



## **CITY OF STEPHENVILLE HOME IMPROVEMENT INCENTIVE PROGRAM**

The following policy applies to the Home Improvement Incentive Program of the Development Services Department.

The purpose of the Home Improvement Incentive Program is to encourage homeowners to make improvements to single-family residential properties. Goals include preventing blight, improving property values, inspiring surrounding homeowners to reinvest, and increasing the quality of life for the citizens of Stephenville neighborhoods.

The minimum improvement value to qualify under the Home Improvement Incentive Program is \$20,000.

### **Qualifying projects will be incentivized as follows:**

1. 5% rebate on qualifying home improvement costs incurred under approved projects. The maximum rebate is \$5,000 per project.
2. A waiver of residential remodel building permit fees.
3. After completion of the project and a city inspection, the city will repair or replace sidewalks in public right-of-ways for participating properties based on the assessed condition of the existing sidewalk.

### **GENERAL QUALIFYING REQUIREMENTS**

1. The property must not exceed a total value of \$200,000.
2. The existing structure must be a minimum of 20 years old.
3. The minimum investment to be considered for this program is \$20,000. At least \$10,000 of the project cost must be related to exterior remodeling improvements of single-family detached homes.
4. The project must be completed within 12 months of approval as determined by the final inspection of the project. The owner is responsible for requesting the final inspection.
5. All applications must be received and approved prior to any work being started. Any improvements started before the application has been received and approved will be declared ineligible to receive any benefit from this program.
6. Applicant must be willing to allow for an initial inspection of property by a city inspector at the conclusion of the project and provide an itemized list and related costs for all repairs to be completed through the project. The city reserves the right to deny the inclusion of any repair

when related costs are deemed unreasonable or the repair is not completed in a workmanlike manner. The city reserves the right to deny program participation/or the issuance of a rebate if life-safety violations exist that were not be brought into compliance as part of the project.

7. Permits must be obtained from the City of Stephenville Building Inspection Department. Permit fees will be waived for approved projects. All construction must comply with all current city requirements and all permits must be obtained in order to receive the rebate.
8. If approved, the rebate will only be paid to the applicant responsible for the improvements as stated under Applicant Information upon FULL completion of the agreed upon project. The rebate shall be paid in a lump sum to the applicant only. Rebates will not be split between parties.
9. At the time of application, the applicant's property must be free of nuisance code violations (such as, but not limited to, high grass, trash, improper storage, etc.). Such requirement does not apply to minimum housing deficiencies (such as, but not limited to, rotting wood, cracking or peeling paint, broken windows, etc.) that will be corrected as a result of the project. Participation in this program does not afford applicants additional time to comply with existing nuisance code violations.
10. The applicant must be in good standing with mortgage holders and current on ad valorem property taxes, utility payments, and judgements. The property must be free and clear of any liens.
11. All applicants are encouraged to select contractors whose businesses are located in Stephenville and registered with the city. Receipts will be required in order to receive the rebate. It is the homeowner's responsibility to do their own due diligence in determining the right contractor for their project.
12. All incentives will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis and subject to fund availability.
13. City staff will not consider applications that are incomplete and do not comply with program policies. Applications must be submitted to the Development Services Department.

#### **DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS**

1. A printed copy of the most recent Erath County Appraisal District's appraised value of the property to be improved.
2. A title search indicating ownership.
3. Proof that the owner is current on property taxes and there are no liens on the property other than the first mortgage.
4. Proof that the homeowner is current on the homeowner's insurance for the property as evidenced by a receipt or documentation showing the policy has been paid or is current on scheduled payments.
5. Line-item bid estimate(s) provided by a licensed contractor who will perform the improvements.

6. Applicant must be the owner of the property and a U.S. citizen or permanent resident with a social security card and a State-issued identification card or driver's license.

#### **ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

1. Receipt of the application does not commit the city to approve the application for the program or to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the application. The award of any rebate is at the sole discretion of the City of Stephenville. The program may be suspended or terminated at any time regardless of availability of funds or pending applications on file.
2. No application shall be accepted or rebate awarded that would constitute a conflict of interest. Members of the Stephenville City Council, city employees, or are ineligible for the receipt of benefits from this rebate program.
3. Applicants will be limited to three incentive agreements per calendar year, although multiple elements may be included in a single agreement. Only one application will be accepted per household.
4. All applications and information contained therein are subject to disclosure pursuant to the Texas Public Information Act.

#### **QUALIFYING IMPROVEMENTS**

1. Replace existing windows with energy efficient windows
  - a. Must replace minimum of 50% of total windows in home to qualify
  - b. If not replacing all windows, those windows visible from the street must be replaced to qualify.
2. Replace exterior doors, including garage door
3. Replace soffit and/or fascia
  - a. Must replace with fiber-cement material such as Hardiplank
  - b. Must replace a minimum of 50% to qualify
4. Replace entire driveway with concrete to city specifications, if driveway is located at the front of the house.
5. Replace or repair fence to city specifications. Must replace or repair a minimum of 50% of the total linear feet of fencing to qualify.
6. Replace siding using fiber-cement material such as Hardiplank. Must replace a minimum of 50% of the total siding area to qualify.
7. Add or repair garage, conforming to all City specifications
8. Repaint house
  - a. Color must be consistent with neighborhood

- b. Entire house surface (main living structure) must be painted to qualify
9. Install or replace front gutters with color matching or complimentary to the paint color of the house.
  10. Add or repair front porch, conforming to city specifications
  11. Foundation repair
    - a. Foundation repair cannot be the only approved improvement to the property.
    - b. Owner must secure a foundation assessment and repair report, at the owner's expense, from a structural engineer certified in the State of Texas that is dated no longer than 90 days from the date of the application for this program.
    - c. To be considered for eligibility, the foundation repair component of the application must conform entirely to the assessment and repair document prepared by a structural engineer.
  12. Removal of accessory buildings
    - a. Removal of accessory buildings (detached garage, storage shed, etc.) cannot be the only approved improvement to the property.
    - b. Only removal will be considered for eligibility under this program. Repair or renovation is not eligible.
    - c. Removal must include both demolition and hauling of demolished materials to a landfill, following the rules and policies of the destination landfill.
  13. Re-shingle roof with 30-year shingles. Must replace a minimum of 50% of the total roof area to comply.
  14. Other improvements that result in aesthetic improvements and/or the repair/correction of housing deficiencies may also be approved by city staff.