



STOREFRONT IMPROVEMENT APPLICATION FUNDED BY: AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA)



City of East Providence, Rhode Island
ROBERTO DASILVA, mayor

The City of East Providence is offering funding to qualified businesses for improvements to their storefronts utilizing funds awarded to the City by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) in response to the Covid-19 Pandemic. Small businesses were hit particularly hard by the Pandemic and this program is a means of providing long-term benefit and improvement to small businesses and the corridors where their businesses are located. Storefront Grants are being offered to both owners and tenants of commercial properties to improve or restore the original character of their building, increase their visibility, and improve their foot traffic.

The goals of the Program are to:

- Bring energy to the commercial corridors of our City;
- Improve foot traffic for the businesses in our City;
- Preserve and beautify our City's commercial corridors;
- Create a pleasant walking environment by improving the visual aesthetics of commercial building in our City.

You may submit the application and supporting materials via email by sending it to mspurr@eastprovidenceri.gov

APPLICATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED UNTIL DECEMBER 31, 2024.

You may also mail a paper copy of the application and supporting materials to:

East Providence City Hall
Office of Planning
145 Taunton Avenue
East Providence, Rhode Island 02914





GRANT AMOUNT

Eligible commercial property owners and tenants can receive a grant up to \$40,000 for eligible storefront improvements.

For grant requests over \$10,000, applicants are required to provide a 25% match of the amount over \$10,000.

Grant amounts up to \$10,000 do not require a match.

The match may not be met using funds from other ARPA-funded programs.

WHAT IS A STOREFRONT?

A storefront is considered the front of the building; the part that faces the street. This includes the sides of the building readily viewed by motorists and pedestrians. This program also covers interior improvements to window displays. Note that this **does not** include the roof.



ELIGIBLE COSTS

This program covers window repair or replacement, doors, awnings, painting, siding, window stickers, re-pointing of brick, exterior lighting, decorative architectural details such as cornices/parapet walls, sidewalk planters, window boxes, landscaping, and signage.

ELIGIBLE BUSINESSES

Most businesses located in Qualified Census Tracts (see page 5) are eligible.

If you are outside the Qualified Census Tracts, you qualify if you were a *disproportionately impacted business* in these industries, as defined by ARPA:

- Arts;
- Entertainment;
- Recreation;
- Accommodation;
- Food Services;
- Personal Care Services.

Businesses outside of the Qualified Census Tracts and not in a disproportionately impacted industry might be eligible for funding through this program. Preference must be given to businesses located in low-to-moderate income areas first, per ARPA and the US Treasury.

SMALL BUSINESSES ARE DEFINED HERE AS:

1. Having no more than 100 employees,
2. Being locally, independently owned and operated.



ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- All storefront improvements must comply with City building and zoning standards.
- Most businesses located in Qualified Census Tracts (see page 5) are eligible for Storefront Improvement. Businesses not located in Qualified Census Tracts must be considered a “disproportionately impacted” business. (See Eligible Businesses section on page 2)
- The owner of the building must be the applicant to the program. Commercial tenants wishing to participate must do so through the property owner/with the permission of the property owner. Building owners may submit separate applications for each tenant.
- The owner/applicant must have no outstanding city taxes, fees, or other assessments due to the City.
- Chain franchises are **not** eligible for this program.
- The Planning Department reserves the right to make the final determination as to the design, appropriateness, and suitability of the improvements.

ELIGIBLE IMPROVEMENTS

- Signs and awnings;
- Exterior lighting;
- Painting and/or residing with wood, stone, brick, or other appropriate exterior siding material;
- Window replacement and window framing;
- Replacement or restoration of original architectural details;
- Removal of elements which cover architectural details;
- New storefront construction within an existing building;
- Interior improvements to enhance window displays (lighting, etc.);
- ADA-compliant entryways;
- Murals;
- Planters and window boxes;
- Landscaping;
- Removal of excess asphalt to create better drainage/ add rain gardens.

