

COMMERCIAL INTERIOR GRANT







Overview

The goal of the Commercial Interior Grant is to support repair and rehabilitation of commercial and mixed-use buildings within the City of Tampa's Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) Redevelopment Areas for improvements that address interior code non-compliance or violations. It is also designed to increase property values by encouraging improvements that bring outdated buildings up to code to spur private investment within the Redevelopment Areas.

This is a matching reimbursement grant providing a maximum 50% reimbursement for eligible improvements. Grant maximums are dependent on the budget for the Redevelopment Area in which the property is located (**see table below**). All commercial grants, except for Special Projects, may be stacked, up to a maximum of three grants. A single expense shall only be reimbursed from a single grant.

CRA Area	Maximum Grant Amount
Central Park	\$50,000
Channel District	\$50,000
Downtown	\$50,000
Drew Park	\$50,000
East Tampa	\$75,000
Tampa Heights/Riverfront	\$20,000
West Tampa	\$75,000
Ybor I	\$75,000
Ybor II	\$50,000

Who Can Apply:

Property or business owners as defined in the Commercial Grants Policy Section II.2.1, who hold a commercial lease within CRA area boundaries can apply for this grant. The property owner must execute a Grant Agreement and Restrictive Covenants applicable to the maintenance of the improvements and future use of the property for a period of five (5) years commencing upon the disbursement of the grant funds (if receiving a Legacy Credit, see Section II.1.1 of the Commercial Grants Policy). The Restrictive Covenants will be recorded in the Public Records of Hillsborough County.

How to apply:

Prospective applicants must schedule a pre-application meeting with the Economic Development Division prior to submitting a grant application. Appointments may be requested by calling (813) 274-8325 or by submitting an online request on the CRA website (<https://www.tampa.gov/cras/community-redevelopment-areas>). **No grant application shall be accepted for review until after a pre-application meeting with the Economic Development Division has occurred.**





Applicant/Property Eligibility

1. Property must be located within the boundaries of a CRA.
2. Property must include commercial use, as defined in the Grants & Funding Policy. Mixed-use buildings, considered 'storefront/residential' as defined in the Grants & Funding Policy, must include a floor area of commercial use equivalent to at least 20% of at least one standard-sized story. Mixed-use property reimbursements shall be limited to the commercial space improvements only.
3. Applicant, owner and property must be current on all mortgages, business taxes and property taxes.
4. Business owners (commercial tenants) applying on their landlord's behalf must submit an Owner's Affidavit with their completed application (affidavit shall be provided at the pre-application meeting).
5. Applicants with existing City Code violations or demonstrated non-compliance with current building codes in which all existing violations or required corrective actions will be satisfied with the completion of the project.
6. Current and future use(s) of the property must be permitted under City of Tampa Code of Ordinances, and all proposed improvements must be in conformance with City Code.



Ineligible Applicants/Properties

1. Residential properties with no commercial uses.
2. Multi-Family developments.
3. Properties in foreclosure, delinquent on mortgages, or delinquent in business taxes or property taxes.
4. Governmental entities and non-tax-generating properties. In the event the property is sold or transferred to a governmental or tax exempt entity within five years of the disbursement of grant funds, the grant recipient shall reimburse the CRA the grant award.
5. Adult uses as defined by the City Code.
6. Bars, lounges and nightclubs.
7. Projects permitted or commenced prior to review and approval of the grant request by the CRA.

The CRA reserves the right to deny funding to applicants who are delinquent on payments of City fines or fees, if unresolved Code Enforcement issues exist and will not be resolved with the proposed project, and to those out of compliance with the terms of their grant award.



Application Requirements

1. Completed/Executed Application Form.
2. Proof of Ownership.
 - Recorded warranty deed.
 - If tenant: executed commercial lease between the property owner and the business owner and an executed Owner's Affidavit by all owners.
 - If Applicant is a corporation, limited partnership or limited liability company: Sunbiz information evidencing that the entity is active and listing the registered agent and

authorized persons for that entity.

3. Consent to Restrictive Covenants.
4. Detailed Project Scope identifying all proposed improvements.
5. Photographs of the existing building and the proposed project area.
6. Three (3) itemized estimates or contract proposals. Evidence that a minimum of three (3) itemized estimates for the work has been requested from properly licensed general contractor (GC) or tradesmen if no GC is required or contracted.
7. Contract with a properly licensed and qualified general contractor or tradesmen. CRA Director approval is required to use a contractor or tradesmen who didn't submit the lowest bid.





