approval.

Signature: _____
Date: _____

For Office Use Only

Date Application Received: _____
Approved Grant Amount: _____