

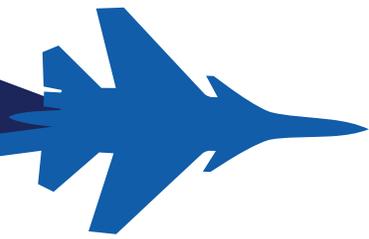


STOREFRONT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

**Grant Funds Available:
Painting Doors, Windows, Landscaping,
Irrigation, Storefronts, Facade Signage, Awnings**

Encouraging the enhancement of storefronts on commercial, professional and retail buildings in Universal City, Texas.

STOREFRONT IMPROVEMENT EXAMPLES



Before



After



Before



After



STOREFRONT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM



PROGRAM PURPOSE

The primary goal of the Storefront Improvement Program is to encourage the enhancement of storefronts on commercial, professional, and retail buildings in Universal City.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The program affects only building exteriors and does not include interior spaces, except for window display areas which are on public view. The design standards are meant to be flexible enough to allow business or property owners to be creative and design storefronts that market their establishments effectively. At the same time, aspects of the program will help to avoid poor quality design decisions that detract from the aesthetics of the business districts. The program also provides an objective basis by which to evaluate projects that come up for review. Ultimately, the design, renovation, and repair projects will enhance the economic success of Universal City by making it a more inviting place for shoppers and businesses.

PROGRAM FUNDING

Funding available is based on a dollar for dollar reimbursement up to a maximum of \$10,000 per building. Additional reimbursement may be approved on a case-by-case basis if the application exceptionally meets the objectives of the Storefront Improvement Program and of the Universal City Economic Development Corporation (UCEDC).

ELIGIBILITY

Either the property owner (corporation, joint venture, partnership, etc.) or the business owner (tenant) is eligible for funding. Property owners with multiple buildings, or tenants with multiple operating locations, may be limited to one building or location per funding cycle.

Tenant: Tenant requests for consideration are limited to existing businesses that have been established in Universal City for at least 12 months. Establishment is based upon the date the business received its permanent Certificate of Occupancy. Tenants must have written authorization by property owner(s) to make the indicated improvements.

Property Owners: Property owner requests for consideration do not have a time/ownership limitation, but property owner must show proof of ownership.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Projects are reviewed on a competitive basis. Projects with the highest weighted average will be granted funding.

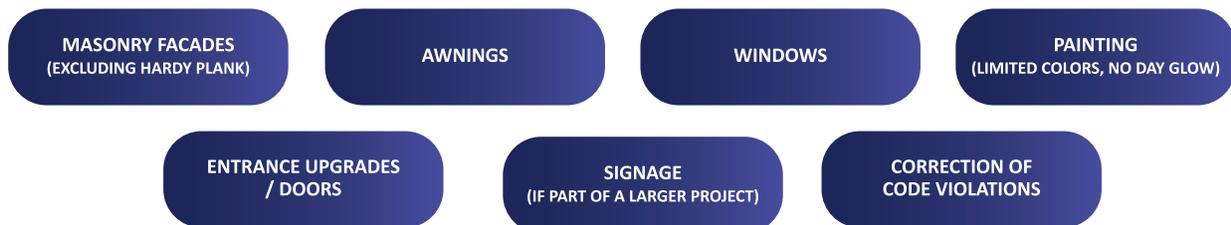
Reimbursable Expenditures

Applicant is responsible for paying all charges incurred on behalf of the project. **No partially completed projects will receive reimbursement; project must be completed in its entirety as reflected on the application submitted for consideration to the UCEDC.** All projects must start construction within 90 days of being awarded funding, and all projects must be complete within one year of being selected.

Once the project is complete, a Final Inspection Report must be obtained through the City's Development Services Department. Applicant shall then submit a copy of all project receipts to the UCEDC, confirming that all contractors and vendors have been paid in full. Within thirty days of receiving these copies, the UCEDC will verify payments to all contractors and vendors. Upon verification of payments and a final inspection by the Development Services Department, the UCEDC will reimburse applicant on a dollar for dollar match, up to a maximum of \$10,000.

