



# TOWN OF HOULTON DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION FUNDING INITIATIVE

## *Façade Grant Program*

### **Façade Grant Program:**

The objective of this program is to encourage private investment in improving historic facades in the Downtown by providing a financial incentive. The goal is to facilitate high-quality façade improvements to buildings in the [Downtown TIF District](#) through a partnership between the Town of Houlton and the private sector. The program promotes direct improvements to the appearance of downtown buildings and preserving the unique character of downtown historic buildings by providing greater leverage to private investment. The program will provide up to a 50% grant for reimbursement of façade improvements in downtown buildings to be matched by an equal or greater investment in private funds. The maximum grant will be \$15,000.

The following criteria will apply:

- ❖ A Façade Grant can be sought for any commercial, mixed-use or multi-family property located in the Downtown TIF District. No single-family residential properties are eligible.
- ❖ There is an open submission period for the Grants with applications being reviewed as received.
- ❖ Grant funds are awarded through a competitive scoring process.
- ❖ Small and large projects are eligible for funding.
- ❖ Grants are available for reimbursement of up to 50% of the total cost of the improvement project and therefore must be matched at a ratio of 1:1 (cash) at minimum.
- ❖ Maximum matching grant award is \$15,000.
- ❖ Business owners leasing or renting space should work with their building owner to develop an application. The property owner must sign the application.
- ❖ Applicant must obtain all necessary approvals and/or permits from the Town of Houlton.
- ❖ The project applicant must owe no outstanding property taxes, fees, judgements or liens to the Town of Houlton and have no outstanding code violations, unless the grant is to ameliorate the violation.
- ❖ Building project designs and signage must be in accordance with [Houlton's Historic District Ordinance](#).
- ❖ The applicant will be reimbursed for the amount of the grant award only upon completion of the project.
- ❖ Applicant will provide a completed application to the Community Development Director.
- ❖ Grant recipients agree to place a Façade Improvement Grant Recipient sign at the construction site during the time of improvements and in their storefront window for 180 days after completion of the project.
- ❖ Applicants must be a for-profit entity. Grants are not made to public, quasi-public and non-profit entities.

### **Eligible Activities**

Grant funds will be used only for eligible improvements to the exterior of buildings/structures. Eligible uses of grant funds may include, but are not limited to:

- ✓ Signage
- ✓ Awnings
- ✓ Highly visible storefront improvements
- ✓ Exterior Lighting
- ✓ Restoration of original/historic windows, doors and trim where possible
- ✓ Removal of non-historic features and/or inappropriate non-historic alterations and additions
- ✓ Repair or replacement of windows, doors and trim
- ✓ Roofing visible from street level
- ✓ Cleaning and/or painting of wood surfaces
- ✓ Cleaning and or repainting of surface brick or stone
- ✓ Replacement, repair or addition of architectural details (e.g. cornices, bulkheads, transoms, etc.)
- ✓ Wall improvements, including visible side walls and murals
- ✓ Cleaning and repair or installation of approved siding
- ✓ Correction of exterior code violations

- ✓ Landscaping
- ✓ Entranceway modifications, including provisions to improve accessibility and life safety in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

**Ineligible Activities:**

- ✓ Interior repairs of any kind except those related to replacement of exterior doors & windows
- ✓ Any improvements not seen from the public right-of-way or publicly owned space
- ✓ Minor maintenance and repairs
- ✓ Purchase of commercial property/equipment
- ✓ Business operations-related costs including business inventory, debt reduction, etc.
- ✓ New construction
- ✓ Parking lot surfaces
- ✓ Property acquisition
- ✓ Non-visible roofing
- ✓ Expansion of building area.

**Grant Timing**

There is an open submission period for the Grants with applications being reviewed as received. Applications are evaluated through a competitive scoring process. Notification of award results will be issued to all applicants.

**Application Review and Grant Payment Procedures**

1. Completed applications should be submitted to the Houlton Community Development Director.
2. The Houlton TIF Funding Advisory Board will review the Façade Grant Applications and score them.
3. Preference is given to proposals that:
  - Make significant visual improvements to the storefronts/building faces.
  - Increase the energy efficiency, structural integrity and/or longevity of the structure.
  - Plan work on their “street-facing” façade.
  - Plan to match more than 50% of the grant amount.
  - Work must be performed in accordance with the Town’s Zoning and Historic District Ordinances.
4. Those downtown proposals that warrant funding will be forwarded to the Town Code Enforcement Officer and any applicable boards or agencies for review and permitting. Please see the Historic District ordinance for guidance.
5. Process for Payment:
  - a) Upon determination by the Houlton TIF Funding Advisory Board that an application should be funded, recommendations will be sent to the Town Manager for final approval.
  - b) Upon completion of each Downtown Façade Grant project, each business/property owner shall submit paid bills/invoices for the work to the Town’s Community Development Director (see contact information below).
  - c) An inspection will be performed to ensure work billed is actually performed. The amount of grant fund reimbursement shall be up to 50% of the actual total unless the actual total is greater than the estimated total approved for the grant, in which case, the grant fund reimbursement shall be up to 50% of the estimated total. The Town will only pay its portion of the project costs once the building owner has paid its portion of the project cost.
  - d) The Director will submit the grant fund reimbursement determination and supporting paid bills/invoices to the Finance Department for payment.

