Town of Johnstown

FAÇADE GRANT PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Johnstown Façade Grant Program provides financial assistance for improvement projects to building facades in Downtown Johnstown in an effort to encourage the revitalization of private commercial properties.

Purpose & Goals: This program provides public financial assistance for improvement projects to building facades in downtown Johnstown and exists to encourage revitalization on as many private commercial properties in the Downtown area as possible. Façade grants are intended to encourage and incentivize private investment Downtown, to preserve the special historic character, encourage new investment in Downtown and our local businesses, and to promote an attractive environment that supports business and community activity.

The grant program is intended to incentivize overall façade improvements that are architecturally appropriate and in compliance with the Downtown Design Guidelines. Individual elements (i.e., awning, sign, painting) may be deemed eligible, but more holistic and permanent façade or building rehabilitation projects will be prioritized for funding.

What you need to know: Grants are subject to availability of Town funds, and projects &/or signage must meet the Eligible Improvements described below.

- Grants are awarded on a 50/50 matching basis, with a maximum of $10,000 per building/façade.
- A one-time grant, per business, is available for signage, up to $1,000 with a 50/50 match, in addition to a grant for a rehabilitation project.
- Project invoices must be paid and submitted for reimbursement by the Town, once work is complete and inspected by Town Staff.

How to apply: Please complete and sign the printed application form and email your complete application with all supporting materials to the Economic Development Department at **scrosthwaite@townofjohnstown.com.** PDF or digital scans of documents are preferred. An Applicant must submit a complete application in order to qualify for a determination of funding.

Required Documents: As each project is unique, additional documentation or details may be requested to assist Town Staff in reviewing your proposed project and application. At minimum, please provide:

- ☐ Signed & Completed Application Form
- ☐ Current W-9
- ☐ Written project description, describing the scope of work, phasing, timelines, and goals of the project
- ☐ Plans, drawings, or renderings (as appropriate) of proposed renovations (scaled, with dimensions)
- ☐ Color photographs of the existing conditions of the building, including the area for improvement
- ☐ Contractor &/or material bids (no more than 30 days old)
- ☐ If a tenant is the Applicant, written permission from the Owner for the proposed improvements

Review Process: The Town will review applications submitted for completeness, program eligibility, and conformance with Downtown Design Guidelines. The Town also takes into account the purpose and intent of the Façade Grant program in determining if a project may receive a grant (see Program Eligibility description).

Grant Award: Fund awards will occur on a first-come, first-served basis, at the sole discretion of the Town, based on the submitted documentation and any other factors the Town deems to be relevant. The Town may, but is not required to, provide a reason for any denial of an application or for the determination of the amount of the grant award. Grants are subject to availability of Town funds, based on the annual approved budget, and prior grant awards.

Submitting an application is not a guarantee of a grant award and the Town may terminate the Program at any time, for any reason, or when available funds are depleted.

Eligible Improvements: Eligible improvements include costs associated with the physical rehabilitation of the exterior of the property. Soft costs such as design fees, permitting fees, etc., are not eligible. Labor costs are eligible if the work is to be performed by a licensed contractor/business, other than the applicant/owner. All renovation and rehabilitation projects must comply with and meet the intent of the Downtown Design Guidelines.

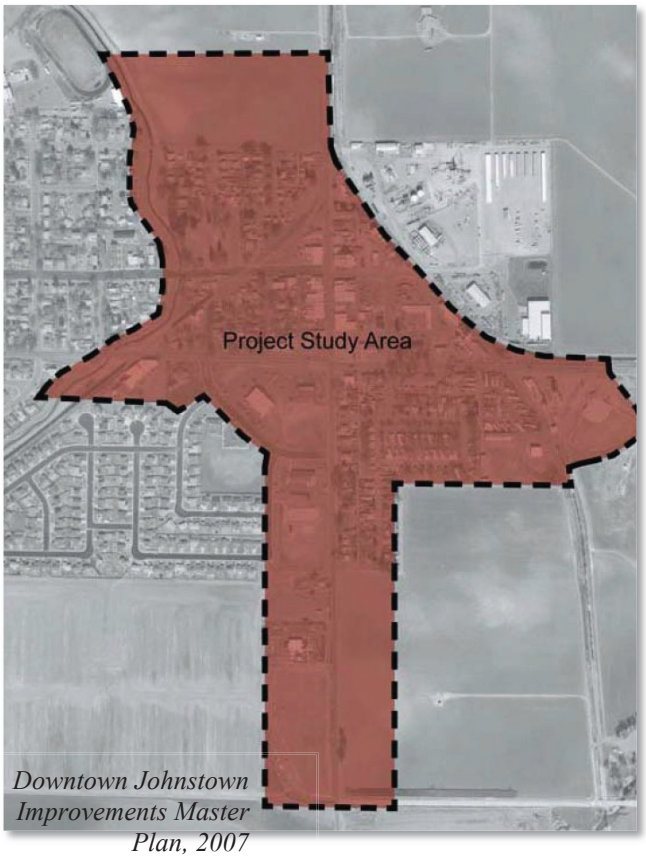
- Removal of false fronts and restoration of original storefronts (provide photos of historic storefront)
- Repair of cornices, soffits, and trim
- Repair or replacement of windows and doors with historically-compatible materials and design
- Repair of historically-appropriate façade materials
- Repair and stabilization of foundations, if related to façade improvements
- Installation or replacement of gutters
- Masonry repointing
- Repair or replacement of roofing with historically-appropriate materials
- New cloth or metal awnings
- Exterior painting of full façade(s)
- Demolition of non-historic or incompatible elements
- Alley entrances and façades, where the entrance is for public access
- New permanent signage that enhances Downtown character and streetscape

Ineligible Improvements:

- Work undertaken due to normal wear and tear, including but not limited to: painting of doors, sills, or trim (unless part of a larger rehabilitation project), or roof replacement with asphalt shingles
- Routine or periodic maintenance; such as cleaning, touch-up painting, minor repairs, redecorating or purely cosmetic changes that do not enhance the property's character
- Soft costs and permit fees; such as appraisals, architectural, engineering or design fees, legal, accounting or realtor fees, loan fees, or sales and marketing
- New additions or enlargements, except as required by building or fire codes
- Outbuildings
- Skylights
- Security features
- Any work completed prior to grant award determination

Program Eligibility: Any property owner or business tenant in the downtown may apply (refer to map). Eligibility is based upon the following criteria:

- Improvements to the exterior appearance of a building
- Rehabilitation efforts that enhance the structural and/or historic integrity of a building
- Creation of Jobs
- Ability to leverage additional economic activities
- Provision of Needed Services



Downtown Johnstown Improvements Master Plan, 2007

Tenants must have the owner's written approval. All applications must be submitted for approval prior to construction.

Owners of vacant buildings shall be eligible if the owner's purpose is to rehabilitate the building to attract businesses. Expenses may be reimbursed, in this case, only after a business occupies the space and opens to the public.

All real property taxes must be paid in full.

In order to qualify for the grant, proposed work must comply with and further the intent of the Town of Johnstown Downtown Design Guidelines. All projects must meet Town codes, regulations and receive appropriate permits and approvals. standards, and

Award Payment: The Applicant shall submit proof of payment for work (typically in the form of a paid invoice and lien waivers) with a request for reimbursement, in order to receive the awarded funds from the Town. The work must fully follow the plans and renderings approved by the Town, and pass all applicable permit and other inspections by Town Staff. Rehabilitation and renovation work must be completed within 6 months of the date of project approval, and an agreement to maintain those façade improvements for a period of ten years must be signed by the Owner.