

HATFIELD BOROUGH ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE

FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT GRANT

SMALL PROJECT GUIDELINES & POLICIES

INTRODUCTION

The Hatfield Borough Economic Revitalization Committee Façade Improvement Grant Small Project Program provides grants of 50% of a project cost, up to a maximum reimbursement of \$1,500, available to Borough businesses to encourage the undertaking of small projects that would enhance the appearance of their business. An attractive image is of critical importance to the success of any commercial area. Façade and storefront improvements, even smaller projects, are an effective approach to enhancing a commercial area's image and economic vitality.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Any person(s) or legal entity that owns or leases commercial buildings is eligible to apply. (Applications by lessees/tenants require the consent of the property owner.) Grant applications will be accepted for any commercial property within the corporate limits of the Borough of Hatfield.

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

Any minor maintenance, repair, rehabilitation and restoration of commercial storefronts and facades are eligible activities. Projects must achieve visible results that enhance the commercial image, marketability and economic vitality, while presenting the building in its most appealing form with the original character of the building preserved and enhanced.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Hatfield Borough Economic Revitalization Committee administers Façade Improvement Grant Small Project Program. Grants are awarded in accordance with the Hatfield Borough Economic Revitalization Committee policies outlined herein and must be in conformance with all applicable state and local requirements.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The Hatfield Borough Economic Revitalization Committee Façade Improvement Grant Small Project Program is intended to stimulate private investment in the Borough. The program seeks to preserve and restore historic architecture and to foster image-making improvements to all commercial properties regardless of their historic significance.

Projects must achieve visible results that enhance Hatfield Borough's image, marketability and economic vitality. Façade Improvement Grants have the following specific objectives.

- Enhance the visual appeal of businesses.
- Assist with the preservation of historic commercial buildings and assure that such buildings are rehabilitated in an appropriate manner.
- Utilize properties in their historic and/or characteristic purpose, or provide new uses that require minimal changes to the defining characteristics of individual building exteriors, their site and environment.

DEFINITION OF FAÇADE

For the purposes of these guidelines, the façade of a building is generally the front of a structure but may also include, at the discretion of HERC, the side and/or back of a building.

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

A variety of commercial property improvements, repair, rehabilitation and restoration of storefronts and facades are eligible activities. Eligible grant activities include:

- **Signage** – Maintenance, repair, removal and replacement. Signs must conform to the Borough of Hatfield Building Code and the Zoning Ordinances for the Borough of Hatfield (if applicable).
 - Types of signs recommended and their definitions are as follows:
 - Flush Signs are meant to be viewed from a distance. They are visible when you are directly facing a structure’s façade or from across the street. Flush signs should be placed on vacant panels above doors or display windows.
 - Projecting Signs are meant to attract the attention of pedestrians as they hang over the sidewalk. This type of sign is most effective on buildings abutting a sidewalk.
 - Freestanding Signs are appropriate when a structure is set back ten or more feet from the sidewalk. They alert people of a business when its structure may be partially hidden from pedestrian or vehicular traffic.
 - Window signs are applied on the inside of display windows or doors.
 - Placement of signs should exhibit the following characteristics:
 - Use of display windows for creative signage.
 - Placement of signs and awnings may not cover or overwhelm architectural details such as cornices, trim, windows, decorative brickwork or other unique architectural features.
 - Orientation of signs should be geared to sidewalk pedestrians and vehicular traffic. Avoid extraneous information on signs and scale them to attract attention of vehicular traffic.
 - Limited signs on storefront display windows and doors. Signs should be sized and scaled to balance and should not hide or overwhelm the structure.
 - Construction and Design guidelines for signs are as follows:
 - Return to or re-create period signage, utilizing lettering characteristic of the period. Sign material and design should reflect the period of the building and the original design of the storefront.
 - Colors of signs and awnings should compliment the overall color scheme of the building’s façade and downtown streetscape.
 - Use artisan-crafted signs & quality sign materials manufactured specifically by the sign industry.
 - Use graphic elements and details of the building and architectural motifs as part of the sign design when feasible.

