



# City of Evans, Colorado

## 2020 Storefront Improvement Program Overview

### 1. What is the City of Evans Storefront Improvement Program?

This program is a tool intended to support existing businesses and to assist in the attraction of new companies with the improvements to the exterior of commercial storefront buildings and lots. This in turn improves the look of the City. This program offers commercial businesses and/or property owners a reimbursement of up to \$5,000 maximum per property of costs involved in improving the exterior of a commercial building and/or lot (see Question 7 below for example). All improvements must be visible from the public right-of-way and other public areas and parks.

### 2. Who can apply for funding?

Applicants must be a licensed storefront commercial business and/or property owner located within the City of Evans that generates sales, use and/or property tax revenues. If the business is leasing the property, authorization from the building owner to apply for funding is required. Not-for-profit organizations, religious institutions, home-based businesses or residential living facilities do not qualify. Tenants must have a minimum of two-years remaining on their lease or an option to renew.

Applications for properties that are located within the Historic Riverside or Highway 85 Corridor Redevelopment Areas (see map) will be considered first if submitted prior to June 1, 2020, all other properties within the city limits of the Evans will be considered on a first come first serve basis and subject to available funding after June 1, 2020, but may apply prior to June 1, 2020 and placed in order received. Funding is limited in 2020 so apply as soon as possible.

Once all funds are committed no additional projects will be approved. If an approved project falls through the next eligible application will be considered and notified of available funds.

### 3. Are projects that have already been started or completed still eligible?

No. Work started or completed prior to the program approval is not eligible for funding. Projects that have already submitted plans and application for building permits are eligible as

long as no work has begun prior to obtaining 2020 Storefront Improvement Program approval and return of the Letter of Commitment.

**4. What types of improvements are eligible for funding?**

The improvements are limited to exterior improvements. The grant does not include interior improvements, furniture or non-fixed improvements. The grant may be used for property maintenance i.e. painting, asphalt resurfacing and roofing; however, not removal of trash. Maintenance may be considered for grant funding only if at least one material improvement is included as part of the application. Seasonal or annual plant material will not be eligible (i.e. flowers planted and replaced or removed at end of season); trees, grasses, shrubs, and perennial plants are eligible. Health and safety improvements will take precedence over aesthetics

**5. Are there any design guidelines?**

Yes. Projects must conform to all aspects of the building, fire, zoning and development codes for the City of Evans. All required plan review and building permit must be obtained by the applicant prior to the work being performed. All contract work must be performed by a licensed contractor in the City of Evans. It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to ensure compliance with the applicable local, state and federal guidelines.

Note: If a submittal requires Site Plan Review and or Use by Special Review application in accordance with the City of Evans Land Development Code the project may not be able to meet timelines for program. Applicants should contact Planning Department staff in advance to determine if a project will require the said reviews. Contact the Planning Department at 970-475-1167 or email at [cityplanning@evanscolorado.gov](mailto:cityplanning@evanscolorado.gov).

**6. Are project fees, permits and taxes eligible to be included in the request?**

Yes. Project related expenses such as sales and use taxes, permits, and project design review fees may be included in the total grant request. Contractors will be required to itemize fees and applicable taxes in their bid proposals and invoices.

**7. Do I have to use a contractor and obtain bids?** Applicants for the 2020 Storefront Improvement Program are required to use a licensed contractor to complete work under the program and obtain itemized bids from at least two (2) contractors for projects valued at \$500.00 or more. If multiple contractors will be used (ex. One for concrete work and another for signage) two separate bids for each component of work shall be submitted.

Applications for program work not exceeding \$500.00 may be done by the applicant if the work does not involve electrical, plumbing and/or heating and ventilation and clearly indicated in application. Receipts for material shall be submitted at the end of the project; only materials costs will be covered, not sweat equity (applicant's own labor).

In an effort to keep spending local, bids solicited from Evans-based contractors are strongly encouraged. If an Evans-based contractor is hired, or purchases are made at an Evans business, reimbursement will be awarded up to 60% or the program maximum of \$5,000.00, whichever is less. Non-Evans contractor work will be reimbursed up to 40% or the program maximum of \$5,000.00, whichever is less. Applicants are encouraged to obtain lien waivers upon payment of contractor(s).

Examples:

Project value is \$8,000.

Evans-based Contractor used, reimbursement (60% not to exceed \$5,000) is \$4,800.00

Non-Evans-based Contractor used, reimbursement (40% not to exceed \$5,000) is \$3,200.00

Project value is \$13,000.

