



## Commercial Building Improvement Grant Program

The Commercial Building Improvement Grant Program (C-BIG) is a redevelopment initiative funded and administered by the Bayshore/Gateway Triangle Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) as partial reimbursement for exterior and interior improvements to commercial buildings within the Redevelopment Area.

### Overview of the Program

Tenants and owners of commercial properties for which property taxes are paid to the current year and which are located within the CRA boundaries may be eligible to receive C-BIG funding. Not-for-profit, 501 (c) (3) and other private entities such as churches, etc., are not eligible for C-BIG funding but may be eligible for grants through the Site Improvement Grant program.

The C-BIG program funds both exterior and interior improvements to qualified commercial buildings in the CRA. Funding for interior improvements is contingent upon grantees performing exterior improvements earning the maximum funding under the C-BIG program. All interior and exterior improvements must be approved by the CRA prior to commencing any C-BIG-funded projects. All exterior improvements must be visible to the public, either from the public right-of-way or some other highly visible location. Grantees generally receive C-BIG funds in about 45 days after CRA staff visit the site and review all paperwork (see **Required Paperwork for Reimbursement**) and verify grantee eligibility.

### Applicant Eligibility

Applicants must own a business or a commercial building within the Redevelopment Area (See map in Appendix A). Eligibility criteria are as follows:

- Applicants who are business owners must have a valid occupational license at the time of application.
- Business owners who rent the building or unit space where their businesses are located must secure a signed Owner Authorization Form (attached) from the building owner to construct improvements.
- Business owners who rent the building or unit space where their businesses are located are strongly encouraged to have a lease guaranteeing a fixed rent.
- All property taxes on the site must be current.

Applicants may submit only one application a year. A business site—defined as the folio number (parcel ID) of business location—may receive up to three C-BIGs, not to exceed the maximum allowable amount in effect at the time of the first application, subject to availability of funds. Once a business site has received its maximum funding, it is no longer eligible for further C-BIG funding for the remaining life of the program (subject to CRA funding availability). This rule also applies to applicants in the same way: one



applicant may receive up to three C-BIGs up to the maximum amount permitted at the time of the first application.

### **Bids for Work**

For each type of improvement to be funded, applicants must obtain a minimum of two bids by licensed contractors. Bids from contractors not licensed will not be accepted for the C-BIG program. The grant amount will be equal the sum of the lowest bids (not to exceed \$50,000) by all contractors for each improvement though any contractor may be used.

### **Required Documentation for Reimbursement**

Grant funds are disbursed after CRA staff verify the improvements are complete (this includes review of certificates of occupancy and/or permits from Collier County). To receive reimbursement, grantees must prove that payment for the improvements was paid to contractor(s) by check or credit card in the name of the grantee. Under no circumstance will payment to unlicensed contractors or subcontractors be reimbursed. Grantees must provide receipts or invoices with the payment amount indicated clearly. No reimbursement will be disbursed for work paid for with cash.

## **Project Requirements**

### **Exterior Improvements**

In order to be approved, exterior improvements must result in one or more of the following: (1) increase in the aesthetic appeal of the area; (2) improvement to the functionality of the premises; (3) remedy of structural problems or code violations or (4) aid in business operation. The grantee will be reimbursed for exterior improvements at a 50 percent match, up to a maximum award of \$30,000. The following are examples of improvements eligible for grant funding.

Installation of or repair to:

- Stucco
- Doors
- Brick or textured pavement
- Exterior lighting
- Awnings
- Windows
- Stormwater enhancements
- Painting
- Masonry
- Landscaping (may require installation of irrigation)
- Shutters
- Electrical work related to exterior lighting
- Signs
- Fencing
- Roofing
- Any other improvements subject to CRA approval.



