

City of West Hollywood

# Seismic Retrofit Grant Program Rules

## **GREAT NEWS!**

Grant Opportunities  
are Available for  
Property Owners!

Receive up to  
\$5,000 in **Design Grants**  
and \$20,000 in  
**Construction Grants**



**WEHO SEISMIC RETROFIT**  
GRANT PROGRAM

West Hollywood's Building and Safety Division received a Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES). The Grant will facilitate seismic retrofitting of wood framed buildings with soft, weak or open front wall lines (SWOF), non-ductile concrete (NDC) and Pre-Northridge Steel Moment Frame Buildings (PNSMF) within the City. **Grant funds are available for new retrofit projects for buildings that are subject to the City's Mandatory Seismic Retrofit Ordinances.**

## Why apply?

This grant was received to assist property owners to comply with the City's ordinances for mandatory seismic retrofitting. There are two (2) types of grants available:

**Design grants for up to \$5,000 per application**

**Construction grants for up to \$20,000 per application.**

The following sections define the WeHo Seismic Retrofit Grant Program Rules that are in compliance with the FEMA/CalOES HMGP Grant. The Rules must be reviewed and adhered by the Applicant in order to be eligible for funding under the Program.

Specialized staff will be available to assist you during the application process and answer any questions that you may have and may be contacted at: 323.848.6309 or [retrofit-grant@weho.org](mailto:retrofit-grant@weho.org)



# How much will the grant pay?

The amount of available grant funding depends on the type and cost of the project. Grants are available in two (2) separate phases:

## PHASE 1: Design Grants

Grants for the design phase will be limited as shown in the table below. Design grants may not exceed 75% of actual documented design costs related to the seismic retrofit of the building.

BUILDING TYPE	DESIGN GRANT
SWOF Buildings	75% of the cost up to \$2,000
Non-Ductile Concrete Buildings	75% of the cost up to \$5,000
Pre-Northridge Steel Moment Frame Buildings	75% of the cost up to \$5,000

**Example:**  
If the total design cost for a SWOF Building is \$2,000, the design grant will be \$1,500 (75% of the total design cost). OR if the design cost for a SWOF building is \$10,000, then the design grant will be \$2,000 (as compared to 75% of the cost or \$7,500).

## PHASE 2: Construction Grants

Grants for the construction phase will be capped as shown in the table below based on actual construction costs, including contractor fees and the cost of special inspections. Construction grants cannot exceed 75% (40% for SWOF) of the permit valuation or actual retrofit costs. whichever is lower.

BUILDING TYPE	CONSTRUCTION GRANT
SWOF Story	40% of the cost up to \$15,000
Non-Ductile Concrete	75% of the cost up to \$20,000
Pre-Northridge Steel Moment Frame Buildings	75% of the cost up to \$20,000
Other Buildings	75% of the cost up to \$20,000

**Example:**  
If the construction cost for a SWOF building is \$40,000, the construction grant would be \$15,000 (as compared to 40% of the cost or \$16,000)

# Are you interested?

Here are 5 steps to receiving grant funding:

STEP 1

See if Your Property Qualifies for a Grant

Program funding is limited to seismic retrofits of the following types of buildings and the applicable ordinances:

- Soft, Weak, or Open Front (SWOF) wood-framed buildings built before 1978 subject to Ordinance 17-1004 provisions and SWOF Retrofit Design Guidelines
- Non-Ductile Concrete (NDC) buildings subject to Ordinance 17-1011 provisions and the NDC/PNSMF Seismic Design Guidelines
- Pre-Northridge Steel Moment Frame Buildings (PNSFM) subject to Ordinance 17-1011 provisions and the NDC/PNSMF Seismic Design Guidelines
- Other buildings that are either pre-Northridge steel moment frame or non-ductile buildings that could not be determined without further investigation, subject to Ordinance 17-1011 provisions and the NDC/PNSMF Seismic Design Guidelines

A survey list of buildings identified as subject to the City's Retrofit Ordinances can be found at [www.weho.org](http://www.weho.org) via the follwing link: <https://bit.ly/3uExB7b>



# Learn About Eligibility Requirements

## Eligible Projects

- New retrofit projects for buildings that are currently on the City’s Seismic Retrofit Survey List which can be found at [www.weho.org/seismic](http://www.weho.org/seismic)
  - Owners must submit a complete Program application and comply with all requirements as required by FEMA, all Program Rules, and all Seismic Design Guidelines.
  - Seismic Retrofit projects that have been reviewed and approved by FEMA.
  - Design of seismic retrofit projects prepared by a California Licensed Design Professional (Engineer or Architect).
  - Construction projects that are completed by a California Licensed Contractor. (Owner-builder retrofits do not meet the Program requirements)
- \* Note: Seismic retrofit projects currently under construction or projects that have been previously completed do not qualify.

