

FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT MATCHING GRANT PROGRAM

Intent

It is the intent of the Dixieland Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) Advisory Board, under Chapter 163, Part III of the Florida Statutes, to provide financial assistance to qualified owners of commercial properties located within the boundaries of the CRA for eligible building or site improvements that contribute to the physical, economic, social and aesthetic well-being of the City of Lakeland. Moreover, it is the intent of this program to encourage improvements to private properties that go well beyond what is required under the City of Lakeland's Land Development Regulations to enhance the form, function and design quality of this redevelopment district.

Eligibility

Façade Improvement Matching Grants are available to all commercial property owners within the Dixieland Community Redevelopment Area (Exhibit A). Governmental entities and not-for-profit entities are not eligible. Grants are intended for rehabilitation and restoration only. New construction is ineligible.

Program

The Façade Improvement Matching Grant is a \$15,000 dollar-for-dollar matching grant that can be used towards any exterior architectural improvements to the street-side façade.

Eligible Improvements

Any exterior architectural improvements to the street-side façade(s) may be eligible for program assistance. Improvements may include one or more of the following:

- ❖ Signs
 - Removal of old and the design, production and installation of new signs or installation of new signs.
- ❖ Awnings/Canopies
 - Removal of old and the design, production and installation of new awning and canopies.
- ❖ Facades
 - Work performed on exterior storefront of a building including cleaning masonry, painting, window or door replacement, other repairs or rebuilding historic storefronts.
 - Exterior painting should not exceed 20% of the scope of work and the grant proceeds.
- ❖ Walls, Fencing and Landscape
 - Includes work to replace or add appropriate fencing or landscaping to hide incompatible or negative site elements such as storage yards,

dumpsters, outdoor fabrication or work areas. This type of work should not exceed 20% of the scope of work or the grant proceeds.

- ❖ Architectural Fees

- o Not to exceed 20% of the of grant amount up to a maximum of \$3,000.

The following items are specifically ineligible for the program:

- ❖ Parking lot paving.
- ❖ Interior work (even if visible through street-front windows).
- ❖ Other improvements required for redevelopment or occupancy of the property with the sole intention of complying with the City of Lakeland's Building Codes.
- ❖ Roof repair or replacement.
- ❖ Installation of seasonal planting or other seasonal landscaping.
- ❖ Permit fees.
- ❖ Inventory/fixtures/equipment
- ❖ Non-fixed improvements.
- ❖ Improvements made prior to grant approval.
- ❖ Refinancing existing debt.
- ❖ Sweat equity payments (i.e. reimbursement for applicant's own labor and performance of renovation work or new construction).

Eligible improvements must be consistent with the City of Lakeland's Land Development Regulations and the Dixieland CRA Commercial Corridor Design Guidelines and Historic District requirements. Grant funds will not be used to correct code violations or to bring structures up to code.

As a condition of approval, Applicant will agree that improvements made using these funds will stay in place a minimum of five (5) years. If improvements are replaced within five (5) years of construction completion, the grant recipient must pay a pro rata portion of the grant proceeds invested in the project for the number of months remaining.

Applicant is responsible for obtaining or having obtained all required building permits for the work undertaken.

Once a maximum grant for any property has been awarded, businesses occupying that property or the building owner cannot reapply for another grant for the same location for a five (5) year period.

Applicant agrees to allow the CRA to photograph the project for use in future publications.

Process

Qualified applicants must schedule an appointment with the CRA prior to preparing an application for submittal. The CRA office is located on the third floor of City Hall at 228 South Massachusetts Avenue, Lakeland, Florida 33801. Appointments may be made by calling (863) 834-6011. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis and grants will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis.

CRA staff will review the application for completeness. A post-application submittal conference will be held with the Applicant to discuss any deficiencies or issues with the application. At this time, the CRA may request that the Applicant provide additional information.

CRA staff will review the completed application against the review criteria and prepare. The Applicant will be notified of award within fourteen (14) business days of receiving the completed application.

