



# Community Development Department

108 E. Proctor Street  
Carson City, Nevada 89701  
(775) 887-2180 – Hearing Impaired: 711

Date: October 31, 2016 ITEM 5.5

To: Redevelopment Authority Citizens Committee  
Meeting of November 7, 2016

From: Lee Plemel, Director

Subject: Possible action to make recommendations to the Redevelopment Authority regarding amendments to the Redevelopment Façade Improvement Program to clarify eligible and ineligible improvements.

**RECOMMENDED RACC MOTION:** I move to recommend to the Redevelopment Authority amending Section 2 of the Redevelopment Façade Improvement Program requirements, to read as follows:

- Ineligible Properties: Ineligible properties include properties already receiving tax incentives or other financial incentives from the City, residentially-zoned properties, buildings that were constructed **or have had façade improvements completed** within the last five years, properties for which property taxes are owed and not paid up to date, ~~and~~ properties with outstanding or unresolved code enforcement issues, **and properties on which construction of the proposed improvements have already been started.***

And I move to recommend amending Section 3 of the Redevelopment Façade Improvement Program requirements, to read as follows:

- Eligible Improvements: All exterior building façade and **wall** signage updating and maintenance, including but not limited to painting, lighting, awnings, doors, fascia, and other decorative elements are eligible to receive Façade Improvement Program funds. **Freestanding signs, roof decking material, landscaping, paving and other improvements not affixed to the building are is-not an-eligible expenses.** **For the purposes of this policy, exterior building façade includes all portions of a building, excluding the roof, visible from the public right-of-way or on-site parking lot.***

## DISCUSSION:

The Redevelopment Authority/Board of Supervisors approved the Façade Improvement Program (FIP) on May 3, 2016, and allocated \$200,000 for the program through Fiscal Year 2016-17. To date, \$198,475 has been awarded to façade improvement projects.

Through the application review process, several questions have come up from various RACC members regarding the eligibility of certain requested improvements. These various issues are

captured in the applicable policy sections in the recommended motion, above. Staff acknowledges that there has not necessarily been a consensus among RACC members regarding the proper interpretation of the policies and/or the intent of the policies. The RACC may discuss the individual components of the proposed changes and adjust the recommended motion, accordingly. Following is an analysis of the issues that have been raised that are addressed in the recommended amendments.

Ineligible properties – One application was received by RACC for which construction had already started. The RACC denied the application based largely upon the belief that the intent of the program is to stimulate new improvements, particularly those improvements that would otherwise not occur without the financial assistance. The recommended change to Section 2 would clarify that properties on which the construction of the proposed improvements have already been started are ineligible.

Freestanding signs – Another application involved the replacement of a freestanding sign on South Carson Street. A majority of the RACC voted to deny the application, primarily based on the belief that it was not the intent of the program policies to fund freestanding signs as a “façade” improvement. Staff’s recommended verbiage in Section 3 would clarify that freestanding signs are not eligible improvements. Alternatively, the RACC may determine freestanding signs should be included as eligible improvements and modify the policy to expressly include them as eligible.

Roofs – The RACC approved one application for a re-roof based on the fact that the roof was a visible element of the building façade (and was in dire need of repair). However, this application also led to debate on whether or not roofs should be included as eligible building façade improvements. Regardless of past interpretation, staff recommends eliminating re-roofing as an eligible program improvement. The façade improvement program has proven successful in that the available funds have been allocated, and there are many opportunities for additional improvements that do not include re-roofing.

Other ineligible “non-façade” improvements – Staff’s recommended amendment would include a clarification that landscaping, paving and other improvements not affixed to the building” are not eligible improvements.

Defining “building façade” – Completing the eligibility clarifications in addition to those noted above, staff recommends clarifying the definition of building façade for the purposes of the Façade Improvement Program to include “all portions of a building, excluding the roof, visible from the public right-of-way or on-site parking lot.” A façade, as it relates to architecture, can be defined as: 1) The front of a building, especially an imposing or decorative one; or 2) any side of a building facing a public way or space and finished accordingly. The goal of the program is to improve the appearance of buildings. To accomplish this, all portions of the building that are visible from public areas should be included.