Qualifying Expenditures

Expenditures qualifying for reimbursement are limited to exterior building façades, except for window display areas that are on public view. Below is a priority listing of the qualifying expenditures that are taken into consideration, along with the evaluation criteria outlined on the Evaluation Form included in this packet. The prioritized exterior components include, but are not limited to the following areas:



*Other renovations may qualify, as determined by the Universal City Economic Development Corporation Board of Directors. All walls visible from a public street or alley must be enhanced with masonry or paint to be eligible for consideration and/or reimbursement. **No partially completed projects will be eligible for reimbursement.***

Permits and Inspections

The Development Services Department is responsible for issuance of building permits, construction plan review and inspections. Contractor licenses relative to all phases of construction are required and will be enforced by the Development Services Department. This includes general contractor licenses, electrical contractor licenses and sign contractor licenses. Registration of plumbers, irrigators, mechanical contractors, and fire alarm and fire suppression installers is also required. Staff is available to offer assistance with all types of applications herein described, to offer guidance in submitting plans for review, and to provide information related to building codes and ordinances.

Application and Permitting Assistance

Prior to submitting an application, all interested parties are strongly encouraged to make an appointment with **Michael Cassata, Development Services Director at 210-619-0720 or at DSDirector@UCTX.Gov**. This meeting is designed to provide both additional information about the program and assistance in completing the application, as well as familiarize you with building codes, ordinances, licensing, permits, and inspection requirements.

Application Process

Applications for the program are currently being accepted. **Completed applications, including attachments, must be returned to the Economic Development Director. Please check with the staff for timeline for submitting the application.** The UCEDC Board will review all submissions during a public hearing. All recommendations for funding must be sent City Council for its approval. Documents can be hand delivered, or mailed to:

**The City of Universal City
ATTN: UCEDC Storefront Improvement Program
2150 Universal City Blvd
Universal City, TX 78148**

Related Parties

This program is not open for participation to any Universal City council member, board or commission member, city employee, or immediate family members of an employee or council/board/commission member.

No Contract

The parties hereto agree and understand that this program does not create any type of contractual relationship between the UCEDC and any of the participants or proposed participants in this program. Each Party making application understands that the funding of this program is the sole discretion of the UCEDC, and that funding thereof may be revoked at any time.



1. What is the City of Universal City Storefront Improvement Program?

This program is a tool intended to support existing businesses and to assist in the attraction of new companies with the improvements of commercial storefront buildings and lots. This in turn improves the look of the City. This program offers commercial businesses and/or property owners a reimbursement of costs involved in improving a commercial building . All improvements must be visible from the public right-of-way or provide a permanent capital improvement that will enhance the property's overall value or usefulness.

2. Who can apply for funding?

Applicants must be a licensed storefront commercial business and/or property owner located within the City of Universal City that generates sales, use and/or property tax revenues. If the business is leasing the property, authorization from the building owner to apply for funding is required. Not-for-profit organizations, religious institutions, home-based businesses or residential living facilities do not qualify. Tenants must have a minimum of two-years remaining on their lease or an option to renew.

Applications will be considered on a first come first serve basis and subject to available funding. Funding is limited, apply as soon as possible. Once all funds are committed no additional projects will be approved. This program is not open for participation to any Universal City council member, board or commission member, city employee, or immediate family members of an employee or council/board/commission member.

3. Are projects that have already been started or completed still eligible?

No. Work started or completed prior to the program approval is not eligible for funding. Projects that have already submitted plans and application for building permits are eligible as long as no work has begun prior to obtaining project approval.

4. What types of improvements are eligible for funding?

The improvements are limited to exterior or capital improvements. The grant does not include furniture or non-fixed improvements. Seasonal or annual plant material will not be eligible (i.e. flowers planted and replaced or removed at end of season). Health and safety improvements will take precedence over aesthetics. Examples of qualifying expenditures are: masonry facades, awnings, entrance/door upgrades, windows, painting, landscaping, signage, correction to code violations, enhanced gas/electric/water service.

