



ReStore Facade and Tenant Improvement Program

[Submit Application Here](#)

The ReStore Facade and Tenant Improvement Program, funded through the Reno Redevelopment Agency (RDA), is designed to stimulate economic development and revitalize downtown and surrounding districts within designated Redevelopment Areas 1 and 2 ([Area Map](#)). This matching reimbursement program supports eligible property owners and tenants in improving and activating vacant or underutilized commercial storefronts, restoring historically significant facades, and launching or expanding public-facing businesses that contribute to a diverse and thriving downtown and neighboring districts.

To encourage investment and improvements to vacant and underutilized storefronts, the Reno Redevelopment Agency will reimburse applicants for 50% of the eligible costs up to a maximum award of \$50,000 for exterior façade improvements, and up to \$50,000 for interior tenant improvement projects. Matching funds for façade and tenant improvements can be combined up to a total of no more than \$99,999.00 in reimbursement per storefront. Projects that are on the National Register of Historic Places or the Nevada State Register of Historic Places are eligible for a \$25,000 bonus.

This program supports the goals of the Reno Redevelopment Agency, including:

- Attracting and retaining a mix of neighborhood-serving and destination retail and services
 - Enhancing walkability and improving the visual character of priority corridors
 - Activating vacant storefronts to reduce blight and encouraging pedestrian activity
 - Promoting adaptive reuse and historic preservation
 - Reducing barriers to entry for emerging entrepreneurs and small businesses
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A. Eligibility Criteria

To qualify, properties must be located within the official boundaries of Redevelopment Area 1 or Area 2 ([Area Map](#)). The applicant may be either the property owner or a tenant with a valid lease, provided both parties submit written acknowledgement and consent.

Eligible commercial uses include:

- Retail shops
- Food and beverage establishments (cafes, restaurants, and bars)
- Personal and professional services (barber shops, salons, studios)
- Fitness and wellness facilities
- Experiential concepts and creative spaces (art, coworking, games)

Ineligible properties and uses include:

- New development or newly constructed spaces (grey shell or white box) are ineligible. However, a tenant may apply for improvements that go beyond the standard landlord delivered finishes.
- Businesses selling primarily tobacco or marijuana, packaged alcohol, firearms, or adult-themed content

Eligible improvements include:

- Exterior signage and awnings
- Exterior façade painting
- Architectural enhancements and materials
- Windows and doors
- Lighting improvements for safety and ambiance
- Landscaping enhancements within the façade area
- Outdoor seating and dining areas
- Accessibility upgrades to comply with ADA requirements
- Preservation and restoration of historical façade elements
- Other improvements that enhance visual appeal and contribute to the vitality of the area
- Architectural and design services (Not to exceed 10% of project costs)
- Interior design and space planning (Not to exceed 10% of project costs)
- Structural modifications including walls, ceilings and flooring
- Plumbing, electrical and HVAC upgrades
- Sewer, grease interceptor and backflow preventer upgrades
- Bathroom installation and expansion
- Lighting improvements for energy efficiency and ambiance
- Installation of permanent fixtures, cabinetry and shelving
- Soundproofing and insulation
- Safety and security enhancements
- Other improvements that contribute to functionality, aesthetics and customer experience

Ineligible improvements include:

- White shell or grey box level of completion of commercial spaces in new developments or new construction
 - Deferred general maintenance or addressing code violations
 - Rent and common area maintenance (CAM) costs
 - Non-fixed equipment and inventory
 - Interior decorations
 - Security, audio/visual, and point of sale equipment
 - Kitchen equipment
 - Roof repair and replacement
 - Broader building improvements above and beyond the storefront area (2nd floor and above)
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B. Program Funding Structure

The ReStore Program offers 50% matching reimbursement for eligible projects:

- Up to \$50,000 for facade improvements
- Up to \$50,000 for tenant interior improvements
- Total potential award: \$99,999 per business space
- Projects that are on the National Register of Historic Places or the Nevada State Register of Historic Places are eligible for a \$25,000 bonus match.
- A single building, parcel, or owner with multiple storefronts may not exceed \$200,000 in cumulative awards across all projects

Please Note: This is a reimbursement-based award. All project costs must be incurred and paid upfront by the applicant. Funds will be reimbursed upon verified project completion and certificate of occupancy (where applicable).

