

For Sugar Land Homeowners

GREAT HOMES APPLICANT GUIDE



2024 Edition

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SUGARLANDECODEV.COM/GREAT-HOMES

CONTACT US

- Greathomes@sugarlandtx.gov
- Ph: (713) 702-0573
- In-person consultations are available during working hours on Tuesday through Thursday and can be requested via email

INTRODUCTION

The purpose and intent of Great Homes is to empower Sugar Land's residents and communities to participate with the City in preserving, protecting, and enhancing Sugar Land's single-family housing and neighborhood areas.

In October 2023, City Council approved a second year of funding for programs under Great Homes. Sugar Land homeowners are encouraged to take advantage of the Great Homes programs in order to take advantage of the incentives that the City is offering and reinvest into the most important asset of their lives, their home.

Key topics covered in this guide include:

1. Getting Started: We will explore how to identify a potential project as it relates to the Great Homes programs.
2. The Design Program: Learn how to get a creative, re-envisioned exterior home design at a Sugar Land-exclusive cost.
3. The Update Program: Learn about our incentive program for projects that rehabilitate and/or refurbish of the exterior of a single-family residential property



GETTING STARTED

Before jumping into the Great Homes programs, all program participants are recommended to:

- Reach out to your homeowners association to get a better understanding of the approval process for home improvement projects.
- Research and find a reputable vendor to complete your home improvement project.
- Learn about the City's permitting process for projects that require a permit.

Reach out to your homeowners association to get a better understanding of the approval process for home improvement projects.

When embarking on home improvement projects, it is crucial to establish clear communication with your homeowners association (HOA) to gain a comprehensive understanding of their approval process. Initiating contact with the HOA allows homeowners to navigate the guidelines and regulations that govern alterations to their properties. Start by reaching out to the HOA board or designated representative to inquire about the specific procedures and requirements for project approval. Clearly articulate the details of your proposed home improvement, providing any necessary documentation such as a scope of work, plans, sketches, and contractor/vendor quotes. This proactive approach not only ensures compliance with community guidelines but also fosters a positive relationship with the HOA, fostering a collaborative atmosphere that benefits both homeowners and the community as a whole.

Research and find a reputable vendor to complete your home improvement project.

When embarking on a home improvement project, finding a reputable vendor is paramount to the success of the endeavor. Leveraging online tools such as Google and Yelp can be invaluable in this process. Begin by conducting thorough research on potential vendors in your area, reading reviews, and testimonials from previous clients. Google can help you assess a vendor's overall online presence, including their website and any additional customer feedback. Look for local vendors with consistently positive reviews, transparent pricing, and a proven track record in the specific type of home improvement project you're planning. Additionally, consider seeking recommendations from friends, family, or neighbors who may have had positive experiences with local vendors. This diligent approach to vendor selection ensures that you choose a reliable and reputable professional to bring your home improvement vision to fruition.

Learn about the City's permitting process for projects that require a permit.

Understanding and navigating the city's permitting process is necessary for any home improvement project that requires the City's approval through a permit. Please note that, in order to be reimbursed through the Great Homes Update Program, a permit will be required to be submitted along with one's reimbursement paperwork. Detailed information about how to obtain a residential project permit can be found on the City of Sugar Land's website at <https://www.sugarlandtx.gov/2362/Permits-Inspections>.

Projects that often require a permit include but are not limited to: siding projects; replacement of driveway; addition, expansion, or replacement of front porch, and installation of exterior accent lighting features. If you are unsure whether or not your project requires a city permit, then please reach out to the Permits & Inspections office at permits@sugarlandtx.gov.



Sugar Land Example 1



PROGRAM #1: THE DESIGN PROGRAM

The Great Homes Design Program provides Sugar Land homeowners and homeowner associations (HOAs) with a creative, re-envisioned exterior home design at a Sugar Land-exclusive cost. In addition, up to a \$500 rebate and an additional 2% reimbursement through the Update Program is available for homeowners who substantially implement at least one qualifying exterior improvement to their home within six months of receiving a design.

