

**EAST HARRIET FARMSTEAD NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION  
BUSINESS FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM  
Business Guidelines**

The East Harriet Farmstead Neighborhood Association (EHFNA) recognizes that healthy neighborhood businesses play an important role in the vitality of the neighborhood and the community as a whole and understands there are many challenges that neighborhood businesses can face. This program aims to help revitalize and sustain neighborhood businesses by providing incentives to improve the appearance of building façades and stimulate private investment.

**ELIGIBILITY**

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All building owners and business owners (with property owner's approval) located within the East Harriet Farmstead Neighborhood are eligible applicants for façade improvement matching grants. The façade improvements are for a commercial business or commercial building, meaning it has a retail or office use.

For-profit and not-for-profit entities are eligible to apply, as long as the grant is used for a commercial building. Most commercial uses are retail and office; however other uses may qualify, such as day care centers. Uses that are religious in nature are not eligible.

Matching grants for **1/3 of project** costs up to \$5,000 in grant monies per business or storefront are available to businesses and commercial property owners for a variety of eligible storefront improvements. The maximum per business or storefront is for the life of this round of financing. Multiple projects may be submitted till the maximum is reached. Matching grants for proposed projects will be awarded on a first come, first served basis, based on completed, submitted, and accepted applications.

**ELIGIBLE USES OF FUNDS**

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EFHNA has adopted the City of Minneapolis Great Streets Façade Design Guide for this matching grant program. See this design guide for specific façade improvements that are encouraged or discouraged. (Design Guide included in packet) Discouraged activities are not eligible for matching grants.

Eligible Activities are as follows:

- Exterior painting, re-siding, or professional cleaning
- Restoration of exterior finishes and materials
- Masonry repairs and tuck pointing
- Removal of architecturally inappropriate or incompatible exterior finishes and materials
- Restoration of architectural details or removal of materials that cover architectural details
- Repair or replacement of windows and doors (if replacement, windows and doors must be architecturally appropriate)
- Window and cornice flashing and repair
- Canopy or awning installation or repair
- Murals

- Installation or repair of exterior signage
- Removal of barriers to access the building from outside for people with disabilities
- Exterior lighting
- Contracted labor related to any of the above improvements
- More than one improvement project, keeping in mind the maximum grant amount per business or storefront
- Wall, window, and hanging signs advertising the business name and identity
- The work must be visible from a public street, not only an alley.

The City of Minneapolis requires permits for most of the eligible improvements listed here. It is critical that business and building owners work with City Zoning staff on designs and obtain all necessary permits before beginning work. If you have *any* questions about permits, please visit Minneapolis Development Review at [www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/mdr](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/mdr), 612-673-3000, or the Public Service Center at 250 South 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Room 300 (downtown Minneapolis). Payment of matching grant money for the EHFNA Business Façade Improvement Program requires evidence of all permits required by the City for the project. Lack of such evidence shall make the improvement ineligible.

#### **INELIGIBLE USES OF FUNDS**

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The following activities are not eligible for matching grants:

- Improvements in progress or completed prior to preliminary approval
- Routine maintenance that is not part of an eligible façade improvement project
- Billboards
- Roofing
- Mechanicals and HVAC systems
- Interior work
- New construction
- Monument, pylon, temporary, or roof signs
- Interior window displays
- Security systems (including metal roll down gates and window bars)
- Trash and mechanical enclosures
- Fencing
- Landscaping
- Parking areas
- Bike parking
- Improvements to non-commercial buildings
- Improvements to a building interior, rear, or side not visible from the main street
- Any other improvement **not** deemed eligible on the above list

The City has small business loan programs with favorable interest rates to assist with many building interior and system improvements that are not eligible for façade matching grants. Visit the City website ([http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/cped/business\\_finance\\_home.asp](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/cped/business_finance_home.asp)) or call 311 for more information.

