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## Downtown Dover Partnership **FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

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A PROGRAM TO HELP GIVE YOUR BUSINESS A WINNING EDGE.

## Purpose

A variety of financial incentives are available for rehabilitation and preservation work performed in the Downtown Dover Business Improvement District. These incentives are intended to stimulate economic growth while improving the appearance and preserving the historic integrity of Downtown Dover.

## Improvement Programs

### Façade Improvement Grant for Active Businesses

Matching grants from \$250 to \$2,500 are available for eligible improvements, subject to review and approval by the Downtown Dover Partnership Design Committee. Grant awards are subject to the availability of funds and the compatibility of the façade improvement project with the Design Standards and Guidelines for the City of Dover Historic District Zone. Paid invoices and receipts for approved projects are to be submitted for reimbursement within six (6) months of the notice of grant award.

### Façade Improvement Loan for Vacant Buildings

Loans from \$500 to \$2,500 are available for eligible improvements, subject to review and approval by the Downtown Dover Partnership Design Committee. Monthly payments, maximum two-year term, Prime Rate. Loan recipients are required to offer adequate collateral for the amount of the loan. Other terms and conditions may require the approval of the Downtown Dover Partnership Economic Development Committee. Loan applications will be accepted for those buildings that have been identified and registered by the City of Dover as being vacant under the provisions of Dover Code, Chapter 22, Article XII. A vacant building means a building, structure, commercial unit or storefront within a building that has been left unoccupied or unattended for three months or more. Loan awards are subject to the availability of funds and the compatibility of the façade improvement project with the Design Standards and Guidelines for the City of Dover Historic District Zone.

### Economic Development Improvement Loan

Loans up to \$10,000 are available for extensive façade improvements, subject to review and approval by the Downtown Dover Partnership Design Committee. Monthly payments, maximum five-year term, Prime Rate. Loan recipients are required to offer adequate collateral for the amount of the loan. Other terms and conditions may require the approval of the Downtown Dover Partnership Economic Development Committee. Loan awards are subject to the availability of funds and the compatibility of the façade improvement project with the Design Standards and Guidelines for the City of Dover Historic District Zone.

## Program Guidelines

Eligible applicants are owners of businesses or business properties, or are business tenants with landlord approval, located in the Downtown Dover Business Improvement District.

In order to ensure compatibility of funded projects with the Design Standards and Guidelines for the City of Dover Historic District Zone, façade work begun prior to receipt of funding is not eligible for the Façade Improvement Program.

### Priority

Grants and loans are reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis. Limit one award per business per year based on the anniversary of the initial grant award or loan.

## Eligible Improvements

Eligible improvements are for the preservation or rehabilitation of building exteriors, including all sides of buildings visible from the street or alley. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Masonry or siding repair, cleaning of façade, repair to facade, exterior painting.
- b. Repair or replacement of entrances, doors, windows, architectural detail, awnings.

- c. Removal, replacement of existing signage and exterior lighting.
- d. Installation of landscaping and site improvements.
- e. Fencing improvements.
- f. Other improvements which are compatible with Design Standards and Guidelines for the City of Dover Historic District Zone.

## Ineligible Improvements

- a. Construction of a new structure or facility, replacement of an existing structure with a new one, or a substantial addition to an existing building.
  - b. Demolition of an existing building.
  - c. Acquiring title to a structure or a property.
  - d. Business salaries, overhead, or similar operating costs of doing business.
  - e. Interior reconstruction, rebuilding, new installations, or the purchase of interior furnishings or equipment, except for storefront windows.
  - f. Improvements to structures devoted solely to residential use.
  - g. Legal fees, insurance premiums, licensing and permitting fees, or fees related to loans for eligible activities.
  - h. Architectural/engineering services, architectural renderings, site plans, cost estimates, related professional services.
- a) Distinguishing original qualities and character of the building are preserved; removal of historical or distinctive architectural features is discouraged.
  - b) Deteriorated architectural features can be repaired rather than replaced; if replacement is necessary, it is preferable that new materials match the original in design, color, texture, and the like.
  - c) Contemporary designs for alterations are acceptable as long as such designs are in accord with significant historical or architectural features and are compatible with the size, scale, color, material and character of the property and adjacent buildings.

## Review Procedures and Evaluation Criteria

In reviewing eligible improvements, the Downtown Dover Partnership Design Committee will consider the following criteria and recommend APPROVAL, APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS, or DENIAL.

Whether the project's design is compatible with the elements of the Design Standards and Guidelines for the City of Dover Historic Zone, Chapter 3, Maintenance, Repair, Preservation and Restoration of Existing Historic Buildings. Copy available upon request (pdf only). Generally:

Members of the Design Committee have professional expertise in a variety of fields, including but not limited to architecture, design, graphics, building code, engineering, and historic preservation. Applicants are encouraged to seek design and technical assistance from the Design Committee prior to submitting an application. ■

Applications are to be submitted to the Downtown Dover Partnership located at 14 The Plaza, Dover, DE 19901 • Telephone (302) 678-2940

**30-day review and approval**





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The Downtown Dover Partnership  
located at 14 The Plaza, Dover, DE 19901  
**Telephone (302) 678-2940**