



Renovating your storefront can be exciting and challenging. An inviting storefront attracts customers and enhances the downtown. Renovating a storefront takes time, focus and money, but the final product of a good renovation will be well worth it.

The Facade Improvement Program (FIP) enables building or business owners to renovate their storefronts and receive reimbursement up to \$20,000 per commercial occupied/available storefront address.

Grants for facade renovations are also available for smaller projects such as signs, awnings, painting, etc.

Participating downtowns include: Aliquippa, Ambridge, Beaver, Beaver Falls, Bridgewater, Freedom, Midland, Monaca, New Brighton, and Rochester.

Highlights

- Receive up to \$20,000 per commercial occupied/available storefront address for an approximate expenditure of \$32,000. The building must be located in the area designated for the facade improvement program.
- The program will fund up to a maximum \$6,500 for architect services.
- The Facade Improvement Program is a grant reimbursement program. The applicant must rst pay for the work and show proof of payment before the reimbursement is given.
- The whole process could take from 6 months to one year or more 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.
- All projects must conform to HUD requirements including prevailing wage, equal employment opportunity and other regulations.
- Vacant storefronts must be occupied within 60 days.
- A five-year mortgage, reduced by 20% each year, is placed on the building for the amount of the grant.

The Facade Improvement Process

Follow these steps for a successful facade improvement project:

STEP 1: Pre-application

- Contact The Community Development Program at (724) 770-2040 for a pre-application packet, which also contains the program and design guidelines as well as other helpful information.
- Submit your pre-application to your local revitalization organization for approval. The name and address of the contact person is 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 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

- If you do not have a final design approved by the Local Revitalization Organization, you must decide on the final design. All projects must adhere to the FIP Design Guidelines and Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation provided with your pre-application packet.
- Because the reimbursement grant is federally funded through U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development, State Historic Review is required if the building is over 50 years old. This process may take 2 months or more.

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STEP 3: Bids

- Pre-bid meeting. The project manager will review the program requirements with you. Bid packets at The Community Development Program.

STEP 4: Pre-Construction

- The agreement is signed by you and the County Commissioners and is passed by resolution at their regular public meeting.

STEP 5: 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 done does not comply with the scope of work in the agreement, the reimbursement 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 6: 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 led 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.

To find out if your storefront is eligible for a facade renovation grant contact:

The Community Development Program of Beaver County
1013 Eighth Avenue
Beaver Falls, PA 15010 , (724) 770-2040

The Board of Beaver County Commissioners:

Sandie Egley, Chairman

Daniel Camp III

Tony Amadio