



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Effective 7-1-21 to 6-30-22

What is the goal of the Storefront Renovation Program?

The mission of the City of Cleveland's Storefront Renovation Program (SRP) is to revitalize, support, and promote the City's neighborhood commercial retail districts. Working towards this mission, the Storefront Program offers financial incentives, combined with free City design assistance, to applicants considering an exterior rehabilitation of a commercial structure.

What financial assistance does the Storefront Renovation Program offer?

A 50% rebate, up to \$50,000, on eligible expenses, is available for comprehensive exterior rehabilitations that meet the program's design and eligibility criteria.

How do I find out if my building is eligible for the Storefront Renovation Program and the maximum rebate amount that I may be eligible to receive?

Contact your local Community Development Corporation (CDC) to begin an assessment of your eligibility, or contact the City at 216 664-4031.

What building types are eligible for the Storefront Renovation Program?

- Traditional commercial buildings (originally built with display windowed storefronts)
- Commercially zoned retail or service buildings

What building types are not eligible for the Storefront Renovation Program?

- Entirely residential buildings
- Arcades/Malls
- Houses
- Schools
- Gas Stations
- Greenhouses
- Churches or any structure used for sacred purposes
- Car Dealerships
- Industrial/manufacturing/warehouse buildings
- Strip shopping plazas (other exclusions may apply)

What projects are not eligible for the Storefront Renovation Program?

The Storefront Program is not a maintenance-only program and requires building rehabilitations to be comprehensive in scope and create a visual impact on the main street facade. Buildings located in a flood plain are not eligible for the SRP. Day cares operating in pre-1978 buildings are also not eligible. Mixed-use buildings with occupied residential units may not be eligible due to lead paint abatement regulations.

Who will determine whether my building is eligible for the Storefront Renovation Program?

The Storefront Program staff at the City of Cleveland will make this determination.

What costs are eligible for the Storefront Program?

Eligible improvements are limited to rehab costs for work done to the main elevation(s) most commonly seen by the general public. Typically eligible building rehab costs include:

- Storefront display windows
- Exterior security systems
- Upper-floor windows in unoccupied residential units
- Awnings
- Doors
- Masonry repair
- Painting
- Business Tenant Signage for those operating businesses located on the main street elevation with a dedicated entrance, or on an upper floor business tenant with a dedicated main street entrance must be included in the building renovation scope of work in order to meet the comprehensive renovation requirement of the program.

What is a "comprehensive rehabilitation?"

Comprehensive refers to an extensive rehabilitation of the front and visible sides of the building that include not only maintenance, but also a significant visual impact, determined at the discretion of the City's Design Specialists.

Will anyone help me develop a design for my rehabilitation?

Yes, the City's Design Specialists will work with you to develop a design that not only meets the goals and requirements of SRP, but also takes your budget and other business concerns into consideration. **Note:** An architect or engineer may be required to prepare measured drawings for permit purposes and/or to assess structural integrity of some building elements.

Is this a grant?

No, SRP offers a rebate, which is paid out after construction is fully completed and you have paid for the project in full and submitted the necessary documentation for approval by the City.

When can I start construction on my project?

In order to remain eligible for funding, you may not issue deposits to contractors or begin construction on your project until you have entered into a contract (Rebate Funding Agreement) with the City of Cleveland.

When can I expect to receive my rebate funds?

Rebate funds are typically mailed to the applicant within 6-8 weeks of completion of the project, including submission and City approvals of all required documentation. **Note:** Completed projects must adhere to a 5 year maintenance agreement whereby no additional exterior changes can occur without the approval of the Storefront Renovation Program

Who should I contact for additional information or to fill-out an application?

Contact your local CDC for additional information or to apply to the Storefront Renovation Program, or email inquiries to tsandy@city.cleveland.oh.us