



# City of OPPORTUNITY

## Commercial Site Improvement Grant

### South St. Petersburg CRA Grant Application Package

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**\*\*To reduce time spent scanning and copying your application, please single-side your application and all attached materials\*\***

#### Submit to

The Greenhouse 440 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue North  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33701  
c/o Tony Chan - [tony.chan@stpete.org](mailto:tony.chan@stpete.org) or (727)551-3279



# Application Fact Sheet

## Application deadline:

The City will begin accepting CRA Commercial grant applications on **February 24, 2020**.

All applications and supporting materials must be received by **5 p.m. on March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020**.

**Submittal Requirements Checklist:** Items listed below are to be submitted together to the Economic and Workforce Development Department for review. Each document is to be numbered and submitted in order per the list below and must include the applicant's original signature and date. Any documents being prepared on behalf of the applicant must also include an original signature of the person preparing the documents. Incomplete packages will not be reviewed.

- Completed and signed application form, business owner **AND** Property owner (if applicable)
- \$35 application fee paid in check or money order, refundable if not awarded grant. (Make payable to "City of St. Petersburg", attention Economic and Workforce Development Department.)
- If necessary, a letter requesting an extension of ninety days to seek additional financing if TIF funding application is approved
- Detailed cost estimates of work by input (labor, materials, etc) and project component (signage, landscaping, painting, carpentry, etc)
- Summary budget of cost estimates tied to each project component described above
- Written description of project improvements
- Sketches or conceptual drawings of improvements that will be funded by the Grant.
- Copy of current business tax certificate
- Confirmation that mortgage, property insurance and property tax payments are current and in good standing
- Documentation of property ownership or written consent from property owner giving permission to conduct the identified improvements.
- Legal description and survey of project site
- Digital photographs of existing conditions of the project site
- Use must be consistent with the City's land development regulations

**Application Package Submittal:** All application materials should be contained within a 9'x12" envelope labeled accordingly with the following:

- Name and mailing address of the applicant
- Grant program for which you are applying
- Address of the subject property
- Contact phone number
- Email Address

*\*If applying for more than one grant, a separate envelope must be used for each grant application.*

Submit application packets to **The Greenhouse** (City Hall Annex), **440 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue North** (just east of City Hall) C/O Anthony Chan.

## Schedule of Approval Steps

- Preliminary scoring by City Staff
- Review and recommended scoring of applications by the South St. Petersburg CRA Grant Review Committee – **April 17, 2020**
- Approval of final awards by City Council – **May 7<sup>th</sup> or May 21, 2020**

## Disqualifying Acts or Events

- Code enforcement liens over \$2,500
- Special assessment liens over \$500
- Pending judgment or foreclosure
- Felony conviction for financial mismanagement within the last five years
- Mortgage payments three months in arrears
- Unpaid property taxes
- Unpaid property insurance

# Eligibility Guidelines

The **Commercial Site Improvement Grant** provides matching grants to commercial property owners that upgrade their building façades, landscaping, lighting, loading and service areas and other features of their sites visible from the public right-of-way.

An applicant may receive a one-for-one matching grant of up to **\$20,000**. Applicants with properties listed on the Local Register of Historic Places may be eligible for a matching grant of up to **\$40,000** if the approved work is found compliant with the City of St. Petersburg Historic Preservation Ordinance. The TIF contribution will be reimbursable to the applicant upon completion of work.

The **Commercial Site Improvement Grant** program is available to fund eligible exterior improvements on commercial, industrial and mixed-use properties. Mixed-use commercial projects are eligible provided the commercial component of the project comprises more than 50 percent of the gross square footage of the development. Eligible costs will be apportioned on the basis of this percentage between nonresidential and residential use.

