

# *REDBANK RENAISSANCE, INC.*



## FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM MANUAL

### CONSIDERATIONS AND GUIDELINES

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**1. *Mission and Vision.*** All improvements should be consistent with these statements.

**-- *MISSION STATEMENT***

The mission of Redbank Renaissance is to direct a revitalization program, using our assets - Redbank Creek, picturesque landscape, Route 28/66 corridor and central tri-county location - to energize new and existing businesses and restaurants, add retail, improve infrastructure, create jobs and reinstate New Bethlehem and the Redbank Valley as an economic, cultural and recreational center that will create an even more attractive and wholesome place to raise a family, work and retire.

**-- *VISION STATEMENT***

New Bethlehem and the Redbank Valley area have a history and spirit of survival.

This spirit runs deep in every individual, family, business and municipality.

Redbank Renaissance has a vision that will capitalize on that spirit and history.

We will form partnerships and collaboratives with area universities, businesses and community groups to promote the revitalization, growth and future of the area.

This process will require improvement of infrastructure, continued improvement of buildings and streetscape, strengthening of existing businesses while encouraging the creation of new businesses, jobs and retail shops to sustain a strong economic climate.

Redbank Renaissance will capitalize on the assets of the region, its wholesome environment, nature's beauty, and transit on the Route 28/66 corridor, by utilizing recreational interests, commerce and tourism to maintain and energize the revitalization of the Redbank Valley area.

**2. *Why Should I Do A Building Improvement?***

Several studies have been conducted that give the economic facts to what we have known intuitively for some time: an improved exterior appearance improves the image of a downtown business, attracts more shoppers and increases sales. Close to home, Ridgway experienced a 25 to 50% improvement in same store sales in the year following as little as \$2500 to \$5000 in façade improvements. The University of Wisconsin conducted a study titled "Economic Effects of Storefront Improvement", and Main Street West Virginia conducted a similar survey titled "The Economic Impact of Storefront Improvements". In each study, interviews were conducted from a sampling of over 100 merchants in a total of 30 different communities.

The studies found that:

- Roughly 70% of the businesses reported an increase in sales after making façade improvements
- Roughly 85% also made interior improvements including new inventory and product lines, merchandising and window displays.
- A majority of improved buildings were owner-occupied or locally owned.
- Cost for façade improvements ranged from \$500 to \$60,000 and included everything from signs to total restoration.
- Well over 90% of all participants were very pleased with the renovations and had experienced favorable comments from customers.

“Wow!” you say. “But how much do sales increase, and are they just a flash in the pan, or are those increases sustained over time?”

Brenda Spencer, a former Main Street Coordinator whose master’s thesis in architecture addresses these issues, made an intensive study of six downtown businesses that had made physical improvements and could provide actual cost and sales data before and after the improvements.

Here’s a summary of Spencer’s study:

- The scope of improvements ranged from storefronts, signs, and/or awnings, and interior improvements.
- Most businesses were retail, with one restaurant and one service business.
- Façade improvements ranged from \$10,000 to \$60,000, with about half being in the \$10,000 to \$20,000 range. Typically, the façade improvement was 20-30% of the total rehabilitation costs.
- The most common concurrent business improvement was of a physical nature—merchandise layout and displays.
- All businesses **tripled** their annual increase in gross sales the year after making improvements.
- The majority of those businesses sustained nearly a tripled increase in sales during the years following the improvements.
- A majority of businesses that made improvements experienced an increase in sales after improvements above their own previous performance and above the performance of other local businesses for the same period.
- Two-thirds of the business owners stated that the physical improvements significantly impacted the sales increase.
- All of the businesses experienced favorable customer response and considered the improvements worth the investment.

Information from: <http://www.downtownbranson.org/aboutus.aspx?CatID=13&ArticleID=146>

### **3. Introduction to the Façade Improvement Grant Program**

*A financial incentive program for storefront improvement projects in New Bethlehem and the Redbank Valley.*

Redbank Renaissance, Inc. is a community based revitalization effort to improve the economic vitality of the Redbank Valley area and New Bethlehem's business district through a comprehensive design, promotion and business development program. It is currently funded by donations of local businesses and individuals. It is hoped that additional funds may be obtained through a grant from the PA Department of Community & Economic Development with support from the Borough of New Bethlehem, the Redbank Valley Chamber of Commerce, local businesses and community members.

If funding comes from the Commonwealth of PA, this facade grant program will be subject to the Prevailing Wage Act which specifies that if over \$25,000 is spent on the entire project, prevailing wage must be paid. For more information on whether your project is subject to the Prevailing Wage Act, contact the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry: <http://www.dli.state.pa.us> for a project assessment. Please check with Redbank Renaissance, Inc. to determine the source of funding.

*This is an Equal Opportunity Program. Discrimination is prohibited by Federal Law. Complaints of discrimination may be filed with the Secretary of Commerce, Washington, D.C. 20250.*

The Redbank Renaissance, Inc. (RRI) Facade Design Grant Program provides grants to commercial property owners, or business owners with property owner approval, to encourage restoration of building facades enhancing the existing appearance. The RRI Design Committee may utilize grant funding if received from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Main Street Program to serve as an incentive to stimulate private investment in facade renovations. It is hoped that the implementation of the Facade Design Grant will result in a more competitive and economically viable business district. Applicants remain fully and solely legally responsible to contractors for payment and RRI will not be a party to a contract with the contractor, suppliers or tradesmen. RRI recommends that 2 written estimates be obtained from contractors and that a formal written contract with specifications of work to be done and warranties be entered into with the chosen contractor after approval of the work to be done by RRI.

