2026-2027 Façade Grant Program Overview

The façade grant program provides matching funds for exterior improvements to historic non-residential structures. It is designed to provide incentive funds to property owners in the Historic District to encourage rehabilitation downtown. It promotes the beautification of the Historic District and its importance to the history of Graham and its residents. Applications for funding are approved by the Historic Resources Commission (HRC). Examples of improvements include:

What is a Façade?
A façade is 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.

- Removing of false fronts and metal canopies
- Safe cleaning of brick and stone fronts
- Sign replacements
- Canvas awning installation
- Window and door repairs or replacements
- Repainting
- Structural repair to exterior
- Historic reconstructions
- Store front reconstruction
- Tuck point mortar joints
- Stain brick to match existing
- Roof vents on store face
- Exterior lighting
- Relocate electrical wiring

Who is Eligible?

Owners or tenants of non-residential properties in the Courthouse Square Historic District are eligible to apply. Tenants must include a signed letter of permission from the property owner as part of their application.



Funding and Renovation Guidelines

This is a cost reimbursement program. Projects are funded on a 50-50 matching basis, with the maximum City contribution being $5,000. The Commission may also choose to support only a portion of a project by providing matching funds to complete that part of the project. The applicant's match may include funding from other sources. Only one grant per year can be awarded to a property. For details see scoring matrix.

This program applies solely to exterior improvements. All proposals must follow the City's building code requirements.

For more information or questions, contact Jonathan at jbuckley@cityofgraham.com or (336) 570-6705

How to Apply

To be considered for funding, a complete application packet must be received by the Planning Department no later than **5:00pm on Friday, December 25th, 2026**.
A complete application packet includes:

- A completed Façade Grant Application
- A completed Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) Application
- An existing photo of the building or structure
- Drawings, sketches or pictures showing the proposed renovations
- At least two itemized cost estimates

Complete application packets should be emailed to Jonathan Buckley at jbuckley@cityofgraham.com or dropped off at 201 S Main St, Graham, NC 27253. If city offices are closed, you may leave applications at the night dropbox at the front entrance of City Hall.

What if my application is approved?

After approval, the applicant has until **May 1, 2027** to complete the project. If more time is needed, a written request for an extension with a reasonable explanation must be provided. Applicants will receive reimbursement once the project is completed, it is inspected and approved by the City and paid receipts are submitted to the Planning Department. Any renovation work completed prior to an application being approved by the Historic Resources Commission will not be eligible for reimbursement.

This program is administered by the City of Graham's Historic District Commission and the Planning Department.

2026-27 Façade Grant – Application Process

Please read the following information carefully as the Historic Resources Commission (HRC) has recently made changes to streamline the process for awarding Façade Grant funds.

1. For any projects requiring a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) the HRC suggests reviewing the applicable section of the HRC Design Guidelines before submission. Projects which require a COA must be approved by the HRC prior to the awarding of funds.

2. The HRC highly recommends applicants submit all major COA applications early. The deadlines for including a COA application on the agenda prior to the January meeting are as follows:

COA Application Due & Public Notices Sent	HRC Meeting
November 20, 2026	December 1, 2026
December 31, 2026	January 11, 2027

   COA applications submitted by or after the façade grant deadline will be heard at the January 11th meeting prior to the awarding of Façade Grant funds. However, this may put the applicants project at risk of not being eligible for grant funding if the HRC feels it has insufficient information to rule on the COA or decides to deny the COA at the January meeting.

3. To learn more about the criteria upon which funding decisions will made by the HRC please **read the scoring matrix** adopted to assist in the prioritization of projects and increase transparency for applicants.

4. A complete application including (Façade Grant Application, COA Application, an existing photo of the building or structure, drawings, sketches or pictures showing the proposed renovations, and at least two itemized cost estimates) must be submitted to Jonathan Buckley at jbuckley@cityofgraham.com or at 201 S Main St, Graham, NC 27253 no later than **5:00pm on Friday, December 25th, 2026**.

5. The HRC will award funding for projects at the meeting scheduled for **January 11th, 2027 at 6PM in Council Chambers** (201 S. Main St. Graham, NC 27215). While not required, the HRC highly encourages applicants to attend this meeting in order to answer any questions the Commission may have with regard to the project proposal.

6. All applicants will be notified by Friday, **January 15th, 2027** whether or not their project was awarded funds and if successful the maximum amount that will be reimbursed.

7. After approval, the **applicant has until May 1, 2027 to complete the project**. Applicants will receive reimbursement once the project is completed, it has been inspected and approved by the City's Inspections and Planning Departments, and paid receipts have been received.

For more information or questions, contact Jonathan Buckley at jbuckley@cityofgraham.com or (336) 570-6705.

2026-2027 Façade Grant - Application

Property Information	**Applicant Information**
Street Address:	Name:
Tax Parcel ID#:	Phone Number:
Owner's Name:	Email:
Use of Building:	Relationship to Property *(check one)*:
Business Name *(if applicable)*:	Property Owner ☐ Tenant/Business Owner ☐
Based on the Historic Inventory Map the property is considered: Pivotal ☐ Contributing ☐ Fill ☐ Intrusive ☐	

Description of Proposed Façade Renovation
Write a succinct description below and attach 1) an existing photo of the building and 2) a drawing, sketch or picture of the proposed renovations, specifically identifying changes and paint color for each detail of the building. Please also attach a completed Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) Application which is sufficiently detailed for the Commission to evaluate the proposal.

Total Estimated Cost *(lowest bid quote)*: $_____ *Attach at least two itemized cost estimates for proposed work.*

Checklist for a Complete Application

☐ I have read the City of Graham Façade Grant Program Overview and fully understand the agreement.

☐ I have met with the City Building Inspector. My project [does ☐ / does not ☐] require a building permit.

☐ I have complied with the HRC Design Guidelines which are based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for rehabilitation. (Building is not over 30 years old ☐)

☐ I have completed a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) Application which is sufficiently detailed for the Commission to evaluate the proposal.

☐ The owner's written and signed permission is attached, if applicant is not owner. (Not applicable ☐)

☐ An existing picture of the building and a drawing, sketch and/or picture of the proposed renovation are attached.

☐ At least two itemized project cost estimates are attached.

I understand that the City of Graham Façade Grant Program must be used in the manner described in this application, and the application must be approved by the Graham Historic Resources Commission prior to commencement of any project. **I understand** that failure to comply with the approved application may result in a forfeiture of all grant funds. I understand it is the applicant's responsibility to meet deadlines and request reimbursement on or before May 1, 2027.

_____

Applicant Signature **Date**