City of Port St. Lucie

Commercial Façade Improvement Grant Program Guide

PORT ST. LUCIE

HEART OF THE TREASURE COAST

If you are interested in applying for this grant program please read this program guide carefully. For any questions about this program please contact the City's Neighborhood Services Department at (772) 344-4084 or write to neighborhoodservices@cityofpsl.com

If you are interested in receiving updates and announcements about City programs and services please sign up for informational emails at: https://www.cityofpsl.com/Residents/Connect/Stay-Informed.

The City reserves the right to make changes and updates to this program in line with Local, State and Federal regulations.

The City of Port St. Lucie is pleased to announce the availability of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding to assist business owners in the restoration, renovation or improvement of commercial façades. The "commercial façade improvement grant" funded by Federal CDBG program aims to provide financial assistance to property owners of commercial buildings, or tenants, to improve the appearance of their storefronts, thereby enhancing the visual appeal of a commercial district, stimulating economic activity, and attracting customers by improving the overall aesthetics of the area. This program is focusing on specific, Federally designated "CDBG Census Tracts" and is a tool to help community revitalization. This program aims to increase the street appeal of commercial properties and positively affects the surrounding neighborhoods, boosting the local economy while helping to beautify and preserve commercial corridors. This is a competitive grant program. The City will open an application portal online at 9 am on March 4, 2025, at: https://www.zoomgrants.com/zgf/cpsl_cdbgfacadegrant. Funding is limited.

A committee will review all applications and award grants based on merit, how well the proposal meets the program objectives, an evaluation of application quality and completeness as well as the availability of funding.

The City is extending the application period until April 8, 2025, at 5 p.m. Please contact us if you have any questions or are having any technical difficulties.

