



# COMMERCIAL FACADE GRANT PROGRAM



**COMMERCIAL FAÇADE GRANT**

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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 Fort Pierce Redevelopment Agency (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 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:

Eligible Project Total Cost	Applicant Contribution	FPRA Contribution
\$5,000	\$2,500	\$2,500 *
\$15,000	\$7,500	\$7,500 *
\$30,000	\$15,000	\$15,000 *
\$50,000	\$25,000	\$25,000 *
\$100,000	\$75,000	\$25,000 **

\* 50% matching contribution

\*\* Maximum grant amount is \$25,000

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## 3. ELIGIBILITY

- A. The property to be improved must be located within the FPRA District boundaries (see section G, Boundary Map).
- B. There must be a Commercial Building on the property. This means that a business that is frequented by the public is located in a portion of the building and that portion of the building is not a private residence.
- C. The Applicant must own the property or, if the Applicant is a tenant, the Applicant must submit its signed lease, and the owner of the property must support the project and execute a Property Owner Affidavit granting the Applicant permission to implement the improvements listed on the application.
- D. The Applicant must have funds sufficient to fully fund the project (proof of funds is required).
- E. The following properties are not eligible:
  - 1. Residential properties
  - 2. Home based businesses and online businesses
  - 3. Governmental facilities
  - 4. New construction developments
  - 5. Properties that have been awarded an FPRA Commercial Façade Grant within the last five years
  - 6. Properties with outstanding monetary obligations owed to the City, for example, past due taxes or code enforcement fines or liens

## 4. APPLICATION PROCESS

The application period will remain open until all of the allocated funds are depleted. Submitted applications will be evaluated every 30 days.

- A. The Applicant must complete the online application and submit all required documents.
  - I. Two (2) different color photographs of the exterior of the property in its current condition.
  - II. Project concept, rendering or any other relevant materials that convey the physical improvements proposed to be made.
  - III. 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.
  - IV. 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.
  - V. Proof of funds to fully fund the project.
  - VI. Timeline of project schedule
- B. Within 5 business days of receipt of the completed Application, a staff member will contact the Applicant to determine eligibility.

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- C. Every 30 days, a staff evaluation committee will review Applications for eligible projects and forward them to the Community Redevelopment Agency Advisory Committee (CRAAC). The CRAAC will review the Applications and make recommendations to the FPRA Board.
- D. The FPRA Board will make the final determination and, if funding is approved, the FPRA Board may authorize the execution of a Grant Agreement.
- E. Written notification will be sent to all Applicants advising them of approval or denial of funding.
- F. Staff will prepare the Grant Agreement to be executed by the Recipient and the FPRA Board following a vote to approve the Grant Agreement.

## 5. ELIGIBLE IMPROVEMENTS:

- A. Façade - Work on the exterior storefront of a building such as cleaning masonry (high-pressure water or steam; sandblasting is prohibited), re-pointing, woodwork, and other repairs (not maintenance-related) or rebuilding historic storefronts.
- B. Awnings/Canopies - Removal of old awnings and canopies and design, production, and installation of new ones.
- C. Removing and disposing of old façade coverings (i.e. vinyl and aluminum cladding, window boards).
- D. Siding/Stucco
- E. Repair or replacement of Windows and Doors
- F. Outdated security features - Removal of roll-up metal security doors and metal window grates.
- G. Removing excessive window signage to allow 95% window transparency.
- H. Decorative walls, fencing, and landscaping – Removing, replacing, or adding fencing and landscaping to hide incompatible uses or negative site elements (no chain-link).
- I. Original building elements - Restoring original decorative building elements.
- J. Pedestrian and Bicycle Amenities - Construction of pedestrian and bicycle amenities such as benches, shelters, bike racks and bike lockers.
- K. ADA improvements
- L. Parking Lot Improvements/Surface Parking
- M. Roof Repair and Replacement
- N. Patio and Deck Improvements
- O. Exterior Lighting
- P. Permanent Landscaping
- Q. Security Cameras
- R. Signs – Renovating existing signs or removing old signs and the design, production, and installation of new signs.
- S. Art Installations – Art installations or works of art created by artists exhibiting the highest quality of skill and aesthetic principles. Includes all forms of visual art, specifically murals

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## 6. INELIGIBLE IMPROVEMENTS AND EXPENSES

- A. Interior improvements (even if visible from exterior).
- B. Exterior improvements visible less than 24 hours per day.
- C. Temporary Improvements including seasonal decorations and seasonal landscaping.
- D. Features that do not meet the applicable provisions of the City of Fort Pierce Land Development Code.
- E. Routine maintenance activities such as painting, asphalt sealing, landscape maintenance, or power washing.
- F. Improvements made prior to grant approval.
- G. Expenses that are ineligible for reimbursement include:
  - i. Permit fees and taxes.
  - ii. Refinancing existing debt.
  - iii. Sweat equity payments (i.e., reimbursement for applicant's own labor and performance of renovation work or new construction).
  - iv. Expenses incurred prior to grant approval

## 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.

By participating in this grant program, applicants agree to allow the City of Fort Pierce and the FPRA, or their agents, to take photos of themselves, their property, and their business for promotional purposes related to the grant program.

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.

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## 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:

- Reimbursement form provided by FPRA indicating that the project is complete.
- Final report documenting all constructions costs incurred with the project.
- Completed W-9, as required by law, for the Recipient of the grant funds.
- Copies of all required closed permits.
- Copies of all invoices
- Proof of payment (cancelled checks or bank statements)
- Photographs of work undertaken
- Release of liens (if applicable)
- Occupancy certificates (if applicable)
- City of Fort Pierce Certificate of Use

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. The reimbursement process may take approximately 45-60 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.

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## 9. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Every 30 days, the Community Redevelopment Agency Advisory Committee (CRAAC) will review the applications and make recommendations to the FPRA Board.

<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>	<b>Max Points Possible 100</b>
<b>Visual Impact/Blight Elimination</b>	<b>Max 50</b>
The project's ability to enhance the visual appeal of the FPRA and significantly eliminate the blight of the building. The elimination of blight will increase safety and security of the public enhancing its visual aesthetics which will lead to increased property values, tenant occupancy, economic development, and job creation.	50
<b>Total Project Investment</b>	<b>Max 25</b>
The higher the ratio of private investment compared to the public grant dollar investment, the higher the score.	
Over \$100,000	
\$100,000 - \$50,000	
\$50,000-\$25,000	
\$25,000 - \$10,000	
Under \$10,000	5
<b>Design and Creativity</b>	<b>Max 15</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovative and visually appealing facade design</li> <li>• Compatibility with neighborhood's architectural style</li> <li>• Sustainability and longevity of proposed improvements</li> </ul>	15
<b>Community Impact/Public Benefit</b>	<b>Max 10</b>
The funded projects not only improve the appearance of commercial properties but also generate meaningful positive impacts for the community and the general public.	10
<b>Total Project Score</b>	<b>100</b>

## 10. TIMELINE\*

- A. The application period will remain open until all of the allocated funds are depleted. Submitted applications will be evaluated every 30 days.

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## 11. FPRA BOUNDARY MAP

