

City of Dunnellon
Community Redevelopment Area
FACADE/EXTERIOR
IMPROVEMENT Grant Program

The CRA Facade Improvement Program provides property owners with financial assistance (grant) to improve the appearance of their properties in designated areas of Dunnellon's Community Redevelopment Area (CRA).

Eligibility Requirements:

- Any property owners of commercial and residential properties in the CRA district.
- Applicant must be the owner or agent (i.e., Corporation, LLC...)

The CRA Grant Program is available to all property owners that are located within the CRA District Area. Businesses must have a valid and current Business Tax Receipt (BRT) through the appropriate agency, and Applicants must propose a permitted/conforming use within the CRA Area.

Applications will not be accepted from property owners who are delinquent on their property taxes. Applicants must not have any active liens on the property.

Additional Requirements:

- The property owner or registered agent must be the grant applicant.
- The proposed work must be approved by the City prior to initiating the work.
- The application must include a detailed budget with reasonable costs for the proposed work.
- Properties in the Historic District must get a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historic Preservation Board for the proposed work.
- Property taxes must be current as of the date of the application.
- The property must have no outstanding building code citations.
- The property owner must provide proof of property insurance.
- Grants will not be awarded to property containing "adult uses" as defined in Article II, Division 1, Sec. 10-36 Dunnellon City Code.

Ineligible Projects/Improvements (all applications):

The CRA Grant cannot be used to fund interior renovations, general maintenance, sweat equity or electrical work (except exterior lighting), any improvement funded with a previous grant or anything not listed as an eligible project.

- Improvements/services rendered prior to grant approval.
- Property damage that may be covered by or compensated through an applicant's property insurance coverage.
- Project funded by a previous grant.

- Interior improvements.
- Electrical work (except exterior lighting).
- General maintenance/sweat equity.

Application Process and Deadline:

(1) Applications are accepted on a monthly basis, by the 15th of each month. Applications will not be processed within the current fiscal year if received after June 30th and will be held for the next fiscal year.

(2) The Applicant must complete the application and submits it to the Community Development Department for processing. Applications are accepted by the Community Development Department, 20750 River Drive, Dunnellon, FL 34431, Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. (excluding holidays).

The application package shall include the following:

- (a) Current photo(s) of project site;
- (b) Property Appraiser Parcel ID number and proof of paid property taxes;
- (c) Applicant Information;
- (d) Listing of businesses or services offered on site, if applicable;
- (e) Description of proposed improvements;
- (f) Identification of project's support of the Dunnellon CRA;
- (g) Business Tax Receipt (current), if applicable;
- (h) Rendering or sketch of proposed improvements;
- (i) Photos of area(s) to be improved;
- (j) Sign/Awning design drawings and/or plans;
- (k) Documentation of cost estimates – copies of vendor bids, estimates, etc. (three bids required)
- (l) Boundary Survey (if applicable);
- (m) Signature of Property Owner (Applicant).
- (n) Utility bill must be current.

The Applicant is responsible for all building permits, fees and other permits and fees that may be associated with the proposed project.

Applicants are advised to submit a complete application and all supporting materials per the instructions in this packet. Incomplete applications will not reviewed.

(3) City staff undertakes the initial review of the application. If the application is found to be incomplete, the applicant will be granted time to complete and resubmit the application. Once the application is complete, staff will review the application according to the program selection criteria and forward to the CRA Advisory Board for review and recommendation to the CRA Board for final approval. A letter will be mailed notifying the Applicant of the status of the application. If an application is denied at any level of review, the Applicant may modify the existing application or reapply at a later date.

Please note that applications must be submitted and approved BEFORE work begins. Award of the grant is not guaranteed, and the Applicant assumes all financial liabilities for work initiated prior to the approval of the Grant by the CRA Advisory Board and CRA Board.

The City is required to file informational returns (Form 1099-G) for individuals and entities receiving grants from the Dunnellon CRA. Grant recipients must sign and return a Substitute W9 form to the City before funds can be considered for reimbursement.

(4) Upon completion of the improvements; a final inspection and approval by the City is required prior to the Applicant submitting a “reimbursement package” which includes the following:

- a. Completed reimbursement form (provided by Community Development staff);
- b. Copies of applicable paid invoices or receipts for improvements;
- c. Photos of completed improvements.

Applicants will receive grant funding after the project is completed and all associated costs have been paid. It is the responsibility of the Applicant to maintain proper documentation of funds expended in the course of completing the project. Release of funds is subject to submission of this documentation to the CRA Advisory Board by the Applicant. The project must be completed essentially as presented to the CRA Advisory Board in order to receive reimbursement. At approximately the midpoint of the project, the Applicant will give an update to the CRA Advisory Board on the progress of the project either in writing or in person. The CRA Advisory Board reserves the right to make on-site inspections throughout the course of the project, subject to meeting sunshine law.

