



# PA Route 6 and PA Wilds Façade Program GUIDELINES



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## INTRODUCTION

Both the PA Route 6 Alliance and the PA Wilds Center are committed to efforts to serve our communities as it relates to community revitalization. Through both organizations' planning efforts we have identified the need for a regional downtown Façade Improvement Program. With a lack of Main Street designations or the resources that had come with such a designation, many of our downtowns are ripe for community revitalization and have the potential to attract new private investment. . The eight communities, designated as PA Route 6 Heritage Communities in the four shared counties, have developed Heritage Workplans with strategies and recommendations for town revitalization and enhancements to their historic and heritage-based assets. These communities would benefit from a regional joint **PA Route 6 and PA Wilds Façade Program**. The PA Route 6 Heritage Communities of Youngsville, Warren, Kane, Smethport, Coudersport, Austin, Galetton and Mansfield, have been invited to participate in this regional program and make up the target area for this program.

It is the belief of those involved in the **PA Route 6 and PA Wilds Façade Program** that building improvements will not only improve the physical property of our region's downtowns, but it will also result in a more viable community. Façade improvements will contribute to a more economically competitive central business district. It has been proven across the nation that improving commercial district property improves business. Patrons of businesses are more likely to cross a business threshold when they feel welcomed through an appearance of an attractive storefront. Hence, by improving your façade you start to improve your business viability.

The **PA Route 6 and PA Wilds Façade Program** provides funding to commercial building owners and business owners (with property owner approval) as well as non-profits, with the restoration of building facades within the targeted area (see map on p. ) Eligible types of restoration activities include design assistance, a fresh coat of paint, new signage, or repairing or replacing an awning. Façade improvements do not need to be costly and will greatly improve the façade of the building, making a lasting effect on the community.

This is a matching grant program and requires a 50/50, dollar for dollar match by the applicant, and is a reimbursable program. All applicants must meet the general guidelines as well as any Pennsylvania Historical Museum Commission (PHMC) guidelines (should the building in which funding is being applied for is designated a historic building or is located in a designated historic district). The guidelines below seek to enhance the historical beauty and integrity of the regions downtowns. In doing such it is the intent of the PA Route 6 Tourism Infrastructure Committee and the PA Wilds Design Committee to ensure that improvements are consistent with scale, character, and history of the downtown and the community as a whole.

It is of the utmost importance that when possible the existing or original architectural elements be repaired and improved. When possible the desire of the program is to reverse past inappropriate architectural alterations.

These guidelines cannot cover every situation; therefore if you do not find the necessary information, please elaborate your situation on your application. Each application is reviewed by the **PA Route 6 and**

**PA Wilds Façade Program Committee** and the Committee will take into consideration all situations as they are addressed.

**PROGRAM GOALS / OBJECTIVES:**

The **PA Route 6 and PA Wilds Façade Improvement Program** has the following goals and objectives:

1. Reduce or eliminate vacancies throughout the program target area, and promote the adaptive reuse of commercial buildings.
2. Bring substandard building conditions into compliance with basic health, safety, and building codes while enhancing the visual appeal of our Region’s Downtown Businesses.
3. Encourage redevelopment and reinvestment as well as stimulate private investment, therefore enhancing commercial growth in the program target area.
4. Assist with the preservation of the historic commercial buildings and districts, and assure that such buildings are rehabilitated in an appropriate manner.
5. Add significant physical improvements to the aesthetics of a targeted downtown property that is compatible with existing buildings and the historical era of the community and region.
6. To create a compelling image of our Region’s downtowns that will increase commerce, attract new business, and foster a sense of community and civic pride.

**FUNDING ALLOCATIONS**

The total funding per property is 50% of the project cost ,. Therefore, a property owner may submit more than one application if that owner owns more than one property located in the designated areas A property owner can apply for more than one eligible improvement as long as the total request for funding does not exceed the maximum funding of \$5,000.00 for a single façade / building address. While the total cost of the façade improvements may exceed \$10,000.00, the maximum program reimbursement shall not exceed \$5,000.00. Total project costs over \$25,000 will be required to adhere to prevailing wages.

**ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS:**

Any person(s) or other legal entity owning property within the designated **PA Route 6 and PA Wilds Façade Program** area (see map on page 13) is eligible to apply. Business owners who lease buildings or parts thereof may apply if given permission by the property owner as shown by their signature on the application.

A property owner with multiple properties (different addresses) within the targeted program area may make multiple applications within the same year. The regional **PA Route 6 and PA Wilds Façade Program** maintains the right to limit the total amount of funding that a property owner of multiple properties/multiple applications may be awarded in order to allow other interested owners to apply.