## Eligible Improvements

- Exterior painting, re-siding, and/or cleaning
- Masonry repairs
- Removal of architecturally inappropriate or incompatible exterior finishes and materials
- Restoration of significant architectural details or removal of materials that cover said architectural details
- Site improvement features such as landscaping, fencing, parking lots, lighting, dumpster enclosures and buffer walls provided such features do not collectively exceed more than 25 percent of the eligible project costs
- Construction of pedestrian and bicycle amenities such as benches, shelters, bike racks and bike lockers
- Installation or repair of exterior signage, including wall, window, hanging, and monument signs advertising the business name and identity provided such features do not collectively exceed more than 25 percent of eligible project costs
- Awnings and canopies installation or repair
- Doors and windows
- Roof repairs that attach to a new or renovated façade
- Exterior lighting attached to an existing building
- Demolition of obsolete accessory structures and partial demolition of exterior walls made necessary for renovation or expansion
- Window and cornice flashing and repair
- Remediation of documented environmental contamination on the exterior site such as lead, petroleum or asbestos
- Architectural and engineering fees as well as permitting and development review fees not to exceed 10 percent of the total eligible project costs
- A contingency reserve of up to 10 percent to be used by the applicant in the event material and labor costs of approved budget items increase between the time of the original estimate and the commencement of the project. The reserve can only be used to pay for construction items described in the budget of the executed grant agreement.

## Ineligible Improvements

- Installation of aluminum or vinyl siding
- Work performed by an unlicensed contractor
- Improvements performed prior to approval of the TIF application
- New building construction
- Reducing or enclosing existing storefront windows
- Improvements to buildings constructed within the last 5 years
- Equipment, mechanical and HVAC systems
- Minor roof repairs (other than those portions that directly attach to a new or renovated façade)
- Security systems (including metal roll down gates, window bars, cameras)
- Any interior work
- Any improvements to secondary or accessory buildings (i.e., garages, sheds, garage apartments, carports)
- Improvements in progress or completed prior to preliminary approval
- Routine maintenance
- Improvements to buildings primarily used for residences, which is defined as more than 50 percent of the building square footage in residential use

## Application Process

Grants are awarded through a competitive application process that is scored based on criteria approved by City Council. The grant applications are presented in a public meeting to the Grant Review Committee for the South St. Petersburg CRA, which uses the “CRA Grant Scoring and Evaluation System” to evaluate and rank applications according to their consistency with the primary goals and objectives of the South St Petersburg Redevelopment Plan. The GRC is made up of City Councilmembers from districts 5, 6 and 7 as well as four members of the Citizen Advisory Committee for the South St. Petersburg CRA.

The Grant Review Committee will be meeting on **April 17, 2020**, at the **Sunshine Center**, which is located at **330 5th Street North**. The meeting will begin at **8:30 a.m.** An agenda will be published that indicates the order in which your application will be heard. Final funding awards are made by City Council. If there is any change to the meeting date and/or time, applicants will be notified of the change.

## Disbursement of Funds and Compliance Requirements

Upon approval of the Project by the Mayor, and subject to City Council if applicable, applicant will enter into a Grant Agreement with the city as evidence of the city’s commitment to the project. Funding will be disbursed by the city after project completion and receipt of Certificate of Occupancy. Projects must be completed within 18 months or the Grant Agreement will be terminated, and earmarked funding will be released for another project.

After project completion, Economic Development staff will continue to provide guidance and mentorship.

Assisted businesses will be visited at least semi-annually to continue to assist and ensure business success.

# Commercial Site Improvement Grant Application

## Project Information

<b>Date</b>	<b>Project Address(es)</b>	
<b>Zoning</b>	<b>Parcel ID(s)</b>	
<b>Current Building Use</b> (i.e., Vacant, Commercial, Industrial, Mixed Use with Residential)		
<b>Proposed Business Use</b>		
<b>Funding Amount Requested</b>		
<b>Use of Grant Funding Proceeds</b> (refer to 'Funding Requested' in line above; provide attachment of detailed cost breakdown)		
Labor		Supplies/Materials
Equipment		Architectural/Engineering
Other (define) \$		
<b>Estimated Private Capital Investment</b> (provide attachment of detailed investment)		
<b>Total Number of Jobs Created</b>		
<b>Total Number of Jobs Retained</b>		
<b>Building Type</b>	New	Existing
<b>Size of Building (sf)</b>	Total	New Space
<b>Project Description</b> (attach any drawings and/or detailed written description as necessary)		