Funding is based on budget availability and applications will be considered on a “first come, first served basis.” Applying does not guarantee funding. Projects will be reviewed on a competitive basis, taking into consideration the quality of the proposed improvements, exceptional design, impact on the streetscape, and potential economic benefits.

All work must be permitted per City of Reno building codes. A building permit shall be submitted within 90 days of the approved program agreement. Work shall be complete within 180 days of an approved building permit, unless an alternative completion deadline is approved and incorporated into the final agreement. Extensions may be granted based on the discretion of the Reno Redevelopment Agency Executive Director.

Failure to complete the project within the time required will result in the agreement being terminated and reimbursement funding will not be provided.

Any work intruding within the public right-of-way, such as awnings, signage and building facades, will also require approval and additional permitting through the Public Works Department.

Applicants must agree to maintain the improvements for a minimum of 5 years from the date of completion and shall be actively marketed for lease at reasonable lease rates for 5 years following the award if they become vacant.

C. Application Process

Applications must be submitted through the online portal via Submittable:

[Submit Application Here](#)

The [Nevada Small Business Development Center](#) provides free one-on-one business advising and planning support. New entrepreneurs and established businesses are strongly encouraged to connect with Nevada SBDC advisors who can assist with business plan development, financial readiness, market analysis, and overall project preparation. Interested applicants can request support directly using this referral link:

[Nevada SBDC Referral](#)

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis while funds remain available. Applications will be reviewed for completeness and compliance with the program criteria. A three-week grace period will be offered to return missing or requested documentation if the application is under consideration.

Applications must include:

- Completed application form
- Photos of the current façade and interior
- Detailed project description, scope of improvements, and current condition
- Renderings or sketches of the finished façade and interior space (if available)
- Summary of the business activities or a business plan detailing the total operating budget and financial capacity to complete improvements, support operations, and market the business
- Lease terms, rent per square foot, TI allowances, and duration
- Construction documents, architectural drawings, and itemized budget
- At least three (3) contractor estimates for any project over \$10,000 (The redevelopment agency executive director reserves the right to allow for two qualified bids at the tenant's request)
- Signed letter by both owner and tenant outlining costs, responsibilities, and grant reimbursement

- Optional – Support letters from neighboring businesses, property owners, and district leadership
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D. Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be reviewed and scored based on a combination of need, impact, readiness, and alignment with program goals. Specific scoring criteria include:

- Impact on the surrounding neighborhood
 - Location in high-priority or high-traffic area
 - Level of vacancy, blight or disrepair being addressed
 - Quality design and comprehensiveness of the proposed improvements
 - Reasonable costs and contractor bids
 - Diversity of business offerings and contribution to neighborhood vibrancy
 - Historic preservation or restoration elements (bonus points)
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E. Award Terms and Conditions

Approved applicants will enter into a Grant Agreement with the City of Reno Redevelopment Agency. The following terms apply:

- Projects must obtain required permits within 90 days of agreement execution
 - Projects must be completed within 180 days of permit issuance. If a Certificate of Occupancy is required for a business, it must be obtained before reimbursement
 - Any substantial deviation from the approved scope may result in revocation of the award
 - Work must be properly permitted and compliant with all applicable codes
 - Businesses must not have active complaints, code violations, or unresolved licensing issues
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F. Reimbursement & Completion Requirements

Upon completion of the improvements, applicants must submit a formal Notice of Completion along with the following to receive reimbursement:

1. Photographs of completed work
2. Invoices, receipts, and proof of payment (bank statements, cleared checks)
3. Statement of work performed, and total cost incurred
4. Final invoice to City for reimbursement (50% of approved cost, not to exceed award)
5. Visual inspection by Reno Redevelopment Agency staff
6. Certificate of Occupancy (if required for business type)

Reimbursements will only be issued after successful review and verification of all completion materials.

