

CITY OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
BUILDING CODE ASSISTANCE GRANT

I. Intent

It is the intent of the Green Cove Springs Community Redevelopment Agency (the "CRA"), under Part III Community Redevelopment Act, Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, to provide assistance to owners or tenants of property located within the community redevelopment area in order to further the purposes of the Downtown Redevelopment Plan by improving the ability to keep existing businesses and assist new businesses moving in that area. Such assistance for code required improvements will be in the form of a financial grant or reimbursement to qualified businesses, owners or tenants who apply to the City/CRA for such assistance. The purpose of these guidelines is to establish the policies and procedures to be followed by the City in considering applications. Assist

II. Program Description

The CRA's *Building Code Assistance Grant* (BCAG) provides up to a \$10,000 financial grant or reimbursement to help pay eligible costs incurred by a qualified owner or tenant in making improvements that are required due to building code requirements. Code requirements may be from building, fire or City codes that could have prevented a new business from starting. Such improvements may include: fire alarms; air system handlers (heating/air conditioning units); fire walls (needed for various uses); handicap access, including bathroom facilities (ADA requirements); front doors; grease traps (restaurants); or electrical improvement. Grants will be awarded only in the CRA's redevelopment area. This program is for building code issues/items and is not utilized for simple replacement.

III. Eligibility

Grant applications will be considered only if they meet all of the following eligibility criteria.

1. Location and Green Cove Springs CRA Redevelopment Plan

The project must be located within the Green Cove Springs CRA's Redevelopment Area, as presented in the adopted CRA Redevelopment Plan. The requested rehabilitation must also further the Green Cove Springs CRA Plan, inclusive of any subsequent amendments.

2. Applicants

Owners or tenants of real property within the Green Cove Springs CRA Redevelopment Area as described in the Redevelopment Plan. Property must be considered non-residential (e.g., commercial, retail or office) unless it is a mixed use (residential being a clear secondary use) according to the Green Cove Springs Comprehensive Plan and Zoning. Applicants for this program must be able to demonstrate financial capability to complete the project and long-term

commitment to maintaining the property in the condition to which it will be renovated. The qualifying property shall not have any fines, liens, code enforcement action, or tax debt imposed upon the parcel.

3. Consistency with Governmental Regulations: Green Cove Springs Code Enforcement Compliance; Green Cove Springs Comprehensive Plan; Zoning & Green Cove Springs Land Development Code; Architectural Standards for the City of Green Cove Springs; CRA Redevelopment Plan, and; Florida Building Code.

Eligible projects must demonstrate consistency with the City of Green Cove Springs's Comprehensive Plan, Land Development Code, applicable zoning, and is consistent with the *CRA Redevelopment Plan*, as evidenced by a review from the City's Planning & Zoning Department. The rehabilitation must meet all requirements of Green Cove Springs's building and safety code requirements, Code Enforcement, Comprehensive Plan, Zoning & Land Development Code, the City of Green Cove Springs Architectural Standards, and the Florida Building Code – all upon completion of the project. Any project location must have a Business tax Receipt, be permitted use, or have a Conditional Use Permit to operate.

4. Eligible Projects and Costs

A) It is the intent of the *Building Code Assistance Grant* to refund a portion of the applicant's cost for building code improvements for non-residential structures that will enable an existing business or a new business to operate/open within the CRA district. Exterior and Interior code required improvements to existing property within the CRA project area for non-residential buildings would be eligible. All new construction not substantially contributing to building code improvements will be excluded from this program. Any other grants from other City/City programs may not be combined for the same materials or work. Handicap access must be available.

The following are examples of eligible improvements:

- i) Fire alarm systems required for the safe operation of businesses.
- ii) Fire walls as required by the Fire Marshall for particular types of businesses.
- iii) Air system handlers – heating and air conditioning systems.
- iv) Handicap access for front or back doors, bathrooms, or internal movement renovations such as door widening,
- v) Electrical – can include rewiring, replacement, and electrical portions of signage.
- vi) Other improvements required for the re-occupation of the property by the Florida Building Code.
- vii) Other code items may be presented and subsequently approved by the city for inclusion into the program.

