



**Frequently Asked Questions &  
Application**

**for the Sign, Lighting & Awning  
Program (SLAP)**

November 2005

# **WAUKEGAN MAIN STREET USAGE GUIDELINES Sign Lighting and Awning Program**

## **What is the Waukegan Main Street Sign, Lighting and Awning Program?**

The program offers up to \$10,000 in matching funds to businesses and building owners in the Waukegan Main Street Program area in order to improve the appearance of individual buildings, as well as the overall look of Waukegan's downtown. Improvements must occur to areas visible from the public way. The goal of this program is to leverage private improvements while making revitalization efforts affordable, creative and community-based. A primary focus of this program is economic development and revitalization through financing improvements for small business: businesses with gross annual revenues of \$1million or less are eligible. Waukegan Main Street and the WMS design committee administer the Sign, Lighting and Awning Program (SLAP).

## **Who can apply for funding?**

Any building owner or store proprietor/tenant with lease authority or authorization from the owner can apply for funding. Businesses must have gross annual revenue of \$1 million or less. The applicant must be a member of Waukegan Main Street. Applicants who are not currently members may join at the time of application submission. All grants are subject to available funding. The project site must be located in the Waukegan Main Street downtown district. (See map of the Waukegan Main Street project boundaries.) Tenants must have a minimum of two years remaining on their lease or an option to renew.

## **What types of improvements are eligible for funding?**

Signs (new, repairs, replacements, removal)

Exterior lighting (new, repairs, replacements)

Awnings (new, repairs, replacements)

Façade Repair

- Painting
- Replacement of entry doors, windows, storefront
- Cornice, woodwork, and trims
- Masonry Repair and new construction
- Concrete Repair
- Decorative Wrought Iron

Landscaping

## **Are there any design guidelines?**

Projects must meet the approval of the Design Committee of Waukegan Main Street. Waukegan Main Street can be consulted for design guidelines. Applicants are responsible for conforming to all relevant codes and ordinances.

## **How are the projects selected for funding?**

Applications will be selected based on their compatibility with the vision and goals of the Waukegan Main Street and their impact on the district. Projects that are selected are expected to preserve and enhance the pedestrian environment, maintain the eclectic

character of downtown Waukegan, respect the scale of Waukegan's downtown, and to maintain the urban nature of the community. Preference will be given to projects that help to remedy inappropriate or incompatible design elements on the building façade.

### **How is the money awarded?**

This is a matching grant program, which means that the applicant pays a portion of the improvement and Waukegan Main Street pays a portion. The amount of the match must be at least 1:1-that is, the applicant pays \$1 and Waukegan Main Street pays \$1. However, there is a maximum grant contribution by Waukegan Main Street of \$10,000 per project. Work completed prior to the letter of commitment is not eligible for funding.

Grant funds are disbursed on a reimbursement basis and cannot be issued until the proposed project has been completed. Before reimbursement is made, applicants will need to submit proof of payment for completed work. In addition, before payment will be issued, Waukegan Main Street Design Committee must review the completed project to determine that the actual work performed was the work approved.

### **How does the application process work?**

Applicants should first meet with Waukegan Main Street staff and complete a preliminary application. This informal meeting will give the applicant the ability to describe, more fully, the proposed improvement. With the preliminary application, attach any information that will be helpful in the review of the proposal. Two color photos of the current building façade are required. Depending on the extent, priority and visibility of the work involved, Waukegan Main Street Design Committee may help locate design assistance for applicants in order to facilitate the development of a proposal.

When the Design Committee has reviewed the preliminary application, a determination will be made. If the preliminary application is accepted, qualified applicants will be asked to complete a full application, which includes architectural drawings (as applicable), sketches or renderings, color and material samples and two cost estimates. If the preliminary application is denied, the applicant will receive a letter explaining the reasons for its denial.

If the Design Committee approves the full application, the applicant will receive a letter of commitment from Waukegan Main Street for the specified amount with information on any other requirements. The applicant can then proceed with necessary permitting and city review processes. Funds will be released to the applicant upon completion of project, inspection of project, and documentation of matching funds.

If the Design Committee denies the full application, the applicant will receive a letter explaining the reasons for its denial. An application may be denied for many reasons ranging from incompatibility with the WMS Design Guidelines to lack of funding. Due to the limited funding available for this program, many good proposals may not be funded.

The entire application process takes approximately 8 weeks; the Design Committee works with applicants to minimize the turn-around time.

**What happens after a project is selected for funding?**

Work selected for a matching grant must be completed and invoiced within six (6) months of approval of the application. The applicant is responsible for obtaining all building permits and any other required permits for the work to be done. The applicant is responsible for conformance with all applicable safety standards and codes. The applicant also agrees to maintain the property and improvement in keeping with the original design and appearance for a minimum of two years following the completion of construction/installation. Waukegan Main Street may promote an approved project including, but not limited to, displaying a Waukegan Main Street sign at the site, during and after construction, and using photographs and descriptions of the project in Waukegan Main Street materials.

Note: Waukegan Main Street reserves the right to make changes in the conditions of the Sign, Lighting and awning Program as warranted. The approval of any applicant is at the sole discretion of Waukegan Main Street and all decisions are final.