Projects must begin within 60 days of approval, and applicants have 60 days from the completion date of the project to file for reimbursement according to procedures set forth within the reimbursement package. All requests for payments will be processed in the next available Accounts Payable Warrant cycle.

Acceptable documentation is defined as PAID invoices/statements and/or schedule of values from vendors clearly detailing the work done for the project, as well a notice of Final Inspection from the Building Department (if applicable).

The following selection criteria will be used to review applications for the CRA Grant Program. Criteria are derived from the goals and objectives of the Dunnellon Community Redevelopment Plan.

1. **Quality of Site Design and Materials:** Degree to which the proposed project promotes the adopted CRA Master Plan and promotes harmony with neighboring structures.
2. **Streetscape Aesthetics and Functionality:** Degree to which the proposed project enhances the streetscape of CRA Corridor, including the addition or enhancement of display windows, awnings, landscaping, exterior handicapped accessibility and architectural amenities.

3. **Increased Safety:** Degree to which the proposed project will promote safety by easily identifying the business for customers and emergency services.

4. **Removal of Slum and Blight:** Degree to which the proposed project upgrades or eliminates substandard structures or eliminates non-conforming uses.

Disclaimer:

The City of Dunnellon shall not be responsible for the planning, design, or construction of the property that is owned by the Applicant. No warranties or guarantees are expressed or implied by the description of, application for, or participation in the CRA Grant Program. The Applicant is advised to consult with licensed architects, engineers, or building contractors before proceeding with final plans or construction.

GRANT TYPES & GUIDELINES:

Categories in which grant funds are eligible:

- Façade Rehabilitation
- Signage
- Paving
- Demolition

Funding Structure (All grants):

Eligible applicants may receive awards of up to 20% of the total eligible project cost with no single grant exceeding \$25,000.

FACADE REHABILITATION

Purpose:

The purpose of the facade improvement is to encourage and assist property owners within the Community Redevelopment Area to improve the aesthetics and appearance of their properties and to create a sense of continuity and design impact. Attractive and appealing images enhance the overall vitality and character of the City by adding new beautification and visual features where previously lacking.

Guidelines:

- Building must be structurally sound based on owner provided documentation.
- Only one Façade Rehabilitation Grant will be awarded per property.

Eligible Improvements (includes but not limited to):

- Awnings and shutters of exterior structure-replace or new
- Exterior Doors and Windows
- Paint on exterior structure (including murals)
- Siding or exterior coverings
- Exterior Lighting
- Landscaping
- Other exterior projects on a case-by-case basis

SIGNAGE**Purpose:**

The purpose of the sign replacement reimbursement grant program is to encourage and assist property owners within the Community Redevelopment Area to improve the aesthetics and appearance of their properties and to create a sense of continuity and design impact.

Guidelines:

- Removal of old signs, replacement of existing signs to meet code, and the production and installation of new signage that meets code.
- Color scheme should harmonize with surrounding structures.
- Only one Sign Grant will be awarded per property.

Ineligible Improvements:

- Repair of signs that do not meet current code, Nonconforming

PAVING:**Guidelines:**

- Repairs, replacement, or extension of paved surfaces.
- Only one Paving Grant will be awarded per property.

Eligible Improvements:

- New pavement, unpaved property or repair of pavement i.e. pot holes, etc.

DEMOLITION**Guidelines:**

- Structures that are beyond economic repair

- Only one Demolition Grant will be awarded per property.

Eligible Properties:

- Deteriorated properties with major structural defects beyond reasonable economic repair

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What are the Program funding limits?

A: If an application is approved, the Program may provide grant funds 20% of the total cost of the improvements (not to exceed \$25,000). The applicant is responsible for all costs not provided by the grant.

Q: What kinds of improvements qualify for grant funds?

A: The Program is only for exterior improvements on all properties and must conform to the Dunnellon Community Redevelopment Plan. Generally, qualified improvements must be visible from the street and increase the functionality of the building for its intended use, e.g. new storefront windows, exterior doors, awnings, exterior lighting, or landscaping. The removal of deteriorated portions of the building is also allowed. Improvements such as roof repairs or structural stabilization will only be considered on a case by case basis.

Q: If I receive a grant award, how do I get the funds?

A: Funds will be released upon satisfactory completion of the project and submittal and approval of complete reimbursement package.