

City of Evanston  
**Neighborhood Storefront  
Improvement Program**  
*5 Easy Steps to Progress*

**Sponsored by  
The City of Evanston Community Development Department  
Planning Division  
(847) 866-2928**

The Evanston Storefront Program (ESP) is designed to help you make the storefront improvements you want as easily as possible. We want your completed construction project to be appealing, efficient and cost effective. The five steps outlined below are your guide to a profitable experience and reflect our commitment to quality customer service.

# 1 APPLICATION

**Complete and submit the attached application.**

Your application will be reviewed by staff in the Planning Division to determine the eligibility of your proposed improvements. Eligibility is met:

- A.) if the proposed project is located in a federally determined target area and
- B.) if proposed changes are in keeping with design standards established in *Design Guidelines*, a publication available from the Planning Division.

If the project is eligible, the City will temporarily reserve funds for the project. These funds will be reserved for a period of four months. ***Please note that any costs you incur prior to the actual formal approval of a project will not be reimbursable.*** The City will contact you to arrange a meeting to discuss the program requirements with you. If you are not sure exactly what changes you would like to make, but definitely want to enhance the appearance of your storefront, we will help you develop your design ideas.

# 2 PLANNING & DESIGN

**Prepare detailed drawings of your plans.**

Following conditional approval from the City, an architect can be made available to you, or you can contract the services of your own designer to produce elevation drawings specifying the work you intend to do. Include with this presentation samples and product literature of color schemes and proposed new materials. Sometimes this step may involve more than one draft of your plans to assure that renovations will be in keeping with City guidelines. A formal letter of approval for the ESP will be granted following the presentation of acceptable plans. This letter will be accompanied by an agreement outlining the terms and conditions of the receipt of your rebate, which must be signed and returned. Construction should commence within one month of this agreement.

## 3 APPROVAL

### **Submit your plans for formal permitting approval.**

As with any building project in the City, building permits and site plan approval are required. Once your detailed drawings are conditionally approved for the ESP, you will submit them to the Community Development Department, Building Division (Civic Center 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor) where technical approval can take place. Your designs will be considered for a building permit and will also pass before the Site Plan and Appearance Review Committee for technical consultation. ESP approval does not guarantee final permit approval. In an effort to streamline the review of your designs, however, Planning Staff will draw your attention to issues that may arise in the formal approval process so that modifications can be made ahead of time.

## 4 CONSTRUCTION

### **Select a contractor to do the work!**

Once the scope of work and design has been approved, the project can be let out to bid. The construction agreement(s) will be between the firm(s) selected and you, the owner. ***The choice of contractor is yours, however, we require that you present evidence that at least 3 bids were solicited to ensure competitive prices.*** By law, we must enforce prevailing wage regulations and fair labor standards. You should be certain that the bidding firms understand and have agreed to comply with the applicable federal requirements. We will meet with your contractor to clarify these rules and will be available to answer their questions throughout the process. A contract should be executed within one month of formal approval, and a copy of the executed agreement forwarded to the City. During construction, Planning Staff will monitor the project to ensure compliance. We generally require that construction be completed within 3 months of our meeting with your contractor.

## 5 REBATE

### **Submit cancelled checks and claim rebate.**

Upon notification from you, Planning Staff will inspect the building to certify that work is completed as agreed upon. Copies of all contracts, cancelled checks issued as payment, final waivers of lien and Building Division final-inspection approval should be submitted to staff for verification. Upon review and approval, a rebate check will be processed and made available approximately two weeks after verification. Your rebate amount is computed at 50% of the actual cost incurred for labor, material, and architectural design services, up to the maximum amount allowed for your building, (\$10,000 per storefront and \$40,000 per building.)

# Evanston Storefront Program

## *Application for Participation*

**Date of Application:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Applicant Name(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Applicant Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Project Address(es):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Store/Tenant Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Lease Expiration Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Applicant is:** *(Check one)* Store Owner \_\_\_\_\_ Building Owner \_\_\_\_\_

**Property Owner Name(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

*(If the applicant is a tenant in his or her building, please provide a letter from building owner granting permission for undertaking improvements.)*

**Project Scope:** *(Describe the storefront improvements you would like to make)*

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

**Total Anticipated Budget: \$** \_\_\_\_\_

**Number of Storefronts:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Are you interested in design assistance?** Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby make application to the Evanston Storefront Program for a commercial façade improvement grant. I understand that my proposal must first be approved by the City of Evanston and that it must conform to established design guidelines as well as specific design recommendations of the City of Evanston Community Development Department, Planning Division. If approved, I understand that all work performed on the storefront is subject to federal prevailing wage and equal opportunity requirements and that I shall inform all selected contractors of this requirement prior to executing any contract. I understand that I am responsible for ensuring that all work meets applicable building codes and requirements.

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

Return this *completed form with a photo of this storefront* to:  
City of Evanston  
Planning Division  
2100 Ridge Avenue  
Evanston, IL 60201

If you have any questions, please call (847) 866-2928