

*City of Pinellas Park's  
Homeowner's Improvement  
Grant Program Guidelines*

**City of Pinellas Park, Florida  
Community Planning Division  
6051 78<sup>th</sup> Avenue North  
Pinellas Park, FL 33781  
(727) 541-0704**

*July 2010*

# Home Improvement Grant Program

The Pinellas Park Homeowner's Improvement Grant Program was established to help property owners within the Community Redevelopment Area address health, safety, and welfare, issues on their property and improve the overall aesthetic character, accessibility and user friendliness of housing units and neighborhoods in the Pinellas Park Community Redevelopment District. The external appearance of homes significantly impacts surrounding property values and the character of neighborhoods.

## Applicant Eligibility

An eligible applicant is a person or household having ownership or leasehold rights to an eligible dwelling within the Redevelopment District. Eligible dwellings are defined as follows:

**DWELLING, SINGLE-FAMILY DETACHED.** A dwelling which is designed for and occupied by not more than one (1) family and surrounded by open space or yards and which is not attached to any other dwelling by any means. This term shall include fixed dwellings, and manufactured home dwellings. (Ord. No. 2177, 11-24-1992)

**DWELLING, DUPLEX.** A dwelling, which is entirely surrounded by open space or yards on the same lot, containing only two (2) dwelling units, each of which is totally separated from the other by an unpierced wall extending from ground to roof or an unpierced ceiling and floor extending from exterior wall to exterior wall, except for a common stairwell exterior to both dwelling units. (Ord. No. 2177, 11-24-1992)

**DWELLING, FIXED.** A dwelling unit built in compliance with the Building Code requirements for a dwelling and permanently attached to a permanent foundation. A modular or manufactured dwelling, that is certified and meets the requirements of the Florida Department of Community Affairs, shall be considered a conventional or fixed dwelling. A manufactured dwelling shall be distinguished from a mobile home, which is defined as manufactured housing built on a chassis. (Ord. No. 2177, 11-24-1992)

Leasehold applicants are required to have written approval, with the property owner's signature. The applicant must identify and document a "NEED". The "Need" may be demonstrated in the following manner:

1. The household income at or below 150% of median income. (Median income as identified in the Urban County Consortium Housing Programs);
2. The applicant having a Debt to Income Ratio of greater than 30% ;
3. The applicant is receiving assistance through one or more County, State, or Federal programs (i.e.: health-care, child-care, unemployment, food stamps etc....); or
4. The applicant is disabled or over 62 years of age and is on a fixed income.

**NOTE:** If an issue arises requiring immediate action and it has been brought to the attention of the City Manager by a Department Administrator, Division Director, or elected official; and the cost to remedy the issue is one thousand dollars (\$1,000) or less; the City Manager (or designee) may authorize, regardless of applicant eligibility, an expenditure of program funds to address the health, safety, and welfare, issues on the property without an applicant match. A signed letter outlining and authorizing the expenditure shall be submitted to the Community Planning Division by the authorizing authority.

### **Eligible Improvements**

Eligible improvements shall include all improvements that address health, safety, and welfare, issues on the property and improve the overall aesthetic character, accessibility and user friendliness of housing units and neighborhoods. Eligible improvements shall also include all improvements that allow for easier access and use of a residential structure for disabled citizens. All improvements shall be made of durable material that is not susceptible to rot and decay. Program funding will not be provided for improvements that are not consistent with the Florida Accessibility Code and/or all City land development and building codes. Program funds may not be used to purchase and replace items previously paid for by this grant.

The applicant must agree to maintain improvements for two (2) years. All recipients of these funds will be required to sign a maintenance agreement for materials installed through this program. When funds are distributed for landscaping improvements, if the City's reclaimed water is available, the property owner must connect to the reclaimed system for irrigation.

