



Announcing a Special Opportunity!

The 2021 Hometown Innovation Grant for Small Businesses in Spencer

Spencer Town Hall • 600 South Salisbury Ave, Spencer NC 28159
Contact: Kyle Harris, Spencer Planning & Zoning Administrator
Office: (704)-633-2231 ext. 28 • kharris@townofspencer.com

The Salisbury Community Development Corporation (CDC), in partnership with the Town of Spencer, has received a generous \$25,000 grant from the Duke Energy Foundation for the purpose of administering a special Small Business Innovation Grant for small businesses in Spencer. The program will provide grant assistance to eligible small businesses and organizations (<50 employees) for storefront beautification projects and other innovative exterior improvements (see: “Program Guidelines” for full details on eligible improvements).

Eligible businesses can apply for a grant of **\$500 up to \$4,500.00** to assist with eligible improvements. Thanks to the generosity of the Duke Energy Foundation, there is no match required for the first \$2,500 of assistance. However, for requests above \$2,500, eligible businesses can apply for up to another \$2,000, provided the applicant contributes a 50/50 “dollar-for-dollar” match in private funds for every public dollar requested above \$2,500.

Please note this is a **competitive grant**. Applicants are not guaranteed to receive an award. Applications will be reviewed by the Spencer Board of Aldermen and grants will be awarded to projects that make the highest quality and most significant design contributions to Spencer. Applications will be ranked based on established review criteria (see “Evaluative Criteria”). Given limited funds, certain projects may receive less than the total eligible award. For this reason, applicants are encouraged to design projects that make exceptional, highly visible, and innovative improvements to facades and storefronts.

2021 Hometown Innovation Grant

Program Guidelines

Program Overview

The 2021 Hometown Innovation Grant is a special, one-time grant program resulting from a unique collaboration between the Town of Spencer, the Duke Energy Foundation, and the Salisbury Community Development Corporation (CDC). The program is made possible by a \$10,000 contribution from the Spencer Board of Aldermen and a \$25,000 contribution from the Duke Energy Foundation.

The program is designed to assist commercial property owners and business tenants, including non-profit, civic, and other community-oriented organizations, along the Salisbury Avenue Corridor and within the Main Street (MS) District (map available) with enhancements to building façades, landscapes, driveways, and parking lots. These projects can range from minor repairs and repainting to substantial façade and landscape rehabilitation projects and the installation of new pedestrian amenities such as outdoor seating, planters, awnings, café fences, art, lighting, and beyond. Get creative!

The purpose of this program is to provide grant funding to small businesses who make exceptional improvements to the quality, character, and economic development potential of Spencer through innovative façade/storefront projects. Projects should transform inactive facades into vibrant, active ones with quality design work, materials, and approaches. Projects should demonstrate creative and innovative design solutions that enhance social, economic, and cultural activity and business expansion in Spencer.

Applications must be submitted to Kyle Harris, Planning & Zoning Administrator, via email to kharris@townofspencer.com, by 12:00 (noon) on Wednesday, December 1, 2021. Funds are limited. Submitting an application does not guarantee that the grant will be awarded. Grants are awarded for eligible projects by the Spencer Board of Aldermen after initial review and recommendation by the Spencer Community Appearance Commission (CAC) and are evaluated based on established Evaluative Criteria outlined in these Guidelines.

All proposed projects must be reviewed and approved by the Board of Aldermen before any work has begun in order to be eligible for the grant. The Board of Aldermen reserves the right to accept or reject any request, require modifications deemed appropriate to meet the guidelines, and/or reduce the award amount from the full 50/50 match based on specific considerations outlined herein. The Board of Aldermen will not promote or reward poor design and execution, inappropriate alterations, etc.

Recovering from COVID-19:

Small business grants are intended to help small business recover or “pivot” as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. A pivot may include adding enhanced outdoor service, modifying physical space, façade improvements, signage, and other methods of creative adaptation.

Who can apply for funding?

- ✓ Any individual small business with less than 50 employees is eligible to apply.
- ✓ Applicants can include commercial property owners or business tenants. Non-profit, civic, and other community-oriented organizations are also eligible to apply if they have a storefront space. A tenant applicant must obtain the property owner’s written permission as part of the application.
- ✓ Business must be located along the Salisbury Avenue Corridor and within the Downtown “Main Street” (MS) District (map available). The business must be located within the Town’s corporate limits. Businesses in Spencer’s area of extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) are ineligible to apply.
- ✓ A project is deemed ineligible for funding if work begins at any point before the application is reviewed and approved by the Board of Aldermen.
- ✓ Owners of any property for which an application is submitted must be up to date on their property tax payments.
- ✓ If a building has multiple storefronts, each tenant with a separate storefront or façade may apply.
- ✓ A property does not have to be occupied at the time a grant application is submitted. However, applicants for projects at unoccupied properties must submit a written plan and timeline of expected occupancy, and must meet all other eligibility requirements. The Board of Aldermen reserves the right to disqualify such projects.

