

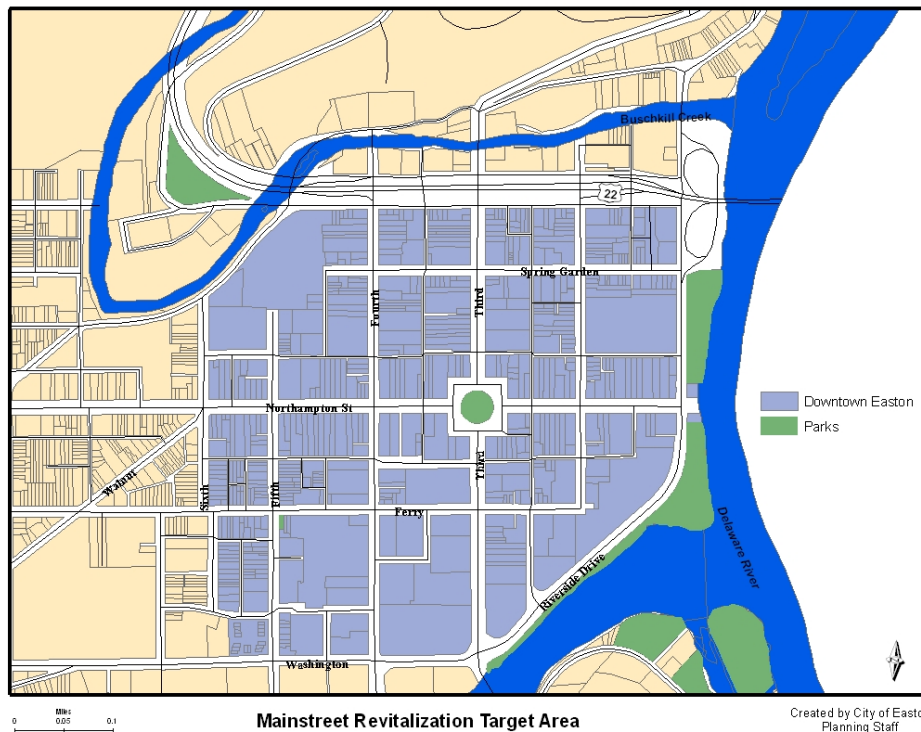
EASTON MAIN STREET INITIATIVE EASTON, PENNSYLVANIA

2019 DESIGN CHALLENGE GRANT PROGRAM AND GUIDELINES FOR BUILDING AND FAÇADE IMPROVEMENTS

Purpose and Scope

In order to encourage rehabilitation of building façades and streetscape improvements in the downtown business district, the Easton Main Street Initiative (EMSI) is able to use funds from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, Northampton County Department of Community and Economic Development, proceeds from the Historic Easton House Tour, and other resources to financially assist property and business owners in completing their projects.

Eligible buildings must be located in the Main Street district which is indicated on the map below in blue. Most street-facing exterior improvements will be considered for the grant including paint, windows, repointing, doors, façade repair/ restoration, sidewalk improvements / replacement, and signage. In addition to physical improvements, professional design services are also eligible for assistance under this program.



Available Funds for Façade Improvements

This grant program will reimburse property and business owners a fifty percent match of project costs up to \$5,000. For example, if a project costs a total of \$10,000, \$5,000 will be reimbursed. Projects exceeding \$10,000 will only be eligible for a maximum reimbursement of \$5,000. Façade improvement projects exceeding \$25,000 in cost are not eligible for this program.

Available Funds for Design Services

This grant program will reimburse property and business owners up to \$500.00 for design fees related to a façade improvement project.

Available Funds for Signage

This grant program will reimburse property and business owners a fifty percent match of signage costs up to \$1,500. Sign projects that exceed \$3,000 are only eligible for a maximum reimbursement of \$1,500.

Available Funds for Sidewalks

This grant program will reimburse property and business owners a thirty-three percent match of sidewalk repair / replacement costs up to \$3,000. Sidewalk projects that exceed \$9,000 are only eligible for a maximum reimbursement of \$3,000. All projects must be compliant with the standards set forth by City's engineering department.

Eligibility Requirements

Only property owners, tenants and business owners in the Main Street district are eligible to apply for this grant. Tenants and business owners are encouraged to apply for assistance even if they do not have any ownership in the building. The tenant applicant must receive written permission from the property owner to be submitted with their application. The property owner and tenant may apply for funding for separate work on the same building. For example, the building owner may wish to replace windows, while the tenant may wish to replace signage. Any applications made for improvements on the same property by the same person must be at least three years apart from completion of the original project.

Corner properties and properties with two façades visible from public thoroughfares may be eligible for additional funding. Please indicate this on the application. At the discretion of the EMSI Design Committee, projects with major impact may be eligible for additional funding.

Eligible activities include exterior improvements made to the property that are visible to the street and permanently attached or adhered to the property such as paint, masonry, shutters, windows, downspouts, doors, maintenance, façade repair, sidewalk improvements, and signage that is attached to the building and lighting.

If the building owner or tenant is proposing to do the improvements themselves, EMSI will reimburse for materials only, and building owner or tenant must submit estimates of material prices. If the building owner is a professional contractor, only materials and labor costs for improvements completed by subcontractors will be reimbursed provided an invoice and proof of payment is submitted.

All applicants must be up to date on the payment of their Easton Area School District and Northampton County taxes as well as City of Easton accounts (including property taxes) in order to be eligible to receive funds.

Notification of EMSI Design Challenge grant award must be received by property/business owner prior to project launch or sign installation.

