

Emmaus Design Challenge Grant Program For Storefront and Façade Improvements



Guidelines

DESIGN CHALLENGE GRANT PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Design Challenge Grant Program is awarded to Main Street communities by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development. Recipients may use the grant as matching funds, up to \$3000, for exterior renovations to the prominent facades of commercial properties as outlined within the program guidelines and in accordance with the US Department of Interior's 'Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings'.

The Emmaus Design Challenge Grant is available to commercial properties who submit applications by the established deadline and who meet all program requirements. The Emmaus Design Challenge Grant Committee will review applications and determine eligibility. Grants will be made based upon

- Appropriateness of design
- Impact on the community
- Order of receipt

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Any person(s) or other legal entity owning **commercial property in the Borough of Emmaus** is eligible to apply. Special arrangements can be made for merchants who lease buildings. Priority will be given to commercial properties and businesses especially those that contain storefronts. The selection of Design Challenge Grant recipients is based solely on project merit and not on financial need. Only external improvements are eligible. Projects will be evaluated in terms of quality, design compatibility and level of visual impact.

In cases where more than one storefront exists within the same façade, each storefront can receive its own grant for eligible grant activities. A storefront shall be defined as having its own unique entrance, interior space, and display window. The façade is the part of the building facing the street or streets. It includes the entirety of the face of the building from the ground up. Both sides of a corner building with a corner entrance will be eligible for façade grants.

A single property owner can receive more than one Grant if he/she owns more than one property. If a property owner seeks and receives a Grant, a tenant in the same building can also receive a Grant as long as the total amount does not exceed the Grant maximum for the building. A tenant can apply for the full amount, with the consent of the property owner.

A joint façade improvement project (with 3 or more adjoining properties that share common walls) is eligible for grants up to \$3,000 per property or 50% of the total project cost whichever is less.

Applicant must be current with all taxes and municipal bills.

PROJECT AREA

Within the geographic boundaries of the Borough of Emmaus.

Program Overview

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

Repair, rehabilitation, and restoration of storefronts and facades are eligible activities. Projects must achieve visible results that enhance the Borough's image, marketability and economic vitality. Projects will be evaluated in terms of quality, design compatibility and level of visual impact.

INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

Landscaping, fences, retaining walls, site improvements, paving, parking lots, and sandblasting are not eligible activities.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

Where applicable all work must conform to U.S. Department of the Interior's "Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings". Available upon request or at <http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/tax/rhb/stand.htm>.

CHARACTER – The Borough of Emmaus enjoys a variety of architectural styles. It is the goal of this design program to see that each building is presented in its most appealing form and the original character of the building is preserved and/or enhanced. A property should be used for its characteristic purpose, or be placed in a new use that requires reasonable changes to the defining properties of the exterior of the building and its site and environment.

PRESERVATION - Any existing or historical character of a property should be retained and preserved to the extent that it is feasible. The removal of historical materials or alterations of features and spaces that characterize a property should be avoided.

CHANGE – It is recognized that many properties have changed over time. Those changes that contribute to the significance of Emmaus Main Street character in their own right should be retained and preserved.

HISTORY – Each property should be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create an inaccurate sense of historical or architectural elements from other buildings will not be favored.

DETAILS – Distinctive features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property should be treated with respect.

REPAIRS – Features that have made a property unique and recognizable should be repaired when they have deteriorated, rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature should match the old in design, color, texture and other visual qualities

and, where possible, material. Replacement of missing features should be substantiated by documentary, physical or pictorial evidence.

SURFACE CLEANING – Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials are not favored. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, should be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.

ALTERATIONS – New additions, exterior alterations or related new construction should not destroy any historic materials that characterize a property. The new work shall be compatible with the size, scale and architectural features that protect the characteristic integrity of the property and its environment.

SIGNAGE – Signs play an important role in how a business is initially perceived. Not only are they a marketing tool, but they also set the appearance from a roadway. Signage should project an atmosphere that is welcoming and inviting to members of the community and visitors. Consistent signage adds to the character of the area in which it is placed, and should be considered to be a unifying factor in a town. Lighting should be external, using spotlights directed onto the sign. Neon signs will not be considered.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The Emmaus Design Challenge Grant Program is intended to stimulate private investment. The Program seeks to preserve and restore historic borough architecture and to foster image-making improvements to all properties regardless of their historic significance.