FAQ (Cont'd)

5. Are there any design guidelines?

Yes. Projects must conform to all aspects of the building, fire, zoning and development codes for the City of Universal City. All required plan review and building permit must be obtained by the applicant prior to the work being performed. All contract work must be performed by a licensed contractor in the City of Universal City. It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to ensure compliance with the applicable local, state and federal guidelines. Applicants should meet with Development Service and Economic Development staff before submitting an application for guidance in submitting plans for review and to provide information related to building codes and ordinances. Contact Economic Development Director Kristin Mueller at 210-619-0701 or kmueller@uctx.gov.

6. Do I have to use a contractor and obtain bids?

Applicants for the Storefront Improvement Program are required to use a licensed contractor to complete work under the program and obtain itemized bids from at least three (3) contractors. If multiple contractors will be used (ex. One for concrete work and another for signage) two separate bids for each component of work shall be submitted.

7. How does the application process work?

Upon receipt of a completed Storefront Improvement Program Application, the City of Universal City staff will review the application to ensure compliance with the program guidelines. Applications are then scheduled for consideration by the Universal City Economic Development Corporation (UCEDC). The UCEDC meets once a month on the 2nd Thursday of every month. To allow for time to post proper notice, applications must be submitted by the 4th Tuesday of every month for consideration at the UCEDC meeting the following month. The UCEDC reserves the right to approve, deny, or suggestion changes to any and all Storefront Improvement Program applications. Application approval may come with a specific set of requirements or conditions to be determined by the UCEDC. Once an application is approved by the UCEDC, it must be ratified by City Council in a City Council meeting. The application and approval process takes approximately 6 weeks.

8. How are projects selected for funding?

Qualified applications will be reviewed and approved based on the following criteria:

- Improvements must be eligible under the program criteria.
- Applicants must qualify as a licensed storefront commercial business or property owner that generates sales, use and/or property tax revenues (not-for-profit organizations, religious institutions, home-based businesses or residential living facilities do not qualify).
- Leasing businesses/tenants must have a minimum of two years remaining on their lease or an option to renew and written approval of property owner.
- Completed Application in addition to required attachments per checklist.
- Compatibility with the laws and regulations of the City of Universal City.
- Professional quality of design.
- Consistency of design with business activity.
- Proposed improvements are sufficient to improve the aesthetics of the building.
- Improvement of property will significantly impact the revitalization efforts of the City.

FAQ (Cont'd)

The applicant hereto agrees and understands that this program does not create any type of contractual relationship between the UCEDC and any of the participants or proposed participants in this program. Each party making application understands that the funding of this program is the sole discretion of the UCEDC, and that funding thereof may be revoked at any time. The UCEDC reserves the right to make changes to the Storefront Improvement Program at any time as warranted.

9. What happens after a project is selected for funding?

Once the project is approved by the UCEDC and City Council, the applicant will receive a Performance Agreement from the UCEDC indicating the specific amount of funding to be reimbursed and information on other requirements. The applicant must sign and return the Performance Agreement within 30 days of application approval. The approved project must begin within 90 days of submitting the signed Performance Agreement. Within twelve (12) months of signing the Performance Agreement, the applicant shall complete the approved improvements, pay the contractor and submit for reimbursement with applicable documentation. Additional time to complete work and pay contractor may be requested in writing and subject to approval for good cause. Failure to abide by deadlines will lead to revocation of program approval.

10. What other responsibilities does the applicant have?

The applicant or its contractor is responsible for obtaining all approvals and permits and any other required approvals for the work to be done. The applicant is responsible for paying the full amount for the cost of the work to the contractor(s); the UCEDC will reimburse the applicant in accordance with the program (see Question #12 below). The applicant is responsible for compliance with all applicable safety standards and conditions. The applicant also agrees to maintain the improvements made from the project funding.

11. What happens if my application is denied?

If the application is denied a letter will be sent to the applicant with an explanation of why the UCEDC or City Council did not approve the application. If an application is denied, a new application may be submitted any time after the initial application was denied.

