

## CITY OF FORT WORTH

### *POLICY FOR THE URBAN VILLAGE STOREFRONT/FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM*

#### I. GENERAL PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

- A. The purpose of the Urban Village Storefront/Façade Improvement Program (“Façade Improvement Program”) is to encourage local businesses to improve storefronts/façades in eligible areas, and to promote commercial revitalization and economic development. The Façade Improvement Program is funded with revenues generated from the City-owned parking garage located under General Worth Square originally funded with Urban Development Action Grant (“UDAG”) funds. Revenues from the lease are deemed “Grant Revenues” under the UDAG Grant Agreement, and can only be spent on specific uses allowed by law.
- B. The City of Fort Worth (“City”) may use Grant Revenues as follows:
1. for community or economic development activities eligible for assistance under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, 42 USC 5201 *et seq.*, as amended;
  2. for projects that are located in a Community Development Block Grant (“CDBG”) eligible area; and
  3. for projects that include private investment.

#### II. DEFINITIONS

“*Building*” means, for funding purposes, a contiguous structure with shared walls, not including firewalls.

“*Eligible Improvements*” means any construction or aesthetic alteration made to the side of the Building parallel to the primary right-of-way and improvements to the interior wall of a façade caused as a result of improvements to that façade, as approved by City staff through the application process.

“*Developer*” means a legal entity/party that enters into the Reimbursement Agreement with the City to receive funds from the Façade Improvement Program.

“*Façade*” means the portion of a Building parallel to the primary right-of-way as determined by City.

“*Owner*” means the legal owner of the property on which the Project is located.

“*Project*” means the City approved improvements to the Building eligible for Façade Improvement Program funds.

### III. ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

**A. Eligible Projects.** In order for a Project to be considered for funding under the Façade Improvement Program, it must meet the following criteria:

1. The Project must be located in
  - a. a CDBG-eligible area, and
  - b. one of the following Urban Villages:
    - Six Points
    - Polytechnic/Wesleyan
    - Oakland Corners
    - Historic Handley
    - Berry/Stalcup
    - Near East Side
    - Evans and Rosedale
    - South Main
    - Hemphill/Berry
    - Historic Marine
2. The use of the property must be in compliance with the City's Zoning Ordinance.
3. The Developer:
  - a. must invest its own funds on Eligible Improvements;
  - b. must submit a complete application to the City;
  - c. must not be delinquent in paying property taxes for any property owned by the Developer; and
  - d. must not have any City liens filed against any property owned by the Developer, including but not limited to, weed liens, demolition liens, board-up/open structure liens and paving liens.
4. No delinquent taxes shall be owed for the property on which the Project is located.

### IV. ELIGIBLE IMPROVEMENTS AND EXPENDITURES

**A. Eligible Improvements.** Eligible improvements are limited to the following:

1. signage attached to the facade;
2. painting;
3. siding;
4. brick/stone/masonry;
5. glass;
6. windows;
7. doors;
8. trim;
9. awnings;
10. structural improvements to façade; or
11. exterior lighting attached to the façade.

**B. Ineligible Improvements:**

1. exterior improvements located on the sides or rear of buildings;
2. interior improvements;
3. landscaping;
4. parking lots and/or paving;
5. sidewalks,
6. equipment;
7. permitting fees
8. architectural, survey or other professional fees; or
9. costs related to improvements not made on the façade.

**V. SELECTION PROCESS**

**A. Application.** A complete application with the application fee of \$50.00 must be submitted along with the following attachments:

1. proof of ownership and/or occupancy such as deed/lease. If the Developer does not own the property on which the Project is located, the Developer must provide proof satisfactory to City that the proposed improvements are allowed and authorized by the Owner;
2. detailed explanation of proposed improvements;
3. renderings, elevations, drawings etc. for the proposed improvements;
4. photographs of existing conditions; and
5. construction cost breakdown that differentiates Eligible Improvements from other improvements if any.

**B. Denied Applications.**

1. Applications will be denied 30 days after submission if all required documentation is not received by the City.
2. Applicants will have 60 days after the date of denial to resubmit applications without paying a new application fee.

**C. Design Review Committee.** A Design Review Committee composed of City staff will review the complete application to ensure Project eligibility and feasibility. The Committee will develop guidelines and objectives for the Façade Improvement Program. Projects will be selected on a first come, first served basis of completed applications and will be approved based upon designs that meet the purpose and objectives of the Façade Improvement Program.

**D.** Applicants will be notified in writing of the City's decision.

**E.** If City staff denies the application, then Applicant may appeal the denial to the City's ~~Urban Design Commission ("UDC")~~ Community Development Council ("CDC").

The ~~UDC~~ CDC will make the final determination for approval or denial of the application.

## **VI. REIMBURSEMENT OF ELIGIBLE FAÇADE IMPROVEMENTS**

- A.** Funding for a Project is subject to availability and will be allocated on a first come, first approved basis. Once an application is approved, in order to participate in Façade Improvement Program, a Reimbursement Agreement outlining the terms and conditions of City providing funds to the Project must be executed by the Owner. Funding for the Project will be set aside so long as construction permits are pulled or work has commenced on the façade within 180 days of Project approval.
- B.** City shall reimburse \$1.00 for every \$3.00 spent by Developer on Eligible Improvements at the completion of the Project. City shall only reimburse for eligible façade improvements and shall not reimburse any funds spent on improvements made to other portions of the building.
- C.** Each Project can receive a maximum of \$30,000 per building for Eligible Improvements.
- D.** Funds will be paid to Developer after all improvements have been made and approved by City and the terms of the Reimbursement Agreement have been met.
- E.** In order to receive funds, Developer must provide proof of expenditures for Eligible Improvements with supporting documentation which may include:
  - 1. itemized invoices that differentiate Eligible Improvements versus other improvements;
  - 2. cleared checks and/or bank statements;
  - 3. release of liens for the work performed, if any;
  - 4. certificate of occupancy;
  - 5. final inspection report from City; and
  - 6. photographs of completed Eligible Improvements.

## **VII. REQUIREMENTS FOR APPROVED PROJECTS**

- A. Approvals.** Prior to construction commencement, all federal, state, and/or local approvals necessary to complete the improvements must be provided. Approvals could include:
  - 1. City's Historic and Cultural Landmarks Commission;
  - 2. City's Zoning Commission;
  - 3. City's Urban Design Commission;
  - 4. City's Downtown Design Review Board;
  - 5. City's Plan Commission;

6. City's Building Standards Commission; and
7. Permitting.

**B. Project Completion.** The completion date of the improvements to be constructed will be determined on a case by case basis, and will be included in the Reimbursement Agreement. If the Project is not completed by this date, then the Project will be ineligible for funding, but City staff in its sole discretion may extend this date upon written request from the Developer.