



Façade Grant Program Guidelines (Fiscal Year 2025-26)

The City of Alameda's (City) Façade Grant Program (Program) provides 50/50 matching grants to business and property owners for the completion of façade improvements on buildings in the City. This document contains information about grant amounts, eligibility, evaluation criteria, and other Program guidelines. Please contact city staff at 510-747-6857 or facadegrant@alamedaca.gov with any questions.

GRANT FUNDING

The Program provides 50/50 matching grants with a maximum grant of **\$20,000** for facade improvements such as signage, awnings, paint and restoration/refurbishment of architectural elements such as transom windows, cornices, trim and other architectural details. A detailed list of eligible façade improvements is on pg. 2.

The maximum grant amount is 50% of the grantee's costs up to \$20,000. For example, to receive a \$20,000 grant, the total cost of the eligible changes must be at least \$40,000.

Grantees may request less than the maximum amount of the grant



ELIGIBILITY

Location, Business and Property Type: The following business/properties within the City locations described below are eligible to participate in the Program:

- Retail, restaurant, theater, or cultural businesses.
- Commercial properties that include retail, restaurant, theaters, or cultural businesses.
- Services* or other commercial businesses/property types (such as offices) are considered on a case-by-case basis, so long as the business or property is located within one of the following City areas:
 - Webster Street Business District.
 - Downtown Alameda Business District.
 - An Historic Station area, including: Grand, Mastick, Bay, South High St., Chestnut, Morton, Versailles, Willow, Fifth Street, Caroline, High Street North and Stanton.
 - A Gateway into the City, including: Webster Tube, Park Street Bridge, Fruitvale Bridge, High Street Bridge and the Doolittle Drive entrance area. The business property must have a front or side façade that is visible from one of the above gateways.
 - Naval Air Station Historic District.

Shopping centers and business parks are not eligible to participate in the Program.

*Service businesses include, among others: personal and pet care services (barber shops, beauty salons, nail salons, pet grooming, etc.), repair services (auto, furniture, electronics, etc.), laundry and dry-cleaning services, caterers, hotels, and fitness centers.

Improvements: Improvements eligible to be made with Program funds must enhance or restore the physical condition or appearance of the building. Types of eligible improvements include, but are not limited to:

- Painting;
- New, or refurbishment of existing, awnings;
- New signs, and/or replacement, retrofit, or restoration of legacy signs;
- Sign removal;
- Constructed outdoor eating areas;**
- Window and/or door replacement;
- Replacement or refurbishment of non-structural materials/features such as cornice bands, parapets and similar architectural features; and
- Rehabilitation of historic features.
- Security improvements such as bollards, sliding metal gates, security lighting and



security cameras, etc.

- ****Parklets are not eligible at this time.**

➤ Improvements must comply with:

- All City laws, including its building code, sign regulations and zoning ordinances.
- For properties located in the Webster Street Business District, the Webster Street Design Guidelines: <https://www.alamedaca.gov/Departments/Planning-Building-and-Transportation/Planning-Division/Guidelines>
- City Design Review requirements.

Applications will not be accepted for improvements that have already been completed or commenced.

Applicant: A Program application may be submitted by an owner or tenant for an eligible project meeting the requirements described above. If the applicant is a tenant, the owner must also sign the Program application.

Tenants and owners may apply for separate grants for the same building and/or storefront.

Frequency: Tenants and owners are considered separately in connection with grant applications.

- Owners: Owners may be eligible to apply for and receive one façade grant every five (5) years on any individual building.
- Tenants: Tenants may be eligible to apply for and receive one façade grant every five (5) years on any individual storefront. A new tenant at a particular address may apply for a new façade grant, as long as the ownership of the business has changed.



APPLICATION PROCESS

- Program applications are available at (i) City Hall West, Economic Development Division, 950 West Mall Square, Suite 205, Alameda, CA 94501 (by appointment – please contact facadegrant@alamedaca.gov or 510-747-6857), (ii) the business offices of West Alameda Business Association and Downtown Alameda Business Association, and (iii) online at <http://alamedaca.gov/business/facade-grant-program>.
- See the Program application for a step-by-step summary of the application process including a detailed checklist of required materials.
- Prior to formally submitting an application, an applicant must meet with Economic Development staff to discuss the project.

