CITY OF ONTARIO

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

303 EAST B STREET

ONTARIO, CALIFORNIA 91764

(909) 395-2005

Downtown Storefront Façade Improvement Program

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

**SECTION I- OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM**

1. **Purpose, Goal and Objective of Program-**

The City of Ontario, in its continuing effort to support the revitalization of the Historic Downtown Area, has created a Downtown Storefront Façade Improvement Program (Program) for all property owners within the designated program area. The purpose of the program is to provide financial assistance to commercial property and/or business owners to make qualifying façade improvements on Euclid-facing buildings.

The goals of the Program are to facilitate commercial revitalization; stimulate private investment and customer patronage; preserve and beautify the Historic Downtown Area; and generate shopping opportunities by creating a pleasant walking environment resulting from the improved visual aesthetics of commercial building façades.

1. **Source of Funds-**

The Program is being funded by the Federal Government’s Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) for Fiscal Year 2019-20.

1. **Financial Assistance-**

Grant funds shall be available to eligible commercial property and/or business owners who meet the requirements of the Program. The maximum program grant amount per applicant is $25,000. The applicant will be required to contribute a 1:1 leverage of personal funds towards the approved improvements of the building. For example, if the grant amount requested is $10,000, the applicant will need to provide $10,000 of improvements within the approved scope of work.

**SECTION II- PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

1. **Location-** Only commercial properties located within theHistoric Downtown Area that have Euclid Avenue-facing buildings between Emporia Street to G Street (100-200 blocks of South Euclid and 100-600 blocks of North Euclid) are eligible to apply.
2. **Permits-** Property owner must obtain plan approval and any applicable Planning and Building permits from the City. All work performed under the provisions of this Program shall meet all applicable standards contained in the City’s adopted zoning ordinance, and local building and safety codes. The City’s General Requirements can be viewed on the City’s website at: https://www.ontarioca.gov/government-departments-development-building/general-requirements
3. **Improvements-** All building improvements must be to the exterior of the building. The scope of work must be approved by City of Ontario’s Economic Development Agency and Community Improvement Department. Proposed work should be consistent with the historic fabric of the building. No work, whether it is program funded or leverage funded shall be conducted prior to the written approval of the scope of work by the City. Improvements are not eligible if they are simply maintenance of the current façade.
4. **Ownership-** The applicant(s) must be either the current property owner(s) or business owner(s) (tenant) of the property to be rehabilitated in order to be eligible for the Program. Business owners must obtain consent from current property owner in order to apply for the program. In case of multiple ownership, the signature of each titleholder is required on all appropriate documents. The City will verify property ownership and require all persons currently on title to give written consent to all work proposed to be performed on the property prior to initiating such work.
5. **Program Limitations-** If a building or qualified unit is occupied by one tenant occupant, the maximum number of applications is one per façade. If a building has multiple independent units, each unit with a separate entrance, which has a wall that qualifies as an exterior facade may make a separate application on the basis of one application per façade. If a portion of a building has been improved with Program funds, subsequent applications for the remaining portions of the building should be consistent with the prior grant work.
6. **Program Eligible Property Improvements-** The Program assistance is limited to supply and installation contracts. Supply and installation contracts are defined as those where the material supplier will provide installation of the material with an incidental amount of construction activity that does not require a separate construction contract. No extensive structural modifications should be required to install the materials (i.e., widening entrances or installing wiring). Such improvements may include, but are not limited to:
   * + New signage;
     + New awnings;
     + Exterior lighting; and
     + Anti-graffiti treatment to existing windows.
7. **Owner Leverage Eligible Property Improvements-** The program requirements require a 1:1 leverage of grant funds with personal funds from the applicant. Eligible leverage‑funded improvements are limited to exterior improvements. Such improvements may include, but are not limited to:
   * + Exterior refinishing;
     + New exterior doors;
     + Exterior lighting;
     + Painting;
     + Decorative improvements; and
     + New windows.