Your Custom Design Elements

(Click for Details)



Paint Colors



Why get a home design?

A professionally-done home design has the power to inspire homeowners to make impactful improvements to the exterior of their homes. When you engage in the process of envisioning and designing your ideal home, it opens up opportunities to explore creative ideas and innovative solutions for the exterior. This process can spark inspiration and motivate you to take action in transforming the outward appearance of your home. All Sugar Land homeowners can utilize the Great Homes Design Program to get a home design at a Sugar Land-exclusive, heavily discounted price. Each home design will include a professional rendering of your home as well as a clickable list of paint colors and materials that you can use to implement your professional design.

Choosing a design vendor

Program participants will have the opportunity to choose from one of two exterior design firms to receive a professional home design from while supplies last:



Brick & Batten

- Brick & Batten's exterior design service, normally priced at \$995, is available to program participants for only \$200



Dzinly

- Dzinly's exterior design service, normally priced at \$199, is available to program participants for only \$25

Design Program Application Process

Sugar Land homeowners who would like to get a professional home design through the Design Program can apply to receive a design voucher at <https://sugarlandecodev.com/great-homes/design-program>. Each design voucher will include a voucher code that you can use at Brick & Batten or Dzinly to claim their discounted exterior design services.

After receiving a voucher, you will visit the design vendor's website with your voucher code. The first step with design vendors typically involves filling out a detailed questionnaire that covers your design preferences and requirements. This information helps the design team understand your home's unique needs. Some tips:

- We encourage all homeowners to let the designers know if you have HOA restrictions that may affect your design so that you can receive an actionable home design.
- If you have paint color preferences or improvements such as landscaping, lighting, or windows that you'd like emphasized, then make sure to let your designer know!

After providing photographs of your home's exterior, the design professionals at Brick & Batten or Dzinly will then craft a customized design plan, incorporating various elements such as color schemes, architectural details, and landscaping suggestions. Throughout the process, clients can communicate directly with the design vendor to provide feedback and ensure that the final design aligns with their vision. The result is a thoughtfully curated home design that reflects your individual taste and enhances the aesthetic appeal of your property.



[APPLY FOR
THE DESIGN PROGRAM HERE](https://sugarlandecodev.com/great-homes)

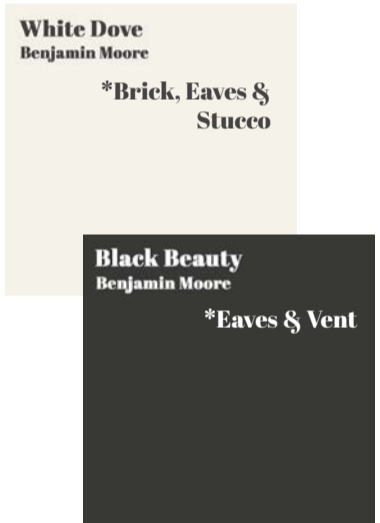


Your Custom Design Elements

(Click for Details)



Paint Colors



Additional Notes

Doors - Doors can be sourced locally by a custom door manufacturer or via the vendor(s) recommended in your deliverable. Please refer to our [Additional Items](#) page for more information.

Gutters - Color: Black. Style: Round Downspouts.

House Numbers - Size: Determined by space. For size guide information please click [HERE](#).

Lights - Size: Determined by space; however, we recommend 1/3 - 1/4 the size of your door.

Roof - Please consult with your roofer on the material that is best for your environment. We recommend colors and companies, but product recommendations may vary based on geography.

Stone & Pavers - For stone and pavers, sourcing stone locally will save you money and allow you to see your stone before you purchase. We recommend finding a local vendor and asking them to match our color with their local selection.

Windows - We recommend [Renewal by Andersen](#) composite windows for their durability and low maintenance. Please request a quote and more information at the link provided [HERE](#). More cost effective options such as vinyl windows can also be sourced locally or from manufacturers such as Andersen or Pella.