Eligible Improvements

1. Any improvements that resolve City of Tampa code violations.
2. Necessary upgrades to meet fire, electrical, plumbing, accessibility and structural code requirements.
3. Improvements must comply with all applicable laws and regulations and be properly permitted in accordance with the City of Tampa's Code of Ordinances.
4. Expenses must be related to the direct labor, equipment or materials associated with the eligible improvements to be counted towards the overall project cost.
5. Eligible improvements include but are not limited to:
 - a. Upgrade of outdated systems if required to comply with code:
 - i. Electrical
 - ii. Plumbing
 - iii. Sprinkler/Fire Suppression Systems
 - iv. ADA Compliance Improvements
 - v. Utility and Wastewater Management Systems
 - vi. Solid Waste Management Systems (fixed systems only)
 - vii. Foundation/Stabilization
 - b. Improvements/repairs eligible only if caused by other code required interior improvements/repairs or restoration of historical features include:
 - i. Flooring (for example, if damaged during code repairs to plumbing or wiring beneath the floor)
 - ii. Drywall/Paint (for example, if damaged during code repairs to plumbing or wiring behind a wall or ceiling)
 - c. Ancillary expenses, listed below, are only eligible in addition to one or more of the above improvements and are capped at 20% of the overall grant reimbursement.
 - i. Fees: Architectural/Engineering Fees are eligible, up to a maximum of \$10,000

The improvements listed below are specifically ineligible for reimbursement:

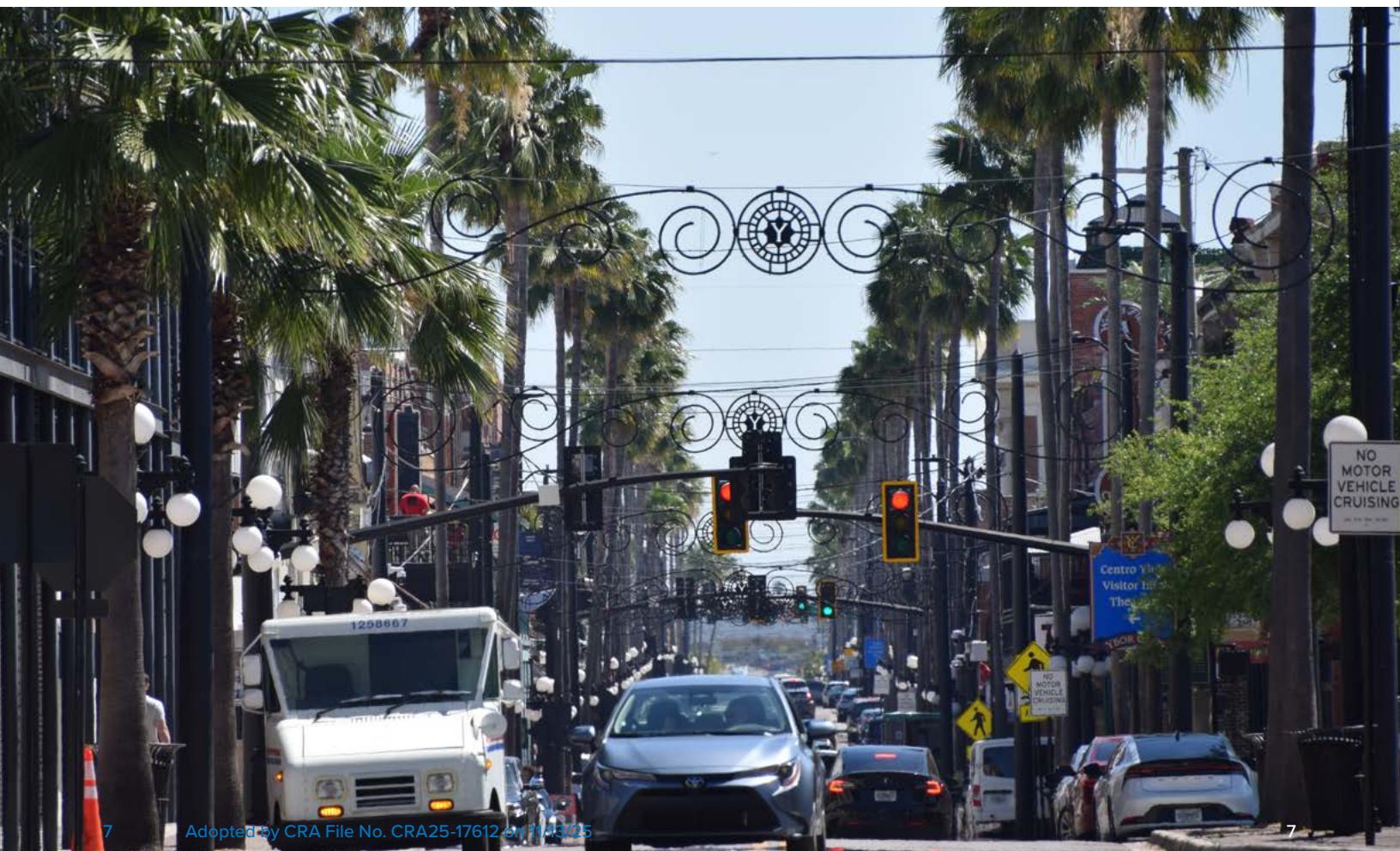
1. Exterior improvements (even if visible from inside the building).
2. HVAC installation or repair
3. Inventory, fixtures, non-fixed equipment, and furniture.
4. Non-fixed improvements.
5. New construction unless to support ADA required improvements
6. Permit/Impact/consulting fees, code enforcement fines, and/or taxes or licensing fees.
7. Sweat equity payments (for example: reimbursement for applicant's own labor and performances of renovation work or new construction). The selected contractor shall have no affiliation with the applicant and/or property owner.
8. Improvements commenced prior to receiving written grant approval.



