

# HATFIELD BOROUGH ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE

## DESIGN CHALLENGE GRANT GUIDELINES FOR STOREFRONT AND FAÇADE IMPROVEMENTS

### INTRODUCTION

The Hatfield Borough Economic Revitalization Committee Design Challenge Grant Program provides matching grants of up to \$2,500 available to commercial property owners or business owners with property owner approval to encourage restoration of building facades and enhance the appearance of storefronts in the business district. The design challenge grants are intended to stimulate private investment in the preservation of historic downtown architecture and to foster image-making improvements to downtown commercial properties.

An attractive image is of critical importance to the success of any commercial area. Façade and storefront improvements are proven to be one of the most effective approaches to enhancing a downtown area's image and economic vitality.

### ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

- All grant applications will be accepted for any commercial property within the corporate limits of the Borough of Hatfield. However, priority consideration will be given to commercial properties located within the designated target area, Hatfield Borough's Core Commercial District (CC).

### ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

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

### DESIGN STANDARDS

Project activities must conform to:

- *The Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* outlined by the Secretary of Interior
- The Program Policies set forth in the Design Challenge Grant Guidelines
- The Hatfield Borough Downtown Zoning Ordinance

### DESIGN ASSISTANCE

Referrals as to professional designers may be obtained by contacting the municipal office of the Borough of Hatfield.

### 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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### PROGRAM POLICIES

#### **PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

Funding for the Hatfield Borough Economic Revitalization Committee Design Challenge Grant Program is made possible by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development through the Pennsylvania Main Street Program. The Hatfield Borough Economic Revitalization Committee administers the program. Matching grants are available for storefront and façade improvements in the downtown area of Hatfield Borough. 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 Design Challenge Grant Program is intended to stimulate private investment in the downtown area of Hatfield Borough. The program seeks to preserve and restore historic downtown architecture and to foster image-making improvements to all downtown commercial properties regardless of their historic significance.

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

- Enhance the visual appeal of downtown 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
- Reduce or eliminate vacancies in the core of downtown Hatfield while promoting adaptive reuse of commercial buildings

#### **ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS**

Any person(s) or legal entity that owns or leases downtown commercial buildings is eligible to apply. Applications by lessees/tenants require the consent of the property owner.

#### **PROGRAM GEOGRAPHIC BOUNDARIES**

All grant applications will be accepted for any commercial property within the corporate limits of the Borough of Hatfield. However, priority consideration will be given to commercial properties located within the designated target area, Hatfield Borough's Core Commercial District (CC). After grant applications from properties located in the Core Commercial District have been exhausted, other applications will be considered as of the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of the Grant Year.

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### PROGRAM POLICIES

#### **ELIGIBLE PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES**

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

- **Signage** – Maintenance, repair, removal and replacement in connection with real property improvements. Signs must conform to the Borough of Hatfield Building Code and the Zoning Ordinances for the Borough of Hatfield Core Commercial District.

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 and 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 directions 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:

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- 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 letting 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 building components, e.g., cast iron, pressed tin
  - **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 facade and/or parking area renovation
  - **Design Assistance** – Architectural, historic preservation, and graphic design services (note: professional design fees are reimbursable through the grant for up to 10% of eligible project costs up to a maximum of \$500 per building)

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
- Interior Renovations and Improvements
- Plastic Signage
- Roofing or Siding Repairs
- Sidewalks, Driveways, Parking Lot Repairs
- New Building Construction
- Improvements to Sides or Backs of Buildings (note: the side of a commercial building situated on a corner property is eligible so long as the building's side is fully exposed to a street that is part of the Core Commercial District)

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### PROGRAM POLICIES

#### TERMS OF GRANT AWARD

The Hatfield Borough Economic Revitalization Committee Design Challenge Grants are the first phase of a broader planned effort to restore downtown image and character through a combination of grants and below market rate loans. Grants are awarded on a 50/50 matching cost basis. The maximum Design Challenge Grant that may be awarded is \$3,500 for projects costing \$5,000 or more. Grants 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.

- 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 \$3,500 per property or 50% of the total project cost, whichever is less.
- 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 Design 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 6 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 for the Core Commercial District

#### GRANT APPLICATION AND APPROVAL PROCESS

- Obtain a Hatfield Borough Economic Revitalization Committee Design Challenge Grant Application (see Attachment "C"). Applications are available at the Municipal Office of Hatfield Borough, 401 South Main Street, Hatfield, PA 19440, tel: 215.855.0781 MAILING ADDRESS: PO BOX 190
- 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, design plan, drawing, schematics, photographs, etc. Professional design consultation is strongly recommended to assure compliance with the Program design standards.
  5. Matching funding verification (must include a minimum of two (2) written cost proposals from bona-fide tradespeople, contractors, and/or suppliers)

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6. Signature of the applicant and property owner (if different from applicant)
- The Storefront & Façade Design 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 Board of Directors of the Hatfield Borough Economic Revitalization Committee at their next scheduled meeting.
  - All applications are subject to approval by the Hatfield Borough Economic Revitalization Committee Board of Directors as a condition of the grant award.

**HATFIELD BOROUGH ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE**

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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.
10. 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.