# STUART COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

# BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:**

The Stuart CRA Business Improvement Reimbursement Program is an incentive program designed to encourage visible, exterior improvements to commercial businesses in the Stuart Community Redevelopment Area.

The grant program provides a reimbursement grant of up to $10,000 of public funds per property to match private funds to pay for the design and completion of property improvements. The grant shall be available for commercial businesses which may qualify for a reimbursement of 50% of the applicants total project costs up to $10,000

Funds are distributed per a 60 day grant cycle. The grant cycle begins on October 1, 2019 and will end November 29th, 2019. To be eligible for consideration applicant must submit a completed application by **5pm on Friday, November 29th, 2019** at City Hall, Development Department office located at 121 SW Flagler Avenue, Stuart. Funds are limited and subject to availability. Funding may be appropriated annually in the CRA budget. The continuation of the program is subject to the availability of funds in the CRA budget.

**ELIGIBILTY:**

- All owners of a licensed business within the Stuart Community Redevelopment Area shall be eligible for the program. Refer to attached CRA map.
- The property owner is the applicant; however the property is currently leased to a tenant, then the application and agreement must be jointly executed by both the owner and the tenant.
- Residential, non-profit and City owned/leased properties are not eligible.
- First time applicants have priority. If funds are available, past applicants may apply for property improvements.
- Properties must not have building code or code enforcement issues. City staff will verify this during its due diligence.
- Property must not have any tax liens and must be current on property taxes paid to the City of Stuart.
- Commercial Businesses must have a current Business Tax License with the City of Stuart.

**ELIGIBLE IMPROVEMENTS:**

The Stuart CRA Business Improvement Reimbursement Program shall provide, on a reimbursement basis, 50% matching grant for eligible exterior improvements, which are consistent with and further the implementation of the Stuart Community Redevelopment Plan and City of Stuart Land Development Code, and visible from the roadway. Funds may be used for one or more of the following types of enhancements as a part of an improvement program:

- Exterior architectural amenities to provide shade over the public right-of-way/sidewalk *(e.g. addition or improvement of awnings, balconies, porches, entryways, or arcades)*
- Replacement of non-conforming pole signs to conforming freestanding or monument signs
- Replacement of windows and doors
- Decorative shutters *(no metal panel shutters or accordion shutters)*
    - Bahama Shutters
    - Colonial Shutters
- Exterior stucco or siding
- Dumpster enclosures
- Xeriscape Landscaping *(a maximum of $1,500.00 or 15% of the total project, whichever is less, no irrigation)* and fences *(no metal chain-link)*
- Parking lots, driveways, and streetscaping (i.e. benches, shade trees, bicycle racks)
- Other exterior (street-side) façade improvements *(considered on a case-by-case basis)*
- Architectural, engineering or landscape architectural services to design improvements to be funded through this program (maximum of 500 dollars in grant funding)

NOTE: All improvements proposed with this grant application must be consistent with the Community Redevelopment Plan and the Land Development Code overlay design guidelines.

**APPLICATION PROCESS:**

1. Download an application from the City's website, www.cityofstuart.us or secure an application at City Hall, Development Department office located on 121 SW Flagler Avenue, Downtown Stuart.

2. Review the application, if you have any questions please call (772) 283-2532.

3. Submit a completed application package to City Hall, Development Department office, which includes the following:

    - Completed application
    - Complete budget spreadsheet *(attached to application)*
    - Proof of ownership of the property
    - Copies of TWO cost estimates by licensed contractor/agent registered with the City of Stuart or Martin County
    - Photographs of areas to be improved
    - Renderings of proposed improvements

    ***The applicant is responsible for all building and other permits and fees which are associated with the proposed project.***

4. City staff reviews the application for completeness, and eligibility. City staff will go to the project property and do a "walk-thru" of the property to consider the proposed improvements.

5. Staff reviews applications on the following criteria and provides a recommendation to the Community Redevelopment Board:

    - Meets grant requirements
    - Follows City of Stuart Urban Code Regulations
    - Promotes the historic character of the neighborhood

- Does the project contribute to reducing blight and economic revitalization
- Does the project significantly enhance the building *(not strictly maintenance)*
- Is this a first time applicant

6. Staff will present a recommendation for funding to the Community Redevelopment Board (CRB). Staff will prepare an agenda item by the January 7, 2020 Community Redevelopment Board meeting. The meeting starts at 4pm located in the City Hall Commission Chambers located at 121 SW Flagler Avenue.

