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# City of Fremont
# Façade Improvement Program
# Step by Step Applicant Guide

The Fremont Redevelopment Agency will provide financial grants to eligible commercial property owners and ground floor retail tenants to upgrade the appearance of storefronts in order to help create a positive retail environment in the **Redevelopment Project Areas** of **Centerville, Irvington, and Niles**.

This outline will guide applicants in completing all of the steps necessary to receive a grant from the Redevelopment Agency, working through the City's Office of Housing and Redevelopment for improvements under the Façade Improvement Grant Program.

1. Your building must be within the Redevelopment Project Areas of Centerville, Irvington, and Niles in order to participate in the program.

2. The application form must be completed and must be signed by both the property owner(s) and the business owner(s). Applicants are to identify <u>one</u> person who will be the Redevelopment Agency's primary contact.

3. On the application, applicants confirm that there are no outstanding code enforcement actions pending against the building or the business.

4. Submit the application to the Redevelopment Agency. Agency staff will review the application and call the designated contact person on the application to set up an initial meeting. At the initial meeting, attended by Agency staff and the architect, the applicant's preliminary thoughts on desired improvements will be discussed. (Architects have been selected through a Request for Proposals process.)

5. A copy of the lease agreement must be submitted with the application.

6. If any architectural drawings already exist for the building, submit a copy with the application. All design improvements must be approved by the Agency.

7. If the program requirements have been met, a draft Façade Improvement Assistance Agreement will be given to applicant for review. The agreement must be signed by all of the applicants and the Agency. Upon acceptance, Redevelopment Agency staff will sign and execute the contract agreement. At this point, Redevelopment and applicant have a legal document committing both to the project.

8. Applicant submits check in the amount of $4,000 (the maximum matching grant) to the Redevelopment Agency. Should the Applicant's portion of the construction costs be less than $4,000, the Redevelopment Agency will reimburse applicant

the difference of $4,000 and actual amount of matching contribution. Work will not proceed until a check is received by the Redevelopment Agency.

9. Agency staff will arrange a second meeting with the applicant, program architect, and Agency project manager to review design drawings on the suggested improvements based on the discussion at the initial meeting.

10. The architect will then make final modifications, if needed, to the drawings. A third meeting will be arranged, if necessary, with the architect to review the revisions made at the second meeting and to discuss the costs of improvements. The project will be scaled back, if necessary, to meet the budget for the project. At this meeting, the applicant makes a final commitment for use of matching funds and makes appropriate changes, if needed. Agency will then notify applicant of approved improvements. (A review by the Historic Architectural Review Board (HARB) may be required if the commercial property has been identified as a historic resource or lies within a historic district).

11. A Building Permit from the City of Fremont may be required for the improvements. Applicant must submit a completed permit application to the Building and Permits for staff review. The City will reimburse the Applicant up to $700 in fees; the applicant will pay any costs exceeding this amount.

12. After review, applicant will receive copies of approved architectural drawings from Building staff.

13. These drawings are sent (returned) to the applicant to be used in obtaining construction bids.

14. Applicant must then obtain two (2) written bids from <u>licensed contractors</u> for each approved storefront improvement.

15. Agency staff may assist applicant in coordinating bid process, if requested.

16. The applicant and the applicant's contractors will be required to pay prevailing wages to workers involved in the performance of the façade improvements in accordance with applicable state laws. This requirement applies to both the Agency and Applicant's portion of funding.

17. Agency staff and/or architect will work with applicant to analyze bids as compared to design documents and provide applicant with their findings. If bids are over budget, architect will suggest areas to reduce costs, or applicant may decide to pay for the higher costs.

18. Applicant has two (2) weeks to choose a contractor. Applicant will choose appropriate contractor after applicant negotiates changes with contractor, if necessary. Once applicant has selected a contractor, applicant notifies Redevelopment staff of intent to proceed with project by submitting a Contract Agreement between Applicant and contractor to Redevelopment Agency staff. The form identifies the contractor that has been selected by the applicant and confirms that contractors are licensed by the State of California and have a valid City of Fremont business license. The specific improvements to be completed by

contractor are also identified. Applicant identifies construction cost negotiated with selected contractor.

19. The applicant hires the contractor and will coordinate construction activities with the contractor. Redevelopment staff does not coordinate contractors work. Applicant has 30 (thirty) days, from the contract execution date to authorize contractor to begin construction.

20. If applicant has not authorized contractor to begin construction within thirty (30) days, Redevelopment has the right to terminate the contract and utilize the reserved grant funds for other projects. (Applicant's matching grant will be returned.)

21. Applicant's contractors must obtain all appropriate electrical, plumbing, encroachment and other permits required by City for construction.

22. Applicant, with assistance from the architect, monitors contractor's work. Progress payments will be made by the Agency to the Contractor equal to 30% of the base grant when Agency determines that Contractor has completed 30% of the eligible improvements and has completed prevailing wage compliance documentation and certified payroll; after completion of 40% of the base grant when determined that 70% of the eligible improvements are completed; and final payment will be made after Contractor has submitted to Agency unconditional lien releases for the work completed for the 30% progress payment.

23. Staff and architect will review completed improvements and, if found to be acceptable, will issue a check to contractor for eligible invoices.

24. Agency representative will issue checks(s) for payment of invoices or for reimbursement to applicant for eligible expenses already paid by applicant, according to the terms of the Agreement between the Agency and applicant.

25. Once all appropriate checks are issued, project is complete. Applicants commit to maintain improvements and keep storefronts clean and free of debris, graffiti, banners, and window postings.

Note: The foregoing steps are for information only and are subject to change.