



REGIONAL MAIN STREET DESIGN GUIDELINES

Introduction:

Design is a major component of the Main Street revitalization effort and is aimed at enhancing the overall physical image of the downtown business district. Many features contribute to this image. Individual buildings—storefronts, signs, window displays, and facades as a whole—generally establish the character of the downtown. These features are what make each town unique. Maintaining a design scheme for the downtown business district can enhance its existing physical assets and minimize its distractions. The hidden assets built into each property bring the whole town together visually and makes it pleasing for customers.

Small improvements to downtowns can have big results to community development. Downtown is important to the communities overall health and vitality because it is the center. It should be safe and attractive with emphasis on community, values and historic preservation. This will encourage continued patronage and stimulate new and future patronage as well as improve the local economy.

A strong and lasting impression depends upon the appearance of individual properties and the assets with which they were originally constructed.

An attractive and energetic Central Business District is essential to the success of Lycoming Regional Main Street program and to the communities in which it serves.

General

Compliance with all codes, zoning ordinances, and if applicable any historic district regulations adopted by each municipality in ---Hughesville, Jersey Shore, Montgomery, Montoursville, and Muncy is **required** before any Regional Main Street Façade applications will be approved.

Funding for the Regional Main Street Design Guidelines Grant Program is provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development through the New Communities Program.

APPLICATION PARAMETERS

Eligible Communities and Central Business Districts:

Hughesville—Main Street from Academy Street to Mill Street

**Jersey Shore—Allegheny Street from Main Street to Wylie Street and
Main Street from Seminary Street to Plum Alley**

**Montgomery—Main Street from Houston Avenue to Broad Street and
Montgomery Street from Main Street to Second Street**

Montoursville—Broad Street from bridge to Montour Street

**Muncy—Main Street from to High Street to Green Alley and
Water Street from Market Street to Water Street Bridge**

The total reimbursement, per applicant, will not exceed 50% of the total project cost up to a maximum of \$5,000 per storefront or as otherwise noted. The grant cannot be used to pay for work that is currently in progress or completed. Eligible projects and their reimbursable dollar amounts are as follows:

AWNINGS

Maximum reimbursement of \$1,500

This category is for the maintenance and repair of, or removal and replacement of existing awnings, as well as the installation of new awnings. This category includes the lighting fixtures that provide direct lighting under awnings.

SIGNS

Maximum reimbursement of \$500

This category is for the maintenance and repair of or removal and replacement of existing signs as well as the installation of new signs.

MURALS

Maximum reimbursement of \$1,500

This category is for new historic depictions or repairs and renovations to any pre-existing, historic murals and artwork. The design and artwork of new murals must be rendered by a professional artist or studio.

EXTERIOR PAINTING AND RESTORATION

Maximum reimbursement of \$5,000

This category refers to the repair, cleaning, refinishing, painting, restoration, or replacement of exterior woodwork, architectural sheet metals and cast iron elements. This category includes exterior masonry repairs, restoration, re-pointing, repainting (only if originally painted), or low-pressure water or steam cleaning.

ADDITIONS AND ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS

Maximum reimbursement of \$5,000

This category refers to the construction of new additions. With respect to existing structures, the repair, replacement, installation, painting or restoration of windows (including display, ornamental and upper-story windows), shutters and exterior doors as part of storefront entrance ways is also included. This category includes repair, installation, painting or restoration of cornices, parapets or roofs when part of façade.

CORNER, STAND ALONE, OR END OF ROW BUILDINGS

Maximum reimbursement of up to \$10,000 per building per five years.

Work may be performed on a storefront and, in the case of a standalone or corner building, one highly visible side façade. An applicant **must** renovate the primary storefront in order to be eligible for a side façade grant. Should one building have one or more storefronts, each storefront qualifies for up to the maximum of \$5,000, but in no case will the maximum amount of \$10,000 per building per five year period be exceeded.

EXTERIOR LIGHTING

Maximum reimbursement of \$1,000

This category is for the maintenance and repair of, or addition of exterior lighting to building sites. Exterior lighting may include building mounted fixtures, lamp posts on the sidewalk and parking area lighting.

The Pennsylvania Prevailing Wage Act (43 P.S. 165-1 et seq; 34 Pa. Code 9.101 et seq) may be applicable to this project if total project cost exceeds \$25,000. If applicable, the grant recipient is responsible for including prevailing wage rates in all bid documents, specifications, and construction contracts pertaining to the Project. The Department of Labor and Industry (L&I) has final authority to make all prevailing wage applicability determinations.

