



STOREFRONT AND STREETScape IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM GUIDELINES AND REQUIREMENTS

The Storefront and Streetscape Improvement Program (the “Program”) assists commercial property and/or business owners in rehabilitating their storefronts and the streetscapes located adjacent to their buildings, to revitalize neighborhood commercial areas, rejuvenate blighted areas, and enhance the livability of surrounding neighborhoods. The City of Windcrest Economic Development Corporation (the “WEDC”) provides Funding for this Program.

PROGRAM GOALS

1. Revitalize and improve the appearance of commercial areas to positively impact the aesthetics, marketability, and overall perception of Windcrest.
2. Activate the Windcrest business environment by improving the pedestrian experience.
3. Stimulate private investment, while at the same time encouraging a higher level of quality and design of retail, commercial, and professional storefronts, and streetscapes.

PROGRAM FUNDING AND FUNDS AVAILABILITY

The Storefront and Streetscape Improvement Program offers commercial property owners and business tenants up to a 50% matching grant of up to a maximum of \$9,999 per building/retail center submitted per Application, on a reimbursement basis only, for the funding of well-designed improvements in enhancing their storefronts and streetscapes. The cumulative amount awarded by the Windcrest Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) under the Program will not exceed \$60,000 annually to all commercial property owners/business tenants who apply.

Total Qualifying Project Cost	Maximum WEDC Reimbursement Match
\$1,000	\$500
\$1,500	\$750
\$2,000	\$1,000
\$2,500	\$1,250
\$5,000	\$2,500
\$10,000	\$5,000
\$14,000	\$7,000
\$20,000	\$9,999

(Reimbursement Match Calculation Example)

EFFECTIVE: October 13, 2023

Grant funds are subject to the WEDC Board's approval and discretion, and budget availability, and as a result, funding may not be available for all eligible applicants.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

1.	Applicants must schedule a pre-application meeting with the WEDC Director or their designee to review the project and provide feedback.
2.	Applicant must be a commercial property owner or business tenant of a commercial property within the City of Windcrest.
3.	If the Applicant is a business tenant, the business will need to have the commercial-property owner's express written consent for the proposed improvements.
4.	Property taxes must be current.
5.	Applicants must represent that to the best of their knowledge they have no debts to the city.
6.	Applicant must certify that there are no current code enforcement actions pending against the property that would not be mitigated by the project.
7.	Applicant must comply with all State and local laws and regulations pertaining to licensing, permits, building code, and zoning requirements and obtain the necessary regulatory approvals.
8.	The Applicant must be registered with the State to conduct business and is in good standing with the Secretary of State and Comptroller of Texas.

ELIGIBLE COSTS

Labor, design, and material costs are eligible costs. Further, permit fees associated with the proposed renovation/rehabilitation and fees for architectural design and engineering for the project are eligible program costs. Costs incurred for alterations or improvements completed before receipt of formal written approval by the WEDC are not eligible for reimbursement. In limited and exceptional circumstances, with notice being given to the WEDC staff and written advanced approval by the WEDC Executive Director, construction may begin once the application has been submitted to the WEDC. Funds cannot be used to correct outstanding code violations or for property damage caused by acts of nature or that are covered by insurance.

The WEDC will provide dollar-for-dollar matching grants from \$500 to \$9,999 to commercial property owners and business tenants who present eligible projects that will activate the streetscape using high-quality, pedestrian-oriented design elements. Projects must exceed \$1,000 to be considered for a grant.

CRITERIA BY WHICH ELIGIBLE PROJECTS WILL BE DETERMINED INCLUDE

- Design quality of proposed improvements
- Consistency of design with business activity
- Compatibility with the design of surrounding buildings and neighborhood
- Proposed improvements are sufficient to improve the aesthetics of the building/retail center
- Improvement of the property will significantly impact the revitalization of the City

SELECTION CRITERIA

Projects will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Projects will be approved subject to grant funding availability and the WEDC Board's approval and discretion.

