



## 2021 CRA Open Space Improvement Program

Program Guidelines • Procedures • Application

### Program Description:

The ***Omni CRA Open Space Improvement Program*** assists qualified business or property owners with building and property improvements that are directly related to the improvement of underutilized, vacant or blighted property, increasing public access to active and passive green spaces, leasing and temporary activation of undeveloped land, assisting with ADA access, permitting, electrical and plumbing infrastructure on site and eliminating blighting neighborhood conditions in the targeted areas of the Omni CRA. Open Space Improvement 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 agencies.

Funds may not cross Omni CRA District Boundaries and are targeted at specific areas in the Omni CRA Redevelopment Area. This program is a match assistance program requiring a 20% match from the property or business owner. The program has an annual project cap of \$300,000. In addition to the required private match, the grant recipient is responsible for all project costs that exceed \$300,000 provided by the CRA, and should demonstrate capacity to cover those costs. The CRA may recommend and approve funding at a lesser amount than requested. Awards are given subject to the availability of funds and based on priorities outlined below. Funds from this program are paid on a reimbursement basis or directly to the contractors performing the work upon the provision of satisfactory invoices to the CRA. All Grantees requesting grant funding must have at least three estimates from different Florida licensed general contractors for each trade in the scope of work. If the Director deems it necessary for the completion of the project he may choose to waive the match requirement.

### Program Areas and Priorities:

While areas of the Omni CRA have benefitted from recent development and other improvements, vacant lots, underutilized parking lots, and large undeveloped assemblies contribute to a sense of blight and a general aesthetic that is not conducive for residents or businesses to thrive in the community. The COVID-19 Pandemic has made outdoor space more sought after than ever in the Omni CRA. The increase in housing density of new residents and businesses in the neighborhood as well as the large number of buildings permitting dogs makes it a high priority to provide places for these people and animals to recreate and exercise outdoors.

The Omni CRA has prioritized improvements to properties within the limits of the boundaries of the entire Omni CRA district ([see map](#)).

In the Omni CRA, priorities include projects that can use CRA funds to leverage other public and private investments and activate new recreational and outdoor businesses in distressed and developing areas.

A lease should be signed that will allow improvements to exist for Funds will be guaranteed by lien, mortgage or deed covenant tied to the property. All work must meet local neighborhood building/appearance codes and performed with applicable permits and inspections.

## 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. Any improvements should allow the public to access the open space insofar as possible. **Properties which receive Open Space Improvement funds to create open air commercial activity such as outdoor markets should create one full-time or equivalent job for every \$50,000 in awarded grant funds.**

## Completion:

All construction shall be completed within a 10-month period from the date of the first disbursement. Extensions beyond the 10-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.

## 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 and the improvements meet basic criteria for the CRA Open Space Improvement Program.

1. Tenant submits Proposal for improvements - TNT
2. Review Tenant Business Model – CRA
3. Review Improvement Activities funded by the program (Eligible Activities List) – CRA, TNT, PROP
4. Eligible Scope of Work and Budget is Prepared – CRA, TNT, PROP
5. Tenant and Property Owner prepare Application, attach Scope and Budget – TNT, PROP
6. BEFORE pictures are taken – TNT
7. Application is reviewed – CRA
8. Letter of Grant Award or denial is sent to Property Owner and/or tenant – CRA

### B) Contract Process

A Contract outlining all conditions of receiving the grant, scope of work and all insurance requirements. 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 bids) and selects contractor – TNT, PROP & CRA
2. Tenant submits contractor list and copies of estimates to CRA – TNT
3. CRA Prepares Contract with Scope of Work as exhibit – CRA
4. Insurance requirements are documented and approved – TNT, CNTR, SUBS
5. Contract is executed – CRA, TNT, CNTR
6. Work Authorization Form is executed – CRA, TNT, PROP
7. CRA may give 30% to the Contractor to begin the work (This amount is subject to the discretion of the CRA and may be amended)
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, the building permit is 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

## Eligible Improvements:

The general rule of thumb for improvements is that the improvement should *remain with the property or surrounding area*. Where special cases arise, the CRA staff will render a decision. Grant funds cannot be used for Fixtures, Furniture, or Inventory. Generally acceptable improvements include but is not limited to:

- Permit fees
- Painting/Pressure Cleaning
- Signage
- Outdoor Hardscape Improvements (Fountains, Walkways, Pavers, Fencing, etc.)
- Concrete Pads for vending
- Landscaping, including tree planting
- Lighting
- ADA Compliance (Restrooms/Entrances/Pathways)
- Plumbing
- Irrigation
- Electrical
- Other Life/Safety Requirements
- Lease payments (in certain limited circumstances)

## Contractor Requirements:

All Contractors, working in the CRA Open Space Improvement Program including Painters, Awning Companies, Shutter Companies, and Sign Companies must provide copies of the following documents when providing an estimate/bid for the project:

1. Contractor Certificate of Competency or License
2. Contractor's Current Liability Insurance Certificate and Workers Compensation Certificate. If exempt from Workers Comp Contractor must provide copy of exemption for each employee that will be working. **NOTE:** If awarded a contract, both insurances must have the CRA as the Certificate Holder with the address: 1401 N. Miami Ave., Miami FL 33136 and the Liability insurance MUST have the CRA as additional insured
3. Contractor and Manufacturer's Warranty (if applicable)
4. Building permit, Special Permit or Certificate of Compliance (except paint jobs)
5. Release of Lien (provided by CRA or Property Owner or Tenant) NOTARIZED

Recipient will post and maintain in good condition a sign substantially similar to the sign hereto at the entrance of the Premises from the Effective Date (as defined herein) until termination of the improvement.

## Proposal

Please attach a proposal documenting the concept, including renderings, drawings or layout of vacant property; vendors; estimated total costs; hours of operation; to whom project will be catered; mitigation of noise and refuse (if applicable); etc.

**CRA Open Space Improvement Application** *Contact Information*

<b><i>Applicant Contact Information</i></b>			
Business Name			
Contact Name			
Mailing Address			
Telephone			
Email			
<b><i>Property Ownership and Corporation Information</i></b>			
Corporation Name			
Mailing Address			
Corporation Officers & Titles			
Date & State of Incorporation			
Tax ID#			
<b><i>Project Location &amp; Scope</i></b>			
Project Address			
Folio#			
Total Sq. Ft.		Existing use?	
Description of the property			
Grant narrative, including Scope of Work for entire project. (Attach separately if needed)			
Estimated Costs for entire project			
Estimated Start Date		Estimated Completion Date	

**Scope of CRA-Funding Request**

Description of Item	Estimated Cost
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.
6.	6.
7.	7.
8.	8.
9.	9.
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 OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM. I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Program Procedures and will comply with all requirements should I be awarded a grant.

Sign / Print Name of Tenant

Date

\_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

I acknowledge that Tenant, \_\_\_\_\_ is seeking assistance using the OMNI CRA OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENT 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

\_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_