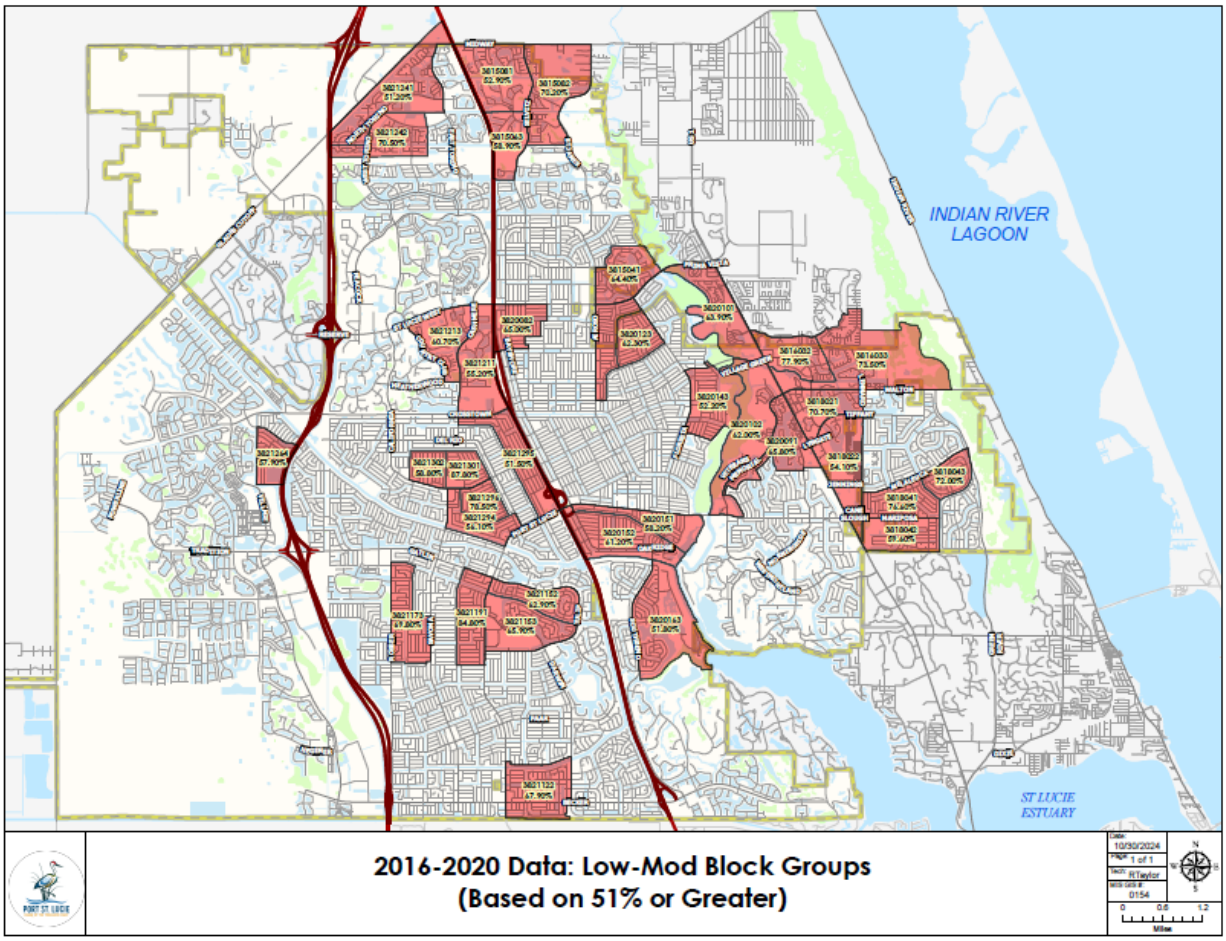
BACKGROUND & FUNDING

The CDBG program is one of the resources offered by the City of Port St. Lucie's to strengthen the City's neighborhoods and has been offered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for 50 years. The City of Port St. Lucie will be utilizing some of its funding to support local for-profit businesses by offering up to **$10,000** in grant funding to improve their façades. In this initial round a total of **$100,000** of grant funding is available for this program. Additional funding may be allocated to continue the program, in the future.

The "target areas" for the program include all addresses located within the City's Official CDBG Census tracts.

TARGET AREA REQUIREMENT

The primary location of business and/or proposed project must be located within the City of Port St. Lucie's targeted areas. You can search whether or not an address qualifies by being located within one of these Census tracts through the interactive online map at: https://pslgis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=57d59e8f4e9547fdb87ee511c21210b3.



City of Port St. Lucie CDBG Census Tract Map

Eligible Census Tract are colored red.

GRANT FUNDING AMOUNT

The Commercial Façade Improvement Grant Program offers financial assistance in the form of a reimbursable, 50% percent matching grant up to **$10,000** for property or business owners or tenants that wish to improve the external appearance of their business. No grants will be awarded for work that has already been completed. Projects must occur after official notice of grant award is issued by the City. The amount of funding is dependent on the total cost of the approved project

Example 1: Project Budget $20,000 (New Front Doors & Awning) Applicant is requesting a grant for $10,000 and the business owner plans to contribute $10,000. The grant is approved. The final project cost is $19,500. The business owner submits proof of the project completion and is reimbursed $9,750.

Example 2: Project Budget $10,000 (Gutters, Window, and Sign) Applicant is approved for a grant for up to $5,000 and the business owner plans to contribute $5,000. The final cost of the project is $12,500. The business owner submits proof of the completion of the project and is reimbursed $5,000.

APPLICATION & GRANT TIMELINE

The application period will begin at 9 am on March 4, 2025, and end at 5 pm on March 25, 2025. Late applications will not be accepted. Grants will be reviewed and scored during April 2025. Award and denial letters will be sent to all applicants by May 2025. All improvements must be completed and reimbursement requests must be submitted to the City by September 1, 2025.

BUILDING TYPE REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must have a for-profit business with façades visible from the street. Mixed-use, industrial, and warehouse buildings are eligible, but improvements must be limited to the street facing portion of the building.

OWNERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

Both business owners and property owners are eligible to apply for the grant as well as tenants. If the applicant is a tenant of the property, then permission from the property owner must be obtained. If selected for funding, a notarized letter from the property owner will be requested. It is recommended that tenants have at a minimum, 12 months remaining on their lease or an option to renew. The business owner/business must have been in operation for at least one (1) year to be considered eligible.

Mobile Food Dispending Vehicles (MFCV) and Temporary Commercial Kitchens (TCK) as well as mobile vending/businesses do not qualify for this grant program.