Examples of eligible and ineligible activities:

- a. Eligible improvements include, but are not limited to:
  - Exterior Lighting, Post Lights, and Security Lights. (Excludes Low Voltage Lights)
  - Window replacements
  - Driveway improvements
  - Exterior finishes, new siding, etc.
  - Landscaping, irrigation for landscaping, landscape planters, mulching, trees, perennial flower planting
  - Exterior painting
  - Exterior restoration and repair
  - Entrances and doors
  - Sidewalks
  - Demolition (not required by Government)
  - Roof replacement and repairs
  - Structural improvement
  - Porch remodeling
  - Weatherization & Insulation
  - Installation of energy efficient central heat and air (energy star rated)

- Hauling away of materials/debris
- Energy efficiency upgrades (solar heat/water, protective film and other conservation measures)
- Building materials
- Equipment rental (such as saws, ladders, scaffolds, etc.)
- ADA accessibility (see accessibility section)
- Tree Removal
- Sod Purchase and Installation
- Connection to City's reclaimed water (if available)
- Fences
- Land Development Fees for the Building & Zoning Divisions
- Connection and Installation Fees for Potable Water, Sanitary Sewer, and Reclaimed Water

b. Ineligible improvements include, but are not limited to:

- Any interior improvements not addressing accessibility issues
- Improvements and/or expenses prior to grant approval by the Project Review Committee, or City Manager if applicable
- Purchase of tools and equipment (hammers, ladders, etc.)
- Carpets
- Window treatments (drapes, blinds, etc.)
- Furnishings
- Fountains
- Pools
- Storage Sheds

### **Maximum Grant Reimbursement Amount**

These funds are available on a first come, first served basis. The funding schedule will be based on the City's Fiscal Year, which is October 1st to September 30th. Eligible applicants will receive a grant reimbursement of 50% of the total eligible project cost. The maximum amount which can be awarded in a single year shall not exceed three thousand dollars (\$3,000). An individual property (which has not changed ownership) is eligible for a total of six thousand dollars (\$6,000) in improvements over the life of the Program. An applicant must submit separate applications for improvement or set of improvements proposed. An eligible dwelling that was previously funded for the maximum grant award through this program, and comes under new ownership, may apply for matching funds under this program.

The Program will provide matching funds after the improvements have been completed, and the grant requirements have been met. Time spent for work performed by the applicant will not be considered as part of the applicant's matching contribution, but supplies, materials, etc. will be eligible for matching fund reimbursement. If available grant funds are insufficient to meet demand, the remaining eligible applicants on the list will be placed at the beginning of the next fiscal year list.

## **Time Requirements**

Once a project is approved, applicants will have ninety (90) days from award of grant to complete the project and seek reimbursement. A building permit (if required) must be obtained within the first thirty (30) days. Should the project not be completed within the ninety (90) day time frame, the applicant shall file for an extension of thirty (30) days or the grant reimbursement will expire. In order to receive an extension the applicant must demonstrate intent to finish the project to the Project Review Committee or its designee.

## **Application Process**

### Step 1.

Applicant picks up the application package from the City's Community Planning Division, 6051 78<sup>th</sup> Avenue North, or by visiting the City's website at [www.pinellas-park.com](http://www.pinellas-park.com). The package will include all pertinent instructions for completing the application process.

### Step 2.

Applicant returns the completed application to the Community Planning Division. All of the following must be provided with the application:

- ✓ Proof of homeownership or leasehold information with owner's approval
- ✓ Detailed drawings or description of proposed improvements
- ✓ Cost estimates
- ✓ Two (2) bids submitted by licensed contractors (if applicable)
- ✓ Two (2) color photographs depicting the current appearance of each of the proposed eligible improvements

The City can reject any proposed work it deems inconsistent with the grant requirements. City staff will review the application and return any incomplete, inaccurate, or unsigned applications by United States mail to the applicant with an explanation. Insufficient or incomplete applications will not be considered for funding.

### Step 3.

The City will notify the applicant in a letter stating whether the dwelling is eligible for program funds. The applicant may contract for work, or begin the work themselves after receiving the letter. The project must be completed adhering to the application approved by the Project Review Committee, or the City Manager (or designee). The Project Review Committee, or the City Manager (or designee), must approve all changes to an approved project prior to actual construction. Deviations from the project that are not approved by the Project Review Committee, or the City Manager (or designee), will disqualify the applicant from receiving the grant reimbursement.

Step 4.

Improvements must begin within thirty (30) days of project approval.

Step 5.

Once the project is complete, and after final inspection by the City's Building Development Division (if applicable), the applicant must submit evidence to the Community Planning Division that the improvements and payments are complete:

- two (2) color photographs of the completed work
- copy of certificate of completion from Building Development (if applicable)
- appropriate receipts, paid invoices, and cancelled checks

Step 6.