Projects must achieve visible results that enhance the borough image, marketability, and economic vitality. Design Challenge Grants have the following specific objectives:

1. Reduce or eliminate vacancies in the borough, and promote the adaptive reuse of commercial businesses;
2. Bring substandard building conditions into compliance with basic health, safety, and building codes and enhance the visual appeal of borough businesses;
3. Facilitate compliance with federal ADA access requirements; and
4. Assist with the preservation of historic commercial building and assure that such buildings are rehabilitated in an appropriate manner.

Grant applicants are encouraged to use the services of design professionals. The Emmaus Design Challenge Grant Program facilitates compliance with the required design standards by providing technical and design assistance to Grant applicants.

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

A variety of property improvements, including major maintenance, repair, rehabilitation, and restoration of storefronts and facades are eligible activities. Eligible grant activities include:

1. Brick and Stone Masonry – Structural repairs, cleaning, repointing and painting.

2. Architectural Metals – Repair, cleaning, refinishing, painting, duplication, and restoration of exterior building components, e.g. cast iron, pressed tin.
3. Doors and Windows - Repairs, replacement, and restoration of window sash, exterior doors, and installation of storm windows.
4. Exterior Woodwork –Repair, rehabilitation, and restoration of sills, window and doorframes, bulkheads, storefront and roof cornices, window hoods, decorative moldings.
5. Storefronts – Removal of inappropriate coverings and additions, repair, rehabilitation, and restoration of display and transom windows and lighting.
6. Signage –Repair, removal, and replacement.
7. Painting – Surface preparation, cleaning, and painting.
8. Awnings – Installation and repair of fabric awnings.
9. Lighting – External lighting fixtures both for signage and building lighting.

TERMS OF GRANT AWARD

Emmaus Design Challenge Grants are awarded on a 50-50 matching cost basis. Individual property owners and authorized tenants, leasees, etc. match the Grant dollar-for-dollar with private investment monies. The maximum Design Challenge Grant that may be awarded is \$3,000 per storefront for projects costing \$6,000 or more.

Grants must be approved before work begins. Grants are made on a cost reimbursement basis, following application submission, design review and approval, and construction. Receipt of grant awards is contingent upon submittal of construction cost invoices from bona fide contractors or tradesmen. The applicant must submit to the Emmaus Design Challenge Committee documentation that substantiates the total and final cost of the work and documentation that substantiates the work is complete.

All work must be completed within 6 months after the grant approval date; otherwise the grant will be forfeited. Applicants may request an extension through the Design Committee who will then make a recommendation to the Emmaus Main Street Program. The Emmaus Main Street Program will have the ultimate discretion to extend the time for project completion.

The Emmaus Main Street Program has ultimate discretion for approving and distributing Design Challenge Grant funds.

Payment will be made by the Emmaus Main Street Program.

STATE AND LOCAL REGULATIONS

1. All work must conform to local and state ordinances. Permits from the Borough of Emmaus and/or permission from the property owner will be required in writing, if applicable.
2. All rehabilitation work financed in connection with the Design Challenge Grant Program must conform to the applicable requirements of Borough codes and regulations. Properties will be inspected in accordance with the Code of Ordinances for the Borough of Emmaus to establish the scope of work necessary to comply with the basic health, safety, and property maintenance requirements of the International Building Code.
3. Any questions about Borough Codes and regulations should be referred to the Borough of Emmaus zoning officer at 610-965-0704.
4. Signage must comply with local ordinances.
5. Contractor must conform to Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry Prevailing Wage Standards if the cost of the project exceeds \$25,000. For more information on those standards, visit http://www.dli.state.pa.us/landi/li_apps/requestPW.asp.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL

All Design Challenge Grant applications and completed projects are subject to review by the Emmaus Design Challenge Grants Committee and approval by the Emmaus Main Street Program as a condition of the grant award. Any and all disputes will be resolved by the Emmaus Main Street Program.

The Emmaus Design Challenge Grants Committee will review applications and determine eligibility using the Program's Design Grant Criteria and Design Grant Guidelines and will recommend formal action to the Emmaus Main Street Program.

DURATION OF PROGRAM

The Emmaus Design Challenge Grant Program will expire June 30, 2009.