INELIGIBLE IMPROVEMENTS

- Projects that are underway or were begun prior to an agreement with the City;
- New construction;
- Internally lit signs;
- Roof repair;
- Removal of architecturally significant features;



CONSTRUCTION

All construction work must be undertaken by contractors that are licensed and insured to do business in Rhode Island. **Hiring of the contractor(s) will be the responsibility of the program participant.** The city will not direct owners to particular contractors. The property/ business owner must secure **at least two competitive bids** and then select the lowest qualified bid. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the contractor undertakes the storefront improvements in accordance with the plans approved by the City. Failure to ensure compliance will result in termination from participation in the program.

Some improvements can be done by the tenant or owner.

FREE DESIGN ASSISTANCE

The Storefront Improvement Program manager can assist with designing signs, logos, paint selection, and other architectural details and choices at no additional cost to the applicant.

FINANCIAL TERMS

Eligible owners and tenants can receive a grant up to \$40,000 for eligible storefront improvements. For grant requests over \$10,000, applicants are required to provide a 25% match of the amount over \$10,000. Grant amounts up to \$10,000 do not require a match. The match may not be met using funds from other ARPA-funded programs.

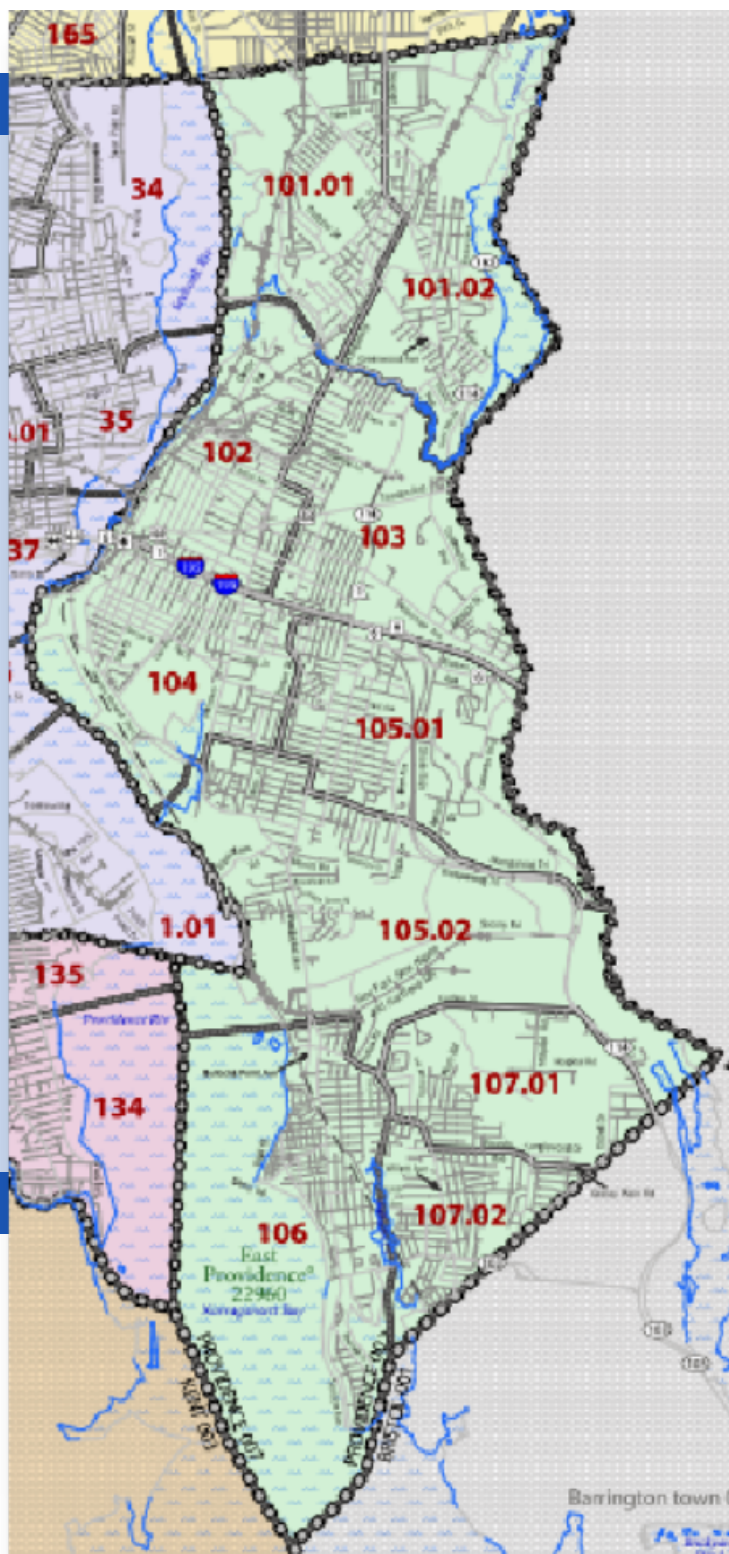
The applicant will receive payment in two installments: the first installment upon submission of an invoice from qualified contractors and a second payment upon completion of all proposed improvements. Under this two-installment option, the city will inspect the property before the first payment to ensure that the work has commenced and then authorize release of the final installment upon city's approval of work completed.

