

COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY (CRA)

Small Business Improvement Grant

Interior Renovation • Storefront Enhancement • Business Assistance

PROGRAM PURPOSE

To stimulate private investment, improve existing businesses, reduce blight, strengthen commercial corridors, and enhance the customer experience within the CRA district through grants for permanent interior and exterior improvements.

1. Program Purpose

The Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) Small Business Improvement Grant Program is intended to stimulate private investment, improve the appearance and functionality of existing businesses, eliminate blight, and strengthen the economic vitality of the CRA district. The program provides grants to eligible businesses for interior renovations, storefront improvements, accessibility upgrades, and other permanent building improvements that support long-term business growth.

2. Program Goals

- Support existing locally owned businesses.
- Encourage reinvestment in commercial properties.
- Improve the visual appearance of commercial corridors.
- Increase property values and reduce visible signs of blight.
- Create and retain jobs.
- Attract new customers and private investment.
- Preserve historic character where applicable.
- Strengthen the overall business environment within the CRA district.

3. Funding Structure

Grant Amount

- Maximum Grant Award: \$20,000.
- Minimum Project Cost: \$5,000.

4. Eligible Applicants

- Operate within the CRA district.
- Hold a current business license.

- Be current on all taxes, utilities, and local fees.
- Have operated for at least one year, or demonstrate financial viability for newer businesses.
- Receive written property owner approval if leasing space.
- Maintain required insurance.
- Agree to remain in operation for at least one year following project completion.

5. Eligible Improvements

Interior Improvements

- Flooring, drywall, interior painting, and ceiling replacement.
- Lighting upgrades and energy-efficient improvements.
- Customer waiting areas and permanent retail display improvements.
- ADA accessibility improvements.
- Restroom renovations.
- Permanent fixtures and interior remodeling.
- Fire and life-safety improvements.

Exterior / Storefront Improvements

- Storefront renovations, windows, doors, and awnings.
- Exterior painting and masonry restoration.
- Historic restoration.
- New signage and entry enhancements.
- Outdoor seating.
- Decorative lighting
- Roof improvements visible from public streets.

6. Ineligible Expenses

- Inventory.
- Payroll.
- Rent or mortgage payments.
- Utilities.
- Vehicles.
- Equipment not permanently attached.
- Marketing expenses.
- Operating expenses or working capital.
- Temporary decorations.
- Portable furniture.
- Routine maintenance.

7. Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	Points
Visible improvement to property	20
Economic impact	20
Private investment leveraged	15
Job creation / retention	15
Historic preservation	10
Project readiness	10
Long-term community benefit	10
Maximum Score	100

8. Application Requirements

- Completed application.
- Business license.
- Proof of ownership or lease.
- Property owner approval, if applicable.
- Minimum of two contractor estimates.
- Project budget and timeline.
- Photos of existing conditions.
- Site plan, sketches, or design drawings, if applicable.
- Proof of insurance.

9. Approval Process

1. Submit application.
2. CRA staff review for eligibility.
3. Design or historic review, if required.
4. Evaluation scoring.
5. CRA Board pre-approval.
6. Grant Agreement executed.
7. Applicant completes approved project.
8. CRA inspection.
9. Reimbursement issued after verification of paid invoices and approved work.

10. Payment Method

This is a reimbursement grant. Applicants must complete approved work, pay contractors, submit paid invoices, and pass final inspection before reimbursement. The CRA reimburses approved costs up to the awarded grant amount.

11. Project Timeline

- Application Period: Open year-round or quarterly, as determined by the CRA Board.
- Board Approval: Target processing period of approximately 7-21 days.
- Project Completion: Within 180 days of award.
- Extensions: By CRA Board approval only.

12. Program Requirements

- Operate the business for at least one year after project completion.
- Allow CRA staff to inspect improvements.
- Display a CRA recognition plaque or window decal for one year.
- Permit before-and-after photographs for CRA marketing and annual reporting.

COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY (CRA)
SMALL BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT GRANT APPLICATION

Interior Renovation | Storefront Enhancement | Business Assistance

This application is for projects located within the CRA district. Do not begin work or incur project costs before written CRA approval and execution of the Grant Agreement. The program is reimbursement-based.

