



CITY OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY (CRA) IMPROVEMENT ASSISTANCE GRANT

GUIDELINES

The City of Green Cove Springs CRA has created an Improvement Grant Program to assist owners of properties within the boundaries of the CRA.

The purpose is to substantially improve the visual appearance and street presence of properties within the CRA boundaries.

Through this program the CRA may provide grants up to \$10,000 based on the Funding Guidelines below. All grant recipients are subject to funding availability. The Commercial Property Improvement Grant Program (Program) is subject to funding availability.

Applications will initially be scored by CRA Staff based on the specific criteria specified herein and approved by the CRA. In the event that multiple completed applications are received the Grant Availability timeframe listed below, the highest scoring applications shall prevail.

Eligibility Criteria

- a. Property must be located within the Green Cove Springs CRA priority area.
- b. Primary and principal property use must be commercial. Residential uses are ineligible.
- c. Exterior improvements must adhere to the Florida Building Code and City Zoning Regulations and all Federal, State, and Local Requirements.
- d. Improvements must support the objectives and goals of the Green Cove Springs CRA Redevelopment Plan.
- e. Property Owners may not reapply if they have received the maximum funding amount within a 5-year period under this or any other grant program administered by the Green Cove Springs CRA.
- f. The property's use must be a legally conforming use per the City of Green Cove Springs Zoning Code.
- g. Property to be improved must not have any delinquent ad valorem taxes, be free of all municipal and county liens, judgments and encumbrances of any kind. This provision can be waived by the CRA Board if development plans for the property meet the goals and objectives as set forth in the Green Cove Springs CRA Plan, as determined by the Board. Upon grant approval, the property must remain free of all municipal and county liens, judgments or encumbrances of any kind under the term of the Grant Program.

Funding Guidelines

- a. Applicants applying for funding below the maximum award amount may reapply but are only entitled to the total maximum amount within a 5-year period of initial approval. However, if a property has already received funding to the maximum amount, said Applicant may not reapply for the Program or any other grant program administered by the Green Cove Springs CRA for a period of 5 years.

- b. Applicants are required to match the grant award with a minimum of 30% of the project costs. Only after the Applicant has paid the match amount will the CRA begin disbursement of grant funds.
- c. Program Grant Agreement and the Declaration of Restrictive Covenants shall be executed within (30) days following approval of the grant by the CRA Board.
- d. Building Permit applications must be submitted within sixty (60) days following execution of the grant Agreement and construction to begin immediately after permit approvals
- e. Executed Declaration of Restrictive Covenants must be recorded in the Clay County public records and a recorded copy provided to the CRA within ten days of receipt of the executed Program Grant Agreement. No Grant funds will be disbursed for the project before this is done.

Eligible Expenses

Eligible expenses are those reasonable costs associated with undertaking a substantial facade improvement and/or substantial site improvements that are visible from a major corridor or street within the CRA area. Eligible expenses include design, permitting, labor and materials related to construction or installation of eligible improvements. The following are eligible improvements to be funded under the Program:

- a. Eligible Improvements:
 - ✓ Facade Improvements
 - ✓ Landscaping (trees, shrubs and perennials)
 - ✓ Signage
 - ✓ Awnings
 - ✓ Impact resistant windows
 - ✓ Parking lot improvements
 - ✓ Exterior Painting and repair
 - ✓ Any other site or building improvements complimentary to the above
- b. All work must be performed in compliance with ordinances and regulations of the City of Green Cove Springs, and must meet all building and other applicable codes, including state and federal regulations.
- c. To be eligible for this grant, Applicants must undertake a comprehensive improvement project undertaking 2 or more of the eligible improvements.
- d. Due to limited funding, CRA Staff will evaluate the submission and may request additional improvements to make projects more comprehensive prior to CRA Board consideration.

Ineligible Expenses

Ineligible expenses include general maintenance items; parking lot repairs (not related to a comprehensive improvement of the overall appearance of the property); roofing; air conditioning systems and ductwork; interior repairs or renovations; or correction of code violations, and; ADA compliance except in limited instances where these expenses are mandated as part of eligible improvements by the City of Green Cove Springs Community

Development Department. Any improvements undertaken prior to execution of the Program Documents will be ineligible for reimbursement.

Scoring Criteria

Scoring for applications that are received by the CRA shall be based upon a 100-point value system.

a. Quality of Improvement - 25 points:

Points will be allocated based on the level and quality of the improvement and its contribution to the street presence and visibility of improvement.

b. CRA Targeted Land Uses – 25 points:

- Restaurant
- BrewPub
- Hotel

c. Use of Sustainable Materials - 25 Points:

Sustainable materials might include, for example xeriscaping, energy efficient lighting, environmentally sensitive paint or other types of sustainable or green initiatives. The maximum number of points allocated for this category means that the applicant has incorporated numerous green initiatives into their design.

d. Comprehensiveness of Property Improvement – 25 points:

Businesses undertaking both property and façade improvements or substantial renovations to one or the other shall receive maximum points. If an Applicant contributes funding significantly above the required 30% match to make additional improvements to their business, they may receive up to 20 incentive points.

