Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization Grants

The Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization Grants Program provides competitive grants to revive historic properties in rural communities across America. The program was created in the FY 2018 omnibus spending bill with a $5 million congressional appropriation. Formerly known as the Historic Revitalization Subgrant Program, the grant program was renamed in honor of Paul Bruhn, the former executive director of the Preservation Trust of Vermont. The first round of grants was awarded to nine recipients in August of 2019.

Background

The Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization Grants are designed to foster economic development while preserving the history of rural communities by awarding grants of $100,000 to $750,000 to rehabilitate historic properties of significance in areas defined as rural by the U.S. Census (population less than 50,000). Under the program, eligible grantees receive funds that are then subgranted to organizations for bricks and mortar preservation projects at National Register Historic Sites. The program is modeled after the state of Vermont’s highly successful Village Revitalization Initiative (VRI), a partnership between the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Preservation Trust of Vermont.

FY 2021 Appropriations Request

Please support $10 million for the Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization Grant Program in the FY 2021 Interior Appropriations bill.

APPROPRIATIONS BILL: Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
AGENCY: National Park Service
ACCOUNT: Historic Preservation Fund
ACTIVITY: Historic Revitalization Grants

Recent Funding History:

- FY 2018 Enacted Funding: $5 million
- FY 2019 Enacted Funding: $5 million
- FY 2020 Enacted Funding: $7.5 million
- FY 2021 President’s Budget Request: $0
- FY 2021 NTHP Recommendation: $10 million

JUSTIFICATION: Historic revitalization grants invest in preserving the unique cultures of the nation’s rural communities, fostering economic development and creating jobs.
Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization Grant Program

In its first year of funding, the Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization Grant Program provided $5 million in grants to nine projects that support the preservation of historic buildings in rural communities across the United States.

Alaska
City and Borough of Sitka
$238,033
Historic Rehabilitation of National Register Properties in Sitka

Louisiana
Louisiana Office of Cultural Development
$662,000
Rehabilitation of Commercial Structures in Louisiana’s Main Street District

Maine
Maine Development Foundation
$750,000
REvitalizeME

Montana
Montana Historical Society
$391,067
Revitalizing Montana’s Rural Heritage

Oregon
Oregon Parks and Recreation Department
$665,000
Oregon Historic Theaters Subgrant Program

Rhode Island
Town of Glocester
$250,000
Chepachet Village Historic District Subgrant Program

Vermont
The Preservation Trust of Vermont
$747,000
Historic Restoration Subgrant Program of Vermont

West Virginia
West Virginia Department of Arts, Culture, and History
$350,000
West Virginia Historic Revitalization Subgrant Program

Nationwide
National Main Street Center, Inc.
$746,900
Main Street Façade Improvement Grant Program

The National Main Street Center is a subsidiary of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

In August 2019, the National Main Street Center became one of the inaugural recipients of the Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization Grant Program. Launched in January 2020, the NPS Main Street Facade Improvement Grant Program, made possible by a $746,900 grant, will offer façade improvement grants in 12 rural Main Street communities in four states across the country. In the 12 selected communities, Main Street America will provide Main Street building and business owners with grants of up to $25,000 each. The before and after photos showcase a similar improvement project on Main Street Texarkana, TX, with support from the 1772 Foundation and Texas Main Street.

PHOTOS BY WILLIAM H. SCURLOCK

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