An attractive image is of key importance to the success of any commercial area. That image depends upon the appearance of the commercial area's individual building assets. Facade and storefront improvements are one of the most effective and proven ways of upgrading the image and ultimately attracting more business. The Facade Design Grant program also affords a property owner the opportunity to reverse past inappropriate architectural improvements. Many improvements do not need to be costly. Often a fresh coat of paint or a new sign or awning canopy may be all that is needed. Many commercial buildings throughout New Bethlehem and the Redbank Valley still retain architectural features that make them unique and authentic.

Property owners may find it beneficial to contract with a design architect, specializing in the rehabilitation/restoration of historic building facades. Examples are shown in this manual. A schematic design rendering, if required or desired by the property owner, provides an excellent design plan, which shows the building at its potential best. It typically addresses the design and modifications of the storefront and upper floors in such a way as to enhance the architectural integrity of the building. If the street level or storefront of the building has fallen victim to contemporary change over the years, such as the application of siding or metal panels, the architect can show in a rendering how the building could look if "brought back" in a way that enhances the original architectural design of the building. At the same time, it will address functional and financial requirements, as well as signage, awnings, and the actual paint color selection.

Approved Project Applications to improve building facades, will entitle the property owner or the business owner, with property owner's approval, to receive a funding grant for 50% of the project cost, but not to exceed a grant in the amount of \$5,000. Signage construction/replacement and awning replacement/repair programs are part of the facade improvement program. If DCED funds are obtained, Redbank Renaissance, Inc. will represent the Borough of New Bethlehem or appropriate jurisdiction and DCED for approval and administration of these funds.

This Facade Design Grant guideline manual is meant to serve as a guide. This manual cannot cover every situation nor solve every problem, but it can offer basic information about physical improvements, which have proven to be effective in revitalizing other commercial districts throughout Pennsylvania and in other states. In addition, the design guidelines establish a set of design principles to insure that improvements are consistent with the scale, character and history of the particular neighborhood and town as a whole. These principles stress good maintenance of existing original architectural features and compatibility of replacement architectural elements and any new additions. The manual is based in part on the National Main Street storefront guidelines and standards for rehabilitation of historic buildings. Ideas and resources are available at <http://www.preservationnation.org>.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Why is your storefront appearance important?**

In business, first impressions mean everything! It is the storefronts that sell the business - and the business district - to customers. An attractive appearance, combined with quality products, competitive prices and good friendly service, creates a compelling image that will increase commerce, profits, and community pride.

### **Who is eligible for store-front improvement grants?**

At this time, all business and commercial property owners in New Bethlehem's Broad and Wood Street district are eligible to apply for the Facade Improvement Grant Program. It is hoped that RRI will be able to expand the program in the future with increased funding.

### **What types of projects qualify?**

The following projects are eligible for assistance under the Facade Improvement Grant.

- Design Assistance
- Sign Repair and Replacement
- Awnings and Canopies
- Storefront facades
- Exterior paint and staining programs
- Exterior lighting

### **What types of projects are NOT eligible for funding?**

Work financed under these programs will exclude:

- Maintenance projects other than painting or staining
- Interior renovations and improvements
- Building permit and other miscellaneous fees
- Sidewalks and paving
- Landscaping
- Demolition or acquisition of property
- Improvement of solely residential properties

### **How much grant money is available?**

Redbank Renaissance, Inc. currently has a total of \$5,000 available for grants. An applicant may apply for any amount up to \$5,000 and must provide a 50% match of the total project cost. For example, if the project cost is \$500, the applicant must provide \$250 and RRI would consider a grant of up to \$250. If the project cost is \$10,000, the applicant would have to provide \$5,000 and the RRI maximum available grant would be \$5,000. If the program is successful, RRI may apply to DCED for a total of \$30,000 each year to stimulate private investment in historically appropriate facade and other improvements in the business district target area with potential grants of \$5,000 per applicant in any one year. Total reimbursement, per applicant, by RRI will not exceed 50% of the total project cost, excluding nonreimbursable items, such as, building permits or maintenance items.

### **What is the application process for the program?**

1. Secure and review a Redbank Renaissance, Inc. Façade Improvement Grant application and Grant Guidelines from RRI, any member of the Design Committee, or online at <http://www.redbankren.org>.
2. Submit a completed RRI Façade Improvement Grant Application including:
  - a. Applicant identification and property owner identification
  - b. Property location
  - c. Written project description
  - d. Two cost estimates of the project
  - e. Schedule for completion of the project

RRI will review the application for completeness and submit it to the Design Committee.

