



COMMERCIAL FACADE GRANT PROGRAM



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COMMERCIAL FAÇADE GRANT

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

1. OVERVIEW

The intent of the Commercial Façade Grant Program is to support the revitalization of the commercial corridors in the FPRA district by stimulating private investment in improvements that enhance the appearance of buildings and properties and eliminate blight and non-conforming design standards. This program is designed to encourage redevelopment of the FPRA by enhancing its visual aesthetics which will lead to increased property values, tenant occupancy, economic development, and job creation. This program will complement other revitalization efforts to ensure the maximum leverage of resources and support local businesses.

It is the intent of this program to encourage improvements to private properties that go well beyond what is required under the City of Fort Pierce Land Development Code to enhance the form, function, and design quality of this redevelopment district.

The FPRA reserves the right to approve or deny any Commercial Façade Grant Program application and to deny payment at any time if, in its sole and absolute discretion, it determines that the business will not advance the goals and objectives established for redevelopment of the FPRA District.

2. FUNDING

The Commercial Façade Improvement Grant Program offers financial assistance in the form of a reimbursable, matching (50%) grant up to \$25,000 to the property or business owner for eligible expenses associated with improving the external appearance of their business and to encourage businesses to invest in their operations. Grants cannot be awarded retroactively for work that has already been completed.

Grant funding examples:

<u>Eligible Project Cost Contribution</u>	<u>FPRA Contribution</u>	<u>Applicant</u>
\$50,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
\$30,000	\$15,000	\$15,000
\$15,000	\$7,500	\$7,500
\$5,000	\$2,500	\$2,500

3. APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

The Commercial Façade Grant program is available to fund eligible exterior improvements on commercial, industrial, and mixed-use properties.

- To be eligible the building must be located within the FPRA District and be commercially zoned.
- Residential and governmental facilities do not qualify for this program.
- Application will be rejected if the property has any judgement liens, code violations, or delinquencies in mortgage or tax obligations.
- If the Applicant (Applicant is defined as the entity that is completing the application) is not the building and property owner, the building and property

owner must agree in writing to allow and support the application as part of the application process (per Property Owner Affidavit).

- Project must have proper City permits and FPRA approval prior to beginning work. Any application where work has started prior to receiving permits and approvals will be rejected.
- A project timeline must be provided with the application. The Project must be started within six (6) months from the date of FPRA Board approval and completed within 12 months of building permit issuance. Failure to do so, without an approved deviation by the FPRA, will result in termination of the grant.
- Businesses must meet City of Fort Pierce Business Tax Receipt requirements.

4. APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Ensure that your property is located within the FPRA District.
2. Review program guidelines and eligibility requirements.
3. Complete the Grant Application Form and attach all required documents.
<https://choosefortpierce.com/969/FPRA-Incentive-Program> Incomplete applications will be returned to the applicant and will NOT be evaluated until all requirements are met.
4. A staff member will contact you within five (5) business days of receiving your Grant Application Form to determine your eligibility and provide information on the grant application.
5. Staff will evaluate application based on the provided evaluation criteria. If an application receives less than 60% out of 300 possible points, it will not be eligible for funding.
6. CRAAC will review rankings and make recommendations to the FPRA Board. FPRA Board will make final determination and execute grant agreement.
7. Applicants will receive written notification of approval or denial of funding.
8. There is no guarantee that funding will be available for every application submitted, including those that meet the required criteria. Applications will be evaluated, and the highest ranked properties will be awarded the grant.

*To request a paper application in person or in the mail, please call 772-467-3786 or email fpra@cityoffortpierce.com

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED

The following documentation must be attached to your application.

Grant Application

- Two (2) different color photographs of the exterior of the property in its current condition.
- Project concept, rendering or any other relevant materials that convey the physical improvements proposed to be made.
- Copy of signed lease (including written permission from the property owner to make changes outlined in the project, see Property Owner Affidavit), or copy of Deed showing ownership of the property by the business owner.
- A minimum of one (1) cost estimate from a licensed contractor. If you will be providing more than one cost estimate, the cost estimates MUST be for the same improvements. Estimates should be broken out in detail, especially if

any non-eligible improvements are being completed, as this allows FPRA to compare based on only grant eligible improvements being performed.

- Proof of funds to fully fund the project.
- Timeline of project schedule

5. ELIGIBLE IMPROVEMENTS:

Eligible improvements are restricted to work done on the exterior of the building and associated elements that are visible from the corridor. A Corridor can be a public road or public thoroughfare for pedestrian traffic. All work must be performed to applicable codes.