B) Specifically exempted from the grant monies are the following:

- i) Off building signage (i.e., any signs not attached to the building, mansard, or canvas type awnings).
- ii) All structural improvements not substantially contributing to the improvement of the property, including load-bearing walls or other similar structural components; and
- iii) Building permits.

- C) The applicant must contribute at least 50% over and above the cost of the requested grant amount.

The grant amount shall in no event exceed \$10,000.00 per unit or building and shall not exceed the total cost of all improvements. The applicant must pay any additional costs over and above the maximum grant amount, and any applicant estimated costs, in order to complete any desired Final bills submitted to the city for reimbursement. In the event actual project costs designated to be paid for by the BCAG come in lower than the estimated contract costs, the grant shall meet, not exceed those actual costs, no matter any additional applicant costs. All bills (marked paid in full), or release of lien must be submitted for reimbursement to the City as proof of payment by the applicant.

- D) Any applicant not meeting the *Building Code Assistance Grant* criteria may request further consideration for an exception from the CRA, depending on the intent of the renovation.

5. Documentation

The grant application must be completed and submitted to the city with the following additional items:

- a. Photographs of the existing building and the proposed project area.
- b. Schematic drawings illustrating all proposed work, or pictures with project description outlined. Include a description of materials and methods to be used, depending on the proposed project (see 4. A.).
- c. Cost estimates for each aspect of the project.

Example:	Air/heat Handler:	\$3,590.00
	Front door:	900.00
	Grease trap:	<u>2,230.00</u>
	TOTAL:	\$6,720.00

6. Application and Grant Availability

The applicant is advised that this grant is given at the sole discretion of the City of Green Cove Springs CRA, and these criteria are used as a base to evaluate the Applicant's project and does not create entitlement to funding. The application shall be reviewed by the Green Cove Springs Planning & Zoning Department and the Building Department if required, for completeness and eligibility prior to any approvals.

* All grant funds are subject to availability as authorized by, and at the sole discretion of the CRA. Only one grant per property shall be authorized every three (3) City fiscal years. If multiple completed applications are submitted a minimum of 30 days prior to the next CRA meeting, both projects are taken to the CRA Board and evaluated for funding availability.

*** CRA Incentive program funds are NOT available for repeat or replacement of the same work that was previously part of a CRA Incentive grant.**

Please note: All projects must be completed within 120 days (4 months) or by the contracted date after receiving grant approval. All work must be completed by the completion date assigned according to the contract.

7. Disbursement of Funds

The City of Green Cove Springs must approve in concept, proposed improvements.

Applications for improvements will be reviewed for completeness, and if they are eligible, the applicant will be notified. At the time the grant is awarded, funds will be dispersed as follows:

- a. In the event building permits are not required for such grant approved renovations, approval may be granted by the CRA or its representative to proceed; and/or
- b. Applicant will be eligible for grant payment at the time of approved final inspection by, or issuance of final approval from the City of Green Cove Springs for the completed project. Verification of payments being made to a vendor or contractor must be presented, (canceled checks, paid invoice from vendors, i.e. the awning contractor, etc.) prior to issuing final grant payment.
- c. All grant requirements must meet all requirements and City of Green Cove Springs codes.
- d. Applicant will be notified in writing as to approval or denial.
- e. Final bills submitted to the city for reimbursement. In the event actual project costs designated to be paid for by the BCAG come in lower than the estimated contract costs, the grant shall meet, not exceed, those actual costs, no matter any additional applicant costs. All bills (marked paid in full), or release of lien must be submitted for reimbursement to the city as proof of payment by the applicant.

ANY COST FOR WORK PREVIOUSLY COMPLETED PRIOR TO AN APPROVED APPLICATION CANNOT BE REIMBURSED UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCE. DO NOT START ANY PHYSICAL RENOVATIONS UNTIL AFTER FINAL APPROVAL BY THE CITY, COMPLETION OF THE CONTRACT WITH THE CITY & NOTICE TO PROCEED HAS BEEN ISSUED. BUILDING PERMITS MAY BE REQUIRED.

* For more information about Green Cove Springs Building Code Assistance Grant, please contact:

Michael Daniels, Development Services
Director City of Green Cove Springs
321 Walnut Street