Sampling

Please note that we ALWAYS RECOMMEND SAMPLING paint, stone, siding, brick, etc., because every eye and computer screen shows color differently. We recommend viewing your samples in your environment and observing them at different times of day. Some manufacturers will send samples for free, however, many will require that you purchase them. Our friends at Samplize will provide you with superior customer service and extra large 9 x 14.75 inch PEEL & STICK PAINT SAMPLES of the colors we have recommended for the exterior of your building.

Please use the link [HERE](#) to order "Real Paint, No Mess" samples.

Landscape Design

Looking for more geographic landscape expertise to bring our landscape visualization to life? Tilly is an affordable online landscape design company that creates custom landscape design plans scaled for your yard based on your location, planting zone, and more and can even procure your plants and have them shipped directly to your home.

Reach out to Tilly [HERE](#) to see how they can help you bring your yard to life!

Brick & Batten Store

Additional design inspiration can be found [HERE](#) at our brick&batten store which features a curated collection of our designers favorite product picks.

Please also refer to the [FAQ](#) and [ADDITIONAL ITEMS](#) pages of our website.

PROGRAM #2: THE UPDATE PROGRAM

Get up to \$10,000 for completing an exterior home improvement project

Before



Received home design through the Design Program



Homeowner implemented Improvements using the Update Program



About the Update Program

The Great Homes Update Program is an incentive program available for eligible homeowners to apply for a reimbursement incentive to complete projects that rehabilitate, enhance, or refurbish the exterior of their residential property within the Sugar Land city limits.

Incentive Information

Matching reimbursement grant funds may be provided for up to 10% or 25% the cost of the project, up to \$10,000 maximum. Projects started or completed prior to an application being approved and an agreement being signed will not qualify for the incentive, nor be reimbursed. Each home project may qualify for a 10% or a 25% reimbursement incentive based on the latest certified appraised values from the Fort Bend County Appraisal district.

In addition, an additional 2% reimbursement incentive may be granted if all of the requirements are met:

- The Applicant has obtained an exterior home design through the Great Homes Design Program
- The Applicant describes the scope of work for the project in the Application and states how the project will achieve the exterior home design granted through the Great Homes Design Program
- The applicant demonstrates substantial completion of at least one aspect of the design, excluding landscaping. Examples of substantial completion include: (1) painting a home to match the colorway of a home design; (2) adding or modifying architectural features to match a reimagined home design; and/or (3) implementing improvements to match those found in a home design, such as windows, garage doors, or lighting features.

How do I qualify for the 25% reimbursement incentive?

A project may qualify for the 25% reimbursement incentive if the eligible property is constructed in 1993 or earlier and has a Fort Bend County Appraisal District appraised market value of less than \$395,855, based on the latest certified appraised values.

If your home does not meet the conditions above, then your home improvement project will likely qualify for the 10% reimbursement incentive.

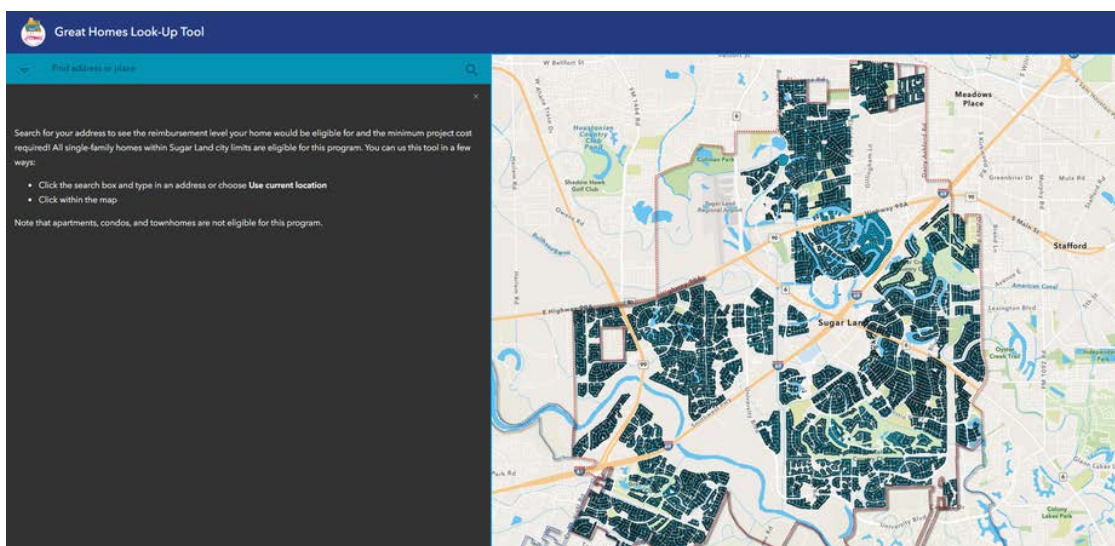
How does the Update Program work?

