



Downtown Grant Review Board Meeting Agenda

Wednesday, July 22, 2026 - 2:00 PM

City Offices (Building 18, Legacy Plaza) - Large Conference Room
303 W 4th St N, Suite 501
Newton, IA 50208

- I. Roll Call
- II. Review of Minutes of Previous Meeting: Minutes of Spl. Mtg. 7.13.2026
- III. New Business
 - 1. 108 1st Avenue E - Restaurant Improvements
- IV. Adjourn

ADA Compliance: The City of Newton is pleased to provide reasonable accommodations, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, for those individuals or groups who require assistance in being able to participate in the meeting. Please contact the Community Development Department at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting by calling 641-792-6622 to arrange for accommodations to be provided.

Chair: Corinne Coyle; **Members:** Fred Chabot, Rita Reinheimer, Marilyn Terlouw, Colby Lawson, Tiffany Thomas, Wade Sheeler

Minutes of Meeting
Downtown Grant Review Board

Community Development/Community Services/Public Works Large Conference Room
303 West 4th Street North, Building 18,
Suite 501 Newton, Iowa 50208

July 13, 2026

Roll Call:

Board members present:	Chabot, Coyle, Terlouw, Lawson (12:08 pm)
Board members absent:	Reinheimer, Thomas, Sheeler
Staff Present:	Varsha Borde, Sr. City planner
Others present:	Erin Yeager, Newton Mainstreet Director

A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 12:11 PM by Chair Coyle.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting. Minutes of the previous meeting for June 17, 2026 were reviewed and approved via VV (4-0). Motion by Chabot, Seconded by Lawson.

1. Downtown Improvement Grant:

- **108 1st Ave E – Tiffany Finch, Applicant.** Staff reviewed the staff report. Subject property is a contributing structure to the historic district. The applicant has proposed restaurant improvements and requests grant funds for the same for the bakery at **108 1st Ave E.**

Motion by Chabot, **seconded** by Terlouw to take no action for the bakery renovations grant application until a future meeting. **Approved** VV (4-0).

Adjournment. Meeting adjourned at 12:40 PM. Motion by Chabot, seconded by Lawson. Approved VV (4-0).

Kitchen grant applications in the recent years.

The following grants were awarded for kitchen/restaurant renovations in the recent years.

1. February 2023 --Gray Moon (118 N 2nd Ave E)– \$25,000.00 Restaurant/Kitchen equipment – Fire suppression
2. April 2024 -- DMACC (403 W 4th St. N) - \$14,243.50 Hood venting systems and electrical improvements
3. October 2024 -- The Venue (211 N 2nd Ave W) – Grant approved for Dishwasher, Refrigerator, Kitchen, Sinks, ice machine, hand-sanitizer
4. December 2022 --Sned's (114-118 1st Ave E) – \$14,169.00 Hood systems and grease trap

