

Downtown Lumberton  
Downtown Improvement Grant  
2024  
Application packet



## **Downtown Improvement Grant Introduction**

The architectural quality of Lumberton's Downtown Historic District ("Downtown") is important to the entire City, its history, image, and economy. The appearance of downtown is largely determined by the condition of its buildings. Because this appearance also forms the basis of the public's overall impression of downtown, the upgrading and preservation of Downtown is crucial to the continued livelihood of Lumberton. The City of Lumberton would like to encourage all Downtown property owners to participate in this program.

The following is an application, outline, and Downtown Design Overlay Guidelines of the Downtown Improvement Grant Program developed by the City of Lumberton for the continued effort of Downtown revitalization.

These guidelines should be followed by property owners, tenants, and contractors involved in exterior and/or interior improvements or rehabilitation to buildings in Downtown. They will be used by the City of Lumberton in approving grant requests for projects in Downtown. By following these guidelines, an applicant has a greater chance of receiving a grant that can be used to enhance the image of Downtown as a special place to work, shop, and socialize.

### **What is a façade?**

A façade is defined as any one side of a building regardless of the building's height or number of stories. Note: The rear of a building may also be considered for grant funding, with priority given to the front of the building.

### **Purpose**

1. Promote façade improvements and landscape beautification in Downtown.
2. Attract new business to Downtown.
3. Preserve the unique architecture and historic character of Downtown.
4. Encourage the use of quality material in the renovation of Downtown.
5. Improve energy efficiency in existing Downtown structures.
6. Ready interiors for viable new business in Downtown.

### **Examples of Improvements Include:**

1. Removing of false fronts and metal canopies.
2. Safe cleaning of brick and stone fronts
3. Sign replacements (excluding advertising).
4. Canvas awning installation.
5. Window, door, and roof repairs.
6. Repainting.
7. Structural repair.
8. Historic reconstructions.
9. Landscaping including sidewalks and plantings.
10. Replacing or adding address information to a structure.
11. Replace interior carpets, lighting and paint.
12. Overall energy efficiency improvements: A/C, insulation, etc.

### **Who is Eligible?**

1. Any property owner or business tenant in a commercial building in Downtown is eligible to apply. Government facilities and private dwellings are excluded from consideration.

2. Either the property owner or the business tenant of a building may submit an application. Property owners and business tenants may also apply jointly. In any case, only one application may be submitted for each improvement made to a structure.
3. A business tenant applicant must obtain the property owner's written consent for any improvement/renovation and submit it with the application. A property owner should attach any provisions for renovation undertaken while a property is occupied.
4. The program budget allows one (1) grant per location per year during the initial grant appropriation of funds.
5. A property owner who desires more than one (1) grant per year may be eligible for a supplemental grant if all applications submitted before the original deadline have been reviewed and there are funds remaining after the initial appropriation of funds.

## **Funding Guidelines**

1. Applicant must use the grant funds only for expenses reasonably associated with improvements.
2. Grants are not intended to be used for general merchandise work. (window displays, shelving, display areas are considered merchandise work).
3. Grants will be administered on a first-come basis.
4. Applicant will make every effort to complete the project as described in the application and to notify the Downtown Development Coordinator of the need to change the originally approved plans. Changes to original plans are discouraged, but will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. All changes must be approved by the Historic Downtown Lumberton Design Committee ("HDLDC") before being undertaken and that failure to obtain approval of any changes could result in revocation of the original approval by the HDLDC.
5. Every effort should be made to complete the project within a four (4) month period of time. If substantial progress toward completion of the project cannot be shown after this period, the City may revoke its approval after thirty (30) working days written notice. If maintenance of façade or landscape improvements becomes negligent, reimbursement shall cease and enforcement action may be taken.
6. The property owner is responsible for maintenance of structure and/or landscape improvements. Failure to maintain an area can be considered a violation of the Downtown Improvement Grant Program.
7. Applicant is responsible for obtaining all building and other permits and fees which are associated with the proposed project.
8. All work on the project must be approved before grant funds are awarded.
9. City of Lumberton will pay one-half (1:1 dollar ratio) of the cost of improvements not to exceed \$10,000.

