



## **Northgate Boulevard Storefront Improvement Grant Program Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA)**

**NOFA #: P23020014008**

**NOFA Posted on:** Monday, June 17, 2024 *(Updated August 14, 2024)*

**NOFA Priority Questions Due by:** Monday, July 15, 2024, by 4 p.m. PDT

**Grant Applications Due by:** Friday, August 16~~30~~, 2024, by 4 p.m. PDT

# Overview

---

The Northgate Boulevard Storefront Improvement (NBSI) Grant Program provides up to \$15,000 for small business owners to complete eligible exterior improvements.

By improving the physical appearance of storefronts along the Northgate Boulevard commercial corridor, the program aims to:

1. Support retention and growth of existing businesses
2. Deter vacancies
3. Attract more visitors
4. Spur new investment

## Eligible Activities

---

Eligible activities include but are not limited to:

1. Exterior painting including murals
2. Installation of new façade elements or repair/replacement of existing façade elements such as signs, awnings, canopies, lighting, windows, doors, stucco, siding, tile, or stone accents
3. Restoration of original architectural features
4. Removal of boarded windows, security bars, dilapidated signs, awnings, and other exterior clutter
5. Exterior security enhancements, but must meet the following requirements:
  - (a) Cannot exceed 25% of total grant award;
  - (b) Must comply with the City's design standards and overall vision for the corridor;  
**and**
  - (c) Must be proposed in conjunction with other exterior beautification improvements
6. Applicable professional service fees related to design, architectural, electrical, engineering, or construction plans
  - (a) Cannot exceed 25% of total grant award
7. Applicable City and State permitting fees
  - (a) Cannot exceed 10% of total grant award

The City will consider other activities on a case-by-case basis, provided the activities contribute to the permanent improvement of the physical appearance of the property.

Please note, applicants applying for multiple City of Sacramento grants cannot receive funding from multiple programs to pay for the same improvements.

Additionally, the activities cannot be one of the ineligible activities listed below.

# Ineligible Activities

---

Ineligible activities include:

1. Interior property improvements
2. Improvements to new buildings constructed within the last five calendar years
3. Performing general or deferred repair or maintenance including roof repair and replacement
4. Upgrading mechanical, plumbing, or electrical equipment
5. Installation of landscaping
6. Land clearing or tree removal costs
7. Parking area paving, resurfacing, repairing, or restriping
8. Construction of new block walls or fencing
9. Residential projects located in residential neighborhoods and non-conforming uses in commercially zoned areas

# Eligible Applicants

---

To be eligible, applicants must meet all of the following criteria:

1. Operate a retail or service establishment<sup>1</sup> in a building with street frontage located on Northgate Boulevard
2. Qualify as a for-profit business
  - (a) Non-profit entities are **not** eligible
3. Be independently owned and operated
  - (a) Businesses cannot be owned by or affiliated with a parent organization that does not meet the remaining eligibility criteria
  - (b) Franchises are **not** eligible
4. Be locally owned and operated
  - (a) Principal office located in the greater Sacramento region<sup>2</sup>
  - (b) Owners/officers domiciled in the greater Sacramento region
5. Have 100 or fewer employees<sup>3</sup> **or** earn \$18 million or less in average annual gross

---

<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this NOFA, a retail or service establishment is one which sells goods or services to the general public.

<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of this NOFA, the greater Sacramento region is comprised of the following six counties: El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba.

<sup>3</sup> For the purposes of this NOFA, the number of employees is the average number of people employed for each pay period during the 12 most recent months. Full-time, part-time, and temporary employees count

receipts over the last three tax years<sup>4</sup>

If a tenant, applicants must also:

1. Obtain the property owner's written consent for the proposed improvements
2. Have a current lease with a minimum of three years remaining **or** obtain the property owner's written assurance of a lease extension for at least three years

To verify eligibility, the City may request additional documentation prior to grant award.

Documentation may include:

1. Tax returns for the business
2. Utility bill in the name of the business
3. Business license filings
4. Secretary of State filings

## Funding Parameters

---

### Amount Available

There is \$200,000 available. Funded by a one-time source of federal American Rescue Plan Act reinvestment dollars, the City does not anticipate future funding.

### Grant Funding Request

The minimum funding request per application is \$5,000.

The maximum funding request per application is \$15,000.

### Match Requirement

There is no match requirement.

### Number of Grants per Applicant

Applicants doing business in more than one building can apply for multiple grants. However, the City reserves the right to limit the number of grants awarded to any applicant at its sole discretion.

