

# **West Town Special Service Area Facade Rebate Program Guidelines and Application**

**APPLICATIONS MUST BE COMPLETE AND SUBMITTED 5 BUSINESS DAYS  
BEFORE COMMISSION MEETING TO BE CONSIDERED.**

## **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The Façade Rebate Program is offered through West Town Special Service Area (29-2014), a special taxing district, whose overall purpose is to:

Maintain and improve the shopping, dining and nightlife within the SSA boundaries by providing a cleaner, safer and more attractive commercial environment for consumers, residents and business owners.

The Façade Rebate Program is designed to help property owners and tenants within the West Town SSA beautify the front of their buildings by providing a rebate of up to \$15,000 for each eligible project.

## **TARGET AREA**

The Façade Rebate Program is only open to properties located within the West Town SSA boundaries:

- Chicago Ave. (Halsted to Western)
- Damen Ave. (Chicago to Huron)
- Ashland Ave. (Chicago to Division)
- Milwaukee Ave. (Erie to Augusta [both sides] and Augusta to Division [east side only])
- Ogden Ave. (Fry to the Kennedy Expressway)
- Division St. (South side only from Milwaukee to the Kennedy Expressway)

## **TYPE OF ASSISTANCE**

Building owner, or tenant with building owner approval, who plans to make at least \$500 worth of exterior improvements, may receive a 50% financial reimbursement for the improvement, up to a maximum of \$15,000 reimbursement.

Applications will be considered in the order that they are received until all the Façade Rebate Program funding is disbursed for the fiscal year.

If there are multiple applications, or the list of applications received before the next SSA Commission review exceeds the amount of funding for the program, a lottery will be held to determine the order in which the projects will be funded and a wait list for funding should it become available.

In order to maximize the number of eligible projects that receive assistance, the SSA Commission reserves the right to award a Rebate at an amount less than the allowable maximum.

Applications are considered on a rolling basis through the calendar year. There is no guarantee that funding will be available upon request of rebate.

## **PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY**

### **Eligibility Requirements**

- The building must be located within the West Town SSA boundaries.
- Building must have proof of proper zoning and city permits.
- Building must be owner occupied, or tenant must have written consent from the owner of the property.
- Projects that have been started, but not completed. If the applicant moves ahead with a project before receiving the approval, the applicant accepts the risk that the project may not be approved for a rebate.
- Applicant must fully and timely comply with all the requirements and deadlines set forth in the application.
- Applicants must be the entity paying for the improvements.
- If the owner or tenant is supplying their own materials or labor for the improvements, profits and overhead are not eligible expenditures for the rebate.
- The Department of Planning and Development has declared that SSA Commissioners are eligible to participate in the Façade Rebate Program, provided they meet all other Program eligibility criteria and abstain from reviewing and voting on ALL Façade Rebate Program applications during the period beginning when their application is submitted until their Rebate check is approved and processed.
- If any change in ownership of the property or business participating in the Façade Rebate Program occurs during the improvements, eligibility for the Façade Rebate Program will be suspended until a meeting with the SSA Service Provider Agency staff and new ownership is completed and any changes to the original application are approved in writing. There is no guarantee that new ownership will be approved for the same rebate amount as the previous owner. All such applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- If the same façade improvement project already received funding from a different grant or incentive program it is ineligible for additional funding through the Façade Rebate Program.
- Applications are eligible for a maximum payout of \$15,000 per business or storefront within a 5 year period.
- Applications must be complete at time of submission
- Preference shall be given to:
  - ~ Applicants who show a need for funding assistance in order to complete the façade improvements.
  - ~ Applicants and buildings that have not previously participated in the Façade Rebate Program.
  - ~ Buildings that will have a significant impact on the area's beautification.
  - ~ Projects that are sympathetic to the vintage character of the building.

