

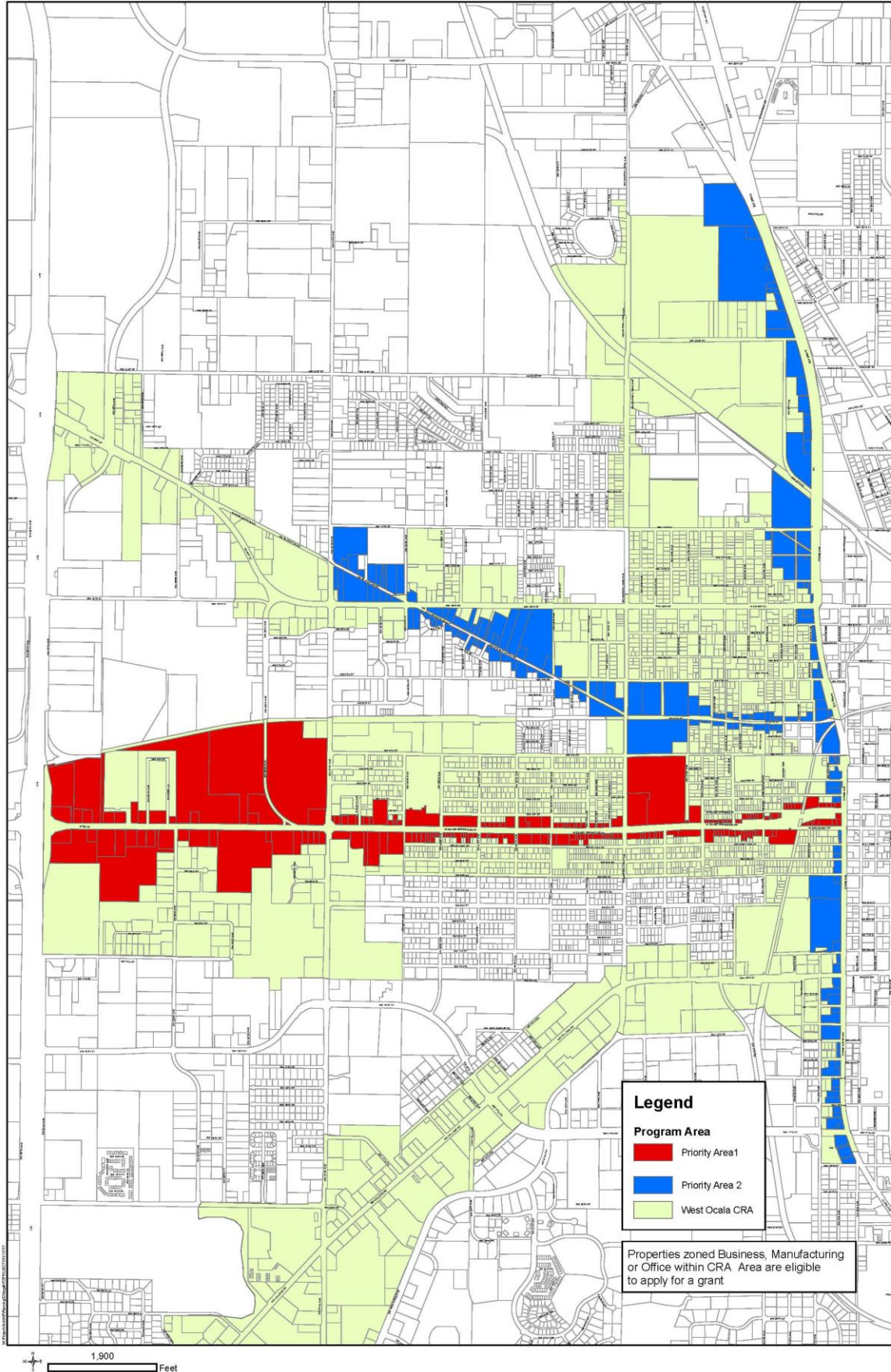
WEST OCALA CRA SUBAREA COMMERCIAL PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM SUMMARY

April 2025

Eligible Area	West Ocala CRA See Map. Target Area Priorities in West Ocala CRA – <u>Priorities</u> 1st = SR 40 corridor; 2nd = US 27 east of NW 27th Ave; US 441; 3rd = all other areas
Eligible Businesses	New & existing businesses; Retail, office, industrial, general business & non-profit organizations
Eligible applicant	Property owner or business owner
Eligible Building Type	1. Existing buildings 2. New construction
Eligible Property Type	Taxable ad valorem properties only. Properties must be in one of the following <u>Zoning Districts allowing for commercial uses such as Business, Manufacturing, or Office.</u>
Ineligible Properties	Tax delinquent property; property in litigation; property in condemnation or receivership; property or tenants with outstanding financial obligations to City require City Council approval
Eligible work	<u>Priority work elements are:</u> 1. Vacant bldg. being converted to active use 2. ADA Accessibility 3. Removal of bars from doors & windows 4. Security systems incl. lighting, cameras and fencing 5. Façade improvements (visible from street) incl. doors, windows and signage 6. Demolitions 7. Creation of new surface parking lot 8. New construction (On vacant property)
Ineligible work	Grant cannot be used to correct outstanding code violations in an active code enforcement case. Routine maintenance procedures, such as painting or minor repairs to existing materials alone, may not be eligible for a grant, but will be eligible as a component of a larger project. Only work begun <u>after</u> approval by the Ocala CRA (CRA) will be eligible for a grant. Work in progress or performed before approval will not be eligible. Reroofing,