Examples of other improvements which qualify for grant funding include the following:

- Removal of deteriorated materials
- Parking lot improvements
- Building cleaning (sand blasting/pressure washing)
- Courtyard and outside dining design and development
- Enhancement of access (e.g. wheelchair ramps)
- Demolition required to build a new entrance to a building
- Remediation of code violations
- Architectural / engineering services
- Landscaping\*
- Any other improvements subject to CRA approval.

\*Landscaping with invasive pest plants listed by the Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council is strictly prohibited (this list available from CRA). Landscaping techniques as outlined in *Waterwise: South Florida Landscapes*, published by the South Florida Water Management District is encouraged; free copies of this manual are available at the CRA office. Special assistance for landscaping is available free of charge through Collier County Extension Services. Contact a master gardener by calling (239) 353-4244.

**NOTE: Projects listed below are ineligible for C-BIG funding.**

- The removal of architecturally important details;
- Installation of aluminum or vinyl siding;
- Improvements commenced prior to execution of agreement with CRA;
- Purchase or installation of statues or fountains;
- Property acquisition;
- Any work by non-licensed contractors;
- Construction of free-standing buildings (including construction of new rooms to existing structures);
- Refinancing of debt;
- Non-fixed improvements; and
- Sweat equity.

### **Interior Improvements**

Grantees who wish to improve the interior of approved commercial properties may be reimbursed for that work through the C-BIG program only if they earn the maximum dollar award for exterior improvements. Interior projects must be approved at the same time as exterior projects and will be reimbursed at a 50 percent match, up to a maximum award of \$20,000. A grantee who fails to perform enough exterior improvements to earn the maximum grant amount will forfeit all reimbursement for interior improvements. All documentation requirements for exterior improvements also apply to interior improvements (see **Bids for Work** and **Required Documentation for Reimbursement** above).



The following is a complete list of qualified interior improvements

- Asbestos removal
- Paint
- Electrical work to meet code requirements
- Plumbing to meet code requirements
- Termite damage repair
- Lighting improvements
- Improvements necessary for ADA-compliance
- Flooring upgrades and replacement
- Ceiling upgrades or repair.

No other interior improvements will be approved for funding.

## **Change Orders and Time Extensions**

### **Change Orders to Increase Funding**

After a C-BIG agreement is executed, if a grantee discovers flaws in the building related to approved exterior or interior improvements, a change order may be issued to increase funding not to exceed the maximum award available. Change orders must be requested in time for staff to process the request and secure approval (allow a minimum of one month prior to expiration of grant). **IMPORTANT:** change orders cannot be processed within the last two weeks of the grant period. Upon successfully completing work under the original C-BIG, grantees must wait one year and may then apply for additional funding for work unrelated to the original improvement[s].

### **Time Extensions**

The CRA understands that redevelopment projects can take more time to complete than is originally anticipated. For grantees who cannot complete their projects within one year, time extensions may be granted. Grantees needing extensions must request the extension within two months of the grant's expiration. Note: no extensions can be granted within the last two weeks of the grant period. **IMPORTANT:** Grantees must verify that applications for permits were submitted to Collier County within four months after execution of the grant agreement and that construction of improvements commenced within six months after execution of the grant agreement.

## **Funding Levels and Matching Requirements**

### **Base Funding**

The base maximum grant award is \$50,000 with the following breakdown of funding:

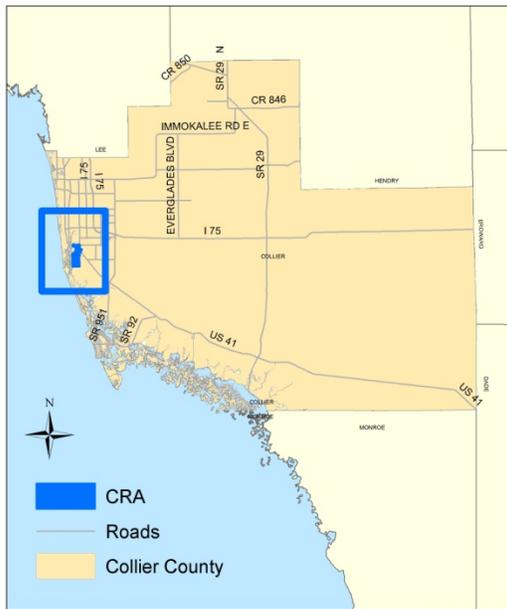
- 1) \$30,000 in 50/50 matching funds for exterior improvements;
- 2) \$20,000 in 50/50 matching funds for interior improvements —absolutely no funding for interior improvements will be permitted if grantee does not perform a minimum of \$60,000 of exterior improvements.