**Community Site Improvement Grant  
Applicant Information**

<b>Legal Name of Business</b>		
<b>DBA (if applicable)</b>	<b>Tax I.D. Number</b>	
<b>Principal Business Address (not P.O. Box)</b>		
<b>City</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Zip</b>
<b>Date Business Est</b>	<b>Business' Industry (provide NAICS code if available):</b>	
<b>Type of Ownership (select one)</b>		
C-Corp.	LLC	Sole Proprietorship
S-Corp.	Partnership	
<b>Business Email</b>	<b>Website</b>	
<b>Mailing Address (if different)</b>		
<b>City</b>	<b>State:</b>	<b>Zip:</b>
<b>Key Contact Name</b>	<b>Key Contact Cell</b>	
<b>Key Contact Email</b>	<b>Bus. Telephone</b>	
<b>Please answer the following:</b>		
Has applicant ever declared bankruptcy or had any judgments, repossessions, or garnishments filed against them?	Yes	No
Are there any pending actions regarding bankruptcy, judgments, repossessions or garnishments?	Yes	No
Are any tax obligations, including payroll, business or real estate taxes, past due?	Yes	No
Are any mortgage payments three months or more in arrears?	Yes	No
Has the applicant or partners or interest in the application been convicted of a felony for financial mismanagement within the last five years?	Yes	No
Are property insurance payments late or unpaid?	Yes	No
Are there code enforcement liens on the project site?	Yes	No
Are there special assessment liens on the project site?	Yes	No
Are any tax obligations, including payroll, business or real estate taxes, past due?	Yes	No
<b>If you answer yes to any of the questions above, please explain:</b>		

**Community Site Improvement Grant**  
**Applicant Certification and Signatures**

I certify that the information provided in this application is true and accurate to the best of my ability and no false or misleading statements have been made in order to secure approval of this application.

I acknowledge the City is required to issue a federal tax form 1099-G to recipients of grants in excess of \$600 whether paid directly to the grant recipient or to a third-party pursuant to authorization from the recipient and it is the grant recipient's responsibility to consult with their tax professional regarding the 1099-G issued by the City and any associated tax consequences. The City is authorized to make all the inquiries deem necessary to verify the accuracy of the information contained herein.

I further acknowledge that if awarded grant funding through this program, I will be required to sign a grant agreement that includes among other items the following for which I agree:

- Providing funding credit to the City of St. Petersburg through signage or other identification provided by the City from project commencement to six months after date of project completion.
- Not assigning the grant agreement to another party without the prior written consent of the City.
- Maintaining the property in the use for which it was awarded funding through this program for a period of five years, unless the City agrees to the change prior to it occurring.

**Applicant Signature**

**Print Name**

**Date**

**Community Site Improvement Grant**  
**Owner Authorization**

As owner of the property/properties located below, I hereby authorize the Applicant as identified above to undertake the activities specified in this application.

**Property Address(es)**

**Property Identification Number(s)**

**Owner Signature**

**Date**

**Print Name**

# Table of Contents

(Submit in this order including chapter dividers included in this document to avoid 15 - point penalty)

1. If necessary, a letter requesting an extension of ninety days to seek additional financing if TIF funding application is approved
2. Detailed cost estimates of work by input (labor, materials, etc) and project component (signage, landscaping, painting, carpentry, etc.)
3. Summary budget of cost estimates tied to each project component described above
4. Written description of project improvements
5. Sketches or conceptual drawings of improvements that will be funded by the Grant.
6. Digital photographs of existing conditions of the project site
7. Copy of current business tax certificate
8. Confirmation that mortgage, property insurance and property tax payments are current and in good standing
9. Legal description and survey of project site
10. Documents to Support Grant Review Criteria Points
  - A. Attending workshops at the City's excluding CRA grant workshop, since February 8, 2019.
  - B. Extent of prior private investment by applicant in South St. Petersburg CRA within the last 5 years.
  - C. An owner-occupied business that has been in business within CRA for two or more years as of March 1, 2020.
  - D. Applicant in business at current location for two or more years as of March 1, 2020.