Process

Grants shall be awarded on a first-qualified, first-awarded basis while fiscal year funds are available. Applicants may utilize the maximum allowable grant across each Redevelopment Area. Any work, including pulling permits, must begin after the grant award letter has been issued unless utilizing a Pre-Development grant in which case, only permits may be acquired. Failure to follow the process shall render your application ineligible for grant funding/reimbursement.

CRA staff shall provide an application, and any other necessary forms, following a successful pre-application meeting. Within ten (10) business days of application receipt, CRA staff will review applications for completeness and accuracy and notify the applicant regarding any deficiencies or issues with the application; additional information may be requested. Applications are considered submitted once all required documents have been received. Incomplete applications will only be held open for a maximum of 60 days after initial submission. After 60 days, if the application remains incomplete, it will be withdrawn by staff. Thereafter, an Applicant will have to reapply for a grant by submitting an entirely new grant application for the project, including any documents originally submitted by the Applicant in connection with its initial application.





Selection Criteria

CRA staff shall review all complete applications and score them based on the grant award criteria and issue an approval or denial letter.

Scoring Criteria

Criteria	Points
Private Contribution towards Project Cost	50 maximum points
Less than \$10,000	10
Between \$10,000 and \$24,999	20
Between \$25,000 and \$69,999	40
Greater than \$70,000	50
Leasehold Improvements	25 maximum points
ADA Only	20
Electrical Only	20
Fire Suppression/Sprinkler System Only	20
Structural Only	20
Plumbing Only	20
Two or more	25
Type of Tenant for Improved Space	25 maximum points
Improvements to Attract Tenant	15
Lease Executed - Not occupied	20
Currently Occupied	25
Bonus Points	55 total maximum points
Horizontal Mixed Use	5
Legacy Property Owner	10
Stacking Exterior & Interior Grants	10
Using a certified SLBE Contractor	15
Vertical Mixed Use	15
100 points maximum (before bonus)	

Applications must score at least 60 out of 100 points to be approved. Applications that score less than 60 points shall be denied. Written notification of the approval or denial shall be provided. Applications that are denied may be appealed (see section II.3.9 of the Grants & Funding Policy) to the CRA Board at its next regularly scheduled meeting. The applicant shall be notified in writing of the Board's decision within five business days.



Disbursement of Funds

The Applicant shall incur all initial project cost and receive reimbursement after the project has been completed in accordance with the grant guidelines. Grant funds shall be disbursed upon a finding of project completion. The finding of project completion shall be made once staff has received, reviewed and approved the following items:

1. Written notification that the project is complete.
2. Verification from City of Tampa that all code violations have been satisfied and the property is free of violations.
3. Copies of all required permits and occupancy certificates.
4. Copies of invoices for all improvements and evidence of payment (cancelled checks, lien waivers, receipts, etc.).

Requests for reimbursement shall be reviewed as a single package. Once the request for payment has been submitted, the CRA shall no longer consider any additional receipts/expense. Grant funds are provided at the discretion of the CRA Board and the findings within the recommendation do not create an entitlement to funding.



Expiration of Grant Award

Applicants must receive a building permit within six months from the date of approval. Project completion must be within eighteen months of the issuance of a building permit. Reimbursement, including the verification of the property is free of code violations, must be requested within thirty days of project completion which shall be no longer than eighteen months from the issuance of a building permit or by the completion date specified in the grant agreement, which ever comes first, if notification of project completion is not received from the applicant. A six-month extension to either the permit or the completion deadline may be granted at the discretion of the CRA Director in his/her sole discretion but is not guaranteed. Additional extension requests, due to issues with obtaining permits, will be considered on a case-by-case basis and may be approved by the CRA Director in his/her sole discretion unless such extensions are required under Florida law.

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**Request a Commercial
Grants Pre-Application
Meeting**



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(813) 274-8325



tampa.gov/CRAs

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The Tampa Community Redevelopment Agency prides itself in working closely with residents, local businesses, community stakeholders, and the private sector to be a leader in redeveloping and sustaining all communities located within our CRA boundaries.

JANUARY 2026