



UNDERWOOD MAIN STREET PROGRAM

GUIDELINES

The Underwood Main Street Program provides grant funds through the Underwood Area Economic Development Corporation (UAEDC) to downtown commercial buildings and/or business owners to renovate their storefronts. As part of the comprehensive approach to downtown revitalization in Underwood, the Main Street Program specifically addresses the importance of the storefront and its crucial role in attracting customers and enhancing the physical appearance of the downtown area.

The decision to “spruce up” your storefront is an exciting, though often times, challenging one. The Main Street Program administered by the UAEDC offers both financial and technical assistance for façade renovation. When participating in the Main Street Program, you will be required to follow a step-by-step process for completing a storefront renovation.

The Main Street Program consists of two types of grants: the mini-grant and the rebate program. Under the rebate program, the applicant is initially responsible for assuming all contract costs above and beyond the maximum mini-grant for the storefront renovation. Once the renovation is successfully completed, a reimbursement payment is made directly to the applicant based on the percentages or maximum dollar amount as specified in the grant guidelines section.

If you plan to do a smaller project, such as repainting, new signage and/or awnings, the UAEDC will offer assistance with selecting colors/materials/design. If you plan to do substantial façade renovations, architectural drawings, construction drawings, and zoning/code compliance review by the UAEDC may be necessary.



ELIGIBLE BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS

Eligibility:

Any owner or tenant whose commercial building is located within the project area as determined by the UAEDC.

Eligible Activities/Costs:

Exterior:	<p>Façade Improvements:</p> <p>Storefront renovations, cleaning of façade materials, painting, brick pointing, awnings, signage, and other repairs or improvements, <i>as approved by the UAEDC</i></p> <p>Repair or replacement of roof is eligible only if substantial façade renovation is included in the scope of work. This determination will be made on a case-by-case basis by the UAEDC</p>
Interior:	<p>Determined on a case-by-case basis by the UAEDC</p>
Landscaping:	<p>Determined on a case-by-case basis by the UAEDC. May include patio, decking, gazebo, and wall construction</p>

Ineligible Activities/Costs:

Improvements to rental residential units in a structure

Non-permanent equipment and merchandising fixtures

Building permit fees and any other miscellaneous fees

GRANT GUIDELINES

1. Mini-Grants
 - a. A project qualifies as a “mini-grant” if the total cost of the project is \$2,000 or less
 - b. Mini-grants will have the same eligibility requirements as larger grants; however, they will not be subject to the rebate program nor be structured as a judgment note
2. Standard Grants
 - a. The UAEDC via the Main Street Program will offer up to a \$10,000 grant per eligible project. The grant will be payable upon invoice of all costs associated with the project, including 100% of any architectural fees, as set forth below. If the total grant amount for a project is less than \$10,000, the property owner may re-apply for additional funds after a five (5) year waiting period.
 - b. This program requires the applicant to invest 50% of the cost of all improvements. If the applicant needs financing for its share, the UAEDC encourages the applicant to apply for such funding from the Underwood Revitalization Fund, a low-interest revolving loan fund offered by the City of Underwood.
 - c. Eligible applicants must first improve their building façade in order to be eligible for other exterior repairs. The façade treatment *must meet the approval of the UAEDC*. The UAEDC will determine whether or not the applicant’s building façade is in need of improvement.
 - d. Approved improvements must be completed no later than ninety (90) days after final approval and award of grant unless otherwise determined.
 - e. The building owner will agree to the filing of a judgment lien for the full grant amount against the property. The lien is reduced at the rate of 20% per year and fully forgiven after five years. If the property is sold or transferred prior to the five-year period, a pro-rated repayment of the grant amount is required.
 - f. A vacant building must be occupied by business within sixty (60) days after completion of construction before the lien will be released unless otherwise determined.



PROGRAM STEPS AND REQUIREMENTS

No matter how small or large your project is, you will be required to follow a step-by-step process that has been developed by the UAEDC to ensure adherence to all guidelines. The design phase to actual construction through the completion of a project may take as much as six (6) months.

The following checklist summarizes what will take place during the process:

- A. Preliminary Phase:
 - 1. Completed Pre-Application and pictures of building submitted to the UAEDC
 - 2. Pre-Application reviewed by the UAEDC. (The UAEDC may recommend architectural services for façade design.)
 - 3. Pre-design meeting is held to discuss the scope of work, including color selection, etc., as appropriate
 - 4. Pre-Bid meeting is held and the following items discussed:
 - a. A minimum of two bids are required
 - b. Federal Labor Standards (Davis-Bacon Act Prevailing Wage Rate) are required
 - 5. Pre-Construction conference held
 - 6. Agreement executed and notice to proceed received
 - 7. If needed, submit completed construction documents to obtain necessary permits and approvals for zoning and building code purposes
- B. Construction Phase:
 - 1. Payroll sheets submitted by contractor on a weekly basis
 - 2. Project site inspections by the UAEDC
 - 3. On-going technical assistance and support by the UAEDC
- C. Post Construction Phase:
 - 1. Certificate of work form signed by applicant indicating satisfactory completion of work
 - 2. Applicant submits proof of payment in full to contractor(s)
 - 3. Contractor submits any outstanding payroll forms, required documents and/or EEO Compliance Letter
 - 4. Once all required documents is received by the UAEDC, the grant check will be issued to the applicant
 - 5. A lien is filed in the McLean County records. Upon expiration of the five-year lien period, the applicant will be notified.



If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact the UAEDC at 400-5391.