

Special Service Area #29 Façade Improvement Program

DESCRIPTION

The façade improvement program is designed to provide reimbursements for façade rehabilitation activities. The program is intended to beautify and revitalize the commercial and residential district throughout the designated service area. West Town Special Service Area (SSA) #29 is the funding source used to provide reimbursements for façade improvements on commercial, industrial, or residential property within its boundaries. The boundaries include:

- Chicago Ave. (California to Halsted)
- Damen Ave. (Chicago to Grand)
- Milwaukee Ave. (Racine to Erie)
- Ogden Ave. (one block north and south of Chicago)
- Eckhart Park

Applicants who plan to complete a minimum of \$500 worth of work and who meet all program requirements may receive a reimbursement up to 50% of eligible costs. The maximum rebate amount in 2006 is \$10,000 for work completed in 2006. Rebates are rewarded after work is approved by the façade improvement committee, completed in the allotted time, paid in full, and all necessary documentation has been submitted to the West Town Special Service Area #29 c/o West Town Chamber of Commerce (see below). Applications will be considered once submitted within the façade improvement program timeline and will be awarded until the all the funding is disbursed. All applications must meet the guidelines outlined in this manual and are subject to review and approval by the Façade Improvement Committee.

The façade improvement program is managed by West Town SSA #29 through the West Town Chamber of Commerce.

TARGET AREA

The façade improvement program is applicable to properties within the West Town SSA #29 boundaries:

- Chicago Ave. (California to Halsted)
- Damen Ave. (Chicago to Grand)
- Milwaukee Ave. (Racine to Erie)
- Ogden Ave. (one block north and south of Chicago)
- Eckhart Park

TYPE OF ASSISTANCE

Property owners who make improvements under the guidelines of the façade improvement program will receive up to a 50% financial reimbursement for exterior improvements worth at least \$500 with a maximum 2006 rebate amount not to exceed \$10,000. It is not the intent of the program to provide financial assistance to ongoing improvements that are considered regular building 'upkeep.'

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

Applicants

- The building must be located within the West Town SSA #29 boundaries {see above}
- Buildings must have proof of proper zoning and city permits
- The building must be occupied, or affirmation of a lease commitment must be provided
- Tenant must have written consent from the owner of the property
- Preference shall be given to applicants who show a need for funding assistance in order to help complete the façade improvements
- Preference shall be given to applicants and buildings that have not previously participated in the façade improvement program
- Preference shall be given to buildings throughout the Special Service Area in an attempt to accomplish geographic diversification

Eligible Improvements

- Improvements must be visible from the public right-of-way and have a positive impact on the business front appearance
- All improvements must be compatible with city and building zoning regulations
- Sample improvements can include:
 - awnings, signs or graphics, window/door replacements, tuck pointing, landscaping; flower boxes, exterior lighting, improvements to sidewalk(s) directly in front or to the side of a property, installation of appropriate anti-graffiti material
- All improvements must meet designated guidelines and are subject to review by the façade improvement program committee. This committee is comprised of members of the West Town SSA #29 Commission.

Ineligible Improvements

- Any roofing improvements
- Rear, side, alley, or secondary improvements not visible from the public right-of-way
- New construction or additions
- Buildings less than 2 years old
- Interior improvements
- Improvements completed or started prior to program approval

Façade improvement applicants are required to submit two detailed estimates for improvement projects. The committee reserves the right to deny any questionable estimates. If the applicant plans to complete construction themselves, they must submit two estimates outside of their own.

Guidelines & Requirements

- Rebates will be applied only once per building per funding cycle on which approved improvements are made
- Buildings must be occupied, or affirmation of a lease commitment must be provided
- Improvements must be in compliance with the City of Chicago building & zoning requirements, and any other applicable state or city laws. Visit: www.cityofchicago.org or call Mayor Daley's Business Express at 312-744-CITY to obtain this information
- All proof of city permits must be submitted prior to starting improvements

- Applicant must fully and timely comply with all the requirements and deadlines set forth in this Façade Improvement Program application

Façade Improvement application process and administrative procedures

APPLY

Completed applications must be submitted to the West Town Chamber of Commerce by the designated 2006 dates. Submit the following items along with the application:

- Photographs of the existing building and the proposed project area
- Detailed plans and specifications for the proposed project, cost estimates from two contractors - specifying the preferred contractor. The committee reserves the right to reject any questionable estimates, as well as implement such additional program rules and regulations as it deems reasonable
- An owner's deed and title insurance policy showing proof of ownership. If the applicant is a tenant, they will also need to submit written consent and contact information from the owner

REVIEW

After the completed application is received the façade improvement committee comprised of West Town SSA #29 commissioners will review it. The committee will review each application, and in its sole and absolute discretion, decide which proposed projects meet the program guidelines, which projects will provide the most positive impact on the beautification to the service area, and which projects have the most need for funding assistance.

The committee will meet as needed as applicants submit proposed projects. All applicants will receive a response regarding the eligibility from the committee chairperson or SSA #29 Program Manager within approximately six weeks of the submission of the completed application deadline. The applicant may be asked to clarify design elements at that time if requested by the committee.

