

Beaver County Downtown Revitalization Program



Building Integrity Program Guidelines

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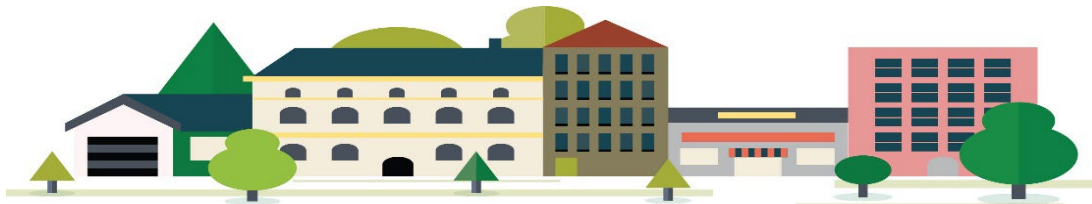
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Program Guidelines

Purpose

The Beaver County Community Development Program has allocated a portion of its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for a commercial building stabilization grant, the Building Integrity Program (BIP), in support of stabilizing and ultimately revitalizing *blighted* commercial buildings in the main streets of low-moderate income communities in Beaver County. The BIP specifically addresses the importance of recognizing nuisance properties that need immediate mothballing/stabilization but have the opportunity for rehabilitation over time. These buildings play a crucial role in attracting customers and enhancing the overall physical appearance of a downtown area. While the program is primarily focused on Main Street Communities, all commercial property owners with a building suffering from slum and blight, in a low-moderate income community, are encouraged to apply.



The purpose and objectives of the program are as follows:

- Eliminate substandard or deteriorating conditions in the Beaver County downtowns;
- Promote a climate for reinvestment in revitalizing neighborhoods;
- Leverage CDBG funds with private funds as part of the larger effort to encourage revitalization;
- Preserve the architectural integrity of property located along public roadways.

To “*mothball*” is the practice of performing structural repairs and other stabilization methods that prevent further deterioration due to weather, vandalism, etc. in an effort to prevent future demolition, while waiting for an uptick in the real estate market to attract investors.

When participating in the BIP, projects are limited to exterior improvements to the building and correction of code violations. You will be required to follow a step-by-step process for completing your building mothball/stabilization.

The BIP is a reimbursement program; therefore, the applicant is initially responsible for assuming all contract costs for the stabilization. Once the work is successfully completed, a reimbursement payment is made directly to the applicant based on the grant guidelines section and contract with the applicant.

Please note:

- ❖ **Blighted** - structure is exhibiting objectively determinable signs of deterioration sufficient to constitute a threat to human health, safety, and public welfare
- ❖ On all projects, it is the responsibility of the applicant to contact the local Zoning/Code Enforcement Officer and obtain any necessary permits. You will also need a fully executed Municipal Certification Form from your local municipality approving this project.

Eligibility

Any downtown commercial building and/or property owner whose commercial building is located within a low-moderate income community and the eligible project area as determined by the Downtown Local Revitalization Organization (LRO). An applicant must be the property owner to apply.

Only eligible projects or improvements will be considered for funding, specifically, exterior improvements that will protect the life, safety and welfare of the occupants and building structure.

Approval Process

❖ Pre-Submittal Meeting

The applicant is strongly encouraged to have a pre-submittal meeting with the Beaver County Community Development Program to discuss the proposed project(s)/improvement(s), ask questions and determine what additional documents (such as permits or approvals) are needed.

❖ BIP Eligibility Application and Required Materials

The property owner should complete and submit the application form. In addition to reviewing the application, including all supporting documentation and photos of the building, a site visit with the applicant will be required.

❖ Award Notification

Once selected, the property owner will be notified by CDP staff and will begin the program.

Overview of Process

Documentation

Documenting a building's history is important because evidence of its true age and architectural significance may not be readily evident.

- ❖ Document the architectural and historical significance of the building.
- ❖ Prepare a condition assessment of the building.

Stabilization

Stabilization as part of a mothballing project involves correcting deficiencies to slow down the deterioration of the building while it is vacant.