What type of improvements are eligible for funding?

The type of improvements that are permitted will depend on the historic status of the property. If a property is located in the Spencer Local Historic District, any exterior alteration must comply with Spencer's Historic District Standards, which can be found on the town's website or by contacting town staff. Generally, improvements may include, but are not limited to:

- Exterior painting, repainting, and patching.
- Installation of upper-level façade elements such as awnings, signage, flower boxes, lighting, etc.
- Introduction of pedestrian amenities such as street furniture, planters, café fences, umbrellas, lighting, etc.
- Safe cleaning of brick/stone fronts or wall surfaces. (Method of cleaning must be pre-approved.)
- Masonry repair, mortar joint repair, re-pointing of brick.
- Repair and replacement of windows and doors.
- Removal of siding and exterior false façades and metal canopies.
- Repair, reconstruction, and/or replacement of original architectural details.
- Structural and cornice repair and/or replacement.
- Historic reconstructions, rehabilitation, or compatible reconstruction of a storefront.
- Landscaping including sidewalks, lawns, and plantings.
- Painting of murals (including artist fees, labor/material/construction costs, and equipment.)
- Roof repairs.
- Addition of a patio or an outdoor eating space (including furniture).
- Design services (architect, etc.) for façade rehabilitation.
- Parking lot and driveway improvements.
- Removal of non-compliant signs.
- Removal of dilapidated buildings.
- Limited interior alterations such as display window changes that are a necessary part of the façade design.

Examples of **ineligible** activities include:

- Routine maintenance.
- Tools used for repair work.
- Intellectual property that is not solely purposed for renovation (e.g., logo design, etc.).
- Unapproved exterior alterations to properties in Local Historic Districts, including Downtown.
- Improvements made prior to grant approval.

- Interior rehabilitation/improvements that are not a necessary part of the façade design.
- New building construction.
- Application fees, permit fees, and inspection fees.
- Payroll, rent, and utilities are excluded, meaning they are not eligible expenses.

What are the requirements?

- All proposals must:
 - Meet applicable zoning and code requirements of the Town of Spencer and comply with the 2021 Hometown Innovation Grant Guidelines set forth herein;
 - Be approved by the Board of Aldermen prior to beginning work;
 - Adhere to all applicable sections of Spencer's Historic District Standards.
- Only exterior enhancements are eligible, and priority is given to improvements on primary street-oriented facades and landscapes. (Rear façades and landscapes are reviewed on a case- by-case basis). The cost of limited interior alterations such as display window changes may be included only if they are a necessary part of the façade design.
- Any proposed project within a local historic district must receive a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historic Preservation Commission.
- Improvements to specific properties are considered part of the real estate value of said property and shall not be removed or relocated. Failure to comply with this criterion may subject the property owner to financial reimbursement to the Town of Spencer for any portion of the grant awarded by the Town.

Timeline:

- ✓ Applications are due to Kyle Harris, Planning & Zoning Administrator, via email to kharris@townofspencer.com by 12:00 Noon on **Wednesday, December 1, 2021**;
- ✓ Applications will be reviewed by the Community Appearance Commission (CAC) at a special meeting in December (date to be determined);
- ✓ Applications will be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) at a regular or special meeting in December or January (date to be determined);
- ✓ Applications will be selected for awards by the Spencer Board of Aldermen at its regular meeting on **Tuesday, January 11, 2022** or at a special meeting in January;
- ✓ In the case of any delay in the process outlined above, the Town will aim to announce grant recipients no later than January 30, 2022.

How much funding can I receive from the Town?

