

**Tacony Community Development Corporation
Façade Improvement Program Guidelines and Application Form**

I. Introduction & Objectives

The Tacony Community Development Corporation (TCDC) Façade Improvement Program is designed to encourage new and established commercial businesses in Tacony to improve the appearance of their buildings, and the commercial corridor as a whole. The TCDC will provide area property owners or business tenants with technical and financial assistance if they seek to renovate or restore their exterior signage, lighting, or commercial building facades. The program is funded and administered by the Tacony Community Development Corporation, and grants are awarded entirely at the discretion of Tacony Board of Directors in consultation with the TCDC Design Team.

II. Eligibility

1. The property must be located within the boundaries of the Tacony Community Development Corporation (CDC) district of the 6300 and 7200 blocks of Torresdale Avenue in the Tacony neighborhood to be eligible. Projects located within one block of Torresdale Avenue will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Please consult with the TCDC Corridor Manager.
2. The property must be zoned commercially or for mixed-use. No “home-based” businesses or residential-only properties. Residential properties that receive a zoning variance for commercial use may be considered.
3. Both owner-occupied and leased properties are eligible, as long as the operating tenant business receives written consent from the building owner prior to the grant award.
4. This grant program is available for single properties with multiple tenants; single businesses spanning multiple properties; or single properties with multiple owners:
 - a. Grants should be used to improve an entire commercial façade, not any individual business or businesses at the exclusion of others within the property.
 - b. Properties with multiple business tenants must apply the same façade improvement principles across the entire property concurrently and as one project.
 - c. Businesses spanning more than one property must apply the same façade improvements across the entire business façade at the same time. In that case, the owner or tenant of each affected property may apply for a

separate Grant to cover that physical portion of the business on his or her property.

- d. Even if there are multiple owners of a single commercial property, only one Grant may be used per property. Single properties with multiple tenants or owners, or single businesses that span multiple properties are encouraged to work together to create designs that enhance the entire façade.
5. Eligible businesses include those that provide goods or services to neighborhood residents. Industrial buildings and churches are ineligible. Nonprofit users may be eligible, please speak to the TCDC Corridor Manager.
6. Applicants must be operating legally, properly registered, licensed with the City of Philadelphia, and current with all city taxes before a grant is awarded.
7. Applicants must supply a cash match of 15% of the entire project cost up to \$2,400 for a single building or up to \$3,600 for a corner building with two facades.
8. There are two options available for payment. The first is the City of Philadelphia Commerce Department standard reimbursement grant. In this program Applicants must pay all the project costs and will be reimbursed upon inspection of the completed project by the City SIP program and the TCDC FIP program. TCDC will assist applicants if they need to obtain a short-term loan to pay for the entire project costs. The second option is expedited reimbursement. See information on page 6.

III. DESIGN PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES

Improvements to be funded by the TCDC Façade Improvement program must be compatible with the character and architecture of the individual building as well as, to the extent possible, with the neighboring buildings. Improvements are limited to the exterior street façade and must be visible to the public. These improvements should enhance the historical and architectural integrity of the business, its “curbside appeal,” and are subject to prior approval by the TCDC Design Team. All work must meet applicable Pennsylvania codes and ordinances and be consistent with the Tacony CDC’s Design Guidelines. Please obtain a copy of the TCDC Design Guidelines before meeting with the TCDC Corridor manager or engaging any design professional, sign maker, or contractor. TCDC Design Team members are happy to provide advice and assistance to you at the start of your project and throughout construction.

Most of the properties along Torresdale Avenue are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Properties listed or eligible for listing on the National Register for Historic Places, the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, or located within a historic district must comply with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for

Rehabilitation. Learn more
at <http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation/rehabilitation-guidelines.pdf>.

Eligible Improvements

ELIGIBLE improvements include, but are not limited to:

- Masonry, brick, or wood repointing, restoration, repair or replacement in kind
- Façade detail and trim restoration (including cornices)
- Removal of aluminum siding and restoration of original materials
- Exterior painting (except on previously unpainted surfaces)
- Window or exterior door repair or replacement in kind
- Exterior façade and/or signage lighting (except back lit signs)
- See-through security grills or security glass
- Improved signage and awnings

Architectural design fees may also be included in the total cost of eligible improvements. TCDC FIP will pay for all architectural fees in their portion of the grant funds. The TCDC will work closely with volunteer architects from the Community Design Collaborative to provide design assistance to potential applicants.