### **Eligible Improvements**

- Improvement must be visible from the public right-of-way and have a positive impact on the building's front appearance.
- Improvement must be compatible with building and zoning regulations.
- Examples of improvements include:
  - ~ Signs or graphics
  - ~ Window/door replacements
  - ~ Tuck pointing
  - ~ Landscaping and flower boxes
  - ~ Exterior lighting
  - ~ Awnings
  - ~ Improvements to sidewalk(s) directly in front or to the side of a property
  - ~ Installation of appropriate anti-graffiti material
  - ~ Installation of additional bike parking racks

**Ineligible Improvements**

- Any roofing improvements
- Rear, side, alley, or secondary improvements not visible from the public right-of-way
- New construction or additions
- Buildings less than 2 years old
- Interior improvements
- Improvements that are considered regular building upkeep or maintenance
- Improvements planned for new buildings (constructed less than 5 years before application date), except for awnings, and/or signage
- Temporary furniture, such as tables and chairs.
- Parking lot improvements that face side streets, alleys or are not visible from the main shopping street
- Rebate requests will not be granted for façade improvements that were completed before the application is received and approved.
- Once a building owner or tenant has received a rebate of the \$15,000 maximum amount, that building is no longer eligible for the Façade Rebate Program for 5 years from date of rebate payout.

**APPLICATION PROCESS**

To apply for funds through the Façade Rebate Program, applicants must complete and submit the attached application to:

West Town SSA Program Director  
 West Town Chamber of Commerce  
 1819 W. Chicago Ave.  
 Chicago, IL 60622

Or via email to [KWakem@westtownchamber.org](mailto:KWakem@westtownchamber.org)

Along with the application, applicants must submit:

- Photographs of the existing building and the proposed project area.
- Detailed plans and specifications for the proposed project.

- A list of applicable City permits to be obtained
- At least three detailed estimates for the proposed improvement project; specifying the preferred contractor. If the applicant plans to do his or her own construction, the applicant must submit three outside estimates in addition to his or her own estimate. (The Façade Rebate Committee may request additional information and documentation.)
- The Summary of Total Project Costs attached to the application.

Applications must be complete at time of submission. Application must be turned submitted 5 business days before SSA Commission meeting to be considered.

The SSA Commission reserves the right to reject any questionable estimates, as well as implement such additional Program rules and regulations as it deems reasonable.

### **EMERGENCY AMENDMENTS TO APPLICATION:**

If unforeseen circumstances are to arise during the construction process that would require additional costs to be incurred, you must submit an explanation in writing to the SSA Program Director. Those additional costs will then be voted on for potential reimbursement up to the limit of the original \$15,000 cap. If you move ahead with the project before a vote is made, you take the risk that reimbursement of those additional costs may not be approved.

### **REVIEW PROCESS**

The West Town SSA Commission will review each application as it is received. The Commission will review each proposed project to determine if it:

- Meets the required guidelines.
- Will have a significant positive impact on the area's beautification.
- Has a need for funding assistance.
- Is not for a building that received approval earlier in the same funding cycle.

Applicants will receive a response regarding the project's eligibility within approximately six weeks of submission of the SSA Commission Meeting where it will be reviewed and voted upon. At that time, the applicant may be asked to clarify design elements.

The SSA Commission reserves the right to deny any Façade Rebate Application for any reason.

### **CONSTRUCTION PROCESS**

After the SSA Commission has approved a project, the applicant will be sent an Approval Letter. The applicant must then submit to the SSA Program Director:

1. Proof that City permits have been applied for within 30 days of receiving the approval letter, if permits are required.
2. Copies of the approved City building permits when received.
3. A schedule showing estimated start and end dates of the project.

If the City permits have not been received within 120 days after the permit has been applied for, the applicant must send a written request to the SSA Program Director requesting an extension.

The SSA Program Director will contact the applicant for status of the project to report back to the SSA Commission. Significant delays in the project will require a written explanation from the applicant, with a revised schedule.

Failure to apply for permits within 30 days of the date of the Approval Letter, or failure to submit a request for an extension if or when needed, may result in the project being dropped from the program and the applicant will no longer be eligible to receive reimbursement.