The RACC may consider other recommendations to clarify these issues. Staff will bring the recommendations to the Redevelopment Authority/Board of Supervisors in December or January. If you have any questions regarding the Façade Improvement Program, please contact Lee Plemel at 283-7075 or [lplemel@carson.org](mailto:lplemel@carson.org).

Attachments:

1. Façade Improvement Program Resolution

**RESOLUTION NO. 2016-R-22 and 2016-RA-R-3**

**A RESOLUTION AMENDING RESOLUTION 2016-RAR-2 AND 2016-R-3 TO CONTINUE THE CARSON CITY REDEVELOPMENT FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM FOR REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT AREAS 1 AND 2 AND AMEND PROVISIONS RELATED TO PROJECT BIDDING REQUIREMENTS**

**WHEREAS**, a stated objective of the Redevelopment Area 1 Plan is to improve the appearance of commercial areas through building rehabilitation, and

**WHEREAS**, strategies in the Redevelopment Area 2 Plan include engaging the business owners in the revitalization process and assisting in the reuse of vacant buildings; and

**WHEREAS**, the Carson City Redevelopment Authority and Board of Supervisors desire to create an incentive program to be an integral part of Carson City's private-public partnership initiatives to retain and expand businesses in Carson City; and

**WHEREAS**, this program is designed to stimulate investment in properties and improve the desirability of properties within Redevelopment Areas 1 and 2 by improving the exterior appearance of buildings.

**NOW THEREFORE**, the Carson City Redevelopment Authority and Board of Supervisors do hereby resolve to establish the Carson City Redevelopment Façade Improvement Program for Redevelopment Project Areas 1 and 2, which includes the following guidelines.

1. Eligible Properties: All commercial properties within Redevelopment Areas 1 and 2 are eligible to apply for Façade Improvement Program funds.
2. Ineligible Properties: Ineligible properties include properties already receiving tax incentives or other financial incentives from the City, residentially-zoned properties, buildings that were constructed within the last five years, properties for which property taxes are owed and not paid up to date, and properties with outstanding or unresolved code enforcement issues.
3. Eligible Improvements: All exterior building façade and signage updating and maintenance, including but not limited to painting, lighting, awnings, doors, fascia, and other decorative elements are eligible to receive Façade Improvement Program funds. Landscaping is not an eligible expense.
4. Maximum Façade Improvement Program Funding: The maximum Façade Improvement Program funding that may be awarded is \$25,000 per individual Assessor's Parcel Number, subject to authorization of Program funding by the Board of Supervisors.
5. Required Property Owner Matching Funds: The property owner shall pay a minimum of 50% of the total project costs. Total project cost includes construction and all

expenses incurred in the preparation and permitting of plans for the improvements, including building permit fees, design work, and construction drawings.

6. Façade Improvement Program Application Review Process:

- A. The Redevelopment Authority Citizens Committee (RACC) shall review and have final decision authority on all Façade Improvement Program applications.
- B. Initial applications are due April 15, 2016, to be reviewed by the RACC on May 2, 2016, for the available FY 2015-16 funding and FY 2016-17 funding. In subsequent years, applications will be accepted through April 15 each year for review by the RACC at its first regular meeting in May for available funding the following Fiscal Year beginning July 1. If available funding is not fully used in any given application review cycle, applications will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis until available, budgeted funding is exhausted.
- C. Façade Improvement Program applications must include plans meeting commercial building permit standards showing all proposed improvements.
- D. Decisions of the RACC regarding Façade Improvement Program applications may be appealed to the Redevelopment Authority provided that such appeal is made within 7 days of the RACC's decision. Only Façade Improvement Program applicants affected by the RACC's decision have standing to appeal.
- E. The property owner shall sign the application consenting to the proposed improvements and all applicable requirements of the Façade Improvement Program.

7. Reimbursement of Redevelopment Funds: Façade Improvement Program funds shall be awarded as a grant, with no reimbursement required, provided that the property is not sold within 12 months of the completion of the façade improvements for which the grant was awarded. If the property is sold within 12 months of the completion of the façade improvements for which the grant was awarded, the property owner shall be responsible to pay back 100% of the Façade Improvement Program funds awarded by Carson City.

