

## I. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Main Street Revitalization Program (MSRP) is to provide the necessary resources to help Greene County's businesses and municipalities with their Main Street revitalization efforts. Resources available at the MSRP include the MSRP Small Grants Program, including professional architectural services provided by the County; and the provision of technical assistance from MSRP staff.

## II. MAIN STREET REVITALIZATION SMALL GRANTS PROGRAM

Requests for Main Street Revitalization Program (MSRP) Small Grants can be made for up to \$7,500 for facade renovations, and \$2,500 for all other eligible activities. Requests for smaller amounts are encouraged. MSRP assistance toward the cost of projects shall not exceed 50% of the approved project cost. Matching requirements for the MSRP Small Grants program can include a match of private funds for individual, privately owned businesses, State and Federal funds, or other matching sources as approved.

### A. Availability of Funds

The MSRP Grant is a reimbursement grant. Funds shall not be provided in advance of construction and full payment for the project by the grantee. To receive funds, an applicant must submit a formal application to the Main Street Revitalization Program, which is located in the Greene County Department of Planning and Economic Development. A completed application is required, and must be approved by the MSRP before construction begins. The MSRP shall only reimburse those costs deemed to be reasonable and appropriate to complete the proposed project that is approved in advance by the MSRP. Personal labor of for-profit applicants is not considered a legitimate project cost. Not-for-profits may use in-kind contributions as the applicant match. Strictly residential buildings are not eligible for funding, but "mixed-use" buildings that include commercial and residential are eligible and encouraged to apply for funding.

Within sixty (60) days, the applicant shall be given notice from the Main Street Revitalization Program as to whether or not their application has been approved. **Successful applicants must document project expenditures and the required match to receive reimbursement.** Generally speaking, upon receipt of the appropriate documentation, payment will be received within a reasonable period of time based on the County payment cycle.

**PROJECTS UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO RECEIVING APPROVAL FROM THE MSRP SHALL NOT BE ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING.**

### III. ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

#### A. Façade Renovations and Restorations <sup>(1)</sup>

Priority will be given to façade restorations that are part of a local Main Street Revitalization Plan and communities that have adopted sign regulations. Individual proposals by building owners will be entertained only if the building is deemed to be part of an established Main Street, or the traditional Main Streets of Greene County. All renovations are subject to approval, where applicable, by existing planning board or design review boards (if applicable) in the village or town where the project is taking place.

##### Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants for facade renovation and restoration grants include building owners or tenants (with owner permission) of commercial buildings in defined Main Street districts. Main Street districts are defined by the MSRP Application Review Committee and are a reflection of the amount of funding available, as well as the physical nature of the commercial core of the municipalities' Main Streets. In addition, only the principal structure of a property is eligible. No outbuildings or accessory buildings such as garages and barns shall be eligible.

##### Eligible Projects

Grants must be utilized for any (or a combination) of the following facade renovations, rehabilitations, or restorations:

- Painting;
- New walls and siding, and repair of same;
- New awnings;
- Exterior storefront and/or storefront display lighting;
- Cleaning and re-pointing of brick;
- New signage;
- Windows and window treatments;
- Other areas, on approval (may include specific projects not listed here.)

All of the above façade improvements must follow a set of design guidelines administered by the MSRP to ensure compatibility with the existing Main Street, helping to create a uniform and coordinated streetscape that is attractive and functional. The façade renovation shall include the full building façade (phased façade renovations will not be considered). Buildings with multiple retail stores are only eligible for one (1) façade grant.

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<sup>1</sup> A façade is defined as the front elevation of a building facing the "Main Street".

1. Review Criteria<sup>(2)</sup> The design plan should meet several objectives including:
  - a. Capitalize on the building's assets. A good design improvement plan will take advantage of a building's original architectural materials, its unique details and other existing features.
  - b. It should respect the relationship of storefront, upper façade and cornice. In cases where this relationship has been upset by the use of inappropriate materials, colors, slipcovers, signs or other alterations, the incompatible elements should be removed. Any new modifications should reestablish this design relationship.
  - c. When appropriate, it should preserve as much of the original building fabric and significant modifications if possible. Once gone, a building's original fabric can never be replaced. New design work should preserve as much of the original material as possible. **The "covering" of a building's original façade, such as with vinyl siding, is strictly prohibited.**

"Regardless of its age, a downtown building's components help make it compatible with surrounding buildings and the entire block. The way the patterns of storefronts, upper facades and cornices repeat from one building to the next along a street gives the whole streetscape visual cohesiveness and creates a physical rhythm that provides orientation to pedestrians and motorists. Through this repeated pattern, the streetscape itself takes on design characteristics as distinctive of those of individual buildings."<sup>(3)</sup>

## 2. Design Guidelines

Greene County Design Guidelines should be considered in the development of your project. A copy of the guidelines is available from the Greene County Department of Planning and Economic Development, or by consulting our Web site at [www.greeneeconomicdevelopment.com](http://www.greeneeconomicdevelopment.com).

