

Business Façade Grant Program

Policies & Procedures

The City of High Springs Community Redevelopment Agency’s Business Façade Grant Program seeks to provide assistance to rehabilitate the facades of commercial buildings within the Community Redevelopment area. The program incentivizes property owners to renovate and update the exteriors of properties located within the CRA district by providing a grant matching program. To encourage and advance revitalization efforts, this program provides a 50/50 reimbursement match for eligible improvements up to $10,000. By off setting the cost of these projects, the CRA hopes to incentivize visible improvements that will increase the overall appearance of building and site aesthetics thereby increasing the marketability and value of existing properties while also attracting new businesses, residents, and visitors to the area.

**General Guidelines**

* The program provides a 50% matching grant reimbursement of actual eligible and verified project costs that were incurred, not to exceed $10,000.
* Applicants must match grant funds dollar-for-dollar for goods and/or services. Work done by owner or applicant will not be funded for labor.
* Grants are intended for rehabilitation and restoration only. New construction is ineligible.
* Funding is on a first come first serve basis. Applicants must finish the project and pay all project costs before being eligible for reimbursement. If work is tied to a building permit, the building permit must be inspected and completed.
* All applicants that are awarded a grant acknowledge that “cash receipts” will not be accepted due to auditing standards. Eligible reimbursements must have been paid for by check, money order, or by credit card. Verification of payment shall be submitted with reimbursement request and Affidavit of Construction Completion.
* Only properties located within the Community Redevelopment District are eligible for this grant.
* The grant application must receive approval by the Community Redevelopment Agency Board before any construction can commence. No grants will be awarded on an application if work has been started or completed.
* Eligible buildings must have a façade that is visible from a street or parking lot. Buildings located on a corner lot containing a single business may be considered to have two or more facades.
* If the grant application is for building/properties within the Historic District applicant must receive all applicable Certificates of Appropriateness from the Historic Preservation Board before the grant application is considered for funding.
* Applicant will be required to obtain proper permitting through the Planning, Development and Codes Department before any application will be approved.
* All grant recipients must complete a W-9 Tax Form and will receive a 1099 Tax Form for their award.
* The project must be completed in a timely fashion in strict accordance with the timeframe specified by the Community Redevelopment Agency within Façade Improvement Agreement.
* The Community Redevelopment Agency shall disperse funds to the grant recipient only upon demonstration that the work has been completed (Affidavit of Construction Completion) and provide required proof of costs and payment, in the form of paid receipts/invoice documentation.
* The façade improvements made using these funds must stay in place and be maintained for a minimum of five years.
* By accepting assistance, the building owner agrees that the CRA may use images of the property before and after renovation.

**Property Requirements**

* Located within the City of High springs Community Redevelopment District.
* Privately owned commercial buildings.
* Applicant must be the owner of the property or a tenant with written and notarized consent by the owner.
* The property owner or tenant must not have outstanding utility balances.
* Property taxes must be current.

**Eligible Improvements**

* Refurbishing of exterior walls including repainting, repairs, residing, stucco or similar cosmetic improvements.
* Removal of False facades.
* Façade cleaning other than general maintenance.
* Replacement of damaged windows or doors.
* Pedestrian walkway enhancements such as permanent awnings, canopies, or other coverings over windows or walkways.
* Electrical repairs or additions that are directly related to exterior or display windows, lights, or awnings.
* Decorative additions such as sconces and other architectural features.
* Roof repair and replacement is only eligible if there is a tangible upgrade (example from shingle to metal).
* Dumpster Enclosure Grant: The CRA may reimburse a property owner for up to 50% of the cost of installing a dumpster enclosure compliant with city code specifications. (Grant not to exceed $5000.00)

**Ineligible Improvements**

* Improvements made prior to grant award.
* New construction or additions.
* Interior work even if it is visible through windows.
* Roof repair or replacement except as noted above.
* Permit fees and engineering fees.
* In-kind or sweat equity payments (Reimbursement for applicants own labor).
* General maintenance.
* Non-aesthetic improvements.

**Application Steps**

* Complete Grant Application Form and include/attach the following:
* Copy of Deed/Proof of Ownership; and Notarized owner authorization (if tenant is implementing the project).
* Complete project design and application requirements
* Project schedule with an anticipated timeframe for improvements and associated budget.
* At least three photos of the existing façade and proposed project area in its current condition.
* Should include schematic drawings or renderings illustrating proposed work or pictures with project description outlined and detail of materials, colors, and other specifics.
* Itemized list of costs or estimates from a minimum of three licensed contractors.
* Proof of Insurance coverage.
* Applicable Certificates of Appropriateness.
* Completed W-9 Tax Form.

**Application Process**

* Completed application packets are to be submitted to the City’s Community Redevelopment Department:

High Springs Community Redevelopment Agency

23666 NW 185th RD

High Springs, FL 32643

* City staff will review the application for completeness. Additional information or clarification may be necessary.
* Approval of the application and funding amount awarded will be determined by the City of High Springs Community Redevelopment Agency Board during a public meeting.
* The City of High Springs CRA will notify applicant of approval or denial in writing.
* The applicant has one year to complete construction.

**Upon Approval of Façade Grant**

* Any changes to qualifying expenditures must be approved by city staff.
* Grantees can request an extension if nearing the end of the one year period. Extensions may be granted, per project, upon request and city approval.
* Consideration and potential award of grant is independent of any development plans reviewed by the city.
* All projects are subject to applicable zoning and building codes.
* Applicant completes work according to approved schedule.
* Approved grant reimbursement is paid to the applicant within 30 days.

**Reimbursement Process**

* Funds will be reimbursed at the completion of the project and upon verification that all grant criteria has been met. In no event will the reimbursement amount exceed $10,000.
* Completed and notarized Affidavit of Construction Completion is to be submitted.
* Proof of payment for project improvements of all project costs.
* Paid invoices.
* Paid receipts.
* Cleared copies of Bank checks.
* Before and after photos of project improvements.