## **Section 1**

*If necessary, a letter requesting an extension of ninety days to seek additional financing if TIF funding application is approved. (Include this sheet blank if not applicable)*

## **Section 2**

*Detailed cost estimates of work by input (labor, materials, etc) and project component (signage, landscaping, painting, carpentry, etc.)*

## **Section 3**

*Summary budget of cost estimates tied to each project component described in previous page.*

## **Section 4**

*Written Description of Project Improvements*

## **Section 5**

*Sketches or conceptual drawings of improvements that will be funded by the Grant.*

## **Section 6**

*Digital photographs of existing conditions on the project site (both a printed copy as well as pictures on a jump/flash drive)*

## **Section 7**

*Copy of current business tax certificate*

## **Section 8**

*Confirmation that mortgage, property insurance and property tax payments are current and in good standing*

## **Section 9**

*Legal description and/or survey of project site*

## **Section 10A**

### **Attendance at Greenhouse Classes**

*Include official documentation of attendance at classes at the Greenhouse, excluding CRA Grant Workshops, since February 8, 2019. For applications with more than one applicant, only the attendance of one shall count toward this criterion. In addition, applicants submitting multiple applications will only receive points for attendance for one application. Email: [tony.chan@stpete.org](mailto:tony.chan@stpete.org) for questions or to verify classes attended.*

## **Section 10B**

### **Extent of Prior Private Investment in CRA**

*Extent of prior private investment by applicant in South St. Petersburg CRA within the last 5 years without City assistance. Includes investment in construction and construction equipment, which must be documented with submission of invoices and receipts and construction value information from Construction Services. Points awarded are*

\$10,000 to \$25,000 – 3 points

\$25,00 to \$50,000 – 5 points

\$50,00 to \$75,000 – 7 points

+\$75,000- 10 points

## Section 10C & D

*Applicant(s) is an owner-occupied business that has been in business within the CRA for two or more years as of March 1, 2020.*

Submit proof of property ownership and evidence of two years of business tax payments

*Applicant(s) has been in business at current location for two or more years as of March 1, 2020.*

Submit evidence of two years of business tax payments

# Criminal Background Check

*\*Required*

## Summary:

On May 18, 2017, St. Petersburg City Council voted unanimously to approve Resolution 2017-316, which among other actions, prohibits participation in the South St. Petersburg CRA grant program for persons convicted of a felony for financial mismanagement within the past five years.

Application Date	Project Address	Grant Number (to be assigned by City staff)
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## Applicant(s) Information

*Provide information on additional applicants on a separate sheet.*

Legal Name	Race	Sex	Date of Birth
------------	------	-----	---------------

Social Security Number	Driver's License Number
------------------------	-------------------------

Legal Name	Race	Sex	Date of Birth
------------	------	-----	---------------

Social Security Number	Driver's License Number
------------------------	-------------------------

## Corporate Officers' Information

*(if application is held by an LLC, LLP or other entity with a fictitious name.)*

*Provide information on additional officers on the attachment sheet*

Legal Name	Race	Sex	Date of Birth
------------	------	-----	---------------

Social Security Number	Driver's License Number
------------------------	-------------------------

Legal Name	Race	Sex	Date of Birth
------------	------	-----	---------------

Social Security Number	Driver's License Number
------------------------	-------------------------

Legal Name	Race	Sex	Date of Birth
------------	------	-----	---------------

Social Security Number	Driver's License Number
------------------------	-------------------------

I hereby affirm under penalty of perjury that all statements on this document are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Organization

*The submitted Application and all attachments are subject to disclosure under Florida's public records law. The applicant may redact any confidential and exempt information.*

