




**OFFICE OF COUNCILMEMBER TODD GLORIA
COUNCIL DISTRICT THREE**

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: April 28, 2015
TO: Honorable Mayor Kevin Faulconer
FROM: Councilmember Todd Gloria 
SUBJECT: Storefront Improvement Program

The City of San Diego's Storefront Improvement Program is one of the City's tools to assist small businesses and revitalize commercial areas. Many businesses in my district have successfully utilized this program, which has not only added to the character of the streetscapes, but also brings new investment into the community.

It is my understanding that the Storefront Improvement Program is not being fully utilized, carrying balances forward from year to year. I have heard suggestions from some businesses that the program's requirements should be revised in order to expand the program and make it more effective.

I am requesting that the City's Economic Development staff evaluate potential changes to the SIP that include the following:

- Increase the eligibility thresholds to enable businesses with up to 20 employees to participate. Many small local businesses, especially restaurants, are not eligible for the program because they exceed the current limit of 12 employees.
- Increase the maximum awards available through the program. As construction costs have increased, it may be beneficial to increase the potential contributions from the Storefront Improvement Program accordingly.
- Evaluate the public art component of the program. Many businesses in my district want to apply for the Public Art Incentive but feel that the City's list of specific artists is too restrictive. Consider amendments that would add flexibility to the program, and work with the Commission for Arts and Culture to update the list of eligible artists.

- Conduct additional outreach to make local small businesses aware of the program. I would be interested in working with staff to spread the word in local business districts to ensure that eligible business owners can fully consider the benefits of participating in the program.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter. I look forward to collaborating with you to improve the effectiveness of the Storefront Improvement Program for the benefit of our small businesses, our economy, and the character of our neighborhoods.

cc: Erik Caldwell, Economic Development Department Director
Honorable Councilmembers
Independent Budget Analyst Andrea Tevlin