

Storefront Improvement Program Guidelines

City of Philadelphia, Department of Commerce



Program Description

The purpose of the Storefront Improvement Program is to encourage businesses and property owners within eligible neighborhood commercial corridors (see attached list) to improve their storefronts, making these areas more attractive to shoppers and growing their vitality and economic performance. The program reimburses owners of commercial buildings and businesses up to 75% of the total cost of eligible improvements, for a maximum reimbursement of \$10,000 for a single commercial property or \$15,000 for a multiple address or corner business property.

Applicant Eligibility Requirements

Applicants must be the owner(s) of a commercially occupied property or an operating tenant businesses with approval of property owners. Storefront improvement projects must be on an eligible corridor. Projects located within one block of an eligible corridor will be evaluated on a case by case basis. Eligible properties must be occupied by a business that provides goods or services that are available to neighborhood residents. Office and industrial buildings are generally not eligible. Unoccupied properties may be considered but must be occupied within six months of approval to be eligible for reimbursement. Applicants must be operating legally, properly registered, licensed with the City of Philadelphia and current with all city taxes, including but not limited to taxes, licenses, water revenue billings etc, as well as any assessments due to Business/ Neighborhood Improvement Districts or Special Services Districts. A property improved under this program may apply for the maximum \$10,000 or \$15,000 allowances no more than once every five years, with exception of signage/awning costs for a new business. **Applications submitted after construction has begun will not be considered.**

Project Eligibility Requirements

Improvements must be made to the exterior and visible to the public and preserve and enhance the historic and architectural integrity of buildings. Typical projects include:

- Masonry/Brick pointing
- Exterior painting
- Exterior doors
- See-through security grills
- Cornices
- Windows/glazing
- Exterior façade lighting
- Signage and awnings

Ineligible Improvements: Projects which use solid security grates, vinyl awnings, or EIFS (synthetic stucco); reduce the size of masonry openings/ eliminate windows; or cover previously uncovered masonry (e.g. brick, stone, limestone, etc.) with paint, stucco, siding, etc. are NOT eligible.

Design Review: Applications will be reviewed by a design committee who may suggest changes or require specific changes to the proposed work for the application to be approved and be eligible for reimbursement. In areas with local design guidelines and processes, applicants should consult the local guidelines and seek feedback on their proposal from their local organization first.

Historic District Requirements: Projects within areas with special design controls or within historic districts must comply with those requirements.

Labor Requirements: This program is funded in part with Community Development Block Grant Funds. As a result, Federal Labor Standards Requirements for Construction wage costs apply and onsite labor must be paid at the area prevailing wage. This may increase your project costs. **For additional information on Prevailing Wage Rates please contact Perritti DiVirgilio- Director Labor Standards Unit at 215-686-2132 or Juan Ortiz Jr.- Wage Compliance Inspector at 215-686-7089.**

Application Process

- 1) **Meet with your relationship manager at the property to review the program guidelines and application and to discuss and begin planning your project.** Your relationship manager will be either a representative of a neighborhood organization responsible for the commercial corridor where your business is located, or a City staff person. To find out the relationship manager for your area, call Ana Fuentes-Program Assistant at (215) 683-2032.
- 2) **Contact your relationship manager when you have completed the program application and gathered the required documentation.** The application must include:
 - a) Photos of your building clearly showing all areas to be improved and at least one photo showing the entire front facade of your building. Photos must be submitted electronically via email.

