

Mayor Michael Bonfanti &
The City of Peabody Community Development Authority
FAÇADE/SIGNAGE IMPROVEMENT
PILOT PROGRAM
GUIDELINES & APPLICATION



I. INTRODUCTION

Mayor Bonfanti and the City of Peabody through the Community Development Authority and the Department of Community Development have established a Façade/Signage Improvement Program to provide technical and financial assistance to property owners or business tenants seeking to renovate or restore their exterior signage, lighting or commercial building façades. The Program's objectives are to improve the physical appearance of independent businesses and enhance the commercial district in Peabody Square. Please note that the available funds shall be allocated in a manner that assists as many possible quality applicants possible.

The Program will provide a grant of up to \$15,000 for the funding of well-designed improvements that will coordinate all the important features of the storefront into a more attractive image. This may include the restoration of architectural details, better windows and doors, and well-proportioned signage, awnings and lighting. All construction work must be completed between July 1 and August 31, 2010.

The Department of Community Development and Planning will retain an in-house architect available for preliminary design and consultation for program awardees. Program participation requires consultation from this pre-selected architect to ensure final designs are streamlined and match Downtown Peabody historic and ordinance guidelines.

There is a total of \$100,000 available for this pilot grant program and the selection committee, appointed by Mayor Bonfanti, will review applications and funding requests in an attempt to accommodate quality proposals as fully as possible. **Improvements made prior to receipt of a formal "Notice to Proceed" letter by the City of Peabody will not be funded.**

II. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The following criteria must be met for participation in the Program:

1. Applicants must be property owners or commercial tenants whose storefronts are within designated areas as indicated on the attached map;
2. Preference will be given to independent businesses not required by contractual arrangement to maintain standardized décor, architecture, signs or similar features;
3. Preference will be given to businesses already located and in operation in Peabody Square;
4. Preference shall be given to applications that will make improvements in highly visible and highly traveled areas of Peabody Square.
5. Tenants must have written approval from property owners to participate in program;
6. Billboards on property, if applicable, must be permanently removed as part of the improvement;
7. Property owners applying for funds must be up to date on all municipal taxes prior to participation in the program; and
8. Applicants must comply with all State and local laws and regulations pertaining to licensing, permits, building code and zoning requirements.

III. DESIGN PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES

Improvements to be funded by the program must be compatible with the character and architecture of the individual building as well as, to the extent appropriate, with other buildings along the street on which the participating storefront is located. This principle is particularly important for historic buildings and streetscapes. Buildings with significant architectural qualities are strongly encouraged to restore and maintain these features. Improvements for buildings not having notably historic or architectural features should still be carefully considered and be seen as an opportunity to substantially enhance the appearance of the buildings and their streetscapes. Initial design proposals should be submitted by the applicant and if awarded, further conceptual designs will be provided by the City retained consultant architect.

A. Eligible Façade/Signage Improvements

Storefronts should be oriented to the pedestrian and provide visual interest both day and night. Effort should be made to facilitate access into the store and to create a store identity unique to Peabody and/or the respective neighborhood. The following improvements are encouraged:

1. Restoration of details in historically contributing or significant buildings, and removal of elements which cover architectural details;
2. Window display areas which are appropriately scaled and which facilitate night viewing;
3. Window replacement and window framing visible from the street that is appropriately scaled to the building;
4. Signage that is attractively integrated into the architecture of the building, including the window area, awnings or canopies, and entryways;
5. Lighting that is visually appealing and appropriately illuminates signage, storefront window displays, and recessed areas of a building façade;
6. Awnings or canopies that can be both functional and visually appealing;
7. Landscaping features attached to the building where appropriate, such as window boxes or planters;
8. Cleaning, repainting or residing of buildings;
9. Street grade entrances which contribute to the active edge along streets;
10. New storefront construction, appropriately scaled within an existing building; and
11. Removal of architectural barriers to public accessibility;
12. Other improvements can be made with written approval, if they meet the objectives of the Façade Improvement Program.

B. Prior Improvements

Alterations and improvements made prior to receiving a “Notice to Proceed with Improvements” are not eligible for award or reimbursement.