To receive a reimbursement incentive, you must apply for the Update Program and be approved by the City first. Applications are accepted online via the Update Program webpage (look for the link at the bottom of the page). After being approved by the City, signing an agreement, and receiving a notice to proceed, you will then begin and complete your home improvement project while collecting the necessary reimbursement paperwork. After completing your home improvement project, you will submit your reimbursement paperwork. Once that reimbursement paperwork is approved, you will receive a check in the mail from the City.

Is my home eligible?

The Great Homes Update Program is available for single-family home improvement projects located within the Sugar Land city limits only. Homeowners must be current on taxes for the property they are applying for and possess an active homeowner's insurance policy. To check to see if your home is located in the Sugar Land City Limits, your potential reimbursement percentage (10% vs 25%), and minimum total required project cost, please use the home lookup tool below:

[Great Homes Update Program Home Look-up Tool](#)
[\[Click Here\]](#)



The Great Homes Update Program Home Look-up Tool is a quick and convenient way to see what reimbursement percentage you qualify for, as well as your minimum required total project cost to participate in the Update Program.

What projects are eligible for the Update Program?

When applying for the Update Program, you must apply with an eligible project. The minimum total project cost must be \$4,000 if you fall into the 25% reimbursement bracket, and \$8,000 if you fall in the 10% reimbursement bracket. Your project can include one or more of the eligible project types below to meet the minimum total project cost requirement:

- Exterior painting
- Addition of new exterior siding, soffit, or trim
- Exterior siding replacement
- Garage door replacement
- Front door replacement
- Replacement or expansion of driveway and/or front path
- Fence replacement
 - Fencing projects that do not have at least some portion of the new fence fronting on the street where the Property is located will be ineligible
- Roof replacement
 - Only 10% of the roof replacement project cost will count toward your total reimbursable project cost
 - Additionally, roof replacement projects must be substantially accompanied by another type of qualifying project to be considered, and the cost of the roof replacement that counts toward the total project cost cannot exceed the cost of other parts of the project
 - For example, a roof replacement with a total replacement cost of Twenty Thousand and No/100 Dollars (\$20,000.00) will only count for Two Thousand and No/100 Dollars (\$2,000.00) towards the total project cost. If you were eligible for the 10% reimbursement, an additional qualifying project totaling at least \$2,000.00 would need to be added in order to meet the \$4,000.00 minimum total project cost threshold.
- Window replacement
 - Only 50% of the window replacement cost will count towards your total project cost. For example, a window replacement project with a total replacement cost of Twenty Thousand and No/100 Dollars (\$20,000) will only count for Ten Thousand and No/100 Dollars (\$10,000) towards the total reimbursable project cost.
- Gutter replacement
 - Must be accompanied by a qualifying exterior siding, exterior painting project, and/or roof project
- Addition, expansion, or replacement of front patio
- Installation of exterior accent lighting features
- Landscaping projects such as tree planting and/or the replacement/addition of turf, shrubs, plants, and trees
 - Must be substantially accompanied by another qualifying project and cannot exceed the cost of the other project
 - Must be substantially accompanied by another type of qualifying project to be considered and the cost of the landscaping project cannot exceed the cost of the other project
 - For example, a \$3,000 project could be accompanied by a \$1,000 landscaping project to meet the minimum \$4,000 minimum total project cost threshold

What documentation is required when applying?

