



FRA CONNECTOR

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NEW GRANT PROGRAMS ANNOUNCED

DESIGN GRANT, CRITICAL SYSTEMS GRANT & EXPANDED MAIN STREET HOUSING GRANT



The Fitchburg Redevelopment Authority (FRA) announced two new grant opportunities as well as an enhancement of an existing grant program. The Fitchburg Redevelopment Authority (FRA) has a long history of supporting local businesses and property owners in its downtown Urban Renewal District. The FRA's role in the community began in 1964 and was charged with assisting the efforts of supporting and attracting business to Fitchburg. These three grants are part of a continued supportive effort aimed to help both property owners and their tenants upgrade or activate their spaces by tackling some of the most critical and challenging building needs within the downtown.

Below is a breakdown of each grant which are all live on our website. If there is a questions about any of the three grant programs, please do not hesitate to speak with the FRA's executive director at 978-345-9602 or email at director@fitchburgredevelopment.com.

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CRITICAL BUILDING NEEDS GRANT

The FRA is introducing its largest grant program in several years, the Critical Building Needs Grant. This annual program will be a competitive process in which awardees will be selected based on the critical nature of their project, which may include, but are not limited to, interior/exterior structural issues, ADA additions, elevators, and sprinkler systems. Applications are available on the FRA's website (fitchburgredevelopment.com) starting today and will close October 17th by end of business. This is a reimbursement grant program that will have two awards of \$50,000 each will be selected and by the first week of November.

DESIGN GRANT

The Design Grant is a new program to help ease the costs of design drawings often required, but not necessarily planned for by the business owner. Drawings can include, but are not limited to architectural, mechanical, or structural designs for new spaces or upgrades within the FRA's Urban Renewal District. This reimbursement grant awards up to \$2,000 and can be applied to at any time throughout the year.

EXPANDED MAIN STREET HOUSING PROGRAM

The existing grant, the Main Street Housing Program, is aimed at providing a financial boost for developers whose projects involve residential units on upper floors of commercial buildings along Main Street. The program previously granted \$5,000 per unit for up to five units, totaling \$25,000. The new iteration still grants \$5,000 per unit, but now for up to ten units, potentially totaling \$50,000. This reimbursement grant can be applied to at any time but must be completed within the year of the approval date.

MART & MONTY TECH PARTNER TO INSTALL SHELTER AT PUTNAM PLACE

What do you get when you have a team of Monty Tech carpentry students partnering with the Montachusett Area Regional Transit (MART)? A beautifully constructed new bus shelter, located in front of Putnam Place. Plans came together and work began the last week of September to construct from the ground up the shelter that will provide a safe and recognizable bus stop for patrons for use within the downtown. The FRA is delighted to have the only centrally located bus stop (the other downtown locations are at the Intermodal Station and at the Upper Common) that not only enhances MART's Fitchburg routes, but also taps into the amazing local resource of the students at Monty Tech. The FRA would like to thank George Kahale from MART and Floyd Morrison from Monty Tech for bringing this project to fruition!



Photo courtesy of MART



LED LIGHTING AT PUTNAM PLACE

Tony Amico, Facilities Manager

In late 2021 we completed the first step in converting our florescent lighting to LEDs and recently completed the project by updating lighting in the common areas of our building. Why is this important for the building and our tenants? There are three main reasons...

1. The new LEDs last almost twice as long as florescent bulbs, so we will not have the cost and waste produced when changing these often.
2. The new LED lights use about half the electricity as light bulbs. This cuts down on all our community lighting costs and reduces our energy footprint.
3. The new LEDs are much brighter than the old bulbs. Once the first phase of LEDs were installed, there was a huge difference in the light output in those spaces.