## Bonus: "Grow Smarter Initiative"

*Available to Commercial Grant Applicants only*

**Description:**

The bonus is for up to \$5,000 for eligible applications. To receive the bonus, applicant must document that the commercial space funded by the CRA grant is or will be occupied by a targeted ("Grow Smarter" industry within one year of completion of the project. The "Grow Smarter" industries are Financial Services, Specialized Manufacturing, Marine and Life Sciences, Data Analytics, and Creative Arts and Design. The applicant must first identify the "Grow Smarter" company in the space provided below that will occupy the space. The bonus will only be paid when the applicant can demonstrate to the City that the space has been occupied by the company after the completion of the project. The bonus award will pay for one-half of eligible costs that are in excess of the maximum grant award of \$20,000 for the program (\$40,000 if the building is historic). For instance, if a project costs \$50,000 the applicant would be eligible for the maximum grant award of \$20,000 + \$5,000 for the "Grow Smarter" Bonus.

Check box if not applying for Grow Smarter Bonus

Applicant Name	Project Address	Grant Number (to be assigned by staff)
"Grow Smarter" Company Name	Current Address of "Grow Smarter" Company (if applicable)	

Describe Company's Primary and Secondary Business Activities.

  
  
  
  
  

Company's Industry Type (check all that apply) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Marine &amp; Life Sciences</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Financial Services</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Data Analytics</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Specialized Manufacturing</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Creative Arts &amp; Design</li> </ul>	<b>To Be Completed by Staff</b>
	NAICS Code and Description
	Total Eligible Project Costs
	\$
	Potential Bonus Award
	\$

I hereby affirm under penalty of perjury that all statements on this document are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature
Printed Name

*The submitted Application and all attachments are subject to disclosure under Florida's public records law. The applicant may redact any confidential and exempt information.*

## Bonus: SBE Contractor

*Available to all Grant Applicants*

**Description:**

The bonus is for up to \$5,000 for eligible applications that use contractors within the City of St. Petersburg that are certified through the City's Small Business Enterprise (see attachment for a list of eligible contractors). To receive the bonus for the SBE contractor, an applicant must first complete the work and document use of the contractor through invoices and payments. The bonus award will pay for one-half of eligible costs that are in excess of the maximum grant award of \$20,000 for the program (\$40,000 if the building is historic). For instance, if a project costs \$50,000 the applicant would be eligible for the maximum grant award of \$20,000 + \$5,000 for the SBE Bonus.

Check box if not applying for SBE Contractor Bonus

<b>Applicant Name</b>	<b>Project Address</b>		<b>Grant number</b> (to be assigned by staff)
<b>Contractor</b>	<b>SBE #</b>	<b>Trade</b>	<b>Eligible Project Costs</b>
<b>Potential Eligible Bonus</b> (to be completed by staff)			

I hereby affirm under penalty of perjury that all statements on this document are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature Printed Name

*The submitted Application and all attachments are subject to disclosure under Florida's public records law. The applicant may redact any confidential and exempt information.*



# *City* of **OPPORTUNITY**

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Commercial Site Improvement Grant**

#### **South St. Petersburg CRA Commercial Matching Grant Program**



## Index to Frequently Asked Questions

*Click on the question to navigate to the answer*

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[Are there additional bonuses for the Commercial Site Improvement grant?](#)

[Does the City provide technical assistance on preparing applications prior to the deadline?](#)

[Do I have to attend a CRA Commercial Grant Workshop to apply for the grant program?](#)

[What is the Schedule for the CRA Commercial Grant Workshops?](#)

## What is the [Commercial Site Improvement Grant](#) program?

This program provides a reimbursable grant to commercial property owners within the South St. Petersburg Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) that upgrade their building façades, landscaping, lighting, loading and service areas and other features of their sites visible from the public right-of-way. (See the FAQ below on eligible and ineligible improvements.) The program improves capital access to private enterprise to spur reinvestment in commercial districts within the CRA.

## What is the maximum award for the grant?

An applicant may receive a one-for-one matching grant of up to **\$20,000**. To receive the full award from the City, eligible project costs must exceed **\$40,000**.