- ❖ Structurally stabilize the building, based on a professional condition assessment.
- ❖ Protect the exterior from moisture penetration.
- ❖ *Example:* Weakened structural members that might fail altogether in the forthcoming years must be braced or reinforced and the building protected from moisture damage both by weatherizing the exterior envelope.

Mothballing

Mothballing efforts involve controlling the long-term deterioration of the building while it is unoccupied as well as finding methods to protect it from sudden loss by fire or vandalism.

- ❖ Secure the building and its component features to reduce vandalism or break-ins.
- ❖ Secure or modify utilities and mechanical systems.
- ❖ Develop and implement a maintenance and monitoring plan for protection.
- ❖ *Example:*
 - **Structure Openings:** Doors, windows, areaways and other openings shall be weather tight and secured against entry by birds, vermin and trespassers. Missing or broken doors, windows and other such openings shall be covered by materials, which are weather protected, and tightly fitted and secured to the opening.
 - **Roofs:** The roof and flashings shall be sound and tight, not admit moisture or have defects which might admit moisture, rain or roof drainage, and allow for drainage to prevent dampness or deterioration in the interior walls or interior of the structure.
 - **Code Violations:** Address exterior code violations considered to be a detriment to public health and safety.

Steps completed on an as needed basis

Ineligible Activities & Costs

- ❖ Non-permanent equipment and merchandising fixtures
- ❖ Building permit fees or any other miscellaneous fees
- ❖ Sidewalks
- ❖ Landscaping and lot beautification
- ❖ Parking lots

Documentation and stabilization are critical components of the process and should not be skipped over. Mothballing measures should not result in permanent damage, and so each treatment should be weighed in terms of its reversibility and its overall benefit.

Grant funds can be used to stabilize or mothball a building or to cover specific and limited portions of a rehabilitation plan based on a professional condition assessment. Stabilization as part of a mothballing project involves correcting deficiencies to slow down the deterioration of the building while it is vacant.

**In addition, the Community Development Program will consider applications for funding a feasibility study, a structural analysis, or development of a rehabilitation plan for a prospective historic rehabilitation project.

Grant Guidelines

Grant Rebates

The County of Beaver via the Community Development Program will offer a maximum grant rebate of \$25,000 per commercial building (or available address), as approved by the LRO.

The grant rebate is based on 70% of the first \$25,000 of expenditures and 50% on the balance of expenditures up to \$40,000 for approved exterior building improvements.

Example (based on a project costing \$50,000):

- For the first \$25,000 spent, 70% of the cost would be reimbursable ($\$25,000 \times 70\% = \$17,500$)
- For the next \$15,000 spent, 50% of the cost would be reimbursable ($\$15,000 \times 50\% = \$7,500$)
- The remaining \$10,000 would **not** be reimbursable.
- Out of the \$50,000 spent, you would be reimbursed \$25,000 total.

Additional Grant Rebates

If property improvements have not been made through this program after twelve (12) years of the first award, the property/business owner is eligible to apply as if a new applicant. No additional funding will be available to any property/business owner until their previous project building is occupied.

Title Search

Upon establishment of eligibility, an informal title search will be conducted on the property for which improvements are to be made. This will be conducted to determine verification of ownership and that the property is free of excessive judgments and liens, that all taxes (borough, school, county) are paid up-to-date or that an agreement has been entered into between the property owner and the taxing body to arrange payment.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

The building renovation must meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines, the Community Development Program Design Guidelines and if available locally adopted design guidelines in addition to any state/local code requirements.

The local organization responsible for the building integrity program along with the Community Development Program will determine whether the individual applicant's building is selected for the program.

Scope of Work

Approved scope of work must be completed no later than ninety (90) days after final approval and award of a contract for a grant unless otherwise determined.

Program Steps & Requirements

No matter how small or large your project is, you will be required to follow a step-by-step process developed by the Community Development Program to ensure adherence to all guidelines and federal regulations.

Included in this document is an applicant checklist, designed for our applicants to use throughout the process.

Review & Approval Phase

Step 1: Pre-Submittal Meeting

The applicant is strongly encouraged to have a pre-submittal meeting with the Beaver County Community Development Program to discuss the proposed project(s)/improvement(s), ask questions and determine what additional documents (such as permits or approvals) are needed.