APPLICATION AND GRANT AVAILABILITY

The applicant is advised that this grant is given at the sole discretion of the City of Green Cove Springs 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 City Development Services Department for completeness and eligibility prior to any approvals.

The timeframe for the application period is:

First Grant Application Period

First Monday in December	Application Period Opens
Last Thursday in March	Application Period Closed

Second Grant Application Period

First Monday in April	Application Period Opens
Last Thursday in August	Application Period Closed

Step 1: Application Process

- a. Schedule an appointment with the Green Cove Springs CRA Staff to discuss the potential project and make sure it meets the program intent. Please call (904)297-7500 or e-mail mdaniels@greencovesprings.com
- b. Submit a completed application with a check for \$100.00 made payable to the City of Green Cove Springs for zoning reviews. Incomplete applications will not be considered for funding until a complete application and all supporting documents are received by the Green Cove Springs CRA. Applications must be signed by the fee simple owner of the property; tenants and/or other occupants are ineligible to participate in the Program and are prohibited from filing an application on behalf of an owner, unless otherwise authorized, in writing, by the property owner.
- c. The Green Cove Springs CRA will complete the application review within 30 days of receipt and notify Applicants of any missing information or deficiencies in terms of eligibility for the Program.
- d. Upon determination of completeness and eligibility CRA Staff will place the Application on the next available CRA Board agenda for consideration. The CRA Board meets monthly on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 10:00 am in City Council Chambers located at 321 Walnut Street.
- e. Applicants are strongly encouraged to attend the CRA Board meeting. The decision(s) of the Green Cove Springs CRA Board shall be final.
- f. Project commences and is completed within 120 days of Green Cove Springs CRA approval.
- g. Should project delays arise, it is at the discretion of the CRA Board to grant a one-time project timeline extension.

Step 2: Construction/Payment by the CRA/City of Green Cove Springs:

- a. If your contractor agrees to wait for payment until a check is issued by the CRA of Green Cove Springs, you must submit an invoice for the work for both you and your contractor, a letter from you indicating the work is complete and that you are satisfied with the job.
- b. If your contractor(s) requires payment upon completion of the work, you must pay the invoice. You may then provide the CRA/City of Green Cove Springs with the paid invoice and/or a copy of *both* sides of the cancelled check. It is also recommended that you obtain a release from your contractor in consideration of final payment.
- c. A CRA/City of Green Cove Springs staff member will visit the property and take photographs of the completed project. A check will be issued in the Applicants' name.

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING PRIOR TO APPLICATION SUBMITTAL

- The application must include **all** of the following items: Photographs of current condition of site and structures; architectural renderings of proposed facade improvements in color; a detailed outline of all proposed improvements with cost estimate, and electronic copies of all required documents. If any components of the project pertain to paving, fencing, landscaping, etc., a survey/site development plan showing location of work shall also be required.
- Owners of properties that are for sale may not apply for grant funding. Properties sold within twenty-four months of receiving grant funding **must repay the full grant amount**.
- After approval by the CRA Board, the property owner can begin construction, improvements completed prior to approval by the CRA Board, will not be eligible for reimbursement.
- If deemed necessary, the CRA reserves the right to have the application and its contents evaluated and analyzed by an outside third party including but not limited to; the proposed business plan, partnership/ownership information with equity positions, mortgage on the property, lease agreements, letter of Intent from lending institution and any other documents provided by the Applicant.
- If your site plan or application request includes landscaping, the landscaping must consist of species and varieties of native plants that are drought tolerant require little irrigation and withstand the environmental conditions of Green Cove Springs. Irrigation systems must prevent overspray and water waste and it is recommended that a drip irrigation system be installed.
- Property to be improved must not have any delinquent ad valorem taxes, be free of all municipal and county liens, judgments and encumbrances of any kind. This provision can be waived by the CRA Board if development plans for the property meet the goals and objectives as set forth in the Green Cove Springs CRA Plan. Upon grant approval, the property must remain free of all municipal and county liens, judgments or encumbrances of any kind under the term of the agreement.

I have read completely and understand the program requirements, including the application guidelines and grant reimbursement process.

Signature_____

Date_____

Printed Name and Title



**CITY OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY (CRA)
IMPROVEMENT ASSISTANCE GRANT**

1. Project: _____
2. Applicant Name: _____
3. Owner Name: _____
4. Applicant Address: _____
5. Property Address: _____
6. Applicant Phone Number: _____
7. Applicant E-Mail: _____
8. Local Contact Name: _____
9. Local Contact E-mail: _____
10. Estimate Cost of Project: _____
11. Amount Requested: _____

Attach detailed outline of the proposed work, including:

- Photographs of current condition of site and structures;
- Architectural renderings of proposed facade improvements in color;
- A detailed outline of all proposed improvements with cost estimate, and electronic copies of all required documents. If any components of the project pertain to paving, fencing, landscaping, etc., a survey/site development plan showing location of work shall also be required.
- Property Owner Affidavit, if applicant is not the property owner

All attachments are required for a complete application.

I certify and acknowledge that the information contained herein is true and correct to the best of my/our knowledge.

Signature of Applicant

Typed or printed name and title of applicant