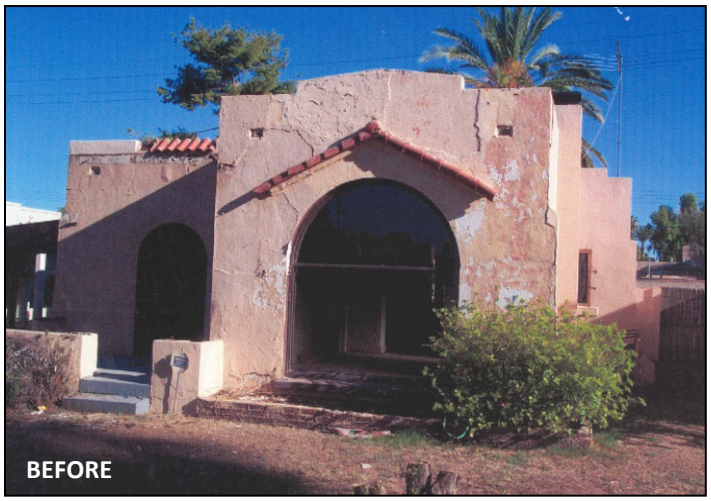
City of Phoenix
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

Exterior Rehabilitation Grant Program Guide



APPLICATION DEADLINE:
October 9, 2026
5:00 p.m.

Submit applications electronically to:
City of Phoenix Historic Preservation Office
via Microsoft OneDrive file sharing

(Applicants must contact staff for access to shared City of Phoenix OneDrive folder prior to submitting application. No emailed applications or paper applications will be accepted.)

For more information or for a copy of this publication in an alternate format, contact Planning & Development at 602-262-7811 voice or TTY use 7-1-1.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

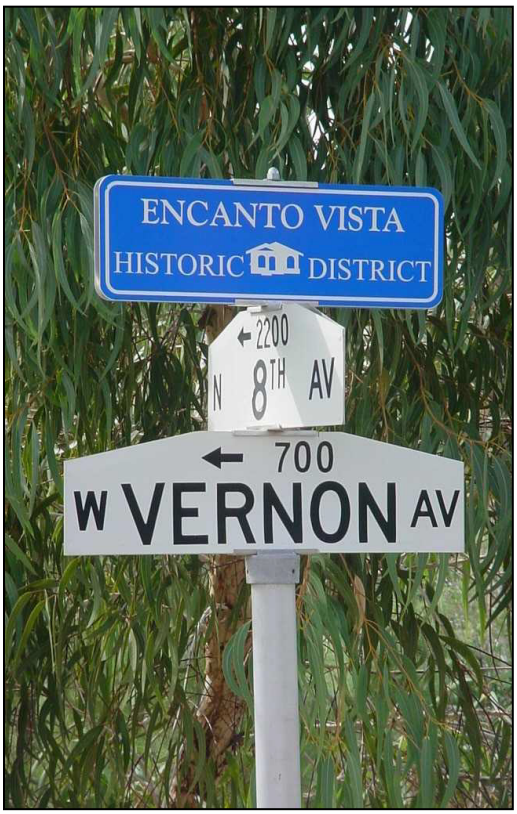
Section	Page
BACKGROUND	3
EXTERIOR REHABILITATION PROGRAM SUMMARY	3
PROGRAM GOALS & PRINCIPLES	3
ELIGIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATION	4
ELIGIBLE IMPROVEMENTS	4
PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA	5
FUNDING LIMITS	5
PROJECT BUDGET & CONTRACTORS	6
COMMENCEMENT & DEADLINES FOR EXTERIOR REHABILITATION WORK	6
APPLICATION APPROVAL PROCESS	6
PROJECT SIGN	7
CONTRACTUAL REQUIREMENTS	7
DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS	8

BACKGROUND

On October 3, 1989, the voters of Phoenix approved $15 million in general obligation bonds to fund the Historic Preservation Program. While $5 million was allocated for the acquisition and restoration of Tovrea Castle, the remaining $10 million was set aside to preserve, protect and enhance other historic properties. The City established the Exterior Rehabilitation Program in fiscal year 1990-91 to further these goals.