REVIEW PROCESS

Application Deadlines: The two application deadlines for the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Program are:

- January 12, 2026
 - April 9, 2026
- Expedited application review may be available for time-sensitive projects. Contact Economic Development staff for more information on expedited review.

Façade Grant Committee Review: A committee consisting of the representatives of the Downtown, West and Greater Alameda Business Associations, and City staff from the Economic Development and Planning Divisions will review the application.

In response to the application, the committee may:

- Approve,
- Disapprove
- Approve with conditions. If approved with conditions, the committee may request that the grantee make specific changes to the proposed improvements.

Evaluation Criteria: Program applications will be reviewed and evaluated based on the criteria listed below. Proposed improvements that meet the criteria below will be most competitive for grant funding.

- Visually improves storefronts and streetscapes;
- Enhances prominent business locations;
- Fills a previously vacant storefront; and



- Rehabilitates or replaces historic features.

NOTIFICATION AND NEXT STEPS

Notification: After the committee review is completed, Program applicants will be notified via email of the committee's decision. If an address has been provided by the applicant, the committee decision will also be mailed.

Documents: Applicants awarded a Program grant will receive the following documents as part of the notification process:

- **Final Scope of Work:** A final Scope of Work (SOW) summarizing the approved improvements will be provided. If the application was approved with conditions, the SOW will reflect those conditions/changes. The final SOW will be attached to and made a part of the application.
- **Notification Letter:** An official letter confirming your grant award and amount.
- **Acceptance Form:** Grantees must initial and sign the grant terms and conditions.

Project Work: Applicants must adhere to work detailed in the final SOW. Any changes must be approved by the committee.

- **Project Completion:** Grantee **must** complete the project in substantial conformance with the final SOW.
- **Project Changes:** Any changes made to the final SOW after the application is approved and the final SOW delivered must be reviewed and approved in writing by the committee (for example, changes to a paint or awning color, sign or architectural design, material choices, etc.). Any change to the final SOW not approved in advance and in writing by the Program committee will not be funded.

Required Forms: The grantee will be required to sign and deliver to façade grant staff at City Hall West, 950 West Mall Square, Suite 205 hard copies of the following within 2 weeks of the date the Program award is granted:

- Acceptance form which details the terms and conditions associated with the grant;
- W-9 form which enables the City to process and provide your grant funding; and
- A copy of a valid City Business License.

PERMITS AND DESIGN REVIEW



Permits: All necessary planning, building, encroachment and other permits must be secured before construction is initiated.

- **Planning and Building Permits** can be obtained from the City of Alameda Permit Center, which can be accessed virtually at www.alamedaca.gov/permitcenter. The physical Permit Center on the 1st floor at City Hall (2263 Santa Clara Avenue) will be available for a limited number of daily appointments for information only. To make an appointment or to process an application, please visit www.alamedaca.gov/permitcenter.
- **Encroachment Permits** are required for any project that permanently or temporarily encroaches on the public right of way, including temporary construction that requires workers, materials and/or scaffolding to be in the city sidewalk. This includes work on doors, windows, awnings, painting, signs and outdoor eating areas. Please contact PWpermits@alamedaca.gov with any questions and/or to obtain an encroachment permit.

Deadline to Complete Work: The Program work must be completed within **six (6) months** of the acceptance of terms and conditions.

Reimbursement: After the proposed improvements are completed and final permits have been issued (if applicable), the grantee must submit the following to façade grant staff at City Hall West, 950 West Mall Square, Suite 205 or facadegrant@alamedaca.gov to receive reimbursement:

- Invoice(s) for work completed;
- Proof of payment for all work; and
- It is also recommended (but not required), that grantee obtain signed lien releases, in a form compliant with law.

Conditions to Reimbursement:

- New businesses **must be open** and **final permits must be issued** before reimbursement with Program funds.
- Grants are processed in the normal City accounts payable cycle of net 30 days.
- Grantee must have all City permits and fee obligations paid prior to reimbursement with Program funds.

GENERAL

- Contracts for improvements must be between the façade grantee and the contractor.
- The Program is subject to all applicable conflict of interest rules and regulations.
- The Program and the funding of any grants are subject to and conditioned on



approval of the funding by the City Council for each fiscal year.