- Please note that this is a reimbursement grant. If your application is accepted, you will be responsible for paying for all expenses up front, documenting the expenses, and submitting receipts for approval prior to being reimbursed. Instructions to do so will be provided. Funds will be provided based on original grant award amounts. All receipts and expenses must be submitted simultaneously.
- Eligible businesses can apply for a grant of up to **\$4,500.00** to assist with eligible improvements. Thanks to the generosity of the Duke Energy Foundation, there is no match required for the first \$2,500 of assistance. However, for funding requests above \$2,500, eligible businesses can apply for up to another \$2,000, provided the applicant contributes a 50/50 “dollar-for-dollar” match in private funds for every public dollar requested above \$2,500. (See below.)
- **For example:** If an applicant applies for a \$2,500 grant, then the applicant will not be required to contribute any private funds toward the project. The Duke Energy Foundation will cover the entire cost of that request. However, if an applicant applies for a \$4,500 grant, then the applicant would be required to contribute a 50/50 “dollar-for-dollar” match on every dollar requested above \$2,500. In the case of a \$4,500 grant request, the amount above \$2,500 is \$2,000. Therefore, the applicant would be required to contribute \$2,000 toward the project to receive the total grant of \$4,500. The total project cost would be \$6,500 (\$2,000 private match + \$4,500 grant = \$6,500). (See “Program Guidelines” for a helpful Award Chart Guide.)
- **The amount awarded is determined by total eligible project costs and by specific considerations as outlined in these Guidelines.** The final award amount is based on documentation of actual costs. Grants are paid only when the approved project is completed in accordance with the plans submitted with the proposal.
- A project that alters submitted plans without prior approval will be disqualified from payment. Designs not completed as submitted will also be disqualified.
- Due to limited funding, a single property owner submitting multiple applications for separate façades may receive lower than the maximum award allowed for each façade. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis given the availability of funds.

Given limited resources, how will the Town prioritize projects to fund?

Priority consideration will be given to proposals that make **highly visible and significant design contributions** and which best exemplify the goals set forth in the Town of Spencer's Future Land Use Plan. The detailed criteria that are used to rank applications is outlined in Addendum A of these guidelines. **Applicants are encouraged to familiarize themselves with these criteria in order to develop strong and competitive applications.**

Award Chart Guide

<u>Total Grant Request</u>	<u>Duke Energy Foundation Award</u>	<u>Town of Spencer Award</u>
<p>(No Private Match Required)</p> <p>This figure represents the total amount of grant funding you are requesting.</p> <p><i>Min. Request: \$500</i> <i>Max Request: \$4,500</i></p>	<p>(50% Private Match Required)</p> <p>This figure represents the amount of funding that will be awarded by the Duke Energy Foundation.</p> <p><i>Does not require any private match by applicant.</i></p> <p>Max Award: \$2,500</p>	<p>(50% Private Match Required)</p> <p>This figure represents the amount of funding that will be awarded by the Town of Spencer.</p> <p><i>Requires a 50/50 private match by applicant.</i></p> <p>Max Award: \$2,000</p>
\$500 (min. request)	\$500	N/A
\$1,000	\$1,000	N/A
\$2,000	\$2,000	N/A
\$2,500	\$2,500 (max. award)	N/A
\$3,000	\$2,500 (max. award)	\$500 (requires \$500 private match)
\$4,000	\$2,500 (max. award)	\$1,500 (requires \$1,500 private match)
\$4,500 (max. request)	\$2,500 (max. award)	\$2,000 (requires \$2,000 private match)

For Example: If your project will cost \$4,500, then you can apply for a maximum grant of \$4,500 through this program. You would reference the bottom row of the above chart. The Duke Energy Foundation will provide \$2,500 toward your project. The Town will provide another \$2,000 toward your project, but you would be required to contribute a 50/50 “dollar-for-dollar” private match of \$2,000 in order to receive any funding from the Town. The purpose of the 50/50 match is to encourage business owners to make a minimum investment of their own funds into the project. So, if you are requesting a \$4,500 grant, then you should prepare to invest at least \$2,000 in your own funds toward the project, with the remainder being reimbursed as a grant after successful completion of the project.

How do I apply?

Grants will be awarded based on the comparative merit of submitted projects as determined by the reviewing boards and the criteria outlined in these guidelines.

In most cases, the process is as follows:

1. Applicant consults with the Planning & Zoning Administrator to review application requirements and to determine if the proposed project is eligible.
2. If the property is located within the Spencer Local Historic District (which includes Downtown), the applicant receives a Certificate of Appropriateness from Development Services staff (for Minor Works) or the Historic Preservation Commission (for Major Works). (This step may happen later in the process.)
3. Applicant submits application to the Planning & Zoning Administrator and attaches all necessary supporting materials (see checklist on the following page).
4. Town staff reviews application for code compliance.
5. Applications are reviewed by the CAC at their next regularly scheduled meeting.
6. If the CAC makes a favorable recommendation, then the application proceeds to the final step in the award process, which is to be reviewed and awarded by the Board of Aldermen at their next regularly scheduled meeting.
7. The Town of Spencer will notify the applicant in writing that the proposed project has been approved as submitted or rejected.
8. An agreement must be signed between the applicant and the Planning & Development Services department, which is authorized to sign on behalf of the Town. The agreement will detail all work to be done and specify a time frame in which the work is to be completed, as well as procedures in the event the agreement is not followed.
9. Applicant may begin work.
10. If, at any point during the grant process, the scope of work changes (for example: the applicant desires for the approved design/materials/size/color to change, the project is unable to be completed as approved, etc.), the applicant must contact the Planning & Zoning Administrator immediately. Grantees are not authorized to make any changes to their approved scope of work without the review and subsequent approval of town staff. Failure to notify staff of desired changes in a timely manner may result in forfeiture of the grant in its entirety.
11. When work is completed, the grantee must contact the Planning & Zoning Administrator and schedule an on-site inspection. Same-day inspections cannot be

