

# Restore Church Avenue

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

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The *New York Main Street Program (NYMS)* has awarded the Church Avenue BID an opportunity to provide financial assistance to area business and property owners who wish to improve their properties. The money will be distributed by the BID through its Restore Church Avenue program. The program is funded by the state to assist downtown revitalization efforts and to increase the economic strength of individual businesses. Please note that due to restrictions imposed by the NY State Main Street Program, **only property or business owners along Church Avenue between East 16<sup>th</sup> & East 19<sup>th</sup> Streets are eligible to apply.**

The program operates as a matching grant. The program will pay for 75% of the total project cost, up to a maximum of \$50,000 per property, with participants paying the remaining 25%. For example, if your project's total cost is \$40,000, the grant could cover a maximum of 75% of this cost, or \$30,000. Program participants are reimbursed for approved eligible expenses following the satisfactory completion of a project. All improvements made with grant dollars are required to be maintained for at least five years.

### ELIGIBLE PROGRAM EXPENSES

Funds from the Restore Church Avenue program can be used in three ways, described below with a list of eligible activities:

#### 1 Façade Improvements

- Brick re-pointing
- Removal of vinyl or aluminum siding
- Cornice restoration/repair
- Window replacement
- Painting, when done in conjunction with other façade work

#### 2 Storefront Improvements

- Replacing signage with appropriate, exterior lit signs
- Replacing or installing new awnings (non-interior lit only)
- Installation of new and appropriate exterior lighting
- Storefront window replacement
- Basic cosmetic work, such as painting
- Installing new open-grid, roll-down security gates

#### 3 Commercial Interior Improvements

- Interior work can only be funded if there are no code violations AND if the storefront and façade already meet the BID's design guidelines
- Improvements in handicap accessibility & energy efficiency
- Non-structural renovations that improve overall appearance

**Ineligible Expenses** (*not a complete list*): Installation of vinyl or aluminum siding, interior furnishings, business supplies, interior lit signs, or upper-story additions to existing buildings.

Projects receiving funding must follow design guidelines established by the BID and receive approval from the State's Historic Preservation Office. These guidelines help to ensure façade and storefront work improves your property's attractiveness to neighborhood customers.



*A potential candidate for the program.*

*An example of appropriate store front design.*

### PROGRAM PROCESS

#### STEP 1

##### **SUBMIT PROGRAM APPLICATION**

Return a completed Project Application to the BID Office, with all of the required attached documents. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis and can be submitted at any time.

#### STEP 2

##### **APPLICATION REVIEW AND PRE-APPROVAL**

The BID staff will review your project application and pre-approve projects that are eligible for the program. If a project is not selected, BID staff will inform the applicant and make suggestions on how to revise their application.

BID Staff will schedule a meeting with applicants who received pre-approval to discuss documentation needed for final review or to clearly articulate why a proposed project did not receive pre-approval.

#### STEP 3

##### **FINAL PROJECT REVIEW AND APPROVAL BY STREETScape ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

After a project is pre-approved, the applicant will need to prepare additional materials for review by the BID's Streetscape Advisory Committee. Depending on the project's scope, an applicant will be required to prepare drawings showing what the building or storefront will look like upon completion of the project. Additionally, at least two estimates for all work to be performed and a project financing plan will need to be submitted at this time. The committee will review the project and either approve your project as is, or recommend changes to improve project appropriateness.

#### STEP 4

##### **SIGNING OF CONTRACT**

Upon final committee approval, the applicant and BID will sign a contract that details all of the conditions of the project that the applicant agrees to meet by the end of the project.

#### STEP 5

##### **APPLICANT RECEIVES ALL NECESSARY PERMITS AND APPROVALS**

Before work can begin on a project, the applicant must resolve any outstanding code violations and receive necessary permits and approvals from all applicable governmental agencies, including the Department of Buildings (DOB). Applicants will be required to submit an application, with assistance from the BID's staff, to the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (SHPO) and comply with the State's environmental regulations.

#### STEP 6

##### **COMPLETE PROJECT**

Once all government approvals are received and contractors have been selected, the applicant can complete the project. Once the BID staff has confirmed that the agreed upon scope of work has been completed, the applicant must file a maintenance agreement with the City of New York in order to be eligible for reimbursement. The maintenance agreement ensures all improvements will be maintained for at least five (5) years. **Projects that are not completed in a manner consistent with the agreed upon scope of work will not be eligible for reimbursement.**

#### STEP 7

##### **REIMBURSEMENT OF PROJECT COSTS**

After BID approval of completed work, and filing of the maintenance agreement, the applicant may submit all eligible project invoices and receipts to the BID for reimbursement. Reimbursement processing should take 3 to 6 weeks.