

UPDATE NORTH LA CROSSE

NORTHSIDE FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM

GOALS:

The mission of this façade restoration program is to provide incentives to property and business owners for revitalizing the exteriors of their buildings. The grant is available to businesses and properties located in the City of La Crosse north of the La Crosse River as funding allows.

BENEFITS:

This program will provide grants up to a maximum amount of \$30,000 for historic buildings, and \$15,000 for non-historic buildings, at no more than a 50/50 match for eligible expenses. **All successful applicants must meet the program requirements and go through the approval process prior to beginning any construction work.**

ELIGIBLE PROPERTIES AND SCOPE OF WORK:

Eligible Properties

- Properties must be located within the designated Northside district.
- Buildings shall have been constructed 50 years ago or more
- Applicants must be property owners or building tenants obtaining written permission from the building owner.
- Project must meet all state and local codes and zoning ordinances.
- Project must conform to the design standards for the City of La Crosse.
- Buildings listed in the National Register of Historic Places individually or as contributing to an historic district shall comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

Ineligible Properties

- Buildings containing a dwelling unit on the first/ ground floor.
- Properties with back taxes.
- Building owners with back taxes on other properties.
- Properties and/or Owners with outstanding citations/orders from the Inspection Department, unless this grant is being used to correct those violations.

Eligible Work

- Front (street) facade
- Side (street/alley) facade
- Rear (alley/parking lot) facade
- Restoration of architectural, historic, or ornamental features
- Lighting attached to the building
- Awnings and signage: limited to a \$1,000 grant for both, however this may be raised to \$2,000 limit if the awning does not have printing

Eligible Expenses (Priority shall be given to front facades)

- Exterior wall restoration/rehabilitation
- Front entry work
- Masonry restoration
- Storefronts

- Ornamental details including but not limited to metalwork, stone, wood, terra cotta, stained glass, and hardware
- Doors and windows including but not limited to materials that take advantage of natural light, reduce air leakage through weather-stripping and crack sealing, and control temperature or ventilation
- Exterior lighting
- Awnings that are opaque, retractable, with openings for ventilation
- Up to \$1,000 for architecture and engineering fees to generate construction documents

Ineligible Work

- Interior improvements
- Roofing
- Exterior portions of the building not visible from a public street/alley
- Removal or insensitive alterations to historic or architecturally significant building features
- Activities completed prior to receiving conditional approval in written form

Ineligible Expenses

- Furniture, interior fixtures and equipment
- Purchase of property
- Marketing/Advertising
- Inventory/Overhead
- Fees for government approvals, taxes, permits, etc.
- New additions

GRANT SELECTION CRITERIA:

Buy Local

While not required, it is strongly recommended to hire local contractors and craftsmen to help support and strengthen the local economy.

Applicant Checklist

Applicants should make sure to have all items in the list below included in order for an application submission to be considered complete.

- Facade Grant Application Form
- Drawing(s) to scale of proposed work/project
- Professional rendered elevations upon request of City staff
- Electronic photos with a key plan illustrating existing conditions
- Contractor's Cost Estimate
- Anticipated construction start and completion date

How To Apply

- Contact Julie Emslie, Economic Development Administrator, to determine if the project meets the funding parameters currently available.
- Determine the scope of work to be done. This will often require retaining the services of an Architect for the "Rendered Elevation(s)" and could also include a Contractor to assist in preparing the "Cost Estimate."
- Contact Tim Acklin, Deputy Director, to determine if the building is historic and the design plans need to be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission.
- Fill out all requested information on the application form, including current contact information. If an area does not apply to your project simply write "N/A".
- Colored, rendered elevations should be 2-dimensional line drawings with color and notes clarifying materials, finishes. Shadows and other features are optional. Drawings are preferred at 1/4"=1'-0" scale, but 1/8"=1'-0" scale drawings are acceptable for larger buildings. All submitted images may be used by

the City at their discretion for advertising and educational purposes. Renderings may be done on any standard paper size.

- Submit electronic photographs depicting the existing condition of the building. Photos illustrating the overall facade(s) as well as detail shots shall be included. (Please keep in mind that photos taken at the same location after project completion will be required prior to final disbursement of funds.)
- Submit one set of any historic photographs of your building. Photos should list the location of the photograph and the approximate date if available. Please note that not all buildings have historic photos available. Two of the best places to search for historic photos locally are the La Crosse Public Library Archives and the University of Wisconsin – La Crosse Murphy Library Special Collections.
- The "Cost Estimate" may best be compiled by a Contractor or Architect. Costs shall be broken down by discipline, i.e. masonry, carpentry, doors/windows, overhead and profit, etc. This breakdown shall also list the work to be performed, such as masonry may have cleaning, tuckpointing and new masonry installation work all listed under the "masonry" section. A 10% construction contingency to help cover unforeseen conditions may also be included.

Award of Funds

- After the complete submittal has been received, it will be reviewed by City Staff.
- Applicants will be notified if their project is "Conditionally Approved" or "Denied." Applicants who are conditionally approved may see items requiring action on their part. Any requested corrections should be addressed in writing and may require the elevation drawing(s) to be resubmitted.
- Portions of work on the project utilizing these funds can only begin after receiving a Conditional Approval from the City.
- When all construction work is **COMPLETE**, requested a reimbursement form from City staff. The final submittal shall also include color photos showing the completed project and shall be taken from similar angles/locations as the original submitted photos. All receipts and invoices paid in full must also be submitted (invoices should have an itemized breakdown of work done and show the cost of each item, such as X square feet or tuckpointing \$5,000). City staff will conduct a final inspection.
- After final review, if the completed project has met the requirements and a W-9 is completed, the City of La Crosse will release funding to the applicant.

Other Program Specifics

- Grant award amounts are based on a per primary façade basis.
- All photos, drawings and other documents shall be able to be used by the City for marketing and advertising purposes without any compensation to the Owner or other parties involved.
- The project may be rejected for not conforming to the design guidelines.
- Work that does not conform to the proposal submitted, reviewed and approved may be partially or totally rejected.
- Work done that does not comply with building codes and zoning will be rejected.
- Work on the project must commence within 6 months. Projects not completed within 12 months of the date on the conditional approval notification may have part or all of the funding denied. Requests for extensions need to be sent in writing to City staff.
- Applications will be reviewed and awarded as funding allows and is available.