7. The applicant or a representative must be present at the January 7, 2020 CRB meeting in order to be considered for the grant program. The CRB make hear the agenda item and make recommendation to the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) Board.

8. The Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) Board will hear the agenda item and make the final recommendation for approval or denial of funding. City staff will provide the public hearing date and time for the CRA Board meeting.

9. Construction of any component of the grant application cannot begin until the board approves the project. With CRA approval, applicant will need to sign contract and will have 120 days for project completion. Any work completed prior to this approval will not be eligible for reimbursement.

Once approved, the property owner will have to sign to specify the obligation of the applicant for grant reimbursement. The contract may be recorded in the public records of Martin County, Florida. For the duration of the improvements, the applicant will post a sign to be provided by the City which indicates the project has received a Property Improvement Grant and relevant program information.

**REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS:**

Upon project completion, the applicant contacts the CRA Administrator at (772) 283-2532 with the project completion date. Disbursement of grant funds shall only occur when the following documents are submitted and all other required conditions are met:

The applicant submits a “reimbursement package” to the CRA which includes the following:

- Completed reimbursement form (provided by the CRA as part of the application);
- Copies of applicable invoices must show “paid in full” *(receipts must clearly show how the project was paid, i.e. check, cash must be made by cashier’s check or credit)*
- Copies of final inspection
- Proof of payment for improvements (which must be at least as much as the amount indicated in the application); and photos of improvements.
- W-9 form

If the project is not completed, is not approved in its final inspection, or does not receive its certificate of occupancy *(if applicable)* within one year from the approval of the grant, the grant award shall expire.

If you have any questions regarding this application, please contact the CRA Administrator at (772) 283-2532.

# STUART COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
## BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM APPLICATION

| APPLICANT INFORMATION | | |
|---|---|---|
| Owner Name: | | |
| Owner Address: | | |
| Phone: | Email: | Tax ID# |
| Authorized Agent/Contractor: | | |
| Agent Address: | | |

| PROPERTY INFORMATION | |
|---|---|
| Name of Business: | |
| Type of Business: | |
| Years in Operation: | |
| Number of Employees: | |
| Description of Improvements: | |
| Address of Proposed Project: | |
| Describe how this project benefits the Community Redevelopment Area: | |
| | |
| | |
| Total Project Cost $ | |

_____ _____
Signature of Applicant/Property Owner Date

_____ _____
Signature of Lessee/Tenant Date

- Submit a completed application package to City Hall, Development Department office, which includes:
  - Completed application
  - Complete budget spreadsheet *(attached to application)*
  - Proof of ownership of the property

- Copies of two cost estimates by licensed contractor/agent registered with the City of Stuart or Martin County
- Photographs of areas to be improved
- Renderings of proposed improvements

- The applicant is responsible for all building and other permits and fees which are associated with the proposed project.
- An application to the Business Improvement Reimbursement Program will not be processed until a completed application packet is submitted to the Stuart Community Redevelopment Agency located in City Hall, Development Department Office at 121 SE Flagler Avenue, Stuart.
- Completed applications are due **Friday, November 29th by 5PM**. Applications with all documents attached will be accepted at Development Department Office located at City Hall, 121 SW Flagler Avenue. If you have any questions, please call 772-283-2532.
- Submitting an application is not a guarantee of funding.

# STUART COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

## PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM

### PROJECT COST ESTIMATE/REIMBURSEMENT FORM

Note: All property improvement grant applicants need to complete the "Project Cost Estimate" portion of this form and submit documented cost estimates as a part of the application packet. To receive the grant reimbursement, the "Reimbursement Summary" portion of this form must be completed and submitted with copies of paid invoices indicating completion of improvements. All improvements must be completed, inspected, and have received final approval from the County prior to reimbursement.

| Project Cost Estimate | | | | Reimbursement Summary | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Item** | **Category of Improvement (windows, roofing, painting, etc.)** | **Contractor** | **Cost Estimate** | **Contractor** | **Date of Completion** | **Actual Cost (include proof of payment)** |
| **1** | | | **$** | | | **$** |
| **2** | | | **$** | | | **$** |
| **3** | | | **$** | | | **$** |
| **4** | | | **$** | | | **$** |
| **5** | | | **$** | | | **$** |
| **6** | | | **$** | | | **$** |
| **7** | | | **$** | | | **$** |
| | | ***Total Cost Estimate*** | $ | | ***Total Actual Cost*** | $ |