

# Center City Development Corporation Board Meeting

To: Center City Development Corporation (CCDC)  
From: DMC Staff  
Date: January 2, 2024  
RE: Exterior Improvement Grant Request – 325 Wagner Pl

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The enclosed Exterior Improvement Grant application has been submitted for consideration at the January 17, 2024 CCDC Board Meeting.

**Project:** **325 Wagner Pl**

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Applicant: Ezekiel Sansing  
1850 Autumn Ave  
Memphis, TN 38112

Property Owner: H&S Printing Co  
495 Tennessee Street  
Memphis, TN 38103

Applicant's Request: Exterior Improvement Grant in an amount up to \$40,000.

Project Description: The subject property is a two-story commercial building located on the northwest corner of Wagner Pl. and Vance Ave. It is approximately 12,700 square feet.

The building was originally constructed in 1920, and initially operated as a flour mill and later as a printing shop. Currently, the rear of the building (fronting the Mississippi River) operates as a small event venue, while the front of the building (fronting Wagner Pl) operates as a short-term rental (Air BnB). The space between the Air BnB and the event space is not currently in use, though the applicant has plans to expand the event venue into this space.

The exterior scope of work will include repair, as well as new windows and openings that will increase the functionality of the building, while also improving its visual appearance. The scope includes:

- Cutting and installing new storefront doors
- Installing new windows
- Concrete restoration and new concrete pour
- Removal of existing steel security bars

- Lighting
- Painting

EIG Budget:

The Exterior Improvement Grant (EIG) is designed to help Downtown commercial property owners make high-quality improvements to the exteriors of Downtown buildings. These improvements help businesses draw customers by enhancing curb appeal, increase walkability by adding street-level interest, and increase neighborhood property values.

The Exterior Improvement Grant is for exterior work only and requires a 1 to 1 match from the applicant. The maximum grant for this location (Central Business Improvement District) is \$40,000.

The following describes the estimated project budget:

**Sources:**

Owner’s Equity	\$ 76,081.63	(66%)
CCDC EIG	\$ 40,000.00	(34%)
<b>Total Sources</b>	<b>\$ 116,081.63</b>	<b>(100 %)</b>

**Uses:**

Remove Existing Steel Security Bars	\$ 1,650.00	(1%)
New Concrete Parge	\$ 3,500.00	(3%)
Restore Concrete Details	\$ 30,000.00	(26%)
New Aluminum Storefront Doors	\$ 30,750.00	(26%)
Single Hung Wood Windows	\$ 29,725.00	(26%)
Paint Existing Overhead Doors	\$ 2,340.00	(2%)
Paint Existing Canopy	\$ 1,200.00	(1%)
Goose Neck Lighting	\$ 3,073.13	(3%)
New Wall Washer Uplight Fixtures	\$ 13,843.50	(12%)
<b>Total Uses</b>	<b>\$ 116,081.63</b>	<b>(100%)</b>

Design Review:

The applicant will submit design plans to the DRB in the coming months.

EBO Program:

Any project that is awarded financial incentives from the Downtown Memphis Commission (DMC) shall include a best faith effort to reach no less than 25% participation by minority and/or women owned businesses (MWBE) in the project's development cost (design and construction hard costs). Compliance with this Equal Business Opportunity (EBO) Program is a closing requirement. **If the requirements of the EBO Program are not met, the CCDC will cancel the incentive.**

Outreach & Inclusion Plan: The specific steps required for each applicant to be compliant with the DMC's EBO Program takes into consideration the size, scope of work, and development costs associated with the project. At the time of incentive application, it is typically too early to identify specific contractors or sub-contractors that will ultimately be involved in the construction. However, the applicant has a clear understanding of the EBO Program and has worked with DMC staff to identify the following key steps that will be included in their Outreach & Inclusion Plan:

- The applicant will meet and coordinate with minority-owned business assistance organizations such as the Memphis Area Minority Contractors Association (MAMCA) and the Mid-South Minority Business Council Continuum (MMBC) to make their members aware of the project and any contracting and sub-contracting opportunities.
- The applicant will use the City of Memphis Business Diversity & Compliance Registry and the resources at the Shelby County Office of Equal Opportunity Compliance to identify qualified subcontractors and other tradespeople to perform the needed work.
- The applicant will advertise and host a pre-bid conference to allow MWBE subcontractors an opportunity to ask questions and learn more about the job opportunity. DMC staff will be invited to attend the pre-bid conference to observe.
- The applicant will contact a minimum of 3 certified MWBE businesses for each trade or type of subcontractor needed, and provide each a fair opportunity to submit a bid and be considered for the work.
- Once the service providers have been identified, the applicant will submit the form titled "Proposed Utilization Plan" to DMC staff for review and approval. The applicant will also be asked to provide a full record of the outreach steps taken and the results thus far. This documentation can include items such as a phone call log, copies of emails, meeting notes, and pre-bid conference attendance sheet.
- After construction has started, the applicant will provide monthly updates to DMC staff detailing the project status

and level of MWBE involvement at each major phase of the project.

**Minimum MWBE Goal:** With an estimated exterior budget of \$116,081.63, a 25% level of MWBE inclusion for that work is approximately **\$29,020.41.**

**Staff Evaluation:** The subject property at 325 Wagner is an historic structure located just outside of the Downtown Core and South Main target areas. While portions of the property have remained underutilized since the closure of the printing shop several years ago, it currently operates as an event venue and Air BnB. The property's location on a bluff overlooking the Mississippi River makes it an ideal event venue, and the owner plans to expand the event space to occupy the currently underutilized space. However, most of the exterior of the building has not been updated to accommodate the changing use; the structure's windows are covered in bars, concrete is cracking, entrances are located and sized for vehicle delivery rather than pedestrian access, and lighting is limited. As a result, the building remains underutilized.

The applicant intends to remedy many of the issues with the exterior of the structure. The bars on the windows will be removed, new entrances will be cut out and new doors will be added, cracked concrete will be repaired and new exterior lighting will be added, creating a more welcoming environment for pedestrians and event goers alike.

This application also compliments ongoing development in the neighborhood. The 7 Vance Mixed-Use Development is located directly across the street from the subject site, prompting the applicant to make a sizable investment in their own property. DMC Staff fully supports this application to improve the exterior of the subject site, as it will improve the pedestrian experience in the neighborhood, and help transform a currently underutilized structure into a livelier and more welcoming space.

**Recommendation:** **Staff recommends approval of an Exterior Improvement Grant in an amount up to \$40,000 based on approved receipts and subject to all standard closing requirements and conditions.**