

**CITY OF HAWAIIAN GARDENS  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

**SIGN PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

**November 2016**

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**I. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The intent of the Commercial Sign Program is to improve the visual quality of commercial buildings, present an appealing image to potential customers, tenant and investors, and remove blighted conditions within the community. A well designed and attractive sign can increase customer traffic and business awareness. The City of Hawaiian Gardens through the Community Development Department (CDD) is offering a rebate to business owners, churches, nonprofit organizations, and civic groups to improve the overall appearance of commercial signs by replacing or updating them.

The Program will assist small (20 employees or less), independent, and family owned businesses that have a single operation, churches, nonprofit organizations, and civic groups, all which have been in the City for one (1) year. Assistance will be provided to those that do not have a permanent business sign or whose sign is dilapidated or weathered. The Program will also offer assistance with landscaping and painting of the exterior of the building.

Purpose of the Program will be to assist applicants with building identification signs only. Assistance will not be provided with temporary signs: banners, flags, window signs or any other signs that are temporary in nature.

Franchises and large corporations will not be assisted under this Program.

**II. PROGRAM COMPONENTS:**

The City of Hawaiian Gardens recognizes the importance of an attractive signage for the success of individual business.

The City's rebate program for signs will help improve the visual quality of commercial buildings and remove blighted conditions within the community.

The objectives of the Sign Program include:

- Eliminate outdated signage
- Update existing signage
- Enhance and stimulate economic activity growth in the area
- Create positive retail environment
- Promote business pride and ownership

### **III. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE:**

The City offers business owners a 75% rebate to cover the cost of replacing or removing a business sign. The business owner is responsible to cover difference of 25%. A maximum of \$5,000.00 of financial assistance will be made available to the applicant, one sign per business.

Funds will be made available on a "First Come, First Served" basis. Funding for this program will be allocated from City's general fund.

#### **3. General Requirements:**

- a. The Rebate Program is offered to small (20 employees or less), independent, family-owned businesses that have a single location. The Program is also offered to churches, nonprofit organizations, and civic groups.
- b. Franchises and large corporations with multiple operations in various locations will not be assisted under the Rebate Program.
- c. For applicants with code violation(s), the CDD will identify the code violations and the applicant will enter into an agreement with the understanding that the code violation(s) must be resolved before assistance is provided.
- d. Purpose of the Programs will be to assist applicants with building identification signs.

- e. The business owner must be current on all real and personal property taxes with the City of Hawaiian Gardens.
- f. Corner business properties can be eligible for two (2) signs through the City's Sign Program.
- g. In the public interest, employees, officials, or consultants of the City of Hawaiian Gardens who exercise any decision-making function or responsibility in connection with the administration of the Sign Program shall not be eligible for assistance under the program. However, City officials or employees otherwise eligible and not directly involved in the operational responsibility of the Sign Program may be granted assistance in accordance with the rules, procedures and regulations of the program.

**IV. PROGRAM APPROACH:**

- a. Upon receipt of the completed Sign application, the applicant will be entered into a first come first serve list.
- b. The City staff will visit the applicant's property and prepare a Work Write-Up which enumerates the type of sign work that will be needed.
- d. Photographs shall be taken of the existing conditions of the business property.
- e. The project will then be presented to CDD Staff for review and authorization to proceed. The City may reduce the amount of funding for the project depending on the ability of the proposed project to meet Program goals and objectives.
- f. The Work Write-Up will be reviewed with the applicant and work schedule will be discussed.
- h. The cost of the project is paid for 75% of the cost up to a maximum of \$5,000.00 by the City. Any amount in excess of \$5,000.00 is the responsibility of the applicant and not to be paid by the City.