On March 13, 2001, Phoenix voters again expressed their support for historic preservation by approving another $14.2 million in bonds to fund the Historic Preservation Program. On March 14, 2006, Phoenix citizens authorized funding for the Historic Preservation Program for the third time in the amount of $13.1 million. This funding provided additional monies to continue the Exterior Rehabilitation Program.

After the final round of Exterior Rehabilitation grants from the 2006 bond was awarded in 2015, the City went several years without funding available. However, in the years 2021 through 2025, the City Council allocated $200,000 each year from the City's General Fund toward the Exterior Rehabilitation program. In June 2026, the City Council approved another $200,000 in funding, which is available this fiscal year. In November 2023, voters also approved $5 million in additional bond funding for Historic Preservation, a portion of which will be available for Exterior Rehabilitation grants this year.



EXTERIOR REHABILITATION PROGRAM SUMMARY

The Phoenix Historic Preservation Office (HPO) provides exterior rehabilitation assistance to encourage residents to maintain, repair, and sensitively rehabilitate historic homes and to encourage reinvestment and revitalization in inner-city historic neighborhoods.

The program makes money available to private property owners to complete exterior rehabilitation, repair, or restoration work on historic homes or residential structures continuing to serve a residential purpose. Owners of historic homes that are either in City-designated historic districts or are individually listed on the Phoenix Historic Property Register are eligible to apply.

The program reimburses owners on a 50/50 matching basis for pre-approved work. The minimum City share for reimbursement is $5,000 and the maximum funding amount is $20,000. In exchange for receiving financial assistance, the property owner agrees to sell the City a conservation easement to protect the historic character of the property's exteriors. The decision to fund work is based upon a competitive application process as described in this Program Guide.

PROGRAM GOALS & PRINCIPLES

The goals of the Exterior Rehabilitation Program are to promote the preservation of historic buildings through proper rehabilitation and to revitalize historic neighborhoods. A successful rehabilitation is one that retains, preserves, and protects as much of the original historic fabric as possible. It also preserves the original character-defining architectural elements of a particular building.

To retain such fabric, it is preferable to repair rather than replace significant architectural elements and historic materials. Repair begins with the least degree of intervention possible, such as splicing or patching. Piecing-in or upgrading also can be undertaken if done according to recognized preservation techniques. For instance, window replacement is frequently considered by historic homeowners but is not likely to be funded if the problem with the windows is merely peeling paint or missing hardware. Only when the level of deterioration or damage precludes repair, or the historic windows are missing entirely, is in-kind replacement acceptable.

When an exterior architectural feature is missing, its reconstruction is recommended as the preferred course of action. The feature may be accurately reproduced if adequate historic pictorial documentation or physical evidence exists.

For further guidance, please review the General Design Guidelines for Historic Properties. Additional information for planning building improvements is available from the HPO.

ELIGIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATION

Owners of any contributing or potentially contributing historic residential property that is listed on the Phoenix Historic Property Register, either individually or within a historic district, are eligible to apply. The property does not need to be owner-occupied. Employees of the City of Phoenix are eligible to apply except for Historic Preservation staff and others who have decision-making authority in the grant process.

To be considered for funding, applicants must own the property to be rehabilitated or provide legal authorization from the owner for the applicant to apply for funding, along with evidence of the owner's willingness to execute all legal agreements. Applicants may also be asked to provide evidence of demonstrated site control through a lease, signed purchase contract or option to purchase.

ELIGIBLE IMPROVEMENTS

All work performed must be **exterior** work that results in the preservation of building exteriors on the subject property (interior work may be eligible only if necessary to stabilize or structurally support the building's historic exteriors). The HPO staff has the responsibility for determining the eligibility of all items included in the proposed Scope of Work.

