

2022 Rural Nebraska Historic Preservation Grant Information

Please read the following information carefully before completing the Rural Nebraska Historic Preservation application.

The Rural Nebraska Historic Preservation (RNHP) program will provide grants to owners of historic properties in rural Nebraska communities. The program is funded through a competitive sub-grant program from the National Park Service. Nebraska was among eleven other recipients to receive funding from the Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization Grants Program for FFY2021. A total of \$7.275 million was awarded to the recipients to support the preservation of historic buildings in the communities across America. Congress appropriates funding for various programs, including the Paul Bruhn Revitalization Grants Program, through the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF, CFDA 15.904). The HPF uses revenue from federal oil leases on the Outer Continental Shelf, assisting a broad range of preservation projects without expending tax dollars. History Nebraska through the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) was awarded \$350,000 to support the RNHP sub-grant program (P22AP01544). Of the initial award, \$328,000 will be made available for subgrant awards.

The objective of the Rural Nebraska Historic Preservation Grant Program is to support the rehabilitation of historic structures at the national, state, and local level of significance in order to rehabilitate, protect, and foster economic development in rural communities. This program will fund physical preservation projects including architectural and engineering consultation (up to 20% of the total grant funds) for historic sites located in Nebraska's rural communities. Grants will be awarded from \$10,000 up to \$75,000.

Eligible Properties

Properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places individually or as a contributing property in a National Register listed historic district or properties determined to be eligible for listing may benefit from this grant. To confirm register status, you may search online at history.nebraska.gov/historic-preservation/national-register-historic-places or contact the State Historic Preservation Office at 402-613-1591 or hn.hp@nebraska.gov.

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Properties that are not currently listed in the National Register of Historic Places, must have a formal determination of their eligibility provided by SHPO prior to submission of their final grant application and the property must be listed in the National Register of Historic Places by the end of the project period, if funded. A determination of eligibility letter from the SHPO must be attached to the application. Such letters can be obtained by submitting a Preliminary Eligibility Form to the SHPO for review. The preliminary form is available from history.nebraska.gov/historic-preservation/national-register-historic-places or by request. We recommend reaching out to the SHPO at least one month in advance of the deadline for determinations of eligibility.

The intent of this program is to assist more Nebraskans seeking to preserve their historic properties while targeting assistance to **small, rural communities**. The property must be within a community with a population of less than 30,000 according to the [2020 U.S. Census](https://www.census.gov). Not all municipalities in Nebraska with populations

under 30,000 are rural in location or character so applicants must successfully provide defensible justification within their application for the rural nature of the property's location.

Eligible Applicants

The grant applicant must be the legal owner of the property and must provide proof of ownership with the applicant. If the property has more than one owner, the applicant must include proof of agreement by all parties to apply. Property owners may not be the State or Federal Governments.

Eligible Activities

All work that is undertaken during the grant period must conform to the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation*. These are referred to as the Secretary of the Interior's Standards throughout this text. The Standards are a set of guidelines used to determine whether an activity will protect the historic quality of a structure. A copy may be obtained from the SHPO or online at [nps.gov/tps/standards/four-treatments.htm](https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/four-treatments.htm). Any project funded through this program must include a final product at completion that matches the detailed line-item outlined in the application, refined in the grant agreement, and approved by SHPO staff before contracts are signed. Eligible activities include architectural and/or engineering services required to produce a final plan or scope for physical work.

The following types of preservation activities are eligible for funding through this grant program:

- 1. Rehabilitation:** The act of making a property usable through repair, alterations, or additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values. Example: the upgrading of mechanical systems, kitchens, and bathrooms.
- 2. Restoration:** The act or process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period. This may be accomplished by removing features from other periods of history or by reconstructing missing features from the chosen historic period. For all restoration projects, sufficient documentation must be provided to establish the form and detail of the property or features that existed at the time to which it is being restored. Example: restoration of a missing bell tower or decorative trim.
- 3. Preservation:** Includes those activities necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of a historic property. Preservation activities are intended to maintain and repair historic materials and features as they now exist, rather than replace them with new materials or extensive new construction. Preservation activities frequently are directed toward halting deterioration of a site or in maintaining existing materials. Example: repairing wooden windows or replacing a deteriorated roof.

Ineligible Activities

The following activities and expenses are not eligible for funding under this program. The list does not include all ineligible activities but indicates the type of activities and expenses that will not be considered for funding.

1. Acquisition of real or personal property.
2. Additions to a historic building or to the surrounding property.
3. Major reconstructions. For example, reconstruction of a whole building or addition from photographs with new materials on an existing foundation.
4. Any and all archeology based projects. This includes research, excavation, and site preservation.
5. Interior work on private homes and existing apartments.
6. Grant administration expenses or other indirect costs.

7. Equipment purchases, except items that are directly related to the building operation and specifically approved by the SHPO
8. Costs incurred before the project starting date or after the project completion date.
9. Costs over the approved project budget.
10. Costs for work not included in the scope of work established in the project agreement.
11. Work not in compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards*.
12. Damage judgments arising from construction or equipping of a facility, whether determined by judicial process, arbitration, negotiation, or otherwise.
13. Fundraising, including grant application preparation.
14. Lobbying.
15. Costs for general maintenance or utilities.
16. Construction of auxiliary structures or site work not directly related to the preservation of the historic property.
17. Interpretive exhibits or displays.
18. Demolition unless necessary for repair or preservation of the historic property (i.e. removing roofing to inspect and repair underlayment). Costs for such necessary demolition must be rolled into the budget line item for the work item (i.e. replacement of the roof) and repair work must be complete before the costs are reimbursed through the grant.
19. Relocation of structures, buildings, or objects.