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- b) An illustration of the work you would like to do. A hand drawn sketch, a printed-out digital picture with written notes, a photo with post-it notes attached or an architect's rendering all are acceptable. If your project includes signs or awnings, ask your contractor to prepare a picture of what the new sign or awning will look like for review.
 - c) Estimates from two licensed contractors are required. We recommend you secure at least three. All applicants must seek proposals from businesses owned and controlled by minority persons (MBEs), women (WBEs) or disabled persons (DSBEs) as described below.
 - d) A letter from building owner (if this is not you) granting permission for the proposed work.
- 3) **Fully documented applications should be delivered by email to SIP@phila.gov or by mail to: Ana Fuentes, Commerce Department, 1515 Arch Street, 12th floor, Philadelphia PA 19102.** Applications will be reviewed for completeness. You and your relationship manager will be notified that the application has been received and whether anything is missing. For additional information about SIP applications contact Giana Lawrence-SIP Manager at 215-683-2017. Incomplete applications will not be considered.
 - 4) **Complete applications will be reviewed by a design committee within two weeks of receipt.** The committee may require specific changes for an application to be approved.
 - 5) **Applicants must NOT commence work until written approval from the City is received.**
 - 6) **Approved applicants should proceed with the agreed upon scope of work and in compliance with any special conditions set forth in the award letter.** If you who wish to change the scope of work from what was approved or wish to use a new contractor, you must submit new estimates and a revised proposal for review and approval. **Approved applicants have up to six (6) months to complete proposed improvements.**
 - 7) **All contractors and sub-contractors must submit weekly certified payroll documentation that employees were paid at prevailing wage rates.** Certified payrolls must be mailed in to **Juan Ortiz Jr., Office of Labor Standards, Municipal Building Services, 1401 JFK Blvd, Room 170 C, Philadelphia PA 19102.**
 - 8) **Upon completion, applicants must submit the following for reimbursement:**
 - a) Invoices for labor cost must include signed certified payroll documentation that employees were paid at prevailing wage rates.
 - b) Payment verification by way of copies of cancelled checks (front & back) or credit card statements. If you pay your contractor in cash we will be unable to reimburse you.
 - c) Copies of any required permits
 - d) Color photographs of the completed work.

Additional Program Requirements

Economic Opportunity: As part of Mayor Nutter's Strategic Plan for this Administration, a goal to create and retain jobs by fostering an improved business environment has been established. One of the strategies designed to achieve this end is strengthening supports to minority, women, and disabled residents and businesses. All applicants certify to make "best and good faith efforts" to include businesses owned and controlled by minority persons (MBEs), women (WBEs) and disabled persons (DSBEs) in their projects. In exercise of "best and good faith efforts" applicants for this program must solicit MBEs, WBEs and DSBEs for participation in the project. NOTE: Potential M/W/DSBE project participants can be found in the City of Philadelphia's Office of Economic Opportunity Registry of Certified Firms. Contact Jennifer Wise at OEO at 215-683-2071 or review the online registry at <http://www.phila.mwdsbe.com>) or the Pennsylvania Unified Certification Program's Directory of Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (<http://www.paucp.com>). Approval letters will advise applicants whether they will be required to report on "best and good faith efforts" as a condition of receiving the rebate offered by this program.

- Funds are awarded on a first-come first-served basis.
- The amount that this program is able to approve for reimbursement will not always be equal to 75% of the eligible costs or the maximum amount due to availability of funds and restrictions in how program funds can be spent.
- Restaurants that serve alcohol will be asked to document that a significant portion of their revenue comes from food sales. Bars that cannot provide this documentation will not be eligible. Restaurants may be asked to submit a copy of their menu.
- Improvements to buildings occupied by non-profits will be evaluated on a case by case basis and will only be eligible if the non-profit uses the space to provide services or programming that are open to the public. Churches and schools are not eligible.

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Eligible Pedestrian-Oriented Neighborhood Commercial Corridors