## Eligible Costs

This section defines the eligible expenditures that qualify for reimbursement.

### Phase 1 - Design Grants

Seismic retrofit design costs paid to California licensed professionals (engineers or architects).

### Phase 2 - Construction Grants

Seismic retrofit construction costs (including materials and labor) paid to California licensed contractors, and cost of special inspections and structural observations.



## Ineligible Costs

Following expenditures will not qualify for reimbursement:

### Phase 1 - Design Grants

- Amounts paid to entities that are not California licensed design professionals
- Costs unrelated to the seismic retrofit design or that are outside the scope of the Design Guidelines
- Design costs incurred prior to May 18, 2021
- Design costs for projects that have not completed the building permit plan check process and have not obtained a building permit.

- Projects that have received FEMA funding under another program

### Phase 2 - Construction Grants

- Amounts paid to unlicensed contractors
- Costs unrelated to the seismic retrofit
- Projects that begin construction prior to FEMA approval
- Permit fees
- Projects that have received FEMA funding under another program





## STEP 3 Grant Application Process

### Review the Grant Application Process

The grant application process will require providing general information about the building and building owner(s). You will be asked to provide specific information for Phase I - Design Grant and Phase 2 Construction Grant. Separate applications for each grant type are required. Both phases have a similar process to make it easier to complete the program:

- Access the Application Form via the online portal and create an account.
- Application forms must be received by the application deadlines which can be found at [www.retrofit-grant.weho.org](http://www.retrofit-grant.weho.org)
- All submitted applications will be reviewed for completeness and Program eligibility.
- Applicants will be notified of the status of the application.
- Grants will be awarded to completed applications on a first come-first served basis.

### Application Check List

Applicants can review the application check list below and begin to compile the required information to input into the Application Form. Applicant and building Information will be used for both design and construction application phases, although a separate application is required for each grant type. If there is a change in building ownership during the application process, the Applicant will be required to start a new application with the new building owner information.

#### 1. Applicant Information

Building owner information or a designated legal representative to manage the application process.

#### 2. Building Information

Building information is needed to complete this section. You will also be asked to submit the Screening Report prepared for the building in this section.

#### 3. Maps

Provide vicinity and site maps. See the Program Website for sample maps at [www.retrofit-grant.weho.org](http://www.retrofit-grant.weho.org).

#### 4. Photographs

Owners must provide at least three photographs from all publicly visible sides (exterior) of the building at the time of application and label each photograph with the building address and direction. See the Program Website for photograph instructions.

#### 5. Phase I - Design Engineer Information

Owners are required to obtain at least three (3) proposals from design professionals (engineers or architects) with a valid and current license to practice in the State of California. Owners need to provide copies of the proposals received (or the attempts made to contact consultants) along with the signed contract. If an owner does not receive three proposals, proof of all attempts must be provided..

Important to Note\*\* All contracts must include the Engineer/Architect Contract Agreement Addendum which includes additional FEMA provisions in the contract agreement with the selected design professional. A signed copy of the agreement addendum must be provided.







**6. Retrofit Permit Application**

The applicant must provide estimated project timelines and cost. In addition, a brief description of the proposed work is required.

Exterior Alterations: Applications must indicate if the retrofit will result in any exterior changes that will be visible from the exterior of the building. If exterior alterations to the building are included in the project’s scope of work, please include elevation drawings clearly showing any exterior changes when submitting a building permit application, for further review.

Please note that design documents will need to be evaluated for compliance with FEMA requirements before a permit is issued.

**7. Acknowledgement**

All legal owners must sign the grant Application Form. An additional application sheet may be attached with all necessary signatures if additional space is needed. For properties owned by a business entity or a trust, a signature from an appointed representative or trustee is required along with a verification document stating that the signatory has the “power” to sign on behalf of the entity or trust must be attached.

**8. Reimbursement Process for Phase I - Design Grants**

Applicants for design grants will be notified upon receiving FEMA approval for their proposed project. Once FEMA approval has been obtained and the applicant has completed the plancheck process and obtained approval of retrofit plans, the applicants can then fill in the Reimbursement Request section of the application and provide the required information. Once all the documents have been provided the reimbursement request will be processed.

**9. Phase II - Construction Grants/ Contractor Selection Provisions**

Owners are required to obtain at least three (3) bids from contractors with valid construction license to practice in the State of California in order to be eligible for this Program. Owners need to provide copies of the bids received (or the attempts made to contact consultants) along with the signed contract.

