



CITY of

Pinellas Park

The Heart of Pinellas

Home Improvements Matching Reimbursement Grants

GUIDELINES



Community Development-Community Planning Division

**Technical Services Building
6051 – 78th Avenue, North
Pinellas Park, Florida 33781
Telephone: (727) 369-5848**

“To provide superior yet cost-efficient municipal services to our community through teamwork, a ‘can-do’ attitude, continual improvement, and genuine respect for all people.”

INTRODUCTION

The City of Pinellas Park offers **two** home improvement grant programs to assist owner-occupied residential properties; one for homeowners living within the Community Redevelopment Area (see CRA boundary map included), and the other for Pinellas Park homeowners living outside the CRA. Both programs offer sliding scale funding opportunities based on Pinellas County's 2016 Area Median Income (AMI). **All applicants must meet eligibility criteria in order to qualify for grant funding from the City of Pinellas Park.**

Eligibility Criteria: Applicants must own and occupy the property as their primary residence, live within Pinellas Park city limits, claim 100% homestead exemption, meet established household income limits, be current on all debt secured against the property, have no liens or judgments, and be current on homeowners property insurance and taxes.

HOW TO READ THE INCOME LIMITS CHART: The City's home improvement grant programs count total household income (all residents ages 18 years and older, receiving any kind of income) regardless of whose name is on the deed. Gross income is used to determine eligibility. We also evaluate assets and income earned from assets. Sources of income include W2 wages, 1099 income, self-employment income, social security, SSI, pensions, child support, reoccurring deposits, etc. All sources of income must be disclosed on your application. Maximum grant awards for all income groups are firm.

PERCENTAGE CATEGORY	ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME LIMIT BY NUMBER OF PERSONS IN HOUSEHOLD							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
≤ 50%	< \$20,750	\$23,700	\$26,650	\$29,600	\$32,000	\$34,500	\$36,750	\$39,100
50.01% - 80%	\$33,150	\$37,900	\$42,650	\$47,350	\$51,150	\$54,950	\$58,750	\$62,500
80.01% - 120%	\$49,800	\$58,880	\$63,960	\$71,040	\$76,300	\$83,400	\$88,200	\$93,840
120% ≥	INELIGIBLE FOR CITY HOME IMPROVEMENT GRANT FUNDING							

Grants are awarded on a first come, first served basis and funding is limited. Completed application packets are due into the Technical Services Building, (6051 – 78th Avenue), by 5:00 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month. Applications will be accepted while funds remain available. Late submissions will be considered at the next committee meeting, pending availability of funds.

ASSISTANCE FOR COMPLETING AN APPLICATION IS AVAILABLE BY APPOINTMENT ONLY. PLEASE CALL 727.369.5848 TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT.

GUIDELINES AND CRITERIA

Pinellas Park's home improvement grant programs are designed to provide assistance for Pinellas Park homeowners whose primary residence (single family dwelling) is in need of repair. Financial assistance is available for eligible applicants to address health, safety, and welfare issues on their residential property. The home improvement grant programs are designed to bring the eligible homeowner's property into compliance with the *Florida Building Code, 6th Edition (2017)*, and to reduce ongoing and future maintenance costs, promote energy efficiency, and to preserve decent affordable owner-occupied housing.

Home improvement grants are awarded based on gross annual household income, as noted in the chart on page 1. **Grantees receiving less than 100% of funding will be required to pay for the project in full and submit documentation for reimbursement.** Funds are limited and grants are awarded on a first-come first-serve basis, pending the availability of funds.

All improvement plans and designs must be approved by the City of Pinellas Park **prior** to project start up and the applicant will be responsible for obtaining all required permits. Grant approval **does not** constitute plan approval for permitting purposes. Projects funded through this program may not begin until any/all required building permits have been obtained by the applicant.

Requests for grants will be handled as funds are available; and priority will be given for improvements in the following categories:

- Emergency repairs
- Code violations
- Accessibility modifications

Emergency Repair: Any repair that requires immediate attention (within two business days) to ensure the ongoing health and safety of the occupants, and is not covered under any insurance policy. Examples include, but are not limited to, damage from natural disasters, flooding from leaks, loss of air condition, loss of power, substantial structural damage, and any living condition deemed severely unsafe or unhealthy by City Inspectors.

Code Violations: Any improvement or repair that remedies an existing code violation as defined by the City of Pinellas Park.

