

City of Whittlesea

Shopfront Improvement Pilot Program (SIPP) Co-contribution

The City of Whittlesea invites business owners in the City of Whittlesea to submit an application for a co-contribution funding program through the City of Whittlesea Shopfront Improvement Pilot Program to upgrade their shopfronts.

Applications can be made by individual business owners or as a collective group where businesses aim to upgrade a larger space as one project provided the application fits with the objectives of the pilot program.

Application queries:

Project ideas can be discussed with Jennifer Pearson, Retail Activity Centre Officer prior to application on 9217 2492 or email Jennifer.pearson@whittlesea.vic.gov.au

Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

We recognise the rich Aboriginal heritage of this country and acknowledges the Wurundjeri Willum Clan and Taungurung people as the Traditional Owners of lands within the City of Whittlesea.

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What is the Shopfront Improvement Pilot Program (SIPP)?

Purpose of the SIPP

The Shopfront Improvement Pilot Program (SIPP) has been established to assist business owners with the cost of upgrading the look, vibrancy, and attractiveness of shop fronts and to encourage retail centre activation and engagement through a Council co-contribution, dollar for dollar project funding contribution with a maximum Council contribution of \$2,000 (\$4,000 project cost).

Objectives of the SIPP

The SIPP aims to assist business owners in upgrading the appearance and appeal of shopfronts in retail activity centres to:

- Attract and retain customers
- Make the centre look and feel inviting and therefore increase the level of safety
- Attract business investment and reduce vacancies for landlords and existing business
- Increase foot traffic
- Drive better economic outcomes for businesses

Key dates

Shopfront Improvement Pilot Program	
Applications open and close dates	1 February 2023 to 21 February 2023
Assessment	6 March 2023 to 10 March 2023
Works to be completed by	14 May 2023
Acquittals due	31 May 2023
Payments made by	30 June 2023

Eligibility requirements

To be eligible to apply for a co-contribution under the SIPP the project/business must:

- Own or operate a legal shopfront business located at any retail centre listed on the attached map.
- Have written approval from the property owner or agent which must be submitted with the application
- Have a valid Australian Business Number (ABN), maximum of 20 employees and registered for GST current at 1 July 2022
- Hold all appropriate insurances, licences and permits with a current public liability insurance which must be submitted with application
- Apply only for items in the 'What can be funded' list below
- Quotes from legitimate suppliers who hold a registered ABN and can provide a formal quote and invoice on business letterhead
- Take before and after photographs of business premises
- Works completed by 14 May 2023

Who is not eligible

Businesses that will not be eligible to be assessed for consideration under this SIPP include:

- Businesses that are not located in a retail activity centre listed on the attached map
- An employee of the City of Whittlesea operating a business
- Trader Associations or large Owners Corporations
- Businesses located in major Shopping Centres i.e. Westfield Shopping Centre, Pacific Epping and University Hill
- Businesses that incur revenue relating to alcohol, tobacco and tobacco related products i.e. e-cigarettes, shisha, hookahs and pipes, gambling and electronic gaming machines
- Franchise businesses i.e. large corporates such as supermarkets and bottle shops
- Businesses that employ more than 20 employees
- Businesses that have been trading less than 12 months or have not yet opened

- Businesses that have less than 12 months remaining on their current lease at the time of submitting an application
- Any business that does not hold all relevant permits and licences to trade in the City of Whittlesea this includes but is not restricted to, building and planning permits, health and liquor licences and any other statutory permits or licences that are required for business to operate legally.
- Businesses that have outstanding acquittals, debts, or financial disputes with the City of Whittlesea.