Examples of eligible improvements are listed below; however, this list is not exhaustive:

- Façade - includes work performed on the exterior storefront of a building such as cleaning masonry (high pressure water or steam - sandblasting is prohibited on masonry structures), re-pointing (filling in or repair to joints), woodwork, and other repairs (that are not maintenance related) or rebuilding historic storefronts. As used in this document a storefront is defined as the front side of a store or store building facing a transit corridor.
- Awnings/Canopies - including the removal of old awnings and canopies and the design, production, and installation of new awnings and canopies.
- Removing and disposing of old façade coverings - (i.e. vinyl and aluminum cladding, window boards).
- Siding/Stucco
- Repairs or replacement of windows & doors
- Outdated security features - removing rollup metal security doors and metal window grates.
- Removing excessive window signage - reduce window signage to allow 95% window transparency.
- Decorative walls, fencing, and landscaping – includes work that removes and replaces or adds appropriate fencing and landscaping to hide incompatible uses or negative site elements such as storage yards, outdoor fabrication, work area, or dumpsters.
- Original building elements - restoring original decorative building elements.
- Construction of pedestrian and bicycle amenities such as benches, shelters, bike racks and bike lockers.
- ADA improvements
- Parking Lot improvements Surface Parking
- Roof repairs / Roof replacement
- Patio/Decks
- Exterior Lighting
- Permanent Landscaping
- Signs - including removing the old and the design, production, and installation of new signs or renovation of existing.
- Art Installations – Art installations or works of art created by artists exhibiting the highest quality of skill and aesthetic principles and includes all forms of visual art, specifically murals.

6. INELIGIBLE IMPROVEMENTS

The following items are not eligible for the grant:

- New construction developments are not eligible for this program.
- Residential properties
- Interior improvement (even if visible from exterior).
- Exterior improvements visible less than 24 hours per day.
- Features designed to be installed temporarily including seasonal planting or other seasonal landscaping.
- Features that do not meet the applicable provisions of the City of Fort Pierce Land Development Code.
- Activities that are primarily for maintenance, for example: painting, asphalt sealing, temporary landscape maintenance, power washing, and other maintenance-type activities are not eligible for reimbursement. This list is not exhaustive. If painting, power-washing, brick repair, landscaping or similar cosmetic work is proposed to take place in conjunction with significant exterior enhancements, then those activities may be eligible for the incentive.
- Permit fees and taxes.
- Improvements made prior to grant approval.
- Refinancing existing debt.
- Sweat equity payments (i.e., reimbursement for applicant's own labor and performance of renovation work or new construction).
- Priority will be given to properties that have not received grant funding for the same business.

7. GENERAL PROVISIONS

The funding assistance provided under the Commercial Façade Grant Program is solely on a reimbursement basis. The FPRA has the exclusive authority to approve or deny program applications based on its determination as to the benefits to the FPRA produced by requested projects. The FPRA may impose any conditions of approval it deems suitable to protect the interests of the agency, including a duly executed contract.

By accepting the grant, the applicant agrees to comply with regular updates conducted by the FPRA Staff. These updates may be obtained via email or site visits. Reporting may include, but is not limited to, work schedules, reporting forms, and projected completion dates.

FPRA staff will conduct a site visit before grant payment is made in order to verify that the business is in operation. Staff may also conduct unannounced site visits periodically in order to ensure compliance with the terms of the grant agreement.

There is no guarantee that funding will be available for every application submitted, including those that meet the required criteria.

The FPRA is a public agency and is governed by the "Florida Public Records Law" under Florida State Statutes, Chapter 119. Any documents provided by the Applicant(s) may be subject to production by the FPRA upon receipt of a public records request, subject to any exemptions provided by Florida Law.

8. DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS

The applicant shall incur all initial project costs and may receive reimbursement only after all improvements have been completed in accordance with the grant award. Grant funds will be disbursed upon receipt of a finding of project completion by the FPRA. The finding of project completion will be granted when the FPRA has received the following package:

- Written notification from the Owner that the project is complete.
- Copies of all required closed permits.
- Copies of occupancy certificates
- Copies of all invoices
- Proof of payment (cancelled checks)
- Release of liens
- Photographs of work undertaken
- Signed and completed W-9, as required by law, for the recipient of grant funds.
- City of Fort Pierce Business Tax Receipt

NOTE: The Finance Department shall process the reimbursement to the applicant in accordance with the regular payment procedures of the City. No funds will be disbursed until all work is completed and all items set forth in paragraph 9 above have been submitted.