The Design Committee will review the application at their next scheduled meeting and forward a letter of approval to those individuals whose projects are chosen to receive funding through the grant program. A meeting with the applicant may be required to obtain approval. **GRANTS WILL NOT BE APPROVED FOR ANY PROJECT THAT HAS ALREADY BEEN COMPLETED AND ALL PROJECTS MUST RECEIVE PRIOR RRI APPROVAL.**

### **How Do I Get Reimbursed?**

1. Follow the design plan on which the funding agreement was based.
2. Have pre-approval by the Design Committee of any changes of the work in progress.
3. Complete the project, in a timely fashion, and submit invoices to the RRI Design Committee Chair for payment of the pre-approved grant amount.
4. Upon completion of the final inspection and approval by the Design Committee, the applicant will be reimbursed for 50% of the total project cost made jointly payable to the applicant and contractor or, if a paid receipt from the contractor is provided by the applicant, directly to the applicant.
5. Every effort will be made to reimburse the applicant in a timely manner. It is important that the project is **not** started until given approval by the RRI Design Committee. **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCE, SHALL REDBANK RENAISSANCE, INC. BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY COST OVERRUNS, TAXES OR OTHER EXPENSES THAN THE AMOUNT OF GRANT INITIALLY AWARDED.**

## 4. EXAMPLES OF WHAT CAN BE DONE

**Before:**  
Color and screening obscure architectural details.



**After:** a \$2500 grant for painting, lights and awning which yielded a 25% increase in sales.



**Before:** Note glass blocks, plain façade.



**After:** Paint, cornice, lighting and awnings



**Before:** All white façade covers architectural details.



**After:** This building was painted red with stone above and below windows and details painted white to highlight the details.



**Signage Styles –**  
**Hanging signs provide good visibility and charm. Historic markers add interest.**





**These buildings demonstrate an acceptable and preferred color scheme of the 1890 to 1930 period.**



**Colors within the approved options should be varied to complement adjoining or nearby buildings.**



**Hanging signs of this type are preferred.**

## **5. PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

### **REDBANK RENAISSANCE, INC. FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM**

#### **Grant Guidelines Summary**

1. Applicant must be a business property owner or tenant business located within the New Bethlehem business district. All tenant businesses must have the consent of all business property owners to submit the grant application.
2. Applications will be reviewed and evaluated and grants will be awarded by the Board of Directors of Redbank Renaissance Inc. The decision of the Board of Directors of Redbank Renaissance is final.
3. All grants will be 50% matching grants, in award amounts ranging from a minimum grant of \$100.00 (\$200.00 project cost) and a maximum grant of \$5,000.00 (\$10,000.00 project cost) depending upon the scope of the project. A total of \$5,000.00 is available to be awarded during the 2009 project year. Eligible activities include, but are not limited to, structural façade repairs, awnings, painting and staining, signs and lighting. Only approved work will be eligible for the RRI façade grant program. Prior approval of Redbank Renaissance must be received before any grant will be awarded or paid. Grants will not be awarded for work that has already been completed.
4. Applications will be reviewed on a first come, first served basis.
5. Grant awards will be based on the level of general improvement to the appearance of the business district of New Bethlehem contributed by the proposed project, the number of applications submitted and the grant amount requested by each applicant.
6. There is no guarantee of approval.
7. All grants will provide up to 50% reimbursement of the total approved and eligible project cost, up to a maximum grant of \$5,000.00.
8. All grant awards are based on availability of funding.
9. Distribution of grant funds to the owner/applicant will occur upon receipt of paid invoices only after all work has been completed according to the project design specifications and upon final inspection and approval by an authorized representative of Redbank Renaissance, Inc.
10. Owner/Applicants are required to obtain a minimum of two written (2) project bids, estimates or quotes for the project as proposed in the grant application.
11. Contractors hired to perform work for an approved grant project are required to provide the requisite proof of insurance and licensing, including, but not limited to, general liability insurance and worker's compensation. Written contracts are

recommended.

12. Redbank Renaissance, Inc. Design Committee must approve any and all changes to the agreed upon project as presented in the grant application, including, without limitation, color changes, from the original project specifications as set forth in the approved grant application. Failure to comply with this process will result in forfeiture of all grant funding. Every effort will be made by the Design Committee to work with the property owner if unexpected difficulties arise during the construction phase, without compromising the overall design.
13. The Redbank Renaissance Design Committee will serve as project liaison between the property owner and Redbank Renaissance, Inc.
14. All projects must be completed by October 31<sup>st</sup> of the year in which notification of approval is received or by such other deadline as may be set by Redbank Renaissance.
15. The property owner and/or business tenant is required to meet with the Design Committee prior to the commencement of work activities and at regular intervals during the project.
16. The following documents must accompany this application:
  - a. Copy of a valid lease or current deed as verification of ownership or authorized use of the property.
  - b. Proof of property insurance for the subject property.
  - c. Verification that all real estate taxes are paid and current.
  - d. Verification of availability of matching funds.
17. Neither Redbank Renaissance, Inc., the Redbank Renaissance Design Committee, Design Committee Chairperson, nor any representatives of these organizations shall be held responsible for quality of work or materials on the part of any contractor or supplier. It is the responsibility of the property owner to resolve any problems or conflicts related to contracted work with any individual contractor or supplier.
18. The grant program is subject to all program requirements as described in detail in the Redbank Renaissance, Inc. Facade Improvement Manual and/or as noted on the notice of approval and/or letter of agreement. After approval and before commencing work on the façade improvements, the applicant will be required to sign a letter of agreement with Redbank Renaissance, Inc.

