

CITY OF TITUSVILLE COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

DOWNTOWN COMMERCIAL BEAUTIFICATION PROGRAM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES



AUGUST 2011

Section 1

Program Purpose and Benefits

The City of Titusville's Community Redevelopment Agency's Downtown Commercial Beautification Program allows for the use of Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) grant funds for general improvements to the exterior of those structures serving a commercial purpose located within the boundaries of the City's Downtown Titusville Community Redevelopment Area. Public and non profit properties serving a commercial purpose for the benefit of the Downtown are allowed to apply for grant funds. A commercial purpose shall include those properties that provide tourist, office, business or professional services, or otherwise promote/assist the economic growth of the Downtown Redevelopment Area.

The intent of the Downtown Commercial Beautification Program is to increase commercial occupancy rates and property values within the CRA while revitalizing the overall appearance of the Downtown. To accomplish this objective, the Program assists eligible property owners and tenants to restore or renovate the exteriors of their structures, thereby improving the area's physical characteristics and enhancing the visual quality and attractiveness of the environment, which will lead to increased investment, occupancy and property values.

Eligible applicants can receive grant funding up to \$40,000. All exterior improvements must be consistent with the City of Titusville's Community Redevelopment Plan, Downtown Master Plan, Urban Design Manual, and the Land Development Regulations set forth in the City of Titusville's Code of Ordinances.

CRA staff will review applications for completeness and determine if funding is to be recommended. The CRA Executive Director or designee may approve grant applications of \$10,000 or less; applications in excess of \$10,000 will be forwarded to the Community Redevelopment Agency for review for funding approval. Grant funds will be distributed only upon completion of improvements and submittal of all receipts, invoices and required documentation to CRA staff. Applicants must be willing to maintain the renovations and improvements for at least five years. The Grantee shall not be liable to the CRA for repayment of the grant funds provided the Grantee complies with all conditions set forth in the Grant Agreement. Should the Grantee transfer, sell, divest themselves of their interest in the subject property, or fail to maintain the renovations and improvements during the five-year period following receipt of the grant funds, the CRA shall be entitled to reimbursement of the grant funds as follows:

<u>Elapsed Time</u>	<u>Amount Due CRA</u>
0 to one year after grant funds received	100%
One year after grant funds received	80%
Two years after grant funds received	60%
Three years after grant funds received	40%
Four years after grant funds received	20%
Five years after grant funds received	0%

Grant funding is awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. Based on the amount of funding requested, applications must be approved by the appropriate entity (CRA, CRA Executive Director or designee) **before** work can begin on the improvements. Grants will not be awarded for work previously completed or that is in the process of being completed; however, at the discretion of the CRA, the CRA Executive Director or designee, costs for eligible repairs directly related to the building's exterior that were completed within six months prior to the date of the grant application may be included as part of the total project costs for grant consideration.

Section 2

Community Redevelopment Area Boundaries

The Downtown Titusville Community Redevelopment Area boundaries can be described as follows: Grace Street to the South, the Municipal Marina to the North, the Indian River Lagoon to the East and the FEC Railroad tracks to the West. See the following map.

Section 3

Eligible Expenses

1. Exterior improvements, such as storefronts, display windows, painting (in conjunction with other improvements), and exterior architectural or security lighting.
2. Removal of elements that cover original architectural design and details.
3. Signage.
4. Addition and/or replacement of awnings/doors/windows.
5. Overall replacement of architectural elements that have structural deficiencies.
6. Painting, as part of a more comprehensive improvement project.
7. New stucco and stucco bands.
8. Electrical work directly related to the exterior of the building or the installation of approved signage.
9. Professional design and engineering services related to structural renovation, new construction and signage.
10. Landscaping and irrigation (subject to approval of a Landscape Plan).
11. Demolition required to facilitate approved façade improvements.
12. Vinyl soffit and fascia, as part of more extensive project improvements.
13. Roof improvements that are visible and contribute to the architectural esthetics of the building.
14. Improvements that enhance access, such as handicapped ramps and sidewalks.
15. Decorative fencing.
16. Improvements to parking facilities which will include landscaping requirements.
17. Stormwater enhancements.

Section 4

Ineligible Expenses

1. Physical or visual removal of architecturally important features.
2. Installation of aluminum or vinyl siding.
3. Painting, when not associated with other improvements.
4. Permitting fees.
5. Any service performed by a non-licensed contractor.
6. Improvements constructed prior to execution of final agreement with the CRA.
7. Routine maintenance activities that are part of normal property ownership.
8. Repairs performed to correct Code violations.
9. Improvements to a property that has any judgment liens, is not current on all mortgage and tax obligations, and has any Code violations.
10. Statues and fountains.
11. New construction.
12. Improvements to properties that are exclusively residential.
13. Improvements to properties that have non-conforming uses.
14. Interior renovations.