### Payment Disbursement Method

The City will issue payment via an incurred cost method. For this grant program, an incurred cost means either an expense that the grantee has already paid or an expense that the grantee is obligated to pay but has not yet made the payment.

---

toward the average number. Businesses younger than 12 months can use the average of each pay period they have been in business.

<sup>4</sup> Both employee and annual gross receipt parameters are derived from the [Small Business Certification requirements established by California Department of General Services](#)

The City will withhold 10% of the total grant award until completion of an onsite inspection.

## Other Requirements

By the time of grant agreement execution, other requirements are as follows:

1. Must comply with all applicable local, state, and federal codes and design standards
2. Must comply with all applicable local, state, and federal prevailing wage requirements
3. Must execute a grant agreement with the City of Sacramento prior to incurring any reimbursable costs
4. Must not have any pending code enforcement violations or must demonstrate a plan to address code violations at the time of grant agreement execution
5. Must not be in foreclosure or bankruptcy proceedings at the time of application or grant award
6. Must be a permitted or conditionally permitted use
7. Must be in active and good standing with the [California Secretary of State's business registry](#), unless a sole proprietor
  - (a) If a sole proprietor, must have an active registration with the [County of Sacramento for a fictitious business name](#)
8. Must possess an active [City of Sacramento Business Operations Tax Certificate](#)
9. Must comply with the City of Sacramento's Commercial General Liability, Automobile Liability, Workers' Compensation, and Professional Liability insurance requirements
10. Must receive approval of the Planning Division, receive a Building Permit, pay all required fees, and comply with any other City standards prior to commencing construction
11. Must utilize licensed and properly insured contractors to complete approved work
12. Must maintain the improvements for at least two years after the grant is complete
13. Must complete work within 12 months of grant agreement execution

## Grant Process

---

### Overview

Grant applications will be accepted from **June 17, 2024, to August 16 30, 2024** and scored by a review panel. If all funds are not awarded, the City may issue a second Notice of Funding Availability.

### Information Sessions

The City will host the following information sessions:

1. **Virtual information session in English and Spanish**  
Wednesday, June 26 from 1-2 p.m.  
[Register via Zoom here](#)



The City will publish a video recording on [this webpage](#)

**2. In-person information session**

Wednesday, July 10 from 7-8 p.m.

Stanford Settlement Neighborhood Center

450 West El Camino Avenue

Sacramento, CA 95833

[Register here](#)

**3. Weekly in-person office hours**

Every Friday starting July 19 through August 16 from 9-11 a.m.

Stanford Settlement Neighborhood Center

450 West El Camino Avenue

Sacramento, CA 95833

Drop-ins are acceptable, but appointments are preferred

[Schedule an appointment here](#)

## Questions and Accommodations

The City will track and publish answers to questions posed during the information sessions on [this webpage](#). Besides the information sessions listed above, all other questions regarding this solicitation must be submitted in writing to [smallbusiness@cityofsacramento.org](mailto:smallbusiness@cityofsacramento.org). Questions submitted via other methods will not receive a response.

There are two question deadlines. For priority questions, the deadline to submit is **Monday, July 15, 2024, at 4 p.m. PDT**. Answers to priority questions submitted by the deadline will be posted by **Friday, July 26, 2024**, on [this webpage](#).

For general questions, the deadline to submit is **Monday, August 12, 2024, at 12 p.m. PDT**. Answers to general questions submitted by the deadline will be posted by **Wednesday, August 14, 2024**, on [this webpage](#).

If applicants require language access assistance, please also submit requests in writing to [smallbusiness@cityofsacramento.org](mailto:smallbusiness@cityofsacramento.org). The City will make reasonable accommodations to provide language access assistance as practicable.

## Tentative Timeline

Activity	Estimated Date
Release of NOFA	June 17, 2024
Priority question deadline	July 15, 2024, by 4 p.m. PDT
Priority question answers published	July 26, 2024
General question deadline	August 12 by 12:00 p.m. PDT
General question answers published	August 14, 2024
Application submittal deadline	August 16 <del>16</del> 30, 2024, by 4 p.m. PDT
Application review	Summer 2024
Award notification	Fall 2024
Grant agreement preparation and execution	Fall-Winter 2024
Anticipated grant term	One year

## Scoring Criteria

A review panel will score applications using the following rubric:

