City of Clermont - CRA

FACADE IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM

Criteria

Facade (f*uh*-**sahd**, fa-): 1. Architecture. A. the front of a building, esp. an imposing or decorative one. B. any side of a building facing a public way or space and finished accordingly.

Improvement (im-**proov**-m*uh*nt): 1. A change or addition by which a thing is improved. 2. A bringing into a more valuable or desirable condition, as of land or real property; betterment. 3. Something done to real property that increases its value.

Grant: to bestow or confer, esp. by a formal act.

Program (**proh**-gram, -gr*uh*m): 1. a plan of action to accomplish a specified end. 2. a plan or procedure for dealing with some matter.

I. Intent

It is the intent of the Clermont Community Redevelopment Agency (the "CRA"), under Part III Community Redevelopment Act, Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, to provide assistance to owners or tenants of property located within the community redevelopment area in order to further the purposes of the Downtown Redevelopment Plan by improving the visual and aesthetic appearance of structures located in that area. Such assistance for external aesthetic improvements will be in the form of a financial grant or reimbursement grant to qualified owners or tenants who apply to the City/CRA for such assistance. The purpose of these guidelines is to establish the policies and procedures to be followed by the City in considering applications.

II. Program Description

The CRA's *Facade Improvement Grant Program* provides a financial grant or reimbursement grant to pay eligible costs incurred by a qualified owner or tenant in making facade exterior improvements. Such exterior improvements may include structural, sign, facade visual treatments (paint, stucco, windows, etc.), awnings, building code and especially historical theme improvements which reflect Clermont history. Grants will be awarded only in the CRA's redevelopment area.

III. Eligibility

Grant applications will be considered only if they meet all of the following eligibility criteria.

1. Location and Clermont CRA Redevelopment Plan

The project must be located within the Clermont CRA's Redevelopment Area, as presented in the adopted CRA Redevelopment Plan, adopted in January 26 2010. The requested rehabilitation must also further the Clermont CRA Plan, inclusive of any subsequent amendments.

2. Applicants

Owners or tenants of real property within the Clermont CRA Redevelopment Area as described in the Redevelopment Plan, dated January 26, 2010. Property must be considered non-residential (e.g. commercial, retail or office) unless it is a mixed use (residential being a clear secondary use) according to the Clermont Comprehensive Plan and Zoning. Applicants for this program must be able to demonstrate financial capability to complete the project and long term commitment to maintain the property in the condition to which it will be renovated.

Nonprofit and/or religious entities may be eligible. Please see #4, D.

3. Consistency with Governmental Regulations: Clermont Code Enforcement Compliance; Clermont Comprehensive Plan; Zoning & Clermont Land Development Code; Architectural Standards for the City of Clermont; CRA Redevelopment Plan, and; Florida Building Code.

Eligible projects must demonstrate consistency with the City of Clermont's Comprehensive Plan, Land Development Code, applicable zoning, and is consistent with the *CRA Redevelopment Plan*, as evidenced by a review from the City's Planning & Zoning Department. The rehabilitation must meet all requirements of Clermont's building and safety code requirements, Code Enforcement, Comprehensive Plan, Zoning & Land Development Code, the City of Clermont Architectural Standards, and the Florida Building Code – all upon completion of the project. Any project must have a Business tax Receipt, or be a permitted use, or have a Conditional Use Permit to operate.

4. Eligible Projects and Costs

A) It is the intent of this grant program to refund a portion of the applicant's cost for exterior cosmetic, non-structural improvements to a structure that will increase aesthetic appeal. Exterior improvements to existing property within the CRA project area must improve the appearance of the exterior of the non-residential building. All new construction not substantially contributing to the aesthetic improvement will be excluded from this program. Any other grants from other City/City programs may not be combined for the same materials or work. Handicap access must be available.

