

# THE ALISAL VIBRANCY PLAN (AVP) COMMERCIAL FAÇADE PILOT PROGRAM



## PROGRAM INTRODUCTION

The Alisal Vibrancy Plan (AVP) Commercial Façade Pilot Program is designed to help local business and property owners improve the storefront appearance along the commercial corridors within E. Alisal Street, E. Market Street, Sanborn Road and Williams Road between E. Alisal Street and Bardin Road. To encourage economic vitality and commercial viability of storefront businesses. The program funding has the potential to be a catalytic investment in the neighborhood and increase foot traffic in the business corridors of the E. Alisal and help improve the perception of Alisal's business corridors and revitalize the district with simple improvements like paint and signage.

The objective of the Alisal Vibrancy Plan (AVP) Commercial Façade Pilot Program is to encourage the retention of existing businesses, increasing property values, tenant stability, and lease rates for commercial properties. The investment in storefronts has a transformative impact on the appearance, economic vitality, and community pride of a neighborhood or commercial district. The enhancement of storefronts is an opportunity to express the unique character of the neighborhood and invite a positive impression.

The Alisal Vibrancy Plan (AVP) Commercial Façade Pilot Program will be awarded on a first come, first served basis to eligible applicants whose projects meet the façade improvement eligibility criteria described below. Projects may include certain exterior façade improvements to first floor commercial storefront retail, restaurants, or service businesses.

## PROGRAM GOALS

### District Identity Goals

The goals for the façade improvement program are to strengthen the perceived identity of the neighborhood by:

- **Strengthening Authentic Character:** Improvements should allow individuality and cultural expression that genuinely reflects the tenants and the neighborhood identity. It is important that the unique, authentic, non-generic character of the Alisal is retained and enhanced. Design guidelines presented in this chapter provide flexibility for expression.
- **Making Community Pride more Visible:** A well-maintained and aesthetically pleasing environment can instill a sense of pride among residents. Community members are more likely to engage in the upkeep of their surroundings when they see positive changes occurring.
- **Enhancing Aesthetics:** One of the primary goals is to improve the visual appeal of buildings. This can involve repairs, repainting, and architectural enhancements that contribute to a more attractive streetscape. Many of the buildings are aging and investment in Façade improvements are an opportunity to express district identity.

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## Business Improvement Goals

There are also business improvement goals for the façade improvement program, including:

- **Stimulating Economic Development:** A well-maintained and visually appealing commercial district can attract more customers and businesses. As a result, a façade improvement program can stimulate economic development by making the area more desirable for investment and commerce.
- **Increasing Business Attraction and Retention:** A visually appealing storefront can attract customers and help businesses thrive. Façade improvements can contribute to the retention of existing businesses and attract new ones.
- **Increasing in Property Values:** The improvement of building Façades can contribute to an overall increase in property values in a community. This is beneficial for property owners and can lead to a positive economic impact for the entire neighborhood.

## Safety Goals

The façade improvement program can also address more practical matters, such as:

- **Public Safety:** Improving the visibility and condition of building façades can contribute to public safety by creating well-lit and well-maintained spaces. This can deter criminal activity and enhance the overall sense of security.
- **Compliance with Codes and Standards:** Façade improvement programs are an opportunity for building owners to bring their properties into compliance with current building codes and safety standards. Minor improvements can be made without more extensive compliance, though the scope of improvement should include necessary safety requirements.
- **Equity:** The goal is to make the program as accessible to all businesses in need as possible.

## PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY AND FUNDING

### Applicable Business Corridors

The Pilot Program will provide financial assistance for enhancing the physical appearance of storefronts along the corridors within the Alisal along E. Alisal Street, E. Market Street, Sanborn Road and Williams Rd between E. Alisal and Bardin Rd. The collective improvement of these business corridors will improve the economic vitality of Alisal Vibrancy Plan area.

