



PRE-SUBMISSION

BEFORE submitting your application, you must contact the Erie Downtown Partnership and schedule a pre-application meeting. Please be prepared to provide design and budget details of your facade project. Applications are only considered for projects that have the 1:1 match funding secured, design concepts finalized and ready for implementation.

Grants are available on a rolling basis until all the funds are allocated. Please submit applications electronically to emily.fetcko@eriedowntown.com or by mail or in person to:

Erie Downtown Partnership
Attn: Emily Fetcko
Facade Grant Application
140 East 5th Street
Erie, PA 16507

Before and after photos of your facade project must be submitted electronically to the Erie Downtown Partnership.

ELIGIBILITY

This grant is specifically for member property owners and businesses located within the designated Downtown Improvement District, which incorporates the area from the Bayfront to 14th Street and from Holland to Sassafra Streets.

Qualifying commercial properties include single-purpose retail and office buildings and mixed-use buildings containing any combination of retail, office, and residential apartments. If you are a merchant located in Erie Downtown Partnership's defined area, but do not own the property from which you operate, you may still be eligible if you are a member of the Erie Downtown Partnership and if you receive the property owner's written consent.

For larger buildings where more than one storefront exists along the same facade, each storefront may be eligible for facade grant funds. The facade is the part of the building facing the street or streets and incorporates the main entrance to the building or store.

It includes the entirety of the face of the building including upper floors which often retain their original appearance.

Facade improvement projects must be transformational and enhance the built environment as well as the surrounding neighborhood. The purpose of these funds is to:

1. Assist with the preservation of historic commercial buildings and assure that such buildings are rehabilitated to an elevated and appropriate standard.
2. Bring substandard exterior building conditions into compliance with basic health, safety, and building codes and enhance the visual aesthetic of downtown businesses.
3. Reduce or eliminate vacancies in the core of downtown and promote the adaptive reuse of commercial buildings.

Grant applicants are encouraged, but not required, to use the services of architectural and signage design professionals. The Erie Downtown Partnership's Design Committee can provide input on your design plans and recommendations as needed.

TERMS

The Erie Downtown Partnership will award facade reimbursement grants to eligible applicants who meet all criteria as outlined below, provide all required documentation, secure the 1:1 match, and that are recommended for approval by the Erie Downtown Partnership Design Committee.

APPLICANT COMPLIANCE

Facade reimbursement grants can be awarded in consecutive years to the same property or business owner provided prior facade projects previously awarded facade reimbursement funds from the Erie Downtown Partnership are completed and the owner has demonstrated a true need for the additional funds. This can also apply to facade improvement projects that have multiple phases over time.

Facade reimbursement grants may not exceed \$10,000 per facade for projects costing \$20,000 or more. Reimbursement grant awards may be up to \$10,000 or one-half of the total facade project cost, whichever is less. Grant funds cannot be used to pay for work in progress or work completed prior to grant award.

Proper care must be executed in accordance with local, state, and federal laws, including, but not limited to, providing for safe and appropriate closings of a street or sidewalk to facilitate the project. Failure to comply with such laws and ordinances will result in the forfeit of your grant reimbursement.

All work must be completed in accordance with grant guidelines and the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

(http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/standguide/rehab/rehab_standards.htm) to be eligible for reimbursement.

REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS

Grants are made on a cost reimbursement basis, following a process of application, design committee review and approval, award agreement signed by applicant, facade construction completion, and proof of project completion and payment.

Receipt of grant reimbursement is contingent upon submittal of approved construction cost invoices from bona fide contractors or tradesmen and compliance with City of Erie codes and ordinances applicable to the project. All grant recipients will be supplied a written grant award agreement from the Erie Downtown Partnership indicating that the project has been awarded a facade reimbursement grant program in the approved amount.

TIMELINE FOR PROJECT COMPLETION

The award agreement is to be signed, dated and returned to the Erie Downtown Partnership with the application. The approved facade project must be completed within six months from the agreement or extended through written agreement between the Erie Downtown Partnership and the applicant; if no notice or update is provided from the applicant on the status of the project before the six-month completion date the applicant's funds may be released and allocated to another facade project. In such a case the applicant will not have any claim to reimbursement.

ELIGIBLE FACADE TREATMENTS

Types of facade improvements or renovations eligible for reimbursement include:

1. **Architectural Elements/Windows/Doors** - Funds are available for painting, rehabilitation, deglazing and reconditioning of existing windows (including display, ornamental, upper-story windows), doors and exterior shutters when they are original to the building. Grant funds will not be available for replacement of original windows, doors and exterior shutters or those elements when they are in character with the building, except when the elements are severely deteriorated and cannot be rehabilitated. Grant Funds will be available for replacement of existing windows, doors and exterior shutters if they are not original and are out of character with the building.
2. **Exterior Painting and Restoration** - Funds are available for repair, cleaning, refinishing, painting, and restoration of exterior woodwork and trim, architectural sheet metal and/or decorative brick elements. This category includes exterior masonry repairs, restoration, painting (in the case of brick, only if originally painted), or low-pressure water or steam cleaning.

Roof and commercial cornices, parapets and other decorative elements may be repaired and reconditioned. Replacement of cornice and trim elements will be permitted when they are severely deteriorated and cannot be repaired. Missing decorative elements can be replaced utilizing extant examples found elsewhere on the building, period photographs, or, in the absence of both, examples of similar buildings in downtown Erie. Roof repair or replacement is not eligible for façade grant reimbursement.