guaranteed.

12. Grant monies are ultimately awarded upon successful completion of approved work within the allotted time frame. Approved applicants will be reimbursed for the amount approved in the application process. Applicant must submit documentation (e.g. invoices) of all actual project costs before any reimbursements can be made.
13. If completed work is in accordance with the application, town staff requests that a check be issued. The reimbursement grant check will typically be issued within 30 business days of the final inspection and approval of the completed project.
14. Check is mailed to applicant at address provided on application.

A complete application must include the following:

- A completed application form with detailed explanation of project;
- Any design schematics, site plans, drawings or renderings, color charts, artwork, or materials samples necessary for the Community Appearance Commission to fully understand the scope of the proposal. The burden is on the applicant to provide all necessary design documentation relative to the project;
- Price quotes from contractors (or a list of materials with price estimates) covering the full extent of the work;
- Certificate of Appropriateness (if the property is in the Spencer Local Historic District);
 - Projects classified as Minor Works may be approved by Staff
 - Projects classified as Major Works will require full HPC review and approval. If this level of review is necessary, please be aware that the HPC has a separate deadline schedule which may prevent concurrent review and approvals of both the Certificate of Appropriateness and the grant application.
- Timetable for completion of the work;
- Photographs depicting the current condition of the project area (façade or landscape);
- Property owner's written permission, if applicable.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact the Planning & Zoning Administrator at (704)-633-2231 ext. 28 or kharris@townofspencer.com. (Email preferred.)

Addendum A: Evaluative Criteria

Each application will receive a score ranging from one (1) to six (6) based on project type and quality. When there are more applications than funds available, higher-scoring projects will receive priority over lower-scoring projects. Additionally, lower-scoring projects are not guaranteed to receive the full 50/50 match. Applicants are therefore encouraged to develop proposals that will score higher in each category.

POINTS
Select one per category


Table: Evaluative Criteria

Project Type	
<p>Introduction of new elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pedestrian amenities such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Outdoor seating and dining, signage, art, planters, café fences, umbrellas and canopies, lighting, awnings, utility screens, and other street furniture. ▪ Upper-level façade elements such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Art and signage; window planters <p>Or... Major landscaping, parking improvements</p>	3
<p>Replacement/stabilization of deteriorated features and elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Doors; windows and transoms; masonry ▪ Awnings and other previously-existing pedestrian amenities ▪ Other architectural elements and ornamentation <p>Or... Minor landscaping, parking improvements Or... (for historic properties) removal and replacement of non-original, inappropriate features or material and restoring with original details and materials</p>	2
Painting & minor repairs	1
Routine maintenance. (Automatic disqualification.)	0
Project Quality	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project represents an <i>exceptional</i> improvement to the quality, character, and economic development potential of the Salisbury Avenue Corridor by <i>transforming</i> a severely blighted/inactive façade or landscape into a vibrant, active one with appropriate and high-quality materials/elements; or... • Demonstrates <i>creative and innovative</i> design solutions that promise to enhance social, cultural and economic activity and expand business within the Corridor. 	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project represents a <i>noteworthy</i> improvement to the quality, character, and economic development potential of the Corridor by <i>improving</i> the vibrancy and active elements of a façade or landscape using appropriate and high-quality materials/elements; or... • Project demonstrates <i>best-practice</i> design solutions that promise to enhance social, cultural, and economic activity and expand business within the Corridor. 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project does not introduce new pedestrian amenities or façade/landscape elements but does represent more-than-routine maintenance or stabilization of existing elements. 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project is inconsistent with the goals of promoting economic development, business expansion, and job creation and would damage, or not affirmatively promote, the visual and functional utility of the Corridor. (Automatic disqualification.) 	0
Total Points (1-6)	

Award Determination

Disclaimer: Given the limited availability of municipal funds per fiscal year, the Spencer Board of Aldermen reserves the right to award lower-scoring projects an amount smaller than the typical 50/50 match and/or lower than the maximum Town participation of \$2,000.00. The CAC strives to ensure that the funding allocated by the Spencer Board of Aldermen is invested in those projects that most affirmatively promote the goals of economic development, business expansion, and job creation along the Salisbury Avenue Corridor. The guide below illustrates the general percentage match ranges that an applicant may (without guarantee) anticipate upon receiving based on the score that his or her project is assigned.