Maximum Grant	\$50,000
Required Match	3:1; City (75%) – Applicant (25%)
Design Guidelines	See attached
Ineligible Businesses	The following business do not fit the vision for the West Ocala CRA and Community Plan and as such are not eligible for the grant. • Adult Oriented Businesses • Tattoo Parlors / Shops • Bail / Bonds • Check Cashing Service • Pawn Shops • Bars; bars as part of restaurant are permissible but restaurant must be primary business • Electronic or Vapor Cigarette Store

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WEST OCALA COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AREA COMMERICAL BUILDING IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM DESIGN GUIDELINES

The Design Guidelines outline the standards that should be followed. These guidelines take into consideration a building's historic and cultural significance (regardless of age) in determining an appropriate design solution to the renovation. All improvements are subject to committee approval.

The Façade

The façade is the entire exposed exterior surface of a building that fronts a public street and contains the building's principle entrance. A façade, not containing the main entrance, but fronting a public street exposed to public view will be considered a secondary façade. Secondary façades are also eligible for grants. Rear or side façades that are viewable from a public street or pedestrian walkway are also eligible for a grant.

Storefronts

When alterations are made to the first floor of buildings that currently have closed-up or opaque storefronts, the Grant Program will usually require that the storefront be restored to its original condition of a more open façade. Opaque or permanently enclosed storefronts are not encouraged, nor are window treatments that significantly decrease the amount of original window space. All damaged or otherwise deteriorated elements of storefronts, display windows, entrances, upper facades or signs should be repaired or replaced to match or be compatible with the original materials and design of the building. Buildings that are an integral element of the traditional streetscape should reflect and complement the character of surrounding area to the greatest extent possible.

Masonry

Unpainted brick, stone, or terra cotta should not be painted or clad with other materials. If it is necessary to remove paint or clean unpainted masonry, the gentlest method should be used to do so. Sandblasting and other abrasive cleaning methods should be avoided due to the damage they can cause to masonry.

Defective mortar should be re-pointed by duplicating the original mortar. Deteriorated masonry should be replaced with new masonry that duplicates the old masonry material as closely as possible.

Windows

Windows are very visible from the public right-of-way and should be restored when possible. Creating additional openings, enlarging or reducing window opening sizes and filling openings should be avoided but when necessary, they should maintain the character of the building. The window style and glazing configuration should be appropriate for the style of the building.

Trim & Ornamentation

All structural and decorative elements of eligible façades should be repaired or replaced to match or become compatible with the original materials and design of the building to the greatest extent possible. This includes, but is not limited to, window caps, carved stonework, ornamental plaques and cornices. Murals are eligible improvements to larger projects.

Signs

Signs are not eligible for a sign-only grant but may be included as an integral part of a larger project. When included on the façade of the building, signage should complement the architecture of the building and surrounding buildings. The following types of signage will be considered for grant funding:

- (a) Display Window Lettering – storefront signage in which the lettering is painted or etched into the interior side of display windows and glazed entry doors. These signs typically consist of lettering and/or a logo, and do not cover more than 1/5 of the glass panel.
- (b) Transom Signs – made of leaded glass letters that are built into the transom above the storefront display window or door.
- (c) Neon signs – only those neon signs that were original to the building or a new sign that would complement an older storefront typically found in post 1920s commercial buildings are eligible for grant funding.
- (d) Other sign types that the applicant can show to be integral parts of the façade renovation will be considered for grant funding. Suggested examples of other preferred sign types include:
 - a. Hanging signs – over sidewalk, often from awnings. Frequently seen in historic Mainstreet communities.



- b. Projecting Signs – Project off of the building



- c. Pinned Letters – appropriately lit, individually placed lettering.



* Signage that is to be replaced to satisfy code compliance issues will not be funded.

Security Gates and Bars

Permanently attached or retractable security gates and bars are typically not in keeping with the character of the building and create an impression that the area is unsafe, and will ultimately hurt business. For that reason, they are discouraged and will not be funded. Less obtrusive methods are preferred.

Exterior Elements

Existing fire escapes, ladders, standpipes, vents, etc, should be painted to blend with the wall on which they are mounted. Repairs to such elements will be considered for funding if a part of a larger project. Awnings, exterior lighting and electrical fixtures should maintain the style of the building and highlight the buildings architectural elements without being overbearing. Storm water system improvements will be eligible as part of a larger project. Improvements include but are not limited to gutters and drains.

Landscaping and Fencing

In some projects landscaping and fencing will be considered if part of a larger project. Fencing will be considered only if the fence has extraordinary architectural character such as wrought iron fence with masonry piers. Common fences such as stockade, board-on-batten, picket and chain link would not be eligible for a grant. Planters and retaining walls should be built of a material, which complement the materials of the adjacent buildings.

Parking Lots

Improvements to an existing parking lot are considered to be additional elements, such as lighting, fencing, gates, benches, bus stops, bicycle racks, etc. that are not required by City Code. Repaving, restriping, maintaining the required landscaping or repairing/replacing wheel stops are considered ordinary repair and maintenance of a parking lot and are therefore not eligible for funding.

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