APPLICATION AND APPROVAL PROCESS

Applicants are required to meet with the Main Street Design Committee of their local downtown organization to discuss their project prior to completing the application process. The local Design Committee and Board of Directors reserve the right to recommend projects that make the most impact in their downtown areas and recommend those projects for design assistance. Consideration will be given to the number of properties that can be assisted. For maximum impact, the central business district boundaries can be reduced by the local Board of Directors and Design Committee to include a portion of the Main Street target area.

Only commercial properties are eligible. Landscaping and site improvements such as sidewalk and paving, though important aspects of revitalization programs, are ineligible expenditures for Main Street Design Challenge Grant assistance.

Applications will be accepted for review during the application period of January 1 through June 30th. The awarding of grants is dependent on funding from the PA Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) and is based on the allocation of funds for the Lycoming Regional Main Street Design Challenge Grant from DCED. There is no certainty that funds will be available at any given time.

The Design Challenge Grant application form is provided in the Design Guidelines packet or on the [website www.mainstreetslycoming.com](http://www.mainstreetslycoming.com)

FAÇADE GRANT APPLICATION REQUIRES THE FOLLOWING TO BE CONSIDERED

- Applicant identification
 - Property owner identification
- Location/address of the property
- Copy of paid Real Estate Tax Receipt
- Three (3) complete copies of the following:
 - Written project description
 - Design plan(s), drawings
 - Paint color samples and finishing material samples
 - Contractor and material cost estimates for each eligible project
 - Matching fund verification, proof of financial responsibility
 - Signatures of the applicant and property owner

Grants will be awarded based upon the level of improvement(s), the accuracy of historic preservation and the vitality and significant impact the project will make to the downtown environment. Only complete applications will be accepted for processing. The grant application will be reviewed by the Local Design Committee of each Borough for the completeness of information and supporting documents.

After the grant application is reviewed and recommendation has been made by the local organization, it will be submitted to the Regional Design Advisory Board for final approval.

Applicants are required to meet all codes and ordinances of their Borough and real estate taxes must be paid current. Applicants are also required to secure any necessary permit (s) from the Borough before work can commence.

Reimbursement to the project applicant/contractor (s) requires the following:

- 1 Adherence to the design plan and/or project as submitted, reviewed and approved by the local downtown organization and Design Chairman;
- 2 Pre-approval by the local Design Committee and of any changes of work-in-progress, and;
- 3 The completion of final inspections, if required by the Borough. There will be no reimbursement if Borough code or ordinance violations exist.

Important: only approved work will be eligible for the Design Challenge Grant. Project work may not commence until the applicant/ property owner receives a notice to proceed from the Regional Design Advisory Board.

Once the project has been completed within the Six (6) months timeframe, the applicant and/or contractor will send a letter of project satisfaction and all invoices to the Regional Design Advisory Board. Once work is completed and reviewed by Regional Design Committee, the funds will be released.

The Storefront

Encouraged

Installing storefronts that complement the existing structural frame of the building.

Repairing, restoring and upgrading storefront materials.

Changing the pattern and/or texture of the storefront materials.

Repainting and repairing brick or other masonry units.

Removing old paint from masonry facades using non-toxic, biodegradable processes.

Strongly Discourage

Installation of historically inaccurate or incompatible façade or material treatments such as imitation brick or stone. Removing existing materials that contribute to the original architectural character of the building.

Painting unpainted masonry, especially in historic districts or on historic landmarks. Using restoration materials that do not closely match (color, size, texture, pattern, quality, etc.) materials of the existing building (i.e. caulk replacing cement mortar.)

Covering, altering or damaging architectural elements of the façade with signs, awnings, or other additive elements. Sandblasting or use of harsh chemicals to clean brick or other masonry.

STOREFRONT COMPONENTS

Window Base

Most storefronts use a window base to lift display windows to a more visible level for passersby while protecting display windows from damage and weathering. Window bases are typically made of sturdy, easy to maintain materials to counter potential wear and tear. Typical materials include brick, concrete, hardwoods, metal panels, ceramic tiles, and other masonry materials.

Encouraged

Restoring and/or repairing original, still-in-place window bases.

Using sturdy, easy to maintain window base materials to provide a new and appropriate storefront window base(s). (Sturdy materials include brick, concrete, hardwoods, metal panels, ceramic tiles, and other masonry materials.)

Maintaining or designing window bases for multiple storefronts in a building such that the height (not evaluation) of the bases is consistent and the bases are of the same material. Installing window bases no higher than two (2) feet two (2) inches from the ground.

Strongly Discouraged

Eliminating a window base that was a part of the original building or that was also used to conceal any portion of a mechanical system of a business.