Important to Note\*\* All contracts must include Contractor Agreement Addendum which includes the additional FEMA provisions in the contract agreement with the selected contractor. A signed copy of the agreement addendum must be provided.

**10. Reimbursement Process for Phase II - Construction Grants**

Applicants can request a reimbursement for construction once a Certificate of Compliance has been issued. Applicants can then fill in the Reimbursement Request section of the Phase II Construction Grant application and provide the required information. Once all the documents have been provided, the reimbursement request will be processed.

STEP 4

Apply for Phase 1 Design Grant

**Review the Design Grant Snapshot**

Applicants that have gathered all property information are encouraged to begin the application for Phase 1 Design

PHASE 1 DESIGN GRANT PROCESS SNAPSHOT

1

Select a Design Engineer/Architect

- See design professional selection compliance and requirements.
- At least 3 proposals are required.
- Provide estimated project timelines and cost.
- Provide a brief description of the proposed work is required.
- Provide copies of proposals and a signed contract including FEMA provisions.
- To verify an engineers license, visit <https://search.dca.ca.gov/>.
- Go to the online portal and submit required engineer information and begin design.

2

Internal Application Review

- Applications will be reviewed within 10 business days from submittal and owners will be notified of your status.
- Applicant may apply for a building permit once the building owner has selected the design professional and the grant application has been approved.

3

Apply for a Building Permit - Additional Process

- Submit permit application for Screening Report.
- After approval of Screening Report, submit retrofit plans for review with the Building and Safety Division.

**FEMA/CalOES Environmental and Historic Preservation (EHP) review.** Review and approval will be required. Please note that to be eligible for a Construction Grant, applicants must wait for notification that the EHP review process has been completed and FEMA has approved the project.

4

Design Approval

- Upon building permit approval, the applicant will be invited to move on to construction.
- Reimbursement for Design Phase 1 may be requested once the retrofit permit application has been approved by the City and plans have been reviewed and approved by FEMA.



## Selection of Design Professionals

Design Grant Applicants are required to obtain three (3) or more proposals from qualified professionals in order to be eligible for reimbursement under this Program.

### Design Professional Compliance

- Design professionals selected to perform retrofit work shall hold a valid and current license to practice in the State of California. Costs incurred for services performed from design professionals without a valid and current license cannot be reimbursed under this Grant Program. To verify an engineer's license, visit <https://search.dca.ca.gov/>
- At least two proposals from licensed design professionals must be provided along with documentation of at least one (1) other attempt to obtain a third proposal.
- Applicants will need to document their efforts to obtain multiple proposals. Please provide documentation of all bids received.
- If the lowest proposal was not selected, provide an explanation in your documentation explaining why the lowest proposal was not selected.
- Retrofit grant funding cannot be used to reimburse owners for expenses paid in cash.
- When a design-build entity is performing both the design and construction of a project under the same contract, the owner or designer must submit documentation that clarifies the portion of the contract amount associated with the design phase of the project. Hiring a design-build entity does not remove the requirement to obtain multiple contractor bids.

### Required Documentation for Each Proposal

- Name of the company.
- Date contacted. (Approximate date if exact date is unknown)
- Method of contact. (Phone, email, etc.)
- Name of person contacted.
- Company's response. (Was a bid received?)

### Selected Design Professional

- Provide a copy of the signed contract with the selected design professional.
- Provide a signed copy of the Design Agreement Addendum for FEMA grant provisions.
- If you are using a "design-build" contract with a single entity performing both design and construction, the contract should identify the amount due for the design phase and construction phase separately.
- Applicants who hired an architect or engineer prior to the announcement of the Grant Program, may still be eligible, given that they can meet the Program requirements. Applicants are encouraged to speak with Program staff regarding their eligibility.

## Apply for a building permit

Applicant may apply for a building permit once the building owner has selected the design consultant and the grant application has been reviewed and approved by the City.

### FEMA Requirements

The grants provided in this Program are federal funds and require an Environmental and Historic Preservation (EHP) assessment. This review will be conducted by Program staff and submitted to FEMA for approval. The cost of this assessment is covered by the FEMA/CalOES grant with no additional cost to the owner. Projects that complete the seismic retrofitting without impacting the exterior facade or other character-defining elements of the building, will be in general compliance with FEMA requirements and may be subject to an expedited review. Property owners are highly encouraged to discuss alternatives with their design engineers to conceal the structural elements as much as possible.

