



NORTH MIAMI CRA
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Commercial Grants Guidelines

**12340 NE 8 Avenue
North Miami, FL 33161
Phone: (305) 895-9839 | Fax: (305) 895-9822
www.northmiamicra.org**

North Miami CRA Commercial Grants Guidelines

One of the primary objectives of a community redevelopment agency is to effectuate positive change within the targeted area through improvements of business and residential structures. To that end, the NMCRA works to transform that area into one that again contributes to the overall health of the community. This transformation occurs through the various grants and incentives initiatives listed below:

- Commercial Grants
- Public Private Partnership Developments
- Infrastructure Improvements
- Residential and Neighborhood Improvement Programs
- Affordable, Workforce, Market Rate, Luxury and Mixed Income Housing
- Affordable/Workforce Housing Development & Renovation
- Transportation and Transit Developments

Mandate

While each grant program may have individual requirements, the NMCRA requires all projects abide by the following to be considered:

1. Must be within the NMCRA geographic boundary
2. Must have a visible improvement to the property or area
3. Must eliminate slum and blight
4. Must meet current NMCRA Plan goals and objectives
5. Must show quantifiable benefits to the community

Commercial Grants

Universal Requirements:

1. Primary property use must be commercial
2. Applicable City of North Miami/county/state licenses must be up to date
3. Preliminary designs, color photos and documentation related to the property must be provided
4. Color photos of adjacent properties must be provided
5. Owner/Operator or applicant shall have no outstanding liens, or any unpaid property taxes
6. Applications must be completed in full, signed and submitted to be considered
7. Applicants should attempt to utilize the online application at: <http://northmiamicra.org/>. If online process is not possible, it may be emailed to cragrants@northmiamifl.gov or delivered to: 12340 NE 8th Avenue, North Miami, Florida, 33161. All hardcopy applications must be legible to be considered
8. Property owner must notify all tenants of the proposed improvements to an assisted commercial property in a reasonable time prior to the initiation of the project
9. If leaseholder, applicant must obtain approval from landlord in order to participate in program

Commercial Grants Continued...

Universal Requirements:

10. Applicants must provide 3 cost estimates for the proposed work from contractors acceptable to the CRA. CRA Staff reserves the right to deny any submitted cost estimates.
 - a. All cost estimates must be fully and completely itemized and detailed
 - b. The lowest bid amount will be considered
11. CRA staff may require additional work to be done as a condition to approval if the requested items do not show a visible impact/improvement and/or meet the CRA's goals
12. Applicants must abide by all rules and laws of the City of North Miami, and the NMCRA, or the grant is subject to immediate forfeiture
13. Any and all improvements must adhere to City of North Miami Building and Zoning Codes and all Federal, State and Local Requirements
14. The property must legally conform to city regulations
15. All applications will be considered on a first come, first served basis. Grant awards are limited by funding availability
- 16. ALL WORK MUST BE APPROVED BY THE CRA BOARD PRIOR TO ITS START TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR REIMBURSEMENT.**

AUTOMATIC DISQUALIFICATION:

- A. Businesses that received grant/assistance in the previous fiscal year cannot apply
- B. Businesses that relocate out of the district during the process will not be considered
- C. More than one application submitted for the same business will not be considered
- D. Properties 'for sale' or listed on the MLS will not be considered
- E. Any work done prior to approval by the CRA Board does not qualify
- F. Religious organizations or sites being utilized for religious purposes will not be considered for funding

ELIGIBLE USES:

CRA funds are to be used for standard building finishes as determined by the CRA.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Impact Windows and Doors | <input type="checkbox"/> Flooring |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Awnings & Canopy | <input type="checkbox"/> Parking/surface lots |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Painting & Stucco | <input type="checkbox"/> Signage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Roof repairs/parapets | <input type="checkbox"/> Security Enhancements |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interior/Exterior Lighting & Fixtures | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscaping |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interior Renovation | <input type="checkbox"/> Green Improvements |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Electrical upgrades | <input type="checkbox"/> ADA enhancements to include stairs/ramps |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Loading Docks | <input type="checkbox"/> Work complimentary to those list |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fence and Gates | <input type="checkbox"/> Architect/Engineer fees |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Driveways/walkways | |

1) Beautification and Enhancement Grant Program

This program offers up to \$25,000 with no match requirement, to eligible commercial property owners or business operators for improvements to the exterior and/or interior of the building. This grant is subject to 100% forgiveness, pending the successful completion of a 3 year maintenance period on the improved property.