Corridor	Blocks
22 nd Street	2700-3100 N. 22 nd 1900-2300 Allegheny
29 th & Dauphin	2300 N. 29 th
40 th Street & Girard Avenue	3800-4100 Girard 1100 N 40 th & 41 st
40 th Street & Market Street	100 N. – 200 S. 40 th 4000 Market St.
45 th Street & Walnut Street	4400-4600 Walnut 100-300 S. 45 th
48 th Street & Spruce Street	4700-4800 Spruce 300 S. 48 th
52 nd Street & Market Street	100 N. – 300 S. 52 nd
54 th Street & Berks Street	1800-2000 N. 54 th
5 th Street & Hunting Park Avenue	4200-4700 N. 5 th
5 th Street & Lehigh Avenue	2600-3100 N. 5 th 400-500 W. Lehigh
5 th Street & Olney Avenue	5300-5700 N. 5 th
5 th Street & Roosevelt Boulevard	4800-5200 N. 5 th
60 th Street & Market Street	100 N. – 300 S. 60 th
63 rd Street North	1200-2100 N. 63 rd
7 th Street & Porter Street	1900-2500 S. 7 th
9 th Street	800-1200 S. 9 th 700-1000 Washington Avenue
Baltimore Avenue	4000-5400 Baltimore
Broad Street & Snyder Avenue	1900-2100 S. Broad 600-1500 Snyder
Broad Street & Ridge Avenue	1400-1800 Ridge 700-800 N. Broad 1400-1900 Fairmount
Broad Street & Cecil B. Moore Avenue	1400-1900 Cecil B. Moore 1400-1600 N. Broad
Broad Street & Susquehanna Avenue	2200 N. Broad 1400-1500 Susquehanna
Broad Street & Germantown Avenue	3400-4000 Germantown 3600-3800 N. Broad
Broad Street & Olney Avenue	5500-5900 N. Broad 5700-5900 Old York Road 1300 Olney
Castor Avenue	5800-8200 Castor
Chester Avenue	5400-5800 Chester
Chew Avenue & Cheltenham Avenue	5600-5700 Chew 700-800 E. Cheltenham
Elmwood Avenue	6300-7300 Elmwood
Frankford Avenue – New Kensington	1200-3100 Frankford
Frankford Avenue – Frankford	4000-5300 Frankford

Corridor	Blocks
Frankford Avenue – Mayfair	6200-8500 Frankford
Front Street & Kensington Avenue	1700-2300 N. Front 2400-2600 Kensington
Germantown Avenue & Lehigh Avenue	2500-2900 Germantown
Germantown Avenue – Nicetown	4100-4400 Germantown
Germantown Avenue – Lower	4900-5300 Germantown
Germantown Avenue – Central Germantown	5400-6200 Germantown Maplewood Mall, 100 E. – 300 W. Cheltenham
Germantown Avenue – Lower Mt. Airy	6300-6500 Germantown
Girard Avenue East	000-800 E. Girard
Girard Avenue – Front -9 th Streets	000-900 W. Girard 900-1100 N. Marshall
Girard Avenue & Broad Street	1000-1800 W. Girard 900-1300 N. Broad
Girard Avenue West	2500-2900 W. Girard
Kensington Avenue & Allegheny Avenue	2800-3600 Kensington
Lancaster Avenue – UCD	3400-3700 Lancaster
Lancaster Avenue – PEC	3800-4300 Lancaster
Lancaster Avenue	4400-6200 Lancaster
Lansdowne Avenue	5900-6200 Lansdowne
Logan Business District	4700-5100 N. Broad 4700-5100 Old York Road 4700-4900 N. 11 th St 1200-1600 Loudon
Market Street – West Philadelphia	4600-6300 Market
Ogontz Avenue & Cheltenham Avenue & Washington Lane	6400-8000 Ogontz 1800-1900 Cheltenham 1900 Washington Lane
Oregon Avenue	600-1300 Oregon
Parkside Avenue	4700-5100 Parkside
Passyunk Avenue	1200-1900 E. Passyunk
Point Breeze Avenue	1200-1700 Point Breeze
Richmond Street & Allegheny Avenue	2300-2700 E. Allegheny 3100 Richmond
Ridge Avenue & Cecil B. Moore Avenue	1900-2400 Ridge 1900-2300 Cecil B. Moore
Rising Sun Avenue	5700-7700 Rising Sun
Stenton Avenue – Tulpehocken to Barringer	6100-6400 Stenton
Torresdale Avenue	5200-7200 Torresdale
Wayne Avenue	4700-5000 Wayne
Woodland Avenue – West	4600-4800 Woodland
Woodland Avenue – Southwest	5800-6600 Woodland