



North Rampart Main Street, Inc.

NEW ORLEANS

Economic Rehabilitation Incentive – Façade Grant

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Statement of Purpose:

North Rampart Main Street, Inc. is initiating an Economic Rehabilitation Incentive Program (ERIP). The goal of this program is to leverage private improvements while making revitalization efforts affordable, creative and community-based, thereby creating new economic opportunities and enhance the quality of life for businesses and residents along North Rampart Main Street and the bordering communities. The volunteer North Rampart Main Street Design Committee, Board of Directors and (one paid staff) the Executive Director administer this program. The Committee is made up of North Rampart business and property owners and residents, some of whom have design expertise and others who just want to improve the cultural as well as economic conditions of the community, as reflected in our Mission Statement:

North Rampart Main Street, Inc. is designed to revitalize North Rampart Street and encompasses the properties located between Canal Street and Esplanade Avenue. These properties, whether through abandonment, neglect, or Katrina damage, are to be nurtured back to the glory days when Rampart Street meant prosperity, vitality, and life on the edge of the historic French Quarter and Treme.

The goal of North Rampart Main Street is to strengthen existing businesses and attract new businesses that have the vision to stay the course, and help rebuild the street to its rightful place of honor.

Objectives:

The historic restoration of building exteriors is an important component of the revitalization of the district. Our wish is to work closely with building owners to offer technical and financial assistance to ensure that, our significant architectural heritage is preserved or “rescued” from inappropriate “modernizations” and neglect.

Funding will be set aside for matching Economic Rehabilitation Incentive grants (based on a 1:1 match) to property owners who wish to make exterior improvements to their buildings. The program will offer up to \$5,000 (per project) in matching funds and, in certain cases, design

assistance to businesses in the program area in order to improve the appearance of individual building facades, signs and awnings.

Who can apply for funding? Any building owner or store proprietor/tenant with lease authority can apply for funding. Properties must be commercial or commercial/residential (mixed use) properties located from Canal Street to Esplanade Avenue on North Rampart Street.

What types of improvements are eligible for funding?

Exterior cleaning, painting and/or paint removal, masonry repair and repainting, repair and replacement of architectural details or materials, window repair or in certain cases replacement, rehabilitation or compatible reconstruction of storefronts, removal of metal siding and exterior slip covers (surfaces), restoration or replacement of deteriorated or hazardous sidewalks, new signage, repair or rehabilitation of signage, and new awnings or the rehabilitation of existing awnings.

Ineligible Expenditures:

Interior decoration, refinancing of existing debt, inventory and equipment, sweat equity (payments for applicant's own labor), and general business operations expenses (payroll, taxes, utilities, etc.)

How are projects selected for funding? What actions will we take to achieve these goals?

Applications will be ranked and selected based on a clear and documented set of evaluative criteria, see below. Depending on the number of applications, we may assign “waiting list” status to projects that qualify for selection, but do not rank as high as other applications selected for funding. Note that NRMSI also follows the same criteria selection format as Louisiana State Historic Preservation Office.

The evaluative criteria and their respective weights are as follows:

- **Impact (40%):** – Overall impact of the project on the North Rampart Main Street area. Are inappropriate design elements removed? Does the project seek to restore the historical or architectural significance of the building? How many jobs will be created?
- **Financial Leverage (15%):** – While we offer a maximum 1:1 matching grant, projects that leverage more private investment will be graded higher than those seeking the maximum match.
- **Cost/Schedule (15%):** – Is the project feasible from a cost and schedule point-of-view?
- **Sustainability/Permanence (15%):** – How permanent are the improvements and is there a maintenance plan for improvements? Does the business own the building? If not, how much time remains on the lease?
- **Community Contribution (15%):** – Is the applicant a good neighbor? Is the area around the business kept clean and free of debris on a consistent basis? Will this project have a favorable impact on the community?

How will you know when you have achieved the goals? What changes will you see?

Enhancements to the façade will immediately improve the overall appearance of the North Rampart area. The businesses will have the capacity to increase their business as well as increase the number of jobs offered/created. To date our organization has contributed \$15,000 in grants which in turn generated more than \$80,000 in improvements to buildings along North Rampart. Also, it is recognized by the urban Land Institute, Smart Growth and others that the

“broken window” syndrome is reversed with building rehabilitation improving walk-ability, safety and business opportunities.

To date economic rehabilitation grant program in Louisiana and the matching \$ improvements have generated the following:

State Fiscal Yr	Total Grants Awarded	Total Project Costs
00-01	\$ 118,000	\$ 538,269.00
01-02	\$ 113,108	\$ 352,778.00
02-03	\$ 90,000	\$ 436,659.00
03-04	\$ 102,000	\$ 376,106.00
04-05	\$ 105,000	\$ 698,723.00
05-06	\$ 50,000	\$ 271,777.00
06-07	\$ 50,000	\$ 487,810.00
07-08	\$ 103,853	\$ 571,294.00
08-09	\$ 98,000	\$ 731,429.00
	\$ 829,961	\$ 4,464,845.00

What do you expect to learn that will improve your program or your organization?

As NRMSI expands this program we continue to improve upon best practices for business/building owner cooperation, design, procurement, production and maintenance of this proven economic development engine. Our organization expects to improve the programs offered to the businesses along North Rampart. We are looking ahead to additional programs that will not only enhance the facades of buildings in the district, but strives to enhance sustainable economic development, improve the quality of life and have an affect on crime in the area.

Are there any design guidelines?

Yes. The Design Committee of North Rampart Main Street is looking for façade projects that protect the historic integrity of the building. The goal is to return the building facades to their original appearance. We also recognize that some buildings may have a different period of architectural significance that supersedes the original construction appearance.

Both sides of North Rampart are official historic districts. Projects must be approved by the Vieux Carre Commission, Historic District Landmark Commission guidelines and the City of New Orleans.