Evaluation Criteria and Approvals

Deadline for submission of completed application is **Friday, July 12, 2019**. This is a competitive process. Applications will be evaluated on a point system, taking into consideration the following criteria:

- Location / Visibility from main corridors
- Aesthetic impact
- Business impact
- Historic impact
- Significance of the grant to the success of the project
- Use of Building
- Ownership
- Project Amount
- Use of design professional
- Overall proposal of the project
- Applicant's ability to carry out the project

All designs must be in keeping with the Easton Historic District Guidelines and recommendations of the Historic District Commission (HDC). Approval from the HDC, and a related Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) from Easton City Council must be attached to the application. If the COA is pending approval, the application for funds may be approved pending approval by the HDC and Easton City Council. EMSI will award funds based on the project's compliance with standards set forth by the Secretary of Interior for historic restoration and preservation.

Many projects, including signage, will require a City building permit or zoning approval. All proper permits and zoning approval must be received in order to be eligible for funding. Any applicant who received approval for grant funds but who finished the project without proper City approvals will not be eligible to receive funds.

If façade painting is part of the proposed project, the applicant must submit color swatches and a color schemata diagram indicating where each color will be used on the building. The color schemata must be a minimum submission of the manufacturers' color swatches and a print-out photograph of the entire façade clearly indicating where each color is to be used. A professional color rendering of the façade may be submitted but is not required. Although not regulated by HDC, color combination and placement on the building must be approved by EMSI as part of the application approval process.

All information on the HDC, permits and zoning can be found in the Codes and Zoning office on the second floor of Easton City Hall and online at www.easton-pa.gov

Guidelines and Application Process

1. Contact the EMSI office at (610) 330-9940 to answer any questions you may have.
2. Arrange for **three bids and material estimates** to be given for the work being done along with a time table for completion.
3. If applicable, obtain a Historic District Commission Certificate of Appropriateness (COA). Application from the Codes department, located on the second floor of City Hall or call (610) 250-6724 with any questions.
4. Obtain proof of compliance with all taxes associated with the property or business.
5. After completing the application in full, contact EMSI staff to schedule a meeting to discuss the design, bids and / or estimates. Please bring the application, three quotes from contractors and all supporting documentation.
6. Once the preliminary meeting is finished and the application has been deemed complete, the application will be submitted to the Design Committee for review.
7. If approved, the applicant will receive a Notice to Proceed letter from the EMSI staff. Applicant must also sign a Reimbursement Agreement document. **Work must begin within 60 days from the date of the grant approval letter and must be completed by November 30, 2019.** Any modifications to the original design must be brought to the attention of the EMSI office. Designs that deviate from the original without prior approval risk their reimbursement.
8. When all work is complete and all contactors and professional services are paid in full, please forward receipts, invoices marked "Paid in Full" and cancelled checks for the completed work to the EMSI office for payment. Please do not pay in cash.
9. Once all information and receipts are submitted, and prior to any funds being released, the Design Committee will arrange for a site visit to inspect that the work has been completed as per the original application.
10. Reimbursement can be expected **within 60 days of submission** of appropriate paperwork.
11. Applicants may apply for funding for façade improvements and design/architectural services simultaneously. Sidewalk improvements and/or signage applications must be made under separate applications.
12. EMSI reserves the right withdraw funding from any applicant that does not comply with these guidelines.

**APPLICATION FOR MAIN STREET FAÇADE
DESIGN CHALLENGE GRANT**

Applicant name: _____

Business Name: _____

Property Address:

Mailing Address:

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Reimbursement check is written out to: _____

- Business? Yes ___ No ___
 - If yes, please provide Tax ID# _____
- Applicant? Yes ___ No ___
 - If yes, please provide SS # _____

Building owner's name and contact information if different from above:

BUILDING INFORMATION

Building's Primary Use (please indicate number of residential units if mixed use property):

Current Tenants, if Owner: _____

Is Building Fully Occupied? Yes _____ No _____

Lease Expiration Date, if Tenant: _____

Application is for:

____ Signage (Please indicate sign type)

- ____ blade (projecting) with lighting
- ____ blade without lighting
- ____ painted window sign with lighting
- ____ painted window sign without lighting
- ____ awning or canopy with lettering
- ____ flat, wall or fascia

____ Exterior improvement

- ____ painting
- ____ windows
- ____ doors
- ____ gutters / visible roof
- ____ repointing
- ____ sidewalk improvement / replacement
- ____ other, please specify: _____

____ Code compliance/ ADA compliance

____ Professional design services

2.) How long has this business been in operation?

- 10 or more years
- between 3 and 10 years
- less than 3 years

3.) Building use: (check all that apply)

- Retail/restaurant storefront
- Owner occupied commercial
- Tenant occupied commercial
- Commercial property/mixed use
- Owner occupied residential
- Tenant occupied residential

4.) Was a design professional consulted on this project? yes no

If yes, please provide contact information:

Proposed Dollar Amount for completed project: _____

Timetable for Completion:

Do you plan improvements in addition to those that will be covered by the grant?
If yes, please explain:

Please include with your application:

1. Current photograph(s) of building
2. Project cost quotes/ estimates (minimum three)
3. Completed Application
4. Letter permitting exterior improvements, if not the building owner
5. Applicable diagrams, sketches, pictures, color swatches, schemata etc.
6. Any additional information you may feel helpful in evaluating your application
7. Historic District Commission Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) Application and/or subsequent City Council approval if already obtained
8. Completed W-9 form for reimbursement payee