G. Reno Redevelopment Agency Information

The Reno Redevelopment Agency was established in 1983 in response to urban decline and shifting economic patterns. As Reno's population grew in the late 20th century, suburban expansion led to the deterioration of key projects, land parcels, and buildings in the downtown core. To counter this, the City of Reno created the Agency and established Redevelopment Area 1 (RDA 1), supporting major projects such as the National Bowling Stadium, the Truckee Riverwalk, and Greater Nevada Field. In 2005, Redevelopment Area 2 (RDA 2) was established.

The Great Recession led to a decline in property values and tax revenues, causing the Agency to go dormant. In recent years, economic recovery and population growth have driven private investment in the urban core, leading to new developments and increased property values. With tax revenues now surpassing the thresholds set at the inception of RDA 1 and RDA 2, the Agency is once again positioned to drive economic progress and foster optimal land use in downtown and surrounding urban areas.

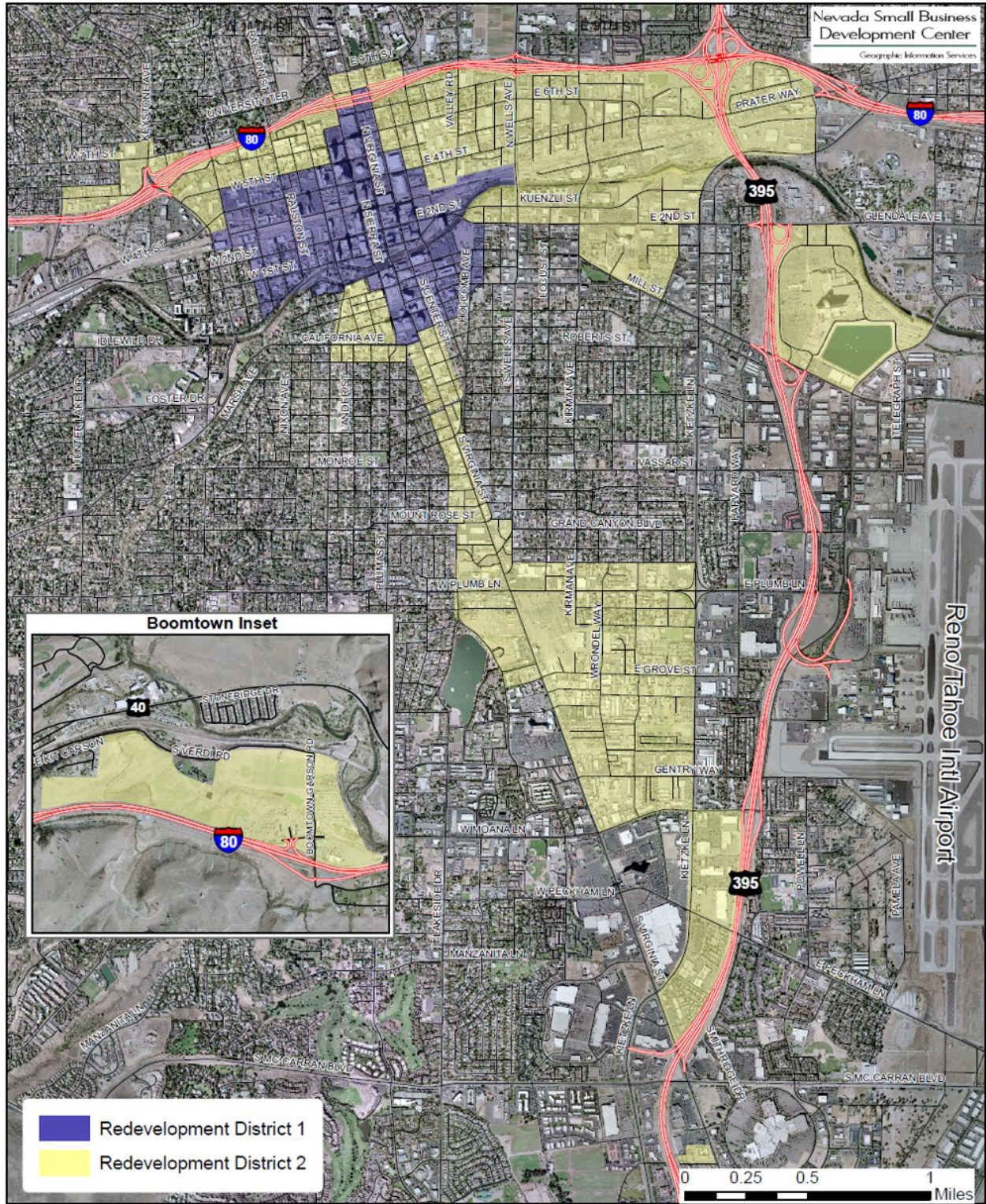
Together, we are restoring Reno—one storefront at a time.