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Eligible Commercial Corridors

October 2019  
Source: City of Salinas, Planning Center  
Office of the Planner, E&S  
0 0.5 1.0 Miles

## Applicant Eligibility

Applicants must meet the following eligibility criteria:

1. A commercial storefront property in the Alisal Vibrancy Plan Area serving a retail use, food service use, or personal service use (*Service businesses may include 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*); and
2. The applicant is a City of Salinas small business owner or City of Salinas commercial property owner.

The business/tenant must have a City of Salinas business license for at least 1-year and there must be no active violations on the building and/or business.

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## Eligible Improvements

Program funds are reserved for the improvement of building exteriors rather than simple routine maintenance. Grant proceeds must be used for labor and materials directly related to the façade improvements. The types of improvements that will be considered for the program include:

- Removal of gates, bars, or metal covering windows.
- Anti-graffiti window coating
- Security lighting
- Exterior mandatory Title 24 energy upgrades
- Exterior painting (including public art/ murals)
- Exterior wall repair (including siding, new elements, and architectural details)
- Signage removal, repair, or replacement
- Repair, replacement, or installation of awnings, windows, doors.
- Installation of new entry doors that meet ADA accessibility requirements.
- Installation of display windows

## Ineligible Improvements

- Tools may not be purchased with grant funds, but tool rental is allowable.
- Vacant lot improvements are ineligible for the façade improvement program.
- Parking lot improvements are ineligible for the façade improvement program.

## Funding

The Community Development Department appropriated \$600,000 from the Alisal Vibrancy Plan Implementation budget for pilot program. The Façade Improvement Program incentivizes existing business and property owners with improvements to their tenant building storefronts and is a tool to support the improvement of vacant commercial spaces by improving curb appeal. The program includes the following element:

- **Façade Improvements:** The E. Alisal Corridor Façade Improvements Pilot Program will provide micro-grants up to \$7,500 or a forgivable loan of up to \$20,000, see table 1.

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**Table 1: Façade Improvement Tiers**

Tiers	Type of Façade Improvements	Maximum Amount
<b>Reimbursable Micro-grant</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City permit fees (covered upfront with grant)</li> <li>• <b>Non-Architectural Improvements:</b> Awnings, parapets, new signs, sign removal, storefront window displays, Painting (including public art/mural)</li> </ul>	<b>Up to \$7,500</b>
<b>Forgivable Loan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City permit fees (covered upfront with loan)</li> <li>• Improvements eligible in micro-grant tier, and</li> <li>• <b>Architectural improvements:</b> Window or door refurbishment / replacement, historic features</li> </ul>	<b>Up to \$20,000</b>

## Reimbursement

### Micro-Grant

Façade Improvements micro-grants are reimbursable (with the exception of costs incurred by the city permit fees). Grant funds will be issued to Grantees through reimbursement based upon an approved scope of work, including cost estimate(s), and issued City permit(s), if required, associated with each grant application approved. Grantees will need to be prepared to cover any and all façade improvement costs that exceed the \$7,500 being reimbursed by the City for the agreed upon grant amount.

**The maximum grant value will not exceed \$7,500.**

### Forgivable Loan

Acceptance of the forgivable loan mandates the business to remain open, operational, and in working condition at the approved location for at least three (3) years. If the business does not remain open, operational and in the same location, the business or property owner will be responsible for repayment of the forgivable loan amount and will be subject to a 33.3% discount per year. In other words, a business that fails to remain open after year one, must repay 66.6% of the forgivable loan; after year 2, the business must repay 33.3% of the forgivable loan; after year 3, the business is no longer financially obligated to repay its debt.

Loan recipients are required to enter into an agreement with the City to maintain the improvements for an ongoing consistent basis of three years. The Forgivable Loan and Maintenance Agreement is transferable should there be a change of ownership or business. The property owner or new tenants would be required to assume the loan and maintenance agreements for the remaining term. The loan recipient shall be held

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responsible for Program requirements until evidence of new business ownership and a new fully executed Forgivable Loan and Maintenance Agreement is filed with the City.

