

# 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 50% of the total cost of eligible improvements, for a maximum reimbursement of \$8,000 for a single commercial property or \$12,000 for a multiple address or corner business property.

## Eligible Applicants

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 or have a signed lease agreement 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 \$8,000 or \$12,000 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.**

## Eligible Improvements

Improvements must be 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

*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.

*Security Improvements:* Security improvements such as cameras and alarm systems will be eligible as part of a larger storefront improvement project. Applicants who apply for security improvements only will be subject to design review as described above. Exceptions will be made when applicants document that they have recently been the victim of a crime.

*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.

## 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 (215) 683-2025.
- 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.
  - 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.

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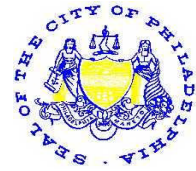
- c) Estimates from licensed contractors detailing 1. on-site labor and 2. offsite material and fabrication costs. Note that an SIP award can only reimburse documented costs for materials (such as doors, windows, or signs) and not the labor portion of the project. Two estimates are required. We recommend 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 mail to Ana Fuentes, Commerce Department, 1515 Arch Street, 12th floor, Phila PA 19102 or [SIP@phila.gov](mailto:SIP@phila.gov).** Applications will be reviewed for completeness. The applicant and their relationship manager will be notified that the application has been received and whether anything is missing. 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) **The applicant must NOT commence work until written approval from the City is received.** Approved applicants have up to 6 months to complete proposed improvements.
  - 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.** Applicants who wish to change the scope of work from what was approved, or who wish to use a new contractor, must submit new estimates and a revised proposal for review and approval.
  - 7) **Upon completion, applicants must submit the following for reimbursement:**
    - a) Invoices. Note that the breakdown of on-site labor and offsite material and fabrication costs must be documented by contractor in final invoices. Invoices for materials purchased by contractor may be required.
    - 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 Directory of Certified Firms. Contact OEO at 215-686-6232 or review the online directory at <http://o eo.phila.gov/directory.asp> or the Pennsylvania Unified Certification Program's Directory of Disadvantaged Business Enterprises at <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.
- This program is funded in part with Community Development Block Grant Funds. As a result, Federal Labor Standards Requirements for Construction wage costs may apply. This may increase your project costs.
- 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 50% 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.
- Projects within areas with special design controls or within historic districts must comply with those requirements.
- 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
22nd Street	2700-3100 N. 22nd, 1900-2300 Allegheny
29th & Dauphin	2300 N. 29th
40th Street & Girard Avenue	3800-4100 Girard, 1100 N. 40th & 41st
40th Street & Market Street	100 N.-200 S. 40th, 4000 Market
45th Street & Walnut Street	4400-4600 Walnut Street, 100-300 S. 45th
48th Street & Spruce Street	4700-4800 Spruce, 300 S. 48th
52nd Street & Market Street	100 N. - 300 S. 52nd
52nd Street North	600-1700 N. 52nd
54th Street & Berks	1800-2000 N. 54th
5th Street & Hunting Park Avenue	4200-4700 N. 5th
5th Street & Lehigh Avenue	2600-3100 N. 5th, 400-500 W. Lehigh
5th Street & Olney Avenue	5300-5700 N. 5th
5th Street & Roosevelt Boulevard	4800-5200 N. 5th
60th Street & Market Street	100 N.-300 S. 60th
63rd Street North	1200-2100 N. 63rd Street
7th & Porter Streets	1900-2500 S. 7th
9th Street	800-1200 S. 9th St., 700-1000 Washington
Baltimore Avenue	4000-5400 Baltimore Avenue
Broad Street & Snyder Avenue	1900-2100 S. Broad, 600-1600 Snyder
Broad Street & Ridge Avenue	1400-1800 Ridge Avenue, 700-800 N. Broad Street, 1400-1900 Fairmount Avenue
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 Avenue
Castor Avenue	5900-7200 Castor Avenue
Chester Avenue	5400-5800 Chester Avenue
Chew & Cheltenham Avenues	5600-5700 Chew Avenue, 700-800 East Cheltenham
Chew & Washington Lane	6300-6800 Chew Avenue
Chinatown	800-1100 Arch Street, 800-1100 Race, 800-1100 Vine, 100-200 N. 9th, 10th & 11th
Elmwood Avenue	6300-7300 Elmwood Avenue
Frankford Avenue - New Kensington	1200-3100 Frankford
Frankford Avenue, Frankford	4000-5300 Frankford
Frankford Avenue, Mayfair	6200-8500 Frankford
Front Street & Kensington Avenue	1700-2300 N. Front Street, 2400-2600 Kensington Avenue
Germantown & Lehigh Avenues	2500-2900 Germantown Avenue

Germantown Avenue, Nicetown	4100-4400 Germantown Avenue
Germantown Avenue, Lower	4900-5300 Germantown
Germantown Avenue, Central Germantown	5400-6200 Germantown, Maplewood Mall, 100-300 East Cheltenham, 100-300 West Cheltenham
Germantown Avenue, Lower Mt. Airy	6300-6700 Germantown
Girard Avenue East	000-800 East
Girard Avenue, Front-9th Streets	000-900 West Girard, 900-1100 N. Marshall Street
Girard Avenue & Broad Street	1000-1800 West Girard, 900-1300 N. Broad
Girard Avenue West	2500-2900 West Girard
Kensington & Allegheny Avenues	2800-3600 Kensington
Lancaster Avenue	3800-6200 Lancaster Ave.
Lansdowne Avenue	5900-6200 Lansdowne
Logan Business District	4700-5100 N. Broad, 4700-5100 Old York Road, 4700-4900 N. 11th, 1200-1600 Loudon Street
Market Street, West Philadelphia	4600-6300 Market Street
Ogontz & Cheltenham Avenues & Washington Lane	6800-8000 Ogontz, 1800-1900 Cheltenham, 1900 Washington
Oregon Avenue	600-1300 Oregon Avenue
Parkside Avenue	4700-5100 Parkside Avenue
Passyunk Avenue	1200-1900 East Passyunk Avenue
Point Breeze Avenue	1200-1700 Point Breeze Avenue
Richmond Street & Allegheny Avenue	2300 East to 2700 East Allegheny Avenue, 3100 Richmond Street
Ridge & Cecil B. Moore Avenues	1900-2400 Ridge Avenue, 1900-2300 Cecil B. Moore
Rising Sun Avenue	5700-7700 Rising Sun
South Street West	900-2200 South Street
Stenton Ave, Tulpehocken to Barringer	6100-6400 Stenton Avenue
Torresdale Avenue	5200-7200 Torresdale Avenue
Wayne Avenue	4700-5000 Wayne Ave
Woodland Avenue	4600-4800 and 5800-6600 Woodland Avenue