INELIGIBLE improvements include, but are not limited to:

- Any interior work not directly related to exterior modifications
- Security and fire systems (security improvements such as cameras and alarm systems are eligible as part of a larger storefront improvement project in the City's Storefront Improvement Program)
- Security and lot lighting except where it is decorative and part of the larger façade improvement project
- Painting of original brick or stone façade that has not been painted before
- Interior lit signs
- Playground or recreational equipment
- Covering of original building details or windows, except where judged absolutely necessary. Reducing the size of window openings is also excluded.
- Paving or sidewalk repair/replacement
- Structural repairs
- Trees, plants, flowers, or groundcover materials
- Solid security grates

Applications submitted after construction has begun will not be considered.

Additional Program Requirements

The TCDC Façade Improvement Program follows all of the City's Storefront Improvement Program requirements. Below are requirements of the City's Storefront Improvement Program that each applicant must follow.

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 support to minority, women, and disabled residents and businesses. All applicants must 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://oeo.phila.gov/directory.asp> or the Pennsylvania Unified Certification Program’s Directory of Disadvantaged Business Enterprises at <http://www.paucp.com>. Approval letters for SIP program funds will advise applicants whether they will be required to report on “best and good faith efforts” as a condition of receiving the grant offered by this program.

The SIP 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.

SIP Funds are awarded on a first-come first-served basis.

The amount that the City’s 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.

Solid security grates, elimination of windows, or projects that reduce the size of window openings are not eligible.

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 is open to the public. Churches and schools are not eligible.

IV. TCDC PROGRAM ASSISTANCE

Financial Assistance

This is a matching grant program, meaning that the applicant must provide 15% of private funding of the entire project cost. The grant runs on a “first come, first served” basis during an open period to accept applications.

Tacony CDC will reimburse applicants up to 85% of the costs for eligible improvements based on this formula:

Single building: Maximum project cost \$16,000. City SIP grant \$8,000. TCDC FIP Grant \$5,600. Building Owner/tenant match \$2,400. Total project cost \$16,000.

Corner building: Maximum project cost \$24,000. City SIP Grant \$12,000. TCDC FIP Grant 8,400. Building Owner/tenant match \$3,600. Total project cost \$24,000.

SIP Grants will be limited to one application per business every five years, except change in sign/awning.

Owners of vacant buildings shall be eligible if the owner’s purpose is to rehabilitate the property to attract eligible businesses.

There are two payment options for this program. The first option is distributed in the form of a reimbursement, once construction is complete and the terms stated in the program requirements section of this application have been met. If the terms of the program are not met, the reimbursement will not be issued. Reimbursements are issued in the form of a check payable to the business or property owner. The City’s SIP and TCDC FIP programs cannot reimburse cash payments to contractors. The second option is expedited reimbursement. With this option, applicants pay their portion of the project 15% up front to the TCDC as a deposit. As contractors complete work, the TCDC issues a check or checks for payment to the applicant. At the completion of the project, applicants must provide invoices, credit card receipts (if payment to contractor is made by credit card) and cancelled checks (both sides) or other proofs of payment to the contractor, to the TCDC. The City of Philadelphia will issue a dual-party check to be endorsed by the applicant and the CDC and deposited by the TCDC as repayment for the advance of funds made by the TCDC.

Combining TCDC Grant Program with City of Philadelphia Storefront Improvement Program

The TCDC Façade Improvement Program grant works in conjunction with the City of Philadelphia’s Storefront Improvement Program (SIP) to maximize incentives for property improvements. For projects that qualify for the city’s SIP grants, Tacony CDC

will provide a matching grant to offset a portion of the City match requirement. **The TCDC Façade Improvement Program is an incentive so that Property Owner/tenant pays only 15% of the total project cost.** Contract for projects utilizing SIP grants will be made between the City of Philadelphia and Tacony CDC, which will distribute the SIP funds to the business owner.

Design Review: Applications will be reviewed by the TCDC Design Team and they may suggest changes or require specific changes to the proposed work for the application to be approved and be eligible for reimbursement. All projects must follow the TCDC Design Guidelines and processes.

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.

Technical Assistance

TCDC Corridor Manager and Design Team members will provide assistance and guidance for applicants on façade improvements specific to individual storefronts. The applicant may provide his or her own Architect and/or Contractor, or may be referred to one by Tacony CDC staff. Applicants should meet with Tacony CDC staff early in the design process to discuss proposed projects.