Painting – The use of color throughout the commercial area should be harmonious. Paint colors must be chosen where they do not clash with surrounding buildings. Painting of soft masonry may be done to help protect it from wind and moisture. The MSRP will not fund the painting of more durable masonry. Separate paint colors for building walls and architectural details is encouraged. The goal is to enhance the architectural details of the building and not suppress them.

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<sup>2</sup> The following paragraphs were taken from Revitalizing Downtown: The Professional's Guide to the Main Street Approach, pg. 29-40.

<sup>3</sup> Revitalizing Downtown: The Professional's Guide to the Main Street Approach, pg. 34.

New walls and siding, and repair of same – Use suitable materials, which are compatible in texture, scale, and color with those already found on the Main Street and the structure. **Proposals for vinyl, aluminum or other synthetic siding or windows will not be approved.**

New awnings – If permitted by building code. Canvas awnings are strongly recommended. **Back-lit awnings will not be approved.**

Exterior storefront and/or storefront display lighting - Should follow local lighting ordinances. Fixtures must not cover architectural details and should be compatible with the existing structure in scale and design. Lighting must not throw off more light than is necessary to show a sign or storefront. Lights must face the façade and bulbs are not to be visible from the street.

Cleaning of building façade - Appropriate cleaning techniques should be used which will not mar building facades or contribute to future decay. For example, **sandblasting** a brick surface exposes the softer masonry inside to moisture and wind damage and **will not be funded** with the MSRP Small Grant funds.

New signage – Must follow local sign ordinances. Signage must also be compatible with the building façade. Use coordinating colors to match building facades and details, as well as, using an appropriately sized sign to fit the scale of the building. New signage must not cover any significant architectural details. **Exterior box-type backlit, moving, flashing or neon signs and awnings are discouraged except when part of a structure’s original architectural design.** Details about the business must be reserved for smaller window signs (hours of operation, etc.) while business name and some immediate relevant information only should be displayed on the primary sign.

Windows and window treatments – Must be consistent with scale and design of the structure. Replacement windows must be historically accurate in design in relationship to the structure. **Vinyl replacement windows will not be funded.**

Other areas – On approval, covering details not mentioned here.

## **B. Public Sign Enhancement**

### Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include municipalities, not-for-profit organizations, and established Main Street organizations or programs.

### Eligible Projects

Main Street Sign Enhancement programs eligible for funding should meet one or more of the following criteria:

1) Development of sign elements, themes, and types which reflect a “sense of place.” Main Street signage should be consistent and uniform in their design. The Main Street visitor should have a clear sense of entering, being in, and leaving a place. The design should be a memorable image, which reflects Main Street character or identity.

2) Directional signage for motorists and pedestrians alike. (Trailblazers, street signs, public parking signs, and marked entrances to downtown areas) Directional signage should be clear, easy to read, and easily understood. Directional signs should be unobtrusive to either pedestrian or vehicular pathways.

3) Special event banners or signage. Temporary or permanent banners and signage that reflect community involvement and advertise local events, festivals and programs.

4) Information kiosks. Information displayed within kiosks should be changeable. A number of items can be displayed within, including but not limited to, pedestrian orientation maps, a guide to Main Street businesses, promotional posters for special events and other advertising.

### **C. Infrastructure Improvements**

#### Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include municipalities, not-for-profit organizations, and established main street organizations or programs.

#### Eligible Projects

These improvements should encourage extended visits to Main Street, and encourage the customers to patronize shops and businesses. Pedestrian amenities that are eligible include:

- Benches;
- Plantings to provide shade and shelter and act as a buffer between sidewalk and street;
- Coordinated newspaper machines;
- Bike racks.

Main Street infrastructure improvements should help create and sustain a safe and clean downtown. Eligible improvements include:

- Pedestrian scale lighting which lights sidewalks and not just the street;
- Well-lit alleyways including those connecting parking areas to downtown;
- Easily identified crosswalks;
- Trash receptacles.