- Lettering should be kept to a minimum. The message should be brief and to the point. A logo or illustration can be substituted or included to communicate the nature of the business.
- Multiple signs are to be avoided when one sign is sufficient so as to avoid confusion and distraction. Small secondary signs used for direction purposes are acceptable so long as they maintain the same design elements of the main identification sign. Freestanding sandwich signs advertising daily specials or events are acceptable so long as they maintain the same design elements of the main identification sign.
- **Lighting** for signs should adhere to the following:
 - They are to utilize external lighting fixtures rather than internally lit plastic features.
 - The use of flashing lights is not permitted.
 - Sign lighting should be directed to the sign itself and not used to light the surrounding area. Separate fixtures should be used for area lighting.
 - Lighting fixture design, if visible, should be consistent across the façade and compliment the architectural period of the building.
- **Awnings** – Installation, repair, and maintenance of fabric awnings in connection with real property improvements. Characteristics of approved awnings are as follows:
 - Both fixed position and retractable awnings are acceptable.
 - The name and nature of the business may be displayed on the front face and/or side facings so long as simple lettering designs are used and the message is brief.
 - Awnings may be used on street level and upper stories so long as they are appropriate to and maintain the architectural style of the façade.
 - Weather-treated canvas or natural looking materials are to be selected. Plastic awnings are not appropriate.
 - An awning should not be oversized; it should fit within the storefront area and not cover architectural elements.
- **Brick and Stone Masonry** – Structural repairs, cleaning, repointing, and painting.
- **Architectural Metals** – Repair, cleaning, refinishing, painting, duplication and restoration of exterior doors and installation of storm windows in conjunction with other significant façade improvements.
- **Doors and Upper-Story Windows** – Maintenance, repairs, replacement, and restoration of window sashes, exterior doors and installation of storm windows in conjunction with other significant façade improvements.
- **Exterior Woodwork** – Maintenance, repair, rehabilitation and restoration of sills, window and door frames, bulkheads, storefront and roof cornices, window hoods, decorative moldings.
- **Storefronts** – Removal of inappropriate coverings and additions, maintenance, repair, rehabilitation, and restoration of display and transom windows, lighting.
- **Painting** – Surface preparation, cleaning, painting.
- **Landscaping, Streetscaping and Parking** – Installation of landscaping and streetscaping (hardscaping, for example: paving and fencing, or softscaping, for example: plant and shrub materials) during a façade and/or parking area renovation.

Eligible activities will be evaluated based on appropriateness of design, impact on the program area and objectives, as well as order of receipt of application.

INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

- General and/or minor Maintenance Projects
- Temporary Signage
- Roofing or Siding Repairs
- Sidewalks, Driveways, Parking Lot Repairs

TERMS OF GRANT AWARD

Grants of 50% of a project cost, up to a maximum reimbursement of \$1,500, are made on a cost reimbursement basis, following a process of application, design review and approval, and satisfactory construction completion in accordance with the program requirements.

- All Borough financial obligations must be met before applicant is eligible for approval of funds.
- Receipt of grant awards is contingent upon submission of construction cost invoices from bona fide contractors or tradesmen.
- A joint façade improvement project (with 2 or more properties that share a common wall) is eligible for grants up to \$1,500 per property.
- One grant per storefront will be considered for tenant/leaseholder/owner applicants.
- All work must conform to local and state ordinances: permits from the Borough of Hatfield and/or permission from the property owner will be required, if applicable.
- All work must be completed in a manner consistent with the work described in the approved Façade Improvement Small Project Grant Application. Reimbursement will be made upon completion of the project. Proof of payment must be provided in order for the reimbursement to be issued.
- The applicant must submit to the Hatfield Borough Economic Revitalization Committee documentation that substantiates the work is complete.
- All work must be completed within 3 months of the grant approval date; otherwise the grant may be forfeited.
- Project costs are inclusive of appropriate Pennsylvania sales taxes.

DESIGN STANDARDS

Project activities must conform to:

- The Secretary of Interior's *Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* (see Attachment "A")
- Hatfield Borough Zoning Ordinances

GRANT APPLICATION AND APPROVAL PROCESS

- Obtain a Hatfield Borough Economic Revitalization Committee Façade Improvement Small Project Grant Application. Applications are available at the Municipal Office of Hatfield Borough, 401 S. Main St., Hatfield, PA, and mailing address of PO Box 190, Hatfield PA 19440. Telephone: 215.855.0781.
- Submit to the above address the completed Application inclusive of the following:
 1. Applicant identification and contact information.
 2. Property owner identification if different from applicant.
 3. Property location
 4. Written project description, and any design plans, drawings, photographs, etc.
 5. A written cost proposal from bona-fide tradespeople, contractors, and/or suppliers).
 6. Signature of the applicant and property owner (if different from applicant).
- The Façade Improvement Sub-Committee of the Hatfield Borough Economic Revitalization Committee reviews the application for completeness and conformance to Program design standards within 30 days of receipt.
- The Sub-Committee recommends formal action to the Hatfield Borough Economic Revitalization Committee at their next scheduled meeting.
- All applications are subject to approval by the Hatfield Borough Economic Revitalization Committee as a condition of the grant award.

TO APPLY

Applications may be obtained at the office of the Borough of Hatfield, 401 S. Main Street, Hatfield PA, 19440. For more information, please call 215.855.0781.

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ATTACHMENT “A”

SECRETARY OF INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION

& GUIDELINES FOR REHABILITATING HISTORIC BUILDINGS

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site environment.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, other visual qualities, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials, shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken with the gentlest means possible.
8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If the resource must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize a property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.