If a property owner seeks and receives a grant, a tenant in the same building can also receive a grant as long as the total amount does not exceed the maximum grant amount for the property.. A tenant can apply for the full amount, with the written consent of the property owner.

Proof of property ownership and property insurance documentation must be provided with the application. All property owners must be current on their State, County, School District, and local municipal taxes. If a property owner is delinquent on their taxes, tenants located within the property are also ineligible to receive a façade grant. The applicant must also be current on all applicable municipal utility bills.

### **ELIGIBLE BUILDINGS, STOREFRONTS & FACADES**

All buildings located within the designated area are eligible to apply for a grant; however, priority ranking will be given to those properties located within a designated PA Route 6 Heritage Community, in a designated historic district or part of a community with a development plan. Consideration will also be given to highly visible properties along the PA Route 6 Corridor that affect the viewshed and landscape of the Corridor

The façade is the part of the building facing the street or streets and includes the entire face of the building from the ground up. In cases where more than one storefront exists within the same façade, each storefront can receive its own grant for eligible grant activities, but must not exceed the total allowable program amounts per property. A storefront shall be defined as having its own unique entrance, interior space, and display window(s).

Multiple facades: If a building sits at a street corner where two named streets intersect, or has two separate facades on two separate streets, both façades are eligible for façade grants, but must not exceed the total allowable amount per property

In order for a project to be eligible for rear façade improvement funding the building must have an existing rear entrance that is accessible to the public from a dedicated public street, alley or other right of way, parking lot, or walkway granting public pedestrian access.

### **ELIGIBLE PROJECTS / IMPROVEMENTS:**

Facade Improvement awards are based on project merit and not financial need. Projects must achieve visible results that enhance the downtown's image, marketability and economic vitality, and will be evaluated in terms of quality, design compatibility and level of visual impact. Only **exterior** improvements are eligible for funding.

Façade Improvements must comply with all state and local building code and zoning requirements. All necessary permitting must be completed by the applicant, at the applicant's expense.

Eligible activities are the repair, rehabilitation, and restoration of building facades located in the designated program target area. Eligible activities include, but are not limited to:

- **Brick and Stone Masonry** – Structural repairs, cleaning, and re-pointing.
- **Architectural Metals** – Repair, cleaning, refinishing, painting, duplication, and restoration of exterior building components, e.g. cast iron, pressed tin.
- **Doors and Upper Story Windows** - Maintenance, repairs, replacement, and restoration of window sashes, and exterior doors. Installation of storm windows is also eligible in conjunction with other significant façade improvements.
- **Exterior Woodwork** – Maintenance, repair, rehabilitation, and restoration of sills, windows and doorframes, bulkheads, storefront and roof cornices, window hoods, decorative moldings.
- **Storefronts** – Removal of inappropriate coverings and additions, maintenance, repair, rehabilitation, and restoration of display and transom windows and lighting.
- **Signage** – Installation, maintenance, repair, removal, and replacement.
- **Painting** – Surface preparation, cleaning, painting using a Design Committee approved color palette. Stains must also be complementary to an approved Design Committee palette.
- **Awnings** – Installation, repair, and maintenance of fabric awnings. Awnings must also be complementary to an approved Design Committee palette.
- **Lighting** – External lighting fixtures both for signage and building lighting. Also storefront window lighting clearly visible from the street, enhancing the façade.
- **Design Assistance** – architectural consultation, renderings, and/or drawings.
- **Decking/porches** – restoration of architectural elements for historic purposes. Historic photographs should be submitted with application,

#### **INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES:**

- Building permit fees and related costs;
- Title reports and legal fees;
- Extermination of insects, rodents, vermin and other pests;
- Sidewalk replacement or repair;
- Acquisition of land or buildings;
- Air conditioning and/or heating facilities;
- Plumbing; Sprinkler systems- interior and exterior;
- Building security systems- interior and exterior;
- Electrical wiring or service upgrade, except electrical work necessary to illuminate an eligible sign;
- Elevator repair or installation;
- Interior floor, wall, flooring and/or ceiling replacement or repair;
- General repair/maintenance work not contributing to the overall exterior visual appearance of the building;
- Landscaping, fences, retaining walls;
- Site improvements, paving, parking lots, roof work not contributing to the appearance of the façade;
- Neon signs.

Façade Improvements not specifically listed as eligible or ineligible are subject to review as to their eligibility by the regional **PA Route 6 and PA Wilds Façade Program** Design Committee at their sole and exclusive discretion.