Step 2: BIP Eligibility Application and Required Materials

The property owner should complete and submit the application form. In addition to reviewing the application, including all supporting documentation and photos of the building, a site visit and an interview with the applicant will be required.

Once completed, a copy of the application will be shared with your LRO for review and approval.

Pre-Application reviewed by LRO

Once the application is approved by the LRO, the project is forwarded to the Community Development Program.

Step 3: Conduct the Pre-design Meeting

After your approved application is received, a meeting will be held to discuss the scope of work required for each phase of the project.

Drawings Required

If architectural drawings are required, the applicant can choose one of two things:

1. Hire an architect to do the drawings
2. Use the Main Street Program architect to do the drawings

If the applicant elects to use the Main Street Program architect, the cost of the drawings will be deducted from the maximum rebate. Applicants must complete the memorandum of understanding and submit it to the Community Development Program.

Please note:

The applicant is **required** to contact the local municipal officials for requirements for drawings and/or permits. If needed, submit completed construction documents to obtain necessary permits and approvals through the Local Zoning or Code Enforcement officer.

Step 4: Conduct the Pre-bid Meeting

After the drawings are completed, a pre-bid meeting will be held with the applicant.

At this meeting, the following items will be discussed:

- Contents of the bid packet and scope of work
- Bid requirements
- Federal Labor Standards & Prevailing Wage Rate (Davis-Bacon Act)

Step 5: The Bidding Process

The applicant will be provided a bid packet containing:

Bid form with detailed scope of work, drawings (if applicable), program guidelines, Secretary of the Interior Standards, Davis Bacon wage determination, non-collusion affidavit, and approved application.

An 'Invitation to Bid' will be published in the Beaver County Times.

The applicant will refer contractors to the Community Development Program office for pick-up of bid packets and submission of sealed bids for a pre-determined public bid opening date. This date would be thirty (30) days (or more) after the pre-bid meeting.

At least two (2) bids must be received by the bid opening. If two bids are not received, the bidding process will be repeated.

If two (2) bids are received, the sealed bids will be opened and reviewed to verify accuracy and completeness. The lowest responsible bidder will be chosen as the contractor for the project.

**Depending on the scope of the project, a COSTARS vendor may be hired in place of the bidding process.

Step 6: Conduct the Pre-Construction Meeting

After a contractor is selected, a pre-construction conference will be held with the applicant and contractor. The contract will be reviewed with and signed by the applicant.

Payroll reports and other HUD requirements will be discussed with the contractor at this time.

After the pre-construction meeting, the completed contract documents will be submitted to the Beaver County Commissioners for approval. After approval, notice to proceed with construction will be issued to the contractor.

Construction Phase

Notice of Construction Start

When preparing to start construction, the contractor is required to submit a “Notice of Construction Start” to the Community Development Program (included in the Pre-Construction Conference Meeting Minutes).

*Any work done prior to the Beaver County Commissioner’s signing of the agreement cannot be included as part of the project and must be removed from the reimbursement.

Payrolls

After construction start, the contractor (and/or subcontractor) must submit certified payrolls to the Community Development Program on a weekly basis.

On-site Inspections

During the project, on-site inspections will be conducted by the Building Integrity & Neighborhood Development Coordinator, representing the Community Development Program of Beaver County and HUD.

Technical Assistance

The Building Integrity & Neighborhood Development Coordinator will provide on-going technical assistance to the applicant, as needed, throughout the construction phase.

Post-Construction Phase

Certificate of Work

After construction is completed, the applicant must submit the certificate of work form indicating that the work completed was satisfactory.

Submission of Contractor Paperwork

The contractor (and/or subcontractor) **must** submit all payroll forms, project documents, and/or EEO compliance letter to the Community Development office at the end of the project.

We advise applicants **not to remit final payment to the contractor** for the project until the Community Development Program confirms that all necessary project documents have been submitted by the contractor.

Final Payment

After final inspection is conducted, applicant approval is received, and all documents are received by Community Development, we will advise the applicant to remit final payment to the contractor.

