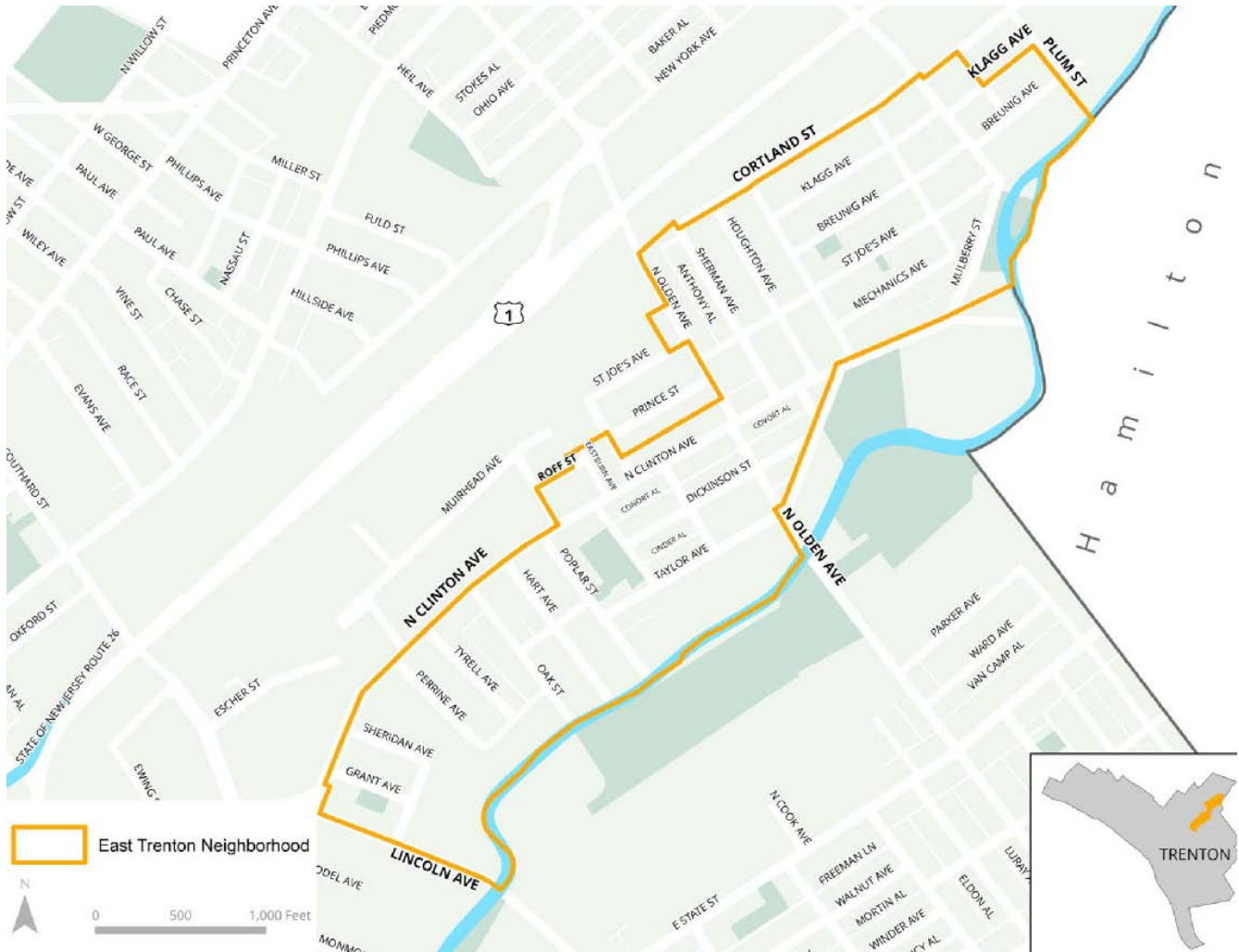


**Storefront Improvement Program Guidelines**

Recognizing that small businesses have always been a part of the East Trenton community, the East Trenton Collaborative (ETC) Storefront Improvement Program is intended to assist **small businesses with storefronts located in the neighborhood** (see map) to improve their storefronts and/or make investments in storefront equipment, with the goal of helping them be a more active, positive presence in East Trenton.

**The East Trenton Neighborhood**



**Eligibility**

Only **existing businesses that currently have a street-level storefront** in the East Trenton neighborhood (see map) are eligible to apply. Priority will be given to businesses whose owner lives in the neighborhood, who have a significant proportion of their employees living in the neighborhood, or who are collaborating on larger neighborhood improvement efforts, though any business can apply. Rejected applicants may reapply, but businesses may only receive **one grant per calendar year**.

