



City of Chaska Economic Development Authority (EDA) Storefront Improvement Program Matching Grant for Signs/Awnings

Purpose

The purpose of the Storefront Improvement Program Matching Grant for Signs/Awnings is to support and encourage downtown businesses in the restoration of downtown building facades with signage and/or awnings that honors the historic nature of downtown while strengthening the visibility of retail services. The EDA, with funding support from the Downtown Chaska Special Services District, is offering matching grants of up to \$2,500 for new signs and awnings to assist with this goal.

Objectives

Assistance is intended to encourage investment in downtown buildings that may not normally occur. More specifically, the program's objectives are to:

1. Restore the historic atmosphere of the downtown area;
2. Enhance the City's sense of community by creating a strong and visible retail service center in the downtown area;
3. Increase the pace of downtown development that would not normally occur unless the market produced such development; and
4. Keep businesses from relocating who would otherwise find it economically difficult to continue providing service in the downtown area without improvements to the exterior appearance of their building.

Who's Eligible?

Any business that is located within Chaska's Downtown Special Services District, which is defined in the following map:



Figure 1- Downtown Chaska Special Services District Boundary

Projects shall include improvements to the general appearance of a downtown building's exterior through new or restored signage and/or awnings.

Minimum and Desired Qualifications

Because of the limited amount of financial assistance available, special attention will be placed on providing grants to businesses whose plans enhance the appearance of the downtown business district by following the recommendations of the *Historic Chaska Downtown Preservation Design Manual* AND *Downtown Chaska Signage Design Guidelines*. All businesses that are considered must meet each of the minimum qualifications listed below and will also be evaluated based on their ability to meet the desired qualifications for assistance. Please note that a project meeting one, some, or all of the qualifications creates no contractual obligations on the part of EDA to approve a developer's project.

A proposed sign/awning improvement project that meets the recommendations of the Preservation Design Manual and/or Signage Design Guidelines, will be considered to have met A and B in the Minimum Qualifications below, and will be reviewed administratively. These project applications shall receive top priority for funding.

Minimum Qualifications:

- A. Meet one or more of the aforementioned Storefront Improvement Program Objectives.

- B. The project must be consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinances. The Planning Department will make the determination as to whether the project's proposal is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinances.

- C. The developer must provide adequate financial guarantees to ensure the matching grant and completion of the project. The developer must also provide evidence of financing.
- D. The developer should retain ownership of the project long enough to complete the approved plans, and to stabilize its occupancy.
- E. The developer must have project plans approved by the City prior to installation. This approval will first be made by the Planning Department before the project is financially considered for a matching grant by the EDA.

Desired Qualifications:

- A. Preference will be given to projects that propose to implement the recommendations of the Preservation Design Manual and Signage Design Guidelines.
- B. Preference will be given to those projects that involve the restoration of a building that is designated as “historically significant” as determined by the City’s Planning Department.
- C. Preference will be given to projects that have utilized professional architects and/or designers to produce plans.
- D. Preference will be given to projects that require significant improvements or restoration. These buildings would likely be considered a significant “eye sore” in the downtown area without such renovation.
- E. Preference will be given to properties that have not received a match grant in the last five (5) years.

Application and Evaluation Process---Matching Grant

1. Meet with the Planning Department and receive/review Chaska Downtown Preservation Design Manual AND Downtown Chaska Signage Design Guidelines.
2. Complete application for Sign/Awning Matching Grant and submit to the Economic Development Director.
3. Planning Staff will review the application. If the application is complete and if the project is determined to be consistent with the Downtown Design Manual and/or the Signage Design Guidelines and meet the Storefront Improvement Program Objectives, the notification of approval will be sent to the applicant. *This approval will come directly from the Economic Development Director and will not need to go before the Board for approval.*
4. Apply for a sign permit to install signs/awnings as approved by the match grant.
5. Upon completion of the project, please notify the Planning and Economic Development Staff so they can inspect.
6. Upon completion of the project and evidence of the matching funds, matching grant funds up to \$2,500 will be reimbursed by the Economic Development Director.

Application Materials Needed:

1. Color copy of scaled drawing of sign face/awning, indicating colors, dimensions, and illumination if any.
2. Site Plan showing sign/awning location (if wall/projecting sign/awning submit an elevation drawing showing location of sign/awning).
3. Cost estimate of proposed sign(s)/awning(s); itemized showing construction and installation costs for each sign/awning.
4. Completed sign/awning grant application (pgs 5-7 of this document).
5. Any other materials as requested by staff.

Examples of the Sign/Awning Grant being Implemented:



Before



After

Grant used to update projecting sign bracket to be more historically accurate



Before



After

Grant used to replace and improve weathered awnings to a more historical look



**Application for Storefront Improvement
Matching Grant for Signs/Awnings**
City of Chaska EDA



Applicant

Business name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Business owners/partners: _____

Sign/Awning Company: _____ Phone: _____

Contact person: _____ Contact's phone: _____

Brief description of business, business history, principle service/product:

Proposed Project

All applicants must submit a copy of the proposed sign/awning plans. Refer to 'Application Materials Needed' above for clarification.

Describe project and need (Please be sure to include how project meets recommendations of the Preservation Design Manual and Signage Design Guidelines):

Location of signs/awnings to be installed:

Describe expected implications of renovation upon business and sales:

Describe expected benefit of renovation upon the historic nature of Chaska's downtown and upon neighboring businesses:

Projected Costs

On a separate piece of paper, please itemize the projected costs of this project. Also include the source of these renovation estimates.

Construction and Design

Target Dates:

Start of construction: _____

Construction completion: _____

The undersigned, _____, of applicant, hereby represents and warrants to the City that (she)(he) has carefully reviewed this application, and that the statements and information contained herein and submitted herewith are accurate and complete to the best of the undersigned's knowledge and belief.

Dated: _____

Applicant

The City reserves the right to require additional information and supporting data from the applicant after the filing of this application.

Staff Approval of Project for Sign/Awning Matching Grant

Representative of the Planning Department: _____ Date: _____

Economic Development Director: _____ Date: _____

Total Match Grant by City: _____

Staff Approval of Completed Project

Representative of the Planning Department: _____ Date: _____

Economic Development Director: _____ Date: _____