Rebate Check

Once all project documentation has been successfully completed and submitted to the Community Development Program, a rebate check will be requisitioned to be issued to the applicant.

Please note:

Check requests can take 2-3 weeks to process through the county.

Questions

If you have questions regarding the guidelines, please contact your municipality's LRO or the Community Development Program of Beaver County at 724-770-2044 or cphlegar@beavercountypa.gov.

PLEASE NOTE THAT NOTHING IN THESE GUIDELINES SUPERSEDES THE LOCAL MUNICIPAL AND UNIFORM CONSTRUCTION CODE (UCC) REGULATIONS. PLEASE CONTACT THE LOCAL MUNICIPAL OFFICE FOR CODE REGULATIONS AND PERMIT REQUIREMENTS.

Design Guidelines

All work must comply with local, state and federal code regulations. The guidelines do not advocate or impose a specific architectural style on the property owner. The approach is to reinforce the existing design character, stabilize the building, and reinvent/revitalize the deteriorated state of the building.

The best course of action for rehabilitation work is to follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standard for Rehabilitation.

*If you are implementing sustainable building design, follow the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Sustainability.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation are ten basic principles created to help preserve the distinctive character of a historic building and its site, while allowing for reasonable changes to meet new needs.

The Standards are applied to projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility.

1. A property shall be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.

8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards, Issued 2017

The Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Sustainability

Before implementing any energy conservation measures to enhance the sustainability of a historic building, the existing energy-efficient characteristics of the building should be assessed. Buildings are more than their individual components. The design, materials, type of construction, size, shape, site orientation, surrounding landscape and climate all play a role in how buildings perform. Historic building construction methods and materials often maximized natural sources of heating, lighting and ventilation to respond to local climatic conditions.

The key to a successful rehabilitation project is to identify and understand any lost original and existing energy-efficient aspects of the historic building, as well as to identify and understand its character-defining features to ensure they are preserved. The most sustainable building may be one that already exists. Thus, good preservation practice is often synonymous with sustainability. There are numerous treatments—traditional as well as new technological innovations—that may be used to upgrade a historic building to help it operate even more efficiently.

Increasingly stricter energy standards and code requirements may dictate that at least some of these treatments be implemented as part of a rehabilitation project of any size or type of building. Whether a historic building is rehabilitated for a new or a continuing use, it is important to utilize the building's inherently-sustainable qualities as they were intended. It is equally important that they function effectively together with any new measures undertaken to further improve energy efficiency.

<https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation/guidelines/sustainability.htm>

Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings

Introduction

In Rehabilitation, historic building materials and character-defining features are protected and maintained as they are in the treatment Preservation. However, greater latitude is given in the

Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings to replace extensively deteriorated, damaged, or missing features using either the same material or compatible substitute materials.

Of the four treatments, only Rehabilitation allows alterations and the construction of a new addition, if necessary, for a continuing or new use for the historic building.

Identify, Retain, and Preserve Historic Materials & Features

The guidance for the treatment Rehabilitation begins with recommendations to identify the form and detailing of those architectural materials and features that are important in defining the building's historic character and which must be retained to preserve that character.

Therefore, guidance on identifying, retaining, and preserving character-defining features is always given first.

Protect and Maintain Historic Materials & Features

After identifying those materials and features that are important and must be retained in the process of Rehabilitation work, then protecting and maintaining them are addressed. Protection generally involves the least degree of intervention and is preparatory to other work.

Protection includes the maintenance of historic materials and features as well as ensuring that the property is protected before and during rehabilitation work. A historic building undergoing rehabilitation will often require more extensive work. Thus, an overall evaluation of its physical condition should always begin at this level.

Repair Historic Materials and Features

Next, when the physical condition of character-defining materials and features warrants additional work, repairing is recommended. Rehabilitation guidance for the repair of historic materials, such as masonry, again begins with the least degree of intervention possible.

In rehabilitation, repairing also includes the limited replacement in kind or with a compatible substitute material of extensively deteriorated or missing components of features when there are surviving prototype features that can be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.

Although using the same kind of material is always the preferred option, a substitute material may be an acceptable alternative if the form, design, and scale, as well as the substitute material itself, can effectively replicate the appearance of the remaining features.

