

City of Whittier



Commercial Façade Loan Program



13230 Penn Street
Whittier, CA 90602
(562) 464-3380

Commercial Façade Loan Program

The **Whittier Redevelopment Agency** (Agency) Commercial Façade Loan Program (Program) is a tool that is being used to revitalize targeted commercial areas.

The Agency wishes to improve the visual appearance of the areas, thereby increasing their attractiveness to potential new businesses and customers.

The Agency offers loans in recognition of the extremely valuable impact these investments have on the vitality of the City's Uptown and Lower Uptown areas.

Program Goals:

- Improve the visual quality of buildings and streetscape
- Preserve the uniqueness and historic fabric of the area
- Enhance or restore buildings to create attraction for new businesses
- Restore economic vitality and investment confidence
- Bring buildings up to Specific Plan standards
- Achieve a high standard of design for individual buildings
- Use of high quality materials and workmanship on building facades

Loan Description:

The Agency will provide funding assistance, to the applicant, in the form of a loan, of up to 50% of the façade improvement costs to a maximum of \$45,000. The loan shall be non-interest bearing and shall be forgiven over a five-year period following completion.

The size of the loan is dependent on the street frontage width and height of the building. For example, a typical one-story building up to 50 feet wide is eligible to receive a maximum of \$15,000. A one-story building over 50 feet wide (or one with street or galleria frontage on two sides) is eligible to receive a maximum of \$30,000. An additional \$7,500 will be allowed for buildings over one-story high. For example, a building over one-story high and up to 50-feet wide would be eligible to receive a maximum of \$22,500. A building over one-story high and over 50-feet wide would be eligible to receive a maximum of \$37,500.

In order to improve the appearance of the alleys, loans may also be used to improve the rear facades. An additional \$7,500 is available for this purpose. However, the option is limited to those buildings located in the Earthquake Project Area and the rear must be used as a customer entrance. Rear security lighting must be incorporated into the rear facade improvements.

Eligible Locations

The Agency has designated buildings in two areas as eligible for commercial facade forgivable loans. The areas are:

1. Uptown Whittier Specific Plan Area (Specialty Retail, Community Retail, and Retail/Office Zones only)
2. Greenleaf Avenue / Uptown Whittier Redevelopment Area (Commercial Zones only)

Eligible Applicants

- Must be the owner of an eligible commercial property. A tenant may apply with owner's consent. However, the forgivable loan must address the entire building, not a portion thereof.
- Must be a U.S. Citizen or lawful permanent resident (PRWORA – Welfare Reform Bill – 1996)
- Must be able to provide their portion of project costs either through use of their own funds or through the use of private loans.

Eligible Improvements:

- Exterior Painting and/or New Stucco Application (no textured stucco finishes)
- Door and Window repair or replacement
- Roof Parapet Walls
- Decorative Brick and/or Tile Accents
- Canvas Awnings (only in Conjunction with building facade improvement)

- Professionally Designed Signage (only in conjunction with building facade improvement)
- Parking lot and Landscaping Improvements (i.e., new pavement or slurry seal, parking lot islands, storefront planters both stationary and moveable), together no more than 50% of total project costs
- Moldings, Cornices, Wood Trim
- Screening for Air Conditioning Equipment
- Complete Storefront Remodel
- Inviting Window Display Cases
- Interesting Lighting Effects

NOTE: All buildings must comply with the disabled access requirements according to the California Building Code.

NOTE: The Agency is allowing Architectural Design fees, Planning Department fees, Building Department fees, and Design Review Board fees as eligible costs which may be included in the loan.

Process

Individuals wishing to apply to this Program may obtain an application packet from the Community Development Department. The participants complete and submit their application packet to the Department. The participants must obtain all necessary Agency/City approvals. Three written proposals must be obtained from licensed contractors. The participants must either, 1) pay for all

project costs up front and submit evidence of expenditures for reimbursement, or 2) deposit 50% of all project costs into a construction disbursement escrow account into which program funds will also be deposited. Funds will be disbursed to either participants and/or contractor(s) upon written authorization of participants and the Agency.

Prevailing Wage Requirement:

California Redevelopment law requires that contractors pay their workers "prevailing wages" when a project is paid for in whole or in part out of public funds. Prevailing wages refer to the wage rates published by California's Department of Industrial Relations, which set the minimum wage rates payable by craft and classification of work to construction workers. The purpose of prevailing wages is to ensure that the workers are paid the generally prevailing rate of wages for their work in the locale where the work is performed. In addition, setting minimum wage rates for all contractors keeps local contractors competitive in the bidding process. Commercial Facade projects are subject to the above prevailing wage law. Thus, contractors bidding on Commercial Facade projects must include prevailing wages in their cost estimates.

For further information, contact the City Of Whittier, Community Development Department at:

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