QUALIFYING IMPROVEMENTS

Examples of qualifying improvements include, and are not limited to the rehabilitation of building facades visible to the street, including storefronts and streetscapes, which consist of new and/or repair, restoration, replacement, and/or removal such as:

•	Cornices
•	Gutters and downspouts
•	Awnings and canopies (excluding vinyl)
•	Exterior façade and trim
•	Exterior lighting
•	Painting (no day-glow) and masonry cleaning
•	Architectural elements
•	Entrance upgrades (street facing) doors/windows
•	Balconies & Patios
•	Signage (on building and monument)
•	Landscaping (i.e., plant life, planting beds, planting containers, xeriscaping, landscape borders)
•	Limited security and accessibility improvements (all accessibility improvements must meet state, federal, and local accessibility standards and law)
•	Permit and design review fees

The following repairs are allowed if they are part of work that directly affects the storefront and/or streetscape:

•	Fences (excluding razor/barbed wire)
•	Seal coating, chip seal, resurfacing, and re-striping of parking lots/business driveways
•	Exterior bike racks for patron use
•	Interior window display lighting that is outward facing to the public view

In addition, sustainable elements such as bio-swales and semi-permeable pavers may be included in the larger project.

NON-QUALIFYING IMPROVEMENTS

●	Roofs
●	Structural foundations
●	Billboards
●	Non-permanent fixture(s), furniture, or decorations
●	Interior window coverings
●	Vinyl awnings
●	Personal Property and equipment
●	Security Bars
●	Razor/barbed wire fencing

DESIGN REQUIREMENTS

All improvements must conform to applicable City of Windcrest building codes and local, state, and federal laws.

The following improvements are encouraged:

●	Parapets that serve to hide air conditioning units, gutters, downspouts, and other rooftop equipment or structures from view.
●	New storefront construction, appropriately scaled within an existing building.
●	Cleaning, repainting, or re-siding of the building.
●	Awnings or canopies that can be both functional and visually appealing.
●	Lighting that is visually appealing and appropriately illuminates signage, storefront window displays, and recessed areas of a building façade.
●	Window display areas are appropriately scaled and facilitate night viewing.
●	Window replacement and window framing visible from the street, appropriately scaled to the building.
●	Signage that is attractively integrated into the architecture of the building, including the window area, awnings or canopies, and entryways.
●	Curbing, irrigation, approved trees, landscaping beds, or other landscaping features are attached to the building where appropriate.
●	Removal of architectural barriers to public accessibility.

APPLICATION

The Applicant will consult with the WEDC's Director, before an application is submitted, to determine the Applicant and project eligibility. WEDC staff will then work with Applicant to help Applicant meet program conditions that are required for a commitment of funds. If the Applicant is determined to meet initial eligibility requirements, the Applicant's required next step will be to submit the following attachments:

1.	Completed application (See Attachment A).
2.	Color photographs of existing storefront and streetscape conditions with a description of what is represented in each photograph before making the proposed improvements.
3.	A written statement of the project scope and why improvements are needed providing as much detail as possible, including what is being changed or replaced, type of new materials to be used, color, location of the building, etc.
4.	If the Applicant is a commercial property owner, show proof of ownership.
5.	If the Applicant is a business tenant, a letter of permission from the commercial property owner to participate in the Storefront and Streetscape Improvement Program. a. Letters should include the primary term, any extension periods, the expiration date of the current lease, and any amendments.
6.	Architectural drawings, Shop drawings, Improvement drawings, and/or renderings of the improvements, reflecting placement, materials, and colors to be used (provided, however, some minor projects, at WEDC Director discretion, may only require pictures of materials).
7.	At least two bids from licensed contractors reflecting work to be performed, costs, and completion schedule. Contractor fees and overhead for Applicant owners will not be reimbursed. Any contractor that has submitted a competitive, detailed estimate can be used. All contractors must be licensed, bonded, and registered with the City of Windcrest. All construction contracts will be between the Applicant and the contractor. Contractors cannot be changed after submission of application and approval by the WEDC Board. If a new contractor is hired, the application and new bids must be resubmitted for approval.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL

The WEDC has the sole authority to determine the eligibility of proposed work and confirmation of completed work. The WEDC's Board of Directors will meet monthly and review any applications. The Applicant need not be present for the Board of Directors meeting. Grant applications will not be reviewed by the Board of Directors until all the requested information has been submitted.

