

Revised January 10, 2014
Downtown Jacksonville Retail Enhancement Plan

The Downtown Investment Authority (DIA) is a governing body for the Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) established by the City of Jacksonville. It was formed to revitalize and preserve downtown property values and prevent deterioration in the downtown business district. The DIA supports the City of Jacksonville's Community Redevelopment Area's (CRA) revitalization objectives and through community workshops and input from numerous stakeholders, has determined that retail and restaurant recruitment and creative office (such as business incubation, education/academia, information technology offices, art galleries and entertainment themed businesses) space is a priority within the Northbank Core Business District. The Northbank Core Business District is shown on the map attached hereto and is located within the Northbank Special Taxing District of the DIA.

The Downtown Retail Enhancement Plan is designed to create momentum in the critical task of recruiting and retaining restaurant and retail businesses and creative office space in to the Northbank Core Business District. The project must be consistent with the Downtown Master Plan and the Downtown Zoning Overlay. In the first phase of the plan, the DIA will allocate (The Program/Plan amount - \$750,000) in recoverable grants to any property or business owner with qualified projects to help pay some costs associated with renovating or preparing commercial space for retail, salon, restaurant, gallery or similar for occupancy as identified above. Funds may be used to retain existing businesses or to recruit new businesses to the Northbank Core Business District. The following identifies specific goals for the program:

- Expand the local property tax base by simulating new investment in older, Downtown properties;
- Expand state and local sales tax base by increasing sales for new or existing shops;
- Decrease renovation costs incurred for modernizing retail space in older, commercial properties in the Northbank Core Business District;
- Attract new businesses to Downtown;
- Retain existing businesses in Downtown.

To advance recruitment and marketability, the recoverable grant provides an incentive to improve the interior appearance and utility of street level storefronts. The premise is that an attractive interior and exterior building design will attract retail and restaurant owners and draw customers.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS:

The DIA has set aside certain limited funds for the Downtown Retail Enhancement District program. The following parameters will guide the DIA in awarding funds through the Grant program:

- Projects must be within the area as designated in the attached map.
- Remodeling, renovation, rehabilitation, installation, and additions to the interior and exterior of the commercial building are eligible for grant funds. The funds are for modification and improvement of the building and not for normal maintenance or repair.
- Mixed-use projects improving multiple floors can qualify for funds; provided the ground floor will be used for retail and renovations to the ground floor are part of the project renovation scope.
- Generally, renovation projects must exceed \$10,000 before DIA will consider the project for grant funding.
- Maximum grant award \$20 for every square foot leased or occupied by the proposed tenant or business. The amount of incentive dollars awarded shall not exceed 50% of the total construction costs.
- Grants must create or retain two or more full time equivalent jobs.
- Existing retailers who need to modernize the location or business owners at the end of their lease term who are considering moving from Downtown can qualify for grant funds.
- Applicants proposing to use Grant funds to help relocate from one Downtown building to another are not eligible to receive program funds unless the proposed move is necessary for business expansion that includes job creation, involuntary displacement from current space that is unrelated to financial or operating disputes, or similar circumstances.
- Applicants proposing to construct new buildings are not eligible to receive program funds.
- Eligible grant expenditures include:
 - Interior demolition or site preparation costs as part of a comprehensive renovation project.
 - Permanent building improvements, which are likely to have universal functionality. Items including but not necessarily limited to demising walls, exterior lighting, code compliant restrooms, electrical wiring to the panel, HVAC systems.
 - Improvements to meet Fire and Life Safety codes and/or Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.
 - Exterior improvements including signs, painting, or other improvements to the outside of a building.
 - Sanitary sewer improvements.
 - Grease traps.
 - Elevator Installation which services the retail.
- Prohibited grant expenditures include:
 - Temporary or movable cubicles or partitions to subdivide space.
 - Office equipment including computers, telephones, copy machines, and other similar items.

- Renovating space on a speculative basis to help attract new tenants. (This provision can be waived pursuant to the recommendation of the review committee and approval by the DIA Governing Board).
- Moving expenses.
- Working capital.
- Grant funds will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Non-eligible projects include adult entertainment venues, single-serving package stores, business-to-business companies, non-profit and government agencies.