Accessibility Modifications: Home changes made to adapt living spaces to meet the needs of one or more residents with physical limitations so that they can continue to live independently and safely. These modifications may include making structural changes to a home.

Availability of Program Funds

Funding for the Home Improvements Reimbursement Matching Grant Programs is based on the City of Pinellas Park's approved budget for each fiscal year, which is October 1st through September 30th. Available funds are limited and not guaranteed to remain consistent from year to year. Grants are awarded based on need and are distributed on a first come first served basis.

Property Eligibility

Improvement grants are available for owner-occupied properties that are located within Pinellas Park's city limits and are 100% homesteaded. Eligible properties are defined as follows:

DWELLING, SINGLE-FAMILY DETACHED: A principal building comprised of a single property unit situated on its own lot and surrounded by open space or yards such that it is not attached to any other property by any means. This term shall include manufactured home properties. (Ordinance No. 3748, § 3, 10-28-2010)

DWELLING, MANUFACTURED HOME. A structure fabricated on or after June 15, 1976, in an off-site manufacturing facility with each section bearing a seal certifying that it is built in compliance with the federal Manufactured Home Construction and Safety Standards Act. When permanently attached to a permanent foundation in compliance with Florida Building Code, a manufactured home shall be considered a conventional property (Ordinance No. 3748, § 3, 1028-2010).

Applicant Eligibility

The applicant must identify and document a "NEED". A "NEED" may be determined based on any of the following criteria:

- 1) The household gross annual income is at or below 120% of Pinellas County's median household income level **(Please refer to the sliding scale chart on page 1)**.
- 2) Any and all County, State, or Federal assistance (i.e. food stamps, unemployment, and/or veteran's assistance) must be reported as income.
- 3) Applicants must be current on mortgage, homeowners insurance, property taxes, and utilities.
- 4) Applicants must carry homeowners insurance on the proposed property.

Ineligibility

- Properties located outside of the City of Pinellas Park's boundaries;
- Persons who cannot verify homestead exemption for the proposed property's improvements may not apply for funding under this grant program.
- Businesses, rental properties, or apartment complexes do not qualify for funding under this grant program.
- Any property that has benefited from the total maximum grant award of \$5,000.00 and has not changed ownership, shall not qualify for new funding for three years.¹

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 persons living in the home. All improvements shall be made of durable material that is not susceptible to

¹ Should an eligible property that was previously funded for the maximum grant award through this program come under new ownership, the new owner may apply for a home improvement grant provided the proposed improvements/modifications are not similar in nature to projects funded through this program in the previous three years (roofs and driveways have a ten-year waiting period).

rot and decay. All home improvements must be consistent with the Florida Accessibility Code, 6th Edition (2017) for Building Construction and/or the City Land Development Code and Florida Building Code Examples of eligible improvements:

- Exterior lighting, Post lights, and Security lights (excludes low voltage lights);
- Window replacements;
- Driveway improvements;
- Exterior finishes, new siding, etc.;
- Irrigation systems for landscaping;
- Exterior painting;
- Entrances and doors;
- Demolition (not required by Government);
- Roof replacement and repairs;
- Structural repairs;
- Weatherization & Insulation;
- Installation of energy efficient central heating and air (energy star rated);
- Energy efficiency upgrades (solar heat/water, protective film and other conservation measures);
- Building materials (as needed for eligible projects);
- Equipment rental (i.e. saws, ladders, scaffolds, cement mixers, etc. [as needed for eligible projects]);
- ADA accessibility projects;
- Sewer pipe replacement;
- Tree removal for trees that are causing damage to the home (roof, utility lines going to the home, cracking of foundation);
- Fences;
- Connection and Installation fees for Potable Water Sanitary Sewer and Reclaimed water;
- Elevation expenses.

Ineligible Improvements

Funds cannot be used towards any repairs, modifications, or improvements that are not considered eligible under these guidelines. Funding from this grant program will not be awarded to property owners whose primary address differs from the proposed project's property. Ineligible improvements include, but are not limited to:

- Program funds may not be used to purchase and replace items previously paid for by this grant program.
- Any/all interior improvements that do not address accessibility issues;
- Improvements and/or expenses made prior to written grant approval by the City;
- Storage sheds of any size or kind;
- Purchase of tools and equipment (hammers, ladders, power tools, etc.);
- Carpets;
- Interior window treatments (drapes, blinds, shades, etc.);

- Furnishings (including indoor and outdoor);
- Fountains, lawn sculptures, bird baths; etc.;
- Pools.