C. Modification/Recapture Policy

All participants in the City of Peabody's Façade/Signage Improvement Program must agree to the conditions of the Anti-Speculation and Recapture Policy attached. In general, the participants must agree not to change or alter the improved storefront without prior written approval from the City of Peabody, for a period of 10 years in the case of façade changes, and five years in the case of signage and awning grants.

IV. PROGRAM ASSISTANCE

A. Financial Assistance

Funding is offered in the form of a grant that will subsidize the applicant's total project cost, up to a \$15,000 maximum. Any formal design fees may be included in the total cost of eligible improvements but cannot exceed \$3,000 of the total reimbursement for facades and \$1,500 for signs, awnings, window treatments, etc.

B. Technical Assistance

Program Staff and architectural can provide guidance on façade improvements specific to individual storefronts, as well as signage issues, awnings or window treatments. The Program Staff will also monitor the progress of the project to ensure compliance with the "Scope of Services" outlined in the contract between the City of Peabody and applicant. Early meetings with Program Staff are necessary in order to help avoid misunderstanding as to the eligibility of completed work or work in-progress.

C. Application and Information

If you wish to participate in the Façade/Signage Improvement Program, please contact Nathan Jones, 978-538-5783 or e-mail at Nathan.jones@peabody-ma.gov with any additional questions beyond the scope of this application packet.

V. PROCEDURES

All prospective applicants must follow the procedures in the order outlined below.

1. Applicant files an application for consideration and meets with Program Staff for initial project discussion.
2. If awarded, Applicant meets with Consultant Architect to finalize a conceptual design for the sign, awning, façade or other eligible work.
3. Applicant submits conceptual designs and budget estimates to Program Staff for review. A meeting will be set up to discuss these plans.
4. If necessary, the Consultant Architect or Awardee's private contractor prepare final design drawings and submit them to City of Peabody for review and final approval by all appropriate permitting bodies.
8. Program staff sends applicant a "Notice to Proceed with Improvements." Any work completed prior to receiving the "Notice to Proceed with Improvements" will not be funded.
9. Applicant has thirty (30) days from the execution date of the contract to begin implementation of approved improvements. Applicant must provide Program staff with copies of all building permits and certifications received

for improvement project. All construction must be completed between July 1, 2010 and August 31, 2010.

10. Contractor constructs project improvements as specified in the final design. Any changes previously agreed upon and contracted must have prior approval of City of Peabody. It is up to the applicant to notify the City of Peabody of proposed changes in writing, ASAP.
11. Applicant notifies the City of Peabody once project is completed.
12. Consultant Architect and/or Program Staff certify that the improvements comply with the final drawings and specifications.
13. The Awardee must submit to the City of Peabody copies of all invoices upon immediate receipt for funding; any private architect and/or contractor(s) must submit letters to the City of Peabody via the Awardee acknowledging participation in this grant program and that payment will be processed through the City.
14. City of Peabody will issue a payment check to the firm marked in invoice and send a copy to the Awardee.
15. The Façade/Signage Improvement Program reserves the right to make adjustments regarding conditions and parameters outlined in these guidelines.

VI. TERMINATION

The City of Peabody has the right to terminate any agreement under the Façade/Signage Improvement Program if a participant is found to be in violation of any conditions set forth in these guidelines or if the project has been started prior to an executed agreement with the City of Peabody or a "Notice to Proceed" has been issued. The City of Peabody also reserves the right to deny any application based upon internal criteria set forth in this packet as well as the opinion of the official program selection committee regarding all submitted proposals.

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARD FOR REHABILITATION

Listed below is the Secretary of the Interior's Standard for Rehabilitation, which would be applied to historic structures seeking tax credits. These standards may also be considered as a guide for projects of lesser historical significance or for projects not seeking tax credits.