Please complete the attached application and return it to:

Sara J. Seidle  
Design Committee Chairperson  
Redbank Renaissance, Inc.  
P.O. Box 232, 468 Broad Street  
New Bethlehem, PA 16242

## **DETAILED PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

**Geographic Boundaries** Applications will be received for all commercial properties within the downtown business district of New Bethlehem Borough at this time. Qualifying commercial properties include single-purpose retail and office buildings and mixed-use buildings containing combinations of retail, office, residential apartments and backs of buildings only if used as a public entrance. All applying businesses also must have business hours greater than twenty-five hours per week. If DCED grant funds are obtained, the grant revitalization area will be limited to the historic business district located along Broad Street and Jockey Lane from Liberty to Water Street and Wood Street from Broad Street to Spruce Street. Commercial structures with frontage on two eligible streets would be eligible for priority consideration.

**Eligible Projects and Activities** The maximum Façade Design Grant that may be awarded is \$5,000 at the present time for projects of the following descriptions costing no more than \$10,000. Please remember the total reimbursement, per applicant will not exceed 50% of the total eligible project costs. Grants are made on a cost reimbursement basis, following a process of application, design review and approval, construction, inspection and approval. Receipt of grant awards is contingent upon submittal of construction cost invoices from bona fide contractors or tradesmen.

### **Eligible Projects and Activities & RRI Design Committee Recommendations**

**1. Exterior Woodwork and Architectural Materials** refers to the removal of metal facings or siding, repair, refinishing, painting, restoration, masonry repointing, and replacement of exterior woodwork or architectural materials.

#### **Painting & Exterior Decoration**

The condition of New Bethlehem's commercial buildings is immediate visual evidence as to the vitality of the overall town.

**Paint Color Selection** - Sample color samples and schemes are available to borrow from RRI. In selecting colors, it is very common to use four colors; one primary façade color, and two or three trim colors that are complementary. Color selection should also be based on the color pattern of the buildings on either side of the project site and should be appropriate to the age of the building or consistent with historic colors of the Late Victorian Period and Queen Anne Style (1855-1900) and Bungalow colors (1910-1930) as shown on the Pratt & Lambert Color Guide for Historic Homes (8/98), Pittsburgh Paints Historic Exteriors (1998), Valspar Exteriors (2009), Valspar Medallion Exterior Color Combinations (Available at Heeter's Lumber who can match most historic colors of other paint types). See the enclosed sample color selections under tab 6 of the hard cover manual.

The original materials used when initially constructed for wall facings, such as wood, brick, masonry, tile, wrought or cast iron and paint colors help give buildings their special character, as well as provide visual harmony to the entire streetscape. Covering original facing details with inappropriate materials like aluminum, or vinyl siding, for example, can rob a façade of its architectural identity and can destroy its relationship to the immediate neighborhood. Repair and

proper ongoing maintenance of exterior decorative features and paint coatings is often a better solution to the problem of a deteriorating facade. By taking advantage of the quality of the original materials, the life of the building can often be prolonged indefinitely.

### **Painting**

- All wood structures and wood trim should be prepared for re-painting by manual scraping to reveal the original architectural details, if present. Wood should not be cleaned by sandblasting, or by using pressurized water or steam. While paint is a very reversible treatment, paint color(s) should nonetheless be chosen from those colors that are appropriate to the period of the building and it should be applied to the architectural features of New Bethlehem in a period-appropriate fashion.
- Single color schemes and contemporary colors should be avoided for early buildings, for example; Victorian or Queen Anne. The placement of accent colors and the relationship of lights to darks should be in keeping with the character of the building. Pittsburgh Paints and Sherman Williams Paints both have samples of historic colors.
- The choice of color palette should be made to correspond with the era the building was erected.
- Avoid a stark, bright white, as it is not historically correct. In many cases, the original color(s) used can be determined with a minimum of detective work and might be appropriate for use.

### **Sheet Metal Work**

- The cleaning of sheet metal, if necessary may be done with chemical paint remover. Never sandblast or use abrasives on sheet metal.
- The repair or replacement of damaged areas can be done with sections duplicated by a commercial sheet metal shop, or use of automobile fiberglass compounds to fill and patch voids.
- Proper priming and painting with oil-based paint products to prevent rusting is recommended.

### **Cast or Wrought Iron Work**

- Wire-brushing should be done to remove loose or deteriorating paint and rust. Chemical removers should be avoided, heat or low pressure sandblasting may be used for removal purposes.
- Missing cast iron parts can be recast in aluminum, fiberglass or reinforced gypsum polymer cements.
- Proper priming and painting with rust inhibitive paint products made for use on exterior metal surfaces should be used.

### **Materials and Details**

- All materials, details and colors should be compatible with the overall design of the building, as well as the surrounding buildings.
- Original architectural features should be retained and replaced whenever possible.

- If a building is attached to other buildings, the pattern and/or prominence of the materials used in adjacent buildings should be taken into account.

### **Scale and Mass**

- Overall scale, massing and proportions should relate to and be compatible with those of adjacent and surrounding buildings.
- Changes in scale and mass, such as a wall offset, or roof line variation should be made through graduated increments.
- Buildings should avoid long, uninterrupted walls or roof planes. Building wall offsets, and changes in floor level can be used to add interest and variety.
- Roof line offsets, cross gables and dormers can be used to help vary the massing of the building.
- Visibly exposed sides of a building can be defined with a base and cap or cornice.

### **Service Areas and Mechanical Equipment**

- Loading areas, waste facilities, air conditioning units, exhaust and vent stacks, elevator housings and antennae should be located to the rear of buildings or screened from view.
- The use of interior refuse rooms in lieu of dumpsters or other methods of waste removal is preferred.
- Fire escapes are not permitted on front facades, unless no other option exists.