DESCRIPTION OF ELIGIBLE WORK

The façade improvements being funded with the CDBG program must comply with both CDBG Federal Guidelines and City Ordinances.

Eligible and ineligible uses of the funds are listed below. These lists are not exhaustive. If you have any questions while preparing your application, please do not hesitate to contact the Neighborhood Services Department.

ELIGIBLE USES

- Façade Improvements- This includes any side of the building which is visible from the street.
- Exterior painting
- Attached exterior lighting
- Repairs or replacements of doors and windows
- Decorative and permanent landscaping installation and removal of dried plants.
- Installation of outdoor living walls – not to exceed 50% of building frontage.
    - **Note: Applications for installation of an outdoor living wall will obtain an additional 10 points during scoring for selection of awardees.**
- Siding and trim treatments including awnings and planter boxes

- Awnings/Canopies - Including the removal of old awnings and canopies and the production and installation of new awnings and canopies.
- Gutters and downspouts – including the removal of old gutter/downspout and the installation of new gutter or downspout
- Parking lot improvements/Surface parking
- Soffit and Fascia repair or replacement
- Fencing to enhance the outward appearance (height limit of three feet)
- Signs that are integrated into the architecture of the building
- Dumpster enclosure visible from the street
- Beautification improvements – Existing outdoor Code violation(s)

INELIGIBLE USES

- New construction development
- Residential properties
- Interior modifications
- Features designed to be installed temporarily such as seasonal landscaping
- Public sidewalks
- Painting unpainted brick
- Equipment and furnishings
- Property acquisition
- Fencing in a height excess of three feet
- Signage not affixed to the building
- Expansion of the building area
- Improvements made prior to the official grant award

FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS

The City of Port St. Lucie extends assistance to eligible projects under 24CFR 570.202(a)(3). Because the program is funded with CDBG federal funding, all projects must comply with the CDBG program's National Objective, as follows:

- Benefit low- and moderate- income areas

Note: The business has a service area that is a) primarily residential and b) is comprised of at least 51% low and moderate-income residents. Low to moderate-income is defined as 80% of the area median income as published annually by HUD for the City of Port St. Lucie.

Other Federal requirements may be applicable. The City will review any of those requirements with the applicant and contractor at the time of the award, if applicable.

NOTICE OF DAVIS BACON WAGE REQUIREMENT:

Construction work that is financed in whole or in part with federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds and exceed $2,000 must adhere to certain federal labor standards requirements, primarily the Davis-Bacon Act. These standards must be followed when undertaking construction projects with CDBG funds to ensure compliance with federal labor laws and requirements. For full information on Davis-Bacon Compliance see "Making Davis-Bacon Work: A Contractor's Guide to Prevailing Wage Requirements for Federally Assisted Construction Projects" (Davis Bacon Manual). The guide is available on the Web at: http://www.hud/gov/offices/adm/hudclips/guidebooks/HUD-LR-4812/4812-LR.pdf

DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDING

Once an applicant has been approved for funding and has submitted all requirements, the property/business owner may proceed by obtaining building permits through the City of Port St Lucie and begin work.

Upon full completion of the improvements, property owners should submit copies of all receipts for the approved improvements listed on the initial application and award letter to csala@cityofpsl.com in Neighborhood Services Department. All copies of receipts, permits, inspection reports, releases, before and after photos, Davis Bacon documentation must be submitted at the same time. Itemized receipts must clearly demonstrate

that the contractor/s and/or suppliers have been paid in full by the applicant, a copy of the release of contractor lien on property must be included, if applicable.

Davis Bacon requirements must be included with the receipts. Each receipt must clearly cite the applicant as the payor. If the applicant's name is not listed on the receipt as such, any costs contained therein will not be reimbursed. Additional improvements not approved as part of the original application will not be reimbursed.

City of Port St. Lucie building permits and completed inspection reports obtained for improvements when submitting receipts. Any documentation submitted by the property owner becomes public record and will be kept on file with the City of Port St. Lucie. Only one reimbursement check will be processed for any one applicant. There will be no partial reimbursements.