Please note that the reimbursement process may take approximately 60 days after the FPRA receives the necessary documentation. This timeframe allows for the review and verification of the submitted documents to ensure compliance with the program's requirements. The FPRA strives to process reimbursements in a timely manner and appreciates the applicants' patience during the reimbursement period.

9. EVALUATION CRITERIA

There is no guarantee that funding will be available for every application submitted, including those that meet the required criteria. Applications will be evaluated, and the highest ranked properties will be awarded the grant.

CRITERIA	POINTS
<u>Visual Impact</u> The project's ability to aesthetically transform the building. Does the project eliminate blight? Does the project raise the visual appeal of the FPRA?	<u>50 points possible</u>
<u>Activation</u> Will this project activate a vacant building or portion of a building?	<u>20 points possible</u>
<u>Type</u> Business type has been identified as <u>targeted tier</u> in the Retail & Business Study	<u>15 points possible</u>
<u>FPRA Plan</u> How does this project meet the goals and objects of the FPRA Plan?	<u>15 points possible</u>

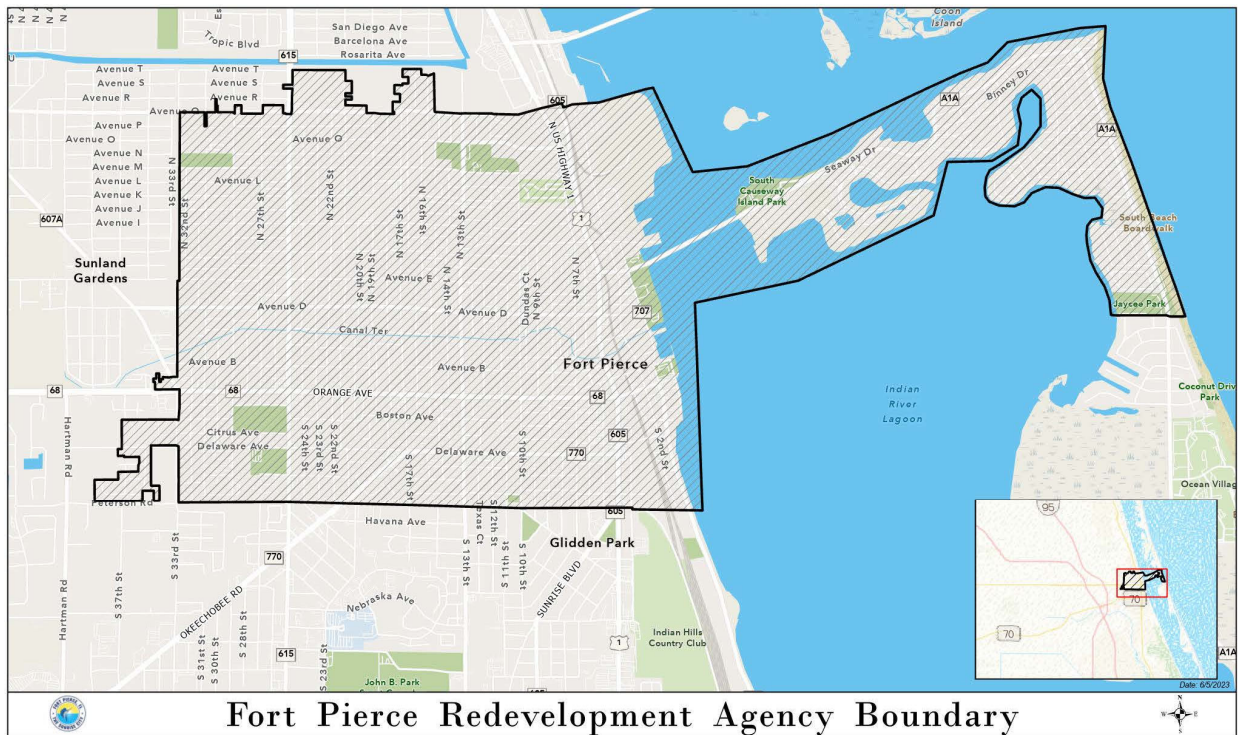
10. TIMELINE*

- a. Application period:
 - i. October 17, 2023, until November 17, 2023
- b. CRA Advisory Committee Review/Recommendation:
 - i. December 6, 2023
- c. FPRA Board Award Recommendation
 - i. December 12, 2023
- d. FPRA Board Approve Grant Agreements
 - i. January 9, 2023

This reimbursable grant will also be offered in March and June of 2024.

*Dates are subject to change

11. FPRA DISTRICT MAP



Commercial Façade Grant Process

