

City of Bradford Central Business/Historic District Facade Improvement Program

INTRODUCTION

The City of Bradford Facade Improvement Program is a matching grant program designed to encourage community investment and revitalization through the rehabilitation of existing commercial facades within the Central Business/Historic District of the City of Bradford.

In addition to facade grants, the City of Bradford administers a low-interest loan program. Additional funds to qualified applicants can be made available to assist with project costs.

GOALS

- To improve the appearance of downtown Bradford and make it more inviting for shopping and business activities.
- To develop a clean and attractive environment that encourages new businesses to locate in Bradford.
- To restore the historic character and highlight the architectural details of downtown Bradford's buildings, using the principles of historic preservation as a basis.

OUTREACH

Owners of commercial properties in the Central Business/Historic District of the City of Bradford will be informed of the availability of the Facade Program funding through public meetings, radio and newspaper releases and personal contact. Interested applicants will be requested to contact the OECD for information, guidelines and application packets.

THE FACADE PROGRAM

The Facade Program will provide qualified and eligible applicants with funds to assist in the rehabilitation of structures within the Central Business/Historic District of the City of Bradford. Funding is provided in the form of a matching grant. A facade improvement grant must be matched and may only be used to finance the physical rehabilitation of the facade of the structure.

ELIGIBILITY

The Bradford Central Business/Historic District:

Any commercial building located within the area along Main Street from the High Street intersection to the Mechanic/South Avenue intersection and all streets perpendicular to Main Street and all other areas within the National Historic District as adopted by the City of Bradford Ordinance General File #2866.2, or latest revision, are eligible to participate in the Downtown Commercial Facade Program.

Building owners or tenants are eligible. However tenants must receive approval by signature from the building owner to do the work.

The types of activities that are eligible under the City's Facade Program include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Cleaning of exterior surfaces using the gentlest effective means possible
- Repair/Restoration of historic features
- Replacement of missing historic features provided adequate documentation exists.
- Repointing
- Painting (only if building was originally painted)
- Repair/Replacement of windows
- Roof repair or replacement
- Repair/Restoration of historic commercial street-level Facades
- Replacement of non-conforming commercial street-level Facades
- Awnings or other exterior window treatments
- Signage
- Architectural services

All work activities must follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (www.nps.gov/hps/tps/standguide/) to be eligible. Facade changes must be consistent with existing or preferably earlier appearance of the building. Any project over \$25,000.00 will require the payment of State Prevailing Wages to all workers hired for the improvements.

The types of activities that are not eligible under the City's Facade Program, include but are not limited to, the following:

- New construction
- Property acquisition
- Interior improvements
- Sidewalks
- Landscaping
- Working capital
- Machinery and equipment
- Furniture and fixtures
- Inventory and accounts receivable

Types of Grants:

Architectural Design – Any applicant who is doing a major facade rehabilitation (more than a paint scheme) requiring the services of an architect shall be eligible for a 50% grant not to exceed \$500.00.

Facades – Facade improvements in the form of painting, cleaning, repair of facade, repointing of brick, and window and roof repair and replacement.

Awnings – Any applicant who shall purchase or repair existing awnings, which includes awnings and necessary hardware, is eligible for a 50% grant.

Signage – Replacement of existing signage is eligible for a 50% grant.

Combinations – Applicant may apply for any combination of the aforementioned categories, however the maximum grant award is 50% of total costs up to \$5,000.00. In such cases, separate estimates should be received for these individual components of the project.

Funding – Project will be funded on a 50/50 basis up to the allowable limit of \$5,000.00.

Selection of Properties

The OECD will review applications for funding. If more applications are received than there is money available, grants shall be awarded for available funds on a first come first serve basis to eligible applicants. Applicants not funded could re-apply if additional funding should become available.

An applicant can only submit one application per property for any funding round. Any future applications for the same property would have to be for distinctly different work and funded from a subsequent round of funding. (It should be noted that funding rounds are not necessarily annual.) If for any reason the program is undersubscribed the OECD reserves the right to consider funding a second project from the same round of funding providing the work is distinctly different. Additionally, if any applicant does not undertake the planned work for a period of more than six months, the OECD reserves the right to award those funds to another ready to start, eligible project. The non-performing applicant would then have to re-apply for future funding.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Each potential recipient of the facade program must comply with the following application procedures. Completed applications will be time dated and processed in the order of receipt. However, the OECD will not consider any application with incomplete or missing information.

1. Facade applications are available at the OECD office at located at 20 Russell Boulevard, Bradford, PA.
2. Applications are to be returned to the OECD office when completed.
3. The OECD reviews the application and makes a recommendation on the approval of the grant with consideration based on the following criteria:
 - a. The completeness of the application and all documentation.
 - b. Selection and utilization of historic colors from historic color pallets.

- c. Types of materials used that adhere to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (www.nps.gov/hps/tps/standguide/).
- d. Sensitivity to the contrast of the project against adjoining properties in order to complement the adjoining properties.
- e. The review and approval of the Historical Architectural Review Board. (on all properties in the Historic District.)
- f. The issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness by City Council.
- g. The OECD forwards project information to Bradford City Council to vote on at their next scheduled meeting.
- h. When the approval process is complete, the attached Program Agreement must be signed prior to commencement of work.
- i. We are using one grant application for the building owners and business owners, with a maximum grant of \$5,000.00 per applicant, per project. It will be up to the OECD to decide how each grant is funded.