REQUIREMENTS

1. Proposed enhancements must show visible improvements to the business/property and its surrounding area
2. For Beautification Grant a qualified business must have commercial space on the ground floor, with street frontage and direct pedestrian access from the street
3. Applicant must produce receipts and/or other documentation showing proof of current business activity at the location

2) Business Attraction & Expansion Grant Program

This grant will cover 50% of the project cost up to \$150,000, toward specifically defined, and approved costs that are related to relocation and attraction of businesses. This program is best suited for businesses previously not located within the boundaries of the CRA or those looking for an opportunity to expand. This grant can also be used to cover half of the monthly rent of an approved property for up to 6 months during the renovations.

REQUIREMENTS

1. Applicant must have either proof of ownership, an executed lease, or signed documents showing an intent to purchase or lease related to the property in the CRA
2. Renters must have a signed lease of at least 5 years, or documentation showing an intent to sign a lease of at least 5 years and 3 years of performance activity documentation in a similar business
3. Business Plan (Preferred)
4. Expansion of business by adding at least half of the existing square footage. Example current 750 sq. ft. expansion to 1,500 sq. ft.
5. Every effort must be made to hire North Miami residents

Eligible Uses for Funding:

All the above eligible improvements, and:

- Up to 50% of rent for six (6) months during renovations
- Large equipment that is permanently affixed
- A percentage of impact fees related to change of use

3) Rehabilitation Grant Program:

This rehabilitation program provides up to 50% of the total cost of interior and exterior improvements to property owners and businesses in an amount not to exceed \$100,000.

REQUIREMENTS

1. Applicant must have either proof of ownership, an executed lease, or signed documents showing an intent to purchase or lease related to the property in the CRA
2. Renters must have a signed lease of at least 5 years, or documentation showing an intent to sign a lease of at least 5 years
3. Properties with multiple business tenants (such as shopping centers or strip malls) must seek to make improvements across the entire property so that it is done as one project. However, it is conceivable that properties with multiple tenants may only seek to improve a limited section of the property
4. No new construction
5. No new roof installation
6. Every effort must be made to hire North Miami residents

4) Capacity Building/Retention Grant

The Capacity Building/Retention Grant Program will focus on helping existing small businesses enhance their operations and capacity during the redevelopment of the area. Up to \$7,500 can be used for approved business expenses or approved technical support and/or training.

Eligible Uses for the Business Retention Grant:

- Durable Machinery/Equipment
- Marketing/Advertising
- Business Related Insurance
- Professional Services that directly improve business operations
- Business Related Training/ Conferences
- Green Rehab Grant Match
- Merchandising Specialist

REQUIREMENTS

1. Must be in business for at least 1 year
2. No more than one (1) other location, not part of a national chain (franchise)
3. No more than five (5) employees

APPLICATION PROCEDURES:

Applicants shall follow the steps listed below for approval:

- A. Visit northmiamicra.org and review the grant guidelines
- B. Schedule an appointment with CRA staff to discuss project and make sure it meets program intent. Please call (305) 895-9839 or e-mail cragrants@northmiamifl.gov.
- C. Meet with the CRA Grants Coordinator or staff for a preliminary review of proposed renovations to property.
- D. Apply online at www.northmiamicra.org, or submit an application via email or in-person. Ensure all required materials are attached.
- E. Applications will not be considered for funding until a completed application and supporting documentation are received by the CRA.
- F. CRA staff will review application and notify applicants of any missing information.
- G. If application has met eligible requirements, staff will schedule the application for review and approval by the CRA Advisory Committee and the CRA Board.
- H. The Committee and Board meet monthly however all applications and backup documentation must be received at least three (3) weeks before the next scheduled meeting to allow staff appropriate review time.
- I. The completed application is reviewed by:
 1. The CRA Advisory Committee, who will make a recommendation of approval or denial, then
 2. By the CRA board for denial or approval.
- J. All applicants must attend both meetings to answer additional questions.
- K. The decision of the CRA Board shall be final.
- L. CRA staff notifies applicant of CRA Board approval or denial. Applicants not approved may apply again one year from denial. A fully executed Grant Agreement between the CRA and the applicant shall serve as a Notice to Proceed.
- M. Project commences.

Commercial Grants Application

Business Information

Business Name: _____

Project Address: _____

Is this project within the CRA Boundaries? Yes No *Please Circle One*

Contact Information

Name: _____

Title: _____

Work Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Contact Name: _____

Email: _____

Property Owner Information

Is the applicant also the property owner: Yes No *Please Circle One*

Property Owner Address: _____

Contact Number: _____

Include a brief written statement explaining how you will use the grant, if awarded.
(*Must attach pictures of the existing business*).