**2. Masonry** refers to masonry repairs, restoration, repointing, repainting (only if originally painted), or low-pressure water or steam cleaning.

- Buildings that are made of brick should be cleaned by the gentlest of methods such as steam or low pressure water. Never sandblast or use abrasives on brick.
- As brick is one of the least costly building materials to maintain it needs only periodic cleaning and repointing to preserve its original beauty and long life.
- When appropriate, the use of the process of repointing is permitted. Repointing is the removal of deteriorated mortar from the joints of a masonry wall and replacing it with new mortar that is historically and technically appropriate. When properly done, repointing restores the visual and physical integrity of the masonry. Improperly done, repointing detracts from the appearance of the building and may cause physical damage to the masonry.
- When repointing, match the new mortar to the original compressive strength, color, composition, depth and type of joint. Some new mortar may be harder than the original and can cause bricks to crack.
- If brick is already painted it may be cleaned with a chemical paint remover, but a test should be done to make certain that the masonry won't be damaged by the process. Sometimes brick used in older buildings was of a poor quality and was meant to be protected. Painting over unpainted brick is not suggested or encouraged.
- The repairing of stucco by removing the damaged material only and patching with new stucco that duplicates the old in strength, composition, color and texture is permitted.
- The replacement of decorative masonry features is permitted only when they are missing or too deteriorated.

**3. Windows and Doors** refers to the repair, replacement, installation, repainting or restoration of windows (including display, ornamental, upper-story and storm windows) and exterior doors.

### **Windows and Doors**

- Windows and doors should be compatible with the style, materials, colors and details of the building.
- Location of upper windows should align vertically with store fronts and entrances.
- The window opening rhythm should not be broken by blocking up window openings, or the use of undersized or oversized windows. The rhythm should be maintained by keeping openings, windows and decorative trim consistent with the original.
- Existing windows and doors should be retained whenever possible. If replacement is necessary, the new windows and doors should match the originals in size, material and style. Hardware should be appropriate to the style.
- Where appropriate to the design of a building, shutters should be provided on all front facing windows and other windows visible from the street. Proper hardware should be used for the installation of the shutters.

### **Store Fronts and Entrances**

- Store fronts should be compatible with the upper floors to retain the overall character of a building.
- Retail, service and restaurant uses have large pane display windows on the ground level.
- Buildings with multiple storefronts should be unified through the use of architecturally compatible materials including: colors, details, awnings, signage, and lighting.
- The retention of the original proportions of display window glass and any special features such as transoms, leaded glass, or similar features is preferred.
- Entrances should be defined by architectural elements such as: lintels, pediments, pilasters, columns, porticos, porches, railings, balustrades, etc.

**4. Cornices, Parapets and Roofs** refers to installation or repair of cornices, parapets, or roofs when part of facade renovation, or independently, when it is a visible part of the façade.

**Roofs and Walls** The roof form should be appropriate to the building as well as that of the neighboring buildings.

- The use of cross gables, dormers, belvederes, masonry chimneys, cupolas, and other similar elements is permitted where appropriate to the design of the building.
- Flat roofs should be avoided on (1) and (1 1/2) story buildings.
- The front facade or wall of a building facing a street should be emphasized through window patterns and proportions, entrance treatment and details.
- Visible side and rear walls should be compatible with the design of the front facade.
- The use of blank and/or windowless walls is discouraged. However, if necessary they should utilize articulation, or elements compatible with the other wall facings.
- Historic murals on building sides will be considered.

**5. Signs, Awnings and Canopies** refers to repair or removal and replacement of existing signs, awnings and canopies or the installation of new signs or retractable cloth or vinyl awnings and canopies.

Signs have a dramatic impact on the impression of the business district. A sign also advertises, creates curb appeal and encourages walk-in traffic. Clear and concise signs are essential to every business. Effective signage, awnings and canopies are attractive. Simple, properly sized, constructed of appropriate materials, and properly located, they enhance the image of the business district. Appropriate signage often includes a combination of sign types for effective customer recognition. Appropriate, well designed signs can accentuate and complement the overall architecture, as well as architectural details of a structure.

THE DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE MUST PRE-APPROVE SIGN AND AWNING DESIGN, MATERIALS, AND COLOR SCHEMES. All signs within New Bethlehem Borough must comply with New Bethlehem's zoning and sign ordinances. No flashing signs are permitted. Signs are limited in number and size. Signs in other local jurisdictions must comply with local regulations.

### **Sign Types**

A. **Flush Signs** are generally meant to be viewed from a distance. These signs are visible when you are directly facing a structure's facade, or from across the street. This type of sign ideally should be placed on a vacant panel above a door or display windows.

B. **Projecting Signs** are primarily meant to attract the attention of pedestrians because they overhang the sidewalk, and are easily visible by street traffic. They are preferred in the New Bethlehem business district.

C. **Freestanding Signs** are appropriate when a structure is set back ten or more feet from the sidewalk. This type of sign alerts people that a business exists when the structure may be partially hidden from pedestrian or vehicular traffic.

D. **Window Signs** are applied on the inside of a display window or door. Generally the viewer would need to be relatively close to the sign for viewing, but visibility will depend on a structure's window configuration.