The following are examples of eligible improvements:

- i) Refurbishing of an exterior wall, including repainting, repairs, re-siding or similar cosmetic improvements;
- ii) Exterior windows and/or doors, including:
  - (a) Installation of new or replacement windows and/or doors;
  - (b) Repair or refurbishing of existing windows and/or doors; or
  - (c) Similar cosmetic improvements;
- iii) Signs, including the removal of old signs and the design production and installation of new signs. One monument sign may be eligible but at least half the grant funding must be used for the façade itself.
- iv) Demolition of exterior cosmetic features necessary to install new exterior cosmetic improvements;

v) Awnings or canopies over windows or walkways and other decorative improvements, including shutters; and

vi) Re-shingling or re-surfacing of the roof or mansard, provided that the re-shingling or re-surfacing contributes to the aesthetics of the facade.

vii) A building on a corner or having a rear facade facing a major street, and containing a single business, may be considered to have two facades, and may combine funding over all, not to exceed $10,000 ($5,000 each side). Each façade must be separated for grant funding, and funds and receipts cannot be combined.

viii) Buildings with multiple units under one roof may combine grant funds provided that units have separate entrances, and have been previously subdivided or partitioned such that:

1. There are separate primary entrances for each business.
2. Each of the businesses has separate and distinct business tax receipts and sales tax licenses.
3. Permanent interior walls must have been in place to be considered as multiple facades, under one roof.

B) Specifically exempted from the grant monies are the following:

i) Parking lot paving or resurfacing;

ii) Landscaping and/or irrigation;

iii) Off building signage (i.e. any signs not attached to the building, mansard or canvas type awnings);

iv) All structural improvements not substantially contributing to the aesthetic improvement of the property, including load-bearing walls or other similar structural components; and

v) Other improvements required for the re-occupation of the property by the City's adopted Standard Building Code.

vi) Any internal improvements

vii) Building permits.

C) The applicant must contribute at least 25% over and above the cost of the requested grant amount.

The grant amount shall in no event exceed $5,000.00 per facade or storefront (see A.vii above), and shall not exceed the total cost of all improvements. The applicant must pay for any additional costs over and above the maximum grant amount, and any applicant estimated costs, in order to complete any desired Final bills submitted to the City for reimbursement. In the event actual project costs designated to be paid for by the *FIGP* come in lower than the estimated contract costs, the grant shall meet, not exceed those actual costs, no matter any additional applicant costs. All bills (marked paid in full), or release of lean must be submitted for reimbursement to the city as proof of payment by the applicant.

D) Any building owned by a nonprofit and/or religious entity for services or meetings that do not pay property taxes shall only be eligible for *Facade Improvement Grant Program* funding up to $5,000. The applicant must contribute at least 50% over and above the cost of the requested grant amount.

E) Any applicant not meeting the FIGP criteria may request further consideration for an exception from by the CRA, depending on the intent of the renovation.

5. Documentation

The grant application must be completed and submitted to the City with the following additional items:

a. Photographs of the existing building and the proposed project area.

b. Schematic drawings illustrating all proposed work, or pictures with project description outlined. Include a description of materials and methods to be used, depending on the proposed project (i.e. sign replacement, new awnings, stucco, signage, new brick, brick re-pointing, etc.)

c. Material samples or color swatches should be provided for approval.

d. Cost estimates for each aspect of the project.
Example:

Awnings:	$3,590.00
Paint:	900.00
Sign(s):	2,230.00
TOTAL:	$6,720.00

6. Application and Grant Availability

The applicant is advised that this grant is given at the sole discretion of the City of Clermont and CRA, and these criteria are used as a base to evaluate the Applicant's project, and does not create entitlement to funding. The application shall be reviewed by the Clermont Planning & Zoning Department and the Site Review Committee for completeness and eligibility prior to any approvals.

* All grant funds are subject to availability as authorized by, and at the sole discretion of the CRA. A maximum of two applications within a three (3) year (City fiscal year), provided the two applications do not exceed the $5,000 per front for both requests, and that the grants would not be available for the same item.

Please note: All projects must be completed within 120 days (4 months) or by the contracted date after receiving approval from the City of Clermont and CRA staff and any required City building permits. All work must be completed by the completion date assigned according to the contract. Incomplete projects may require reimbursement to the CRA, according to contract requirements.

7. Disbursement of Funds

The City of Clermont must approve in concept, proposed improvements.