1. Every reasonable effort shall be made to provide a compatible use for property that requires minimal alteration of the building, structure, or site and its environment, or to use a property for its originally intended purpose.
2. The distinguishing original qualities or character of a building, structure, or site and its environment shall not be destroyed. The removal or alteration of any historic material or distinctive architectural features should be avoided when possible.
3. All buildings, structures, and sites shall be recognized as products of their own time. Alterations that have no historical basis and which seek to create an earlier appearance shall be discouraged.
4. Changes that may have taken place in the course of time are evidence of the history and development of a building, structure or site and its environment. These changes may have acquired significance in their own right, and this significance shall be recognized and respected.
5. Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship that characterized a building, structure, or site shall be treated with sensitivity.
6. Deteriorated architectural features shall be repaired rather than replaced, wherever possible. In the event replacement is necessary, the new material should match the material being replaced in composition, design, color, texture, and other visual qualities. Repair or replacement of missing architectural features should be based on accurate duplications of features, substantiated by historic, physical, or pictorial evidence rather than on conjectural design of the availability of different architectural elements from other building or structures.
7. The surface cleaning of structures shall be undertaken with the gentlest means possible, sandblasting and other cleaning methods that will damage the historic building materials shall not be undertaken.
8. Every reasonable effort shall be made to protect and preserve archeological resources affected by, or adjacent to, and project.
9. Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties shall not be discouraged when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant historical, architectural or cultural material, and such design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material, and character of the property, neighborhood or environment.

10. Wherever possible, new additions or alterations to structures shall be done in such a manner that if such additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the structure would be unimpaired.

INVESTMENT TAX CREDITS

- Federal historic preservation tax incentives are available for any qualified project that the Secretary of the Interior designates as a certified rehabilitation of a certified historic structure.
- The percentage of Investment Tax Credits (ITC) are 20% credit for rehabilitation of certified historic structures and a 10% credit for rehabilitations of other buildings first placed in service before 1936.
- You may be eligible for ITC if your commercial or income producing property is listed individually, qualified to be listed, or is a contributing building within districts in the National Register of Historic Places.
- To qualify for the tax incentives and prior to beginning work on the property, property owners must complete a Historic Preservation Certification Application available from Massachusetts Historical Commission.
- The Massachusetts Historical Commission will review your application and submit it to the National Parks Service.
- A detailed description of the proposed rehabilitation work is part of the application. All rehab work must be done according to the Secretary of the Interiors Standard for Rehabilitation with Guidelines for Rehabilitation Historic Buildings.
- The underlying concern expressed in the Standards is the preservation of significant historic materials and features of a building in the process of rehabilitation.
- Certification is based on whether the overall project meets the Standards.
- Upon completion of the rehabilitation the owner must submit a Request for Certification of Completed Work.
- A project does not become eligible for tax incentives until it is completed and designated by the National Parks Service.

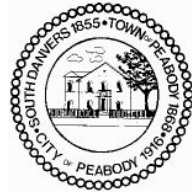
For further information call the Massachusetts Historical Commission at (617) 727-8470.

DISABLED ACCESS TAX CREDIT

- The 1990 Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act created a federal income tax credit for small businesses to help offset the costs of modifying buildings in order to comply with the accessibility requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- The credit will cover 50% of eligible cost that exceed \$250, but do not exceed \$10,250.
- An eligible small business is one whose gross receipts do not exceed \$1,000,000 or whose workforce does not consist of more than 30 full-time workers.
- Examples of eligible access expenditures include the necessary and reasonable cost of removing barriers, providing auxiliary aids, and acquiring or modifying equipment or devices.
- The Internal Revenue Code also allows a deduction of up to \$15,000 per year for expenses associated with the removal of qualified architectural and transportation barriers.
- For further information contact the Internal Revenue Service by visiting their website at www.IRS.gov or by calling (800) 829-4933. Additional information can be found by visiting the American with Disabilities Act website at www.ada.gov or calling the ADA Information Line at (800) 514-0301 or TTY (800) 514-0383.



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I. APPLICANT INFORMATION

1. Applicant's Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Fax Number: _____

E-mail: _____ Web Site: _____

2. Business Organization of Applicant:

Corporation (d/b/a) or Partnership or Sole Proprietorship

Business Name: _____

Business Address: _____

Business Telephone Number: _____

Number of full time individuals employed at location? _____ Part Time: _____

3. Relationship of Applicant to the storefront to be renovated:

Owner: Attach copy of latest tax bill and proof of payment.

Tenant: a) Attach copy of Peabody Business Certificate, and b) Attach written permission from building owner to participate in the Façade Improvement Program, including expiration date of present lease.