**Please Do Not Contract for Work to Be Done Until Application Has Been Accepted.**

**For More Information**

Nancy Ketch, Director  
Houlton Community Development Department  
21 Water Street ~ Houlton, Maine ~ 04730  
Phone: (207)521-5938 ~ E-mail: [comm.development@houlton-maine.com](mailto:comm.development@houlton-maine.com)



# TOWN OF HOULTON DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION FUNDING INITIATIVE

## *Façade Grant Program Application*

*For Matching Grant to Improve Historic Facades in the Downtown TIF District.*

Application and Attachment Checklist – Submit to Community Development Department, 21 Water Street, Houlton, ME 04730 with the following items:

- \_\_\_ 1. Complete Application Form
- \_\_\_ 2. Sketches or photographs to show where proposed activities will take place and proposed design features
- \_\_\_ 3. Photographs of existing conditions of project, including abutting buildings
- \_\_\_ 4. Written professional quotes or detailed scope of work for proposed project (minimum of 2) – *Identify preferred contractor*
- \_\_\_ 5. Documentation of source of private funding match. If source is other than applicant's ready available funds, please provide a letter of commitment or similar documentation indicating availability of funds.

### **PLEASE PRINT**

#### **Applicant Information (Property Owner):**

Name of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Address of Property to be Improved: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address (*if different from above*): \_\_\_\_\_

Business Name(s) (*if applicable*): \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Do you, or any other owner of the building/business, have any personal/business judgments, unsettled lawsuits, major disputes, or tax liens against you/them or pending against you/them? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No**

**If yes, please describe:**

**Are you, or any other owner of the building/business delinquent on any taxes (local, state, federal, etc.) or payments owed to municipal utilities (water, sewer, electric)? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No**

**If yes, please describe:**

**Is your building/business currently compliant with all applicable local, state and federal zoning, permits and other regulations regarding operation of your building/business? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No**

**If no, please describe:**

**Have you ever received a grant through this program before? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No**

**If yes, please describe:**

**Project Information:**

Proposed Project (*Select One*):

\_\_\_\_\_ Storefront Improvement

\_\_\_\_\_ Signage

\_\_\_\_\_ Awning

\_\_\_\_\_ Other (*explain*): \_\_\_\_\_

**Detailed description or scope of work for proposed project and each proposed activity** (*Please attach separate page if necessary*). For example: (1) Painting – Paint entire street façade with three colors; a base wall color, a trim color, and an accent color. (2) Install a new awning at main entry.

**Describe the long-term maintenance plan that will be in place to protect the façade improvements.**

**Please explain why these grant funds are needed and the importance of this grant to the completion of the project.**

**How will this project enhance your business, other businesses in the same building, and/or attract new businesses to the building? How many jobs do you expect this project to a) create and/or b) retain?**

**Do you plan on making other improvements/renovations (e.g. interior improvements, site or landscape improvements) in conjunction with this project (if selected)? If yes, please describe:**

**Would you be interested in funding from this program if you did not receive the full award requested?**

Estimated Cost of Project: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Cost Category</b> <i>(Fields should align with written quote from your preferred contractor.)</i>	<b>Façade Grant</b>	<b>Applicant Match</b>	<b>Cost Category Total</b>
<b>Demolition/Removal</b>			
<b>Architectural</b>			
<b>Engineering</b>			
<b>Planning</b>			
<b>Construction</b>			
<b>Materials</b>			
<b>Equipment</b>			
<b>Inspection</b>			
<b>Other (List)</b>			
<b>1.</b>			
<b>2.</b>			
<b>3.</b>			
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>			

**Total Applicant Match:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Grant Amount Requested:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Preferred Contractor Information:**

Full Name/Business name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Applicant's Signature:**

I have read and understand the Houlton Downtown Façade Grant guidelines and agree to meet these guidelines. I understand that this is a matching grant program, and that money is granted on a reimbursement basis, following completion of work and payment of the cash match.

Signature of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this application with all documentation to the Town Office or mail to: Town of Houlton, Community Development Department, 21 Water Street, Houlton, ME 04730.

*Note: Applications must be mailed or hand delivered (email or fax will not be accepted).*

**For More Information**

Nancy Ketch, Director  
Houlton Community Development Department  
21 Water Street ~ Houlton, Maine ~ 04730  
Phone: (207)521-5938 ~ E-mail: [comm.development@houlton-maine.com](mailto:comm.development@houlton-maine.com)

**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY**

**TOWN OF HOULTON DOWNTOWN FAÇADE GRANT PROJECT APPROVAL NOTIFICATION**

- The attached application is approved AS PRESENTED
- The attached application is APPROVED WITH THE FOLLOWING CHANGES
  
- The attached application is NOT APPROVED FOR THE FOLLOWING REASON(S)

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Town Manager

Date

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Submit completed application to:

Town of Houlton

Community Development Department

21 Water Street

Houlton, ME 04730

**For More Information**

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