Applicants with properties listed on the Local Register of Historic Places may be eligible for a matching grant of up to **\$40,000**, provided the work is on the historic portion of the property applied to the building and approved work is found compliant with the City of St. Petersburg Historic Preservation Ordinance. In awarding a historic property bonus, under no circumstance will the City contribute more than 50 percent of the total eligible project costs. Therefore, to receive the full **\$40,000** eligible project costs for a historic project must exceed **\$80,000**.

## When is the application deadline for the Commercial Site Improvement grant program and where do I submit my application?

The City will begin accepting CRA Commercial grant applications on FEBRUARY 24, 2020, with a deadline of 5 p.m. on MARCH 6, 2020, for receipt of all applications. Please bring your application to The Greenhouse (City Hall Annex), located at 440 2nd Avenue North (just east of City Hall).

## Is there an application fee?

Yes. There is a \$35 nonrefundable processing fee, in addition to the fee there will be criminal background checks required on each signer of the application, including property owners that are not the business owner. This would also include background checks per officer for those applications where the property and/or business owner is held by a LLC or other corporate ownership.

## Am I eligible for the grant?

Commercial businesses and/or property owners located within the South St. Petersburg Community Redevelopment Area are eligible for this program. The CRA is generally located between Fourth St. and 49th St., from Second Ave. N. to 30th Ave. S. [Click here](#) to see the CRA boundaries.

[Click here](#) to see what other financial incentives are potentially available for your property.

## What would disqualify me for the grant?

Below are the disqualifying criteria that may be ineligible for funding

- Code enforcement liens over \$2,500
- Special assessment liens over \$500
- Pending judgment or foreclosure
- Felony conviction for financial mismanagement within the last five years
- Mortgage payments three months in arrears
- Unpaid property taxes
- Unpaid property insurance

## What types of improvements are eligible for Commercial Site Improvement grant funding?

- Exterior painting, re-siding, and/or cleaning
- Masonry repairs
- Removal of architecturally inappropriate or incompatible exterior finishes and materials
- Restoration of significant architectural details or removal of materials that cover said architectural details
- Site improvement features such as landscaping, fencing, parking lots, lighting, dumpster enclosures and buffer walls provided such features do not collectively exceed more than 25 percent of the eligible project costs
- Construction of pedestrian and bicycle amenities such as benches, shelters, bike racks and bike lockers
- Installation or repair of exterior signage, including wall, window, hanging, and monument signs advertising the business name and identity provided such features do not collectively exceed more than 25 percent of eligible project costs
- Awnings and canopies installation or repair
- Doors and windows
- Roof repairs that attach to a new or renovated façade
- Exterior lighting attached to an existing building
- Demolition of obsolete accessory structures and partial demolition of exterior walls made necessary for renovation or expansion
- Window and cornice flashing and repair
- Remediation of documented environmental contamination on the exterior site such as lead, petroleum or asbestos
- Architectural and engineering fees as well as permitting and development review fees not to exceed 10 percent of the total eligible project costs
- A contingency reserve of up to 10 percent to be used by the applicant in the event material and labor costs of approved budget items increase between the time of the original estimate and the commencement of the project. The reserve can only be used to pay for construction items described in the budget of the executed grant agreement.

## What types of improvements are not eligible for the Commercial Site Improvement grant?

- Installation of aluminum or vinyl siding
- Work performed by an unlicensed contractor
- Improvements performed prior to approval of the TIF application
- New building construction
- Reducing or enclosing existing storefront windows
- Improvements to buildings constructed within the last 5 years
- Equipment, mechanical and HVAC systems
- Minor roof repairs (other than those portions that directly attach to a new or renovated façade)
- Security systems (including metal roll down gates, window bars, cameras)
- Any interior work
- Any improvements to secondary or accessory buildings (i.e., garages, sheds, garage apartments, carports)
- Improvements in progress or completed prior to preliminary approval
- Routine maintenance
- Improvements to buildings primarily used for residences, which is defined as more than 50 percent of the building square footage in residential use

## Why must I sign a grant agreement if I am awarded funding?

The CRA commercial grant agreement specifies your rights and responsibilities after receiving the grant award as well as the City's duties and rights. It is an agreement signed by the Mayor and the applicant that details the award amount, the improvements and their amount on which the award can be used, the time frame for executing the agreement and completing the project and other items. Click on the link for a [Sample CRA Grant Agreement](#).