Please note that to be eligible for a Construction Grant, Applicants must wait for notification that the EHP review process has been completed and FEMA has approved the project. Projects that begin construction prior to receiving notification of FEMA approval will not be eligible for a Construction Grant per FEMA funding requirements.



As part of the review of the permit application, the City will work with FEMA to conduct an EHP review. Photographs of each building and other required information will be submitted to FEMA, along with the detailed structural plans of the proposed retrofit project. During the EHP review process, additional information may be requested to respond to requests from FEMA. The City may also request access to the property to take additional photos or provide access to FEMA or its consultants to better understand the building or proposed scope of work. Once FEMA has approved a proposed project, any significant changes to the scope of work may require additional review and approval by FEMA and may affect Construction Grant eligibility.



Depending on the type of retrofit project and the age or historic nature of the building, the EHP review period may take up to 3-4 months. Usually the review will require less time. Historic buildings (as defined by FEMA), and projects that impact the exterior facade or other character-defining elements of the building, will likely require additional review by FEMA and may not be approved for funding if the project is determined to have a negative impact on the historic character of the building.

Once the EHP review is completed and the project has received FEMA approval, the property owner will be notified and the confirmation of their construction grant eligibility will be provided. Grant reimbursement will be contingent on the property owner's plans being approved by FEMA, applying for a building permit, addressing plan check comments, obtaining a building permit and completing construction consistent with the FEMA approved plans within the applicable Program timelines.

**Plan Revisions**

Any revisions to the approved set of plans will be required to be submitted to the Building and Safety Division to confirm consistency of the drawings with those previously approved by FEMA. To ensure grant funding, Applicants should alert Program staff to any significant changes to a project's scope of work.

**Reimbursement Process**

Once FEMA approval has been confirmed, property owners or their approved representatives can apply to receive the design grant funds by completing the reimbursement section of the online application. You will be notified of our review process and if we need any additional information.

**Requirements for Reimbursement**

- 1. Applicant has completed the plan check process and has obtained approval of retrofit plans.
- 2. Applicant will be required to complete the Reimbursement Request information through the online portal along with:
  - Copies of invoices from licensed design professionals for all design expenses
  - Copies of cancelled checks documenting payment.

**Design Grant Time Limit**

After a Design Grant Application form is received and approved, the Applicant must apply for a building permit. Property owners must meet all deadlines noted on the City's website at retrofit-grant.weho.org or be granted an extension in writing to be guaranteed grant funding. Building owners who do not meet deadlines will receive funding only if it is still available.

Property owners may consider including deadlines in contracts with design professionals to provide drawings by a certain date and respond to plan check comments within a certain number of days of issuance, to ensure all Program deadlines are met.

STEP 5

# Apply for Phase 2 Construction Grant Process

**Review the Construction Grant Snapshot**

Once the Applicant has obtained FEMA approval and approval of retrofit plans from the City,, the Applicant will be invited to move to Phase 2 Construction Grant process.

PHASE 2 CONSTRUCTION GRANT PROCESS SNAPSHOT

1

Select a Contractor

- See the Contractor Selection Compliance, document requirements and contractor information.
- Copies of at least 3 construction bids.
- Copy of signed contract including FEMA provisions.
- For construction contracts exceeding \$250,000 -

Additional documentation will be required.

- To verify a contractor's license, visit <http://www.cslb.ca.gov>.

► Go to the online portal and submit your required documents for each bid.

2

Internal Bid Review

- A review of the final construction bid will be conducted and approved.

3

Obtain a Building Permit

- Selected Contractor to pull a building permit for the approved retrofit plans.
- Provide and verify permit valuation.
- Retrofit work may only begin after building permit has been obtained

4

Construction

- Start construction after obtaining the building permit for the retrofit.
- Call for required inspections during construction.
- Complete retrofit construction.
- Request and receive Final Inspection and Certificate of Compliance.
- Reimbursement for Construction Phase 2 may be requested once the Certificate of Compliance has been issued and all required documents have been submitted.



## Selection of a contractor

Construction Grant Applicants are required to obtain three (3) or more bids from licensed contractors in California in order to be eligible for reimbursement under this Program.

### Contractor Selection Compliance

To receive a Construction Grant, at least three bids from licensed contractors must be provided or two bids along with documentation of at least one (1) other attempt to obtain a bid.

- Contractors selected to perform retrofit work are required to hold a valid and current license to practice in the State of California. Costs incurred for services performed by contractors without a valid and current license cannot be reimbursed under this Program.
- To verify a contractor's license, visit <http://www.cslb.ca.gov>.
- Hiring a design-build entity does not remove the requirement to obtain multiple contractor bids.
- Applicants will need to document their efforts to obtain multiple bids. Please provide copies of all bids received.
- If the lowest bidder is not selected, provide an explanation in your documentation about why the lowest bidder was not selected.
- Retrofit Grants funding cannot be used to reimburse owners for expenses paid in cash.
- Retrofit Grants funding cannot be used to reimburse for construction completed by owner-builders.

