

REVAMP ROUTE 66

SIGN IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

About

November 11, 2026, marks 100 years of Route 66! Albuquerque's eighteen miles of historic Route 66 is the longest urban stretch of the route in the U.S. Route 66 is a vital cultural and commercial corridor that the City of Albuquerque seeks to honor, improve, and celebrate.

As ABQ approaches this important milestone, the City of Albuquerque Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) and the Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency have collaboratively developed a Sign Improvement Program. The Sign Improvement Program seeks to restore historic neon signs along Route 66 by granting restoration funds to property owners who are interested and able to complete sign restoration by Fall 2025. A total of \$432,000 is set aside to accomplish restorations of signs along Route 66 – Central Ave.

The Sign Improvement Program will take applications submitted by property owners between August 7 and October 15, 2023. Funding is awarded on a competitive basis with an emphasis on projects that can be completed within the next two (2) years.

Sign Eligibility

An eligible sign must be an exterior freestanding sign (permanent, fixed structure) located directly along Historic Route 66 – Central Avenue in the Albuquerque city limits.

One (1) sign per property may apply for funding. Property owners with multiple signs/properties must submit one (1) application per sign.

Eligible expenses include professional consulting design services, materials, permitting fees, and construction and installation; but do not include providing electricity from the power source to the sign.

Applicant Eligibility

- Applicant must be the property owner(s) or commercial lessee(s). If a lessee, the application must include a notarized letter of authorization with property owner signature.
- Lessee's seeking to apply must apply with property owner as co-applicant(s).
- Property Owner shall provide proof of ownership (deed).

Eligible Area

In order for a sign to be eligible, it must fall within a 1) Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (identified by the colored areas in the map) and 2) be directly along the north or south side of Central Avenue.



Verify the property is within an Metropolitan Redevelopment Area by typing in the address here:

<https://www.cabq.gov/mra/redevelopment-areas>

Restoration Design Options:

The Route 66 Sign Improvement program includes two (2) overarching restoration and design principles. A sign restoration project must fall within the following two (2) options:

1. Restoring Character of Historic and Neon Signs

Sign improvement may include restoring historic character via neon repair, repainting, re-lettering, light repair, or other replacements that will restore sign to historic appearance.

2. New Art Possibilities

Sign improvement may include collaborations with artists to recreate historic signs as new works of art, as Friends of the Orphan Signs has done with certain projects like "Revivir" (see photos at right.)

Projects submitting for this criterion will be asked to submit a mock up of the proposed art. The City reserves the right to request modifications or reject art proposal.

GET INSPIRED! <https://orphansigns.org/projects>

Or email: orphansigns@gmail.com



Friends of the Orphan Signs art re-creation and restoration projects in Albuquerque (Option 2)

Application Evaluation Criterion

The Route 66 Sign Improvement Program aims to restore signs that are exemplary of the Route 66 era. Applicants must narrate how the restoration of the sign meets the following goals:

- Lies within an MRA on Central Avenue
- Exhibits historic/cultural significance
- Improves streetscape/environs
- Spurs Economic Vitality
- Exhibits ability to meet deadlines

Applications will be evaluated on how well the restoration of the signs meets the criterion above.

Application Process

The Route 66 Sign Improvement program is a public competitive application process. Applicants shall complete a narrative about the sign's historic significance, economic impact, location, proposal for refurbishing the sign, with material and labor details; an official vendor quote for all related cost to include labor and material cost, design, etc.; and a vendor verified project timeline. Priority shall be given to those applications that submit a vendor verified quote(s) and project timeline at the time of application.

A complete Application package shall include:

- 1) Completed Application Form;
- 2) Current image of the sign for which the application applies to;
- 3) A map identifying the sign location as it related to the property;
- 4) Proof of property ownership (Property Deed, real estate contract, and/or notarized authorization);
- 5) Project Cost Sheet with all supporting vendor/contractor quotes (including, but not limited to, labor, material cost, design services, and permitting fees);
- 6) A project timeline support by vendors/contractors;
- 7) A completed W9 Supplier Form: <https://www.cabq.gov/dfa/onlineservices/modified-w9-supplier-form>; and
- 8) Not required, but helpful: Conceptual drawing of sign in its future improved state.

Application materials must be compiled into one project folder. The project folder must be uploaded by the applicant via: <https://sftp.cabq.gov/link/MvGuaf-5sL4/>

Applicants must be submitted, online, within the application submittal period of August 7 to October 15, 2023.

Applications will not be accepted via mail, email, or in-person.

Successful applicants will sign a Program Agreement with the City of Albuquerque Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency. Projects are subject to the terms of the agreement between the property owner and the City.

Applicants will be notified via email of approved or rejected projects. Applications will be reviewed and evaluated in the order they were received. The City shall notify applicants of the status of their application after the application period has lapsed.

Applicants are responsible for securing any necessary permits and complying with all building codes and state and federal laws.

Program Funding & Disbursement

The City of Albuquerque has designated approximately \$432,000 in funding for the program. The funds are available for improvement and rehabilitation of Route 66 era signs.

Signs restoration projects that are approved for funding are subject to the following payment schedule:

- 25% upfront disbursement with proof of contract between vendor and applicant; and
- 75% at completion of the project.

Applicants are responsible for securing funding to complete the project. Applicants shall submit for reimbursement upon completion of the project.

Approved applications will be required to submit additional information and supporting documentation:

- An executed contract by the contractor/vendor of choice that will complete the sign improvements
 - Contract must include the estimated cost to complete the project
 - Contract must include the estimated timeframe to complete the project
- City of Albuquerque approved sign permit (if necessary)

Who to contact with questions about the REVAMP Route 66 Program:

MRA Project Manager, Omega Delgado – odelgado@cabq.gov, (505) 810-7502

DAC Special Projects Manager, Amanda Sutton – asutton@cabq.gov, (505) 768-3553