E. **Awnings and Canopies** are both functional and decorative. They provide sun control for merchandise in the display windows and shelter for pedestrian shoppers. An added feature of awnings and canopies is that they bring the appeal of color to the individual building, business, and streetscape. They also can be used to either unify or distinguish multiple businesses in a single building.

### **Location of Signage – Please consider:**

- The use of display windows for creative signage.
- Utilizing lettering on a structure itself to recreate the feel of an earlier era. This type of sign should replace any other main identification sign.



- Locating signs, awnings, and canopies to avoid covering or overwhelming architectural details such as cornices, trim, windows, decorative brick work, or other unique structure characteristics.
- Sign orientation for pedestrians should be detailed so as to appeal to someone proceeding slowly at close range.
- Limiting the number and size of signs on storefront display windows and doors. Signs should be sized to balance, not hide or overwhelm the structure. The size of the signs and types of signs within New Bethlehem Borough must conform to New Bethlehem's sign ordinance and zoning.

### **Sign Lighting**

- External lighting fixtures are preferred rather than utilizing internally lit plastic fixtures.
- Lighting should be directed only on the sign itself and not on the surrounding area.
- Lighting fixtures, if visible, should be compatible with the period of the structure.

### **Construction / Design of Signage, Awnings, Canopies**

- Sign material(s) and design(s) should reflect the period of the building and the design of the store-front. Additionally, the colors of the sign, awning, or canopy should complement the paint scheme of the store front facade.
- The use of artisan-crafted signs and quality sign materials manufactured specifically by the sign industry for handcrafted signs such as wood, metal and urethane, and especially tile is preferred. A Pittsburgh area tile artist at Red Clay Tile Works whose brochure can be found in the Manual can provide unique address signs at a reasonable cost.
- The colors to be used should compliment the paint scheme of the store front facade to distinguish the type of business and create interest without losing community appeal and continuity.
- Use building elements with the sign design when feasible.
- Lettering of the sign should be kept to a minimum and likewise, the message should be brief and to the point. A logo and/or illustration can be substituted to communicate the nature of the business.
- The avoidance of using multiple signs where one sign would be sufficient thereby avoiding confusion and distraction. However, the use of small secondary signs for directional purposes are permitted if they maintain the same design elements of the main identification sign.
- Awnings and canopies may display the name and nature of the business on the front face and/or side facings.
- Awnings that are fixed or retractable are permitted.
- Awnings may be used on the ground or upper level floors as appropriate to maintain the architectural style and provide functionality.
- When erecting an awning or canopy select a weather-treated canvas or other natural looking material. Plastic, wood, or metal awnings and canopies are not appropriate. Additionally, the awnings or canopy should not be oversized and should fit within the storefront area not covering architectural element.

**6. Lighting Fixtures** refers to exterior lighting fixtures, which are associated with a building façade, or to provide indirect sign lighting. The lighting fixtures chosen must be appropriate to the age and character of the building.

**Lighting – The following are preferred:**

- The use of minimum wattage metal halide or high pressure sodium light sources. Low pressure sodium and mercury vapor light sources are discouraged.
- Decorative lamp posts are recommended.

**7. Design Assistance** - The most enjoyable places we visit, or patronize are generally very comfortable for reasons that we may not readily notice or think about. These hidden assets of a community are made up of relationships between natural and man-made elements and ourselves. The architecture of our town is the visible face of these relationships. Scale, mass, rhythm, patterns, materials, shapes, and colors are some of the ingredients used to define streetscapes and public spaces. The use of professional services to help maintain these ingredients is an acceptable component of your project. RRI may be able to assist with professional recommendations.

## **6. Color Schemes**

Please see the hard copy of the program manual for samples.

Sample color samples and schemes are available to borrow from RRI. In selecting colors, it is very common to use four colors; one primary facade color, and two or three trim colors that are complementary. Color selection should also be based on the color pattern of the buildings on either side of the project site and should be appropriate to the age of the building or consistent with historic colors of the Late Victorian Period and Queen Anne Style (1855-1900) and Bungalow colors (1910-1930) as shown on the Pratt & Lambert Color Guide for Historic Homes (8/98), Pittsburgh Paints Historic Exteriors (1998), Valspar Exteriors (2009), Valspar Medallion Exterior Color Combinations (Available at Heeter's Lumber which can match most historic colors of other paint types).

## **7. Application Forms and Procedures**

### **Approval Process**

1. Secure a Redbank Renaissance, Inc. Facade Design Grant application from 468 Broad Street or 209 Lafayette Street, New Bethlehem, from any member of the Design Committee, or print an application from at [www.redbankren.org](http://www.redbankren.org).
2. Complete the RRI Facade Design Grant Application including:
  - a. Applicant identification
  - b. Property owner identification if different from applicant
  - c. Property location (must be within business district).
  - d. Written project description and design plan drawing and schematics for each eligible project.
  - e. Contractor/material cost estimates (two required) for each eligible project.
  - f. Matching funding verification.
  - g. Signature of all applicants and property owners (if different from applicant).
  - h. Schedule for completion of the project. (The façade project must be completed by October 31 of the year in which the grant is awarded unless a different date is specified by RRI or the grants will be forfeited back to RRI.)
3. Get permits and approvals from New Bethlehem or the appropriate jurisdiction, if required. (These costs are not reimburseable or part of the match).
4. RRI will review the application for completeness within twenty working days of receipt.
5. The application will then be submitted to the RRI Design Committee for review at their next scheduled meeting.
6. Necessary permits must be secured before commencement of work.
7. **IMPORTANT NOTE:** Only approved work will be eligible for the RRI façade grant program. **PROJECT WORK MAY NOT COMMENCE UNTIL THE APPLICANT/PROPERTY OWNER RECEIVES A WRITTEN NOTICE TO PROCEED FROM THE RRI DESIGN COMMITTEE CHAIR.** Please note, in the case of the grantee of a façade project selling the property during or before completion of the grant project, the grant money will be forfeited back to RRI and the new building owner must re-apply.
8. Reimbursements to the project applicant/contractor(s) requires:
  - a. Adherence to the design plan and/or project as submitted and reviewed and approved by the RRI Design Committee.
  - b. Pre-approval by the Design Committee of any changes of work-in-progress.
  - c. Satisfactory completion of final inspections by RRI, and by New Bethlehem Borough officials, or appropriate jurisdiction, and UCC Code Inspector, if required.

