



2021 Business Assistance Microgrant

Program Guidelines - Procedures – Application

Program Description:

The ***Omni CRA Business Assistance Microgrant Program*** assists qualified business or property owners with costs that are directly related to opening of a new business, improving an existing business conditions, remedying code violations, providing ADA access, assisting existing businesses struggling due to business interference, blight, or disasters and eliminating blighting conditions in targeted areas of the Omni CRA. Business Assistance Microgrant funds may be used for improvements to properties that are not eligible for grant funding from other sources available in the area, or to supplement grant funds awarded by other sources. Priorities include projects that can use CRA funds to leverage other public and private investments and bring new business and restaurant/entertainment venues to distressed areas.

Funds may not cross outside of Omni CRA District Boundaries and are targeted at specific areas in the Omni CRA District. **The program has an annual project cap of \$35,000.** This amount may be exceeded in rare circumstances at the discretion of the Executive Director. In addition to a private match, the grant recipient is responsible for all business costs that exceed funding provided by the CRA. The CRA may recommend funding at a lesser amount, given that funds are awarded as available and based on priorities outlined below. Funds from this program are paid directly to the business owner or to the contractors performing the work after a competitive selection process.

Program Areas and Priorities:

While parts of the Omni CRA's redevelopment area have benefited from the boom in commercial and residential development, some areas within the CRA district have not seen the benefit of this investment. The business corridors of the Omni CRA suffer from neglected properties and vacant properties and a general aesthetic that is not conducive for businesses to thrive in the community. The Omni CRA has prioritized improvements to properties within the limits of the boundaries of the entire Omni CRA district ([see map](#)), but may choose to focus on particular problem areas.

Emergency Recovery & Business Interruption Microgrant

Due to large number of infrastructure and other construction projects, power outages, burglaries, flooding, and other disaster-related interruptions in the changing neighborhoods of the Community Redevelopment Area, businesses and residents may face difficulty in remaining open, which can cause a negative cycle of blight and disinvestment. The CRA is committed to preventing the conditions causing Slum & Blight and is offering a microgrant to businesses or residents facing these problems.

Grant award can be used to conduct quick repairs to damaged property, replace damaged or stolen equipment or infrastructure, add emergency lighting or cameras, mitigate previous damage, increase signage, or defray other costs after or during a business interruption or emergency. Grantees are selected on a rolling basis at the discretion of the executive staff as funding permits.

Employment Opportunity Microgrant

Portions of the Omni CRA redevelopment area have a high underemployment rate. The CRA is intent on increasing employment opportunities in the district and raising the median income levels for residents and workers here. This microgrant is available to hire, train, and retain workers at businesses within the Omni CRA which serve the local community and increase quality of life and local activity. Funds will be paid as a reimbursement. Grantees are selected on a rolling basis at the discretion of the executive staff as funding permits.

Business owners using these funds are expected to have appropriate insurance, and to provide evidence of capacity to remain in business and compensate employees after the grant ends. Best efforts must be made to hire from the neighborhood, city, and then then county.

Building Improvement Microgrant

Due to the increased vacancies and the changing character of the neighborhoods in the CRA, it is often necessary to upgrade the infrastructure of a building to improve customer experience, change the use, add new AC, ventilation or sewer infrastructure, shift from temporary to permanent operation, or to make signage or aesthetic improvements to the property. Building Improvement Microgrants are available on a rolling basis, as funding permits, for businesses to make small improvements to the building, façade, landscaping, signage, or other improvements to the property.

Eligibility:

These funds are usually not made for routine maintenance and should be part of a larger scope of improvements to the property or area. All Microgrants will be subject to insurance requirements as deemed necessary by the CRA. Any improved property should have an active or soon-to-be active business and/or residential use located on the property.

- ***Emergency Recovery & Business Interruption Microgrant***

These funds will be issued in response to a documented business interruption, emergency or other unforeseen hardship resulting from natural disasters or blighted or disruptive neighborhood conditions.

- ***Employment Opportunity Microgrant***

These funds will be issued so that local businesses wishing to ramp up hours, increase their visibility, or otherwise improve the quality or hours of service, or increase the number of employed staff members.

Documentation of new employment will be required [see attached form].

- ***Building Improvement Microgrant***

These funds will be issued for businesses wishing to change the use of their building, to improve the aesthetics, visibility or accessibility of their business, or to add infrastructure and fixtures to allow them to better serve the neighborhood.

Documentation of Improvements will be required [see attached form].

Completion:

All projects and grant disbursements shall be completed within a 6-month period from the date the contract is signed. Extensions beyond the 6-month completion date can only be made with the approval of the CRA Director. Such approval shall be in writing and noticed to all parties. All Microgrant recipients will be required to prominently display signage acknowledging the CRA assistance.

Recovery & Business Interruption Microgrant:

These funds will be issued in response to a documented business interruption, emergency or other unforeseen hardship resulting from natural disasters or blighted or disruptive neighborhood conditions. The funds can be used to address the current effects of disruption or install mitigation against future disruptions, including, but not limited to, improvement of electrical generators, installation or repair of impact windows and doors, roof repairs, installation and repair of locks or security measures, rent assistance, hiring of security guards or cameras, replacement of stolen or vandalized property, and other similar items.

Attach documentation of hardship/interruption

Please attach photographic evidence or other documentation verifying that the business has suffered an eligible business interruption or emergency. This can include, but is not limited to, estimated traffic counts, road closure notices, police reports, hurricane damage reports, etc.