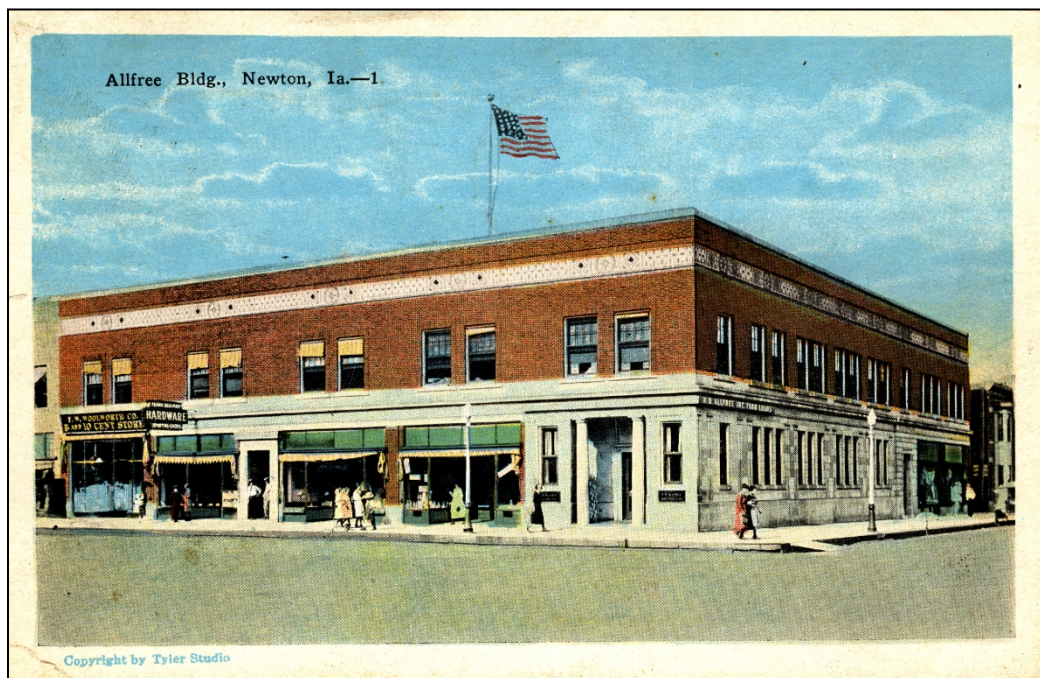
The following grant was NOT awarded -

1. February 2023 - April's diner - Maytag Hotel (120 1st St. N)- **TOTAL GRANT RECOMMENDATION:** In light of the board's recommendation and City Council approval of the restaurant grant for 114-118 1st Avenue East which excluded equipment as proposed, staff recommends the board remains consistent with past activity. No grant amount is advisable. The subject tenant space is already out-fitted with the necessary, permanent-to-the-building, equipment such as a hood ventilation system, grease trap, etc.

Downtown Grant Review Board - Staff Report

Location: 108 1st Ave E
Applicant: Vannessa Young – Youngs Cake Shop
Owner: Judith Mulbrook
Program Area: Restaurant Improvements

Proposal: Restaurant improvements for the restaurant at Youngs Cake Shop (Bakery)



Historic Building Facade

Site Description: The Allfree Building is located on the northeast corner of the intersection of First Avenue East and First Street North. Its façades face east and south. It is adjoined on the north by a two-story brick building and on the east by an public alley. Public sidewalks on First Avenue East and First Street North run flush to the building, providing access to the ground floor businesses and the upstairs apartments.



Building Facade April 2026

Building Background: The subject storefront at 108 1st Avenue East is part of the building historically known as the Allfree Building. The Allfree Building is a two-story red brick structure on a stone foundation. The block building is rectangular in form, measuring extending northward approximately 107' from its 131' frontage on 1st Ave. E.

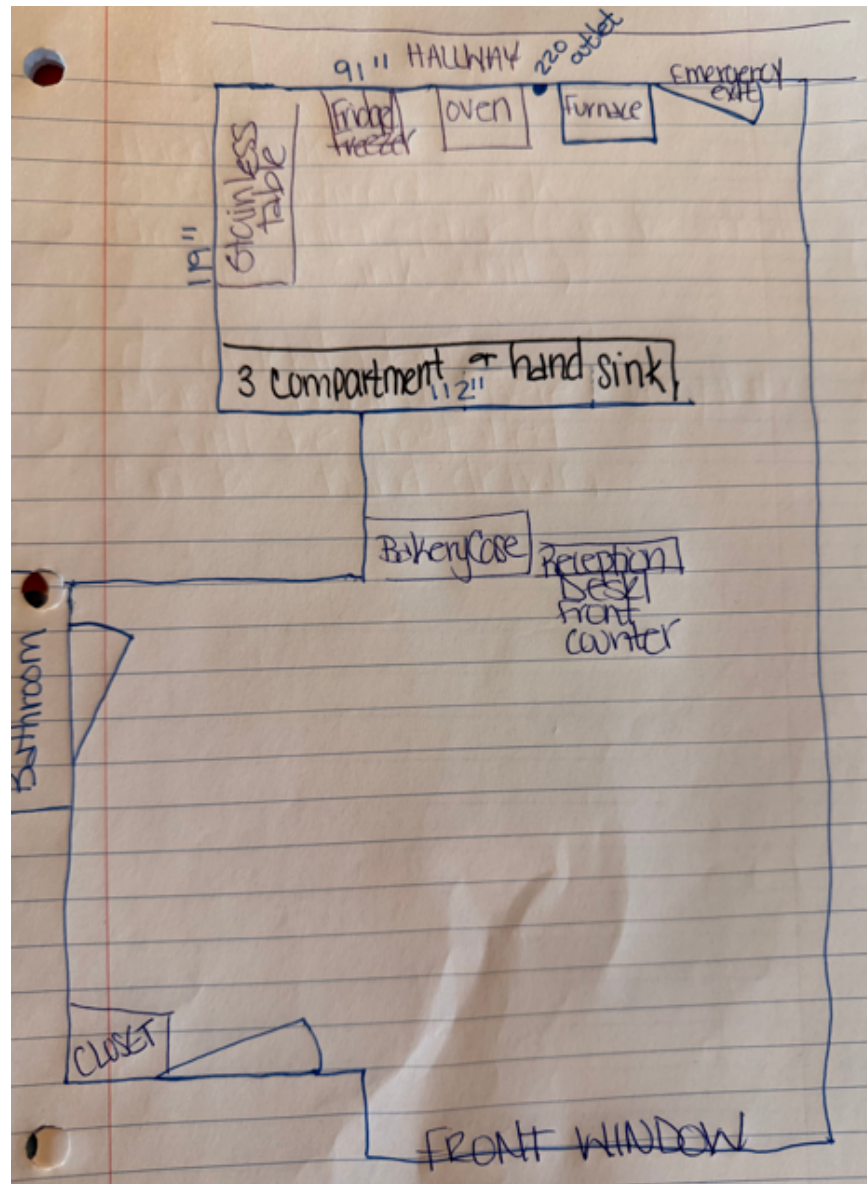
In 1937, the building slowly began to be known as “The Jewel Building.” The name “Jewel” is now carved into the stone above the primary entrance on First Avenue East, and it appears on the transom above the secondary entrance on First Street North.