The WEDC Board of Directors has the right to deny the application if, in its sole opinion, it does not meet the goals or requirements of the program. Certain work may be required or precluded as a condition of grant award funding. If the WEDC Board of Directors determines that the project meets the criteria of the Program and should move forward, a recommendation will be made to the WEDC Board of Directors. An award decision will occur within 45 days of the completion of the application.

Applicants will be notified in writing as to whether his/her application has been rejected or approved. Upon approval, the Applicant must enter into a legally binding Performance Agreement with the WEDC which references and incorporates the Guidelines and General Conditions of this Storefront and Streetscape Improvement Program and the terms and conditions of his/her participation in the program. The specific requirements of this Program include, but are not limited to, the following:

1.	Project scope, property location and specific improvements to be undertaken.
2.	Amount of the grant.
3.	Work commitment period, so that if funds are not used within that period, program funds can be reallocated for other eligible projects.
4.	Maintenance requirements and operating standards will vary based on the nature of the establishment.
5.	Acknowledgment of the reimbursement claim procedures and supporting documentation needed for reimbursement.
6.	Monitoring and right of final inspection by the WEDC
7.	Acknowledgment of change order procedures.
8.	Compliance with applicable local, state, and federal laws.
9.	Promotional rights of WEDC for the project.
10.	Repayment penalty for removal of improvements.
11.	WEDC's standard contract terms and provisions (e.g., liability, indemnification, termination, etc.)

Upon the date of WEDC board approval, the Applicant has 30 days to enter into the above Performance Agreement with WEDC and 90 days from the date of contract execution to begin construction. If the work does not begin within 90 days, the Applicant will be notified in writing that the grant will lapse, and the grant agreement will be terminated. Once construction has started, the Applicant has one year to complete the underlying improvements. If the improvements are not complete at the end of the one year, the Applicant will be notified in writing that the grant will lapse, and the grant agreement will be terminated. If an approved project is nearing the one-year lapse point, an opportunity will be provided for the Applicant to request an extension. An extension may be granted at the discretion of the WEDC Executive Director depending on the project's circumstances and the future needs of the program. If an approved grant does lapse and is terminated, the Applicant may re-apply if funds are available. There is no guarantee that a resubmission will be approved and that the project will be re-evaluated based on the established criteria detailed above.

After approval, any changes to the project, no matter how minimal, must be approved by the WEDC and a Final Inspection Report must be obtained through the City Secretary/Permit Clerk. Grant recipients will work closely with the WEDC's Director to communicate the project progress and resolve any issues or questions. Funding will be provided on a reimbursable basis after satisfactory project completion and submission of project receipts to WEDC. Further, reimbursement payment will not be issued until the Applicant has paid for the improvement work in full. Reimbursement claims must be accompanied by the following supporting documents: proof of payments (e.g., canceled checks, paid invoices/receipts of eligible expenses), statements from architects, contractors, and/or subcontractors acknowledging that all payments have been received.

ADJUSTMENTS AND TERMINATION

The Applicant understands that the WEDC and the City of Windcrest reserve the right to make changes in the conditions of the Storefront and Streetscape Improvement Program as they determine in their sole discretion as warranted at any time, including for applications already pending.

If the Applicant seeks to change the scope of their project after a grant has already been approved, the Applicant must meet with the WEDC Director or their designee. The Applicant must have written approval on all modifications to remain eligible for grant funding.

The WEDC has the right to terminate any agreement under the Storefront and Streetscape Improvement Program if a participant is found to violate any conditions outlined in these guidelines or if the project has been started (without notification and approval of WEDC Staff and Executive Director as outlined and required above) before an executed agreement with the WEDC.