9. Once the grant project is completed, the applicant and/or contractor will:
  - a. Send a letter of project completion stating the owners' satisfaction with the contractors' work to the RRI Design Committee Chair.
  - b. Or submit proof of payment to the RRI Design Committee Chair with request for reimbursement.

**Application**

For a printable version of the RRI Facade Grant Application, print from the home page or contact RRI at 814-275-1718 or any Design Committee Member. Please return 2 copies of the completed form to: Redbank Renaissance, Inc., 209 Lafayette Street, New Bethlehem, PA 16242 or to the Design Committee Chair at P.O. Box 232, 468 Broad Street, New Bethlehem, PA 16242.

**Grant Application Form - See Next Page.**

**REDBANK RENAISSANCE INC.  
FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM**

GRANT APPLICATION

Applicant Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone Numbers: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Property Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Property Owner(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT:**

Please describe the proposed project in detail, including written cost estimates of the project. Attach photographs or drawings as applicable. Attach additional sheets if necessary.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

PROPOSED SCHEDULE FOR COMPLETION OF PROJECT \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**AUTHORIZATION and ACCEPTANCE OF TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

I/We \_\_\_\_\_, the applicant(s) named above, do hereby affirm that I/we have fully read, understand and agree to the Grant Guidelines that accompany this Grant Application. I understand that by submitting this Grant Application, I am not guaranteed to be awarded a grant from Redbank Renaissance, Inc. However, in the event that a grant is awarded to

me/us, I/we agree to comply with all terms and conditions of the Grant Program and requests for information made by Redbank Renaissance Inc., and/or its representatives as it relates to the Grant Program and proposed project. I/We further understand that, upon approval of my/our grant request by Redbank Renaissance Inc., I/we will be required to enter into a Grant Agreement that more fully sets forth the terms and conditions of the Grant Program and my/our responsibilities as a Redbank Renaissance Inc. Façade Improvement Grant recipient.

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

I/We \_\_\_\_\_, the owner of the real estate that is the subject of this Grant Application, do hereby grant my permission to the Applicant(s) named herein to submit this application and will further agree to comply with all terms and conditions of the Grant Program as set forth herein in the event the grant request is approved by Redbank Renaissance, Inc.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Owner Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Owner Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*Please complete this application and return 2 copies with all supporting documentation as listed on #2 of Page 20 of the Program Manual to:*

Redbank Renaissance Design Committee  
ATTN: Sara Seidle  
P.O. Box 232, 468 Broad Street  
New Bethlehem, PA 16242

For questions regarding the Redbank Renaissance Façade Improvement Grant Program or this application, please contact: Sara Seidle, Chairperson, Redbank Renaissance, Inc. Design Committee, at (814) 275-9947 or Sandy Mateer, President, Redbank Renaissance, Inc. at (814) 275-1718.





4. OWNER'S and/or BUSINESS TENANT'S Responsibilities. The OWNER and BUSINESS TENANT shall assure the completion of the work in accordance with the specifications, and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation where so noted on the specifications. Selections and supervision of a Contractor shall be the right solely of the OWNER and BUSINESS TENANT, subject to RRI's right to determine the acceptability of Contractor's qualifications.
5. Reimbursement. RRI shall reimburse the OWNER or BUSINESS TENANT for fifty percent (50%) of their eligible costs incurred for labor and materials necessary to complete the Project, with a total maximum reimbursement of \_\_\_\_\_ Dollars (\$ \_\_\_\_\_) dollars upon satisfactory completion of rehabilitation specifications. Reimbursement will be provided directly to the OWNER or BUSINESS TENANT within THIRTY (30) days after receipt by RRI of paid receipts from the Contractor(s). The Owner is responsible for payment of 100% of the cost of the project to the project Contractor(s). Reimbursement hereunder shall be conclusive evidence that the project has been completed by the OWNER or BUSINESS TENANT and accepted by RRI in accordance with the terms of the Agreement and that the OWNER or BUSINESS TENANT has satisfied all their obligations hereunder.
6. Allowable or Eligible Costs. Allowable or eligible costs as used in this Agreement are as follows:
  - a. All costs which are verifiable from the OWNER'S or BUSINESS TENANT'S accounting records with paid receipts and which are in conformity with the agreement.
  - b. Only charges for construction and encompassing materials, laborers, suppliers and equipment relating to the project which were pre-approved by RRI and which conform with the guidelines in the Façade Improvement Program Manual.
  - c. Building permits, street or sidewalk blockage permits, cleaning and maintenance items are not allowable or eligible costs.
7. Representations and Covenants of OWNER. The OWNER and/or BUSINESS TENANT make(s) the following representations and covenants to RRI:
  - a. The improvements on the Property will be accomplished and the use of the Property for the purposes intended will be in compliance with all federal, state and local laws and regulations and will not violate any sub-division, zoning, environmental protection, use ordinance or law or any agreement applicable to the Property.
  - b. The plans and specifications regarding the project must be approved by RRI and all necessary building permits and all other government and /or private authorizations and approvals must be obtained.
  - c. All promotional materials, publications and communications to media related to the project shall contain an appropriate acknowledgment of RRI participation by using the following statement:

*"This project has been funded in part through a grant from Redbank Renaissance, Inc."*

A construction sign provided by Redbank Renaissance, Inc. will be displayed prominently at the Property acknowledging Redbank Renaissance, Inc.'s assistance with the project during and for 3 months after completion of the project.

- d. OWNER or BUSINESS TENANT shall notify RRI promptly of any problems, delays, or adverse conditions materially affecting its ability to complete the Project's objective or precluding the completion of the work on the specifications set forth herein. Any adjustments or revisions must have prior written approval of RRI which shall not be unreasonably withheld.
  - e. OWNER or BUSINESS TENANT shall deliver a letter to RRI indicating the project has been completed in accordance with the specifications, along with proof of the cost of the parts of the project covered herein by this grant, in the form of paid invoices.
  - f. If the project includes "personalized" elements such as signs, window lettering, and awning name strips, and the OWNER or BUSINESS TENANT discontinues the business or changes the business name such that new signage or lettering is required, within a period of three (3) years after the initial installation, the OWNER agrees to reimburse the RRI grant funding amount for the signs or lettering, per the following schedule.
    1. Within the first year after the approved date of completion, OWNER or BUSINESS TENANT must reimburse RRI 100% of the original grant funding.
    2. Within the second year after installation, OWNER or BUSINESS TENANT must reimburse RRI for 66% of the original grant funding.
    3. Within the third year after installation, the OWNER or BUSINESS TENANT must reimburse RRI for 33% of the original funding.
8. Indemnification. OWNER and BUSINESS TENANT agree to indemnify, defend and hold RRI harmless from and against any damage, claim, action or loss, including attorneys' fees and costs, incurred by RRI as a result of this grant. This indemnification shall survive the completion of the Project.
9. Insurance.
- a. OWNER and BUSINESS TENANT agree(s) to maintain policies of casualty and physical damage insurance to protect the Property and any future improvements and renovations thereto so long as it/they own(s) or lease(s) the Property. Such insurance shall be maintained in an amount equal to not less than 80% of the full insurable value of the Property. For the purposes of this agreement, full insurable value shall be defined as fair market value of the Property prior to the casualty minus fair market value of the Property as a cleared site.
  - b. Upon submission of application documents, OWNER and BUSINESS TENANT must furnish RRI with a certificate of insurance for the Property.
  - c. In the event of any casualty loss to the Property, OWNER shall make necessary repairs and rehabilitation in accordance with this Façade Program Letter of Agreement. However, if the loss is a substantial loss, OWNER and/or BUSINESS TENANT may elect not to rebuild and there shall be no further obligation to RRI.
10. Events of Default.
- a. Each of the following, if not cured within thirty (30) days of written notice by RRI to the OWNER or BUILDING TENANT, is an Event of Default hereunder:
    1. If OWNER or BUILDING TENANT shall fail, neglect or refuse to perform any of the promises, covenants or conditions of the Agreement.
    2. If any of the representations of the OWNER or BUILDING TENANT contained herein shall have been untrue when made, or shall become inaccurate for any reason at any time prior to the completion of the project.

11. Remedies.

- a. If an event of default occurs, RRI, at its option and without benefit of any notice or grace period, may exercise any or all of the following rights and remedies:
  - 1. Revoke and refuse to disburse the grant award to OWNER or BUILDING TENANT.
  - 2. Recover from OWNER or BUILDING TENANT any amount of grant award disbursed to OWNER or BUILDING TENANT.
  - 3. Exercise any other rights and remedies available to RRI at law or in equity.

12. Payments by OWNER or BUILDING TENANT. OWNER or BUILDING TENANT agree(s) to pay all expenses, including reasonable attorneys' fees and costs, incurred in the enforcement of this Agreement including for recovery of any grant funds provided herein.

13. Assignment Prohibited. No transfer or assignment of this grant or this Agreement directly or indirectly, voluntarily or involuntarily, shall be made. Grants become void upon transfer of property and new OWNER or BUSINESS TENANT must reapply for the grant.

14. Pennsylvania Law. This Agreement shall be interpreted in accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and no presumption shall be deemed to exist in favor of or against either party hereto as a result of the preparation and / or negotiation of the same.

15. Severability. If any of the provisions of this Agreement are declared illegal or unenforceable, the remaining provisions of this Agreement shall continue in full force and effect.

IN WITNESS THEREOF, the parties have executed this Agreement the day and year first above written.

REDBANK RENAISSANCE, INC.

\_\_\_\_\_  
OWNER(S)

\_\_\_\_\_  
BUSINESS TENANT(S)

\_\_\_\_\_