



Storefront Improvement Grant Program

The Nelson County Job Development Authority (NCJDA) offers the Storefront Improvement Grant Program to assist Nelson County businesses and property owners in updating commercial buildings.

Purpose

- a. *To improve the storefront presentation*
- b. *To assist local business and property owners in reducing the cost of capital improvements that increase the visual appeal of a building.*

Goals

- a. *To improve the visual appearance of storefronts in Nelson County*
- b. *To incentivize continued revitalization of Nelson County's business districts by leveraging public funds*
- c. *To encourage new businesses to relocate to vacant buildings*
- d. *To lower the cost of property improvements for business owners*
- e. *To assist businesses in expanding their customer base*

Eligible Improvements (include but are not limited to)

- External doors or windows
- Awnings or canopies
- Signs
- Permanent outdoor lighting
- Exterior paint, siding, etc.
- Reconfiguration of entrances

Grant Requirements

Overview & Eligibility

1. Matching grant of up to \$5,000 per project, but no more than 50% of the cost of improving the business's storefront.
 - a. Applicants must match the public funds 1:1.
 - b. Matching funds cannot be county mill dollars.
 - c. Applicant shall submit written estimate(s) with the application.
 - d. Sales tax dollars are not reimbursable.
 - e. For projects in Lakota, the public funds would be matched 50/50 by the City of Lakota and NCJDA since Lakota has its own Storefront Improvement Project. Projects must be eligible for both programs.
2. Applicants must have a valid ND sales and use tax permit, if applicable.
3. Applicants must be either commercial property owners or tenants of a commercial property.
 - a. If a tenant would like to apply for a project, written consent for the specific improvements must be obtained from the property owner.
 - b. Proof of property ownership or lease terms may be required in order to process the grant application.

Review & Approval

1. Nelson County JDA determines grant awardees by a majority vote.
2. Whenever possible, work shall not commence prior to application approval.
 - a. If work has commenced prior to application approval, it must have started within the last 4 months.

Project Completion & Disbursement

1. The applicant is **strongly encouraged** to purchase all supplies in Nelson County, whenever possible.
2. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure all local, city, county, and/or state building permits and codes are obtained and followed. The NCJDA will not be liable for any infraction.
 - a. The Nelson County JDA may request a review of the applicable improvements by a certified code enforcer at the expense of the applicant prior to finalizing the grant award.
3. Disbursement of grant award will occur after the approved project is completed and all applicable receipts are submitted.
 - a. All work must be completed within one (1) year of the application being approved unless prior authorization is received.
 - b. Improvements must be maintained for at least three (3) years or grant dollars may be recalled.
4. A business and/or property owner can receive the grant once every two (2) years with a maximum lifetime award of \$25,000.
 - a. If the property or business is sold or rented, the new proprietor is fully eligible for the grant with the lifetime award being reset.