Section 5

Program Criteria

1. The structure to be improved must be within the boundaries of the Downtown Titusville Community Redevelopment Area (Grace Street to the South, the Municipal Marina to the North, the Indian River Lagoon to the East and the FEC Railroad tracks to the West).
2. Applicants must demonstrate that all necessary financing required to complete the project has been secured and that the applicant is providing matching funds that are at least one-half (½) of the amount of the grant amount being requested. Matching funds will be for exterior improvements only. However, upon the discretion of the Growth Management Director, funds used for interior

improvements may be considered as matching funds. These improvements shall include only permanent structural interior improvements.

3. Applicants must have received the requisite CRA, CRA Executive Director or designee approval prior to commencement of improvements.
4. All necessary permits and approvals must be obtained from the City of Titusville before work is commenced. All work is to be performed to the satisfaction of the City of Titusville Building Department officials, and all site and landscaping work is to be performed to the satisfaction of the applicable City Administrator or designee pursuant to the Land Development Regulations.
5. A licensed contractor must perform the work; proof of licensure and insurance is required.
6. Applicants must agree to maintain the improvements for at least five years. **The Community Redevelopment Agency, CRA Executive Director or designee, as applicable, must approve any changes proposed to the improvements.**
7. The property must be free from any judgment liens, and all mortgage and tax obligations must be current.
8. There may be no more than one approval for project funding every two years. A "project" is defined as a single or set of enhancement/renovation activities for an eligible property.
9. The total amount of grant funds available for any one property under this Program is \$40,000. Any subsequent applications for the same property in future years will be treated cumulatively for purposes of determining funding eligibility.
10. An applicant can only receive funding twice per property through the Downtown Commercial Beautification Program.

Section 6

Evaluation Criteria

Grant funds are limited and will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. Because one of the primary objectives of the Downtown Commercial Beautification Program is to eliminate blighted conditions and improve the visual impact of the redevelopment area, competing applications will be evaluated using the following criteria:

1. Consistency with the goals, principles and objectives of the City of Titusville Community Redevelopment Plan, the Downtown Master Plan and the Urban Design Manual.
2. Adjacency of the project to a recent or proposed redevelopment project.

3. Likelihood that the project will result in the occupancy of a presently vacant building.
4. The amount of funds that the applicant pledged to match leveraged against CRA funds.
5. The extent to which the project encourages a secure and convenient environment for patrons and employees.
6. Receipt of previous façade improvement grant awards (first-time applicants will have priority over repeat applicants).

Section 7

Application Procedures

A property owner or tenant that is interested in participating in the Downtown Commercial Beautification Program must submit a completed and signed application, along with supporting documentation, to:

The City of Titusville Community Redevelopment Agency
555 South Washington Avenue
P.O. Box 2806
Titusville, FL 32781-2806

In addition to other supporting documents, applicants are required to submit quotes from two licensed contractors with the application.

CRA staff will review applications for completeness and for compliance with Program criteria. Applications that are incomplete may be returned for additional information. Projects that do not comply with Program criteria will not be considered for funding.

Awards of funding will be based on the lowest qualified bid. The applicant may elect to choose a contractor other than the one with lowest qualified bid but shall be responsible for all costs exceeding the lowest qualified bid. Under all circumstances, the contractor performing the work must be licensed, insured and have worker's compensation insurance.

It is recommended that applicants retain the services of a registered architect, or similarly qualified design professional to prepare plans, drawings, renderings and construction specifications for their projects. Fees for services provided by a registered architect or similarly qualified design professional may be counted towards the applicant's Program match.

The CRA will not be responsible in any manner for the selection of a contractor. An applicant should pursue all activities necessary to determine contractor qualifications, quality of workmanship, and reputation. The applicant will bear full responsibility for

reviewing the competence and abilities of prospective contractors and secure proof of licensing and insurance coverage.

Downtown Commercial Beautification Program grant applications can be obtained from the City of Titusville Community Redevelopment Agency, Second Floor, City Hall, 555 South Washington Avenue, or from the City's website at www.titusville.com.

Pre-Application Meeting

If desired, CRA staff will review the applicant's conceptual plans in an informal setting, including discussion of the eligibility criteria, Program requirements, proposed project scheduling, and consistency of the proposal with the intent of the Program. At this stage, staff can offer assistance with the completion of the application form and provide limited technical and architectural guidance on the project proposal. At the conclusion of the pre-application meeting, staff will provide the applicant with a general determination as to whether the proposed project is likely to qualify to receive Program funds and whether the applicant is sufficiently prepared to move on to the application stage.