APPLICATION PACKAGE

1. Application packages are available by contacting the OECD, 20 Russell Boulevard, Bradford, PA 16701.
2. Fill out and sign the application form and facade renovation program agreement. Return the completed application form to the Main Street manager's office with the following required supportive documentation:
 - a. Verification of ownership (Copy of Deed and if other than the owner is applying, written approval from the owner.)
 - b. Tax Statement (evidence that real estate taxes are current.)
 - c. Verification of Property Insurance
 - d. Two copies of a color photo of facade to be rehabilitated.
 - e. Copies of two formal quotes/bids for the work to be done.

*Note: Applications will be accepted, but will be processed only as long as funds are available.

PROJECT PROCEDURES

Initial Project Meeting

Once the application is received and reviewed for accuracy, the OECD may contact the applicant to schedule an Initial Project Meeting to become familiar with the project work. At this time the OECD can work with the applicant on the details of the project and offer assistance on design.

Upon the completion of the Initial Project Meeting, the following process describes the course of the facade program. The order and necessity of each step will be determined on a case-by-case-by-case basis depending on the requirements for each facade project:

- 1. Initial Inspection** - A representative from the OECD will conduct an initial inspection of the condition of the existing facade to detect existing health, building and safety code deficiencies related to the facade of the structure. The applicant will meet with the OECD to review scope of work. An architect will be required when facade projects propose changes to the design and placement of windows and/or structural changes to the building. Architect fees up to \$500.00 can be financed through the program.

- 2. Design Review** - The OECD will review the work write-ups and if applicable, accompanying architect's drawings for each project and provide approval or make recommendations for the alternatives if deemed necessary. All facade projects must follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (available online at www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/standards/preservation.pdf) and must be approved by the OECD prior to commencement of work.

Additionally or concurrently to this review, projects located in the Historic District must apply for a review by the Historical Architectural Review Board and attain a Certificate of Appropriateness by Resolution of the City of Bradford.

- 3. Contractor Bidding** - The Owner will then solicit at least two bids from qualified contractors to perform the rehabilitation work. (A qualified contractor is defined as one regularly doing business as a contractor, being able to acquire and maintain insurance and have experience with similar projects.) The bids will then be reviewed for completeness and given to the OECD for attachment to the application.
- 4. Board** - The OECD will make recommendation to City Council to approve the project for one half of the project amount up to \$5,000.00.
- 5. Financing** - If the Applicant/Owner has secured the required matching funds, the required permits and certifications the project will advance to the APPROVAL phase. If the Applicant/Owner requires financial assistance to provide the required match, he/she may submit an application to the OECD for low-interest loan consideration.
- 6. Determination of Eligibility** - The OECD will determine that the owner is eligible for assistance based on the application documentation, rehabilitation specifications, and financial ability.
- 7. Contract Signing** - An agreement between the OECD and owner will be executed.
No Work Can Begin on Project until Contracts are Properly Executed.
- 8. Rehabilitation Monitoring** - As work progresses the OECD, as a service, along with the owner will monitor the rehabilitation of the property to assure contract compliance. In the event the scope of the project changes due to unforeseen circumstances the OECD will work with the applicant to insure the project remains eligible for any approved funding.
- 9. Final Inspection, Payment and Project Closeout** - As this is a reimbursement program, checks will be issued to the owner or applicant only after a paid invoice(s) from the contractor(s) has been provided to the OECD, all work items for which payment is requested are inspected and confirmed completed and the City has sufficient time to process a payment. Final inspection of the work will be done by the OECD with the owner/applicant. Final payment will only be made after all work has been satisfactorily completed and the owner has received all warranties and guarantees. If the work is not complete, as per the specifications, final payment will not be approved and payment will be withheld until all work is completed or corrected.

As this is a 50/50 reimbursement grant program, checks will be issued as payment for half of all paid invoices presented up to the approved amount. Final payment will be issued to the owner or applicant upon the approval of the OECD.

**City of Bradford
Facade Improvement Program**

**Application Form
Part I**

DATE: _____

PROPERTY ADDRESS: _____

OWNER(S): _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

If Applicant is a Tenant without interest in the property to be rehabilitated, the following information is required:

TENANT(S): _____

ADDRESS: _____

BUSINESS NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

The following items of documentation MUST be submitted for this Application to be considered complete:

1. Tax Statement (Tax Verification letter included with Application Packet)
2. Verification of Ownership (Copy of Deed/Leasehold Interest in Real Estate documentation)
3. Two copies of a color photo of facade to be rehabilitated

OWNER SIGNATURE

TENANT

OWNER SIGNATURE

TENANT

Part II

Please complete the following information as accurately as possible.

Total Project Cost: \$ _____ Number of Current Jobs: Full Time _____

Part Time _____

Number of Anticipated New Jobs Created: Full Time _____

Part Time _____

City of Bradford Facade Improvement Program Agreement

Conditions

1. All proposed improvements must be pre-approved by the OECD
2. All improvements are subject to 30-day inspection by the OECD.
3. Upon final inspection – Matching grant funds will be paid to the applicant by paying half of all invoices up to a maximum of \$5,000.00.

Disclaimer

I herby acknowledge that I understand the terms and conditions of the Matching Grant Program, and this signature so indicates my intent to meet the specified terms if the application is approved.

I understand further that, upon grant authorization, this project is approved for payment only in strict accordance with the Facade Improvement Program Guidelines design which are attached to this application and herby made part of this agreement.

I further understand that change orders are not eligible, and that failure to comply with this agreement may jeopardize receipt of grant funds.

Applicant Signature

Date

Design Approval and Grant Authorization

The OECD is recommending approval of grant funding in the amount of _____ (50% of project costs up to a maximum amount of \$5,000.00). This amount is good for six months from the date of signature below.

OECD

Date