

2024 STOREFRONT IMPROVEMENT & SIGN GRANT PROGRAM



About Us

The Hackensack Main Street Business Alliance (MSBA) is a public/private partnership formed as an alliance between the business community and the city of Hackensack. Its mission is to address the issues facing the business community with the goal of improving the local economy and the overall business climate in Hackensack.

The MSBA management organization is governed by an 11-member Board of Directors, comprised of commercial property owners and business owners who are elected by the members of the district, along with liaisons from the Hackensack Chamber of Commerce and the City Council.

The Main Street Business Alliance, created in January 2004, focuses on such issues as; clean and green programs, business promotion, creative placemaking, special events, visual improvements, business recruitment and retention, and more.

Why fund storefront improvements?

The Main Street Business Alliance has identified a need to provide façade and signage improvements to assist commercial property owners and businesses located within the Hackensack Special Improvement District's boundary to (1) promote the physical and economic revitalization of the Hackensack business district (2) create an aesthetically pleasing shopping environment and (3) create a defined and complementary streetscape/street retail environment through the improvement of facades and signage.

Who is eligible to apply?

- A commercial property or business located within the boundaries of the Main Street Business Alliance is eligible to apply for grants;
- Applicants must follow enclosed guidelines;
- Funds are provided on a 1 to 1 ratio for façade, signage, and awning improvements;
- Grants are paid on a reimbursable basis after proof of payment and work is inspected.

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John T. Peters
Executive Director,
Main Street Business Alliance



Lighting

Gooseneck lighting is preferred, although we will consider well-planned lighting and signage systems.



Awnings

Retractable awnings, cloth or canvas with open sides are desirable. Lettering should be limited to the business name.



Signage + Lettering

Locate signage within a distinctive signage band. Use high contrast lettering consistent with business' brand.



Entryway

Locate street number at Entry Door for easy way finding. Avoid unnecessary signage on the doorway.



Window

Let your merchandise speak for itself by minimizing window signs. Ensure only up to 20% of the window is covered.



Amenities

Greenery, sandwich boards and outdoor seating is welcome where space allows and doesn't block pedestrians.



UNDESIRABLE

DESIRABLE



Undesirable - Facade is overcrowded

This program is administered through the Visual Improvement Committee of the Main Street Business Alliance and covers storefront improvements including façade, signage, and awning improvements.

Proposed signage and storefront designs must be approved by the Visual Improvements Committee before applying for Zoning permits.

Funding Source:

Funding will be allocated for the program through the Main Street Business Alliance's budget. Applicants will complete a simple application which will be reviewed and funds will be awarded to approved projects on a first come, first serve basis.

Key Program Points:

- Eligible properties include commercial properties or businesses located within the boundaries of the Downtown Hackensack Special Improvement District.
- Funds are provided on a 1:1 ratio for façade, signage, and awnings improvement projects.
- The grants are reimbursable after proof of receipt and inspection of completed work.
- No funds will be contributed to completed projects without prior application.
- Approving body must sign off on application and any change orders.

Grants Funding:

Business and property owners are eligible to apply. Storefront improvements may be funded on a 1:1 matching basis, at a grant maximum amount of \$5,000. Additional funds may be available in special circumstances. Storefront design must be approved in advance of installation or purchase. Property owners are eligible to apply for multiple grants not to exceed the number of units within the building. Projects will be considered on a project by project basis. Awning designs must meet the strict criteria as established by the Main Street Business Alliance. Vinyl awnings are prohibited. Light lettering upon a dark background is recommended for awnings. Sign composition, letter and size must be approved in advance of installation or purchase. Any signage adhered to the awning must be approved by the Main Street Business Alliance and follow signage requirements of the City of Hackensack's Zoning Codes and Ordinance. Storefront changes may require a building permit from the Building Department.

Reimbursement Procedure:

All funding is discretionary and grants are on a reimbursement basis. If awarded, the Main Street Business Alliance is not obligated to give the maximum amount allowed. The Main Street Business Alliance may award grants in an amount less than the amount requested. Reimbursement may take 3-4 weeks after the work is finalized, with submission of pictures of "before" and "final" project, and approval of invoices.

Application Review:

Projects will be judged on a project by project basis by the Main Street Business Alliance Visual Improvements Committee (VIC), who will meet monthly to review applications and make recommendations to the Main Street Business Alliance Board of Trustees.

Considerations For Façade, Signage and Awning Grants:

- Applications must be approved by the Visual Improvements Committee in order to receive grant funds.
- The quality of the design and its general compatibility, arrangement, materials election, and colors will be considered individually and with regard to the adjacent buildings
- The application's relevant impact on the building and the District
- The compatibility of the project to the overall streetscape
- The sign's overall design, use of color, materials and placement must be complementary and/or compatible with the host building and the adjacent buildings.
- Any and all grant applications must follow all requirements of the City of Hackensack's zoning codes and ordinances.
- Applicant must give approval to the Main Street Business Alliance to display their signage as the sponsor of the program during the construction.

Applications must include:

1. Three (3) photographs of the building as it exists. Where site work is involved, photographs should include existing ground conditions around site, adjacent buildings, trees, benches, trash containers, etc.
2. Written description of the project;
3. Design drawings of the proposed work, indicating materials, accurate scale and colors;
4. Minimum of two written estimates from contractors of construction (orwork) prior to award of grant.

Estimates

shall be provided by licensed contractors;

5. Written authorization from the landlord to perform the work;
6. Documentation that all Main Street Business Alliance assessments are paid prior to award of grant;
7. Plans and projects must comply with City of Hackensack's regulations.

Zoning Procedures:

After approval of the proposed design by the MSBA Visual Improvements Committee, and before applying for a façade improvement, awning, or sign installation permit, the applicant **must first obtain zoning approval.** This is done by filling out a "Zoning Sign Permit Application FORM E2" which is available online at www.Hackensack.org. The application should contain sufficient information to ensure compliance with the City's Land Use Ordinance. Once zoning approval is obtained, the applicant must apply for permits through the Building Department. Generally, a "Building - Electric" application is required along with three sets of signed and sealed plans prepared by an architect. Include as much information as possible in order to expedite the plan review process. It is critical you list "This application is under review by the Main Street Business Alliance" on any City applications.

For questions regarding procedures for obtaining Zoning Approval or applying for permits, please contact the City of Hackensack at (201) 646-3920

Please note: Incomplete applications will not be considered.
For questions regarding this program, please contact John T. Peters, Executive Director,
at jpeters@DowntownHackensack.ORG or (201) 498-1690





Main Street Business Alliance

2024 Storefront Improvement & Sign Grant Application

Applicant Name: _____

Business Name: _____

Property Address: _____

Mailing Address (if different): _____

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

Anticipated Construction Date(s): _____

Property Owner Name: _____

Your application must include the following:

- Three (3) photographs of the building as it exists. Photographs should include existing ground conditions around the site and adjacent buildings.
- Sketch, renderings and/or design plans
- Sign design with lettering and detail
- Minimum of two (2) written cost estimates (prior to the time of award).
- Property Owner’s Approval-inwriting
- Color chips, paint swatches and material samples, if applicable
- Written description of intended storefront improvement plans.

Property Owner Signature

Date

Applicant Signature

Date

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