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- ☐ Completed and signed application
- ☐ Current business license
- ☐ Proof of property ownership or current lease
- ☐ Property owner authorization (if applicant is a tenant)
- ☐ At least two contractor estimates
- ☐ Detailed project budget and proposed timeline
- ☐ Current photographs of the project area
- ☐ Site plan, sketches, or design drawings, if applicable
- ☐ Proof of required insurance

CRA STAFF USE ONLY

Date Received:

Application No.:

CRA District Verified: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Complete: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Staff Initials: _____

SECTION 1 - APPLICANT AND BUSINESS INFORMATION

Legal Business Name:

DBA / Trade Name:

Primary Contact:

Title:

Business Phone:

Email:

Business Street Address:

City / State / ZIP:

Mailing Address (if different):

City / State / ZIP:

Business Website / Social Media:

Business License No.:

Federal EIN (optional):

Years in Operation:

Number of Employees:

☐ Business structure: Sole Proprietorship

☐ Partnership

☐ LLC

☐ Corporation

☐ Other:

Briefly describe the business, products/services offered, and customers served:

SECTION 2 - PROPERTY INFORMATION

Project Property Address:

Parcel ID (if known):

Property Owner Name:

Property Owner Phone / Email:

☐ Applicant owns the property

☐ Applicant leases the property

If leased, lease expiration date: _____

Tenant applicants must attach written authorization from the property owner. The property owner authorization form included in this packet may be used.

SECTION 3 - PROJECT DESCRIPTION

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Interior renovation | ☐ Storefront / facade improvement |
| ☐ ADA accessibility improvement | ☐ Historic restoration |
| ☐ Signage / entry enhancement | ☐ Lighting / energy efficiency |
| ☐ Fire / life-safety improvement | ☐ Outdoor seating |
| ☐ Other: _____ | |

Describe the proposed improvements in detail. Identify the current condition and how the project will improve the business or property:

Describe the anticipated economic and community benefits, including customer experience, property appearance, business growth, or reduction of blight:

[illegible]

SECTION 4 - JOB CREATION / RETENTION

Current Full-Time Employees:

Current Part-Time Employees:

New Full-Time Jobs Expected:

New Part-Time Jobs Expected:

If applicable, briefly describe jobs expected to be created or retained as a result of the project:

SECTION 5 - PROJECT BUDGET AND FUNDING REQUEST

The maximum CRA grant award is \$20,000. The minimum project cost is \$5,000. Applicants must provide payment initially. Volunteer labor and donated materials do not count toward the final cost.

Improvement / Work Item	Contractor / Vendor	Estimated Cost	CRA Request	
TOTAL PROJECT		\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____

Total Project Cost: \$

CRA Grant Requested: \$

Other Funding Sources: \$

List any other public or private funding being used for this project:

SECTION 6 - PROJECT TIMELINE

Estimated Start Date:

Estimated Completion Date:

Approved projects must be completed within 180 days of award unless an extension is approved by the CRA Board.

SECTION 7 - APPLICANT CERTIFICATIONS

- ☐ I certify that the information in this application and all attachments is true and complete to the best of my knowledge.
- ☐ I understand that submission of an application does not guarantee funding.
- ☐ I understand that no project work may begin and no eligible project costs may be incurred before written CRA approval and execution of the Grant Agreement.
- ☐ I understand that this is a reimbursement grant and that approved work must be completed and paid for before reimbursement, subject to CRA inspection and verification of paid invoices.
- ☐ I certify that the business is current on applicable taxes, utilities, and local fees.
- ☐ I agree to obtain all required permits and approvals before construction begins.
- ☐ I agree to allow CRA representatives to inspect the property and approved improvements.
- ☐ I agree that the business will remain in operation for at least one year following project completion, consistent with program requirements.
- ☐ I agree to permit before-and-after photographs for CRA marketing and annual reporting and to display any required CRA recognition plaque or window decal for one year.

By signing below, the applicant acknowledges and accepts the program requirements stated above and in the CRA Small Business Improvement Grant Program guidelines.

Applicant Printed Name:

Title:

Date:

Applicant Signature:

SECTION 8 - PROPERTY OWNER AUTHORIZATION (TENANT APPLICANTS ONLY)

I certify that I am the owner or authorized representative of the property identified in this application. I authorize the applicant to submit this CRA grant application and, if approved, to complete the improvements described in the approved scope of work.

Property Owner Printed Name:

Phone / Email:

Property Owner Signature:

Date:

CRA STAFF / EVALUATION COMMITTEE - SCORING SHEET

For CRA use only. Score the application using the evaluation criteria established in the program guidelines.
Maximum score: 100 points.

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Points	Points Awarded	Comments
Visible improvement to property	20		
Economic impact	20		
Private investment leveraged	15		

Job creation / retention	15		
Historic preservation	10		
Project readiness	10		
Long-term community benefit	10		
TOTAL SCORE	100		

☐ Recommended for approval

☐ Recommended for approval with conditions

☐ Not recommended

Reviewer / staff comments and recommended conditions, if any:

Reviewer Name / Title:

Date:

CRA Board Action:

Board Meeting Date:

Approved Grant Amount: \$ _____