- i. The applicant must execute all required documents, prior to initiating sign installation.
- j. For guidance on City approved signs or prohibited signs, refer to the City's Municipal Code 18.90.050.A and 18.90.050.D

## **V. CONTRACTOR REQUIREMENTS**

1. The City of Hawaiian Gardens, as a public entity, is required to fund projects to the lowest responsible bidder. In order to expedite the funding process, the City will circulate a Request for Proposals (RFP) and make available a single contractor for the entire year. This contractor will then be required to engage into a contract to perform the scope of work or services with the applicant.
  - i. The City of Hawaiian Gardens will not be part of the contract, but will approve the scope of work and monitor the construction.
  - ii. The contractor will submit both the estimate and the invoice directly to the City. A copy will be provided to the participant.
  - iii. The City will pay the contractor directly for work performed. Any expenses that exceed the grant amount will be the responsibility of the applicant.
  - iv. A progress payment or final payment will be made after staff verifies that the work has been completed and after the applicant completes a program survey to determine applicant's level of satisfaction with the services received under the program.
  - v. Upon completion of all work, staff will verify that all permits have been properly processed, all labor and/or material lien releases have been obtained, and post-work photographs of the work completed have been taken.
  - vi. Payment for the work completed will not be issued until a Notice of Satisfaction is signed by the applicant, certifying that all work completed is satisfactory.

- vii. The City of Hawaiian Gardens will not accept bids from contractors who are related to the property owner or the business owner/applicant.

**VI. PROJECT BID PROCESS:**

1. In cases where the City selected contractor is unable to perform its contractual duties, the City will go out to bid to meet program guidelines and obtain a minimum of (3) three qualified contractors. The City will then select the lowest responsible bidder.
2. A contractor bid packet will be prepared containing the Scope of Work and Work Specifications and mailed/faxed to a minimum of (3) three qualified contractors. Bids submitted after the deadline date will not be accepted.
3. Bids can be accepted after the deadline date only when the minimum number of bids are not received.
4. Staff may provide to the applicant a list of contractors who have been pre-qualified to bid the work for this program. Applicant can select contractors from the list, or may request bids from any contractor who meets the following requirements of eligibility.
  - viii. A valid State Contractor License in the proper category and in good standing.
  - ix. Contractor must have public liability and property damage insurance.
  - x. Contractor must have City of Hawaiian Gardens Business License.
  - xi. Staff will clear contractor with State License Board and County Contract Compliance Office as required.
  - xii. The applicant(s) and/or contractor(s) must verify with Planning and/or Building and Safety Departments what rehabilitation work requires permits and/or inspections. Proper permits will be required prior to commencement of work. Contractors who do not obtain all required permits before starting a job will be barred from bidding future projects.

5. If a project bid comes in higher amount, the applicant will be responsible to pay the difference out of pocket before construction begins; a cashier check or money order payable to the contractor and will kept by the City until the project is completed.
6. In cases where the applicant elects not to accept the lowest bid, the applicant is responsible for funding the amount that exceeds the lowest bid. The property owner will need to pay the additional funds before construction begins.

## **VII. APPEAL PROCEDURES:**

In the event that a problem arises between the City staff and an applicant, and it cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the applicant, then the following process shall be available to resolve such problem:

1. The applicant may appeal in writing to the City Council within 10 days following written notification from the staff that a problem has been identified that will materially affect the applicant's application.
2. The applicant shall be allowed to present all pertinent facts to the City Council that may have a hearing on the particular issue to be resolved.
3. The decision of the City Council shall be final unless appealed to the City Council.

## **VIII. PROGRAM MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

All elements of the Sign Program will be monitored and evaluated statistically and programmatically.

In order to provide the City with information on the progress of the program, basic data will be maintained on the number of applications received, activities undertaken, applications approved and payments made, and any other relevant data required by the City. A regular monthly report will be provided to Council which includes financial balances and disposition of all applications.

A periodic evaluation will be conducted. Participating applicants, contractors and Council members will be interviewed to determine the following:

1. Has the program benefited property owners, tenants, and the neighborhood in general, and has it met the established goals and objectives?
2. What problem areas exist, if any, and how should the program be modified to address identified problems?
3. Has the funding level and other financial restrictions impeded the realization of the program goals and objectives?
4. The Community Development Director and/or City Manager are authorized to make minor modifications to the program guidelines, if such changes shall substantially achieve the same results as would strict compliance with the guidelines. The City of Hawaiian Gardens Council shall be notified in writing of any program changes within 15 days. Any member of the City Council may require a review of any changes.