Varying window base heights within a storefront of building.

Using non-durable materials, like low-grade plywood, which are not easy to maintain.

Doors and Windows

Encouraged

Restoring or replacing doors with appropriate commercial doors.

Installing storefront doors made of glass or containing significant glass to allow additional visibility into a business.

Adding new doors when required to meet disabled accessibility laws.

Maintaining the continuity of storefronts on the primary business street by locating loading and service entrances on the side or rear of a building where possible.

Installing new and maintaining existing durable wood or metal frame doors that can be painted a variety of colors to emphasize the business entry while adding visual interest.

Installing folding/sliding doors that allow the activity of a business to be opened up to the sidewalk.

Strongly Discouraged

Adding new doors that are not required by code and which are inconsistent with the building and/or storefront image.

Sealing or closing off existing entrances or doorways with any material.

Blocking doors with merchandise or any other obstruction.

Installing doorways that swing out directly onto sidewalks.

Covering or replacing glass door panels with any opaque substance or material that would prevent or limit visibility.

Covering doorways with signage, interior cases or woodwork.

DISPLAY WINDOWS

Encourage

Restoring or increasing the percentage or amount of transparent glass on a storefront.

Replacing dark tinted or texture glass with clear glass when appropriate to increase visibility into the business.

Matching new windows to originals.

Preserving historic features such as frames, special glazing, and decorative moldings.

Aligning window heights and unifying window sizes when appropriate.

Painting window frames in order to add visual variety and interest.

Using aluminum or wood frame windows that provide thermal insulation and prevent condensation. Non-traditional colors are encouraged for either frame type.

Using upper floor windows that might be boarded up as retail display areas.

Strongly Discouraged

Preventing visibility into display areas by covering or blocking a display window.

Obstructing views into a business by using glass block, woodwork, paint, signage, lowered ceilings, shelves, refrigeration units, cases, posters, or other items except products being temporarily marketed by the business.

Covering or obscuring existing window trim with metal or other materials.

Removing historic windows or window components when restoration and maintenance are possible.

Using less durable materials such as Plexiglass.

Failing to maintain and repair broken or boarded display windows.

TRANSOM WINDOWS

Encouraged

Restoring or maintaining the original pattern of transom windows.

Using the same or compatible material and design that are a part of the storefront system.

Restoring stained glass panes in transom windows where appropriate and feasible.

Allowing the transom window to read as a distinctive architectural element by keeping all interior elements at least eight (8) inches behind or away from the transom windows.

Concealed mechanical systems in a ceiling should be dropped no lower than the height of the display area or windows.

Restoring and maintaining transom windows even when they will be hidden by awnings as awnings may be removed at some future date.

Retain original colored glass and stained glass in upper panes above doorways and windows.

Strongly Discouraged

Covering transom windows with paint, signs, awnings, or wood panels.
Filling transom windows with masonry, glass block, wood, ventilation/mechanical systems or other non-transparent materials.

COLORS

Encouraged

Selecting paint colors that complement the color of the larger building.
Coordinating the colors of all storefront components as a marketing tool for your business.
Using paint colors to accentuate architectural details such as dentils, rosettes, cornice lines, etc.
Exploring how painting storefronts or buildings in selective locations might increase the visibility of a business without seeming inconsistent or out of character with others in the district.

Strongly Discouraged

Painting masonry that has not been painted before, especially in historic districts.
Failing to maintain painted or other colored storefront elements that have faded, peeled or flaked due to weather conditions.
Selecting colors that detract from the overall image of the storefront and building.

SIGNS

Encouraged

Replacing, repairing, or installing signs that are appropriately scaled for you buildings and storefront.
Maintaining and restoring historic signs.
Exploring very creative graphics and materials that maintain high standards in legibility and character.
Building flexibility into signage and components to allow for changes or upgrades.
Installing signs on the sign band, window, doors, awnings, or other architecturally appropriate location.
Establishing a sign band on buildings that may not have a clearly demarcated area for signs.

Encouraged

Using durable wood, painted plastics, metals, or pre-fabricated pin mounted letters.

Installing painted metal or wood signs.

Installing fin or blade signs, projected from the building wall, to identify a business to those passing by walking or traveling parallel to the storefront.

Exploring bold and vibrant colors, still according to good graphic design practice, as a method of distinguishing a sign while relating the sign to the storefront design and business type or project.

Recommending three-dimensional, fixed signs that include an icon of the business type, business name and/or logo.

Illuminating signs from behind. (Backlit box signs are strongly discouraged)

Complying with **signage regulations of Borough.**

Strongly Discouraged

Applying too many signs to your storefront or building.