## **DESIGN GUIDELINES**

Both the PA Route 6 Heritage Corridor and the PA Wilds is known for a strong sense of place. Our region's rural and historic character are part of what makes us attractive to visitors and residents, so it is important for us to be good stewards of these characteristics.

***The Pennsylvania Route 6 Management Plan, Historic Conservation Strategy and Corridor Management Plan*** is the overall governing document of the PA Route 6 Heritage Corridor. Among other strategies, it contains guidelines and recommendations for the downtowns, commercial districts and public spaces within the Heritage Corridor. The multi-faceted plan can be found at [http://www.paroute6.com/planning\\_efforts](http://www.paroute6.com/planning_efforts).

One of the key recommendations of the plan is to support and expand the guidelines in the Pennsylvania Wilds Design Guide.

***The Pennsylvania Wilds Design Guide: A Design Guide for Community Character Stewardship*** is a voluntary planning document that highlights how communities in the PA Wilds can protect or enhance their rural character as they grow – whether that growth is due to tourism, resource extraction, or other industries.

The Design Guide is a great resource for developers, planners, architects, business or property owners, revitalization partners and community leaders and all applicants are strongly encouraged to consult the guide prior to applying for façade funds. The Design Guide is available on line at <http://www.pawildscenter.org/community-character-stewardship/>.

**CHARACTER** – The PA Wilds region enjoys a variety of architectural styles. It is the goal of this design program to see that each building is presented in its most appealing form and that the original character of the building is preserved and enhanced.

**PRESERVATION** - Any existing or historical character of a property should be retained and preserved to the extent that it is feasible. The removal of historical materials or alterations of features and spaces that characterize a property should be avoided.

**CHANGE** – It is recognized that many properties have changed over time. Those changes that contribute to the significance of the Designated Area's architectural character in their own right should be retained and preserved.

**HISTORY** – Each property should be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create an inaccurate sense of history or architectural elements from other buildings will not be favored. Please refer to the **Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings** at <http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation/rehab/stand.htm> or upon request.

**DETAILS** – Distinctive features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property should be treated with respect.

**REPAIRS** – Features that have made a property unique and recognizable should be repaired when they have deteriorated, rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature should match the old in design, color, texture and other visual qualities and, where possible, material. Replacement of missing features should be substantiated by documentary, physical or pictorial evidence.

**SURFACE CLEANING** – Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials are not favored. The surface cleaning of structures, if necessary, should be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.

**ALTERATIONS** – New additions, exterior alterations or related new construction should not destroy any historic materials that characterize a property. The new work shall be compatible with the size, scale and architectural features that protect the characteristic integrity of the property and its environment.

**SIGNAGE** – Signs play an important role in how a business is initially perceived. Not only are they a marketing tool, but they also set the appearance from a roadway. Signage should project an atmosphere that is welcoming and inviting to members of the community and visitors. Consistent signage adds to the character of the area in which it is placed, and should be considered to be a unifying factor in a town. Lighting should be external, using spotlights directed onto the sign.

## **PROJECT CRITERIA**

### **Awnings and Canopies**

Awnings as well as canopies are both functional and decorative. Not only are they a marketing tool, but also set the appearance of the business from the roadway. An added feature of an awning or canopy is that they bring the tremendous appeal of color, not only to the building but to the entire streetscape. It is because of this that in order for funding to be used for awnings or canopies the color scheme of these must be consistent with the downtown's color palettes. Funds are available for repair, or removal and replacement, of existing awnings and or canopies, as well as installation of new. If replacement of awnings or canopies is requested rather than repair, cost estimates showing that repair of panels was cost prohibited must be submitted.

Awnings and canopies shall be placed in such a way that they avoid covering or overwhelming architectural details such as cornice, trim, windows, decorative brickwork or other unique structural characteristics.

Please note not only must the awning or canopy design be approved by the regional **PA Route 6 and PA Wilds Façade Program** Design Committee, but it also must be approved by the local Code and Zoning officials and meet all state and local requirements and codes.

### **Signs**

Signs can be one of the most important parts of a storefront. Signs can have a dramatic impact on the overall image of your business and your community. A sign can cause an individual passing by to become a potential customer. Signs that are properly sized, attractively designed, constructed of appropriate materials, and properly located enhance the image of the business and again that of the community. Signs should be designed to complement the façade of the business.