## What information will I need to provide in order to apply for the grant?

Below are the required documents for Commercial Site Improvement grant

- Completed and signed application form, including the signature of the property owner if not the same as the applicant.
- If necessary, a letter requesting an extension of ninety days to seek additional financing if TIF funding application is approved
- Detailed cost estimates of work by input (labor, materials, etc) and project component (signage, landscaping, painting, carpentry, etc)
- Summary budget of cost estimates tied to each project component described above
- Copy of current business tax certificate
- Confirmation that mortgage, property insurance and property tax payments are current and in good standing
- Documentation of property ownership or written consent from property owner giving permission to conduct the identified improvements.
- Legal description and survey of project site
- Digital photographs of existing conditions of the project site
- Use must be consistent with the City's land development regulations
- Written description of project improvements
- Sketches or conceptual drawings of improvements that will be funded by the Grant.

## Do I have to complete the work before I get paid?

Yes. The Commercial Site Improvement grant is a reimbursable award to ensure that the work for which the award was approved is completed and in accordance with City regulations and requirements. To be paid, you must submit a request for review of work after completion and provide documentation that the work has been completed in accordance with City regulations through a Certificate of Completion or Certificate of Occupancy. In addition, you must provide documentation of the expenditures made supporting the project such as invoices, canceled checks, etc.

## Are there other sources of potential funding to pay for my part of project costs and help me complete the project before receiving the grant award?

Yes. The Commercial Site Improvement grant generally pays one-half of eligible project costs, which are reimbursed after the work is completed. That means that the applicant will need sufficient funds to pay for the project up-front before the City awards. Many applicants need funding assistance to take advantage of the program and the City is partnering with the Tampa Bay Black Business Investment Corporation (TBBBIC) to offer bridge loans to grant awardees.

The program, which you can link to [here](#) for information on term, collateral, interest rates and more, provides a direct loan up to \$40,000 for businesses within the South St. Petersburg CRA. For more information, please contact [Brent Everett](#), (813) 425-2043.

Below is a list of other sources of private funding for local businesses that complement and go above and beyond the amount of resources in the CRA funding process for business financing.

**GTE Federal Credit Union**  
[Shamus McConomy](#), (813) 414-6553

### Can I still apply for a grant if I am a commercial tenant and do not own my building?

If you are a commercial tenant on a property that you do not own, you may still apply for the Commercial Site Improvement grant provided that the property owner signs the consent form that is included with the application. City policy also requires the property owner to undergo a criminal background check.

### My property includes both residential units and commercial space. Am I eligible for the Commercial Site Improvement grant program?

Maybe. If 50 percent or more of the building square footage is used for commercial (non-residential) purposes than you are eligible for the grant, provided the work for which funding is sought is restricted to the commercial portions of the building.

### How does the City decide on who gets awarded funding?

Grants are awarded through a competitive application process that is scored based on criteria approved by City Council. The grant applications are presented in a public meeting to the Grant Review Committee for the South St. Petersburg CRA which uses the “CRA Grant Scoring and Evaluation System” to evaluate and rank applications according to their consistency with the primary goals and objectives of the South St Petersburg Redevelopment Plan, which is to remedy physical and social contributors to blight and poverty in the CRA. View the [Criteria Scoring System](#).

Final funding awards are made by City Council.

### Who is on the Grant Review Committee (GRC) for the South St. Petersburg CRA?

The GRC is made up of City Councilmembers from districts 5, 6 and 7 as well as four members of the Citizen Advisory Committee for the South St. Petersburg CRA.

### What are the meeting dates for the Grant Review Committee and City Council when they will be reviewing the grant applications?