The City's Community Planning Division will then review and inspect the project to be sure the work was completed adhering to the application approved by the Project Review Committee, or the City Manager (or designee). If the project was completed as proposed, within fourteen (14) calendar days a check will be issued to the applicant for the approved match or reimbursement. No grant funding will be issued for projects that are incomplete.

**NOTE:** If an award of grant arises from an issue(s) requiring immediate action as determined by the City Manager (or designee), the application process shall consist of a signed letter from the recommending Department or Division to the City Manager, identifying the issue(s) requiring immediate attention and the suggested course of action. A letter, signed by the City Manager (or designee), outlining and authorizing the expenditure will constitute a grant award and shall be submitted to the Community Planning Division by the authorizing authority.

How disbursement of funds, implementation of remedy, and documentation that the issues, described in the letter from the recommending entity, have been addressed and meet with local codes is expected to differ for each special case; A Letter of Agreement will be developed for each such occurrence.

**Program Considerations**

The following shall be considered when reviewing and acting on project applications:

1. Will the proposal have a positive impact on community standards?
2. Does the proposal compliment surrounding neighborhoods?
3. Will the proposal address deferred maintenance and repairs issues?

4. Does the proposal aesthetic appearance of housing in the Redevelopment District as well as foster pride-in-ownership among the District's residents?
5. Will the proposal improve the accessibility and user friendliness of housing units for disabled citizens?
6. Will health, safety, and welfare issues be addressed?

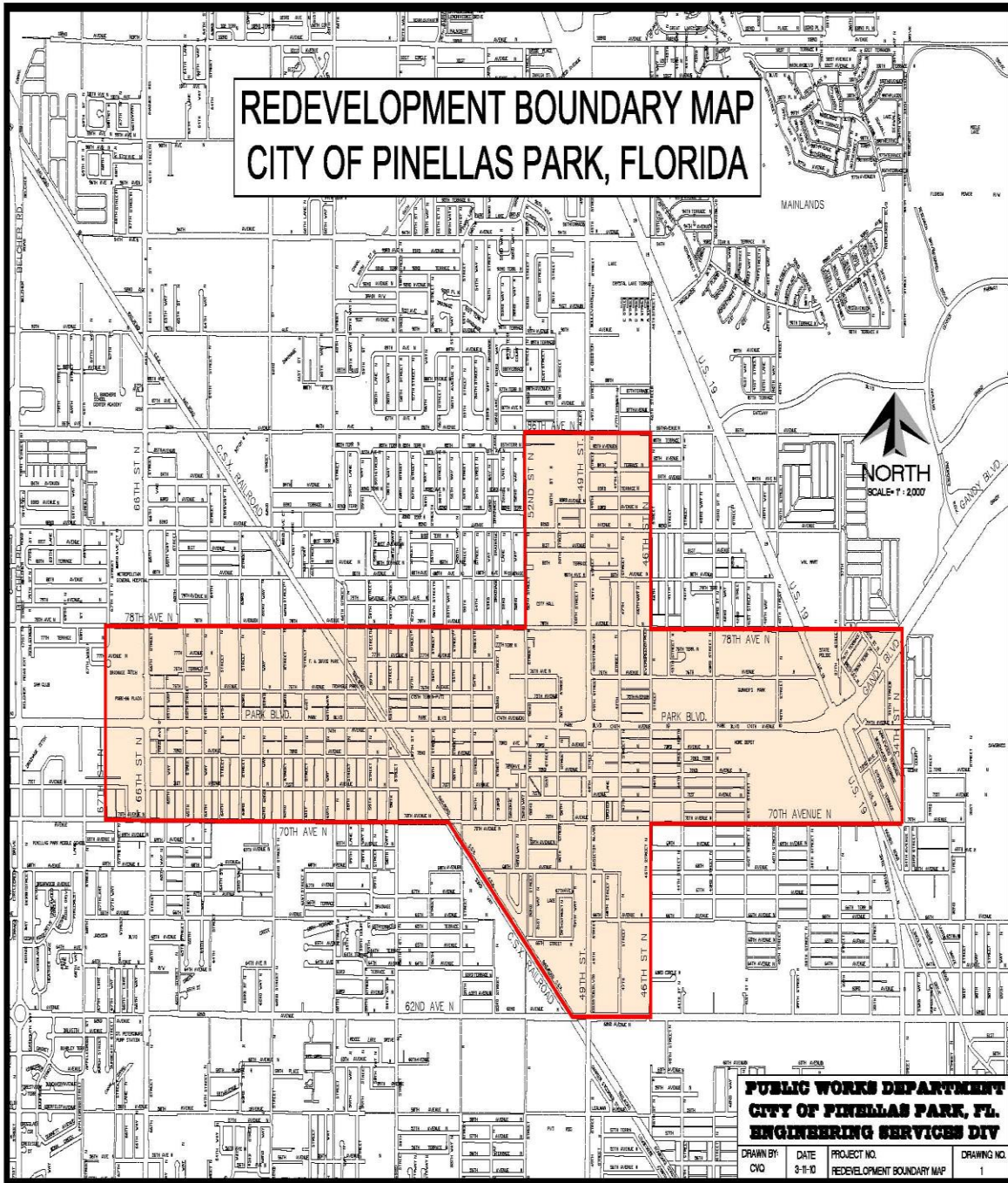
The Project Review Committee or the City Manager (or designee) will not use any other criteria to approve or deny an application other than the required criteria outlined in the Homeowner's Improvement Grant Program Guidelines. The Project Review Committee may approve projects contingent upon specific adjustments to the project.