**SECTION III- PROGRAM PROCEDURES**

1. **Applicant Intake and Eligibility Determination-**
   1. **Application-** Applications are available at City Hall or online at [www.ontarioca.gov](http://www.ontarioca.gov). Each application must be completed in its entirety, signed and submitted with all required documents as listed on the application, and signed proof of ownership of lease agreement. Applications will be reviewed in the order in which they are received. The City will maintain a waiting list for all prospective participants.
   2. **Verification and Eligibility Determination-** The City shall verify all information as necessary. Applicants will be notified in writing regarding eligibility status.
   3. **Rehabilitation Feasibility Determination-** Once an applicant has been determined to meet eligibility requirements, an initial inspection of the property will be made by the Economic Development Agency and Community Improvement Department to determine the extent of any code violations, as well as any health and safety issues, that need to be corrected as part of the program or leverage scopes of work. A proposed scope of work will be developed illustrating the items to be included as part of the program scope of work and items to be included as the leverage scope of work.
   4. **Approval and Notifications-** Once the application and scope of work have been verified as eligible, the City and the applicant will enter into a Program Agreement that contains the terms and conditions required by the program. After execution of the Program Agreement, the City will issue a Notice to Proceed with work. **No work should be initiated, contracted for, or performed until after the Notice to Proceed has been issued.** The City may not approve reimbursement for work completed prior to the issuance of the Notice to Proceed.
   5. **Reservation of Funds-** After the applicant has been approved for the program, a reservation of funds letter will be issued for the grant amount approved. This letter will reserve the approved grant amount for 90 days. If the applicant has not submitted all required items for reimbursement within the 90 days, the reservation of funds may be cancelled. If unforeseen conditions are delaying the project, the applicant should contact the City immediately to discuss options to preserve the reservation of program funds. One additional extension of time up to 90 days may be granted based upon a demonstrated hardship.
2. **Procurement and Contractor Selection**
   1. **Program-Funded Improvements Procurement-** The applicant is required to obtain multiple proposals for the program-funded improvements. A minimum of three proposals for each item approved within the program scope of work shall be submitted. If the applicant is unable to obtain three proposals, the applicant shall provide a summary of the efforts made to obtain the minimum number of required proposals. Supply and installation proposals from vendors qualified to perform the improvements approved within the program scope of work shall be submitted for approval prior to execution of contracts with material suppliers. Proposals shall clearly state a cost for materials and a cost for installation.
   2. **Program-Funded Improvements Selection-** The City will review the proposals submitted by the applicant and verify the lowest-qualified proposal. Approval will be given for the amount specified in the lowest-qualified proposal within the grant limits of the program. Should the applicant wish to enter into an agreement with a vendor other than the approved lowest-qualified proposal, the applicant will be responsible for the cost difference between the lowest-qualified proposal and the selected proposal. The material supplier and/or the applicant will be responsible to obtain all necessary permits for the program-funded improvements. The amount of reimbursement approved is limited to the approved lowest-qualified proposal.
   3. **Leverage-Funded Improvements Selection-** The City will review the scope of work and contract proposal for the leverage-funded improvements pursuant to the scope of work approved during the feasibility determination. All leverage-funded improvements will be contracted for privately by the applicant and paid for from private funds. No CDBG funds will be used for any portion of the leverage-funded improvements. While the City is not involved with the contracting for the leverage-funded improvements, a best practice suggestion is that the applicant obtain a minimum of three bids for the leverage-funded improvements. The final amount of program funds reimbursed will be based on the final amount of the leverage-funded improvements.
   4. **Insurance and Licenses-** The applicant is solely responsible for ensuring that the contractor has all necessary insurance and required licenses. In addition, the applicant shall insure that the contractor obtains all necessary permits for both the program-funded and leverage-funded improvements.
3. **Award and Reimbursement**
   1. **Notification-** Once the applicant has submitted all required procurement documents for both the program-funded and leverage-funded improvements, the City will issue a final Notice to Proceed. No reimbursement shall be issued for work completed or contracted for prior to the issuance of the Notice to Proceed.
   2. **Inspection of Completed Work-** After the applicant notifies the City that all work has been completed, including all program-funded and leverage-fund improvements, an inspection of the work will be conducted. This inspection shall include a review of the permits issued and inspections of permitted work.
   3. **Reimbursement-** Based upon the results of the inspection, the City will issue reimbursement from program funds to the applicant for the completion of the improvements. In order for reimbursement to be processed, receipts evidencing payment in full on all vendor contracts for the program-funded work and construction contracts for all leverage-funded improvements shall be provided. In addition, the applicant shall file a Notice of Completion within 10 days of the completion of the work and provide a copy as part of the reimbursement request.
4. **Applicant Responsibilities**
   1. **Property Maintenance-** The applicant is responsible for property maintenance and safety during the construction and material installation. The property owner/business owner is responsible for ongoing maintenance of the improvements for five (5) years following the completion of both the program-funded and leverage-funded improvements.

**Section IV- AMENDMENTS**

Amendments to these guidelines may be made from time to time by the City. Authority shall be granted to the City Manager or his/her designee to grant a minor waiver or make minor amendments to these guidelines, with the exception of Federal guidelines and regulations.