What can be funded

- External works such as repairs or upgrades to facade
- Painting the façade
- Replacement or new signage in accordance with relevant regulatory requirements
- Murals on property facade
- Installation of new or upgrade of existing external lighting
- Upgrade or replacement of fixed awnings
- Accessibility access minor works including making doors automatic and installing a ramp
- Decluttering of facades, signage, and window displays

What won't be funded

- Upgrade or installation of either internal or external security (CCTV)
- Projects and activities that relate to politics or the advertising or promotion of gambling, alcohol, electronic gaming machines or tobacco in anyway
- Upgrades that have already been completed or committed to prior to submitting an application
- Property extensions
- Temporary/loose street furniture or fixtures
- Statutory and regulatory fees
- Expenses that are considered ongoing costs to run the business such as rent and utilities
- Wages

Please note that only one application can be submitted per business owner/owners. Where a person or persons operate more than one business there can only be one project application submitted relating to one business.

How do I apply

1. Ensure you have carefully read the guidelines and that your business and project submission meet the eligibility criteria before submitting
2. Submit your project application online through Smarty Grants platform. Go to smartygrants.com.au to register an account and complete your application. For

technical support using smarty grant, contact the support desk on 9320 6888 or email service@smartygrants.com.au

3. Submit your project application with valid supporting documentation including:
 - Copy of current commercial lease showing at least 12 months remaining in term
 - Written approval from property owner or agent authorising works
 - Formal quote showing works to be completed with itemised costing, business name, business address and ABN for contractor/s
 - Completed application providing full details of works to be completed (matching the quote/s)
4. Applications and supporting documentation and quotes must be received by midnight 21 February 2023. Applications received after the closing time will not be considered.
5. Council advises businesses to support local where possible.

Application Process

- Only one application per business will be considered
- Applications received will be checked for eligibility. If all eligibility requirements are met, these applications will progress to an assessment process.
- Any application that is deemed ineligible or does not meet the eligibility criteria will not be assessed
- Applications will be assessed against the assessment criteria by the approval panel according to the weighted assessment ranking.
- The approval panel will consider all assessed applications and recommendations and make final decision to approve or reject an application.
- Applicants will be notified of the outcome in March 2023
- Business owners have until 14 May 2023 to complete the works described in the project application and to submit their acquittal to Council
- Any business that is unable to complete the works described in the initial application or that ceases to operate prior to the 14 May 2023 will be deemed ineligible to receive a rebate. In the event of supply chain issues, any extension for variation must be submitted in writing and include evidence of the issues.
- In the event that more applications are received, applications will be assessed according to assessment weighted ranking.

Assessment criteria

- **Aims and Outcomes 40%** - The aim and outcomes of the project/works increase safety, attract and retain customers and make the centre look and feel inviting
- **Location of business 20%** Businesses within Rochdale Square, Lalor and Bundoora Square, Bundoora receive a higher weighting due to significant investment through

Council's streetscape upgrades. Businesses outside these areas can apply for funding however they do not receive the 20% weighting.

- **Level of Need 15%** – Is the shopfront in a state of disrepair or overdue for a freshen up
- **Project sustainability 10%** - Will the project/works include refurbished or recycled materials and will used materials be recycled. This can be shown as a commitment in a project plan.
- **Budget 10%** - Is the budget reasonable for the project/works
- **Quotes (City of Whittlesea) 5%** - Is the quote from a local provider within the City of Whittlesea or Melbourne's North (Includes quotes from Banyule, Darebin, Hume, Merri-bek (formerly Moreland), Mitchell, Nillumbik, Whittlesea).

Applicant commitments

Successful applicants will be required to:

- Be prepared to complete an online acquittal at the conclusion of the pilot program by the 31 May 2023 (rebates will not be paid to applicants that have not provided a full acquittal)
- The successful applicants and their projects may be acknowledged through Council's online media channels and participate in media opportunities.

Lobbying

Canvassing or lobbying administrators, employees of the City of Whittlesea or assessment panel members in relation to any grant is prohibited during the application process. Failure to comply will consider the application ineligible.

Contact

If you have any questions regarding these Guidelines, please do not hesitate to contact Jennifer Pearson, Retail Activity Centre Officer on 9217 2492 or email

Jennifer.pearson@whittlesea.vic.gov.au