CONSTRUCTION DEADLINES

Once the committee has approved an applicant, the applicant will receive an approval letter in the mail (the "Approval Letter"). Within 30 days of the date of the Approval Letter, applicant must submit to the Program Manager of the West Town SSA #29, the proper city building permits if not previously submitted (or evidence of application for such permits). Provided that the applicant has applied for the proper city building permits within 30 days of the Approval Letter, if there is difficulty obtaining the issuance of these items in a timely fashion (60 days from the issuance of the Approval Letter), it is necessary for applicant to in writing within 75 days from the issuance of the Approval Letter provide copies of all permit applications to the Program Manager of the West Town SSA #29 and formally request an extension. If for any reason the Project cannot be completed within 120 days of the date of the Approval Letter (and provided applicant has made timely application for its building permits as required above); applicant must no later than 90 days from the date of the Approval Letter, in writing to the Program Manager of the West Town SSA #29 formally request an extension submitting documentation and the basis for why such an extension should be granted (the "Extension Process"). Failure to timely submit such extension request shall constitute a waiver of applicant's rights to participate in the Extension Process. The committee's decision as to grant an extension shall be in its sole and absolute discretion.

Once the committee has received the appropriate documentation, the applicant will be notified via telephone to proceed with approved renovations. Construction must commence within 30 days of issuance of city building permits, and be completed within 120 days of receiving notification to proceed via the Approval Letter. **THE WORK MUST BE COMPLETED WITHIN 120 DAYS OF RECEIVING THE NOTIFICATION TO PROCEED VIA THE APPROVAL LETTER!** (excepting only extensions granted in strict compliance with the Extension process as set forth above). Failure to complete such work within the 120 day deadline, shall notwithstanding anything to the contrary elsewhere in this Application or related program materials, constitute a material breach of the program requirements resulting in the withdrawal of funding for applicant's project without further notice of any kind.

Once work is completed, please contact the West Town Chamber of Commerce to arrange an inspection*. At that time, the applicant will need to submit copies of all paid invoices for all approved improvements, and photographs of the completed project area.

REBATE DISTRIBUTION

Once the façade improvements have been completed, a member of the committee will observe* the project to determine compliance with program guidelines and pre-approved plans. A rebate check will be sent within six weeks after final inspection* and the proper final documentation has been submitted.

* The committee member's observation is limited to a review of the completed work only in connection with the applicant's application under this program, and in no way shall be deemed an inspection as to whether or not the repairs were completed in good order and satisfactory condition. It shall be applicant's responsibility to verify adequacy of all repairs, and applicant's failure to verify the repairs shall not relieve applicant of any expenses or responsibilities resulting from such failure, nor shall the SSA or its representatives have any liability or obligations to applicant arising from such failure.

CITY PERMIT INFORMATION

BUILDING PERMITS

Building permits are issued by the Department of Construction and Permits, City Hall, Room 900, 121 N. LaSalle St., 312-744-3449.

BARRICADE PERMITS

Barricade permits are issued by the Department of Transportation, Construction Compliance, City Hall, Room 905, 121 N. LaSalle St., 312-744-4652.

AWNINGS

Awnings or canopies that extend two feet or more over the public right-of-way require a permit from the Department of Revenue, Compensation Unit, 333 S. State St., Room 310, 312-747-9035.

Awnings that extend less than two feet over the public right-of-way can be issued through the Department of Buildings, City Hall, Room 501, 121 N. LaSalle St., 312-744-3400.

ELECTRICAL PERMITS

Electrical permits are issued by the Department of Construction and Permits, Electrical Inspections, City Hall, Room 900, 121 N. LaSalle St., 312-744-3400.

For further information about City permits, contact Mayor Daley's Business Express, 312-744-CITY.

Façade Improvement Program Application– West Town SSA #29

Proposed Project Address

_____ 60622 _____

(Street) (City) (State) (Zip)

Business or Organization Name _____

Contact Information

(Name) (Email)

(Phone) (Evening Phone)

Applicant is: (please mark any that apply)

Property Owner

Business Owner

Tenant

(Name of Tenant) (Business Name)

(Phone)

If applicant is not the property owner, please supply property owner information:

(Name) (Address)

(Phone) (Email)

Business/Organization is: (please mark any that apply)

Individual Resident

Business

Not-for-Profit Organization

Other (please specify) _____

Project Description (please attach any necessary photos, plans, etc.)

Statement (please describe why this proposed improvement project and funding is necessary to your business and the community)

Has this property received any rebates through this or any other program before? Yes No

If yes, please describe details:

Statement of Understanding

The applicant (undersigned) agrees to fully and timely comply with the guidelines and procedures of the West Town SSA #29 Façade Improvement Program and the outlined specifications as agreed to by the applicant and the committee. It is understood by the applicant that two cost estimates, copies of building permits, contracts, insurance, and invoices are required documentation, and that they have read the entire Façade Improvement Program guidelines and agree to be fully bound by their terms and conditions. **APPLICANT RELEASES THE WEST TOWN SSA #29 AND THE WEST TOWN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (TOGETHER WITH THEIR OFFICERS, DIRECTORS, AND AGENTS) FROM ALL CLAIMS AND CAUSES OF ACTION OF ANY KIND (KNOWN OR UNKNOWN) IN CONNECTION WITH THIS FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.**

Date _____

Applicant Signature

Applicant Name (Please Print)

Applicant's SSN or Company's FIN

**If the applicant is not the property owner, the following must be completed by the property owner:

I certify that I, the owner of the property located at _____, authorize the applicant to apply for a reimbursement under the West Town SSA #29 Façade Improvement Program and undertake the approved improvements.

Owner Signature _____

Date _____