Please note, not only must the sign design be approved by the **PA Route 6 and PA Wilds Façade Program** Design Committee, but it also must be approved by local Code and Zoning officials and meet all state and local requirements and codes. Signs should be sized to balance, not hide or overwhelm the structure.

Interior window signs shall **not** be eligible to receive **PA Route 6 and PA Wilds Façade Program** funding.

The regional **PA Route 6 and PA Wilds Façade Program** Design Committee recommends:

- The use of display windows for creative signage.
- The use of individual lettering on a structure itself to recreate the feel of an earlier era to the time of construction of the building.
- Locating signs to avoid covering or overwhelming architectural details such as cornices, trim, windows, decorative brickwork or other unique structural characteristics.
- Orienting signs to pedestrians, not vehicular traffic. Signs should be detailed so as to appeal to someone proceeding slowly at close range.
- Sign material(s) and design(s) that reflect the period of the building and the design of the storefront along with sign colors that complement the paint scheme of the storefront façade.
- Artisan-crafted signs and quality sign materials manufactured specifically by the sign industry for handcrafted signs such as wood, metal, and urethane.
- Colors should complement the paint scheme of the storefront to distinguish the type of business and create interest without losing community appeal.
- The lettering of the sign should be kept to a minimum and, likewise, the message brief. A logo or illustration may be substituted to communicate the nature of a business.
- Avoid using multiple signs where one sign would be sufficient.

### **Paint, Exterior Restoration and/or Architectural Elements**

Some central business districts may specify the color schemes that are allowable for funding through the program. For those who do not, color schemes that would be typically found in a historic downtown of your age shall be used.

Funds are also available for repair, cleaning, refinishing, painting, and restoration of exterior woodwork and trim, architectural sheet metal and/or decorative brick elements. This category includes exterior masonry repairs, restoration, painting (in the case of brick, only if originally painted), low-pressure water or steam cleaning, or best recommended manner in which to clean the specified material.



Roof and commercial cornices, parapets and other decorative elements may be repaired and reconditioned. Replacement of cornice and trim elements will be permitted when they are severely deteriorated and cannot be repaired. Missing decorative elements can be replaced utilizing existing examples found elsewhere on the building, period photographs, or, in the absence of both, examples of similar buildings in your downtown. Roof repair or replacement is **not** eligible for funding.

### **Windows and Doors**

Funds are available for painting, rehabilitation, reglazing and reconditioning of existing windows (including display, ornamental, upper-story windows), doors and exterior shutters when they are original to the building. Funds are also available for the replacement of non-original existing windows, doors and exterior shutters that are out of character with the building.

Grant funds will not be available for **replacement** of original windows, doors and exterior shutters or those elements when they are in character with the building, unless they are severely deteriorated and cannot be rehabilitated.

### **Window Guidelines:**

The **PA Route 6 and PA Wilds Façade Program** Design Committee encourages the preservation of original wood windows wherever possible, and discourages the use of new vinyl, fiberglass or metal windows where such replacements would lead to the removal and destruction of historic wood windows. Although the **PA Route 6 and PA Wilds Façade Program** Design Committee may determine eligibility for funding on a case by case basis, window related projects will generally be evaluated according to the guidelines below.

Window related activities that may be eligible for funding include:

1. Restoration and repair of original wood sash and frames.
2. Addition of quality storm windows, or replacement of existing storm windows, if undertaken as part of an effort to retain original wood windows.
3. Addition or replacement of appropriate weather-stripping to existing wood windows, if undertaken as part of an effort to restore and retain original wood windows.
4. Replacement of original wood windows with comparable new wood windows or high quality aluminum clad wood windows.
5. Replacement of existing non-wood or non-original replacement windows with new non-wood replacement windows, where the older windows are deteriorated or otherwise of inferior quality and the newer windows result in a significant visual improvement.

Window related activities that may **not** be eligible for funding include:

1. Replacement of existing wood windows with vinyl or other non-wood windows where comparable improvements in appearance may be achieved by painting or otherwise repairing existing wood windows.
2. Replacement of existing wood windows with vinyl or other non-wood windows for the sole purposes of energy savings or convenience of maintenance.