The Grant Review Committee will be meeting on **April 24, 2020**, at the Sunshine Center, which is located at **330 5th Street North**. The meeting will begin at 8:30 a.m. An agenda will be published that indicates the order in which your application will be heard.

City Council is expected to take action on the grant applications at its **May 21, 2020**, meeting, which will begin at 1:30 p.m. City Council meetings will be held at the Sunshine Center, which is located at **330 5th Street North**.

For both meetings, grant applicants will be notified of any change to the date, time or venue.

### Are there additional bonuses for the Commercial Site Improvement grant?

There are two bonuses available for applicants – the Grow Smarter bonus and SBE Contractor Bonus. Only one (1) bonus award per type shall be given for each property.

- “Grow Smarter Initiative”

The bonus is for up to \$5,000 for eligible applications. To receive the bonus, applicant must document that the commercial space funded by the CRA grant is or will be occupied by a targeted (“Grow Smarter” industry within one year of completion of the project. The “Grow Smarter” industries are Financial Services, Specialized Manufacturing, Marine and Life Sciences, Data Analytics, and Creative Arts and Design. The bonus will only be paid when the applicant can demonstrate to the City that the space has been occupied by the company after the completion of the project. The bonus award will pay for one-half of eligible costs that are in excess of the maximum grant award of \$20,000 for the program (\$40,000 if the building is historic). For instance, if a project costs \$50,000 the applicant would be eligible for the maximum grant award of \$20,000 + \$5,000 for the “Grow Smarter” Bonus.

- **Small Business Enterprise (SBE) Contractor Bonus**

The bonus is for up to \$5,000 for eligible applications that use contractors within the City of St. Petersburg that are certified through the City’s Small Business Enterprise. The SBE award is tiered with CRA based contractors receiving up to \$5,000, contractors in St. Petersburg but outside the CRA receiving up to \$4,000, and all other contractors receiving up to \$2,500.

To receive the bonus for the SBE contractor, an applicant must first complete the work and document use of the contractor through invoices and payments. The bonus award will pay for one-half of eligible costs that are in excess of the maximum grant award of \$20,000 for the program (\$40,000 if the building is historic). For instance, if a project costs \$50,000 the applicant would be eligible for the maximum grant award of \$20,000 + \$5,000 for the SBE Bonus.

**Does the City provide technical assistance on preparing applications prior to the application deadline?**

Beginning **January 9, 2020** and continuing every Thursday until **March 5, 2020 (excluding February 27)**, City staff will be holding satellite office hours from 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm at the **Enoch Davis Satellite Office**, which is located at **1111 18th Ave South**.

**Do I have to attend a CRA Commercial Grant Workshop in order to apply for the grant program?**

In advance of the grant application deadline, City Administration is offering mandatory workshops to assist with preparing the application. Applicants must attend at least one CRA grant workshop in order to be eligible to apply for these commercial programs.

**What is the Schedule for the CRA Grant Workshops?**

The Greenhouse (440 2nd Ave. N.) or at Enoch Davis (1111 18th Ave. S.)

CRA Grant Workshop (The Greenhouse)	6:00pm-7:30pm	January 9th
CRA Grant Workshop (Enoch Davis)	3:30pm-5:00pm	January 14th
CRA Grant Workshop (Enoch Davis)	6:00pm-7:30pm	January 23rd
CRA Grant Workshop (The Greenhouse)	6:00pm-7:30pm	January 30th
CRA Grant Workshop (Enoch Davis)	6:00pm-7:30pm	February 6th
CRA Grant Workshop (Enoch Davis)	3:30pm-5:00pm	February 13th
CRA Grant Workshop (The Greenhouse)	6:00pm-7:30pm	February 20th
CRA Grant Workshop (The Greenhouse)	6:00pm-7:30pm	March 2nd
CRA Grant Workshop (Enoch Davis)	6:00pm-7:30pm	March 5th

\*To register for the workshops, go to: <https://stpetegreenhouse.com/>