Selection Criteria

The CRA will review completed applications against review criteria:

Scoring Criteria	
CRITERIA	POINTS
<u>Private Contribution</u>	<u>20 points total</u>
Less than \$10,000	10
Between \$10,000 and \$50,000	20
Between \$50,000 and \$100,000	15
More than \$100,000	10
<u>Location</u>	<u>40 points total</u>
On S. Florida Avenue	25
Corner property	15
<u>Historic Preservation</u>	<u>5 points total</u>
Historically significant structure*	5
<u>Aesthetic Enhancement</u>	<u>55 points total</u>
Principal Building Improvement	15
Site Improvement	5
Building and Site Improvement	25
Implementing results of Design Assistance Grant	15
Compatibility of proposed improvements to the surrounding	

** See Exhibit B for a list of historically significant structures as defined by the standards outlined in the Secretary of the Interiors' Standards for Historic Structures.

structures/styles	
Good	15
Fair	5
Poor	0
	120 points total

Applications that score below 50 points will be denied. Applicants are advised that grant funds are provided at the sole discretion of the CRA Advisory Board and the findings stated in the recommendation do not create an entitlement to funding.

Available Assistance

The CRA Advisory Board will set the amount of assistance available for the fiscal year in its Annual Budget. The standard maximum grant contribution per application is set at \$15,000. The CRA Advisory Board may raise or lower this amount at any time upon a majority vote of its members. An applicant must contribute at least 50% towards the total cost of the eligible improvement. Expenses must be related to direct labor, equipment or materials associated with the eligible improvement to be counted towards the project cost. Grants will be awarded on a first-come first-served basis.

Disbursement of Funds

The Applicant shall incur all initial project costs and may receive reimbursement only after all improvements have been completed in accordance with the grant award.

Grant funds will be disbursed upon the receipt of a finding of project completion by the CRA. The finding of project completion will be granted when the CRA has received the following package:

1. Written notification from the Owner that the project is complete.
2. Copies of all required permits and occupancy certificates.
3. Copies of paid invoices and evidence of payment (cancelled checks).

Expiration of Grant Award

Applicants must receive a building permit within six (6) months from the date the CRA Advisory Board approves the grant request or the funding will expire. Extensions may be granted by the Dixieland CRA Advisory Board under special circumstances.

Project completion must be within twelve (12) months of the issuance of a building permit. Extensions may be granted by the CRA Advisory Board under special circumstances.

Application

1. Completed application form.
2. Project Schedule.
3. Photographs of the existing building and the proposed project area.
4. Schematic drawings illustrating proposed work, or pictures with project description outlined. All improvements must comply with Dixieland CRA Commercial Corridor Guidelines or Historic District Guidelines as appropriate.
5. Certificate of Review from the Historic Preservation Board Design Review Committee.[†]
6. Description of materials to be used, the construction procedure and colors.
7. Three (3) cost estimates.

[†] For more information about how to receive a Certificate of Review, please visit the City of Lakeland's website at www.lakelandgov.net
Downloads are available under the Community Development, Planning, Historic Preservation links.