When considering whether to repair or replace wood windows, applicants are encouraged to review two informative Preservation Briefs on the subject, available online at:

“The Repair of Historic Wood Windows” [www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/briefs/brief09.htm](http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/briefs/brief09.htm)

“Conserving Energy in Historic Buildings” [www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/briefs/brief03.htm](http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/briefs/brief03.htm)

*These briefs conclude that “the repair and weatherization of existing wooden windows is more practical than most people realize, and that many windows are unfortunately replaced because of a lack of awareness of techniques for evaluation, repair, and weatherization. Wooden windows which are repaired and properly maintained will have greatly extended service lives while contributing to the historic character of the building. Thus, an important element of a building's significance will have been preserved for the future.”*

When there is no other alternative but to replace severely deteriorated windows, the **PA Route 6 and PA Wilds Façade Program** Design Committee encourages property owners to consider the following options:

1. To maintain the original architectural character and structure of the building, replacement windows should be sized to fit the original opening and be consistent with the style and detail of the original building.
2. Consider the use of colors other than bright white when choosing replacement windows for brick buildings or other façades that are not white. Many manufacturers offer a standard tan color that will blend much more naturally with surrounding surfaces.
3. Limit the use of snap-in interior grilles where possible. Replacements with single-paned sash or those with a double paned sash and a single wider vertical bar will often appear more authentic than those with grids of four, six or nine divisions.
4. Visit local showrooms to consider all the different replacement windows available.

### **Design Assistance**

Design Assistance – Funds are available for architectural, historic façade research and preservation, and graphic design services by a design or architectural professional.

**The total funding request for design assistance cannot exceed \$500.00.**

### **Lighting**

The **PA Route 6 and PA Wilds Façade Program** Design Committee recommends externally lit fixtures rather than internally lit plastic fixtures and spotlights. Sign 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. Lighting should be placed to cast light in a downward direction. Bulbs are not to be visible from the street. Lights should be consistent with dark sky friendly lighting.

#### **APPLICATION PROCESS/PROJECT AWARD**

Applications must be postmarked or e-mailed by December 22, 2017. The mailing address is: PO Box 180, Galeton PA 16922

The **PA Route 6 and PA Wilds Façade Program** Design Committee will begin reviewing applications at that time.

Upon final approval, the applicant will receive a Letter of Commitment stating the reimbursement grant amount, terms of the improvements, conditions for construction, and any other provisions related to the project. The Letter of Commitment must be signed by the applicant and returned within 15 calendar days of the notification of the award. The applicant can then obtain the necessary building permits and any other applicable review processes.

Applicants should **NOT** start improvements before he/she receives written notification of approval by the **PA Wilds Façade Improvement Program** Administrator as well as the Letter of Commitment is signed and building permits are issued. Any work performed, materials purchased, or contracts entered into prior to approval and a completed Letter of Commitment will **NOT** be eligible for grant assistance.

**Grants are made on a cost reimbursement basis**, following a process of application, design, review, approval, construction, and proof of payment in full. The applicant must submit documentation to the **PA Route 6 and PA Wilds Façade Program** Coordinator that substantiates that the agreed upon work is complete and has been paid for in full in order to receive the reimbursement check.

All work must be completed within 150 days from the Letter of Commitment Date; otherwise the grant may be forfeited. Applicants may request an extension through the Design Committee for their approval. An extension cannot exceed beyond an additional 90 days.

Reimbursement will be based upon the Scope of Work submitted as part of the application. Any and all Project Change Orders must be requested in writing to the **PA Route 6 and PA Wilds Façade Program** Coordinator who will make recommendation to the design committee to initiate approval of modification to any part of the executed Commitment Letter. Approval must be obtained prior to conducting activities that in any way modify the agreed to scope or cost of said activities. Failure to obtain approval from the **PA Route 6 and PA Wilds Façade Program** Design Committee before the commencement of work relieves the **PA Route 6 and PA Wilds Façade Program** from any obligation to make any payments to the Approved Applicant. Any expenditure made by the Applicant which is not in accordance with the terms of the Commitment Letter may be disapproved, and payment to the applicant adjusted accordingly.

Reimbursement to the applicant requires the submittal of documentation that substantiates the work is complete as well as total and final cost for work. This documentation shall include photographs of the completed project, final invoice(s) and or receipts, and cancelled check(s) or confirmations of payment in full. In addition, prior to reimbursement, the work completed must be approved by the **PA Route 6 and PA Wilds Façade Program** Design Committee or Program Coordinator through an actual on-site inspection of work done to ensure the consistency of initial approval to the end project.

## **SUMMARY**

While these guidelines may not address each and every situation, they are intended to be a helpful guide and should be used in conjunction with the *Pennsylvania Wilds Design Guide: A Design Guide for Community Character Stewardship*, <http://www.pawildscenter.org/community-character-stewardship/>.

Please feel free to contact the **PA Route 6 and PA Wilds Façade Program Coordinator**, Gwen Auman at 814-594-4251 if you have questions or would like to discuss your ideas.