Assistance in Obtaining a Short Term Loan

If applicants choose the standard reimbursement grant, they may need to obtain a short-term loan to pay for the entire project costs (either \$16,000 for a single building or \$24,000 for a corner building) for their improvements, because both the City's SIP and TCDC FIP programs are both reimbursement grants. All the construction costs must be paid up front and be completed before grant checks will be paid. TCDC will make suggestions about which banks or credit unions to approach for such a short term loan, but cannot guarantee that such financing will be made available.

The second option is expedited reimbursement. With this option, applicants pay their portion of the project 15% up front to the TCDC as a deposit. As contractors complete work, the TCDC issues a check or checks for payment to the applicant. At the completion of the project, applicants must provide invoices, credit card statements if payments are made to contractors by credit cards and cancelled checks (both sides) or other proofs of payment to the TCDC. The City of Philadelphia will issue a dual-party check to be endorsed by the applicant and the CDC and deposited by the TCDC as repayment for the advance of funds made by the TCDC.

V. Application Process

Pre-Construction

1. Meet with Tacony CDC Corridor Manager to review program guidelines and application, and to discuss how to begin planning your project.
2. If the applicant does not have an architect, Tacony CDC will provide free volunteer architectural design services to eligible applicants from the Community Design Collaborative. The volunteer architect and Tacony CDC Design Team will work directly with property and business owners to assist them to create design improvements that are compatible with the building and neighborhood.
3. Have a budget in mind for your project, and how you will pay for the entire project cost since this is a reimbursement grant. The volunteer architect will need to know your budget when they meet with you.

Application Process and Getting Estimates

1. Contact the Tacony Corridor Manager when you have completed the program application and gathered required documentation. Required documentation includes:
 - a. At least four (4) photos of your building clearly showing all areas to be improved, and at least one photo showing the entire front façade of your building. A photograph showing the context of the building, including adjacent structures, is also required. Submit these as color digital files or color snapshots.
 - b. An illustration of the work you would like to do. A hand-drawn sketch, printed digital picture with written notes, a photo with post-it notes attached or an architect's rendering are all 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, and how it will attach to the building.
 - 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 above. TCDC Manager will help you obtain estimates from qualified contractors.

- d. Letter of consent from the building owner granting permission for the proposed work, if the applicant is not the owner.
2. Proof of ownership/occupancy, lease or deed.
3. Fully-documented applications should be sent to: TCDC Corridor Manager, at 4817 Longshore Avenue, Unit c, Philadelphia, PA 19135, or alex@taconycdc.org
4. Complete applications will be reviewed by the Tacony staff and the Design Team committee within two weeks and be approved by the Board or Executive Committee of the TCDC within this two week period.
5. The application must be approved prior to the beginning of any construction, or funds will not be distributed. Construction must begin within 90 days of approval.

Construction

1. Approved applicants should proceed with the agreed upon scope of work and in compliance with any special conditions set forth in SIP award letter. No construction should begin before receipt of the SIP 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 to SIP and TCDC FIP program. If you encounter an unexpected change to the scope of work during construction contact Jonathan Snyder, Program Manager for the City of Philadelphia Commerce Department immediately at 215-683-2153. No construction should take place during this period.
 - a. The applicant will hire a contractor and coordinate construction activities with the contractor. Tacony CDC will not coordinate contractor's work. The Tacony CDC staff may refer applicants to various contractors or vendors, however the applicant is solely responsible to any contractors or vendors that it hires or contracts with.
 - b. Applicants must adhere to the City's zoning and building codes. Applicants and their contractors must obtain all appropriate building, zoning and other permits required by the City prior to construction.
 - c. Contractor change orders should not be made without the approval of Tacony CDC staff and the project Architect. Applicants are responsible for any approved change orders that may affect an increase in contractor pricing and project budget.
2. Applicants are responsible for monitoring work completed by contractors/vendors to make sure that it is done according to all drawings, specifications and agreement. If necessary, a pre-construction meeting may be required in order to solidify all arrangements.
3. Construction must be completed within 180 days of project approval.

Post-Construction

1. Following construction, applicants must submit the following to the SIP program:
 - a. Verification of payment to all contractors (invoices, receipts, cancelled checks, credit card statements, or other payment verification). Cash payments will not be reimbursed.
 - b. Copies of permits showing compliance with City of Philadelphia regulations, when applicable.
 - c. Color photographs of the completed work.
 - d. Rebate checks from the SIP program will arrive within two to four weeks from the City.
2. Once work is completed, Tacony CDC staff will review the completed improvements to ensure that the agreed upon design has been executed correctly, and a grant check will arrive within two weeks.