**While this program is currently aimed at existing businesses**, entrepreneurs planning to start a business in the neighborhood should contact the East Trenton Collaborative to discuss their plans and determine the most appropriate way the Collaborative can assist them.

### **Eligible Expenses**

This grant is intended to support **long-term, physical, tangible investment** that will help the business become a more active and positive presence in the East Trenton community. Businesses may apply for up to **\$5,000 in grant funds** for eligible expenses to improve their storefront space or their street-side presence, such as:

- Physical renovation of storefronts, including interior fixtures, lights, countertops, piping, etc.
- Renovation or improvement of facades, including side walls that face the street, as well as signage, awnings, etc.
- Purchase or repair of equipment that is critical to the business, particularly if it will enable the business to employ additional people, extend its hours, or otherwise become more active
- Lights or other security equipment

This list is not exhaustive, and applications will be reviewed individually. Businesses should understand this program as an investment in their physical, visible presence in East Trenton.

The grant **cannot support** operating expenses, including the following:

- Salaries, wages, or consultants
- Operating inputs, such as raw materials or consumables
- Inventory for sale
- Debt reduction, back taxes, or other financial liabilities
- Marketing, advertising, etc.

### **Owner match**

If the applicant is requesting more than \$1,500 in grant funds, the applicant must show that they are “matching” the grant with a significant investment of their own resources. This can include covering a portion of the proposed work out of pocket, or documentation of the cost of physical repairs the business has already carried out within the past six months.

There is no set match proportion, but applicants that show a larger match will be given priority and have a higher likelihood of receiving the grant. The intent is to assist businesses that are making their own investment in the neighborhood.

### **Grant Timeline**

- This program is intended to have rapid, visible results. **Grantees are expected to do all work within 90 days** of their grant agreement.
- Grantees will receive **one-half** of their grant amount in advance, upon signature of their grant agreement. The balance will be released upon the submission of a **satisfactory interim report** and a **site visit** from the East Trenton Collaborative, to verify progress.

If a grantee requires an extension for exceptional circumstances, the request must be submitted in writing to the Small Business Committee at least **one month before** the end of the grant period along with a detailed justification. The Small Business Committee will review the request and approve or reject it. **Only one extension of up to two months will be given.**

If the grantee is unable to complete the project within the approved timeframe, they will be required to return the full amount of the grant to ETC.

### **How to Apply**

1. Complete the **application form**, with information about your business, the proposed work, and the total budget for the improvements. The application form is on the next page.
2. Attach the following required documents:
  - **Photographs** of the existing storefront and any other relevant items (equipment to be purchased, fixtures to be repaired or replaced, etc.)
  - **A design sketch** of what will be built / repaired, if applicable
  - **Two quotes** for the proposed work or equipment
  - **Documentation of your “match”** – the amount you will be contributing from your own resources. This can mean covering a portion of the total cost of your project, or documenting recent physical renovations you have made to your storefront in the past six months.
  - **The written agreement of the landlord**, if the business does not own the building.

Applications can be submitted in hard copy to the East Trenton Collaborative during regular working hours, or online at the [www.east-trenton.org](http://www.east-trenton.org).

### **Application Review**

Applications will be reviewed by a sub-committee of the East Trenton Collaborative, which will schedule a site visit and interview with the business owner, and will additionally verify that the property is current on its City of Trenton property taxes. The committee may request modifications to the proposed work, request additional documentation, or recommend only a portion for funding.

If the application is approved, the business will be required to sign a grant agreement before receiving any funds.

**STOREFRONT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM GRANT APPLICATION**

**1. Applicant's Contact Information**

**Business Name**

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**Location**

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**Owner's Name**

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**Business Phone**

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**Mobile Phone**

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**Email Address**

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**2. Do you own your storefront? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No**

**3. If not, please provide the landlord's contact information:**

**Name**

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**Address**

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**Phone**

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**Email address**

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**4. Application Summary**

**Please provide a short description (1-2 sentences) of the proposed storefront improvement work for which you are applying.**

**Funds requested from this program:**

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**Total cost of storefront improvements planned:**

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**APPLICANT INFORMATION**

5. Please describe your business in brief (types of products sold, customers served, etc.).

6. How long has your business been located in the East Trenton neighborhood? \_\_\_\_\_

7. How many employees do you have? \_\_\_\_\_

8. How many of your employees live in the East Trenton neighborhood? \_\_\_\_\_

**STOREFRONT IMPROVEMENTS**

9. Please list any improvements you have made to your storefront in the past 6 months, if any.

**Required attachments:** If you would like to claim any of these as a “match” for your grant request, please attach photographs of the improvements as well as copies of contractor receipts.

