



DDA Façade Grant Program

INTRODUCTION

The Façade Grant Program has been established to stimulate investment and exterior building improvements in commercial buildings located in The Thomaston Downtown Development Authority district. The program is administered by Thomaston Main Street and the Downtown Development Authority for the City of Thomaston.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Grant Program is to provide a matching grant for façade improvements to existing commercial buildings for preservation, restoration and maintenance. Grant resources should produce visible changes and improvements to commercial building facades.

TARGET AREA

The Façade Grant Program is available to all downtown Thomaston businesses located in the Thomaston Downtown Development Authority (DDA) district of the City of Thomaston. (See Map-Exhibit A)

FAÇADE GRANT AMOUNTS

Maximum grant awards are \$5,000 and must be matched by the property owner. For example, an owner's \$10,000 façade project could be eligible for a grant award up to \$5,000, while an owner's \$5,000 façade project could be eligible for a grant award up to \$2,500. Amounts are subject to current budget funds available for the program.

ELIGIBILITY AND GUIDELINES

The structure(s) must be an existing commercial building(s) within the City of Thomaston's DDA District.

- All properties must be conforming uses or legal nonconforming uses under the City's zoning ordinance. Properties will not be eligible if any special assessments, real estate taxes or personal property taxes are delinquent or they are associated with any violations of any City of Thomaston codes.
- Owners, tenants, or owner/tenant joint ventures are eligible to submit applications under this program.
- Tenants must submit written approval of the property owner and evidence of their leasehold interest.

Eligible Projects:

- Enhancement of historic storefronts
- Enhancement of historic entry ways
- Enhancement of upper floor spaces
- Enhancement, repair and maintenance of fixed historic architectural details
- Enhancement, repair and maintenance of historic windows
- Enhancement, repair and maintenance of exterior materials
- Repointing and masonry repairs
- Awnings
- Repair and maintenance of gutters and downspouts
- Repainting or removal of hazardous lead-based paint
- Appropriate cleaning of exterior building surfaces, or removal of graffiti

Ineligible Projects

- Non-commercial uses
- Roof repairs
- Construction of new buildings
- Interior structural improvements to existing buildings
- Purchase of property and/or buildings
- Equipment
- Interior fixtures & furnishings
- Inventory or operating capital

PROGRAM FUNDING

The program is a matching grant. All funds are allocated by and administered by the Main Street Program

HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS

- **Application**-See the Thomaston Economic Development Coordinator for an application packet and any questions you might have. Take this time to discuss your intended plans.
- **Complete the application forms** along with copies of any required permits, documentation, and the Historic Preservation Certificate of Appropriateness **(allow time for permitting and COA processes)**
- **Create a realistic Plan of Work.** Applicant completes a Plan of Work, which includes design plans, line-item cost estimates, construction schedules and at least 4 photos of the building. If necessary, create a sketch of the work to be done and let us know who the contractor will be. This should be included and submitted with the Request for Funding. The Plan of Work will not be considered complete until the applicant has included **all required documentation** on behalf of the contractor.
- **Design Review.** Upon submitting the Plan of Work, the applicant must schedule a design review meeting with Thomaston Main Street /DDA Board.
- **Change Orders.** Any change orders that are added to the Plan of Work after it has been approved by Main Street must be resubmitted, and reapproved prior to completing the work.

- **Complete Application by Providing Supporting Project Documentation:** the application process ends by submitting the application and all necessary documentation to receive project funding.
- **Meetings Required Prior to Beginning the Project**
 1. The applicant/property owner and the contractor employed to do the Façade Grant renovation may be required to meet with Thomaston Economic Development Coordinator and the Façade Grant Committee representatives prior to the start of the project.
 2. We may recommend the applicant have a walk thru meeting at the site with the Economic Development Coordinator and any available committee members prior to beginning the work.
 3. Meetings may also include our compliance officer if the nature of the work involves code compliance. **Applicants are responsible for obtaining all necessary governmental permits and authorization, to include any approvals needed by the Historic Preservation Commission (This will require a meeting with the Historic Preservation Commission Board).**
- **Façade Grant Approval.** If the application is approved for funding, a letter of commitment will be sent to the applicant, which must be signed and returned to Main Street, within thirty (30) days. If the application is not approved, the applicant will be given an explanation for the disapproval, and what, if any, steps can be taken to gain approval. **PLEASE NOTE: WORK CAN NOT BEGIN UNTIL YOU RECEIVE A WRITTEN NOTICE FROM THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR INDICATING THAT THE PROJECT MAY PROCEED UNDER THE FAÇADE GRANT PROGRAM.**
- **Pursue Project.** If the Plan of Work is approved, the applicant will move forward with completing the project. **The applicant must pay for the project in full, and show documentation to The Economic Development Coordinator for reimbursement after the project is completed,** and the Façade Grant has been approved. The Applicant must document the Façade Grant Project by compiling at least 4 photos of the completed work.
- **Final Walk-Through. The Thomaston Economic Development Coordinator and City Code Enforcement Officers** may ask the applicant to schedule a final walk through, depending on project. The applicant and Main Street staff will review proof of payment, a lien release by the contractor, and completed work before Thomaston Main Street will fund the project. Deviations from an approved plan or failure to comply with all City ordinances may disqualify the applicant from this program.

PAYMENT OF GRANT AWARDS

The Façade Grant recipient will receive reimbursement for 50% not to exceed \$5000 of the total cost of the approved façade grant project. A check will be submitted to the person or entity that submitted the Grant Application. In order to receive reimbursement for the

expenses the person or entity who has received a façade grant must provide the Thomaston Economic Development Coordinator with the following:

- a) Documentation that the project has been completed, including final contractor invoices, cancelled checks along with a final total of expenses, and a contractor lien release. An applicant's labor (referred to as "sweat equity") may, at the sole discretion of the DDA, be applied to the determination of the project's total cost at the rate of \$20.00 per hour, but not to exceed the greater of a total amount of \$1,000 or fifty percent (50% of the applicant's documented financial contribution, whichever is less. For example, if the applicant's matching portion of the grant is \$500 and the applicant's labor is estimated at \$700, then the maximum of \$250 for labor may be included for reimbursement.
- b) A copy of the building permit and a copy of the building inspector's final report.
- c) A site visits to confirm that the project was completed and that all work was done in compliance with approved plans;
- d) The owner's written commitment to maintain project improvements for a minimum of 5 years.

Thomaston Economic Development Coordinator / Executive Director of the DDA

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