



FAÇADE REHABILITATION GRANT PROGRAM

PURPOSE:

The objective of the façade grant program is to provide assistance for the maintenance, rehabilitation, and upgrading of existing commercial properties within downtown Hazleton. The grant program is intended to stimulate building improvements while being mindful of the historical significance and uniqueness of downtown architecture. This program is designed to enhance the appearance of the district, and indirectly, make a positive statement about downtown Hazleton's business climate.

SPONSORS:

The matching grant program is funded by the Downtown Hazleton Alliance for Progress (DHAP), which has been made possible by support from the First Federal Charitable Foundation. The objective of this program is to promote joint public/private action and investment, which will complement and enhance other downtown revitalization efforts.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

All properties located within the boundaries of the downtown area as defined by the attached Project Eligibility Area Map (Appendix A) are eligible for this program. Projects will also need to be in conformance with the City's zoning ordinance and the Downtown Hazleton Overlay District Zoning Ordinance.

PROGRAM APPLICANTS:

Building owners may submit an application under this grant program.

GRANT TERMS:

Grants approved under this program shall not exceed \$5,000 per building. Higher preference will be given to program applicants that commit to providing a 50% match of his or her own capital to the total project cost, either in the form of cash or a loan. Grant amounts will be determined at the time the application is approved, based on estimates, but final payment will not occur until DHAP certifies project completion. Program applicants that provide matching funds must submit the original receipts for all materials and labor incurred in the completion of the project (originals can be returned once verified).

ADDITIONAL FUNDING

Should the project approved under this program exceed the grant amount, the property owner will be required to pay the difference. Low interest city façade rehabilitation loans are available through the Community Development office. Interested applicants can contact Fallon Fermin for more information about the loan program: 570-459-4965.

CRITERIA: Priority will be given to storefronts that are located within the "Priority Improvement Area" as delineated in the Strategic Downtown Revitalization Plan. The Priority Improvement Area generally encompasses all properties fronting along Broad St. between Cedar and Vine; properties fronting along Green and Maple Streets between Pine and Church; and properties fronting along Laurel, Church, and Wyoming Streets between Chestnut and Maple. DHAP reserves the right, due to funding limitations, to prioritize the projects that it believes will result in the greatest positive impact to the revitalization effort.

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES:

Façade grant money shall only be used for exterior repairs and renovations on commercial storefronts and facades that front on public streets. For this program, "storefront" is defined as follows: The exterior front surface of a building, which abuts the street from grade to the eave or fascia line. Improvements above the storefront level, including roof repairs and

roof replacement, are not eligible. Adding historic roof features may be considered storefronts if it is determined that they are visible from a main commercial street, or significant in meeting the goals of the program.

Exterior eligible expenses include but are not limited to the following:

- New windows and doors
- Decorative exterior lighting fixtures
- Canvas awnings (as appropriate to building design; to be determined by DHAP)
- Structural and surface repair of exterior walls and overhangs
- Signage
- Repainting
- Renovation/replacement of exterior devices and lighting fixtures

DESIGN STANDARDS:

All improvements must conform to Downtown Hazleton Overlay District Ordinance and other applicable codes or ordinances, as well as particular design and preservation practices that may be requested by the Overlay District Review Committee, including but not limited to paint color schemes, signage, materials, and window styles.

APPLICATION SUBMITTAL:

To be formally considered for a grant request, an application must be completed in full and submitted to the DHAP office (20 W. Broad Street, Hazleton). Program applicants must meet with DHAP Executive Director prior to filing an application in order to discuss the details of the proposed project, and develop a façade rehabilitation design schematic. Both the property owner and DHAP may solicit quotes from qualified contractors. DHAP reserves the right to choose the contractor.

APPLICATION REVIEW:

DHAP shall review submittals to determine that all information is complete and to assure compliance with the general design recommendations. It will be the program applicant's responsibility to proceed with procuring any and all required permits through the City of Hazleton, as needed. If the proposed design does not meet the required guidelines, DHAP will meet with the program applicant to discuss solutions to satisfy the grant eligibility requirements. Once the design is approved the program applicant will receive notice from DHAP committing grant money to the project, and work with DHAP staff to proceed with the grant agreement, design details, permitting, contractor selection, and renovation. Once a plan is approved it must be followed. Should a program applicant deviate from the approved plan without pre-approval from DHAP, DHAP may elect not to release the grant money.

WORK PROGRESS AND COMPLETION:

DHAP may review the project progress as needed during the period in which actual renovation work is being performed in accordance with all elements of eligibility and as agreed upon at the time of application approval. Upon completion of the work the program applicant will issue a written Notice of Completion to DHAP. The Notice will signify that the agreed upon work has been completed and, if required, the work has been approved by the Building Inspector or by the City of Hazleton Code Department. All work must be completed within the time period agreed upon or amended between the program applicant and DHAP. If needed, documentation of the program applicants matching investment must be supplied. Following receipt of the Notice, DHAP will review the improvements for meeting the façade improvement concepts.

MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT:

A condition to the grant funding is that the property owner agrees to maintain the façade improvements for a ten year minimum period following acceptance of the work. No other changes shall be made to the façade during this ten year period (including the addition of new signage, paint, windows, etc. or the removal of features), without written approval from DHAP.

DRAWING DOWN GRANT MONEY:

If all the following work completion conditions are met, DHAP will issue payment in the form of a dual payee check to the Program Applicant and Contractor in accordance with the Contractor's proposal for services.

INDEMNIFICATION OF DHAP:

As a condition of receiving the grant money, the Program Applicant, property owner and contractor will fully indemnify DHAP for any claims of any kind related in any way to the rehabilitation work or issuance of the grant.