Type of interruption/emergency	Proposed Mitigation	Estimated Cost

Award

Award of the Recovery & Business Interruption Microgrant is at the discretion of the Executive Director. Awards involving buildout should follow the procedures for Building Improvement Microgrants.

Building Improvement Microgrant Project Procedures:

CRA= CRA Staff; CNTR = Contractor; PROP = Property Owner; TNT = Tenant

A) Application Process

CRA meets with Tenant and/or Property Owner, verifies that the property is an eligible address and that the tenant/business meets basic criteria for the CRA Business Assistance Microgrant.

1. Review Tenant Business Model and verify lease – CRA
2. Review Improvement Activities to be funded by the program – CRA, TNT
3. Eligible Scope of Work and Budget is Prepared – CRA, TNT, PROP
4. Tenant and Property Owner prepare Application, attach Scope and Budget – TNT, PROP
5. BEFORE pictures are taken and delivered to CRA– TNT, PROP
6. Letter of Grant Award or denial is sent to Property Owner and/or tenant – CRA

B) Contract Process

Contract includes scope of work exhibit. Additional documents such as sub-contractor lists (for release of lien) and Work Authorization Form are used for project monitoring.

1. Tenant or Property Owner secures pricing (3 leveled bids) and selects contractor – TNT, PROP & CRA
2. Tenant submits contractor list and copies of estimates to CRA – TNT
3. DMP Prepares Contract with Scope of Work as exhibit – CRA
4. Insurance for Business Owner, Contractor and subs is approved.
5. Contract is executed – CRA, TNT, CNTR
6. Work Authorization Form is executed – CRA, TNT, PROP
7. After invoice is received CRA gives up to 40% to the Contractor to begin the work
8. Permits are pulled and work begins – TNT, CNTR
9. CRA monitors progress – CRA

C) Project Completion

Contractors are paid after all liens are released, any permits are closed and a final invoice is submitted.

1. AFTER Pictures are Taken – TNT
2. Release of Lien letter for each contractor is obtained – TNT, CNTR
3. Closed Permit Report submitted – TNT, CNTR
4. Final Invoice Submitted for payment – CNTR
5. CRA makes the final payment to the Contractor Payment (2-4 weeks) – CRA

Employment Opportunity Microgrant Procedures

The Employment Opportunity Microgrant is intended to further the employment of residents of the Omni CRA and improve ability of employers to expand services and pay living wages to their employees. The Omni CRA does not tolerate employment discrimination based on membership of any protected class. Documentation of non-discrimination in hiring must be provided to the CRA.

The CRA may require the documentation of the following:

- Help-Wanted Advertisements to be posted for the position open or previously filled positions
- Current payroll records
- Projected payroll with new hires
- Workers Compensation insurance for all employees

Hiring should be targeted at residents of the Omni CRA neighborhoods, including Omni, Overtown, Wynwood, and Edgewater; If best efforts to hire from those neighborhoods is unsuccessful hiring may take place from the City, and then the County.

After an initial payment, all payments for the Employment Opportunity grant will be conducted on a reimbursement basis every two weeks pending proof of payment by ACH or Check.

Proper payroll records must be kept during the course of the Microgrant.

The Omni CRA reserves the right to terminate the Grant agreement for convenience at any time.

Employment Microgrant Projected Job Creation Form (Please note additional forms to be completed)

Employment Verification Compliance Form for Job Creation Goals

Job Title	# of positions	Existing/ New Position	Projected/ Actual Hiring Date	Part Time/ Full Time	Hourly Pay Rate
TOTAL					

I certify that the information contained in this form is true and accurate.

Business Name: _____

Certified by: _____
 Signature of Business Owner Title

 Printed Name Date

Omni CRA Business Assistance Microgrant Application

<i>Applicant Contact Information</i>			
Project Business Name			
Contact Name			
Mailing Address			
Telephone			
Fax			
Email			
<i>Corporation Information</i>			
Registered Corporation Name			
Mailing Address			
Corporation Officers & Titles			
Date & State of Incorporation			
Tax ID#			
<i>Project Location & Scope</i>			
Property Owner Name			
Project Address			
Folio#		Year Built	
Total Retail (Sq. Ft.)		Leased Retail (Sq. Ft.)	
Description of the business			
Type of Microgrant Requested (check one)	<input type="checkbox"/> Employment	<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency/ Interruption	<input type="checkbox"/> Building Improvement
Description of Grant Requested			
Estimated Start Date		Estimated Completion Date	

Scope of CRA-Funding Request

Description of Item / Contractor or Supplier		Estimated Cost
1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.
4.	4.	4.
5.	5.	5.
6.	6.	6.
7.	7.	7.
8.	8.	8.
9.	9.	9.
10.	10.	10.
TOTAL		

Acknowledgements

As a current business owner in this community or a business seeking to improve business in this community, I wish to participate in the OMNI CRA BUSINESS ASSISTANCE MICROGRANT. I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Microgrant Grant Program Procedures and will comply with all requirements should I be awarded a grant.

Sign / Print Name of Business Owner

Date

_____ / _____

(if building improvements will be included in scope of grant)

I acknowledge that Tenant, _____ is seeking assistance using the OMNI CRA BUSINESS ASSISTANCE MICROGRANT PROGRAM and that the general terms of their lease conform to the terms above. Should the applicant win a grant award, I understand that funds will be used to make improvements to my property.

Sign / Print Name of Property Owner

Date

_____ / _____