Select grant program you are applying for:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beautification/Enhancement | <input type="checkbox"/> Business Attraction/Expansion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rehabilitation | <input type="checkbox"/> Capacity Building/Retention |

Commercial Grants Application

How will this grant help your business? The North Miami community and the North Miami CRA? **Please provide your response on a separate sheet of paper and attach with your application.**

1. How long have you been in business? _____ Years *Please Circle One*
2. Are you interested in participating in Business Development workshops? Yes No

My signature below indicates that I have read and fully understand this document and its contents.

Signature

Date

Applicant is other than the property owner of the building, the following line must be completed. I certify that I, the trustee and/or owner of the below-cited property, give _____ (applicant) authority to implement improvements at the property as may be required under the North Miami CRA Grant Program.

Signature of owner/trustee Print owner or trustee name and capacity Property

Address Phone: _____ Email: _____

Property Owner's Signature

Date

Terms & Conditions

Interested parties may apply through the NMCRA website: www.northmiamicra.org, request an application via email: cgrants@northmiamifl.gov or in person at our offices: 12340 NE 8th Avenue, North Miami, FL 33161. Applicants must thoroughly review application guidelines and terms and conditions to ensure eligibility.

The NMCRA (Grantor) will make payments to the awarded party (Grantee) in the form of reimbursement issued during the duration of the project and/or after the completion of the project. Projects must be pre-approved and an agreement executed with the NMCRA prior to commencing the project.

In order to be eligible for grants through the NMCRA, projects must meet all the following requirements:

- Must be within the NMCRA geographic boundary.
- Must have a visible improvement to the property or area.
- Must eliminate slum and blight.
- Must meet current NMCRA Plan goals and objectives.
- Must show quantifiable benefits to the community.
- Must provide proof that property taxes are up to date.
- Grants are available to commercial property owners of eligible commercial buildings, business operators, as well as non-profit organizations.
- Applicable City of North Miami/County/State licenses must be up to date.
- Leaseholders of commercial buildings must obtain approval from the property owner in order to participate in the program.
- Preference is given to applicants located along the City's major commercial corridors (West Dixie Highway, NE 6th Avenue, N.E. 125th Street, N.W. 7th Avenue, Biscayne Boulevard and N.W. 119th Street).
- A qualified building is a structure with commercial space on the ground floor with the street frontage and direct pedestrian access from the street. An eligible "façade" is the front face or elevation of the building, which typically faces the street, contains windows and is the principal entrance to the building.

Eligible Work

- In order to be eligible for the program, the façade must be in need of assistance to correct physical decline (e.g. blighting conditions).
- Eligible exterior work typically includes installation of storefront windows, awnings, painting, roof parapets, canopy, stucco, flooring, security enhancements, signs and exterior lighting. Site work such as walkways, parking pavement, fence/gates, landscape, ADA stairs or ramps and loading docks may be eligible as an ancillary part of the proposed project.
- Work to upper portions of the façade of a building is eligible for the grant, provided that such work is part of a larger qualified project involving street level improvements and provided that such work does not involve residential portions of the building.
- Eligible interior building work includes: interior painting, lighting fixtures, flooring, security enhancements, ceiling and other fixed improvements necessary for the operation of the business. Security enhancements include, but are not limited to, security cameras, alarm systems, motion detectors, locks, replacement of current windows and doors with impact resistant materials, and lighting which is used to enhance the building's safety.
- The following types of items are **not eligible** as interior building work: expenses with mobile elements (shelves, furniture, equipment, etc.), business expenses (inventory, payroll, licenses, taxes, utilities, maintenance, etc.), rent and moving expenses. Exception is made for Business Attraction Grant which allows for rent and some equipment.
- All work must be pre-approved and permitted as may be required by the City and performed by a licensed contractor selected by the Grantee through a competitive bidding process.

REQUIREMENTS

- Property owner must notify all tenants about the proposed improvements to an assisted commercial property.

The following types of businesses and uses are **not eligible** to participate in the commercial grant program:

- Residential buildings
- Properties occupied by religious institutions
- Adult bookstores or similar businesses
- Free standing liquor stores
- Commercial building containing ineligible uses listed above and/or are non-conforming to the City of North Miami Comp Plan and zoning codes

The following types of work are generally **not eligible** for funding through the commercial grant program:

- Roof replacement
- New construction or additions
- Work to buildings less than 5 years old, unless it is for interior work for new business
- Work on residential portions of a commercial building

OCCUPATION REQUIREMENTS

The recipient is required to be open for business within (30 days) thirty days of the completion of the project. If occupation requirements are not met, the business must immediately repay 100% of the grant to the Grantor.