Additional information on the City of Reno Redevelopment Agency and the ReStore Façade and Tenant Improvement Program can be found below:

[Visit the ReStore Landing Page](#)

[Email the Redevelopment Agency](#)

H. Map of Redevelopment Areas



I. Frequently Asked Questions:

1. I am a new or emerging business. Where can I go for help preparing my application or business plan?

The [Nevada Small Business Development Center](#) provides free one-on-one business advising and planning support. New entrepreneurs and established businesses are strongly encouraged to connect with Nevada SBDC advisors who can assist with business plan development, financial readiness, market analysis, and overall project preparation. Interested applicants can request support directly using this referral link:

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2. I am a tenant. Do I need the property owner's approval to apply for the program?

Yes, if you are a tenant applying for the program, you will need to provide a letter signed by both the applicant and property owner. The property owner's consent is necessary to ensure that both parties are aligned on the improvements being made to the property and the distribution of reimbursement funds.

3. I am a property owner. Do I need to work with my tenant?

Yes, property owners are required to collaborate with their tenants and obtain their consent for the proposed improvements. This program encourages cooperation between property owners and tenants to enhance the storefronts and overall commercial spaces. Mutual agreement is an essential part of the application process.

4. I only want to replace my signage or install new lighting. Can I still apply?

Yes. While all eligible projects are evaluated on their merits, smaller award requests may increase your chances of being selected - especially when funding is limited. We welcome small-scale, high-impact improvements like signage, lighting, landscaping, and exterior paint. These types of projects are often more feasible, quicker to implement, and can significantly enhance the look and feel of a business. Small, tactical upgrades that improve the pedestrian experience are highly encouraged.

5. How much reporting am I required to do?

The reporting requirements for the program are designed to be straightforward. While specific details will be outlined in the award agreement, participants are generally

expected to provide project updates, documentation of expenses, and completion reports. The Reno Redevelopment Agency aims to streamline the reporting process to minimize the administrative burden.

6. Do I get to choose my design consultant and the contractor for construction?

Yes, you have the flexibility to choose your design consultant and contractor for the project. It's important to work with professionals who are experienced and capable of delivering the desired improvements. The design and contractor selection should align with the project's goals and meet all necessary permitting and code requirements.

7. Are the improvements required to meet prevailing wage requirements?

No, the improvements under this program are not required to meet prevailing wage requirements unless the reimbursement award exceeds \$100,000. However, participants are encouraged to adhere to fair labor practices and work with reputable contractors.

8. How long will funds be available?

Funds for the ReStore Facade and Tenant Improvement Program will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis, subject to availability and funding allocated to the program. It's recommended to submit your application promptly to secure your place in the program.

9. I have multiple storefronts. How many projects can I apply for?

Property owners with multiple storefronts are eligible to apply as a separate project for each storefront. Each project will be evaluated independently, and approval will be based on the merits of each application. However, a single building, parcel, or owner with multiple storefronts may not exceed \$200,000 in cumulative awards across all projects

10. Will there be a legal agreement with the application?

Yes, if your project is selected for funding, an award agreement will be established between the Reno Redevelopment Agency and the award recipient. This agreement will outline the terms, conditions, and responsibilities related to the funding, project implementation, reporting, and maintenance of improvements.