

NEWS

For Immediate Release

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Redevelopment Agency's Housing Enhancement Loan Program (HELP) Spurs Home, Community Improvements in 11 of City's 17 Project Areas

San Ysidro man first in project area to receive HELP loan for home improvements, Grantville residents now eligible for HELP loans

SAN DIEGO, California — When Michael Fleming needed to rehabilitate his nearly 70-year-old home, he was at his wits' end. He didn't know where he'd get the money.

Now, thanks to the Housing Enhancement Loan Program (HELP) offered by The City of San Diego Redevelopment Agency, he has completed \$30,000 in improvements to his two-story house and an adjacent cottage in San Ysidro.

"The HELP loan literally saved my home, which was built during World War II by one of the 'Little Landers' who founded a utopian community here," said Fleming, the first homeowner in the San Ysidro Project Area to participate in the forgivable loan program.

"I needed rain gutters, heaters, a front door, a water heater, plumbing—you name it," he added. "Now, my older home not only is more attractive, it is more energy efficient and a safer living environment."

The rehab also included the removal of all lead-based paint. It included the replacement of the old, wood-framed windows with new, double-paned, vinyl windows. For this portion of his home improvement project, he received an additional \$10,000 no-interest loan through a 0% Deferred Payment Loan funded by local Housing Trust Funds.

Photos are available upon request.

Although Mr. Fleming is the first homeowner in the San Ysidro project area to take advantage of the program, more than 400 homeowners have benefited from the Redevelopment Agency's HELP program since its inception. Under the program, homeowners make interior and exterior repairs and improvements, ranging from new paint to roofs, furnaces, plumbing, solar panels and California-friendly landscaping.

HELP Loans Availability

HELP loans are now available in 11 of San Diego's 17 redevelopment project areas: City Heights, College Grove, Crossroads, Grantville, Linda Vista, North Park, San Ysidro and the SEDC area of influence (including Central Imperial, Gateway Center West, Mount Hope and Southcrest). Grantville is the most recent project area added to the HELP program, in July 2009. San Ysidro was admitted in July 2008.

The forgivable home-improvement loans from the City of San Diego Redevelopment Agency not only benefit homeowners, they also benefit the community at large.

“Housing rehabilitation and enhancement is an important factor for improving neighborhood and community stability. When the Redevelopment Agency funds a HELP loan, the impact goes far beyond a single home. The HELP program also encourages private investment and improves the local housing stock overall,” said Janice Weinrick, Deputy Executive Director of the Redevelopment Agency.

The repairs and improvements also help remediate health and safety issues, as well as supporting and promoting the growth and vitality of the area’s business environment.

Who is Eligible, How to Apply

The loans are available to homeowners living in or near a redevelopment project area and whose gross household income does not exceed 100 percent of the San Diego Area Median Income (AMI). The 2009 San Diego AMI for a family of four is \$74,900.

HELP funds come from redevelopment project area housing set-aside funds, and the program is administered by the San Diego Housing Commission on behalf of the Redevelopment Agency. The one-time loans, which range from \$5,000 to \$30,000, have an annual simple interest of three percent and are forgivable over 10 years. The homeowners must live in the home during the term of the loan.

The City of San Diego Redevelopment Agency created HELP as part of an overall redevelopment program to increase, improve and preserve the supply of low- and moderate-income housing occupied by persons and families of extremely low-, very low-, low-, and moderate-income within the redevelopment project areas and the surrounding neighborhoods.

For more information about the HELP loans, homeowners should contact:

The City of San Diego Redevelopment Agency
1200 Third Avenue, 14th Floor, MS 56D
San Diego, CA 92101
(619) 236-6700
www.sandiego.gov/HELP

About the City of San Diego Redevelopment Agency

The City of San Diego Redevelopment Agency created by the City Council in 1958, uses special legal and financial mechanisms to eliminate blight and improve economic and physical conditions in designated areas of the City. The Agency’s purview encompasses 17 project areas, study areas and affordable housing. Activities within the project areas are carried out by the City’s Redevelopment Division and two public, nonprofit City corporations: Centre City Development Corporation (CCDC) and Southeastern Economic Development Corporation (SEDC). The Agency also administers eight Project Area Committees (PACs) that advise the agency on the adoption of redevelopment plans and implementing redevelopment projects. For more information, visit: www.sandiego.gov/redevelopment-agency/