### **Project Review Committee**

**Membership:** For the duration of the program the Project Review Committee will be chaired by the Community Planning Division Director, and comprised of City staff members as follows: the Zoning Division Director or designee, the Building Development Supervisor or designee, and the City Manager or designee.

**Resources:** City staff will provide the Project Review Committee with appropriate information. The Project Review Committee may request specific information and opinions from staff on building and zoning codes, professional design standards, etc.

# Redevelopment District Boundary Map





**PINELLAS PARK COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT DISTRICT  
HOME IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM APPLICATION**

**MAIL** or bring your application to Pinellas Park Community Planning Division, 6051 78<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Pinellas Park, Florida 33781 **Attention:** Community Planning Division **Telephone #:** (727) 541-0704

APPLICANT/LESSEE

I. Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone (home) \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone (bus.) \_\_\_\_\_

II. PROPERTY OWNER (if difference from above)  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

III. PROJECT SITE  
Property Address: \_\_\_\_\_

IV. PROJECT PROPOSAL (submitted a general description of the work that is being proposed. Use an additional sheet if necessary.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

V. PROJECT BUDGET (submit an itemized budget indicating the total project amount, the amount being requested from the grant program, and the property owner participation.)

Work Item	Owner Match	Requested Funding	Total Cost
TOTAL			

- VI. Required Attachments:
- Two color photographs depicting the current appearance of each proposed improvement
  - Two bids from licensed contractors for the work to be done (if applicable)
  - Detailed drawings or description of the proposed improvements
  - Proof of homeownership or leasehold information with owner's approval
  - Specific cost projections

VII. The Undersigned Applicant Affirms That:

1. The information submitted is true and accurate to the best of my (our) knowledge.
2. I (We) have read and understand the conditions of the Home Improvement Grant Program and agree to abide by its conditions and guidelines.
3. I (We) hereby {\_\_\_\_ give} or {\_\_\_\_ do not give} permission for a representative from the City of Pinellas Park Community Planning Department to access my property for the purpose of taking before and after photographs for my proposed project.

Signature of Applicant(s):

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

VIII. AFFIDAVIT

I (we), the undersigned attest to my (our) ownership of the property located at \_\_\_\_\_ and hereby authorize \_\_\_\_\_, to act as my (our) agent for the limited and express purpose of participating in the Pinellas Park Homeowner's Improvement Grant Program. I (we), have reviewed and approve of the alterations to be made on the property as proposed in the grant application.

The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_ who is personally known to me or who has produced \_\_\_\_\_ as identification and who (did/did not) take an oath.

Title Holder \_\_\_\_\_ Notary Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title Holder \_\_\_\_\_ Notary Public \_\_\_\_\_

Serial Number \_\_\_\_\_

I swear that the information contained in this application to be to the best of my knowledge true and complete. I, the undersigned, do understand and agree to the requirements of the Pinellas Park Community Redevelopment District Homeowner's Improvement Grant Program. Any alteration from the proposed project must be approved by the City Grants Coordinator before work is completed.

Applicant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**(Office Use Only)**

**Project Review Board Approved** \_\_\_\_\_ **Disapproved** \_\_\_\_\_

**Approved Grant Funding Amount** \_\_\_\_\_

**Notes:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_