## **REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS**

Once the project is completed, applicant contacts the SSA Program Director to arrange an inspection to verify that the work was done in compliance with program guidelines and pre-approved plans\*.

In addition, the applicant submits copies of all paid invoices for the approved project and photographs of the completed work so the before and after pictures may be compared. A reimbursement check will be sent to the applicant within six weeks of the inspection and submission of documents.

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\* The SSA Program Director's inspection is limited to a review of the completed improvements only in connection with the applicant's application under this Program, and in no way shall be deemed an inspection as to whether or not the repairs were completed in good order and satisfactory condition. It shall be the applicant's responsibility to verify adequacy of all repairs, and applicant's failure to verify the repairs shall not relieve applicant of any expenses or responsibilities resulting from such failure, nor shall the SSA or its representatives have any liability or obligations to applicant arising from such failure.

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## **CITY PERMIT INFORMATION**

### **BUILDING PERMITS**

Building permits are issued by the Department of Construction and Permits, City Hall, Room 900, 121 N. LaSalle St., 312-744-3449.

### **BARRICADE PERMITS**

Barricade permits are issued by the Department of Transportation, Construction Compliance, City Hall, Room 905, 121 N. LaSalle St., 312-744-4652.

### **ELECTRICAL PERMITS**

Electrical permits are issued by the Department of Construction and Permits, Electrical Inspections, City Hall, Room 900, 121 N. LaSalle St., 312-744-3400.

## **OTHER BUILDING AND ZONING INFORMATION**

[www.cityofchicago.org](http://www.cityofchicago.org)

**Façade Rebate Program Application- West Town SSA 29-2014**

Proposed Project Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Street) (City) (State) (Zip)

Applicant Name \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant is: (please mark any that apply)

Property Owner

Business Owner

Tenant

Not for Profit Organization

Individual Resident

**\*\*If applicant is not the property owner, please supply property owner information:**

Owner Name \_\_\_\_\_

Owner Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Project Description (please attach photos, plans, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Statement of Need (please describe why this proposed project and funding is necessary to your business and the community)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Has this property received any rebates through this or any other program before?

Yes  No If yes, please describe:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

***Statement of Understanding***

The applicant (undersigned) agrees to fully and timely comply with the guidelines and procedures of the West Town SSA29-2014 Façade Rebate Program and the outlined specifications as agreed to by the applicant and the West Town SSA Commission. It is understood by the applicant that three cost estimates, copies of building permits, contracts, insurance, and invoices are required documentation, and that he/she has read the entire Façade Rebate Program Guidelines and Application and agrees to be fully bound by the terms and conditions. APPLICANT RELEASES AND AGREES TO DEFEND AND INDEMNIFY THE WEST TOWN CHICAGO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (TOGETHER WITH THEIR OFFICERS, DIRECTORS, AND AGENTS), THE WEST TOWN SSA29-2014 COMMISSION, AND THE CITY OF CHICAGO FROM ALL CLAIMS AND CAUSES OF ACTION OF ANY KIND (KNOWN OR UNKOWN) IN CONNECTION WITH THIS FAÇADE REBATE PROGRAM.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant Name (Please Print)

***Statement of Ownership***

I, \_\_\_\_\_, certify that I am the owner of the property located  
at \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Owner Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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\*\*If the applicant is not the property owner, the following must also be completed by the property owner:

I, \_\_\_\_\_, authorize the applicant to apply for reimbursement under the West Town SSA29-2014 Façade Rebate Program and undertake the approved improvements.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Owner Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date





# Application Checklist

Ensure all of the following items are completed and submitted with the application. Incomplete applications will not be accepted.

Completed Application Form

- Project Description
- Photos of Existing Building
- Project Plans
- Cost Estimates, at least 3 contractors.
- Supplemental Documents

List Documents: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Owner's Written Consent (if applicable)

Applicable City Permits

List Permits: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_