#### IV. RATING CRITERIA

The Main Street Revitalization Program reserves the right to approve or disapprove each application and ALL IMPROVEMENTS WILL BE IN CONFORMANCE WITH EXISTING LOCAL AND STATE BUILDING AND LAND USE CODES. The following criteria will be used to rate applications:

<u>MSRP Principals</u>	<u>Points</u>
1. Will the project create or expand a business	20
2. Aesthetic impact of renovation on character of Main Street	10
3. Degree improvement capitalizes on building's architectural assets	10
4. Degree of historical integrity of renovation plans (renderings)	10
5. Is the property State/National Historic Register eligible	0-10
6. Other building improvements beyond those MSRP funded	0-10
7. Will lighted window displays be created to enhance Main Street	0-10
8. Project demonstrates collaboration/partnership	0-10

#### V. PRIORITY LIST/RANKING ORDER OF APPLICANTS

Generally, projects in towns or Villages that have an established Main Street, and have an adopted local sign ordinance or streetscape design plan shall be given first priority. Priority will also be given to the following types of projects:

1. Buildings where an immediate renovation will stop serious deterioration of the building's façade.
2. Historic properties in danger of being lost, in part or in total, to disrepair. This may include properties listed on the State and /or National Registers of Historic Places, or properties with historical, architectural, or cultural significance.
3. Buildings where historic or architecturally significant features contributing to the building's character are in danger of being lost due to disrepair.
4. Vacant properties where façade improvement would reduce the perception of downtown decay.
5. All other properties within the established Main Streets.

## VI. COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE LAWS

### Environmental Review

Before the Main Street Revitalization Program takes any action to award a grant, the requirements of the State Environmental Quality Review Act shall be met by the applicant, where applicable.

### Historic Review

Any project that involves a building that is listed on the State or National Historic Register must conform to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation. Approval of the scope of proposed work by the New York State Historic Preservation Office shall be required for all structures on the State or National Historic Register.

### Building and Land Use Code Requirements

All projects will need to comply with the Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and land use regulations, as applicable. A letter from the municipal building inspector or code enforcement officer stating that such conditions have been met shall be provided as part of this application.

## VII. GRANT APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS AND REVIEW PROCESS

You should contact the MSRP to verify that your project site is within an eligible Main Street district and that the project itself is eligible. MSRP staff can help you determine if you are eligible to apply. However, the MSRP Application Review Committee makes the final decision on grant awards. Please review the following page to insure that your grant application is submitted correctly. Following the guidelines below will help the MSRP process your application and, if approved, project reimbursement.

Your completed application must include the following. Please use this checklist to be certain that you have included all elements.

### A. **Application Forms**

1. A completed application form including a description of your project. This description should be as detailed as possible. For example, if you are replacing windows, what style will be the colors of the trim? If you wish to purchase benches, where will you put them on your Main Street?
2. A completed Incentive Program Letter of Agreement signed and dated by the applicant.

## B. Cost Estimates

**Applicants are required to obtain two (2) cost estimates from separate contractors or vendors.** The estimates should provide an itemized cost estimate for all work proposed.

1. Cost estimates must be on a contractor or vendor's letterhead or invoice and signed by the contractor or vendor. (Work to be done on buildings must include estimates for work to be done on the façade only.) The two (2) cost estimates must each cover the same scope of work for MSRP review purposes, though individual contractors may bid on a whole or part of a project. **COST ESTIMATES ARE TO BE BASED UPON THE ARCHITECTURAL RENDERINGS PROVIDED BY THE MSRP, OR OTHER RENDERINGS AS APPROVED BY THE MSRP APPLICATION REVIEW COMMITTEE.**

## C. Additional Materials

1. Include photographs of the building if you are applying for a façade grant. If you are applying for a Public Sign Enhancement or Infrastructure grant include photographs of the Main Street where you will be working.
2. If your project is already designed, submit any architectural plans, design sketches, or site plans.

## VIII. APPLICATION SUBMISSION, REVIEW, AND GRANT AWARD

- A. Submit a formal application to the MSRP, which is located in the Greene County Department of Planning and Economic Development. Be sure to include all of the materials mentioned in the GRANT APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS section.
- B. MSRP staff and the Architectural Consultant will meet with the applicant to discuss the details of the project, commitment of the applicant and to prepare architectural renderings, as required.
- C. The MSRP Application Review Committee will review the application to insure consistency with MSRP Small Grant Guidelines. Once the MSRP has concluded that the proposed project meets its program guidelines, a letter of agreement (including project budget, performance timeline and scope of work) will be written between the applicant and the MSRP. Final construction documents will require MSRP review before work can begin.
- D. The applicant is then notified of the Committee's decision within sixty (60) days of receipt of the application.
- E. The grant amount is determined by taking 50% of your lowest cost estimates. This

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amount will be the **maximum amount** that you will be awarded. If 50% of the final project cost comes out to be less than your maximum amount, your grant amount will be reduced to 50% of the final project cost.