Award Determination Guide



<i>Project Score</i>	<i>Matching Grant</i>
6	40-50%
5	35-50%
4	30-50%
3	25-50%
2	20-50%
1	0%
0	0%

Please note that as annual program funds reach their point of depletion, the Board of Aldermen may be unable to award full funding to even the highest scoring projects.

2021 Hometown Innovation Grant

For Small Business in Spencer – Application Form

Spencer Town Hall • 600 South Salisbury Ave, Spencer NC 28159

Office: (704)-633-2231 ext. 28 • kharris@townofspencer.com

Note: This is a reimbursement grant. If your application is accepted, you will be responsible for paying for all expenses up front, documenting the expenses, and submitting receipts for approval prior to reimbursement. Funds will be provided based on the original grant award. Applicants are strongly encouraged to carefully review the *Program Guidelines*. If you have any questions, please contact Kyle Harris, Spencer’s Planning & Zoning Administrator, by email at kharris@townofspencer.com.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Business/Organization Name:	<input type="checkbox"/> Property Owner	<input type="checkbox"/> Business Tenant
Storefront Address:	Rowan County Parcel ID:	
Property Owner Name:	Property Owner Phone:	
Property Owner Email:		
Property Owner Mailing Address (City, State, Zip):		

APPLICANT INFORMATION (if different from owner)

Applicant Name:	Applicant Phone:
Applicant Email:	
Property Owner Mailing Address (City, State, Zip):	

GRANT INFORMATION

Funding Request

Total Project Cost (please attach itemized estimate):
Funding Request (Please enter your funding request from \$500 to \$4,500):

☑ Checklist

<input type="checkbox"/>	I have read the Program Guidelines in their entirety. I understand that any questions I have regarding this program, including eligible expenses, should be directed <u>by email</u> to Spencer’s Planning & Zoning Administrator at kharris@townofspencer.com .
<input type="checkbox"/>	I understand that this is a <u>competitive</u> grant, and that I am not guaranteed to receive an award. I understand that the competitiveness of my application will be based on the quality of my project and the creativity, persuasiveness, and thoroughness of my written proposal.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I understand that this is a <u>reimbursement grant</u> and that I will be responsible for paying all expenses up front, documenting the expenses, and submitting receipts for approval.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I understand that there is no private match required for the first \$2,500 of assistance. However, for requests above \$2,500, I must contribute a 50/50 “dollar-for-dollar” match for every public dollar requested above \$2,500.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am the owner of a small business or other eligible organization in Spencer with less than fifty (50) employees and which has a physical storefront in Spencer.
<input type="checkbox"/>	My business is located along the Salisbury Avenue Corridor or within Spencer’s Main Street (“Downtown”) District (map available on request).
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have attached the following: (1) photographs showing existing condition of the areas for repair or improvement; (2) itemized estimate or a materials list including total project cost; (3) project plans and specifications or other appropriate design documentation; and (4) property owner’s written permission, if applicable.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Using the space below, please provide a clear and detailed description of the full scope of the project for which you are seeking grant funding. For a list of eligible expenses and project types, see Program Guidelines. Please keep in mind that the Spencer Board of Aldermen will consider awarding a grant based, in part, on the creativity, persuasiveness, and thoroughness of your application. Priority will be given to projects that make an exceptional improvement to the quality, character, and economic development potential of Spencer. Projects should demonstrate creative and innovative design improvements. If you need additional space, please attach additional (typed) pages.

Dashed lines for writing the project description.

SIGNATURE

By signing below, you certify that all information provided on this application is accurate and that all work will be performed to meet the Program Guidelines, the laws of the State of North Carolina, the standards of the Spencer Development Ordinance, and all other applicable regulations. Submission of this application does not constitute award of a grant or issuance of a permit. The Town of Spencer reserves the right to request additional information to ensure complete review.

Signature of Applicant:	Date:	<i>Town Seal indicates receipt of completed application.</i>
OFFICE USE ONLY		
Received By:	Date:	
Application Completed?	Note:	