Covering windows, cornices or decorative details with signs or any other element.

Blocking visibility into your storefront with signs, shelves or other obstruction.

Installing internally-lit plastic or plastic faced signs.

Maintaining obsolete advertisements or other temporary signs.

Painting signs directly onto the building surface.

Installing signage above the rooftop.

AWNINGS

Encouraged

Installing canvas or metal awnings.

Using individual awnings for individual storefronts in a building so that the building's structural frame, detail and rhythm are readable. This also helps to define the extent of an individual store and to establish better business identify.

Installing retractable or fixed type awnings.

Illuminating storefronts and sidewalks from beneath an awning.

Using a consistent size, profile and location of awnings on a single building with multiple storefronts. Font styles may vary from business to business.

Designing creative awning shapes that are complementary to the overall building.

Locating signage on the valance of the awning. Letters should be not more than 12" tall.

Strong Discouraged

Backlighting or internally illuminating plastic awnings.

Applying large signage on the sloped portion of an awning.

Concealing architectural details including transoms and storefront cornices with awnings or other elements.

Using material other than canvas or metal, including vinyl.

LIGHTING

Encouraged

Illuminating interior display areas to promote merchandise or services inside a business.

Balancing the amount of building lighting with street lighting.

Using exterior mounted light fixtures selectively, i.e. sconces or downlights to enhance overall building image.

Using lighting to illuminate signage or special architectural details.

Concealing lighting sources as much as possible.

Strong Discouraged

Installing flashing, pulsating, or moving lights or lights that cause significant glare.

Using non-commercial lighting fixtures.

Using neon tubing to border windows, doors and storefronts.

Using a lot of light fixtures

EXTERIOR WALLS AND MATERIALS

Key points to maintaining masonry buildings:

Retain original brick and stone and mortar whenever possible.

Repair or replace deteriorated material only if necessary. If replacement is deemed necessary, make sure the new materials duplicate the old as nearly as possible.

Clean masonry walls with the gentlest method possible. Low pressure washing and or brush scrubbing will usually clean the surface adequately. Avoid chemical washes unless deemed necessary by an expert. Never sandblast.

Never apply waterproofing or repellent washes unless determined necessary to solve a technical problem.

Never remove paint from masonry surfaces. Often paint was applied to solve water problems. Removal of paint can cause damage to the masonry surface. Consult an expert if paint removal is necessary.

Retain original and/or old historic color scheme.

Moisture is the main culprit for the deterioration of masonry surfaces. Solving drainage problems along gutters, downspouts and foundations will correct most moisture problems.

Minor cracks in mortar can be easily repaired. Match mortar, color and joint size. An analysis of the mortar composition should be completed to ensure adequate moisture barrier and to ensure that the masonry surface does not fail. Never use strong cement mortar for repairs. Inappropriate mortar can damage the masonry and/or allow water penetration.

Avoid unnecessary repainting. Only repaint joints that are deteriorated.

Determine cause of cracks prior to repair. Cracks that run through masonry may be a sign of structural problems. Consider consulting an engineer to find the source of the problem.

For wood frame buildings:

Retain and preserve original or old clapboard or shingles. Replace sections and/or deteriorated portions rather than entire siding/shingles.

Replace materials that match the original or old in size, shape and texture.

Covering wood frame buildings with new surfaces should be avoided.

Aluminum, vinyl, brick and stone like veneers, asphalt and asbestos should not be introduced.

Paint existing asbestos shingles as an economical way to improve the exterior appearance.

Resurfacing of clapboard/shingle can trap moisture and cause deterioration and future structural problems that are not detectable behind the modern material.

Requirements for design funding improvements

Buildings in the Regional Main Street downtowns are generally in good condition, but many are a part of the region's older building stock. Some buildings have not been maintained properly for decades. Over time, the wear and tear that buildings have endured begins to show and the deterioration can affect how potential customers and visitors perceive your business and your business district.

As an eligible participant within the initiative, owners should work with designers to select the materials that best meet their storefront and property image needs while understanding the maintenance requirements of those materials. Expensive materials are not always the best.

Expectations

- Visibility into storefronts will be maintained.
- Signage and display windows will be lit during the evening hours as a marketing tool for business.
- Sidewalks must be swept and cleaned on a regular basis.

- Storefront windows must be cleaned on a regular basis.
- Outdated signs and window postings must be removed immediately.
- Planters, window boxes and any landscaping elements must be properly maintained and free of debris.
- Graffiti must be removed immediately and the façade restored to its prior “improved” condition.
- Any and/or all improvements must be in compliance with all applicable laws, codes, and regulations of the borough.