

## Frequently Asked Questions

**I am interested in applying to the Fund for a building on the East Side that is publically owned. Am I eligible?**

No. Only privately-owned, historic mixed-use or commercial properties are eligible for funds.

**What do you mean by “historic?”**

For purposes of this Fund, “historic” shall mean any building that has existed on the site since prior to urban renewal, or for at least 50 years; or that contributes to the unique neighborhood character of the place in which it is located and contributes to the vision for revitalized business districts through providing an opportunity for business development at the site and wealth creation in the neighborhood. Such buildings may or may not be listed on or determined to be eligible for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places (S/NRHP).

**I don’t live on the East Side, but I do own a historic commercial property on the East Side in need of stabilization. Am I eligible to apply to this program?**

Yes. Anyone who owns a historic mixed-use or commercial property is eligible to apply, but please note that this is a competitive program and those applicant/property owners who are East Side residents will be given preference.

**I own a commercial property in need of stabilization that is on the East Side, but not located along one of the commercial corridors or target areas on the map. Am I eligible to apply to this program?**

Yes. Any privately-owned, historic mixed-use or commercial property located on the East Side is eligible to apply, but please note that this is a competitive program and those applicants located on a commercial corridor especially in the target area will be given preference.

**I am interested in renovating and making upgrades to my commercial building. Is this program for me?**

Probably not. Improvements that enhance but do not significantly contribute to the stabilization of the property are not eligible. Stabilization refers to undertaking preventative repairs that correct structural deficiencies or code violations, which if not corrected, could lead to loss of the building through collapse or demolition. You may be interested in learning more about the [East Side Commercial Districts Program](#) which does fund building enhancements, repairs and renovations in four target areas.

**I have housing court violations, am I eligible to apply?**

Yes. Applicant building owners with housing court violations are eligible to apply for program. However, all back taxes must be paid prior to receiving funds, and funds cannot be used to pay taxes.

**My building needs stabilizing measures, but I’m not exactly sure what is needed, and I don’t have any experience with repairs/construction, am I eligible to apply?**

Yes. Preservation Buffalo Niagara will provide technical assistance to property owners and will oversee construction. But, please note that this is a competitive program and those applicant/property owners who have some experience with real estate development and have undertaken redevelopment and/or stabilization activities in the past will be given preference. If you want to learn more about commercial real estate development, you may be interested in the [Community-Based Real Estate Development Training Program](#).

**I want to stabilize my property to make it more attractive to potential buyers. Am I eligible to apply?**

Yes. However, grant funds will be subject to pro rata recapture if property is sold within five years of disbursement of funds unless the transaction is approved by ESD. It is the intention that this Fund help return buildings to productive use. Therefore, it would not preclude resale of a building that has been improved through this funding. Resale of properties will be monitored through a Property Maintenance Declaration to ensure the buildings continue to provide an opportunity for local residents to redevelop them, would not involve substantial price increases associated with “flipping” practices, and/or are not sold to another building owner who does not intend to reuse the building in a definable time period.

**My building is in need of extensive stabilizing measures. Can I request more than the \$50,000 maximum request?**

At the discretion of ESD, a higher grant amount may be awarded; however, please note that grant funds are competitive and those projects that, when completed, will fully correct code violations or structural deficiencies that will prevent crisis-level failures in the future will be given preference.

**Are matching funds required?**

No. Property owners do not need to contribute matching funds, however, upon completion of work conducted under this grant, the property owner will need to ensure that these investments are protected. Recipients of funds who are willing to enter into a 10-year preservation easement on the property with Preservation Buffalo Niagara will be given preference when awarding funds, which will ensure that the investments made in the property will be protected for 10 years.

**Do I need to pay for the entire project before I can request/receive grant funds under the program?**

No. It is not expected that the owner will need to come out of pocket with any funds to take part in this program. Once a project is accepted into the program and a scope of work is agreed upon and a contractor hired, PBN will pay the contractor directly for work done to the satisfaction of both PBN and the owner. More information on how payments will be made to contractors can be found in the Program Guidelines.

**I am interested in stabilization funds for a historic church. Is this building eligible?**

Yes, but only if it is 1.) not used for religious purposes, and 2.) not owned by a religious or private membership-based organization.

**I want to stabilize a residential property on the East Side, is this program right for me?**

No. Only historic commercial, which includes mixed-use (residential and commercial), properties are eligible.

**Is the application deadline flexible?**

The application deadline is Friday, January 15, 2021 at 4:00 P.M. ET. Preservation Buffalo Niagara will not accept applications received after the deadline.

**Will there be future rounds of this program?**

Yes. We anticipate future rounds.

**Can funding be used toward project costs that were incurred before the grant was awarded?**