### Required Documentation for Each Bid:

- Name of company.
- Date contacted. (Approximate date if exact date is unknown.)
- How you contacted them. (Phone, email, etc.)
- Name of person contacted.
- Company's response. (Was a bid received?)
- For construction contracts exceeding \$250,000.
  - Three (3) or more contractor bids are required.
  - Property owners must request at least three contractors to submit sealed bids on a specific date/time and provide us with proof of adherence with this requirement.
- If you anticipate your construction contract will exceed \$250,000, please speak with Program staff prior to selecting your contractor.

### Selected contractor

- Provide a copy of the signed contract with your selected contractor.
- Provide a signed copy of the Construction Contract Addendum for FEMA provisions.

## Reimbursement Process

Once a Certificate of Compliance has been issued, property owners or their approved representatives can apply to receive Construction Grant funds by completing the reimbursement section of the online application. You will be notified if additional information is needed.

### Requirements for Reimbursement

1. Applicant has completed construction and has obtained an approved final inspection and Certificate of Compliance.
2. Applicant has submitted the engineer's letter of structural observation and the special inspection agency affidavit(s) to the building inspector.
3. Photographs of the completed retrofit project has been provided. If any changes to the exterior were included in the retrofit or specific conditions of approval were placed on the project by FEMA, please be sure that photographs highlight these features.



4. Applicant has submitted a Reimbursement Request form along with:

- Copies of invoices from licensed contractors for all construction costs
- Copies of cancelled checks documenting payment.

### Permit Valuation/Actual Cost

Construction Grant reimbursements are calculated based on the lower of the following:

- The stated construction valuation on the building permit
- The total documented amount paid to the contractor for retrofit construction

## Construction Grant Time Limit

After receiving notice of EHP approval and obtaining a building permit, Applicants may apply for a Construction Grant (submit three bids) and start construction after getting approval of your grant application within six months of permit issuance. Extensions may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

- Construction must begin within 6 months of issuance of building permit issuance.
- Complete the retrofit construction and obtain an approved final inspection no later than the program deadline to be guaranteed Construction grant funding.

Property owners may consider including deadlines in contracts with their selected contractor to ensure all Program deadlines are met.

# Program Process & Timeline Summary

Applications for each phase will be accepted on a rolling basis and through the deadlines noted below. Funding will be awarded for projects based on completed applications and on a first come, first served basis.

Applicants must meet all Program deadlines to retain eligibility for grant funding. Reimbursements for the grant will be issued in two (2) phases, the first phase after the completion of design and the second after the completion of construction.



Phase I - Design Grant Program Milestones	Timeline	Phase II - Construction Grant Program Milestones	Timeline
Submit Seismic Retrofit Grants Program Design Application	Applications are open to property owner’s incurring design cost on or after May 18, 2021.	Invitation to Apply for Construction Grant	Upon completion of Phase 1 for the Design Grant, the applicant will be invited to apply for the Construction Grant.
Application Review	Applicant will be notified by email of their design grant status. A review of the initial applications will take place within ten (10) business days from submittal and owners will be notified of their status.	Application Review	Applicant must submit all required grant application documents for review and approval. Applicant will be notified of their construction grant status.
Apply for a Building Permit	Applicant will be instructed to apply for a Building Permit once the building owner has selected the design consultant.	Start Construction	After receiving approval for the selected contractor, the contractor may pull building permits and begin construction.
Submit Retrofit Plans and All Required Information	Submittal of retrofit plans and all required information such as elevations. Drawings will be reviewed for both compliance with City and FEMA requirements. Qualifying applications will be submitted to FEMA/CalOES for Environmental and Historic Preservation (EHP) review.	Construction Completion and Certificate of Compliance	Complete the retrofit project and obtain a Certificate of Compliance.
Application Selection and Applicant Notification	Applicants will be notified if their application has been approved by FEMA/CalOES. Applicant must also complete the plancheck process and obtain approval of retrofit plans.	Phase II – Reimbursement Process	Eligible Applicants can request reimbursement for Construction Grants once they have received their Certificate of Compliance by providing contractor invoices and proof of payment.
Phase I – Reimbursement Process	Eligible Applicants can then request reimbursement for the Phase I- design grant by providing design consultant invoices and proof of payment.		





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