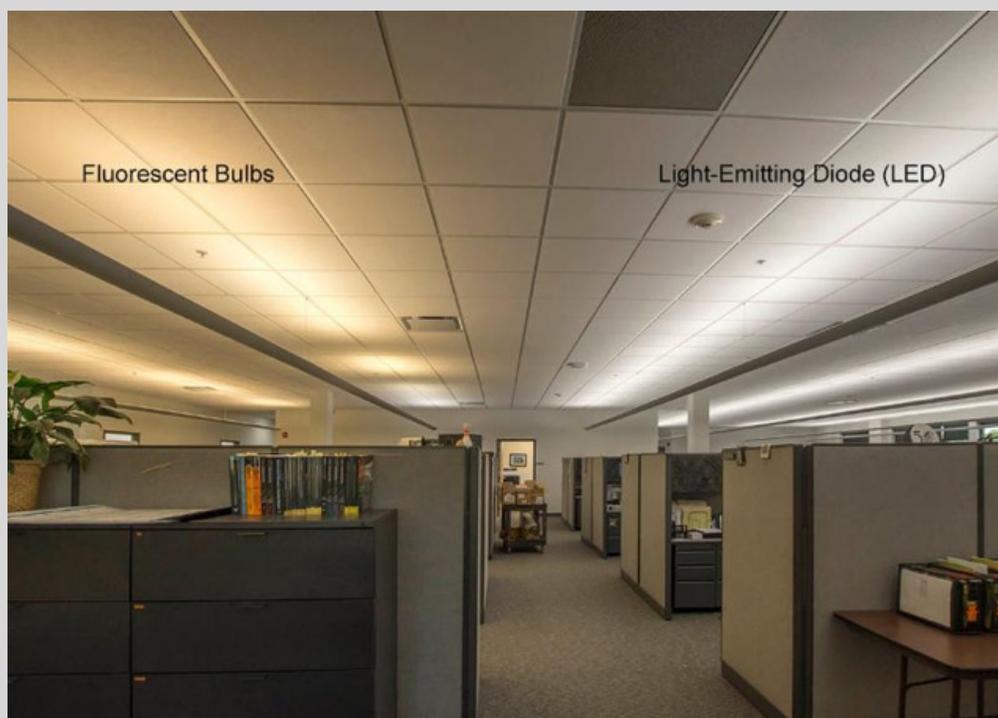
Here is a break down of the savings from the 1st and 2nd phases of the project.

Phase 1

- Estimated annual electricity savings- \$9,205.89
- ROI (return on investment)- 2.1 years
- kWh saved- 61,372.6
- Pounds of CO2 saved (per EPA)- 39,371.7
- Unutil incentive (what they paid to this project)- \$45,556.78

Phase 2

- Estimated annual electricity savings- \$1,375.73
- ROI (return on investment)- 3.5 years
- kWh saved- 9,171.6
- Pounds of CO2 saved (per EPA)- 5,883.7
- Unutil incentive (what they paid to this project)- \$11,146.69



FRA SUMMER INTERN EDWARD SEAVER



This summer the FRA was lucky enough to have an intern join us to help assist in the office. Eddie Seaver is going into his senior year at Auburn High School and brought his strong work ethic and willingness to learn to the internship. Eddie spearheaded a long awaited filing and document management project. He was a huge asset in finally helping us to organize and shift through the extensive files of the FRA's predecessor, get rid of duplicate and unrelated files, and prepare the important remaining files to be scanned and digitized for future management. Below he shares about his time in our office.

"This summer I have learned a lot about how the environment is in a working office. I have learned how people should be treated in a normal everyday workspace. I also learned about work ethic, and hard work. This experience, I feel, has given me a leg up for adult life because most people my age have not had the opportunity to work an office job like I have. This has been a great experience for me and I have learned a lot from the people here in such a short amount of time. In conclusion, this opportunity has been very helpful to me and I appreciate it very much because I now have got to experience the regular working world which will help me in the future."



PUTNAM PLACE TENANT SPOTLIGHT

"What will it take to make a positive difference in Fitchburg? That's the question we asked ourselves when deciding to start Fitchburg Fiber, and it's the motivation behind every decision we make. We started with a dedicated team and a dream to bring high speed, affordable internet to the city. Now that we're here, we will continue pushing to make that a reality. Our values make us who we are, and they continue to drive us forward as we grow this business for the good of Fitchburg."

Fitchburg Fiber is a local startup internet service provider that laid their roots here in December of 2020. They offer Gigabit internet across select parts of the city for \$40 per month with no contract, no hidden fees, and no router rentals. Their team is committed to never raising prices, and with zero small print, you won't need a magnifying glass to understand their service.

Fitchburg Fiber also offers VoIP phone service for homes and businesses to help you cut the cord entirely. On the more business-oriented side they can provide dedicated internet access, and are able to help you build out custom IT and connectivity solutions across the region. They run a small datacenter right in the heart of Putnam Place, and are able to offer highly competitive pricing for colocation and web hosting services to interested parties. Whatever your technology plan, Fitchburg Fiber is ready and willing to support you from start to finish.

Check them out at - www.fbfiber.net

Let's stay in touch...

www.fitchburgredevelopment.com

166 Boulder Drive, Suite 104

Fitchburg, MA 01420

978.345.9602

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