Over the years a number of business and professionals have been located in the Allfree/Jewel building. The second floor provided office space for a number of medical professionals and lawyers for many years, and an elevator provided easy access by people of all ages. Long-term tenants of the second floor included Drs. Stanton, Thielmann, and attorney Ross Mowry. First floor tenants have included the long-time Newton businesses of Walgreen's, Spurgeon's, Newton Office Supply, F. W. Woolworth, Singer Sewing Center, and the Panda Garden Restaurant.

Building Description:

The two northernmost bays (numbered 106-108) were added to the building in 1918. Each of them has a recessed entryway. Large, steel-framed display windows occupy almost the entire facade and angle inward to the non-historic wood and glass doors. The use of matching non-historic signage panels and retractable awnings above the doors create a continuum that mirrors the repeated brick banding of the cornice. The subject building is considered a contributing structure to the Newton Downtown Historic District. While the building retains a high degree of integrity.

Proposal: The applicant is requesting funds to do kitchen/bakery renovations as shown in the sketch below-



Proposed Layout

Past Grant Awards:

Previous Awarded Project	Project Area	Grant Amount
Signage	Signage for 108 1 st Ave E	\$245.93

Analysis: The grant applicant requests grant money for the interior of 108 1st Ave E. of the building, which is currently vacant. Proposed improvements include a sink, faucet, display, grease interceptor. The applicant is requesting grant money for the following items.

Proposed Project (Items Requested)	Estimated cost each	Quantity	Total cost	Notes
Vevor Refrigerated Pastry Display Case 17.6 cu ft. in black	\$2,278.16	1	\$2,278.16	
Vevor Coffee maker	\$254.67	1	\$254.67	
Soap dispenser	\$18.99	1	\$18.99	
Giantex reception desk	\$109.44	1	\$109.44	
Towel Dispenser	\$38.50	1	\$38.50	
Bonnlo commercial hand sink	\$85.59	1	\$85.59	
Undersink grease interceptor	\$122.00	1	\$122.00	
Sink proportioner detergent and sanitizer	\$65.00		\$65.00	
Faucet adapter kit	\$22.35	1	\$22.35	
Beverage refrigerator free standing	\$174.99	2	\$349.98	
Labor charges Pipe Pros	\$4,100.00		\$4,100.00	
Total			\$7,023.08	

Summary of grant application:

Proposed Project	Estimated Cost	1:1 Match Amount	Maximum Allowed	Less previous Award	Recommended Grant
Restaurant Improvements	\$7,023.08	\$3,511.54	\$25,000	-	\$3,511.54
Total					\$3,511.54

Staff Recommendation: - In the light of recent grant recipients auctioning off items paid for by the Downtown Improvement grants and due to the funds being limited, staff recommends that the board not only consider past grant applications and approvals for restaurant improvements, but also consider this previously noted fact before making a decision.

For this particular grant there is no guarantee of final approval by the City Council, even if the Downtown Grant Board recommended full funding. There is a chance that the Council may not approve these items due to the reason stated above.

For future applications, staff will be working to make eligibility rules tighter and less subjective for restaurant grants. Staff is also working to make changes to the deadlines in order to have complete information when submitted.