II. PROPOSED PROJECT INFORMATION

1. Description of Building to be rehabilitated:

Street Address: _____

Building Dimensions:

Frontage (feet) ____; Depth (feet) ____; Height (feet) ____; # of Floors ____

Does building contain residential units? No Yes; How many? _____

2. Describe the scope of work you want for this proposed façade/signage improvement project. (Check all that apply and/or describe improvement ideas.)

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exterior Signage | <input type="checkbox"/> Exterior Lighting | <input type="checkbox"/> Exterior Painting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Restoration of Arch. Details | <input type="checkbox"/> Storefront Windows | <input type="checkbox"/> Storefront Door |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Metal/Wood Storefront System | <input type="checkbox"/> Exterior Paneling/Siding | <input type="checkbox"/> Awning/Canopy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Accessible Entrance | <input type="checkbox"/> Add Architectural Details | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: (Describe below) |

3. If known, please indicate the estimated project cost or the total amount budgeted for improvements.

\$ _____ Total Project Cost or Total Budget

4. If known, please provide information on the architect or contractor responsible for your drawings, plans, and permits:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Fax Number: _____

E-mail: _____ Web Site: _____

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned hereby represents and certifies to the best of his/her knowledge and belief that the information contained on this statement and any exhibits or attachments hereto are true and complete and accurately describe the proposed project, and the undersigned agrees to promptly inform the City of Peabody of any changes in the proposed project which may occur.

Signature of Building Owner

Date

Print Name

Social Security #: _____

Tax ID#: _____

RETURN COMPLETED APPLICATION

Deadline: Applications must be received by the Office of Community Development no later than 12:30PM on Friday June 4th, 2010. Late applications shall not be accepted.

FORWARD COMPLETED APPLICATION VIA MAIL OR HAND DELIVERY TO:

Nathan Jones, City Planner

Office of Community Development and Planning

City Hall, 24 Lowell Street, Peabody, Massachusetts 01960

Telephone: (978) 538-5783 FAX: (978) 538-5987

E-mail: nathan.jones@peabody-ma.gov Web: www.peabody-ma.gov

City of Peabody

FAÇADE/SIGNAGE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

ANTI-SPECULATION AND RECAPTURE POLICY

Façades: For property owners, the funding mechanisms will be Deferred Payment Loans (DPL), a mortgage, and/or a promissory note. The commercial rehabilitation funds would be secured by placing a lien against the property. The City's recapture policy, as administered by the City of Peabody, would only be triggered if by the sale of transfer of property, or in the event that the property owner substantially changes the façade, contradictory to the guidelines and without approval from the City of Peabody. The City of Peabody will evaluate individual sales and enforce this policy as needed to prevent windfall situations. The repayment schedule would start from the date of project completion, as evidenced by the lien document. A maximum of \$15,000 would be available for most projects. The anti-speculation period will be based on a ten-year timeframe for all participants. Should the property owner sell the building, the City would be able to recoup grant funds based on the following schedule:

1. Within one (1) to three (3) years: 100% recapture, regardless of new owner maintenance of storefront improvements.
2. From three (3) to ten (10) years: The City of Peabody will not recapture, provided that the new owner continues to maintain all storefront improvements financed with funds. Alterations will require the written approval of the City of Peabody.

Signage/Awnings: For businesses or leaseholders desiring to make improvements involving signs or awnings, the funding mechanisms are a Deferred Payment Loans (DPL), a mortgage, and/or a promissory note. The funds are secured by placing a lien against the business. The City of Peabody's recapture policy would only be triggered by substantial changes to the sign or awning contradictory to the guidelines without the City's approval or the relocation or sale of the business. The repayment schedule would schedule starts from the date of project completion as evidenced by the lien document.

In most cases, a maximum of \$1,500 per sign and \$2,500 per awning will be available. The recapture period will be five (5) years for all participants. Should a business owner sell or transfer his/her business during the duration of the DPL agreement, s/he will be required to repay the City of Peabody schedule:

1. Within two (2) years: 100%.
2. From two (2) to five (5) years: City of Peabody permission required prior to alteration.

All legal documents shall contain the following language: "Changes to storefront: The participant must agree not to change or alter the improved storefront without prior written approval from the City of Peabody, for a period of 15 years in the case of façade changes, and five years in the case of signage and awning loans."