



## Wilmington Downtown Incorporated

### Facade Improvement Program POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

*Updated 8/30/17*

Wilmington Downtown Incorporated (WDI) has designed a pilot Facade Improvement Program to stimulate new investment in Downtown. The Program is also intended to provide an economic incentive for renovating building facades, to encourage quality design and construction that enhances the historic character and the appearance of the area. The Program is also designed to improve the business setting and safety of the area and to provide a timely application and review process. The following policies and procedures will govern the Facade Improvement Program:

**Facade Improvement Program:** WDI may make grants at its complete discretion to property owners or tenants who submit complete applications that WDI determines meets the goals of the program. The Facade Improvement Program (FIP) will be made available to renovate or restore the front wall of any structure facing a street, from the top roof line to the ground level of the structure, including each floor. A building containing multiple, ground floor storefronts or tenants with access from the street will be considered as having one facade. Any commercial, institutional, mixed-used or residential property in zoned Commercial Business District (CBD) may be eligible for FIP grant funds. FIP funds will be considered based on the program's goal and additional factors such as visibility of the property and size of the investment.

**Funding:** The FIP fund will be capitalized on an annual basis and funds are subject to availability. Funding for FY 17-18 is from the Downtown Municipal Service District and totals \$15,000.

**Terms:** FIP funds will be made available on a matching basis. Awards for any building range up to \$2,500 or 50% of the façade renovation project, whichever is less. The award of any grant is based on WDI's discretion and the current availability of funds. Storefronts situated on corner properties with façades facing two streets are eligible for up to \$5,000 in matching funds or 50% of the project cost, whichever is less.

FIP funds may be made available to finance the design and construction of a building facade that will result in significantly improving the architectural and/or historical integrity of the building. Eligible projects must stress quality design and workmanship to enhance the appearance of the entire building and contribute to the fabric of the center city. The design must meet the architectural standards and, if applicable, obtain approval from the City of Wilmington's Historic Preservation Commission. Examples of significant projects that will be considered for funding include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Removing stucco or similar non-historic siding;
2. Repairing or replacing cornices;
3. Repairing or replacing windows;

4. Repointing brick and masonry work and/or adding structural support to failing structures;
5. Repainting brick and masonry facades, exterior window frames, and other façade features;
6. Adding historically compatible materials or features to the front of a building;
7. Repairing or restoring transom windows;
8. Repairing or restoring original storefront features; and/or
9. Installing appropriate awnings and signs.

FIP funds will not be allocated for projects that are inappropriate or incompatible with the design of surrounding structures or to the historical context of Downtown. The project must also address deficient architectural elements of the facade. Properties owned by non-profit, governmental or religious organizations are ineligible from receiving Façade Improvement Program grants as they are tax exempt. In addition, funds will not be allocated for the following items:

1. Roof improvements;
2. Plumbing improvements;
3. HVAC improvements;
4. Any work within the interior of the building or on any exterior portion of the building facing an alley;
5. Projects that are considered minor improvements such as painting a portion of the façade or only installing a sign;
6. Property acquisition;
7. Constructing a façade for a new building; and,
8. Working capital.

*Construction activity shall not begin prior to funding authorization from WDI.* Any construction activity that commences prior to WDI's funding commitment may disqualify the project from receiving any facade improvement program funds. Funds will not be disbursed if the completed project does not meet the renovation plan, minimum standards established by WDI or if incomplete cost documentation is submitted.

**Administration:** All FIP applications will be reviewed by the Work Committee of Wilmington Downtown Incorporated. The final decision to award funds for the project will be made by WDI's Executive Committee.

The Work Committee and WDI staff will assist applicants in planning and implementing the proposed project. The assistance includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Conduct research on properties to identify original features of a building facade;
2. Review building design features with the applicant or applicant's designee and recommend specific design elements for the facade;
3. Facilitate and coordinate access to architects, contractors, urban designers or other

- professionals, as needed;
- 4. Facilitate and coordinate the City's building permit process;
- 5. Assist and monitor construction activities and compliance.

