



DISTRICT BRIDGES FACADE IMPROVEMENT GRANT INFORMATION SHEET

Overview: District Bridges, in collaboration with the DC Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), is granting facade improvement awards to restore and enhance storefront property exteriors for low to moderate income corridors within designated District Bridges neighborhoods.

Eligibility: Businesses, certified 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations, and owners of vacant commercial properties (which are not seriously dilapidated) located within the below mapped specified blocks of these District Bridges Main Streets*:

- Columbia Heights, Mt. Pleasant
- Lower Georgia Avenue

Ineligibility: Government owned buildings; national chains or franchises; businesses and properties owned by staff or board members of District Bridges, or their relatives; and elected government officials are ineligible to receive grant funds.

*National grant criteria limit grant boundaries to specific low-to-moderate income areas, to aid in the prevention of blight and which meet specific community development needs. See Code of Federal Regulations 24 CFR 570.208 for further information.

Application Requirements: To be considered for award, District Bridges must receive a complete application, supporting documentation, and participation commitment from the business or property owner. The application solicits basic business information, property owner information, improvement requests, and photos of the building. Applicants may be requested to provide follow-up documentation such as an active lease agreement, a certificate of Clean Hands, or a written authorization to conduct building modifications from the property owner or their legally designated representative.

Scope of Improvements

Storefront improvements under this grant are intended to restore or upgrade building appearance, efficiency, and safety. Funds are limited to exterior building enhancements and historical rehabilitation as designated by the terms of the government grant, and cannot be used for interior design, mechanics, roofing, security cameras, or sidewalk street-scaping. Priority consideration is given to the removal of fixed exterior bars, with additional emphasis on improved signage and restoration of a building's architectural integrity, particularly at street-level.

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The following are types of improvements eligible for consideration, with options for new installation, repair, replacement and/or removal:

- Fixed gates, grates, or bars removed (with or without an option for new exterior mesh gates, interior roll down bars, or interior grilles)
- Paint, including site preparation
- Canopy/awning
- Business signage
- Lighting
- Entrance, windows, & doors (ADA compliant)
- Architectural elements (shutters, parapets, etc.)
- Building finishes & materials
- Damage repair

Additional provisions: Historic buildings and those located in (designated or pending) historic districts, or those deemed “contributing” to such a historic district, are subject to historic preservation requirements. Improvements must meet accessibility requirements.

General Grant Terms

District Bridges reserves up to \$15,000 each for up to six properties located within the designated corridors. The actual number of properties improved is variable and will be determined by scope of work and cost estimates. The timeline, terms, and funds allocated to each facade are subject to extension and/or modification.

DHCD Funds for improvements are issued to the authorized contractor and not to the business or property owner. Contracts are negotiated and held by District Bridges with administrative review by the grantor. Business and property owners may not amend the scope of work or designated contractor for any approved award.

The business and property owner agree to participate in the storefront improvement process throughout, providing documents, obtaining authorizations, collaborating with the grant team, attending requisite meetings, assisting in permit acquisition, and cooperating with third party contractor(s) performing the work as requested or required. Application and finalist status does not guarantee award. Pursuant to national and district statutes, information furnished in connection with use of public funds may be made public.

Grant Process:

- **Applications are reviewed on an ongoing basis, as funding becomes available.**
- **District Bridges reviews submissions for completeness, eligibility, and impact.**
- **Finalists work with the facade improvement team (District Bridges, project consultants, construction contractors) to develop a comprehensive project proposal.**
- **DHCD reviews the proposal for design, historical preservation status, environmental standing, improvement priorities, construction activities, schedule, and other grant principles and compliance requirements; and may request further details or drawings. DHCD denies or approves with a Notice to Proceed (NTP.)**
- **Applicants are notified of the decision.**
- **Terms of agreement are confirmed between award recipients and District Bridges.**
- **Contractors bid on improvements, participate in pre-construction meetings, and adhere to Davis-Bacon wage rates and administrative reporting requirements.**
- **Improvements are completed within 60-90 days of notification.**

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Questions? Please contact your District Bridges Main Street Program Manager if you have any questions about the above information or the application process.

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