# Appendix A: CRA Map & Funding Summary

## Map: Location of Bayshore Gateway Triangle CRA

Location of CRA within Collier County



CRA Close-Up



## Funding Summary

Funding Type	CRA Amount	Applicant Match
EXTERIOR PROJECTS: Base Level Funding	\$30,000	MINIMUM \$1- TO-\$1
INTERIOR PROJECTS	\$20,000	MINIMUM \$1-TO-\$1



**C-BIG Application** (Detach and submit to CRA office.)

<b>Applicant Information</b>			
Grantee Name			
Grantee Address		Site Address	
Daytime Phone		Alternate Phone	
E-Mail Address			
Do you own or lease the property?		Occupational License No. (if applicable)	

**Project Information**

Describe the existing conditions of the site (attach additional sheets if necessary).

Outline the proposed improvements in detail (attach additional sheets if necessary).

**REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS FROM APPLICANT:**

- 1) One estimate each from **TWO** contractors for each project. These contractors **MUST** be licensed.
- 2) Business Owners: copy of occupational license.

**CRA STAFF:**

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Attach two color photos of each project to be performed.</li> <li>2) Attach Property Appraiser ID.</li> <li>3) Attach proof of payment of property taxes.</li> </ol>	Estimated cost of improvements:     \$ _____
	Maximum grant award:                     \$ _____
	Signature: _____ Date: _____



## Lessor / Owner Authorization for Improvements

I, \_\_\_\_\_, owner of the property located at \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, understand that \_\_\_\_\_, who has a valid  
lease for the above listed property, authorize said tenant to complete the improvements listed under  
Section 2 of the completed Commercial Building Improvement Grant application and to request  
reimbursement funds from the Collier County Community Redevelopment Agency.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Owner

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Owner  
(if jointly owned)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**STATE OF** \_\_\_\_\_

**COUNTY OF** \_\_\_\_\_

The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me by means of  physical presence or  online notarization this  
\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_, by \_\_\_\_\_ . Such person(s) Notary

Public must check applicable box:

- are personally known to me.
- produced her current driver license.
- produced \_\_\_\_\_ as identification.

**(Notary Seal)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public

Printed Name of Notary: \_\_\_\_\_

Commission Number: \_\_\_\_\_

My Commission Expires: \_\_\_\_\_



### Applicant Commitment of Resources

I / we, \_\_\_\_\_, owner(s) / tenant(s) of the commercial property located at \_\_\_\_\_, have the funding and all other capability necessary to begin the site improvements listed above and have the ability to complete all improvements within one year of the approval of the improvement grant by the Collier County Community Redevelopment Agency. I / we further affirm that payment for all work on approved improvements will come from accounts in my / our name(s) or the name(s) of entities registered in the State of Florida which I / we have incorporated or otherwise registered with the state (verification is required). Payment for improvements by from persons or entities not a party to this Grant Application is grounds for disqualification.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Tenant (if leased)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Tenant (if leased)  
(if jointly leased)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Owner

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Owner  
(if jointly owned)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



## Grantee Project Summary & Evaluation (attach additional sheets as necessary)

### Project Summary

Describe the improvements made.

List all vendors / contractors providing materials or services for this project with contact information.

Vendor / Service Provider	Phone Number or Address or Website

\_\_\_\_\_  
Grantee Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Grantee Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**CRA Staff: Color photos of completed project from site visit must be attached to this report.**

