



2014-2015

Mount Airy Downtown, Inc.

Façade Grant Program

Mission Statement: The Façade Grant is a program of Mount Airy Downtown, Inc., offered to further the goal of historic restoration for the Municipal Service District. Preserving and enhancing the historic character of our historic downtown is our primary goal, but we also seek to encourage property and business owners to make improvements to their buildings.

Mount Airy Downtown, Inc.

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## The Mt. Airy Downtown Façade Grant Incentive

The Façade Grant Program offered by MAD is our way to encourage historic preservation and improvements to buildings in the district, providing financial assistance that can ease the way. We want to emphasize the appearance of downtown and support improvements. This program grows out of the Four Points of revitalization. The Façade Grants program is overseen by the Design Committee of MAD and has access to technical support services from the North Carolina Main Street program.

*With many downtown buildings designated as contributing structures through the National Register of Historic Places, property owners are able to earn Federal tax credit incentives for major restoration and re-use projects. (MAD is prepared to explain such programs and work with owners to secure participation in tax credit programs.)*

Our Façade Grant Program provides financial assistance for projects that preserve the historic character of downtown and improve building fronts. The program also offers technical and professional support services that might not otherwise be available on a local basis. The grant program provides a reimbursable matching amount of one-third of a project's total costs, up to \$2,000 to meet qualified costs as outlined in our written approval of the grant application. The grant is intended to give both property and business owner's additional tools to make improvements to their buildings.

### Qualifying Projects.

Please review the types of projects typically approved for our reimbursement grants. MAD has access to professional design assistance through the Main Street program to suggest historically appropriate paint colors, architectural features, and drawings for use in construction. A list of the main categories that qualify for grants follows:

- Painting of a façade (One exterior wall, usually facing the street)
- Awning replacement using appropriate materials and colors
- Professional cleaning of brick or stone walls
- Masonry repair (replacement and repointing of mortar, securing stone and brick)
- Repair, reconstruction and/or replacement of architectural details
- Replacement of non-historic doors and/or windows with approved materials
- Removal of siding and exterior false facades
- Rehabilitation or compatible reconstruction of a store front or residential front
- Signage that is compatible with the historic context of downtown district. With Non-historic properties the process will be on a case by case basis.
- With residential properties, the MAD Façade Grant may be applied to more than one façade (example: To Paint all exterior walls).

Since the Mount Airy Downtown MSD district boundaries are very similar to those of the National Register of Historic Places District, we do require that materials used in Façade Grant projects for historic buildings comply with the Standards of the Secretary of Interior (attached) from the National Park Service. Additionally, all projects must comply with City of Mount Airy ordinances for construction and signage.

The Façade Grant Program cannot provide funds for building interiors or roofs. The program cannot cover reimbursement for any projects that are already completed without an approved

application. If you have a larger project, check with MAD about possible grants (or tax credits) from state or federal sources that will stimulate job growth.

## Eligibility Standards

- All projects must be located within the area designated by MAD. If you have questions, please consult the downtown MSD map (online) or check with Lizzie Morrison at the MAD office.
- Owners and tenants may request grants separately, however, any tenant must have written permission from the owner included in the application submitted to MAD.
- The owner is eligible to apply once every three years per façade. A staggered improvement plan that would allow the owner to make improvements to more than one side over time may be eligible.
- When there is a change in ownership the new owner is eligible to apply even if the previous owner used grant funds within the last three years.
- Changes and improvement to the building front would not include tables, seating and planters, which are the responsibility of the owner or tenant.
- Eligible projects are those proposed by owners or business tenants in the Downtown MSD tax district, or residential property owners within the district. We are unable to make grants to other not-for-profit organizations. }

## Source of Funds

The façade grant program is made possible through an annual appropriation by the Mount Airy Downtown, Inc. Board of Directors. The budget is supported through the Downtown Mount Airy Municipal Service District. MAD may provide up to 33% reimbursement of approved façade improvement costs up to a total of \$2,000, as long as funds are available. The Design Committee or Board may elect to provide a matching amount less than \$2,000 for projects involving side or rear facades.

If the budgeted funds are already committed, MAD will suspend the program until the next budget year. Our fiscal year begins on July 1<sup>st</sup> and ends on June 30th of the next calendar year.

We encourage applicants to discuss pending projects with MAD ahead of schedule to ensure that everyone understands what is available and eligible for funding. Remember that work done before a letter of notification cannot be counted as part of the reimbursement under the Façade Grant program.

