



## **The Margate Community Redevelopment Agency**

### **Commercial Property Façade Improvement Grant Program Policies and Procedures**

#### **I. Purpose**

The purpose of the Commercial Property Façade Improvement Grant Program is to assist property owners and commercial tenants with sites located in the Margate Community Redevelopment Area in substantively enhancing the visible appearance of their property. Many commercial properties were designed and built in styles that have become dated and suffer from lackluster maintenance. This has led to a situation in which some properties are not as attractive to potential tenants or shoppers. It is the goal of the Margate Community Redevelopment Agency (MCRA) to assist in returning properties to their fullest potential through reimbursement grants for property improvements. These grants will assist owners and tenants undertaking substantial exterior renovations that will significantly enhance the property's appearance.

#### **II. Eligibility Criteria**

- a. Property must be located within the boundaries of the Margate Community Redevelopment Area.
- b. Must be a commercial property (i.e. retail, restaurant, office, service, mixed-use) and not solely provide living accommodations.
- c. Exterior improvements must adhere to all Federal, State, and Local requirements.
- d. Improvements must support the objectives and goals of the MCRA Plan.

#### **III. Funding Guidelines**

The MCRA is making grants available to eligible commercial properties within the Community Redevelopment Area, in an amount equal to 50% of project costs (including architectural services, fees, construction costs, etc.) up to a maximum grant award per the following parameters:

- a. For structures with over 100 feet of frontage or more than 2 stories: Up to \$50,000 for eligible project costs.
- b. For structures with over 60 feet to 100 feet of frontage or more than 1 story: Up to \$25,000 for eligible project costs.

- c. For structures with 60 feet of frontage or less:
  - Up to \$12,500 for eligible project costs.

MCRA funding cannot exceed 50% of the total cost of each portion of the project, and the MCRA grant is subject to the limits listed above. If the MCRA approves the grant application, an Agreement between the grantee and the MCRA must be signed. The Agreement will guarantee that any façade improvements made with grant funds will not be altered unless pre-approved by the MCRA for a minimum of five (5) years after completion, and that the property will be maintained in accordance with the City of Margate's Property Maintenance Standards Ordinance. If these provisions are not met, the MCRA has the right to demand from the grantee the return of any funds disbursed plus interest at the prevailing rate but not to exceed eight percent (8%) No work covered by the grant application is to be undertaken without written approval of grant funds from the MCRA. The program will not reimburse the grantee for work previously done or already underway prior to the MCRA board's approval of the grant.

#### **IV. Eligible Expenses**

Eligible expenses are those reasonable costs associated with undertaking a substantial façade improvement to commercial structures. This may include but not limited to: design fees, permit fees, construction costs, labor and materials, awnings, impact storefront systems, signage, stucco work, paint, light fixtures, etc. Additionally, costs associated with complying with the Florida Accessibility Code (as determined by the City of Margate Building Department) due to the undertaking of approved façade renovation upgrades are eligible. All work must be performed in a first class workmanlike manner in compliance with all applicable State, County and City of Margate ordinances and regulations, and must meet all building and other applicable codes.

#### **V. Ineligible Expenses**

Ineligible expenses include general maintenance items, painting (when not part of a larger improvement), repairs, concrete repairs, general parking lot striping, resurfacing or drainage, roof repair or replacement, with the exception of roof projects that structurally alter the façade of the building and are visible from adjacent roadways (i.e., change from flat to pitched roof, or significant increase in roof pitch, parapets, etc.), improvements to the rear of the building (unless visible from a right-of-way), fencing, interior repairs and landscaping. Handicapped parking striping is not an eligible expense except in limited instances where these expenses are mandated as part of eligible improvements by the City of Margate's Building Department. Work done prior to grant approval is not eligible for reimbursement.

## **VI. Application Checklist**

Every application package must include the following items before it will be processed and considered for approval:

- Signed and completed application form.
- Copy of executed commercial lease (if tenant) or proof of ownership (if owner).
- If applicant is a tenant, signed and notarized authorization by property owner is required.
- Business Plan or Executive Summary describing the use, management and occupancy of the property.
- Legal Description of the property.
- Narrative description of entire project being undertaken, including sources of financing.
- Detailed budget for entire project with breakdown of exterior improvements for which reimbursement is being requested from Program.
- A minimum of two bids/quotes from licensed, insured contractors.
- Preliminary construction schedule.
- Photograph of existing conditions with at least one photo showing adjacent properties- digital file and hard copy.
- Site plan or survey that accurately reflects the existing property-digital file and hard copy.
- Preliminary site plan and elevations of proposed improvements that enable staff to determine quality of design- digital file and hard copy.
- Color chips and material samples.

## **VII. Application Procedure**

Applicants are advised that it may take between 60 and 90 days to fully process a Grant Application, depending upon the completeness of the Application and back up information, and the MCRA Board meeting schedule. The MCRA Board meets on a monthly basis. Once an application is fully complete it is anticipated that it will be presented to the Board at the next available meeting.

Applicants shall follow the steps listed below for application approval:

- a. Schedule an appointment with MCRA staff as early in the process as possible to discuss project and make sure it meets program intent. Please call (954)935-5324 or e-mail [craprojects@margatefl.com](mailto:craprojects@margatefl.com).
- b. Meet with the Economic Development Department for a preliminary review of proposed renovations to property.
- c. Compile application materials and submit application to MCRA.
- d. MCRA staff reviews application, conducts a site inspection and notifies applicant of any missing information.
- e. Complete application and Grant Agreement signed by applicant are presented to CRA Board for approval. The decision of the MCRA Board shall be final.

- f. MCRA staff notifies applicant of MCRA Board approval or denial.  
Applicants not approved may apply again one year from denial.
- g. Project commences.

### **VIII. Reimbursement Procedure**

All work agreed to in the Grant Agreement (Agreement) must be commenced within one hundred eighty (180) days of the effective date of the Agreement and completed within five hundred forty-five (545) days of the effective date of the Agreement.

No grant funds will be disbursed prior to the receipt of a Certificate of Occupancy or the necessary inspection approvals.

Costs for improvements not pre-approved through the application process are not reimbursable.

To receive reimbursement grantees must provide the following:

- Detailed invoice(s) from the contractor or vendor corresponding to the completed approved improvements.
- Proof of payment in the form of a cancelled check (front and back) or credit card statement clearly indicating that payment for the specific item has been made. Payment amounts must correspond with invoice amounts.
- Cash payments may not be reimbursed if MCRA staff cannot conclusively verify that payment was made.

Staff will review the supporting documents and conduct a site inspection. If everything is in order, the MCRA will declare the project complete and issue a check to the grantee for the amount allowed by the grant agreement. The executed Grant Agreement will be recorded in the public record.

### **IX. General Provisions**

It is the intent of the MCRA to fund applicants on a first-come, first-served basis; however, the MCRA reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to make any final determinations as to how this program will be offered and implemented. This may include, but not be limited to: ranking of applicants, which applicants will be funded, all conditions of funding, and approval of all plans, designs and materials to be utilized. Applicants, even those that meet the eligibility requirements, may not be approved if a project conflicts with objectives and goals in the MCRA Plan.

If an applicant is applying for the Commercial Property Landscape Improvement Grant Program simultaneously, he/she will still have to complete the application form for both programs but may submit them together with all the required attachments as one package. Remember to include separate short narratives describing the improvements to be undertaken through each program. Acceptance of an application to one program does not guarantee approval of both programs.