

C|R|A Community Redevelopment Agency
for the City of Live Oak

**COMMERCIAL BUILDING
FAÇADE &
SITE IMPROVEMENT
GRANT PROGRAM**

-
- ❖ Preservation
 - ❖ Restoration
 - ❖ Beautification
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Contact Information:

Community Redevelopment Agency Office

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Gabrielle Redfern, Executive Director

Additional information can also be found on the City website:

www.cityofliveoak.org

This brochure is for informational purposes, and does not supersede any adopted codes, ordinances, procedures or documents which may be applicable.

OBJECTIVE

The Live Oak Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) has a mission to *reduce and eliminate blight* within the designated area or district.

The CRA recognizes that the *appearance and functionality of commercial establishments* plays an important role in *portraying a successful image*, and subsequently attracting patrons, which results in a viable business endeavor.

This grant program, for qualifying properties, has been designed to encourage reuse and upgrades to existing buildings, improve appearance and environment, improve functionality, eliminate code violations, and help fill vacant or underutilized spaces within the commercial district. The result is to foster renewed interest in opening or operating a business or visiting the redevelopment area.

The CRA seeks to *increase “pride of ownership” and to get “feet on the street”*. Crowded sidewalks and occupied storefronts indicate healthy economic activity and a safe environment – a place for people to come and enjoy.

With guidance from and adherence to the goals, objectives and other governing criteria of the Redevelopment Plan(s), and other related documents, the CRA will be able to effectively work with building Owner(s) and City staff to help move grant applications efficiently through the consideration process.

The CRA recognizes that this initiative to improve the atmosphere and properties of the Redevelopment Area is an important investment. Over time, through the commitment of the CRA and of private enterprise, investment and reinvestment into this district, which is the *‘heart of the city,’* will accomplish the *preservation and revitalization* of the areas for which Live Oak is known and loved.

As such, the City-Community partnership component of community redevelopment is the key to success.

Property and business owners – this is your City! Let’s partner together and make it the best place to live, work, play, worship, and visit that it can be.

OVERVIEW

This program is currently funded through September of 2020. There is no fee to apply; however, submission of an application does not entitle the applicant to funding.

The process for project application and approval is as follows:

1. **Pre-Application Conference** - Meet with CRA Director or Staff to determine eligibility, review program requirements, and scheduling of application submission.
2. **Owner/Recipient** – Applications must be filed by the owner(s) of the property, considered the recipient.
3. **Grant Application Submission** – Please submit application and all documents as a complete package (incomplete packets will be returned). There is no fee for submittal. A checklist will be provided.
4. **Application Packet Review and Consideration** – Staff will review the application packets in the order which they are received.
5. **Grant Funding, Agreements and Construction** - Once approved for funding, the Owner/Recipient and CRA Board Chairman shall sign an agreement which describes the obligations and limitations of the Grant Award. This document shall be referred to as the “Live Oak Commercial Building Façade Grant Agreement.” Additionally, all required plan review and building permits must be approved and issued. The project may then proceed with the obligation of the CRA to reimburse costs as approved in the Agreement. Substantial modifications to final plans will require review and written approval from the CRA Director(s).
6. **Construction Approval and Disbursement** - *Upon completion of all project construction, Recipient shall arrange for any required on-site inspection by the applicable City Departments as well as the CRA Director and staff. Improvements will be documented and compared with what was proposed at application. If any discrepancies are noted, the CRA has the right to request the discrepancies be corrected, and a timeframe for their correction will be established as necessary. Recipient shall also submit written proof of payment for all improvements. Upon final approval by the CRA Board, payment reimbursement to the Recipient, to the maximum extent possible, will be made within 60 business days of receipt and verification of all expenditure documents.*

APPLICATIONS

Interested parties may request an application for grant funding from the *CRA Staff*, who will be the point of contact for initiating an application or answering questions about the program. The CRA Board shall designate Grant criteria and eligibility on a cycle-by-cycle basis. All Grant Agreements shall have language indemnifying the CRA and the City of Live Oak. This indemnification shall have the Owner's/ Recipient's *notarized* signature.

Please be aware: once an application/documentation has been submitted, it is considered public record.

ELIGIBILITY

In order to effectively promote the revitalization of the commercial core of the redevelopment district, the current 2019-2020 Grant Program funding will be limited to the following:

- Properties which have *no identified code violations*, unless the proposed improvements serve to remedy said violations;
- Properties which are demonstrated to be, according to City records, *within the adopted Redevelopment Area*, and also which are designated on the Suwannee County Tax Collector records as *paying into the Live Oak Redevelopment fund*;
- Properties which *have no signage or structures which were previously erected in violation of existing land development or other applicable code regulations*, unless said signage or structures are removed or replaced as part of the proposed improvements;
- Properties whose *current and proposed future use is 100% conforming* and legally existing in relation to the Zoning Atlas and applicable Land Development Regulations, and is used for *legally permitted commercial or industrial purposes*;
- Owner(s) and/or tenant(s) have maintained *all required licensing to operate*, as well as being *current on all City utility accounts*, and having *no delinquent property tax payments*.