- F. Once construction begins on the project, it shall be completed in ninety (90) days. Extensions may be considered.
- G. An MSRP sign will be delivered to you for display during project construction and for a two-month period after project completion.
- H. Any changes to the project **must** be reviewed and approved by the MSRP as necessary, or the applicant risks losing grant monies.
- I. Once a project is completed, proof of payment must be submitted to the MSRP. This should be in the form of an invoice or receipt, which includes the final cost of the project, the work which was done or products purchased, and signed by the contractor or vendor acknowledging that the project was paid for in full. Photographs of the completed project must be submitted as well. Acceptable proof of payment includes a cancelled check or copy of money orders in addition to an invoice showing final payment. If credit cards are used, a copy of the paid statement and the check must be submitted along with the original receipt.

**CASH PAYMENTS ARE NOT AN ACCEPTABLE FORM OF PAYMENT AND CANNOT BE REIMBURSED.**

- J. MSRP staff will perform a site visit and review the completed project for completeness and quality of work. Ineligible activities undertaken as part of the project will not be reimbursed.
- K. The Applicant should allow four (4) to six (6) weeks from the time proof of payment is received by the MSRP until they receive project reimbursement, based on the County's monthly payment cycle.

## IX. GREENE COUNTY MAIN STREET REVITALIZATION PROGRAM Incentive Program Letter of Agreement

I understand and by signing agree:

- that the Main Street Revitalization Program will review my application and, if approved, may commit up to \$7,500 of MSRP assistance toward the cost of my façade renovation or up to \$2,500 of MSRP assistance toward the cost of any other eligible project, not exceeding 50% of the total façade/project cost.
- that my personal labor is not considered as a legitimate improvement cost for the purposes of this program.
- that I am solely responsible for obtaining the proper permits or variances for my project and that the costs associated with the same are not eligible costs.
- **that I must pay for the project in full and provide proof of payment before I will receive my grant funding**, and that the Main Street Revitalization Program will review my completed project to determine that the actual work performed was the work approved.
- that the project will not include vinyl siding, vinyl replacement windows or other synthetic materials.
- that the Main Street Revitalization Program must review and approve any changes or alterations proposed to my project, after the initial approval is given.
- that I will display the Main Street Revitalization Program sign in my storefront window during the project and for two months after project completion, or, if a municipality, at the improvement site during the project and for two months after project completion.
- that the Main Street Revitalization Program will not be responsible for unsatisfactory work completed or claims of property damage and personal injury.
- that I must complete my project within 90 days after my application is approved. Extensions will be considered.
- that my rehabilitation shall be based upon proper design, mutually agreeable to myself, any planning board or local design review boards (if applicable), and the MSRP Committee. If I do not own the building, I will receive written permission from the owner to make any improvements on the property.

- that the Main Street Revitalization Program reserves the right to approve or disapprove each application. ALL IMPROVEMENTS WILL BE IN CONFORMANCE WITH THE EXISTING LOCAL AND STATE BUILDING CODES.
- that projects undertaken prior to receiving approval from the MSRP are not eligible for funding.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

## X. GREENE COUNTY MAIN STREET REVITALIZATION PROGRAM Small Grants Program Application

### Applicant Information

Business                       Not-For-Profit                       Municipality                       Main Street Group

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

Relationship to Project: \_\_\_\_\_

*Applicants who are not the owner of the building/property shall submit a letter of authorization from the property owner.*

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

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Tax ID or SSN: \_\_\_\_\_

### Project Site Information

Section-Block-Lot: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Business Type: \_\_\_\_\_

Building Owner: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Village/Town \_\_\_\_\_

Business Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Business E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

### Type of Project (Check as Appropriate)

#### Façade Renovation

Storefront Lighting                       New Signage                       Cleaning/Re-pointing of  
Brick

New Awnings                       Walls and Siding                       Windows

*No vinyl or aluminum siding*

Painting                       Other Areas (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

#### Public Sign Enhancement (See Criteria)

**Infrastructure Improvements (See Criteria)**

**Description of Project:** (Attach Additional Pages as Necessary)

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**(Please include any architectural plans, design sketches, site plans, and/or photographs that you may already have to help the MSRP to make its decision)**

Do you already have estimated costs of the Project? Yes No If Yes \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Do you already have quotations/estimates for the Project? Yes No If Yes \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
**(If yes, please attach copies to this application)**

When do you intend to start the project? \_\_\_\_\_

When do you intend to complete the project? \_\_\_\_\_

Please identify sources of matching funds? Cash \_\_\_\_\_ Bank \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Certifications (Applicants and Recipients)</b>	
The undersigned does solemnly affirm that to the best of my/our knowledge, information and belief, all statements in this application, including all schedules, attachments and additional information submitted in connection herewith, are true and accurate.	
Signature:	Date:
Print Name/Title:	
Signature:	Date:
Print Name/Title:	
Signature:	Date:
Print Name/Title:	