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## PROCESS

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Step 1: Be sure your project meets program requirements:

- ✓ The building to be improved has a commercial component with a façade visible from the street.
- ✓ The building to be improved is located within the boundaries of East Harriet Farmstead Neighborhood. The applicant is a property owner or a commercial tenant, with the property owners' written approval.
- ✓ The property to be improved is up-to-date on all property taxes.
- ✓ All improvements meet City zoning and building codes.
- ✓ You may apply for grant monies to cover more than one improvement project provided the cumulative total of all grant awards does not exceed the maximum grant amount.
- ✓ All construction management is your responsibility.
- ✓ If qualified to do so, you may perform the work yourself; however, grant funds can **only** be used to compensate for materials, **not** for your labor, the labor of a relative or someone with a financial interest in the business or property receiving the grant funds, or the purchase or rental of tools and equipment.
- ✓ Remember that this is a reimbursement program. You must complete and pay for the full private match for the work before EHFNA will issue a reimbursement check. You should be totally satisfied with the work before paying.

Step 2: Review the Great Streets *Façade Design Guide* for ideas. Meet with EHFNA Business, Housing, and Zoning Committee designate to discuss proposed improvements.

Step 3: Schedule a Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) Review. Meet with City of Minneapolis Crime Prevention Specialist, Tom Thompson, for design suggestions as they relate to crime prevention.  
(612-673-2823, Thomas.thompson@ci.minneapolis.mn.us)

Step 4: Submit a completed application to EHFNA, including:

- a. Written description of the project, including drawings or other materials that accurately represent scope and intent of project improvements
- b. Photographs of the current state of the building, where the improvements will be made
- c. Two (2) contractors' bids for the planned work.
  - i. Both bids must be for identical scopes of work.
  - ii. If qualified to do so, you may perform the work yourself; however, grant funds can only be used to compensate for materials, not for labor or the purchase or rental of tool and equipment. Sweat equity labor includes that of a friend, relative, or anyone with a financial interest in the business or property.
  - iii. Applicants are encouraged to solicit estimates from women and minority contractors.
  - iv. Projects totaling less than \$5,000 and murals need only submit one written estimate.
  - v. Evidence that contractors are licensed, bonded, and/or insured
  - vi. Grant amounts will be based on the lower bid; however, you are free to accept the higher bid.

Step 5: EHFNA will notify you of your application's status within two weeks of receiving it. If you receive a confirmation letter from EHFNA, you may proceed with the project. EHFNA approves applications on a first-come, first-serve basis until all funds are allocated.

Step 6: Proceed with project. Be sure to obtain all the necessary permits for the project. Before disbursing a reimbursement for signs, verification is required that the City permit(s) is complete.

Step 7: Submit to EHFNA the following items upon completion of the work.

**If more than one contractor** is used, there must be **completed sets** of the items listed below for each contract/contractor:

- a. A completion certificate (copies provided to grantee) filled in and signed by the grantee and contractor;
- b. For work requiring a city permit, proof of final inspection by the City of Minneapolis Inspections Department (send a copy of the permit signed off by the responsible City Inspector); for work NOT requiring a city permit, call the EHFNA Business Coordinator to notify them that the work is complete;
- c. Proof of *full payment of total project cost* to contractor, showing the total project cost in all of these three forms;
  - i. **Lien waiver** a statement issued by the contractor that advises the client they, the contractor, (1) have been paid in full for the total project cost, (2) are satisfied with the compensation for the work they performed, and (3) waive their right to place any liens on the property for the work completed (*If there are significant material costs, it can be a good idea to obtain a lien waiver from the materials supplier, advising that the contractor paid them in full.*)
  - ii. **Cancelled check**: a copy of the actual cancelled check(s), returned to you by the bank that paid the contractor who completed the work. Both the front and back of the check must be copied and must be made payable to the contractor for the amount of the total project cost.
  - iii. **Signed receipt**: a properly executed receipt is signed by an authorized officer of the firm that completed the work and includes the contractor's name, address, telephone number, and notation that the total project cost was paid in full; and
- d. Photographs documenting the completed work, taken from the same locations of the "before" photographs required in the initial application.

***In order for you to receive the reimbursement, EHFNA must receive items a. thorough d. within six (6) months of the date on the confirmation letter.***

#### **EAST HARRIET FARMSTEAD NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION CONTACT**

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