Documentation required to be uploaded with the online application includes:

- Completed W9 Form
- Proof of Property's Market Value and Build Date (Proof must be obtained from the Fort Bend Central Appraisal District (FBCAD) [\(T\)](#))
- Proof of being current on taxes (Proof must be obtained from the Fort Bend County Tax Office [I](#))
- Proof of current homeowner's insurance
- Detailed color photographs of the existing conditions
- Proposed project documents/drawings/images
- Documentation of project cost and project scope
- Signed Disclosure of Information on Lead-Based Paint and/or Lead-Based Paint Hazards

Applicants are solely responsible for obtaining required HOA approvals for their project and required permits.

What documentation is required to get reimbursed after I get approved for the Update Program?

Per an executed agreement, the applicant must complete the approved improvements and submit a complete reimbursement package within three (3) months from the date the agreement between the Applicant and City is executed. Upon approval of the reimbursement package, city staff will coordinate delivery of a reimbursement grant check to the applicant. Documentation required to be uploaded with the reimbursement package includes:

- Copies of all required permits obtained for the installation of the improvements
- Copies of receipts and sufficient supporting documentation showing that all contractors have been paid the total project cost. Documentation must include cancelled checks and/or bank statements.
 - Cash payments are not acceptable and will not be reimbursed.
- Letter from property owner warranting those improvements have been completed according to requirements of the agreement
- Detailed color photographs of all completed improvements.

[Learn more and apply today at
Sugarlandcodev.com/great-homes/update-program](https://sugarlandcodev.com/great-homes/update-program)

APPLYING FOR THE UPDATE PROGRAM

Using eProval

How do I get started with an application?

- Link to Application: <https://permitsandgrants.sugarlandtx.gov/dashboard/application/start/110071a1-df63-4340-b1e8-d048f1efe0bb>
- After reviewing the program page and program policy, you will visit the application landing page pictured on the right
 - This landing page features a video that will walk you through all aspects of the application and how to fill it out. We highly recommend reviewing this video while applying.
- In order to start an application, you must create an account on eProval. You will login to this account to review the status of your application and communicate with program staff directly through the application platform, eProval
 - Alternatively, you can email us directly at greathomes@sugarlandtx.gov

The screenshot shows the eProval interface for the Great Homes Update Program. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'eProval', 'DASHBOARD', 'APPLICATIONS', 'REPORTS', and 'TOOLS'. The user 'Jonathan' is logged in. The main heading is 'CREATE APPLICATION'. Below that, the program name 'Great Homes Update Program' is displayed. A video player shows a logo for the program featuring a house and the text 'Great Homes Update Program'. Below the video, there are sections for 'IMPORTANT TIPS' and 'Eligible Projects'. At the bottom, there is a button labeled 'Great Homes Improvement Application' with a right-pointing arrow and the text 'Click here to begin your application.'

****IMPORTANT TIPS**

- Please watch the above video prior to applying for more detailed information on how to submit an application.
- You must obtain a quote for the contractor/business that you plan to utilize through the program before applying
 - Only formal documents will be accepted for the contractor quotes. Quotes must include: a date, the scope of work, photos of the proposed improvements, business contact information (Name, Address, Phone Number)
- Work that has been started/completed prior to getting a notice to proceed from the City will not be reimbursed or accepted
 - Any quotes/estimates that are already signed for or paid for will not be accepted. Do not begin any work prior to getting a notice to proceed from the City.
- Visit the [Great Homes Home Lookup Tool](#) to lookup your home's address and identify your potential reimbursement percentage amount (10% vs 25% reimbursement) and minimum total project (\$4,000 vs \$8,000) cost required.