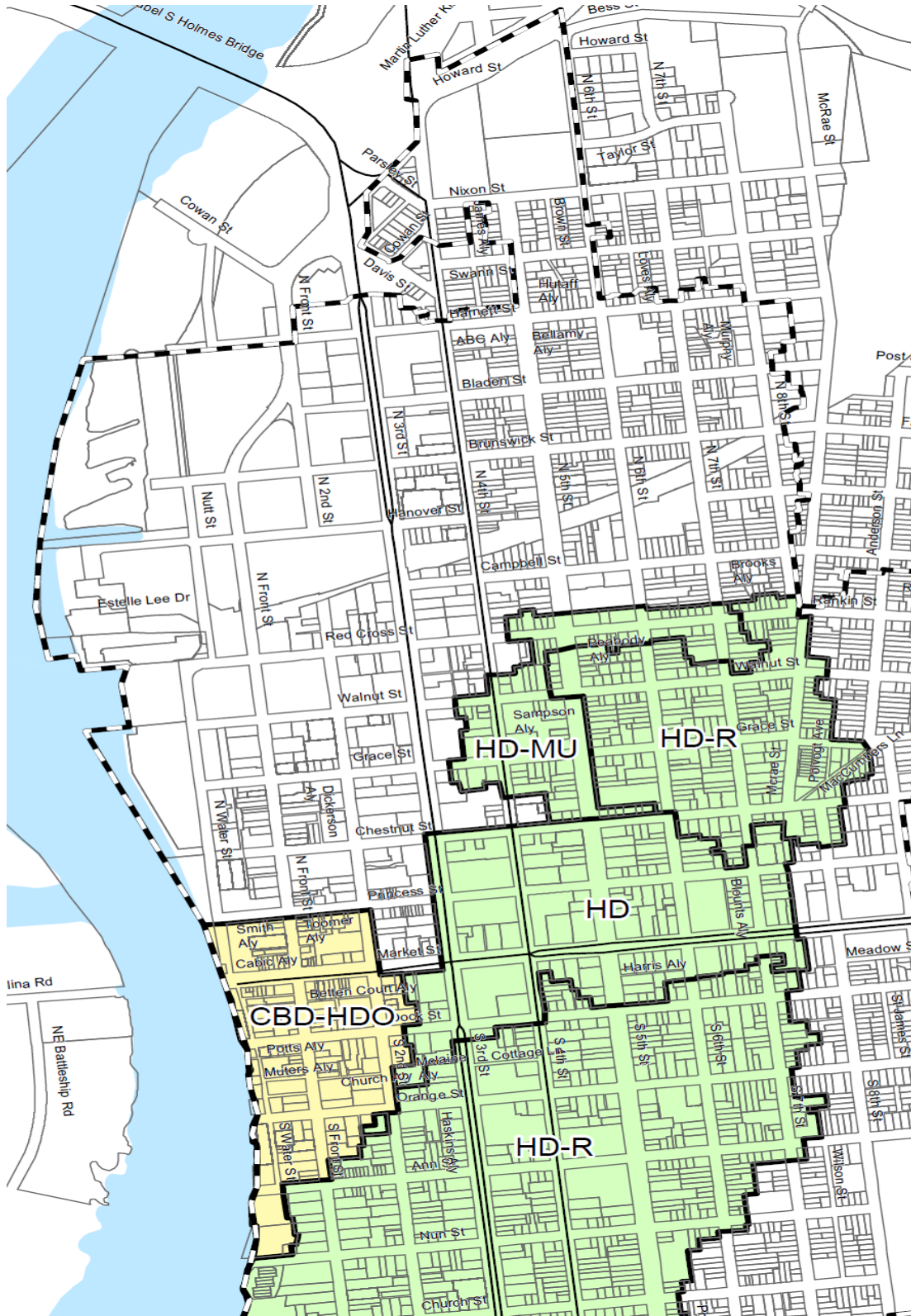
In addition to WDI volunteers, the Work Committee may be augmented by representatives of the City of Wilmington to review the applicant's qualifications and insure that the proposed project meets the established design guidelines.