## Design Guidelines

1. Securing funds for a facade restoration project ~~must be in~~ requires compliance with the 1997 Downtown Design Guidelines. Project specifications will be reviewed by the Main Street Coordinator, Mount Airy Planning Department and the MAD Board. The Board will take into consideration the discussions and recommendations of the MAD Design Committee in making a final award decision.

Design guidelines allow for handicapped accessibility, restoration, and both major or minor rehabilitation. Designated historic buildings on the National Register of Historic Places district listing will need to comply with the Standards of the Secretary of the Department of Interior (included in this document). The City Planning Department will need to certify that your project with the design guidelines before any grant may be awarded by the MAD Board.

The determination of a “period of historical significance” has been set by the National Register of Historic Places for the Downtown district, which in this case is 1895 to 1925. That will inform all recommendations for improvements or restorations approved under the Façade Grant program.

All eligible buildings may apply for Design Services from the North Carolina Main Street Center. Participants will receive a rendering of the proposed façade, measurements for placement of features, and appropriate paint and awning colors. Historic properties must follow the recommendations of the Design Service, including specific types of materials to complete the grant qualification process. If there are problems with materials or colors, the property owner may request a written waiver from the Design Committee and Board.

For non-historic buildings within the National Register of Historic Places historic district in downtown owners may look at a wider range of options with regard to materials and architectural features. If the building is in a modern style, the aim is to produce results that are harmonious and compatible with the distinctive style and period of significance of the entire downtown district.

Residential buildings will have different requirements and materials, both historic and non-historic buildings alike. An owner who has submitted a proposal to MAD and a separate application for federal tax credits may commence work before final decision on the government level, recognizing that it is at their own risk if the project is found to be in non-compliance with the Standards.

2. Attached signage may be eligible for a façade grant as long as it follows guidelines for Downtown Mount Airy, including materials, location, size, lighting and color.

Free-standing signage is not a historic characteristic of Downtown Mount Airy, though façade grants may be awarded on a case-by-case basis by the MAD Board. The Board would need to determine that the sign is compatible with the project, and that the guidelines outlined below are followed:

- a. Address and Name Signs – Signs indicating the address and/or name of the residential projects will not exceed a total of ten (10) square feet in area, and not including any commercial advertising or identification. The sign will not exceed seven (7) feet in height and any illumination will be external and or detached.

- b. Multi-Family Developments – Two (2) signs per vehicle entrance onto a public street not to exceed two (2) per development, provided that if two free-standing signs are used, they shall be at least fifty (50) feet apart. The signs will be under seven (7) feet in height and any illumination will be external and/or detached.
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  3. Rehabilitation of structures within the MAD district should respect the architectural integrity of the entire building and the neighboring landscape.
  4. All ~~rehabilitation~~ design proposals must meet the code requirements of the City of Mount Airy.
  5. All facades are eligible for grant assistance, subject to review by the MAD Design Committee and the Planning Department, with final decisions made by the MAD Board. Once approved for funding, please note that the entire project presented must be completed in order for us to provide reimbursement.
  6. A façade is defined as one side of a building, regardless of the number of stories. Each store front of a building can be considered a façade. The rear of a building may also be considered for a façade grant, with priority given to the front of the building. Any façade to be considered should be visible from a street or public parking area, with customer access whenever feasible.
  7. Any renovation proposal, from an entire façade rehabilitation to the replacement of an inappropriate sign is eligible for funding. Top priority will be given to front facades and projects that are highly visible within the district boundaries.
  8. The application must include a drawing, sketch and or photo of the proposed renovations, with specific measurements, and identifying changes and paint colors for each detail of the building, along with an existing photo of the building.
  9. Façade improvements grants may only be used for exterior improvements.
  10. Upon completion of the rehabilitation project, your improvements will be inspected by the City Planning Department to check for compliance with the application as approved.
  11. Upon completion of the grant you will be asked to place a small sign in front window that acknowledges the assistance of Mount Airy Downtown, Inc. The sign is to remain in place for 30 days. A sample copy is included in this document
  12. Upon notification of a grant award, owner or tenant has 12 months to complete the project and submit the written request for payment, along with invoices.

## Application Process

The grant application and related materials are posted online with the MAD Web site and may be downloaded for completion, or you may request a copy from the MAD office.