Exhibit A: Dixieland CRA Boundary Map

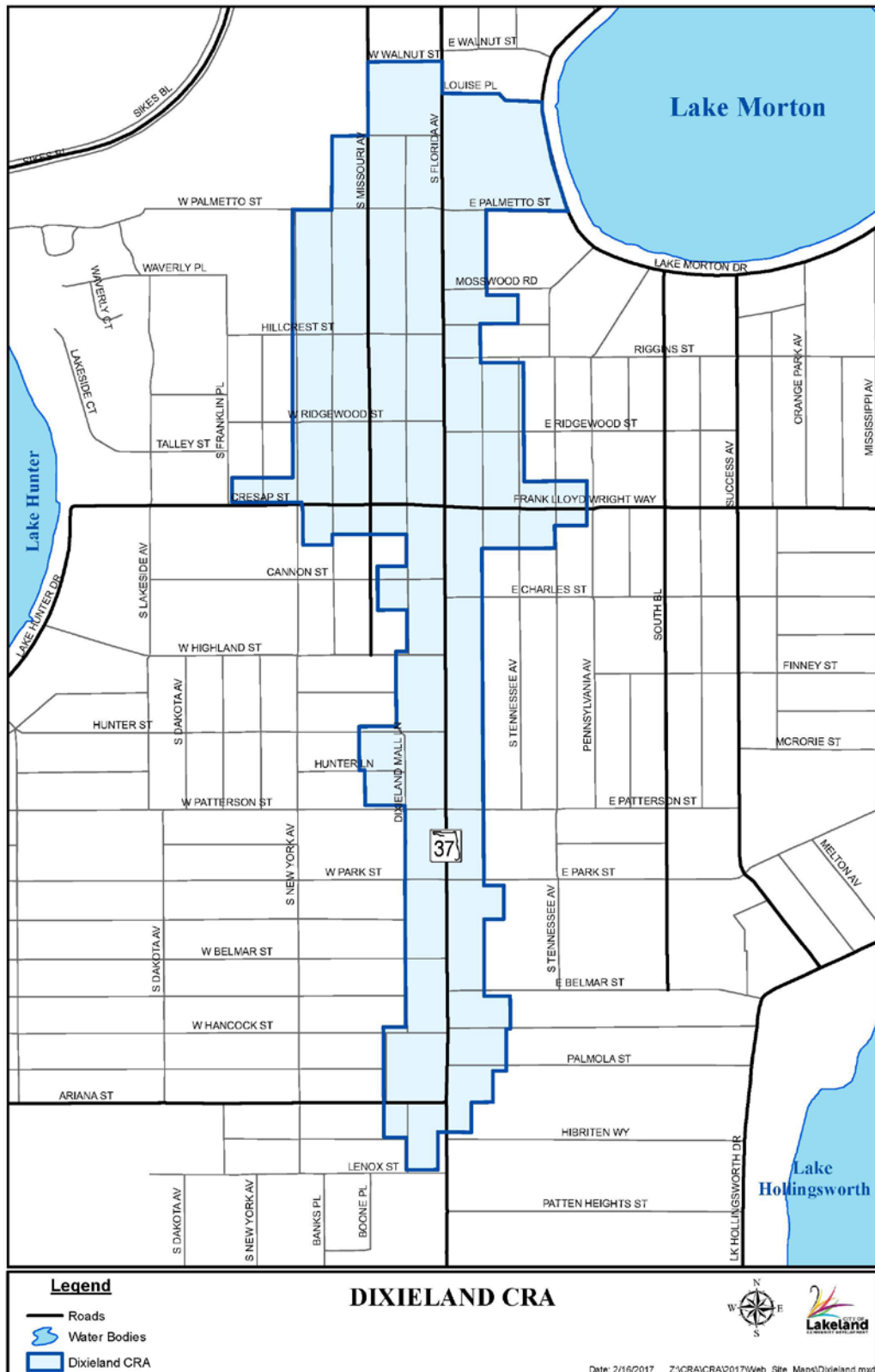


Exhibit B: Historically Significant Structures Within the Dixieland CRA

1222 South Florida Avenue
1220 South Florida Avenue
1214-1218 South Florida Avenue
1212-A South Florida Avenue
1212 South Florida Avenue
1132 South Florida Avenue
1117 South Florida Avenue
1115 South Florida Avenue
1113 South Florida Avenue
1111 South Florida Avenue
1101 South Florida Avenue
1065 South Florida Avenue
1028-1034 South Florida Avenue
1026 South Florida Avenue
1023 South Florida Avenue
1015 South Florida Avenue
1008 South Florida Avenue
1021 South Florida Avenue
923-925 South Florida Avenue
913 South Florida Avenue
911 South Florida Avenue
901 South Florida Avenue
814 South Florida Avenue
902 South Florida Avenue