The denial of any grant application by WDI's Work Committee shall be appealable for review to the Board of Directors of Wilmington Downtown Incorporated.

**Matching Grant Application Process:** The Façade Improvement Program application review process will be as follows:

1. A prospective applicant contacts WDI staff to obtain an application package and review design requirements.
2. An applicant submits a complete application package to WDI staff with all required attachments. Applications must include historical data on the facade; photos documenting existing façade conditions; renderings of the proposed work to include materials and colors; and a construction estimate for the renovation work.
3. WDI's Work Committee conducts a project and design review as soon as possible, with a goal to be complete within 30 working days.
4. If the project and design review are favorable, the Work Committee will forward the grant application to WDI's Executive Committee for final action. The Executive Committee will review the recommendation, normally within 20 working days.
5. At its complete discretion, the WDI Executive Committee may grant FIP funds to the applicant.
6. If the grant application is approved, WDI staff issues a letter of commitment to authorize funding, subject to the review of the finished construction and a determination that the project meets the terms of the facade improvement plan.
7. If the grant application is denied, the applicant will be notified in writing of the reason(s) for the rejection. A rejected application may be re-submitted provided it satisfies the objectives stated. A rejected application may also be appealed to the WDI Board of Directors.
8. WDI staff monitors construction activities. Funds will be paid to the applicant once the work is complete, after WDI receives invoices for the work and after WDI has completed a satisfactory inspection of the work.
9. A portion of the FIP monies may be advanced by WDI after a large portion of the work is completed and documented, if needed.
10. During construction, WDI will be allowed to install a sign to acknowledge matching grant funds for the project.

Review and approval is required by the Historic Preservation Commission prior to exterior building renovation or construction projects within the shaded areas. Contact the City of Wilmington at 910.341.3251 for information.



**WILMINGTON DOWNTOWN INCORPORATED**  
**FAÇADE GRANT PROGRAM**  
**APPLICATION**

**APPLICANT INFORMATION**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ FAX: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

DO YOU OWN OR LEASE THE BUILDING: \_\_\_\_\_

*If leased, please provide a letter of authorization from the building owner*

**BUILDING INFORMATION**

BUILDING ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

PRESENT USE: \_\_\_\_\_

PROPOSED USE: \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER OF FLOORS: \_\_\_\_\_

IS THE BUILDING IN THE HISTORIC DISTRICT: \_\_\_\_\_

WAS THE FAÇADE EVER RENOVATED OR ALTERED: \_\_\_\_\_

WHEN: \_\_\_\_\_

HOW: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

DOES THE FAÇADE HAVE ANY STRUCTURAL DAMAGE OR AREAS IN NEED OF MAJOR REPAIR? \_\_\_\_\_

IF SO, EXPLAIN: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**RENOVATION INFORMATION**

PLEASE DETAIL, AS SPECIFICALLY AS POSSIBLE, THE TYPES AND EXTENT OF THE PROPOSED REHABILITATION TO BE COMPLETED. (Attach separate sheet if necessary):

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

\*\* In addition to the information provided here, attach any architectural plans you may have for the renovation proposed.

IF NEW GLASS IS BEING INSTALLED, IS IT TRANSPARENT? \_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_ NO

**PLEASE ATTACH A CURRENT PHOTOGRAPH OF THE BUILDING AND ANY HISTORICAL PHOTOGRAPHS YOU MAY HAVE.**

PROVIDE HERE OR ON A SEPARATE SHEET A DETAILED COST ESTIMATE OR CONSTRUCTION BID (Façade rehabilitation ONLY):

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE**

I understand the limits, design review and other requirement of this program. If approved, I agree to complete the project according to the plans or specifications discussed in this application and give Wilmington Downtown Incorporated (WDI) the right of inspection of the finished work and to provide copies of all paid invoices pertaining to the work described. I also agree to allow Wilmington Downtown Incorporated (WDI) to use illustrations of the project within its publications and advertisements.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Applicant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Owner (If different from Applicant)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date