Required Submissions

Items required for submission include:

1. A completed and signed application form.
2. At least four 4 X 6 color photographs of the existing building exterior, showing all sides of the building, with emphasis on the area to be improved.
3. Renderings or conceptual drawings of the project when completed.
4. Two bids from licensed contractors detailing the following:
 - a. Description of the materials to be used and the construction procedure.
 - b. Itemized cost estimate of the project.
5. A legal description of the property.
6. Proof of property ownership and, if a tenant, a copy of the lease.
7. Tenants must provide **written documentation verifying the property owner approves the proposed enhancements** and will sign the restrictive covenants and/or mortgage.
8. Documentation from all lending institutions verifying all mortgage payments on the property are current and that the lending institutions will provide updated information upon request by the Community Redevelopment Agency, CRA Executive Director or designee.
9. Documentation indicating that all property tax payments are current.

10. Proof of property insurance.

11. If Applicant intends to include the costs of exterior improvements completed on the subject property within the six months preceding the Application as part of the "Total Project Cost", documentation pertaining to the costs, construction and permitting of those improvements must be provided.

Application Approval

The CRA Executive Director or designee will approve or deny grant applications of \$10,000 or less. Projects in excess of \$10,000 will be forwarded to the Community Redevelopment Agency with a recommendation from CRA staff for funding approval or denial. All applicants will receive written notification regarding approval or denial of their application. If an applicant's proposal is approved by the CRA Executive Director/designee or the CRA, as applicable, the applicant will receive written notification of the approval, which will include a funding agreement listing the amount of grant funds that are approved.

Documentation of Applicant's Funding Source

The applicant will be required to document the type and source of the project funds on the application submitted to the CRA. Verification of the funding sources will be required before final approval of the grant application.

At the discretion of the CRA Executive Director or designee, or the CRA, structural repairs directly related to the building's improvements that were completed within six months prior to the date of the grant application **MAY** be used as part or all of the applicant's required match.

Construction Start

After the funding agreement has been executed, the applicant may award the construction contract and secure all necessary construction permits. The owner/tenant must issue a "Notice to Proceed" to the contractor and apply for a building permit within 60 days of executing the funding agreement. Construction must begin within 90 days of the funding agreement and be completed within 12 months of the agreement. Extensions may be granted at the discretion of the CRA Executive Director or designee, contingent upon the applicant's demonstrating just cause for such an extension.

Modifications to the approved final plans or changes to the construction documents, which produce visible differences in the approved façade design, will require review and approval by the CRA and/or CRA staff. Failure to receive such approval shall invalidate the funding agreement, and the agreement will be deemed terminated. In the event the agreement is terminated, and if any grant funds have been disbursed to the applicant by the CRA as provided below, the disbursed funds shall become immediately due and payable to the CRA.

Disbursements

Generally, approved projects will receive reimbursement funding upon completion of the project and submission of all required receipts, invoices and documentation. For projects in excess of \$10,000 (grant and applicant match combined), where the applicant cannot secure full funding for the project, the Executive Director of the CRA may approve the partial payment. Grant funds once a project has reached agreed-upon milestones. In these cases, the applicant and the CRA will reach an agreement before construction begins on the terms and conditions of such a milestone and the amount of the partial payment. However, grant funds cannot be used to reimburse the applicant for any work done on the building prior to the date of a fully executed Grant Agreement between the applicant and the Community Redevelopment Agency; however, at the discretion of the CRA, the CRA Executive Director or designee, costs for eligible improvements directly related to the building's exterior that were complete within six months prior to the date of the grant application may be included as part of the project cost for grant consideration.

Funds will be disbursed by a check payable to the applicant (1) upon certification of completion by a City Building official, or as agreed to with the CRA Executive Director; (2) CRA staff verification that the work was completed as proposed in a satisfactory and professional manner; and (3) submission of all receipts and required documentation, including contractor invoicing, and evidence of payment of funds for reimbursement and match, to CRA staff. Funds will not be disbursed on projects that are not in accordance with the approved plans.

The City's Community Development Department will make the final determination as to whether the project is complete. Applicants must provide verification, satisfactory to the CRA, of all project costs, including contractor invoicing, and evidence of payment of funds for reimbursement and match, before grant funds can be disbursed.

Application Process Summary

1. Applicant submits a complete application to the CRA office.
2. CRA staff reviews application for completeness, accuracy and eligibility.
3. CRA staff presents recommendation to the CRA Executive Director and/or CRA, as appropriate.
4. Upon approval, the applicant will be notified in writing of the amount of the grant awarded and the documentation that must be provided before funds are released.

Section 8

Disclosures

The Community Redevelopment Agency expressly reserves the right to reject any or all applications or to request additional information from any or all applicants. The CRA retains the right to amend the program guidelines and application procedures without

notice. The CRA also retains the right to display and advertise properties that receive grant funding.

Section 9

Contact Information

Questions related to the application or viability of a proposed project should be directed to CRA staff at (321) 383-5825 or (321) 264-7883.