TERMINATION

The City has the right to reject the Storefront Improvement Program application or terminate any agreement if a participant is found to be in violation of any conditions set forth in these guidelines, fails to begin construction *within one year of an executed agreement* with the City, or has started the project prior to an executed agreement with the City.

Projects that do not adhere to the agreed design and concept or violate the agreement in any way will be suspended from the program, funding will cease, and a lien may be placed on the property until funds are recovered.





EAST PROVIDENCE CENSUS TRACTS

Businesses located in these census tracts will have higher priority for funding, per ARPA and the U.S. Treasury:

- 103
- 104
- 106
- 102
- 105.01



 To see an easier-to read version of this map, click [here](#).

TIMELINE FOR GETTING STARTED

- 1 Applicant submits application with required materials including a plan/sketch/photos or in the instance of larger projects a detailed set of drawings demonstrating the proposed work.
- 2 Applicant meets with Storefront Improvement Manager to explore design options.
- 3 Property is evaluated for feasibility and eligibility
- 4 Plans and design are reviewed for approval.
- 5 City issues letter of conditional approval.
- 6 Owner obtains all necessary permits.
- 7 Owner secures bids from at least two qualified contractors.
- 8 Owner informs the Storefront Improvement Manager of lowest qualified bid and submits copies of all bids received.
- 9 Owner enters into agreement with the city.
- 10 Initial payment is made to applicant and work commences.

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Use this checklist to help you remember all the pieces you need to submit with your Storefront Improvement application.

Remember to include this checklist with your submission.

- ☐ **Completed application**
- ☐ **Application Checklist** (this form)
- ☐ **Copy of property deed**
- ☐ **Copy of lease** (if occupied by a tenant)
- ☐ **Project description** A written statement of what the Storefront Improvement project will involve. Provide as much detail as possible, including what you are changing or replacing, the types of materials to be used, colors, etc.
- ☐ **Drawings of proposed Storefront Improvement** A concept drawing of what the storefront will look like after work is completed. For larger projects, include site plans. For smaller projects, a simple sketch may be appropriate. The sketch must include sufficient detail, including product sample sheets of design elements such as windows, doors, lighting, awnings, colors, type of materials. Note: The Storefront Improvement Manager can work with you to help you create these renderings.





APPLICATION for STOREFRONT IMPROVEMENT FUNDING



PROJECT INFORMATION

NAME OF BUSINESS:

PROJECT ADDRESS:

ESTIMATED START DATE:

ESTIMATED END DATE:

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT:

PROPERTY OWNER NAME:

OWNER ADDRESS:

EMAIL

PHONE

TAX ID NUMBER:

BUSINESS OWNER NAME, IF DIFFERENT THAN PROPERTY OWNER:

BUSINESS OWNER ADDRESS:

EMAIL

PHONE

BUSINESS OWNER TAX ID NUMBER:

APPLICANT INFORMATION

PROJECT INFORMATION

FUNDING AMOUNT REQUESTED:

PROJECT LOCATION:

NUMBER OF BUSINESSES IN THE BUILDING:

TOTAL NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES:

TYPE OF OWNERSHIP:

☐ CORPORATION

☐ PARTNERSHIP

☐ SOLE PROPRIETOR

☐ LLC

☐ NON-PROFIT

☐ OTHER

DESIGN FIRM/ARCHITECT, if needed:

HOW LONG HAVE YOU OWNED THE PROPERTY?

