

TAMPACRA

# COMMERCIAL SPECIAL PROJECTS GRANT





## Overview

The City of Tampa's Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) recognizes that there are projects that may warrant CRA support even if that project does not fall within the parameters of a standard CRA grant. The Commercial Special Projects Grant establishes an application and review process for certain limited projects located within a Tampa Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) Redevelopment Area. This grant category is intended for commercial funding requests up to \$999,999 and is unavailable for requests above that threshold where the Project meets the CRA goals and objectives as outlined in Sections I.1 and II.1.1 of the Grants & Funding Policy.

The Commercial Special Projects Grant allows reimbursement of eligible pre-development costs of up to 20% of the total grant award, not to exceed \$200,000. The maximum reimbursement percentage and allocation amount may vary depending on the available budget within the applicable CRA area. Eligible soft costs include Architectural and engineering design fees incurred on the Project for services performed by professionals licensed by the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR), Permit Fees (not to include additional plan review fees) and Site remediation and stabilization (Brownfields) only.

### Who Can Apply:

At the CRA's sole and absolute discretion, the CRA may elect to award a grant of up to \$999,999 for a "special project" located within a Redevelopment Area that does not fall within the parameters of the standard CRA grants so long as the Project is identified in and is otherwise consistent with the funding principles listed in Section II.1.1 of the Grants & Funding Policy. In addition, one or more of the following factors must also exist:

- The Applicant is a Governmental Entity (except the City of Tampa) who does not qualify to apply for any standard CRA grants; or
- The Project or grant request does not qualify for funding under any other available CRA grants or the CRA Board determines that the Project warrants consideration under this grant category due to the size, public benefit or unique nature of the request; or
- The Applicant has not received another CRA grant for the Project and the Applicant can demonstrate special circumstances warranting a grant in excess of the standard CRA grant funding limits.

### How to apply:

Prospective Applicants must schedule a pre-application meeting with the Economic Development Division prior to submitting a grant application. Applicants are encouraged to schedule pre-application meetings well in advance of the application window (see the Two-Cycle Application Timeline Table) of the funding cycle to which they apply.

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 successful 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. Governmental entities (excluding the City of Tampa), property owners, and non-tax-generating properties may apply, provided:
  - a. Ground tenants submit a copy of the current, executed lease; and
  - b. All property owners execute and Owner's Affidavit evidencing consent to the application.
3. Applicant, owner and property must be current with all mortgages, business and property taxes.
4. The property's current and future use must be permitted under City of Tampa's Code of Ordinances.
5. Improvements must require the issuance of building or site permits from the City of Tampa.



## Ineligible Applicants/Properties

1. Properties not located within a CRA.
2. Properties in foreclosure, delinquent on mortgages, or delinquent in business taxes or property taxes.
3. Single Family Residential, Multi-Family developments and Mixed-Use Commercial with less than 20% commercial use in a single-story.
4. New construction except as allowed under Florida Statute Chapter 163.370(2).
5. Adult uses, bars, lounges and nightclubs as defined by the City of Tampa Code of Ordinances and properties that do not or will not contain a commercial use.
6. Projects that are already funded under or that can be funded through a standard grant, or a request greater than \$999,999.
7. Sweat equity payments (for example: reimbursement for Applicant's own labor and performances of renovation work). The selected contractor shall have no affiliation with the Applicant and/or property owner.
8. Projects not consistent with applicable City Code including, without limitation, any applicable historic preservation requirements or architectural design guidelines.
9. Projects with work commenced prior to review and approval of the grant request by the CRA.

The CRA reserves the right to deny funding to Applicants in its sole and absolute discretion including Applicants who are delinquent on payments of City fines or fees, Applicants with unresolved Code Enforcement issues, and Applicants out of compliance with the terms of their grant award.