GENERAL CONDITIONS

1.	It is expressly understood and agreed that the Applicant shall be solely responsible for all safety conditions and compliance with all safety regulations, building codes, ordinances, and other applicable regulations. Neither approval of a grant application nor payment of the grant upon completion of the project shall constitute approval by any City department or WEDC staff of the project, nor shall approval of such grant application or payment of the grant upon completion constitute a waiver by the City or the WEDC of any safety regulation, building code, ordinance, and other applicable regulation.
2.	It is expressly understood and agreed that the Applicant is solely responsible for overseeing the work, and will not seek to hold the WEDC, the City of Windcrest, and/or their agents, employees, officers, and/or directors liable for any property damage, death or personal injury, or other loss related in any way to the Storefront and Streetscape Improvement Program, and by submission of an application, the Applicant agrees to indemnify the WEDC, the City of Windcrest, and/or their agents, employees, officers, and/or directors from any claims or damages resulting from, related to, and/or arising out of in any way the project, including but not limited to reasonable attorneys' fees.
3.	The Applicant shall be responsible for all liability for the Project and should maintain adequate insurance coverage for property damage and personal injury liability, and ensure all contractors are licensed, bonded, and insured.
4.	The Applicant authorizes the City of Windcrest and the WEDC to promote an approved project, including, but not limited to displaying a sign at the site during and after construction and using photographs and descriptions of the project in marketing materials and press releases.

STOREFRONT AND STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM APPLICATION

Applicant Name:	<hr/> <hr/>
Applicant Address:	<hr/> <hr/>
Contact Person:	<hr/> <hr/>
Phone:	<hr/> <hr/>
Email:	<hr/> <hr/>
Business Description:	<hr/> <hr/>
Certificate of Occupancy/Business Registration Number and Date Issued:	<hr/> <hr/>
Texas Sales and Use Tax I.D. Number:	<hr/> <hr/>
Are you the property owner Or Business Tenant?	<input type="checkbox"/> Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Tenant
Commercial property owner name:	<hr/> <hr/>
Commercial property owner's phone:	<hr/> <hr/>
Length and expiration date of lease of business:	<hr/> <hr/>
If the expiration date is less than 2 years, do you intend to renew?	<hr/> <hr/>
Square footage of establishment:	<hr/> <hr/>
Days/hours of operation:	<hr/> <hr/>

Are all the business's local, state, and federal taxes paid and up to date?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No (if no, explain
Does the business have any outstanding City of Windcrest code violations and/or fines?	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes (if yes, explain
Grant amount requested:	\$ _____
Estimated cost of the project:	\$ _____
Work is to be performed by:	_____
Estimated project dates:	Start Date: _____ End Date: _____

PLEASE INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION WITH YOUR APPLICATION:

1. **If the Applicant is a business tenant, a letter of permission from the commercial property owner to participate in the Storefront and Streetscape Improvement Program.**
 - a. **Letters should include the expiration date of the current lease**
2. **Color photographs of existing conditions with a description of what is represented in each photograph before making the proposed improvements.**
3. **Written statement of the project scope and why improvements are needed. Provide as much detail as possible, including what you are changing or replacing, the type of new materials to be used, color, location of the building, etc.**
4. **Architectural drawings and/or renderings of the improvements, reflecting placement, materials, and colors to be used. Some minor projects may only require pictures of materials.**
5. **At least two bids from licensed contractors reflecting work to be performed, costs, and completion schedule.**

By affixing your signature, the Applicant acknowledges they have read and agreed to the Windcrest Economic Development Corporation Storefront and Streetscape Improvement Program Guidelines and General Conditions. The Applicant understands that this application and its contents shall be binding on the Applicant at the discretion of the WEDC. The Applicant understands that all grants are awarded on a rebate basis after all work has been certified completed by the Windcrest Economic Development Corporation. Applicant understands that his/her project will be evaluated, and recommendations made as to the scope of work to be included in the Storefront and Streetscape Improvement Program. The Applicant understands that the submittal of this application in no way guarantees him/her a grant from the Windcrest Economic Development Corporation. The applicant understands that additional information may be requested as needed. The Windcrest Economic Development Corporation reserves the right to reject all applications at its sole discretion.

It is expressly understood that work commenced or completed before the final approval of the grant is ineligible for funding. The Applicant is solely responsible for overseeing the work and will not seek to hold the City of Windcrest or the Windcrest Economic Development Corporation liable for any property damage, personal injury, or other loss related to the Storefront and Streetscape Improvement Program.

The Applicant agrees to indemnify the City of Windcrest and Windcrest Economic Development Corporation and/or their agents, employees, officers, and/or directors from any claims or damages resulting from the project, including reasonable attorneys' fees.

Signature of Applicant: _____	Date: _____
Printed Name of Applicant: _____	Title: _____

Signature of Commercial property owner: _____	Date: _____
Printed Name of Commercial Property Owner: _____	Title: _____