Eligible **exterior** work includes:

- Roof repairs/replacement
- Foundation repairs
- Structural rehabilitation/reinforcement
- Exterior wall repairs
- Masonry/stucco repairs
- Exterior window and doors repairs
- Porch and step rehabilitation
- Cornice and parapet repairs
- Re-painting (if a part of an eligible repair)
- Historic garage, guest house, or carport rehabilitation
- Reversal of previous inappropriate alterations
- Demolition of non-historic additions
- Reconstruction of original architectural elements based on documentation/evidence

Engineering costs (soft costs) are eligible if related directly to eligible work and if the costs are incurred within two (2) years prior to and/or one (1) year after application date and amount to no more than 20 percent of the total funding request. These costs can include historic structure reports and construction drawings and specifications. Any requests for structural stabilization (such as foundation repairs) must be accompanied by a structural engineer's report documenting the need and recommendations for work.

If you are requesting funds for paint removal, the application must demonstrate that the house was historically unpainted and that you are using the HPO's Paint Removal Methods and Masonry Cleaning Procedures (when applicable). Projects involving masonry

repointing must also demonstrate that the proposed work follows the HPO's Masonry Repointing Procedures and Masonry Cleaning Procedures (when applicable).

To improve energy efficiency in historic windows, window films that reduce solar heat gain are eligible for funding as part of a comprehensive window repair project. Also, retrofitting historic window sash with thicker single-pane glass, hard coat low-E glass, or dual-pane glass is eligible for funding as part of a comprehensive window repair project, provided that the historic exterior window profile is maintained (except for cases where there is specialty glass such as leaded or stained glass). All window films and replacement glass must be clear with a visible transmittance rating (VTR) or visible light transmittance (VLT) of .65 or higher. As a general rule, **full window replacements will only be considered for funding if the originals are severely damaged, deteriorated or missing**. The proposed replacement windows match the originals in size, material, operating type, and configuration (with true divided lights, if applicable), based on documentation or other physical evidence. For more information on window projects, please see the City of Phoenix Guide to Window Repair and Replacement for Historic Properties, the HPO's publications on Wood Window Repair and Steel Casement Window Repairs, and the "Energy Efficiency in Historic Properties" page of the HPO website.

Please note that additions to buildings, new construction, and work on additions that are not historic are not eligible. Additionally, landscaping, fencing, and other types of site improvements will not be considered for funding. Painting is not an eligible activity on its own; however, if painting is a component of an eligible repair, the cost or value of painting can be included in the project Scope of Work.

PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA

Applications are competitively scored based on several criteria. The main objective of the grant program is to preserve the historic character and historic fabric of the house. If the grant proposal is in keeping with the Preservation Philosophy and addresses the most critical physical needs of the building, the application will score higher.

Priority will be given to applications that:

- Clearly demonstrate adherence to the City's Preservation Philosophy and General Design Guidelines for Historic Properties.
- Demonstrate proper rehabilitation techniques based on historic preservation principles (such as following the City's technical bulletins on masonry repointing, paint removal, steel or wood window repairs, and wood shingle roof replacements).
- Clearly address the most critical physical needs of the building.
- Substantially improve the visual appearance of a historic neighborhood, district streetscape, or an individually significant property.
- Return a non-contributing property in a historic district to contributing status.
- Encourage the investment of private funds to rehabilitate, improve, maintain, preserve, protect, and enhance deteriorated historic properties.
- Completely address each question on the application and include detailed bids for all proposed work items.

Points also are awarded to applications that reflect appropriate research on the architectural elements and history of the house. In addition, the significance of the house, overall quality of the application, and adequacy of construction bids play a role in the overall application score.

FUNDING LIMITS

The Exterior Rehabilitation Program will provide 50 percent of project costs up to $20,000 per property for the purchase of a Conservation Easement. The minimum purchase price for a Conservation Easement that the City will consider is $5,000 (i.e., the scope of work must total at least $10,000, with the property owner funding $5,000 and the City funding $5,000). The property owner must agree to utilize the proceeds of the grant to perform exterior rehabilitation on the structure in accordance with the HPO's design standards.

PROJECT BUDGET & CONTRACTORS

Applicants need to establish project budgets from estimates provided by licensed contractors, or qualified subcontractors, craftsmen or vendors. The application may include itemized estimates from general contractors or a series of estimates from specific contractors or subcontractors, such as painters, masons, carpenters, roofers, or a combination thereof. The City uses these estimates to determine the dollar value for the City's purchase of a Deed of Conservation Easement on the property (see page 8 for more information on the Conservation Easement).