FUNDING LIMITATIONS

For qualifying projects, expenses are eligible for a *75% grant rebate*. **The maximum amount that this 75% can be applied to is \$16,000;** thus, the maximum grant funding amount is capped at **\$12,000**.

Projects applied for shall be considered collectively for each parcel of record. A separate application may be filed for each separate qualifying parcel of record.

Awards are currently limited to **one award, per parcel, per CRA Fiscal Year** (October through September).

(All projects shall be, or result in, compliance with adopted Land Development Regulations.)

ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURES

- Improved areas must be *visible from the street or other public space*.
- Labor and material costs which are consistent with current rates generally available for the scope of work being proposed.
- Professional design services.
- Removal or restoration of deteriorated or sub-standard exterior building materials.
- Masonry work and/or new stucco, brick or repairs thereof.
- Painting (includes preparation: scraping, sanding, pressure washing, sandblasting, etc.).
- New or replacement windows.
- New or replacement doors.
- New or replacement woodwork, architectural façade details, aesthetic detailing.
- Permanent Signage (shall include the removal of all temporary, old signs or non-conforming signs and the design, production and installation of new signs).
- Awnings and canopies (including the removal of old awnings and installation of new awnings or canopies).
- Tear out required to build a new entrance into the building.
- Landscaping, planters, irrigation and screening.
- Lighting of the exterior (as permitted by the Land Development Regulations).
- Brick or textured pavement.
- Courtyard and outside patron activity design and development (when space is available).
- Roof repairs or rehabilitation (when approved design/materials used *).
- ****Roof repair portion of grants limited to portion of roof which is visible from street.***
- Resurfacing, re-striping, re-habilitation of existing off-street parking areas, new parking and curb cuts (shall include a landscape element/compliance).
- ADA Improvements (exterior).
- Visible fascia, soffit, flashing, drip edge, guttering (when approved design & materials are used).
- Restoration of a façade's historic appearance.
- Other materials as may be required pertaining to eligible projects.

INELIGIBLE EXPENDITURES

- Any improvements or work completed prior to grant agreement signature.
- Interior renovations, fixtures, items, inventory, equipment or materials.
- Refinancing existing debts.
- Non-fixed improvements.
- Sweat equity payments (i.e. reimbursement for Applicant's or associates own labor, or tool purchases, in performance of renovation work or new construction).
- Business Payroll.
- General maintenance.
- Labor for hired help who are not licensed to operate or perform work within the City of Live Oak, according to records at City Hall – Business Tax Receipts Records.
- Work performed that is not consistent with the Design Guidelines for the CRA pursuant to the Redevelopment Plan and City of Live Oak Comprehensive Plan and/or Land Development Regulations.

REQUIRED GRANT CRITERIA

1. You must attach at least two (2) cost estimates from different contractors for all categories of work. All estimates must include identical scopes of service.
2. Material-only estimates may be submitted singularly if from a bona fide retailer or supplier.
3. All aspects of the Grant Program shall have been satisfied and met, as certified by the CRA Director.
4. Approval of Grant Awards shall be determined by the CRA Board, at the CRA Boards absolute discretion (*Not all applications may be approved, even if funds are available*).
5. Funding of each and every grant is contingent upon the availability of budgeted CRA funds.
6. Completed application packets submitted will be accepted on a month-to-month basis and subsequently considered by the CRA Director.
7. An application, which would upon approval exhaust the remaining grant funds for the current cycle, but which would not be fully funded according to the Funding Limitations Section above, will be offered the option of the remaining amount in the fund balance.
8. All Grant funding shall be issued as a reimbursement to the Recipient. Reimbursement payment will be made only after CRA Board approval and verification of expenses by standard acceptable industry practices are submitted and verified by the CRA Director as valid and paid in full.
9. Contractors must be from Live Oak or Suwannee County, unless the service is not available locally and the CRA approves of the contractor.
10. Materials are to be purchased locally, unless the product is not available locally.
11. All Applicants who are awarded a grant understand that when submitting for reimbursement that “cash receipts” will not be accepted (NO EXCEPTIONS).
12. Paint estimates must include all trim, steps and other visible appendages of the building.
13. Non-working appliances, such as window air-conditioning units must be removed. If this results in an open area of wall, it must be closed to match the building.
14. Broken windows must be repaired.
15. Grounds must be free of debris and landscaped, or covered with material approved by the CRA Director.
16. Window tint that shows age, such as peeling, cracking and the like must be removed, and windows cleaned to remove all residue.
17. Each qualifying property of record in the CRA may file a grant application.