3. **Signage and Awnings** - Funds are available for repair, or removal and replacement, of existing signage and awnings, as well as installation of new signage and awnings, provided none of the original sign panel(s) or signage are still intact, in which case original panels may be rehabilitated. New panels shall be installed within the original space reserved for that purpose or, in the absence of a sign panel or frieze, be mounted in a sensitive manner approved by the Design Committee.

Lighting fixtures that directly illuminate a sign or provide area lighting under awnings are also eligible for reimbursement. Funds may also be used to purchase new awnings for entrances. No funds are available for sidewalks or site amenities such as tables and chairs or floral baskets/planters.

4. **Design Assistance** - Funds are available for architectural, historical façade research and preservation and graphic design services.

SELECTION

All applicants are required to meet with the Erie Downtown Partnership staff to discuss their project prior to completing the application process. Applications will be accepted for review at any time during the year. The awarding of grants is dependent upon funding availability and on formal action by the Erie Downtown Partnership's Design Committee and Board of Directors.

This facade improvement reimbursement grant is highly competitive and allocated on a first come, first served rolling basis. Grant reimbursement funding will be awarded based upon:

- Availability of grant funds
- Level of transformational improvements
- Synergy with other investment in the area
- Level of transformational impact on the downtown
- Assists with the preservation of historic commercial buildings
- Degree and/or accuracy of historic preservation
- Brings substandard exterior building conditions into compliance
- Reduces or eliminates vacancies in the downtown core
- Promotes the adaptive reuse of commercial buildings

APPLICATION PROCESS OVERVIEW

1. Meet with the Erie Downtown Partnership Staff

- Bring a current photo of building (or site visit)
- Receive application
- Discuss intended plans
- Understand your property's historic architecture
- Create a sketch of the work to be accomplished

2. Complete Application

- Secure architect or design assistance, if required
- Submit estimate for work to be completed. The Erie Downtown Partnership serves the right to require two (2) estimates for any project.
- Submit commitment letters for 1:1 match
- Complete and sign all sections of the application and award agreement
- Return application to Main Street Manager

3. Grant Approval

- The Erie Downtown Partnership's Design Committee will review application
- Committee will either approve for grant funding or refer questions or concerns to applicant and/or property owner. Applicant may be permitted to amend application at Design Committee's discretion.
- If approved, the recommendation will be submitted to the Board of Directors for final consideration.

4. Meetings Prior to Project Execution

- The applicant/property owner and the contractor employed to do the facade renovation may be required to meet with Erie Downtown Partnership's Design Committee representatives prior to the start of the project.
- Meetings may include a City of Erie Building Code Official if nature of the work involves code compliance.

5. Execution of Project

- **PLEASE NOTE:** WORK CAN NOT BEGIN UNTIL YOU RECEIVE A WRITTEN NOTICE FROM THE MAIN STREET MANAGER INDICATING THAT THE PROJECT MAY PROCEED UNDER THE FACADE GRANT PROGRAM.
- Participate in meetings with the applicant/property owner, the contractor and the Erie Downtown Partnership's Design Committee representatives as needed for project updates.

6. Project Completion

- Once project is completed, send a full color "after" photo, copies of credit card statements and/or front and back of cancelled check(s) with associated invoices to the Erie Downtown Partnership Main Street Manager.
- Within thirty (30) days of receiving copies, the Erie Downtown Partnership will reimburse the property owner or applicant in accordance with the terms of the grant.
- Completed work must be in accordance with grant guidelines and the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/standguide/rehab/rehab_standards.htm) to be eligible for reimbursement.

RESOURCES + OTHER GRANTS

1. LOCAL FACADE GRANTS

The City of Erie's Department of Economic and Community Development team can answer any questions regarding their grant programs. Please note that the below grants can be used as match for the Erie Downtown Partnership's facade improvement reimbursement grant.

CONTACT: Jennifer Hoffman, Business Development Officer
(814) 870-1275 | jhoffman@erie.pa.us

- a. **Flagship Facade Fund:** The City of Erie has multiple grants for businesses located within the City of Erie, including a new facade grant of up to \$5,000. Information and an application are available at: <https://cityof.erie.pa.us/flagshipfund/>

- b. **HUD Grant:** The City of Erie has multiple grants for businesses located within the City of Erie, including a HUD grant of up to \$20,000 to \$50,000. Information and an application are available at: <https://cityof.erie.pa.us/facade-improvement/>

2. PRESERVATION ERIE

Preservation Erie is a group dedicated to historic preservation and they have grants available for projects that rehabilitate and preserve historic structures throughout Erie County.

<http://preservationerie.org/facade-grants/>

3. CODE AND ORDINANCES

<https://cityof.erie.pa.us/government/departments/code-enforcement/>

4. BUILDING PERMITS

<https://cityof.erie.pa.us/business/applications/permits/>

5. SAFETY AND SIDEWALK CLOSING

https://www.osha.gov/doc/highway_workzones/mutcd/figures.html

6. HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The City of Erie has a new Historic Preservation Task Force that can assist with historic research and architectural guidance.

<https://cityof.erie.pa.us/city-planning/historic-preservation-task-force/>

Historic Architecture Research:

<http://eriebuildings.info/>

<http://preservationerie.org/>

<https://www.phmc.pa.gov/Preservation/Pages/default.aspx>