Eligible Projects

- The minimum total project cost must be greater than \$4,000 or \$8,000, depending on the incentive bracket your home qualifies for. Please use our [Great Homes Home Lookup Tool](#) to see which incentive bracket your home qualifies for (10% or 25% reimbursement incentive) and what minimum total project cost is required in your application.
- Projects qualifying for the incentive include:
 - Exterior painting
 - Addition of new exterior siding, soffit, or trim
 - Exterior siding replacement
 - Garage door replacement
 - Front door replacement
 - Replacement or expansion of driveway and/or front path
 - Fence replacement (Note: Fencing projects without some portion fronting on the property's street will be ineligible)
 - Roof replacement (Only 10% of the cost counts towards the total reimbursable project cost. It must be substantially accompanied by another qualifying project.)
 - Window replacement (Only 50% of the total cost counts towards the total reimbursable project cost.)
 - Gutter replacement (Must be accompanied by a qualifying exterior siding, exterior painting project, and/or roof project.)
 - Addition, expansion, or replacement of a front patio
 - Installation of exterior accent lighting features

Great Homes Improvement Application
Click here to begin your application.

After creating an account, you will click on the box at the bottom of the page to begin your application.

Project Highlights - 2023



Before



After

- New windows, siding, and paint



Before



After

- Added new driveway over existing dirt driveway



Before

- New paint, structural pillars, and fence



After

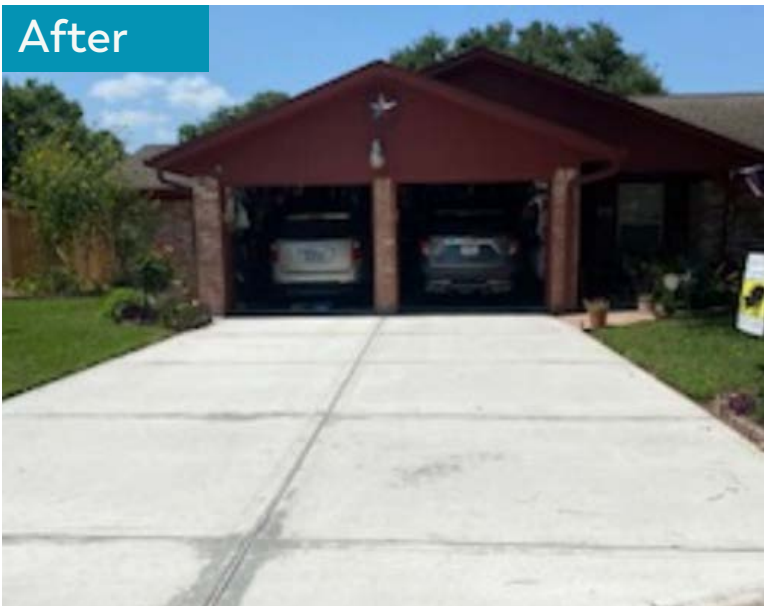


After

Before

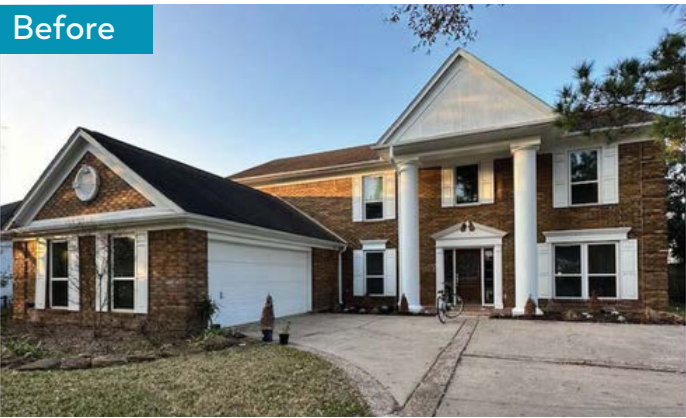


After



- New Driveway

Before



- New exterior paint in a modern colorway

After 1



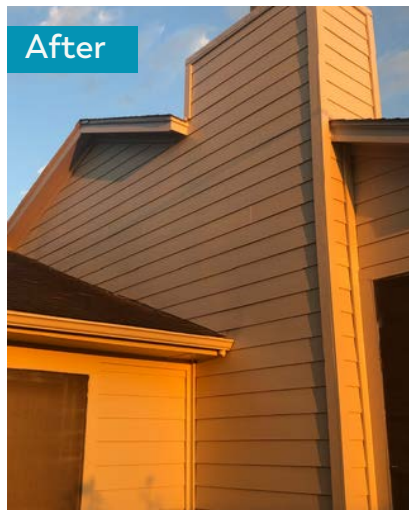
After 2



Before

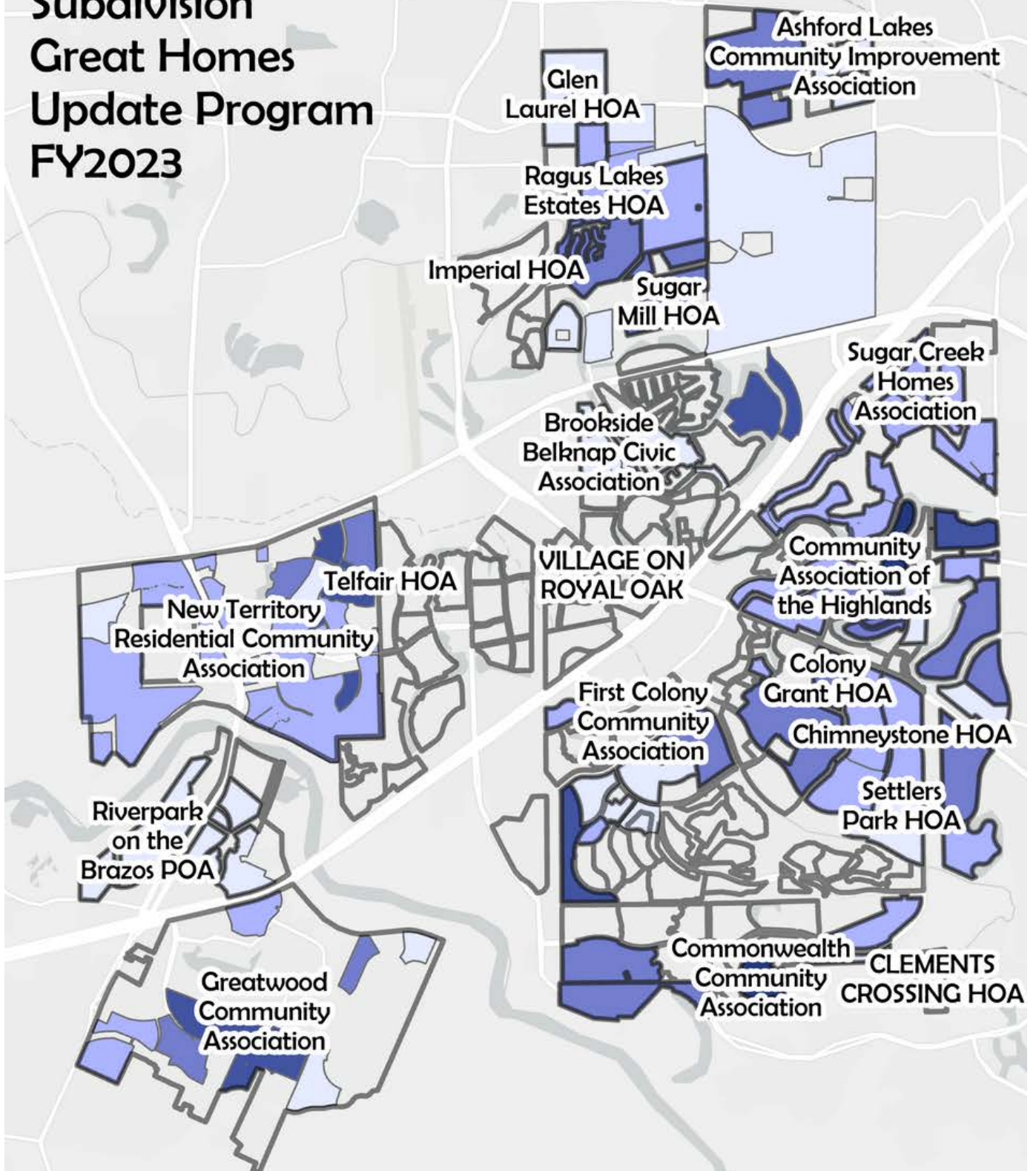


After



- Replaced rotting siding

Average Project Cost by Subdivision Great Homes Update Program FY2023



City of Houston, HPB, Texas Parks & Wildlife, CONANP, Esri, HERE, Garmin, Foursquare, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, USDA

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

