

# *Storefront Improvement Program*

## GUIDELINES AND REQUIREMENTS

**The Storefront Improvement Program assists commercial property and business owners in rehabilitating their storefronts, to revitalize neighborhood commercial areas, eliminate blight and enhance the livability of surrounding neighborhoods.**

### **APPLICATION**

You must submit a written application. PDC staff will then work with you to help you meet program conditions that are required for a commitment of funds. Application forms and maps that will help you determine if your building is in an eligible area are also available at [www.pdc.us/storefront](http://www.pdc.us/storefront).

### **AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS**

The Storefront Improvement program provides a matching grant of up to 75% for the following eligible cost to assist property owners and lessees in rehabilitating their storefronts.

1. Exterior Façade Improvements: maximum \$20,000 grant per building.
2. Signage, Lighting and Awning Incentive: up to an additional \$12,000 for these elements
3. Business Tenant Signage Incentive: In the event where the property has exhausted all storefront funds, ground floor business tenants may be eligible for up to \$2,000 for permanent signage. This incentive is only available for business tenants who occupied the space within the year.

**Funds are subject to budget availability and therefore some program incentives may not be available in all areas or for all eligible applicants. Funds are limited; grants are awarded on a first come, first served basis.**

### **ELIGIBILITY**

**Eligible work:** Rehabilitation of building facades visible to the street, including storefronts; cornices; gutters and downspouts; signs; exterior lighting; canopies and awnings; painting and masonry cleaning; and limited security and accessibility improvements. Permit and design review fees can be reimbursed through the program.

The following repairs are allowed as long as they are part of work which directly affects the façade: landscaping; fences; seal coating and re-stripping of parking lots; bike racks; and interior window display lighting. In addition, sustainable elements such as bio-swales and semi-permeable pavers may be included in the larger project.

**Ineligible work:** Roofs; structural foundations; billboards; security systems; non-permanent fixtures; interior window coverings; vinyl awnings; personal property and equipment; security bars; razor/barbed wire fencing; sidewalks and paving.

Eligible participants include both commercial property owners and business lessees with written authorization of the property owner.

### **The following entities and properties are not eligible:**

- National franchises/for profit corporations that are not headquartered in the State of Oregon or Clark County Washington; except in the case where the franchisee or brand has a locally based owner and the brand has no more than three locations within the City of Portland. (However, national for-profit corporations and franchises located within the Downtown Retail Core Boundary are eligible for the program)
- Buildings in excess of 80,000 square feet; except buildings located within Central City Urban Renewal Areas
- Government offices and agencies (non-governmental tenants are eligible)
- Businesses that exclude minors 24 hours a day; except buildings located within Central City Urban Renewal Areas
- Properties primarily in residential use
- New construction, less than 5 years old

### **LETTER OF CONDITIONS**

Accepted applicants receive a Letter of Conditions which must be met prior to commitment of grant funds.

### **DESIGN**

PDC has several pre-qualified architects on retainer to provide up to 30 hours of free design assistance per project for rehabilitation

of exterior building facades and storefronts. The architect may help you put together a final concept and the requirements for design review approval from the city (which applies in most areas in the central city), should it be necessary.

If you choose to use your own architect, and include the PDC Storefront Coordinator in the design process, you may be partially reimbursed, up to a maximum of \$1,865. This amount is paid in addition to the grant funds awarded in the Commitment Letter as a reimbursable project expense. Reimbursement for outside design assistance will only take place if the improvements occur under the Storefront Program.

## **APPROVALS**

PDC has the sole authority to determine eligibility of proposed work and confirmation of completed work. Certain work may be required or precluded as a condition of funding. Participants will be responsible for obtaining necessary regulatory approvals, including those of the City Design and Landmark Commissions where applicable, the State Historic Preservation Office, the City of Portland building permits and any other necessary permits. All work must comply with city, state and federal regulations.

## **BIDDING**

PDC requires that you get at least one bid for each type of work you are doing. We will commit to paying up to 75 percent of the total bid(s) up to \$32,000.

If the applicant is a licensed contractor, an additional bid must be submitted to validate the applicants bid. Contractor fees and overhead for applicant owners will not be reimbursed. All contractors must be licensed by the State of Oregon. All construction contracts will be between the applicant and contractor.

## **MWESB**

Applicants are encouraged to hire minority, women-owned, emerging small business (MWESB) certified contractors. If you need assistance locating an MWESB certified contractor please visit <http://egov.oregon.gov/DCBS/OMWESB/>.

## **COMMITMENT OF FUNDS**

The grant available for each building is up to 75 percent of the cost of eligible improvements, up to \$32,000. PDC will review and approve proposed work and insure all other conditions are met prior to entering into a Letter Agreement and allocating funds to the project. The Letter Agreement will outline additional terms and conditions of the matching grant, and will serve as the legal commitment of both parties as to the scope and quality of work and the amount of funds committed. Grants are paid upon completion of pre-approved, applicant-paid work. Under no circumstance will grant funds be disbursed for work completed before a Letter Agreement is executed.

## **GENERAL CONDITIONS**

The following general conditions will apply to all projects:

- Improvements funded by the grant will be maintained in good order for a period of at least five years; graffiti and vandalism will be dutifully repaired during this time period.
- Property taxes must be current, and participants may have no debts in arrears to the City when the Letter Agreement is issued.
- Eligible buildings qualify for a maximum of \$32,000. You may apply more than once as long as the building doesn't exceed the maximum grant. The maximum grant will be available again after a five-year time frame. If a building is sold and the new owner wishes to apply for the grant, the five-year time frame still applies. The five-year time frame begins at the date the improvements are completed.
- Compliance with the City of Portland Business License is required.
- The Applicant must complete, sign and submit a W-9 in order for disbursement of funds.
- All projects will display signage indicating PDC's involvement in the improvement work.
- Building must be at least five years old.

## **REIMBURSEMENT OF FUNDS**

Prior to reimbursement of funds, all completed work will be reviewed by PDC staff as to compliance with the Letter Agreement. In the case of projects that are larger than the required match, the final \$5,000 disbursement of funds will be held until the exterior of the building is "picture ready" and consider complete by the Storefront Coordinator.

For more information, please call Dana DeKlyen at (503) 823-3312, Pam Johnson at (503) 823-3334 or Amy Fleck-Rosete at (503)823-9036.