## **Criteria**

- All design proposals must meet applicable zoning and code requirements of the City of Lumberton.
- Interior and exterior façade renovations are eligible for consideration. Window display changes may be included if they are deemed pertinent to the exterior design, and are not deemed general merchandise work.
- Priority will be given to those proposals that make highly visible and significant design contributions to the downtown area.
- A property does not have to be occupied at the time a Grant application is submitted.
- All applications must be submitted to the Downtown Development Coordinators office at City Hall . The Historic Downtown Lumberton Design Committee ("HDLDC") will initially review the application and make recommendations for final approval. **Any project may not begin before final grant approval is made or consideration will be removed.**



## Application Process

1. Applicant meets with Downtown Development Coordinator.
2. Applicant completes application and includes design plan and owner's permission.
3. Historic Downtown Lumberton Design Committee ("HDLDC") will review the application.
4. If recommended for approval, then the application will be forwarded to the City Manager for final approval.
5. The Historic Downtown Lumberton Design Committee will send a Notification Letter to the Applicant as to whether the project is accepted as described, accepted with conditions, or rejected. The applicant may have the opportunity to discuss his or her plans at any time.
6. If approved, a grant agreement must be signed prior to beginning work. Parties in the agreement will be the Applicant and the City of Lumberton.
7. Upon project completion, a copy of all paid statements showing the total project cost must be sent to the HDLDC. The work will be inspected and the statements will be reviewed. After the work is reviewed, a check will be requested for the approved amount pursuant to the Funding Guidelines. Work must be done in accordance with the signed agreement for payment to occur.

Applications should be mailed or delivered to:

Downtown Development Coordinator  
City of Lumberton  
Post Office Box 1388  
500 N. Cedar Street  
Lumberton, NC 28359  
Phone: 910-671-3876

Grant applications may be submitted to the City of Lumberton at any time. Due to our annual budget cycle, grant awards will begin with the fiscal year on July 1st. Grants are awarded to eligible applicants until all funds are expended.

Approved by City of Lumberton, Lumberton City Council August 10, 2009

Disclaimer: Neither HDLDC, the City of Lumberton, or its affiliates shall be responsible for the planning, design, or construction of improvements to property that is owned by the Applicant. No warranties or guarantees are expressed or implied by the description of, application for, or participation in the Downtown Improvement Grant Program. The Applicant is advised to consult with licensed and bonded architects, engineers, or building contractors before proceeding with final plans or construction.

**HISTORIC DOWNTOWN LUMBERTON**  
**2021-2022 DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENT GRANT APPLICATION**

*Property & Address:*

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*Current Use / Proposed Use:*

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*Applicant:* \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Owner ☐ Tenant (If “tenant”, written consent of the property owner must be attached.)

*Mailing Address:*

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*Phone:* \_\_\_\_\_ *Fax:* \_\_\_\_\_ *E-mail* \_\_\_\_\_

**Type of Façade, Landscape, Interior or Energy Efficiency Improvement Proposed (description of all that apply).**

*Indicate materials and/or color designations as applicable. Please feel free to attach additional pages as necessary. See Page 9-10 for guidance on acceptable color palettes.*

**Exterior Painting/Awnings (Please attach paint chip and color swatches)**

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**Landscape Modifications**

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**Interior Cosmetic Alterations (carpet, interior painting, etc.)**

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*(At least 50% of all monies awarded must be used on façade improvements to qualify for any interior funding).*

**Structural Alterations/Energy Efficiency Upgrades**

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*Total Estimated Cost for Façade Improvements\*\** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Total Estimated Cost for Interior Improvements* \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
*(other than Energy Efficiency)*

*Total Estimate for Landscape Modifications* \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Total Estimated Cost for Energy Efficiency* \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Project Cost** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Estimated Time to Complete Project:* \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ *Drawing/sketch is attached.*      ☐ *\*\*Written documentation of estimate is attached.*
- ☐ *Site survey is attached, if improvements involve landscaping.*
- ☐ *Color photos of current condition is attached.*
- ☐ *Written consent of property owner is attached (if applicable).*

❖ *I acknowledge that I have read and understand the Improvement Grant guidelines, procedures, and application of the City of Lumberton and that I will abide by the same.*

❖ *I understand that this project will need to be presented to the Historic Downtown Lumberton Design Committee for independent review and/or approval.*

❖ *I understand that the Grant must be used for the specific project and scope of work described in the application.*

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

*Signature:* \_\_\_\_\_

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