**The maximum forgivable loan value will not exceed \$20,000.**

## APPLICATION AND REVIEW PROCESS

The Façade Improvements Grant Pilot Program is a limited period program. Grants will be awarded on a first come, first served basis to eligible applicants whose projects meet the façade improvement eligibility criteria. Applications will be accepted through December XX, XXXX (or until grant funds are exhausted).

- 1) **Review Program guidelines.** Review the guidelines and application form, available online at [www.CityofSalinas.org](http://www.CityofSalinas.org), to understand the program goals, eligibility criteria, and process.
- 2) **Submit a completed application.** Property owner and/or business owner must submit the following to the City staff. The application will include:
  - Applicant information, site information, and an acknowledgement / signature;
  - If applicant is a tenant, application must include the property owner's signature;
  - Project information and scope of work details;
  - Vendor/contractor estimates;
  - Photos or drawings of existing conditions.
  - Copy of the applicant's business license.
  - Form W-9 (current within the last year)
  - Additional attachments as identified in the checklist of items to be included for the architectural services.
  - Estimates must reflect [California prevailing wage requirements \(Prevailing Wage FAQ\)](#).
- 3) **City staff will review applications.** A committee of internal staff will review applications and follow up with applicants to discuss the scope of work. Staff may approve, disapprove, or approve with conditions. Staff will advise grantees on the permitting requirements once review is complete. Program applications will be reviewed on a first come, first serve basis, and evaluated based on the fulfillment of the program goals.
- 4) **Selection of grantees and contract.** Once the grant is awarded, the grantee must enter into an agreement with the City of Salinas to carry out the work as described in the final approved scope of work.
- 5) **Grantee to secure necessary Permits.** If planning or building approval is required, the grantee is responsible for submitting project plans to the respective divisions. When a planning permit is required, project plans must be prepared by a licensed architect. When a building permit is required, plans must meet all Code requirements through the Building Division. [See Table 2: Façade Improvement Permit Matrix](#) for additional details on permits required.
- 6) **Complete the work.** After receiving all required approvals and permits, the grantee shall complete the improvements within six (6) months or within the timeline designated within

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the agreement. The applicant is responsible for contacting City staff to request an extension if necessary (an extension is not guaranteed). All permits must have completed final inspections prior to reimbursement.

- 7) **Standard reimbursement request process.** Grantee must submit all documentation as required within 30- days of project completion or planning/building permit approval. Documents for reimbursement include proof of payment, such as invoices and receipts. The request for reimbursement will need to include an itemized list of all expenses and corresponding receipts or proof of payment as documentation for any and all expenses and must follow the schedule outlined in the Grant contract.

## PREVAILING WAGE

Use of public funds may trigger [prevailing wage](#) requirements per the [California Department of Industrial Relations \(DIR\)](#). Prevailing Wage is the basic hourly rate paid on public works projects to a majority of workers engaged in a particular craft, classification or type of work within the locality and in the nearest labor market area (if a majority of such workers are paid at a single rate).

Prevailing wages shall be paid when the total construction cost is \$15,000 or more. Where the total project cost is \$15,000 or more, all estimates and payments for construction and installation of façade improvements shall include prevailing wages and shall otherwise comply with the provisions of Sections 1773.8, 1775, 1776, 1777.5, 1777.6 and 1813 of the California Labor Code and all other applicable laws and regulations with respect to prevailing wages.

Where prevailing wage is triggered, in accordance with Labor Code section 1720 et seq., prevailing wages shall be paid for all façade improvements; use of volunteer labor is not allowed. California [wage schedules](#) are available from DIR. Participants in the program are responsible for ensuring that the improvements are in compliance with the Prevailing Wage Law, and all projects are registered with the Department of Industrial Relations.

[Frequently Asked Questions – Prevailing Wage \(dir.ca.gov\)](#)

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