8. Compliance with Development Standards:

- A. All improvements shall be reviewed pursuant to and comply with the Carson City Development Standards Division 1.1, Architectural Design, as applicable to the proposed improvements.
- B. Improvements to buildings within the Downtown Mixed-Use (DTMU) zoning district shall comply with the DTMU Development Standards, Division 6.6, 6.6.2, Lighting, 6.6.3, Signage, 6.6.10, Building Design and Character, and

6.6.11, Guidelines for the Renovation and Restoration of Existing Structures, as applicable to the proposed improvements.

9. Commitment Agreement: Each participant in the Façade Improvement Program must execute and record a document agreeing to reimburse the City 100% of the awarded Façade Improvement Program funds if the property is sold within 12 months of the completion of the façade improvements for which the grant was awarded. The agreement shall be in the form as required by the City.

10. Reimbursement Process:

- A. Payments from the City shall be made on reimbursement-basis only at a rate of no more than 50% of the actual expenses incurred by the property owner up to the total amount of funds approved.
- B. For façade improvement projects that equal or exceed a total cost of \$10,000, reimbursement may be made in a maximum of two payments. The first payment may be requested for up to 50% of the approved Façade Improvement Program funds only after expenses have been incurred by the applicant equaling or exceeding 50% of the total project costs. The final reimbursement payment shall only be made upon completion and final inspection approval of the proposed improvements.
- C. Reimbursement for projects that are less than \$10,000 in total costs shall be provided in a one-time payment only after improvements have been completed and have received final inspection approvals.
- D. Applicants who receive funding must document all expenditures and provide the Community Development Department with proof of payment (receipts, paid invoices, etc.) for all eligible improvements, including costs associated with the property owner's required match, within 30 days of project completion.

11. Project Bidding Requirements:

- A. Applicants are responsible for obtaining three bids or competitive quotes for the proposed work. All contractors must be registered and bonded by the State of Nevada and licensed to perform the applicable work in Carson City.
- B. Approved projects will be based on the lowest of the three bids. The applicant may select any of the three bidders to complete the improvements, but the applicant will be responsible for costs in excess of the lowest bid.
- C. Construction contracts will be between the applicant and contractor. The contractor must obtain all required permits prior to commencing construction.
- D. Applicants shall make every attempt to get the required number of bids for the work to be completed. However, the RACC shall have authority to waive this

requirement depending on but not limited to the following conditions: market trends, lack of qualified vendors, timing of application submittals, or other applicable conditions.

- E. Notwithstanding the provisions above, a property owner/applicant who is also a contractor and will be the contractor for the proposed façade improvements shall not be required to obtain three bids but shall be responsible for obtaining and submitting a written contractor's or subcontractor's bid detailing by line item the description and cost for each item of work to be completed. All contractors must be registered, licensed and bonded in the State of Nevada and licensed to perform the applicable work in Carson City.

- 12. Completion of Façade Improvements: Improvements for which Façade Improvement Program funds are awarded must be completed within 180 days of application approval or the beginning of the Fiscal Year from which the funds are awarded, whichever occurs later.

Upon motion by Supervisor Brad Bonkowski, seconded by Supervisor Karen Abowd, the foregoing Resolution No. 2016-R-22 was passed and adopted this 18<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2016, by the following vote:

AYES: Supervisor Brad Bonkowski  
Supervisor Karen Abowd  
Supervisor Lori Bagwell  
Supervisor Jim Shirk  
Mayor Robert Crowell

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None.

  
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ROBERT L. CROWELL, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
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SUSAN MERRIWETHER, Clerk-Recorder

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Upon motion by Member Brad Bonkowski, seconded by Member Lori Bagwell, the foregoing Resolution No. 2016-RA-R-3 was passed and adopted this 18<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2016, by the following vote:

AYES:           Member Brad Bonkowski  
                  Member Lori Bagwell  
                  Member Robert Crowell  
                  Vice Chair Jim Shirk  
                  Chair Karen Abowd

NAYS:           None

ABSENT:       None

ABSTAIN:      None.

  
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KAREN ABOWD, Redevelopment Authority Chair

ATTEST:

  
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SUSAN MERRIWETHER, Clerk - Recorder