



THE REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF MEADVILLE COMMERCIAL FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM GUIDELINES

PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM

The purpose of the RDA Commercial Façade Improvement Program is to preserve the historic integrity of our buildings and increase the curb appeal of retail businesses in downtown Meadville, enhancing the character of Meadville, attracting new customers and injecting life into our downtown. The goal of this program is to leverage private improvements while making revitalization efforts affordable, creative, and community-based.

TARGET AREAS & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

The target area for this project is the downtown business district, specifically Arch St. (southern boundary) to North St. (northern boundary) and Water St. (western boundary) to Liberty St. (eastern boundary). Projects outside of this target area will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

Approval of applications will be considered based on strength of proposals and readiness to begin work, funding availability, and Community Development priorities. Proposals will be scored and selected by the Committee based on the following priorities:

- Projects supporting the overall goals of the City's Comprehensive Plan
- Projects improving economically distressed areas by eliminating blight, improving property values, creating and retaining jobs, and enhancing commercial viability
- Severely deteriorated buildings with negative impact on the community
- Projects advancing disadvantaged business entities, defined as a minority-owned business, a woman-owned business or a small business
- Properties with significant Codes Enforcement history
- Prominent highly visible locations such as major intersections or locations on major arterials
- Businesses located in pedestrian oriented business districts
- Vacant buildings being returned to active use
- Buildings located in areas where other public investment is taking place
- Projects that leverage maximum private investment

FINANCING

- \$50,000 total set aside from RDA's Community Revitalization fund
- Loans/grants will be administered on a rolling basis as funding allows

Loans

- \$40,000 of total project funds set aside for loans
- Loans at minimum of \$500 and maximum of \$5,000 at 2% interest rate
- 3-year payback period

Grants

- Each loan will be accompanied by a grant.
- Loans of \$500 - \$2,000 will be accompanied by a \$250 grant
- Loans of \$2,001 - \$5,000 will be accompanied by a \$500 grant
- No payback is required of grant portion



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APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications for the Façade Improvement Program will be available as funding allows. To begin the application process and to receive additional information about the program, call the Redevelopment Authority at (814) 724-6000 or email swrubleski@cityofmeadville.org. Applicants will be required to complete the program application and provide a project timeline, renderings of proposed changes, and specifications of the proposed façade improvement work to the Façade Committee for approval. Proposals must pass a threshold review for eligibility, and will then be reviewed for quality and impact of the proposed improvements. Below are the steps in the process:

1. Submit a Letter of Interest, which can be found in our program brochure or online at www.cityofmeadville.org/facade.
2. A member of the RDA's Façade Program Committee will contact you within a week to confirm receipt of Letter of Interest and to set up a face-to face meeting to discuss your proposal.
3. Committee will meet with you to discuss your proposal and to begin working with you to assemble an eligible design and a competitive application. This may also include making you aware of pertinent ordinances and connecting you to helpful resources.
4. Once your project proposal is ready, the Committee will provide you with an application.
5. Submit your application to the Committee.
6. The Committee will meet to evaluate and score applications. Applications will primarily be scored according to the economic development criteria in the application.
7. Applicant will then be notified of status of application.
8. The Committee will present recommendations to the Redevelopment Authority Board for final approval.

ELIGIBILITY

Who can apply?

Any building owner or store proprietor/tenant with lease authority or verified authorization from the owner can apply for funding. Properties must be commercial, mixed use commercial-residential with the commercial space on the first floor, or a residential property turning commercial. A recipient may utilize the Façade Improvement Program in conjunction with other public and private financial resources. Property owners may receive assistance for more than one building based on funding availability.

- Eligible buildings are commercial and mixed commercial/residential with facades visible from the street. New construction will not be considered for this program.
- Applicants should be aware that buildings containing or that will contain residential units may require lead hazard abatement. The cost of lead hazard abatement is not an eligible expense under the façade program and will be the total responsibility of the owner.
- Applicants must be current on all property taxes, mortgages and insurance. Existing mortgage(s) on the property must be current and in good standing for a minimum of 12 consecutive months immediately prior to the submission of an application. Both City and County property taxes on all real property owned by the applicant must be up to date.



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Eligible Activities

Façade renovation activities must involve the general upgrading of a building's external appearance in compliance with the Design Guidelines and Design Review process. Examples of eligible activities are:

- Exterior cleaning, painting and/or paint removal
- Masonry repairs and tuckpointing
- Repair/replacement/preservation of historically significant architectural details
- Storefront reconstruction
- Removal of metal siding
- Cornice repair
- Awnings and canopies
- Window and door repair or replacement
- New exterior signage
- Repair or rehabilitation of signage
- Removal of inappropriate or out-of-date signage
- Exterior lighting
- Repair/replacement of gutters and down spouts
- Façade building code items
- Visible roof repairs relating to the building's façade and known by RDA staff before an application is submitted to the appropriate design review committee.
- Utility/trash enclosures
- Decking and stairs
- Side and rear building façades where improvements will serve to cause the removal of a blight designation

DESIGN GUIDELINES

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis.

COMMITTEE

The Façade Improvement Program Committee shall consist of two RDA board members and three community persons and will be assisted by one RDA staff person.

CONTACT

Questions can be directed to the City's Community Development Coordinator

Renna Wrubleski
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City of Meadville
swrubleski@cityofmeadville.com
814-724-6000 ext. 333