I/we attest that all information provided in this entire application is true and correct to the best of my/our knowledge and that no information has been excluded which might reasonably affect funding. I/we authorize the City of East Providence to obtain verification from any source provided.

NAME (printed):

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

NAME (printed):

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Please read the statements below and certify that you understand:

- ☐ I/we certify that the building owner is the owner of the property.
- ☐ I/we certify that there are no current code enforcement actions pending against this property.
- ☐ I/we have attached a copy of all current leases.
- ☐ I/we certify that there are no outstanding property taxes, utilities, or other past due bills to the City of East Providence.
- ☐ I/we have attached relevant photos of the building facade(s) to be included in this program.
- ☐ I/we have reviewed the program overview and guidelines, have familiarity with responsibilities of each party and understand that the City shall not assume any liability for this or any such agreements.
- ☐ I/we have read and understand the City of East Providence's Design Guidelines, accept the qualifications and conditions, and through signature(s) below, certify that I/we are qualified and will abide by such conditions set forth in this application and all reasonable conditions which may be issued by the City of East Providence in the implementation of this program.
- ☐ I/we understand that this is a voluntary program, under which the City of East Providence has the right to approve or deny any project or proposal or portions thereof.

Applicant Name:

Applicant Name:

Applicant Signature:

Applicant Signature:

Date:

Date:

Property Owner Name:

Property Owner Name:

Property Owner's Signature:

Property Owner's Signature:

Date:

Date:

NON-COLLUSION AFFIDAVIT

(to be completed by contractor submitting bid)

I/We [redacted] depose and say that: I/We am/are an (owner, partner, officer, representative or agent) of [redacted], the bidder that has submitted the attached bid:

I/We [redacted], depose and say that: I/We are the applicants to rehabilitation property located at [redacted] in East Providence, Rhode Island.

I/We are fully informed respecting the preparation and contents of the attached bid and of all pertinent circumstances respecting such bid:

Such bid is genuine and is not a collusive or sham bid

Neither the applicant or bidder, nor any of their officers, partners, owners, agents, representatives, employees or parties in interest, including these affiliates, have in any way colluded, conspired, connived or agreed, directly or indirectly with any other bidder, firm or person, to submit a collusive or sham bid in connection with the contract for which the attached bid has been submitted, or to refrain from bidding in connection with such contract, or has in any manner, directly or indirectly, sought by agreement or collusion or communication or conference with any other bidder, firm, or person, to fix the price or prices in the attached bid or of any other bidder or to fix any overhead, profit or cost element of the bid price or the bid price of any other bidder, or to secure through any collusion, conspiracy, connivance or unlawful agreement, any advantage against the city of East Providence, or any person interested in the proposed contract: and

The price or prices quoted in the attached bid are fair and proper and are not tainted by any collusion, conspiracy, connivance or unlawful agreement on the part of the applicant or bidder, nor any of their agents, representatives, owners, employees, or parties in interest, including these affiliates.

Signed under the pains and penalties of perjury:

[redacted]

Bidder's Signature

[redacted]

Bidder's Signature

[redacted]

Date

[redacted]

Applicant's Signature

[redacted]

Applicant's Signature

[redacted]

Date

NON-COLLUSION AFFIDAVIT

(to be completed by contractor submitting bid)

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Signed under the pains and penalties of perjury:

[redacted]

Bidder's Signature

[redacted]

Bidder's Signature

[redacted]

Date

[redacted]

Applicant's Signature

[redacted]

Applicant's Signature

[redacted]

Date