

HIGHLIGHTS

- The program will offer up to \$20,000 per commercial occupied/available storefront address for an approximate expenditure of \$32,000.
- The program will fund up to a maximum of \$6,500 for architect services.
- The applicant must first pay for the work and provide proof of payment before the reimbursement is given.
- The building must be located in the area designated for the FIP.
- The whole process could take from six (6) months to one (1) year to complete.
- All approved reimbursement grants are subject to availability of funds.
- All projects must adhere to the FIP and design guidelines in addition to the Secretary of the Interior Standards.
- Local and UCC code regulations are not superseded by the FIP Program guidelines.
- All projects must conform to HUD requirements including prevailing wage, equal employment opportunity and other regulations.
- Vacant storefronts must be occupied within 60 days of completion of the renovation.
- A five-year mortgage at 0% interest, reduced by 20% each year, is placed on the building for the amount of the grant.

THE FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

FOLLOW THESE STEPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT:

STEP 1: PRE-APPLICATION

⇒ Contact The Community Development Program at (724) 847-3889 for a pre-application packet which contains the program and design guidelines as well as other helpful information.

⇒ Submit your pre-application to your Local Revitalization Organization for approval. The contact person is listed on the cover letter that comes with your pre-application packet. If you do not own the building, the building owner must agree to the work and a five-year 0% interest mortgage on the building.

⇒ Do not do any work on your facade prior to receiving notice to proceed in writing from the Community Development Program.

STEP 2: FINAL DESIGN AND HISTORIC REVIEW

⇒ The final design and color selections must be approved by the Local Revitalization Organization. All projects must adhere to the FIP Design Guidelines provided with your pre-application packet.

⇒ Because the rebate grant is HUD funded, State Historic Review will be conducted if the building is over 50 years old. This process may take 2 months or more.

STEP 3: BIDS

⇒ Pre-bid meeting. The project manager will review the program requirements and bidding process with you. Bid packets will be made available which include the scope of work and drawings, prevailing wage rate, instructions and guidelines.

STEP 4: PRE-CONSTRUCTION

⇒ Once your contractor is chosen, a pre-construction conference is held. Your contractor must agree to abide by the federal prevailing wage rate, Equal Employment Opportunity, and other regulations which will be reviewed at the meeting.

⇒ The agreement is signed by you and the County Commissioners and is passed by resolution at their regular public meeting. You will need to enter into a contract with the contractor.

STEP 4: CONSTRUCTION AND DOCUMENTATION

⇒ After the contract is signed, you will receive written notice to proceed. Work can be started at this time. Most projects must be completed within 90 days. If the work completed does not comply with the scope of work in the agreement, the rebate will not be granted. The applicant must insure that all necessary documentation is submitted to the Community Development Program.

⇒ Periodic and final inspection of the work is done.

STEP 5: REIMBURSEMENT AND MORTGAGE

⇒ The reimbursement is processed. All necessary documentation must be submitted before the reimbursement is processed.

⇒ A mortgage in the amount of the reimbursement is filed against the property. This mortgage is 0% interest rate and is reduced 20% each year for five years until reduced to 0.

⇒ After five years, the mortgage may be satisfied. Call the Community Development Program for details.