This next section includes some of the most frequently asked questions in regards to the Great Homes Design Program and Update Program.



What's new for Great Homes in 2024?

The Update Program

- The threshold to qualify for the 25% reimbursement incentive has been updated to reflect the latest median data from the Fort Bend County Appraisal District ("FBCAD") for any given Fiscal Year. Based on the latest certified values from the Fort Bend County Appraisal District, your home will need to have been built in or before 1993 and have a FBCAD market value of \$395,855 or less. You can check your home's build date and market value from the FBCAD at their website: <https://esearch.fbcad.org/>. If your home does not meet these thresholds, then you can still qualify for the 10% reimbursement incentive
- Eligible project types have been added, such as replacement of gutters (cannot be standalone) and front door replacement
- The minimum total project cost required for home projects eligible for the 10% reimbursement incentive has increased to \$8,000
- For window replacement projects, only 50% of the cost will count towards the total reimbursable project cost
- Fencing projects must have at least some portion of the new fence fronting on the street where the property is located
- An additional 2% reimbursement incentive is available for applicants who obtain an exterior home design through the Great Homes Design Program and include it in an Update Program application

The Design Program

- If you apply to the Update program with a design received through the Design program and substantially implement an element of that design, then you can receive an additional 2% reimbursement through the Update Program
- Design vouchers are in very limited supply for 2024, so [apply today!](#)

How is the City paying for these programs?

Funding for the Great Homes programs was approved by City Council in Fiscal Year 2023 & Fiscal Year 2024 and is sourced from the General Fund.

Can you use both the Design Program and the Update Program?