The property owner is encouraged to select the contractor or tradesperson who is best qualified to perform the Scope of Work. The chosen contractors/tradespersons must have experience with the work item they will complete. *Selection of the lowest price is **not** required.* All cost estimates shall be listed on letterhead from the contractor/tradespersons and include contact information (address, phone number, and email) and contractor license number, if applicable. It is the responsibility of the property owner to ensure that the selected contractor has the necessary licenses to perform the requested work.

Estimates submitted as part of this application should be dated within sixty (60) days of the grant deadline. While this is not intended to serve as a price guarantee from the contractor, it demonstrates current market values for the work proposed. Any price increases above the requested amount are the responsibility of the property owner; however, the grant budget may include a contingency. Building permit fees, if applicable, are the sole responsibility of the owner and cannot be included in the project cost.

A project may not be funded if a chosen contractor has a documented history of failing to meet deadlines or standards for City-funded work. If a property owner decides to change to a different contractor from the one chosen in an application approved for funding, HPO staff must approve the change, or the grant funds may be revoked.

COMMENCEMENT AND DEADLINES FOR EXTERIOR REHABILITATION WORK

Any construction or rehabilitation that is included in the project Scope of Work, whether funded by the City or the property owner, should NOT commence prior to the date the City informs the applicant that all agreements are signed and finalized (see Contractual Requirements on page 7). Work started prior to finalization of agreements may be at risk of losing funding.

Applicants are expected to sign the Program Agreement and Deed of Conservation Easement within ninety (90) days of grant approval by the City Council. Failure to sign the necessary documents within the required time frame may result in forfeiture of the grant, as funds must be encumbered before the end of the City's fiscal year. Applicants are also expected to register as a vendor in the City's financial system, obtain Consent Agreements from all lienholders, and provide certificates of insurance in a timely manner, so as not to delay the project. After the Exterior Rehabilitation Program Agreement is signed, project work is expected to commence by July 1, 2027, and be completed by June 30, 2029.

APPLICATION APPROVAL PROCESS

Funds for the Exterior Rehabilitation Program are awarded through a competitive application process. Given the annual limits of available funds, not all applications submitted may be funded. Consequently, it is important to plan projects carefully and to prepare applications in accordance with the instructions in this Program Guide. Further information can be obtained by contacting the HPO.

As was the case in 2025, applications for the 2026 round **will not be accepted via email**. **Paper copies will not be accepted either.** Grant applications and all attachments, including the Historic Property Inventory Form, cost estimates, engineer's report (where necessary), photos, site plan, elevations (where necessary), and archival documents (where necessary), **must be uploaded to a shared City of Phoenix OneDrive folder**.

Applicants intending to submit a grant application must contact the Historic Preservation Office by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, October 9, 2026, to request access to the shared City of Phoenix OneDrive folder. Late requests will not be granted. Each applicant will receive a link to a folder that will only be accessible to the applicant, City staff and grant panel members.

Once the applicant receives the link, **all grant materials must be uploaded to the shared City of Phoenix OneDrive folder by 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, October 14, 2026**. **Files uploaded after the deadline will be rejected. Please also note that applications missing crucial elements (such as cost estimates, photos or site plan) will not be considered for funding.**

Once applications are received, the following process applies:

1. HPO staff verifies that the application is complete and evaluates the proposed work items to ensure that the most critical needs are being addressed and that the proposed work meets the City's Preservation Philosophy and Exterior Rehabilitation Program goals.

2. Eligible applications are forwarded to an advisory panel to be competitively ranked. While the panel consists primarily of City staff, members of the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC), historic neighborhood representatives, or past grant recipients may also be invited to participate. The panel reviews and ranks applications in accordance with the project selection criteria.

3. The panel recommendations are forwarded to the full HPC for consideration. The HPC reviews and acts on the recommendations.

4. The staff and HPC recommendations are forwarded to the City Council. A City Council Subcommittee generally reviews the recommendations before final approval is granted in a City Council formal meeting.

5. Staff notifies applicants of the City Council decision. If approved for funding, grant recipients must register as vendors in the City's procurePHX portal so payments can be issued. Applicants will need to set up a user ID and password and upload relevant documents to the portal.