12. How am I reimbursed once the project is completed?

Grant funds are disbursed on a reimbursement basis and cannot be issued until the proposed project has been fully completed and all permits for the project are closed. No partially completed projects will receive reimbursement; project must be completed in its entirety as reflected on the application submitted for consideration to the UCEDC. Before funds are released, applicants will need to submit proof of payment to applicable contractors and at least two color photos of the completed project. Approval by the City building inspectors and submission of Certificate of Occupancy, if applicable, is necessary. A City representative will review the completed project to determine if the actual work complies with the approved grant. Once work has been approved, payment has been verified, and permits have been closed, a check will be prepared and sent to the applicant within 30 days of meeting the program reimbursement submission requirements.

FAQ (Cont'd)

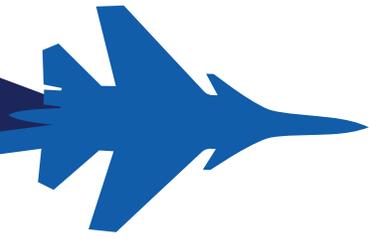
13. Can I reapply for additional funds?

Businesses and property owners may apply for future Storefront Improvement Programs no less than two years after previous program approval for the same property.

For additional information contact:

Michael Cassata
City of Universal City
Economic Development Director
210-619-0720
dsdirector@uctx.gov

EVALUATION FORM



Below is the evaluation criteria and point system that will be used to judge each of the submitted Storefront Improvement Program Projects.

EVALUATION FACTOR

SCORE

POSSIBLE POINTS

Professional Quality of Design

10

Consistency of design with business activity

20

Proposed improvements are sufficient to improve the aesthetics of the building

30

Improvement of property will significantly impact the revitalization efforts of the city

40

TOTAL SCORE

/ 100

NOTES



STOREFRONT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM CHECKLIST

- Attend Pre-Application Meeting with City Staff
- Complete Storefront Improvement Program Application
- Submit an Outline and/or Illustration of Proposed Improvements
- Submit 3 bids / quotes for project scope
- Property Owners: Show Certificate of Ownership
Or Tenants: Obtain Property Owner's Letter of Authorization
- Proof of Insurance (Contractor's responsibility when permits are obtained)
- Proof of Contractor's License (Contractor's responsibility when permits are obtained)
- Provide Two 4 x 6 Photos of existing storefront or building interior

CONTACT INFORMATION

UNIVERSAL CITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Michael Cassata, Director of Economic Development & Development Services

(210) 659-0333 ext 720

PERMIT QUESTIONS, CONTRACTOR REGISTRATION, ETC.
Linda Iglehart, Administrative/Code Compliance Officer

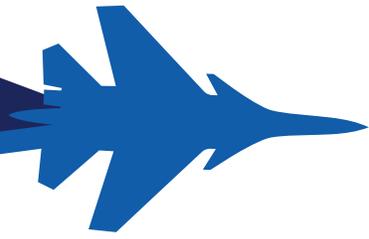
(210) 659-0333 ext 723

INSPECTIONS

(210) 659-0333 ext 444



APPLICATION



PARTICIPANT

Name: _____

Building Owner (s)

Tenant

Daytime Phone # _____

Email _____

Business Name _____

Business/Building Address _____

Is the building owner interested in making improvements?

Yes No

BUILDING OWNER

Name _____

(if partnership, corporation, etc, list each officer name and title)

Address _____

Daytime Phone # _____

Does building owner have a business in the building? Yes No

If yes, what is the business name? _____

OTHER BUSINESSES IN BUILDING

Please list other businesses in building and check those interested in participating in the Storefront Improvement Program:

Name of Business

Name of Owner

UNIVERSAL CITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

(210) 659-0333 ext 720

Michael Cassata, Director of Economic Development & Development Services

PERMIT QUESTIONS, CONTRACTOR REGISTRATION, ETC.

(210) 659-0333 ext 723

Linda Iglehart, Administrative/Code Compliance Officer

INSPECTIONS

(210) 659-0333 ext 444

EVALUATION OF REQUEST (FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY)

1. Pre-Application Meeting Yes No
2. Date of site visit _____
3. Photographs taken _____
4. Orientation of property N S E W
5. Condition of structure Excellent Good Fair Poor
6. Number of stories _____
7. Exterior building materials _____
8. 3 bids/quotes for project scope Yes No
9. Other information