## **WAUKEGAN MAIN STREET**

### **Steps to SLAP**

The review process is expected to take 8 weeks.

1. Meet with Waukegan Main Street staff and complete a preliminary application;
2. Preliminary application is reviewed by Design Committee;
3. Preliminary application is accepted or denied. If accepted, applicant completes a full application;
4. Full application is reviewed by Design Committee;
5. Full application is accepted or denied. If accepted, a letter of commitment with the specified award amount will be sent to applicant;
6. Applicant is responsible for any permits and city review processes necessary for work to be completed;
7. Work completed must follow what was proposed in full application;
8. All work must be completed and invoiced within 6 months of the commitment letter.
9. Grant funds are disbursed on a reimbursement basis and cannot be issued until the proposed project has been completed and a paid invoice is submitted to the Design Committee.

Remember, two copies of two recent color photographs of the building are required for the preliminary application.

To set up an appointment or have questions answered; please call Waukegan Main Street at 847/623-6650. The office is located at 221 North Genesee Street, just South of Grand Avenue.

**Waukegan Main Street  
SLAP: Sign, Lighting and Awning Program  
Preliminary Application  
Required Information**

Name of the Applicant \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the Business \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Applicant (circle one)      property owner      business owner      other

How long has business  
been at this address? \_\_\_\_\_

When does current  
lease expire? \_\_\_\_\_

Property Owner's Name  
(if different from applicant) \_\_\_\_\_

Property owner's address \_\_\_\_\_

Property owner's phone \_\_\_\_\_

Annual gross income  
Under 1 Million (circle one)      yes      no

Optional Information  
Short description of proposed improvement (e.g., signs, lighting, awnings, painting, etc.)

In addition, TWO copies of TWO current color photographs must be attached to this application.

The application will not be reviewed without photographs. Digital images will only be accepted if they are high resolution and show adequate detail.

Signature of applicant \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

**Waukegan Main Street  
SLAP: Sign, Lighting and Awning Program  
Full Application  
Required Information**

Name of the Applicant \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the Business \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Applicant (circle one)      property owner      business owner      other

How long has business  
been at this address? \_\_\_\_\_

When does current  
lease expire? \_\_\_\_\_

Property Owner's Name  
(if different from applicant) \_\_\_\_\_

Property owner's address \_\_\_\_\_

Property owner's phone \_\_\_\_\_

Annual gross income  
Under 1 Million (circle one)      yes      no

Note: if you are not the property own, please have the property owner or an authorized representative co-sign this application where indicated in the General Conditions.

**Waukegan Main Street  
SLAP: Sign, Lighting and Awning Program  
Full Application**

Proposed improvements

Please describe below the proposed improvement to the property.

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Total proposed budget\_\_\_\_\_ Proposed start date\_\_\_\_\_ Estimated completion date\_\_\_\_\_

The following must accompany this application:

1. Two bids on contractor letterhead
2. Details of improvements
  - Dimensions (complete)
  - Placement on building
  - Colors
  - Materials
  - Drawings

The application will not be reviewed until these items are complete

Signature of applicant \_\_\_\_\_ date\_\_\_\_\_

If applicable:

I, as a Board Member of Waukegan Main Street, recused myself from voting on this application.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Waukegan Main Street  
SLAP: Sign, Lighting and Awning Program  
Full Application**

**General Conditions**

It is expressly understood and agreed that the applicant is not an agent, servant, employee, or subcontractor of Waukegan Main Street.

It is expressly understood and agreed that the applicant shall be solely responsible for all safety conditions and compliance with all safety regulations, building codes, ordinances, and other applicable regulations.

It is expressly understood and agreed that work completed prior to final approval is ineligible for funding.

It is expressly understood and agreed that the applicant will not seek to hold Waukegan Main Street and/or its agents, employees, officers and/or directors liable for any property damage, personal injury, or other loss relating in any way to the Sign, Lighting and Awning Program.

The applicant shall be responsible for maintaining valid and sufficient insurance coverage for property damage and personal injury liability relation to the Sign, Lighting and Awning Program.

The applicant agrees to maintain the property and improvements, including, but no limited to, promptly removing graffiti, sweeping and shoveling in front of the property.

The applicant agrees to return a pro-rated amount of the grant money received if the improvement is removed within two years.

The applicant authorize Waukegan Main Street to promote an approved project, including but not limited to displaying a sign at the site, during and after construction, and using photographs and descriptions of the project in WMS materials and other communications.

The applicant understands that Waukegan Main Street reserves the right to make changes in conditions of the Sign, Lighting and Awning Program as warranted. The approval of any applicant is at the sole discretion of Waukegan Main Street and all decisions are final.

Signature of applicant \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

If applicant is not the property owner, please have the property owner (or an authorized representative) review and co-sign this application below.

As owner of the property at \_\_\_\_\_ I have reviewed the above application and authorize operator of \_\_\_\_\_ at said address to perform the improvements described above as part of Waukegan Main Street's Sign, Lighting and Awning Program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of property owner or authorized representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date