## Application Requirements

1. Completed/Executed Application Form
2. Letter of Request detailing
  - Background
  - Detailed Project Scope identifying all proposed improvements (overall projected costs, including material, labor and eligible fees) and verification that the proposed Project is and will be consistent with all regulatory requirements and approvals including all requirements contained in the City Code (especially zoning, building and development standards and requirements).
  - Project Renderings and Site Layout.
  - Photographs and information regarding the existing and proposed development area;
  - Explanation of how the Project is consistent with Chapter 163, Part III, Florida Statutes (the Community Redevelopment Act);
  - Explanation of how the Project is identified in or is otherwise consistent with the adopted Community Redevelopment Plan (CRP) for the Redevelopment Area in which the Project is located;
  - Explanation of how the Project is consistent with or furthers a strategic goal of the CRA or the adopted Strategic Action Plan (SAP) for the Redevelopment Area in which the Project is located, if applicable;
  - The specific amount of financial assistance being requested from the CRA and how that assistance will be used if the grant is awarded (including the projected timeline for the Project and when the CRA's financial assistance will be required);
  - Three (3) itemized estimates or contract proposals from properly licensed contractors, together with the contract. 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;
  - The total estimated cost of the Project and how much of the Project will be funded by the Applicant or private/public sources other than the CRA; and
  - Verification of funds demonstrating the availability of financial resources exceeding the amount REQUESTED from the CRA.
3. Proof of Ownership
  - Recorded warranty deed.
  - If business owner (commercial tenant), then a copy of the executed commercial lease between the property owner and business owner, and an Owner's Affidavit executed by the property owner(s); and
  - If Applicant is a corporation, limited partnership or limited liability company: Sunbiz information available from the Florida Division of Corporations evidencing that the entity is active and listing the registered agent and authorized persons for that entity.
4. Approval from any required review committees (if applicable)



Stacking of a Commercial Special Project Grant with other CRA grants for the same Project is expressly prohibited. If awarded a Commercial Special Project Grant, an Applicant is prohibited from seeking another CRA grant for the same property within 10 years.

## Process

Commercial Special Project Grants shall be evaluated and awarded competitively. Applications will be accepted on a twice a year cycle based on funding availability. Complete applications must be received annually by November 1<sup>st</sup> for cycle one and April 1<sup>st</sup> for cycle two.

**Two-Cycle Application Timeline**

| <b>MILESTONE</b>                                             | <b>CYCLE 1</b>            | <b>CYCLE 2</b>           |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Grant Cycle Opens</b> (Accepting Applications)            | September 1 <sup>st</sup> | February 1 <sup>st</sup> |
| <b>Grant Cycle Closes</b> (Complete Application Packets Due) | November 1 <sup>st</sup>  | April 1 <sup>st</sup>    |
| <b>CAC Presentations</b>                                     | January                   | June                     |
| <b>Group A CRA Board Presentations*</b>                      | February                  | August                   |
| <b>Group B CRA Board Presentations **</b>                    | March                     | September                |

\* **Group A:** Channel District, Downtown, Drew Park & East Tampa

\*\* **Group B:** Central Park, Tampa Heights Riverfront, West Tampa & Ybor

No work shall commence prior to issuance of a grant award letter and execution of the Grant Agreement. Applicants may apply for permits after successful completion of the Pre-Application Meeting solely for the purpose of obtaining application-required estimates and project readiness documentation. 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 or if additional information is required. Applications received within ten (10) days of the submission deadline are provided at the Applicant's risk and may not allow sufficient time for staff review or correction of deficiencies. Applications that are incomplete as of the deadline will not be considered for that funding cycle and must be resubmitted for consideration in a subsequent cycle. Applications are considered submitted once all required documents have been received. Incomplete applications shall only be held open for a maximum of 60 days after initial submission. At the conclusion of the application window, if the application remains incomplete, it shall be terminated and withdrawn. Thereafter, an Applicant shall 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.

After the timely receipt of a complete application, staff shall review the application for purposes of determining eligibility, scoring and grouping for Community Advisory Committee (CAC) review and recommendation. CRA staff shall review all completed applications against the review criteria for consistency with Chapter 163 Part III, the Community Redevelopment Plan for the district, and in compliance with the budget(s) for the year of application or year(s) of funding. If found consistent, staff will recommend consideration by the CAC and the CRA Board. Each Applicant shall present their Project and request to the CAC for its review and recommendation. After the CAC has provided its recommendation, the Applicant shall present their Project and request for review to the CRA Board for final funding decision. Once approved, the Grant Agreement will be placed on the next available CRA Board meeting agenda. The scheduling of the CRA Board meetings will be subject to applicable public notice and agenda deadlines.

The CRA Board may decide to deviate from the standard criteria to either approve or disapprove an application (See the Grants & Funding Policy Section II.2.3 for more details).