The Grant Review Committee may deny funding for these or other projects deemed not feasible for this grant program.

Maximum Grant Reimbursement Amount

The maximum grant award in a single fiscal year for a project to an eligible applicant shall be **\$5,000.00**. Subsequent home improvement applications may be submitted in following fiscal years for the same eligible property, provided ownership of the property is unchanged and the proposed project is dissimilar from a previously awarded project. The maximum grant funding for subsequent applications is \$2,500.00.

The maximum amount which can be received for an eligible property which does not change ownership is \$7,500.00 over the life of this grant program. An applicant must submit separate applications for each home improvement project; and only one project will be funded during a single fiscal year. Income verification is required for all grant applications.

The Home Improvement Matching Reimbursement grants are implemented using a sliding scale based on the gross annual household income (total income of all persons ages 18 years and older, living in the home). The following table illustrates how the City of Pinellas Park distributes grant funds to awardees:

Income Level	Disbursement of Grant Funds
≤ 50% below Area Median Income	Pinellas Park will fund projects in full up to \$5,000.00. Any expenses exceeding \$5,000.00 are the full responsibility of the homeowner.
50.01 – 80% below Area Median Income	Homeowner pays for the project in full and is reimbursed by Pinellas Park for 75% of the costs, up to and not to exceed, \$5,000.00.
80.01 – 120% of Area Median Income	Homeowner pays for the project in full and is reimbursed by Pinellas Park for 50% of the costs, up to and not to exceed, \$5,000.00.

Should an eligible property that was previously funded for the maximum grant award through this program come under new ownership, the new owner may apply for a Home Improvements Reimbursement Matching grant provided the proposed improvements/modifications are not similar in nature as projects funded through this program in the previous three years (roofs and driveways have a ten-year waiting period).

Submit only complete application packets. Incomplete applications will be returned without review.

1. Obtain two (2) written estimates from contractors licensed within Pinellas County.
2. Read grant criteria to be certain you qualify for the program.
3. Complete application form and budget worksheet in detail.
4. Sign and date all documents. The affidavit must be notarized.
5. Copies of the following documents must be included with your application:
 - A. Proof of Homestead Exemption (available through Pinellas County Property Appraiser)
 - B. Copy of driver license(s) verifying the proposed project site is the applicant and co-applicant's primary residence
 - C. Proof of Homeowners Insurance (submit Declaration page)
 - D. Proof of flood insurance (flood zone applicants only)
 - E. Two (2) most recent months' pay stubs for each household members over 18 years
 - F. Self-employed (only) schedules C, E, or F
 - G. Social Security, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and Disability benefits
 - H. 2017 Federal Tax Return
 - I. Current Pinellas Park utility bill statement
 - J. Copy of most recent mortgage statement showing that payments are current
 - K. Two (2) or more color photographs clearly depicting the current conditions of the proposed project's improvement area
6. Submit complete application packets to the City's Community Planning Division by the monthly due date (5:00 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month). Applicants may schedule an appointment with the Community Services Technician (727.369.5848) to review the application packet for completeness prior to submitting the application.
7. Complete applications are reviewed by a committee of City staff appointed by the City Manager and includes: the City Manager, Assistant City Manager and staff representatives from the Community Development Department (Building, Planning, and Zoning), Neighborhood Services, and the Community Policing Unit. Committee members meet monthly, with the exception of December. Grants received during December will be reviewed at the January meeting.

The Review Committee will determine whether the project should receive a grant and determine the amount of the award. In making the decision, the committee will consider the following factors and may give priority to projects that meet the following criteria:

- Does the proposed project meet an accessibility need of the homeowner or resident of the property?
- Will the project rectify code violations?
- Will the grant result in an improvement that would not be made otherwise?
- Does the project comply with the City's land development and zoning codes and ordinances?

Applicants will be notified by telephone of incompleteness, inaccuracies, or unsigned forms within their application and provided an opportunity to make corrections. Applicants may schedule an appointment to pick up incomplete applications or they will be mailed to the address of the proposed project. Incomplete applications will not be considered for funding. The City reserves the right to deny any project that does not align with the Grant Program's Guidelines. Applications submitted after the deadline may be reviewed with applications at the next month's review, pending availability of funds.