Evans-based Contractor used, reimbursement (60% not to exceed \$5,000) is \$5,000.00

Non-Evans-based Contractor used, reimbursement (50% not to exceed \$5,000) is \$5,000.00

#### **8. How does the application process work?**

Upon receipt of a completed 2020 Storefront Improvement Program Application, the City of Evans staff will review the application to the program guidelines. Application approval may come with a specific set of requirements or conditions to be determined by the staff.

#### **9. How are projects selected for funding?**

Qualified applications will be reviewed and approved based on the following criteria (all projects being equal, the first application will have priority):

- Funding availability.
- Property must be within Evans Redevelopment Areas (see attached map) for applications approved prior to June 1, 2020; applications for properties elsewhere within the City of Evans will be reviewed in order received and considered for funding after June 1, 2020 subject to availability of funds.
- Improvements must be eligible under the program criteria.
- Applicants must qualify as a licensed storefront commercial business or property owner that generates sales, use and/or property tax revenues (not-for-profit organizations, religious institutions, home-based businesses or residential living facilities do not qualify).
- Leasing businesses/tenants must have a minimum of two years remaining on their lease or an option to renew.
- Completed Application in addition to required attachments per checklist.
- Reimbursement request shall not exceed \$5,000.00.
- Compatibility with the laws and regulations of the City of Evans.

**10. What happens after a project is selected for funding?**

Once the project is approved the applicant will receive a Letter of Commitment from the City of Evans indicating the specific amount of grant funding and information on other requirements. The applicant must sign and return Letter of Commitment within 30 days of date of letter. The approved project must begin within 60 days of submitting the signed Letter of Commitment. Within six (6) months of signing acceptance letter, or December 23, 2020, whichever occurs first, the applicant shall complete the approved improvements, pay the contractor and submit the 2020 Storefront Improvement Program Request for Reimbursement with applicable documentation as noted on the reimbursement application. An additional (1) month to complete work and pay contractor may be requested in writing and subject approval for good cause. **Failure to abide by deadlines will lead to revocation of program approval.**

Example Timeline:

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| February 1 | Project approved by the City of Evans and Letter of Commitment is provided to applicant dated February 1.  |
| March 3    | Applicant submits signed Letter of Commitment to City of Evans   |
| May 2      | Work must begin on approved project  |
| November 2 | Work of approved project, payment of contractor and submittal of 2020 Storefront Improvement Program Reimbursement Request and material must be complete and submitted to the City of Evans Economic Development office. |

**11. What other responsibilities does the applicant have?**

The applicant or its contractor is responsible for obtaining all approvals and permits and any other required approvals for the work to be done. The applicant is responsible for paying the full amount for the cost of the work to the contractor(s); the City of Evans will reimburse the applicant in accordance with the program (see Question #13 below). The applicant is responsible for compliance with all applicable safety standards and conditions. The applicant also agrees to maintain the improvements made from the project funding.

**12. What happens if my application is denied?**

If the application is denied a letter will be sent to the applicant with an explanation for not approving the program. If an application is denied, a new application may be submitted any time after the initial application was denied and reviewed in order received.

**13. How am I reimbursed once the project is completed?**

Grant funds are disbursed on a reimbursement basis and cannot be issued until the proposed project has been fully completed. Before funds are released, applicants will need to submit a completed 2020 Storefront Improvement Program Reimbursement Request form, proof of payment to applicable contractors and at least two color photos of the completed project. Approval by the City building inspectors and submission of Certificate of Occupancy, if

applicable, is necessary. A City representative will review the completed project to determine if the actual work complies with the approved grant. Once work has been approved a check will be prepared and sent to the applicant.

**14. How will the City of Evans promote this project?**

The City of Evans may promote an approved project by numerous means including, but not limited to, displaying a grant program sign or sticker at the site during and after construction, and the use of photographs and descriptions of the project in City of Evans communication materials.

**15. Do I have to report this as income on my taxes?**

Yes. The City of Evans is required by federal tax law to report to the IRS and grant money awarded to a business above \$600 as income. A completed W-9 form shall be submitted with the 2020 Storefront Improvement Program Application.

**16. Can I reapply for additional funds?**

Businesses and property owners may apply for future Storefront Improvement Programs no less than two years after previous program approval for the same property.

For additional information contact:

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970-475-1196

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*The City of Evans reserves the right to make changes in the conditions of the Storefront Improvement Program as warranted.*