Replace Deteriorated Historic Materials and Features

Following repair in the hierarchy, Rehabilitation guidance is provided for replacing an entire character-defining feature with new material because the level of deterioration or damage of materials precludes repair.

If the missing feature is character defining or if it is critical to the survival of the building (e.g., a roof), it should be replaced to match the historic feature based on physical or historic documentation of its form and detailing. As with repair, the preferred option is always replacement of the entire feature in kind (i.e., with the same material, such as wood for wood),

However, when this is not feasible, a compatible substitute material that can reproduce the overall appearance of the historic material may be considered.

It should be noted that, while the National Park Service guidelines recommend the replacement of an entire character-defining feature that is extensively deteriorated, the guidelines never recommend removal and replacement with new material of a feature that could reasonably be repaired and, thus, preserved.

Design for the Replacement of Missing Historic Features

When an entire interior or exterior feature is missing, such as a porch, it no longer plays a role in physically defining the historic character of the building unless it can be accurately recovered in form and detailing through the process of carefully documenting the historic appearance. If the feature is not critical to the survival of the building, allowing the building to remain without the feature is one option.

But if the missing feature is important to the historic character of the building, its replacement is always recommended in the Rehabilitation guidelines as the first, or preferred, course of action. If adequate documentary and physical evidence exists, the feature may be accurately reproduced. A second option in a rehabilitation treatment for replacing a missing feature, particularly when the available information about the feature is inadequate to permit an accurate reconstruction, is to design a new feature that is compatible with the overall historic character of the building.

The new design should always take into account the sill, scale, and material of the building itself and should be clearly differentiated from the authentic historic features. For properties that have changed over time, and where those changes have acquired significance, reestablishing missing historic features generally should not be undertaken if the missing features did not coexist with the features currently on the building. Juxtaposing historic features that did not exist concurrently will result in a false sense of the building's history.

Alterations

Some exterior and interior alterations to a historic building are generally needed as part of a rehabilitation project to ensure its continued use, but it is most important that such alterations do not radically change, obscure, or destroy character-defining spaces, materials, features, or finishes. Alterations may include changes to the site or setting, such as the selective removal of buildings or other features of the building site or setting that are intrusive, not character defining, or outside the building's period of significance.

Code-Required Work: Accessibility & Life Safety

Sensitive solutions to meeting code requirements in a Rehabilitation project are an important part of protecting the historic character of the building. Work that must be done to meet accessibility and life-safety requirements must also be assessed for its potential impact on the historic building, its site, and setting.

Resilience to Natural Hazards

Resilience to natural hazards should be addressed as part of a Rehabilitation project. A historic building may have existing characteristics or features that help to address or minimize the

impacts of natural hazards. These should always be used to best advantage when considering new adaptive treatments so as to have the least impact on the historic character of the building, its site, and setting.

Sustainability

Sustainability should be addressed as part of a Rehabilitation project. Good preservation practice is often synonymous with sustainability. Existing energy-efficient features should be retained and repaired. Only sustainability treatments should be considered that will have the least impact on the historic character of the building.

The topic of sustainability is addressed in detail in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation & Illustrated Guidelines on Sustainability for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings.

New Exterior Additions and Related New Construction

Rehabilitation is the only treatment that allows expanding a historic building by enlarging it with an addition. However, the Rehabilitation guidelines emphasize that new additions should be considered only after it is determined that meeting specific new needs cannot be achieved by altering non-character-defining interior spaces.

If the use cannot be accommodated in this way, then an attached exterior addition may be considered. New additions should be designed and constructed so that the character-defining features of the historic building, its site, and setting are not negatively impacted.

Generally, a new addition should be subordinate to the historic building. A new addition should be compatible but differentiated enough so that it is not confused as historic or original to the building. The same guidance applies to new construction so that it does not negatively impact the historic character of the building or its site.

Rehabilitation as a Treatment

When repair and replacement of deteriorated features are necessary; when alterations or additions to the property are planned for a new or continued use; and when its depiction at a particular time is not appropriate, Rehabilitation may be considered as a treatment. Prior to undertaking work, a documentation plan for rehabilitation should be developed.