

GEORGE
EASTMAN
MUSEUM

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LETTER WRITING KIT

GEORGE EASTMAN MUSEUM

2022 Grant Proposal to the

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

and

Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council

GEORGE EASTMAN MUSEUM

Executive Summary of 2022 Grant Proposal National Historic Landmark Restoration—Chimneys and Parapets

Grant Request: \$500,000

Private Funding to be Raised: \$200,000

Total Estimated Project Cost: \$700,000

Estimated Jobs to be Created: 10

George Eastman's estate is a National Historic Landmark and a major tourist destination that draws visitors to the Rochester region from all over the world. More than 65% of visitors to the Eastman Museum travel from outside the region. Now more than 115 years old, the historic mansion is faced with imminent and severe threats, some of which put the safety of our visitors at risk.

In June 2022, Bero Architecture PLLC conducted a condition survey focused on the upper portion of the mansion. Masonry restoration and repairs to the chimneys and parapets were assigned the highest priority because of their poor condition, and even more important, because of concerns for visitor safety. Parapets are the sections of exterior walls that rise above the roofline, providing visual height and helping to provide a weather-tight junction between the roof and wall.

Noted architect J. Foster Warner designed George Eastman's mansion with a total of eleven chimneys (eight engaged chimneys on the walls of the mansion and three freestanding chimneys in the center of the mansion). Since 1905, the chimneys and parapets have been exposed to the damaging effects of Rochester's annual freeze/thaw cycle, which has led to moisture infiltration, severe deterioration, and instability. Moisture damage has caused deterioration of the mortar which holds bricks in place. Of greatest concern are the open mortar joints that have allowed bricks to become dislodged in numerous areas. If the masonry is not repaired, these bricks may fall to the ground, putting at risk the safety of all who visit or work at the museum. In addition, moisture seepage from chimneys and parapets into the mansion has already damaged plaster walls and ceilings.

Our project will address necessary and urgent repairs to the chimneys and parapets so that people may safely visit and work at the George Eastman Museum and walk through its grounds. Restoration of the chimneys and parapets will assure that the historic mansion is preserved for the enjoyment of future generations.

This project will create about 10 jobs in construction and building trades, contribute to job retention, and provide economic benefits from increased tourism.

In the past decade, the Eastman Museum has invested \$6 million in restoration of George Eastman's mansion and gardens. Three NYSHPO grants totaling [\$1,569,000] have supported restoration projects and provided an invaluable boost to our fundraising efforts. Restoration work must continue.

Our grant application for restoration and repairs to the chimneys and parapets of the historic mansion will request \$500,000 from the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation (NYSHPO). The total project cost is estimated to be about \$700,000. Within one year of notification of the grant award, the museum will raise matching funds of \$200,000 for the project. Grant funding from New York State will assure that this project is completed as soon as practicable and that all areas of George Eastman's historic mansion remain open and publicly accessible.

Key Facts

NOTE: A key element of the grant review process is the impact on tourism and economic development in our community and the Finger Lakes Region. We encourage you to use some of the tourism and economic details provided below in your letter.

- The project, ***National Historic Landmark Restoration – Chimneys and Parapets:***
 - Aligns very well with the Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council’s strategy to continue to invest in, preserve, develop, and promote the region’s major assets.
 - Supports the creation and retention of at least ten local jobs in construction and building trades.
- The overflow of economic development benefits that the George Eastman Museum brings to the region is substantial—nearly \$10 million in 2019.
- George Eastman’s estate is one of only two National Historic Landmarks in Monroe County.
- The George Eastman Museum is a major cultural attraction and tourist destination. More than 65% of visitors to the George Eastman Museum travel here from outside the region. Many visitors travel here from across the U.S. and around the world.
- It is significant to the economy of the Finger Lakes Region that visitors to the George Eastman Museum have a rewarding and pleasant experience so that they will return to our area and recommend the region to others.
- Awareness of and access to the George Eastman Museum’s cultural opportunities—which are the source of pride and an enhanced quality of life in our region—benefits our regional economy and supports positive social change.

Checklist for Your Letter of Support

- Your letter will be included with our grant application package. The following address is provided for use as the inside address in your letter. Do **not** mail your letter to this address. Mailing details are provided at the end of this document.

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
PO Box 189
Waterford, New York 12188

- Please use the following salutation in your letter:

Dear SHPO Grant Reviewers:

- Please be sure to include the project name in your letter:

National Historic Landmark Restoration—Chimneys and Parapets

- Your letter does not need to be lengthy—just a few sentences or a few paragraphs that convey your strong support for this project and the George Eastman Museum.
- If you own a business, it would be very helpful to write your letter on business letterhead.
- You may either send your letter as an attachment to an email **OR** mail it to the Museum.

For e-mailing your letter, please send it to:

rwagner@eastman.org

For sending your letter via U.S. Mail:

Ruth Wagner
Grants Manager
George Eastman Museum
900 East Avenue
Rochester, New York 14607

- Please be sure to sign your letter and submit it **by July 25** for inclusion with our grant application.
- Questions? Please contact Ruth Wagner at rwagner@eastman.org or 585-478-3945 (cell).

Thank you for your support of the George Eastman Museum!