Grant awardees will be notified in writing. The award letter will include the amount of funding from the City and the approved startup and deadline dates for project implementation.

Awarded Project Process and Time-frame

It is the homeowner's responsibility to ensure that all work is permitted from the Building Development Division; and that all work is in compliance with the applicable codes and ordinances. Failure to do so will result in the termination of the grant award and no funds will be issued from the City.

The scope of work for the awarded project may begin on the date of the award letter, and **must** begin within thirty (30) days. This includes securing any/all building permits required by the City.

Awardees will have 120 days from the startup date to complete the project. The deadline date will be shown on the bottom of the award letter. In the event of unforeseen issues, it is the awardee's responsibility to contact the Community Services Manager of any unforeseen issues that may keep the project from being completed by the deadline. Grant awardees must submit in writing, to the City, a request for extension within no less than one (1) month prior to the closeout date. Failure to contact the City to request an extension will result in termination of the grant award.

Completion of Project – Reporting

Final Inspections: All completed projects must be approved by a Community Development Inspector.

Prior to disbursement of funding, the awardee shall submit to the Community Planning Division:

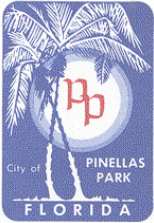
- A. A *Work Completion Verification Form* (included with the award letter).
- B. Please paper clip (**do not staple**) copies of invoice(s), receipts, canceled checks or credit card statements, and final permits and inspections that apply only to the funded project.
- C. A minimum of two (2) color photographs depicting the completed project.

Authorization of Payment

City staff will determine that all aspects of the agreement have been met and will submit a payment request to the Accounting Division. A check will be made payable to the awardee, generally within two (2) weeks of the request. Reimbursement checks will be sent to the address where the improvements were made. In lieu of checks being mailed, arrangements can be made for awardees to pick up their checks by contacting the Community Planning Division at 727.369.5848.

Promotion of Project

The City of Pinellas Park reserves the right to use pictures, renderings, video footage, or descriptions of the work for any promotional purpose.



OFFICE USE ONLY
 Date Received _____
 Staff Initials _____

CITY OF PINELLAS PARK

HOME IMPROVEMENT MATCHING REIMBURSEMENT GRANT PROGRAM

APPLICATION FORM

SECTION A: Personal Information

Applicant/Homeowner Full Name: _____

Co-Applicant/Co-Homeowner Name: _____

Address (Proposed Project Site): _____
 (Full Street Address including Zip Code)

Primary Telephone Number: _____ **Secondary Number:** _____

Applicant's Email: _____

- Is this the Applicant's primary Residence? YES NO
 Describe the type of dwelling: Single-Family, Detached Duplex Manufactured Home
 Year the home was built: _____
 Is the mortgage on this property current? YES NO
 Are the property taxes current? YES NO
 Are there any liens against this property? YES NO
 Do you have Homeowner's insurance? YES NO (Include a copy of the Declaration page)

SECTION B: Financial Information

The City's home improvement grant programs count total household income (all residents ages 18 years and older, receiving any kind of income) regardless of whose name is on the deed. Gross income is used to determine eligibility. We also evaluate assets and income earned from assets. Sources of income include W2 wages, 1099 income, self-employment income, social security, SSI, pensions, child support, reoccurring deposits, etc. All sources of income must be disclosed on your application. Maximum grant amounts for all income groups are firm.

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80.01% - 120%	\$49,800	\$56,880	\$63,960	\$71,040	\$76,300	\$83,400	\$88,200	\$93,840
120% ≥	INELIGIBLE FOR CITY HOME IMPROVEMENT GRANT FUNDING							

APPLICATION CONTINUES ON PAGE 2

Please complete the following financial information:

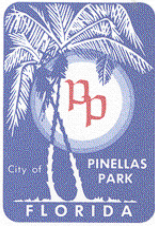
ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME (ALL household income must be reported.)		
INCOME	ANNUAL GROSS	SOURCE OF INCOME (Wages, Social Security, SSI, etc.)
Applicant/Homeowner	\$	
Co-applicant//Co-Homeowner	\$	
All other household income	\$	
Total	\$	

ASSETS – Refer to last page for ASSET Inclusions & Exclusions			
Household Member's Name	Asset Description	Current Cash Value of Combined Assets	Actual Income from Assets
Net Cash Value of Assets.....		\$	
Total Actual Income from Assets.....			\$

SECTION C: Project Description

Describe the repair for which you are requesting a grant.