Matching Funds

The grant reimburses 90 percent (90%) of eligible project activity costs up to the award amount. Grant recipients shall provide 10 percent (10%) of the cost of eligible project activities as match. In-kind services, donated materials, donated services, and indirect costs are not accepted as a match share. **The cash match must be available and reserved for the project no later than the March application deadline and proof of match must be included with the application.**

Reimbursement

The RNHP grant program is a reimbursement grant. The grant recipient shall pay, in full, all costs of the project as they become due and payable. Progress payments or monthly billings for a percentage of the completed project *are not reimbursable* under this program. This should be taken into consideration when calculating the cash flow for the project and itemizing the project budget.

All work must be complete, and all reimbursements paid out by the end date of the grant period mandated by the signed grant agreement. The end date must be no later than August 31, 2025.

Final Applications

The deadline for completed applications is **March 1, 2023**. Final applications must be received by midnight March 1, 2023, through the online platform Apply. A public webinar to learn more about the grant will occur on December 21, 2022. Information on this webinar will be posted on the History Nebraska website.

Evaluation

A grant review committee will evaluate all final applications. The committee will be selected primarily from the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Review Board and History Nebraska Board of Trustees. This is the same board that evaluates properties proposed for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. Each application will be rated to determine if it has adequately addressed the questions outlined in the application instructions below.

The application is evaluated in the categories of **need and urgency, community impact and rural justification, measuring project success, organizational and professional ability** of the applicant, and **project description (scope), budget, and timeline**. The committee will also evaluate the **overall** application. SHPO staff will conduct a **risk assessment** based on information provided and will advise the grant committee of any concerns.

The grant committee must feel confident that the project applicant has proposed a feasible project, that the applicant’s organization has the personnel and financial means needed to implement the project, and that the project is likely to have a positive long-term impact on preservation, either on a state-wide or local level. The committee will also evaluate the budget to be certain it is both reasonable and sufficient for the work proposed. You are encouraged to be very clear in your answers to ensure that the committee will fully understand the nature of your proposed project.

A public meeting will be held on **May 12, 2023, at 1:00pm** at the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Review Board spring meeting, where final award recommendations will be announced.

Each applicant will be awarded scores within six categories. The maximum number of points that can be awarded to any one category is listed below.

Project need and urgency	25
Community impact and rural justification	25
Measuring the success of the project	20
Applicant organization and personnel	10
Budget, Schedule, and Scope	15
Overall application	5
Total	100

Funding Priorities

The RNHP grant is a sub-grant from the National Park Service’s Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization Grants Program. The focus of this program is to “enable the rehabilitation of historic properties and to rehabilitate, protect, and foster economic development of rural communities.” While all properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places individually or as a contributor to a National Register-listed historic district, or determined eligible for listing in a community under 30,000 are eligible to apply, priority will be given to applicants that provide defensible justification for how their project and community fit the focus of the program. The United State Department of Agriculture (USDA) defines rural as open countryside, rural towns (smaller than 2,500), and/or urban areas less than 30,000, that are not part of a larger metro area.

The evaluation criteria listed above will provide a base score, but the priorities listed below will be taken into consideration and help the committee in determining overall project awards.

- Property is in a [Certified Local Government community](#)
- Property is in a [Main Street community](#)
- Property is currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places

In the instance of an abundance of qualifying applicants other priorities that may be considered include:

- “Maintain Our Heritage” - A plan is in place or is being created to maintain property after the project is completed and/or it demonstrates a sustainability concept.
- Geographical location (representation from across the state)
- Project necessity is to retain a property in a hospitable condition (new roof vs new door)

General Grant Conditions

Once grant awards are announced, grantees will be contacted in writing with a request to formally accept the grant offer. SHPO staff will then develop a grant agreement tailored to each project and will coordinate with grant administrators for a time to conduct a grant orientation session. All grantees must follow the Federal Assurances for Construction. Please read through the Assurances before applying for the grant.

Grantees will be required to select consultants and/or contractors through a competitive process approved by SHPO. Grantees are expected to pay all bills as they become due and payable then seek reimbursement from the RNHP grant for 90% of those costs up to the grant award. Donated and indirect costs will not be reimbursed or accepted as a matching share. The cash match must be available and reserved for the project no later than the March application deadline.

Because this grant is supported by a Historic Preservation Fund grant administered by the National Park Service, Department of Interior, the project must follow Federal project requirements, including placement of an easement on the property following the project completion. Historic preservation easements are voluntary agreements intended to preserve the historic character of a property by giving the easement holder a legal property interest. When a property owner grants an easement, the entity accepting the easement gains certain property rights for the duration of the easement period. Easements associated with this grant program require allowing public access to the grant-funded property at least 12 days per year; for this reason, we will not fund any interior work on properties owned by individuals or properties that are not otherwise accessible to the public (eg. interior of private homes and existing apartments). See the required easement schedule below.

Grant Easement Schedule

Grant amount \$1-\$50,000 - requires a 5-year agreement, amending the deed is not required

Grant amount \$50,001-\$250,000 - requires a 10-year easement recorded on the deed

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Questions?

Betty Gillespie

Interim Deputy SHPO/Section

106 Coordinator - Standing Structures

402-805-7392

betty.gillespie@nebraska.gov

History.Nebraska.gov



Important Dates:

March 1, 2023

Final application submission by midnight

May 12, 2023

Announcement of grant awards at the Nebraska Historic Preservation Review Board spring meeting.