If applicants choose the expedited reimbursement option, the applicant must submit to the Tacony CDC:

- a. Verification of payment to all contractors (invoices, receipts, cancelled checks, credit card statements, or other payment verification). Cash payments will not be reimbursed.
- b. Copies of permits showing compliance with City of Philadelphia regulations, when applicable.
- c. Color photographs of the completed work.

The Application for the Tacony CDC Façade Improvement Program is on the next page.

Final for approval

**Tacony Community Development Corporation
Façade Improvement Program Application**

I. APPLICANT INFORMATION

1. Applicant's Name:

Property Owner's Name (if different):

Project Address:

Applicant's Mailing Address:

Telephone Number(s): _____

Fax Number: _____

E-mail: _____ Web Site: _____

2. Business Organization of Applicant:

Business Name: _____

Type of Business:

Applicant Business Privilege Tax #: _____ EIN or SSN# _____

Number of Employees: _____

How long has business been at the current location? _____

3. Owners and Officers in Applicant's Business Organization

Position Name and Address

4. Relationship of Applicant to the building to be improved under Façade Improvement Grant:

- Owner: Attach proof of ownership (tax bills, title deed, etc.)
- Tenant:
 - a. Attach terms, length, and expiration date of present lease and,
 - b. Building owner or authorized representative must certify in Section IV approval to participate in the TCDC Façade Improvement Program

5. For building owner / applicants: Have all City of Philadelphia taxes levied on the building and property described in this application been paid to date?

Yes No If No, please attach explanation.

6. Provide a list of ALL businesses operating from the project address – attach a separate sheet if necessary:

Business Name	Business Type	Owner's Name
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

II. PROPOSED FAÇADE PROJECT INFORMATION

Examples of work covered under this phase of the grant include signage, suspension arms, awnings, exterior signage lighting and electrical work to install lighting, and window lettering.

1. Description of Building to be improved:

Street Address: _____

Building Dimensions:

Frontage _____ feet Depth _____ feet Height _____ feet

2. Description of proposed improvement (check all that apply):

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exterior Signage | <input type="checkbox"/> Storefront Door | <input type="checkbox"/> Accessible Entrance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exterior Lighting | <input type="checkbox"/> Metal/Wood Storefront System | <input type="checkbox"/> Add Architectural Details |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exterior Painting | <input type="checkbox"/> Exterior Paneling/Siding | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Restoration of Arch. Details | <input type="checkbox"/> Awning/Canopy | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Storefront Windows | | |

Materials Preference: _____

Location of Signage: _____

Type of Signage (Projecting, flush mount, etc.): _____

Lighting (existing or new armature) _____

3. Estimated Project Cost: _____

4. Please indicate the funding source(s) of the 15% match (e.g. bank loan, personal investment, etc).

5. For larger projects, please list any other loans you are seeking in connection with this project (include type of loan, amount and source or financial institution):

6. If known, please provide information on the architect responsible for your drawings, plans and permits:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone No. _____ E-mail: _____

III. REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS CHECKLIST

- Brief written description of project
- Photographs of Façade. At least four (4) different “before” photographs showing the building as it exists. Photographs should include existing conditions around the site and adjacent buildings.
- Property owner’s written approval
- Lease, Deed, or proof of occupancy
- Sketches/rendering (image showing the attributes of a proposed project design) OR “before” photographs annotated with proposed design
- Proof of permitting compliance with the City of Philadelphia’s Code.

IV. CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that all of the information provided above is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. By signing below, I certify that I have read and understand, and shall remain in compliance with, the Tacony CDC Façade Improvement Program and TCDC Design Guidelines and that I acknowledge and agree that it is a discretionary program, as determined by the Tacony CDC Board of Trustees. I further acknowledge and agree that I have no entitlement to receive approval or funding for a proposed project or any other purpose except at the sole discretion of the Tacony CDC Board of Trustees.

Applicant Signature: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Property Owner Signature: _____ Date: ____/____/____

SUBMIT TO:

Send completed applications with supporting documents to:

Alexander Balloon

TCDC Corridor Manager

4819 Longshore Avenue, Unit C

Philadelphia, PA 19135

Phone 215 501 7799

Email address alex@taconycdc.org