1. Review your grant application packet and the 1997 Downtown Mount Airy Design Guidelines and discuss any questions with the Main Street Coordinator.
2. Complete the application, including design plans or sketches, and budget information, returning your application to MAD. If the building owner plans to complete additional renovations, please indicate what is planned and the approximate time-frame. For budget purposes, it is best to get written estimates from prospective vendors or contractors. If the business is a tenant, the written permission of the building owner must be included. Please sign the page with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards listing.
3. The Main Street Coordinator will review your application for completeness and conformance with the Design Guidelines, preparing a presentation to the MAD Design Committee and Board of Directors..
4. MAD will review your application with input from the Planning Department, and will decide to accept, accept with conditions, or reject the application. Meetings of the MAD Board are open to the public and applicants are encouraged to attend.
5. MAD will notify applicants of the decision in writing and submit an agreement form that should be signed before work begins. Projects must be completed within 6/12 months of the award date.
6. Upon completion of work, the grantee should provide paid invoices and information to MAD via the Planning Department. A payment requisition form should be completed and signed.
7. MAD will inspect the completed project and process the requisition for payment in an amount of one-half of the actual costs or the grant amount, whichever is less, provided the work is completed to match the application.
8. Approved expenses will be reimbursed and MAD reserves the right to exclude certain items with written notice during the process.

For information and application materials, please contact:

Lizzie Morrison, Main Street Coordinator  
Mount Airy Downtown, Inc.  
P.O. Box 6309  
Mount Airy, NC 27030  
*Phone:* 336.401.0885  
*E-mail:* [coordinator@mountairydowntown.org](mailto:coordinator@mountairydowntown.org)

# MAD Facade Grant Application

Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Business Owner's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Property Owner's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Briefly describe proposed improvements: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please attach a drawing, sketch, or photo of proposed renovations, specifically identifying changes and paint color for each detail of the building, along with an existing photo of the building. Please provide measurements with any sketches or drawings..

I certify that all information included with the application is true and correct and agree to adhere to any conditions stated herein in addition to all city ordinances and the laws of the State of North Carolina regarding this work.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Approved By:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature (MAD Representative)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## The Secretary of the Department of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Rehabilitation are ten basic principles created to help preserve the distinctive character of a historic building site, while allowing for reasonable change to meet changing needs. All façade changes must meet these standards. A listing of the buildings included in the Mount Airy Historic District can be found at <http://www.hpo.ncdcr.gov/nr/SR0661.pdf>, beginning on page 11 of the document.

1. 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 environment.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
7. 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.
8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved if such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to project the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
10. 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.

*I have read and understand these guidelines.*

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*Signature of Applicant*

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*Date*



Mount Airy Downtown, Inc.  
Payment Request

Please complete this form and attach paid invoices, receipts, and photos before submitting the request for payment.

Applicant's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Reimbursement for approved costs: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I

<u>Work performed</u>	<u>Façade Costs</u>	<u>MAD Share</u>
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_____	_____	_____
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_____	<u>Total \$</u>	<u>\$</u>
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\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature* *Date:*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print name of payee:



Exterior improvements  
for this business were  
provided in part by  
Mount Airy Downtown, Inc.

## Historic Marker Program

Many of the buildings in the Downtown district are listed on the National Register of Historic Places through certification programs managed by the Department of the Interior and the NC State Historic Preservation Office. Mount Airy Downtown Inc. offers an historic marker, or plaque program to identify those buildings to pedestrians on the street. Part of this program provides a potential \$50 reimbursement grant to help meet the cost of purchase.

1. MAD will provide assistance with editing an appropriate message for a permanent plaque, including information taken from the original nomination document.
2. The plaque size is between 6" x 10" and 9" X 12" and can accommodate a message of between 126 and 144 characters. Costs range from \$200 to \$250. More expensive options are available, but MAD's reimbursement process is limited to the \$50 amount listed above.
3. If a longer citation is appropriate MAD will work with the property owner to find alternate sizes, text length, or vendors.

Examples are included to demonstrate the look, layout and standards.

The signs may include the following elements

1. Original date of construction.
2. Original business or subsequent notable tenant,
3. Year of restoration or occupation by the current business.
4. Presence of text "Listed on the National Register of Historic Places."

The signs must be accurate and consistent with the records of the National Register of Historic Places to qualify for the reimbursement.

To apply for the Historic Marker program, please send a brief letter to the Coordinator at MAD to initiate the process.