

# NORWALK REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM GUIDELINES

NOVEMBER 2017

The Norwalk Redevelopment Agency Façade Improvement Program purpose is to provide façade design and/or construction assistance to eligible property owners, tenants, and/or business owners in rehabilitating commercial, residential and/or significant streetscape components located within the Agency Redevelopment Plan areas along the urban corridor. Exterior improvements have a positive visual impact, stimulate private investment and complement other community development efforts. The Grant program is intended to assist projects that are typically too small to generate historic tax credits.

The *Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* establishes a benchmark for improvement project design and construction that is a widely accepted standard to guide work on local historic buildings. These guidelines have been updated recently to accommodate buildings constructed with newer materials and are adapted to current building codes as well to address resiliency and sustainability. The *Standards* are set up as recommendations allowing for consideration of the economic and technical feasibility of each project. The purpose of the *Standards and Guidelines* is to provide guidance to owners, tenants, architects, contractors and project reviewers on project design, specified materials, colors etc. prior to the start of work. In addition, the *Standards and Guidelines* assist and direct the recommendations of preservation professionals and/or third party design reviewers.

The 2016/2017 Capital Budget awarded the Redevelopment Agency Façade Improvement Program funding in the amount of \$160,000 to be used to support grant allocations to property owners or tenants with an owner's permission that are:

Eligible Program applicant properties listed in or eligible for listing individually or as part of an Historic District in the State or National Register of Historic Places; in the Norwalk Historic Resource Inventory; or in the Norwalk Historical Society historic building plaque program as recommended by the Norwalk Historical Commission or the Norwalk Preservation Trust;

Exterior property improvements visible from the public street;

Proposed project design and/or construction that address preservation, rehabilitation, restoration and/or reconstruction;

Proposed improvements that meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating,

Restoring and Reconstructing historic Buildings as published by the US Department of the Interior National Park Service 2017;

All projects funded with Façade Improvement grants will require design review by a third party design reviewer qualified in historic preservation;

Façade Improvement Program grant funding requires a 100% match with the maximum grant award not to exceed \$50,000 or not more than 30% of the total project cost.

These Façade Improvement Program Guidelines have been developed in collaboration with the Norwalk Historic Commission.