Applications for improvements will be reviewed for completeness and if they are eligible, the applicant will be notified. At the time the grant is awarded, funds will be dispersed as follows:

a. Applicant may receive monthly payments based on submittal of paid receipts. Maximum payout is 75% of the grant amount until final CO or approval is completed. Building permits may be required for work to be done, and the applicant must check with the Building Official to determine permit needs.

b. In the event building permits are not required for such grant approved renovations, approval may be granted by the City or it's representative to proceed; and/or

c. Applicant will be eligible for the remaining portion of the grant at the time of approved final inspection by, or issuance of final approval from the City of Clermont and the CRA for the completed project. Verification of payments being made to a vendor or contractor must be presented, (canceled checks, paid invoice from vendors, i.e. the awning contractor, etc.) prior to issuing final grant payment.

d. All grant requirements must meet all requirements and City of Clermont codes.

e. Applicant will be notified in writing as to approval or denial.

f. Final bills submitted to the City for reimbursement. In the event actual project costs designated to be paid for by the FIGP come in lower than the estimated contract costs, the grant shall meet, not exceed those actual costs, no matter any additional applicant costs. All bills (marked paid in full), or release of lean must be submitted for reimbursement to the city as proof of payment by the applicant.

ANY COST FOR WORK PREVIOUSLY COMPLETED PRIOR TO AN APPROVED APPLICATION CANNOT BE REIMBURSED UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCE. DO NOT START ANY PHYSICAL RENOVATIONS UNTIL AFTER FINAL APPROVAL BY THE CITY, COMPLETION OF THE CONTRACT WITH THE CITY & NOTICE TO PROCEED HAS BEEN ISSUED. BUILDING PERMITS MAY BE REQUIRED.

***** For more information about the Clermont *Facade Improvement Grant Program*, please contact:

City of Clermont
Economic Development Department
685 W. Montrose St.
Clermont, FL. 34711
(352) 241-7305
Email: jhitt@clermontfl.org

REDEVELOPMENT DEFINITIONS

Alteration. Any construction or physical change in the internal arrangement of rooms or the supporting members of a building or structure, or change in the appearance of any building or structure.

Applicant. Owner(s) or lessee(s) of property, or their agent(s), or person(s) who have contracted to purchase property contingent upon their ability to acquire necessary permits under this Land Development Code, or the agent(s) of such persons.

Awning. A roof-like cover that is attached to and projects from the wall of a building for the purpose of shielding from the elements.

Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA). The public body created to designate redevelopment project areas, supervise and coordinate planning for a project area and implement the Community Redevelopment Plan, (City Council or appointed by) according to Florida Statutes, Chapter 163, Part III.

Redevelopment Plan. Plan for revitalizing and redevelopment of land within the project area in order to eliminate blight.

CRA District. That area designated by the Redevelopment Plan of the Community Redevelopment Agency which is considered in need of redevelopment.

Design. Includes the planning and engineering of the following: street alignments, grades and widths; drainage and sanitary facilities and utilities, including alignments of grades thereof; location and size of all required easements and rights-of-ways; fire roads and fire breaks; lot size and configuration; traffic access; grading; land to be dedicated for park or recreational purposes; building and other such specific physical requirements.

Architectural Standards. Criteria developed by the City to identify design concerns, and to help property owners ensure that new construction and rehabilitation respect the character of designated buildings or districts.

Design Review. The process of ascertaining whether modifications to structures, sites, or districts meet the standards of appropriateness established by the CRA.

Facade. The face or elevation(s) of a building.

Infill Development. Development that occurs on up to 4 contiguous lots scattered within areas that are already largely developed or urbanized. Generally, these sites are vacant because they were once considered of insufficient size for development, because an existing building located on the site was demolished or because there were other, more desirable site for development.

Preservation. The identification, evaluation, recordation, documentation, analysis, recovery, interpretation, curation, acquisition, protection, management, rehabilitation, restoration, stabilization, maintenance, or reconstruction of historic properties.

Reconstruction. The authentic reproduction of a building or site that once existed, but disappeared or was demolished.

Rehabilitation. The act or process of returning a property to a state of utility through repair or alteration which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions or features of the property that are significant to its historical, architectural, and cultural values.

Renovation. Modernization of an old or historic building that may produce inappropriate alterations or elimination of important features or details.

Restoration. The creation of an authentic reproduction beginning with existing parts of an original object or building, and to return the appearance to an earlier condition.

Review Authority. The person, committee, commission, board or council responsible for the review and/or final action or approval on a land use entitlement.

Revitalization. The imparting of new economic and community life in an existing neighborhood, area, or business district while at the same time preserving the original building stock and historic character.

Streetscape. The distinguishing and pictorial character of a particular street as created by its width, degree of curvature and paving materials, design of the street furniture, landscape materials, lighting features, general view, and forms of surrounding buildings.