EXHIBIT A: APPLICATION & DOCUMENT CHECKLIST

Applications will be submitted online through the City's ZoomGrants portal at: https://www.zoomgrants.com/zgf/cpsl_cdbgfacadegrant. The City will open an application portal online at 9 am on March 4, 2025, and the application portal will close at 5 pm on March 25, 2025.

Information that will be asked about in the application includes:

- Business owner, business type, and property information
- Description of planned improvements/project, with a timeline and detailed budget, this should include quotes
- Total cost of project and grant amount request

Additional supporting documents will be required. You must upload all supporting documents in order to have your application marked completed and be considered for the grant.

Before submitting the application, verify that you have attached all the necessary supporting documents to support your application. If your application is incomplete it will be returned to you and not evaluated. All applications must be completed before the application closing deadline in order to be considered for a grant. If you have any questions contact Neighborhood Services – Community Programs Division at (772) 344-4084 or by email at: neighborhoodservices@cityofpsl.com.

Supporting Documentation Checklist:

- ✓ **Driver's License or other Government issued ID**
- ✓ **Copy of Deed/Proof of Ownership or Lease copy if renting**
  - **If renting the property, we require a notarized letter from the property owner granting permission**
- ✓ **Copy of Port St. Lucie Business Tax Receipt, current business tax receipt from St. Lucie County, and Sunbiz receipt**
- ✓ **Project Timeline (completion date must be no later than 9/30/2025)**
- ✓ **Estimate & at least one (1) quote (or maximum of three (3) quotes) for all costs associated with the grant project from a licensed engineer or contractor or other vendor**

- ✓ **Evidence (such as letter from your bank, proof of credit line, etc.) of the ability to pay for the project being proposed**
- ✓ **Before pictures of project**

The Port St. Lucie Commercial Façade Improvement Program is a reimbursement program in which funds are paid after receipts/proof of payment and project completion have been submitted to the city showing that all contractors and subcontractors have been paid in full and the project has been completed.

EXHIBIT B: EVALUATION CRITERIA

Applications received will be evaluated based on the criteria below. The applicants that obtain the highest number of points will be selected for funding. There is no guarantee that funding will be available for all applications that submit required materials and meet the evaluation criteria. Grant funding is limited.

Evaluation Criteria for Selection	Maximum Number of Points Possible: 100
Clear Project Plan, feasibility and compliance as well as: Projects' Overall Neighborhood and Public Space Impacts; Community Improvement Benefits	**40**
Design/Creativity	**20**
CDBG Census Tract, 10 points; additional 5 points if property is located within a Community Redevelopment Area (CRA)	**15**
Property is located near to or along the US-1 Corridor	**15**
Installation of Outdoor Living Wall	**10**

The City will consider this following additional criteria when evaluating applications:

- Applications submitted by PSL residents
- Applications submitted by Veterans
- Projects that support small business retention and/or expansion

- Projects with heightened vehicular or pedestrian visibility
- Project Sustainability
- Public Accessibility
- Projects that incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)
- Projects with improvements of high-quality design and/or value based on recognized professional standards or best practices
- Projects that align with the design standards established for the neighborhood and, when applicable, which may include historic preservation
- For vacant commercial properties, identification of an end use (office, retail, etc.) and tenants secured (at least a letter of intent
- Projects that have a clear construction timeline and can be completed by 9/30/2025
- Partnerships with local organizations, community consultation and/or support or stakeholder engagement efforts

EXHIBIT C: SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR REIMBURSEMENT

If selected for funding, to obtain a reimbursement check the following materials must be submitted after project completion:

- ✓ **Copies of all paid invoices and receipts for the improvement listed on the application**
- ✓ **Copies of City of Port St. Lucie building permits and completed inspection reports obtained for improvements when submitting receipts (if applicable)**
- ✓ **Project after photos**
- ✓ **Davis Bacon documentation (if applicable)**
- ✓ **W-9**

IMPORTANT REMINDER:

DO NOT BEGIN ANY IMPROVEMENT PRIOR TO WRITTEN APPROVAL FROM THE CITY OF PORT ST. LUCIE AND BUILDING PERMIT ISSUANCE.