



City of Cleveland Storefront Renovation Program Sign-Only Rebate Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

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Effective July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022

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 support new businesses located in previously rehabilitated buildings. To better meet these objectives, the City partners with neighborhood Community Development Corporations (CDC) to implement the program in the neighborhoods. The SRP's financial assistance is meant to improve the quality and design of the signage, not just assist in the cost the business has already budgeted.

What is the Storefront Program's Sign-Only Program?

The program offers 50%, up to a \$5,000 rebate, on eligible signage expenses for businesses that meet the following eligibility requirements. (A minimum total signage cost of at least \$2,000 is required to be spent by the applicant, not including the additional cost of the permit and permit procurement fees, unless the signage is contributing to an established comprehensive sign concept that can be demonstrated was less.)

What projects are eligible for the Storefront Renovation Sign-Only Rebate Program?

Eligible projects must meet one of the following criteria:

- The building rehabilitation is currently under construction (under contract) with the SRP and the Applicant is a brand new business whose sign costs are not already included in the building's rehabilitation contract;
- The building was previously completed through the SRP; and the building, or its surrounding site, does not currently require any exterior maintenance as determined by the SRP Design Specialist; and the Applicant's signage was not previously addressed through the program. (If the building or site requires maintenance, then a Sign-only Application will not be accepted until all maintenance issues are completed to the satisfaction of the SRP Design Specialist.)
- The exterior of the building was previously rehabilitated without the assistance of the Storefront Program, but:
 - Has been rehabilitated to SRP design standards; and
 - Does not require any additional exterior rehabilitation or maintenance; and
 - Is located in a Storefront Renovation Program eligible building type and is an eligible business use.

What signage projects are not eligible for the Storefront Renovation Program?

Excluded building types include, but are not limited to regardless of their current use: houses, churches, schools, apartment (with or without a leasing office on premises), manufacturing, warehouse (with the exception of Downtown where buildings were built with large display windows), car dealerships, gas stations, strip shopping plazas, arcades (except for businesses with a dedicated exterior/main street entrance);

Excluded business types are those that do not provide a clear "walk-in" customer experience and include, but are not limited to: manufacturing and/or warehouse businesses, office businesses without a walk-in customer purpose, call-center businesses, leasing offices for an otherwise residential building, sacred purpose, private clubs/membership based businesses where membership is not open to everyone, business(es) located in newly constructed buildings where no substantial exterior renovation has occurred since its construction.

What costs are considered eligible signage expenses?

- removal of old signage;
- design, construction, and installation of temporary banner signage;
- design, construction, and installation of new signage (may include exterior light fixtures to light sign);
- awnings that function as signage;
- City permit/design fees related to the eligible rebate items

How does the Storefront Program Sign-Only Program work?

After a design is developed with, and/or approved by, the City's SRP Design Specialist, the City and an applicant will enter into a contract. The contract requires applicants to pay for all signage costs in full, within 1-year of the contract effective date, before receiving a rebate. Once a project is completed, applicants can receive a rebate of 50% of eligible signage expenses (based on successfully meeting all terms and conditions of the contract).

Is there a maximum rebate amount?

The maximum rebate amount is \$5,000 per business. In order to receive the full \$5,000 rebate, the total cost of signage, installation, permit fees, other fees, and taxes must be at least \$10,000 and paid upfront by the Applicant.

Who should I contact for additional information or to fill-out an application? Contact your local Community Development Corporation (CDC), or call the City's SRP staff at 216 664-4031.