LEASING REQUIREMENTS

Upon completion of the project, 50% of the ground-floor “leasable” commercial space must have leasing commitments of at least one year, with a business opening within 30 days of completion. If leasing requirements are not met at the time of final inspection, the property owner will be given 180 days to submit a one-year lease agreement to the grantor. Proof of an operational business is required in the form of City licenses (Certificate of Use and Business Tax Receipt). If leasing requirements are not met after the extension, the Grantor will require the repayment of 100% of the grant.

PAST PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

Buildings that have been previously assisted by the CRA or the City of North Miami in the last five (5) years are generally not eligible. Especially if the application is for the same work previously done. This portion may be waived if it is for a new business relocating into the building that has not previously received a grant.

CODE VIOLATION

Buildings with pending code violations are not eligible for the program, unless it is determined that the proposed scope of work includes the resolution of the code violation(s) in a manner that is deemed acceptable and appropriate in the sole discretion of the program administrator.

CHANGE IN OWNERSHIP

Program participation is not transferable to new property owners. New property owners must reapply to participate in the program. In the case of the Beautification Grant and Capacity Building/Retention Grant, if the assisted property or business is sold during the three-year period following the completion of the project, the Grantor will recapture 100% of the grant.

In the case of the Business Attraction/Expansion and Rehabilitation Grants, if the assisted property or business is sold during the five-year period following the completion of the property, the Grantor will recapture 100% of the grant.

Property owner is forbidden to make any alterations to the funded improvements without written permission of the Grantor.

TIME LIMITS

Construction must start 3 months from the date of signing of the agreement between the Grantee and the Grantor and must be completed 1 year from such date. Projects must be completed by the timetable outlined in an agreement signed between the Grantor, business owner, and approved by the property owner in the case of a tenant.

CONSISTENCY WITH CITY ORDINANCES AND COMPLIANCE

Projects must comply with all City of North Miami zoning code and building requirements.

To be eligible to participate in the program, applicants must comply with all program requirements. Failure to comply with the program requirements at any time will result in the applicant being dropped from the program. The Grantor is the sole interpreter of eligibility determinations, payment amounts and compliance with program requirements. All of the Grantor's decisions are final. Projects are not officially accepted in the program until an agreement between the applicant and the Grantor is signed.

BUSINESS CATEGORY LIST

Priority will be given to businesses that complement the city's desired retail mix. Example of such businesses are listed below:

- ❖ Restaurant
- ❖ Furniture Store
- ❖ Art Gallery
- ❖ Bookstore
- ❖ Music Store/Studio
- ❖ Specialty Food
- ❖ Coffee Shop
- ❖ Produce Market
- ❖ Photography Studio
- ❖ Dance Studio
- ❖ Specialty Retail

The Grantor reserves the right to reject any application and has the right to amend the business category list to accommodate special circumstances.

APPLICATION PROCESS

- Applicant will review and complete the application and submit all required backup documentation in order to be considered for the grant.
- Make appropriate changes/corrections in application as instructed by CRA staff
- Completed application needs to be received at least three (3) weeks before the next CRA Advisory Committee Meeting and the CRA Board Meeting to be placed on the agenda.
- Applicant or representative is required to attend both meetings.
- Once application has been considered for approval/denial by both boards, staff will notify applicant for next steps.
- If approved, an agreement will be drafted and needs to be executed prior to starting the work.
- Grantee will need to complete Vendor Registration forms and a W-9 to be reimbursed.
- If the project is denied, applicant can re-apply within a year of original request.

PAYMENT PROCESS

The Grantor will issue no more than four payments during the project. Upon completion of each phase of the project, program staff will inspect the project to ensure compliance with the approved plans and budget. Every reimbursement request must include:

1. An invoice from the grantee request to be reimbursement with itemized expenses
2. Front and back copies of cancelled checks
3. Invoices for each payment made to contractors/vendors
4. Partial Release of lien from each contractor/vendor for the amount specifically paid
5. Pictures showing progression of project
6. Copies of permits pulled, inspections and final inspection

The Grantor will **reimburse** the property owner for the grant amount established in the agreement by issuing a check up to six weeks after staff inspections and after the following documentation has been submitted for each phase of the project.

Final payment will be issued after all work has been completed, all the above mentioned documentation has been reviewed and accepted by the Grantor, and leasing and other program requirements have been met.

MONITORING PROCESS

Staff will monitor progression of the project through photo/video documentation, in addition to comments to the file.

After project is complete, staff will monitor the business/structure for the required three to five years and will follow the monitoring steps outline in the CRA SOP.

PUBLICITY

By accepting this grant the grantee shall recognize the CRA as a funding source for all the activities outline in the application and agreement. The grantee shall ensure that any publicity, public relations, advertisements, and signs recognize the CRA for the support of all contracted activities. Grantee shall permit or shall have the landlord agree to have a sign placed on the property by the CRA in relation to this grant.