6. Before work may begin on a project approved for funding, the HPO staff requires receipt of an executed Consent Agreement from all lienholders as well as proof insurance. Applicants must also sign and abide by the terms of the Deed of Conservation Easement and the Exterior Rehabilitation Program Agreement and obtain any necessary building permits before beginning work.

Projects not recommended for funding by the HPC receive will notification via email. Applicants who wish to resubmit for consideration in a future grant round are encouraged to meet with HPO staff before submittal to receive advice for improving their application.

PROJECT SIGN

Upon commencement of a project, HPO staff may provide owners with a sign to post on the property acknowledging the Historic Preservation grant funding. This sign should remain located on the property until the project is completed. Program participants are asked to notify the HPO if signs are damaged or lost.

CONTRACTUAL REQUIREMENTS

Once an application under the Exterior Rehabilitation Program is approved, the following documents are required:

A. Title Report: The City will secure a current title report prior to executing the Program Agreement to identify any mortgages or liens that may affect the City's ability to record the easement.

B. Consent Agreement: The property owner must obtain a duly acknowledged Consent Agreement from all lienholders or other persons or entities with an interest in the subject structure consenting to a Deed of Conservation Easement. To expedite this process, the applicant must submit the contact party name and

loan number for each lienholder with the grant application. If the application is approved for funding, HPO staff will contact the lienholders and send them the Consent Agreement along with an explanation of the request. However, it will be the applicant's responsibility to follow-up with the lienholders to ensure they return the Consent Agreement to the City of Phoenix. Applicants are strongly encouraged to contact lienholders prior to submitting grant applications to find the most appropriate contact person and to verify lienholder participation requirements, as many lienholders charge processing fees and require additional information to be submitted. Please note that delays with lienholders are often the biggest impediment to starting and completing grant projects in a timely manner.

C. **Exterior Rehabilitation Program Agreement:** The Program Agreement sets forth the terms and conditions for participation in the program. Some of the key terms include project initiation and completion requirements, required City approvals and disbursement of funds.

D. **Deed of Conservation Easement:** Funds allocated for a specific rehabilitation project occur through the City's purchase of a Conservation Easement for that property. Under the terms of the easement, the property owner agrees to a higher level of preservation on the property and grants to the City a non-possessory interest in the exteriors, exterior views, and site. The interior is not affected. Furthermore, the owner agrees to maintain the exterior, as rehabilitated, and allows HPO staff to review any proposed exterior alterations. The Conservation Easement term is 15 years for grant funding between $5,000 and $10,000 and 20 years for project funding between $10,001 and $20,000. The Conservation Easement is recorded on the property's title and runs with the land.

E. **Insurance Certificate:** The property owner must provide a certificate of homeowner's insurance that certifies the subject property is insured for an amount acceptable to the City. Prior to any disbursement of funds, the City must be named as an additional insured party on the insurance policy.

DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS

An applicant may request reimbursement of funds once the project is completed or an agreed upon component of the project is completed. Up to three (3) draws are allowed. These payments must relate to clearly defined, discrete components of the work. Payments will only be made for fifty (50) percent of the total submitted on the Payment Request Form that have invoices associated with them. (For example, if a request is submitted with a bill for $13,000, the reimbursement check would be for $6,500.)

To receive payment, applicants must submit invoices to the City describing and totaling work completed. HPO staff will inspect and approve all completed rehabilitation work prior to reimbursement. Once requested, it may take up to seven (7) days for the inspection to take place, depending on staff availability. If the completed work meets City standards, staff will authorize payment, and a check will be mailed to the address indicated in the applicant's procurePHX account within forty-five (45) days. If the work is deemed unacceptable, staff will require that it be corrected before payment is authorized. The property owner will need to contact staff for a follow-up inspection once the corrective work is complete. Any work requiring a building permit should also be inspected and approved by City building inspectors before payment is authorized. HPO staff determines whether a project is complete and meets the City historic preservation design guidelines. The City is not obligated to pay the property owner if staff determines that the project has not been completed in accordance with the City's program guidelines or historic preservation design guidelines.