Yes! Participating in both the Design Program and the Update Program is highly recommended but not required. We encourage all program participants to get a home design first through the Design Program, and then after a home design is completed by the professional designers, apply for the Update Program with a project estimate from a local vendor of your own choice.

Does the City have any recommendations on vendors that could complete X project for the Update Program?

No, the City of Sugar Land, as a city government, cannot give any recommendations on local vendors that could complete your exterior home improvement project. We recommend finding a reputable vendor with a proven track record through using online tools such as Google or Yelp and consulting with community members/your neighbors for vendor recommendations.

I own two or more homes in Sugar Land. Am I still eligible for this program?

Yes! There is no limit to how many homes you can apply with, as long as they are a single-family home located within the city limits.

Are reimbursements/incentives received through Great Homes considered to be taxable income?

Yes, income received through the Great Homes programs may be considered to be taxable income and must be reported to the IRS. 2024 reimbursement/rebate recipients should expect to receive a Form 1099 from the City of Sugar Land in the mailing address you indicate in your Form W-9 in January 2025.

THANK YOU!

Why is the City of Sugar Land doing this?



To stay relevant and preserve Sugar Land's quality of life for current and future residents, City Council has identified redevelopment as a key priority for the city.



New and redeveloped housing options will create new pathways to home ownership, create a place nearby for family and our workforce, and increase our population which will drive demand for existing and new dining, retail, amenities, and attractions.



The City is providing incentive programs for you as a homeowner, so that you can update and transform your home while taking advantage of an incentive program available exclusively for Sugar Land homeowners. The City needs your participation as homeowners to help Sugar Land stay relevant, create desirable housing options, and maintain a competitive edge as we redefine growth.



CONTACT US

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