APPLICATION CONTINUES ON PAGE 3



City of Pinellas Park
Home Improvements Matching Reimbursement Grant Programs
Budget Form

Applicant's Name: _____

Property Address: _____
 (Site where purposed improvements will take place)

BUDGET WORKSHEET

Line Item	Requested Amount from the City	Amount of Matching Dollars	Total
Contractual Services			
Labor			
Equipment (windows, bike racks, benches, doors, etc.)			
Materials (paint, plants, mulch, etc.)			
Signage			
Other (Please Explain)			
TOTAL			

Budget Details

CITY OF PIENLLAS PARK

AFFIDAVIT AND RELEASE

The undersigned applies to participate in the Home Improvement Matching Reimbursement Grant Program indicated in this application. I (We) attest to ownership of the property on this application and that it serves as my (our) primary residence. The City of Pinellas Park is not responsible for any damage, and I/We the undersigned release and hold harmless the City from any and all liabilities to myself/ourselves and personal property. The undersigned further understands that all statements made in this application are true and made for the purposes of participating in this Home Improvement Matching Reimbursement Grant Program. The undersigned warrants that all income from every person in the household is accurately listed on this application. Verification may be obtained from any source named in the application.

Applicant Signature

Co-Applicant Signature

Print Full Name

Print Full name

Date

Date

STATE OF FLORIDA)

COUNTY OF PINELLAS)

The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me this _____ day of _____, 20____. By

_____.

Personally known

Personal Identification: Driver's License/State ID/ Passport

Notary Public Signature
Stamp/Seal

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

If an item is not applicable, indicate with N/A.

Incomplete application will not be considered for funding.

- _____ Application completed in full. (Signed and all questions answered)
- _____ Completed Budget Worksheet
- _____ Affidavit signed and notarized
- _____ Two (2) written estimates from licensed contractors
- _____ Proof of Homestead exemption
- _____ Copy of drivers license(s)
- _____ Proof of Homeowner's insurance
- _____ Proof of flood insurance (if property is in a flood zone)
- _____ Two (2) most recent months' pay stubs for each household member over 18 years
- _____ Self-employed (only) schedules C, E, or F
- _____ Social Security, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and Disability benefits
- _____ 2016 Federal Tax Return (1040 and any schedules)
- _____ Current Pinellas Park utility bill statement
- _____ Copy of most recent mortgage statement showing that payments are current
- _____ Two (2) or more color photographs clearly depicting the current conditions of the proposed Project's improvement area.

ASSET INCLUSIONS AND EXCLUSIONS

INCLUSIONS: IF YOU OWN ANY OF THE FOLLOWING LIST THEM AS ASSETS ON PAGE 2 OF THE APPLICATION

1. Cash held in savings accounts, checking accounts, safe deposit boxes, homes, etc. For savings accounts, use the current balance. For checking accounts, use the average 6-month balance.
2. Cash value of revocable trusts available to the applicant.
3. Equity in rental property or other capital investments. Equity is the estimated current market value of the asset less the unpaid balance on all loans secured by the asset and all reasonable costs (e.g. broker fees) that would be incurred in selling the asset. The applicant's primary residence is not considered.
4. Cash value of stocks, bonds, Treasury bills, certificates of deposit and money market accounts.
5. Individual retirement and Keogh accounts (even though withdrawal would result in a penalty).
6. Retirement and pension funds.
7. Personal property held as an investment such as gems, jewelry, coin collections, antique cars, etc.
8. Mortgage or deeds of trust held by an applicant.

EXCLUSIONS: THE FOLLOWING ARE NOT CONSIDERED ASSETS AND ARE EXCLUDED:

1. Necessary personal property, except as noted in number 7 of Inclusions, such as clothing, furniture, cars and vehicles specially equipped for persons with disabilities.
2. Assets not effectively owned by the applicant. That is, when assets are held in an individual's name, but the assets and any income they earn accrue to the benefit of someone else who is not a member of the household and that other person is responsible for income taxes incurred on income generated by the asset.
3. Equity in cooperatives in which the family lives.
4. Assets not accessible to and that provide no income for the applicant or any household members.
5. Assets that are part of an active business. "**Business**" does not include rental of properties that are held as an investment and not a main occupation.