Upon receiving CRA Board approval, Applicants must:

- Execute a Grant Agreement in a form and content approved by the CRA board within 10 business days after it has been provided to the Applicant for execution, and prior to commencing any work to be funded by the grant. The Grant Agreement shall address all terms and conditions concerning the Project. However, if not addressed in the Grant Agreement, the Applicant will also comply with all the requirements in this document (unless expressly modified or waived by the Grant Agreement approved by the CRA Board).
- All eligible improvements must be consistent with the information provided in connection with the approved grant application and be permitted in accordance with City Code. Any material changes to the Project required for permitting must be disclosed to and first approved in the manner provided in the Grant Agreement.
- Submit verification of funds demonstrating the availability of financial resources exceeding the amount APPROVED by the CRA Board.
- The property owner must execute Restrictive Covenants regarding the maintenance of the grant improvements and the use of the property for a period of 10 years as a condition to disbursement of grant funds.
- Allow CRA representatives and employees reasonable access to the property to inspect the work for which the grant was provided and to photograph the Project for use in future publications. Applicant also agrees to display signage promoting the CRA's assistance with the improvements; signage will be provided by the CRA.
- Grant reasonable access to all documents pertaining to the planning, construction and financing of the Project as may be reasonably required to assure compliance with the terms of the Grant Agreement.

- Recognize the CRA's financial contribution as approved by the CRA Board, consistent with Section 3.4 of the Grants & Funding Policy.
- Unless otherwise provided in the Grant Agreement, grant funds will be disbursed as reimbursement for eligible improvements completed by or on behalf of and paid for by the Applicant in compliance with these requirements and any special requirements contained in the Grant Agreement, if applicable.

The CRA's commitment to fund any special project in future fiscal years is expressly made contingent upon the appropriation of funds for the special project and the approval of the budget in future fiscal years. Notwithstanding any provision herein to the contrary, NO entitlement to grant funding is created by a decision or recommendation to contingently approve a grant application per this process. Without limiting the foregoing provisions, any approval of an initial grant application is expressly contingent upon and subject to funding availability, approved matching grant requirements, and all post-award grant requirements or conditions.

## Scoring Criteria

| CRITERIA                         | MAXIMUM POINTS | CRITERIA DESCRIPTION                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|----------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>CRP Alignment</b>             | 20             | Points will be awarded to proposed projects that generally align with the goals outlined in the district's Community Redevelopment Plan (CRP). Greater consideration will be given to projects that not only support these goals but also implement them in the specific manner identified in the plan. |
| <b>Financial Feasibility</b>     | 20             | Points will be awarded to proposed projects based on the extent to which they demonstrate financial soundness and the efficient use of CRA funding. Greater consideration will be given to projects with a higher ratio of private investment relative to CRA funds.                                    |
| <b>Project Schedule/Timeline</b> | 5              | Points will be awarded based on the awardee's readiness to commence construction.                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Project Location</b>          | 10             | Points will be awarded to proposed projects based on proximity to targeted transportation corridors identified in the district's CRP/SAP.                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Community Benefit</b>         | 15             | Points will be awarded to proposed projects based on the extent to which they address identified needs within the district, as identified in the CRP/SAP. Greater consideration will be given to projects that incorporate green space, public parks and/or public improvement.                         |
| <b>CRA Board Goals Alignment</b> | 20             | Points will be awarded based on the number of CRA Board-approved goals with which the proposed project aligns, with four points assigned for each of the five goals. The five goals are Attainable Housing, Community Engagement, Connectivity, Economic Development and Quality of Life.               |
| <b>Legacy</b>                    | 10             | Points will be awarded to proposed projects in increments of 0,5, or 10, as defined under Legacy Relief in Section II.1.1 of the Grants & Funding Policy.                                                                                                                                               |





## Disbursement of Funds

Unless provided otherwise in the Grant Agreement, the Applicant shall incur all initial project costs and receive reimbursement after the Project has been completed in accordance with the grant award approval. Grant funds shall be disbursed upon a finding of Project completion and evidence of the costs of the eligible improvements. The finding of Project completion shall be made once staff has received, reviewed and approved the following items:

1. Written notification, from the Applicant, that the Project is complete.
2. Copies of all required permits and occupancy certificates.
3. Copies of invoices for all improvements and evidence of payment (canceled checks, lien waivers, receipts, etc.)
4. Any other conditions outlined in the Grant Agreement.

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 or expenses.



## Expiration of Grant Award

Unless otherwise provided for in the Grant Agreement, applicants must receive a building permit within twelve months after execution of the Grant Agreement. Project completion must occur within twenty-four months after issuance of the building permit or by the completion date specified in the Grant Agreement, whichever comes first. Reimbursement must be requested within thirty days of Project completion which will be determined based on twenty-four months from the issuance of a building permit or Grant Agreement execution if notification of Project completion is not received from the Applicant.

Extensions to any of these deadlines may be granted, but are not guaranteed, and are at the sole discretion of the CRA Director for up to an additional year.





## Request a Commercial Grants Pre-Application Meeting



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[\(813\) 274-8325](tel:(813)274-8325)



[tampa.gov/CRA](https://tampa.gov/CRA)s

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.

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