Scoring Criteria	Maximum Points
<b>Location</b>  1. The location of the proposed improvement(s) is either directly abutting or has minimal setback from Northgate Boulevard and the proposed improvement(s) are easily visible from Northgate Boulevard without any obstruction such as a fence or other barrier.	20
<b>Proposal and Budget</b>  1. The applicant clearly describes the funding request and proposed improvement(s).  2. The applicant requests a reasonable and allocable amount of grant funds given the proposed usage.	20
<b>Feasibility</b>  1. The applicant's proposed improvements are feasible and will be completed within 12 months.	20
<b>Impact</b>  1. The project features high quality improvement(s) that will: (a) Permanently enhance the corridor streetscape (b) Support the retention of existing businesses and the attraction of new businesses (c) Increase patronage to corridor businesses (d) Deter corridor vacancies (e) Spur new corridor investment	40
<b>Total Points</b>	<b>100</b>



# Step-by-Step Overview

---



## Step 1: Submit an Online Application

---

To apply, applicants must submit an online application via the City of Sacramento's [Submittable platform](#) no later than **August 16 30, 2024 by 4 p.m. PDT.**

### Required Application Components:

---

1. Applicant contact information
2. Property information
3. A written narrative describing the proposed improvements, how such improvements will benefit the Northgate Boulevard commercial corridor, and why the City should select the applicant for a grant award
4. A preliminary cost estimate, including a line-item breakdown for labor, materials, design costs, and any other expenses
5. Price estimates/quotes from licensed contractors
6. A preliminary timeline for completion
7. High quality “before” photographs documenting the property and the locations where the proposed improvements are to be performed
8. Disclosure if applied for other City of Sacramento grants within the last five calendar years
9. Disclosure of any ongoing code enforcement violations or legal proceedings related to the property
10. Self-attestation that applicant operates a retail or service establishment in a building with street frontage located on Northgate Boulevard
11. Self-attestation that business qualifies as a for-profit business
12. Self-attestation that business is independently owned and operated
13. Self-attestation that business is locally owned and operated
14. Self-attestation that business has 100 or fewer employees or earns \$18 million or less in average annual gross receipts over the last three tax years
15. If a tenant is the applicant:
  - (a) Property owner’s written consent approving of proposed improvements
  - (b) A copy of a current lease showing a minimum of three years remaining or property owner’s written assurance of a lease extension for at least three years

### Optional Application Components:

---

16. If available, attach any preliminary renderings, design, or construction plans
17. If known, contact information of contractors, architects, engineers,

designers, or project managers to be involved

#### 18. Applicant demographic information



### Step 2: Attend an Application Review Meeting

---

The City will review applications based on the prioritization criteria and at the close of each round invite the highest scoring applicants to participate in an application review meeting. At the meeting, applicants will talk with representatives from various city departments depending on the proposed improvements. The purpose of the meeting is to review the improvements and discuss the required approval processes necessary.



### Step 3: Execute a Grant Agreement

---

Based on the application review meeting, if all parties agree to proceed, the applicant must execute a grant agreement with the City.



### Step 4: Seek Planning Approval

---

The grantee must work with the Planning Division to obtain all applicable Planning approvals.



### Step 5: Seek Building Approval

---

Once the grantee obtains all applicable Planning approvals, the grantee must work with the Building Division to obtain all applicable Building approvals.



### Step 6: Complete Improvements

---

After receiving all required approvals, permits, and submitting copies of executed contractor agreements as applicable, the grantee may commence construction. The grantee must complete the improvements within 12 months from grant agreement execution.



### Step 7: Participate in Closeout Process

---

Upon completing the improvements, the grantee must participate in a closeout process, which includes an onsite inspection.

Once deemed satisfactory, the grantee must submit supporting documentation such as itemized receipts and proof of payment to vendors and contractors as applicable. To obtain the final 10% payment, the supporting documentation must demonstrate:

1. Spenddown of previous payments
2. Need for final payment (10% of grant award)



## Step 8: Maintain Improvements

---

The grantee must maintain improvements, at their own expense, for at least two years after the grant is complete.

## Miscellaneous

---

### Amendments

The City reserves the right to revise or amend any part of this Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) by issuing an addendum up to the due date/time for submittal. If necessary due to the revisions or amendments, the due date for applications may be postponed.

### Public Records

All applications and application materials are public records. All information received from an applicant, whether received in connection with a grant application or in connection with any grant funded activities performed, will be disclosed upon receipt of a request for disclosure pursuant to the California Public Records Act. Application scores may also be disclosed. The City reserves the right to use application materials as demonstration examples in future workshops.

### Rejection of Applications

The City of Sacramento may, at its sole discretion, determine not to award any grant in response to this request or to negotiate with any grantee in any manner necessary to serve the best interests of the City. No applicant shall receive any compensation for preparing any grant application.