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS:

The grant offers a maximum grant award of \$20 for every square foot leased or occupied by the proposed tenant or business (as recommended by staff, the Review Committee and approved by the Governing Board). The amount of incentive dollars awarded shall not exceed 50% of the total construction costs. The application may be made by the building owner, the tenant, or jointly by the building owner and tenant. The funds are not available for previously funded improvements.

The applicant has verified expenditure for the improvements must at least match the amount of the Grant funding (a minimum of \$1 to \$1 ratio). The amount of the Grant shall not exceed the \$20 for every square foot leased or occupied by the proposed tenant or business.

All eligible applications, as presented by staff, will be considered on a case-by-case basis by a Review Committee comprised of three members from the Governing Board for the DIA appointed by the Chairman. The Chief Executive Officer will present recommendations of the Review Committee to the DIA at a regularly scheduled monthly meeting for approval or denial of the application. Notification of grant funding approval or denial will be sent to the applicant promptly.

The Grant review process will take into consideration aesthetic improvements and retention of the building integrity. The Grant review process will encourage the reuse, rehabilitation or restoration of historic architectural elements to retain the charm and character of older buildings and incorporation of design principles sensitive to neighboring structures.

All rehabilitation work must comply with all applicable city codes, ordinances and established Downtown Design Review Board Guidelines. Work must follow plans and specifications as approved and must be completed within 6 months from the date of permitting. All applicable licenses and permits must be obtained.

All design features must comply with the Downtown Design Review Board Guidelines of the City of Jacksonville and be properly permitted by the City of Jacksonville Development Services Division.

Prior to reimbursement, the business owner must hold a current Occupational License to do business in the City of Jacksonville. Acceptable proof of payments for materials, supplies, and labor shall be in the form of “paid” receipts and/or invoices. Reimbursement shall be disbursed per an established “draw schedule” approved by the DIA or “in-full” at the time of completion and final inspection.

The DIA will annually evaluate the Grant to refine the guidelines.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

A completed and signed application will be presented to the Review Committee. With the application, each applicant must provide:

- A copy of the property tax bill or deed to confirm ownership of the property.
- A legally valid and binding new lease for a period of at least five years with use restricted to an Allowable Retail Use. If the tenant is paying for the improvements, the lease must provide for a minimum of free rent, discounted rent, or equivalent thereof in lieu of the property owner having to share the cost of the improvements.
- A detailed written description and scaled elevation drawing depicting the size, dimension, and location of the improvements and modifications, with samples when applicable.
- A legally binding agreement with a licensed and qualified contractor.
- Unless the property owner is the applicant, a notarized statement from the property owner authorizing the construction and improvements.

In order to qualify for the Grant, the prospective building owner or tenant shall provide evidence they are prepared to do business by including with the application acceptable:

- Business Plan to include:
 - Concept and target market
 - Advertising/marketing plan
 - Source of cash/capital and cash flow analysis
- Three-year projected operating pro-forma
- Design for the storefront and interior
- Plan for merchandising (inventory levels, brands)
- Minimum one-year corporate and three year’s personal tax returns (exceptions will be considered for start-ups to accept three year’s personal tax returns).

RECOVERABLE GRANT PARAMETERS:

The grants shall be recoverable and amortized over a period of 5 years. The principal amount of the grant will diminish 20 percent each year for a period of five years. If the grantee does not default on the terms of the grant during the required five year period, the grant is considered closed.

DOWNTOWN JACKSONVILLE RETAIL AND RESTAURANT RECRUITMENT
RECOVERABLE GRANT PROGRAM APPLICATION

This information is necessary to process a grant request for eligible, established retail businesses and restaurants planning to relocate from outside the Northbank Core Business District to, or open a new location on, the street level in the Northbank Core Business District. **The designated area is located within the Downtown Improvement Authority's and the City of Jacksonville's Community Redevelopment Area and Special Taxing District. Please complete all blanks using "None" or "Not Applicable" where necessary.** Please attach a separate sheet if you require additional space.

SUMMARY (Please provide a brief description of the proposed property improvements or modification)

I. APPLICANT INFORMATION

APPLICANT: _____

CONTACT PERSON (Name and Title):

CURRENT BUSINESS ADDRESS:

WEB SITE: _____ E-MAIL: _____

BUSINESS TELEPHONE: _____

FAX: _____

NUMBER OF YEARS IN BUSINESS: _____

EMPLOYER TAX ID #: _____

TYPE OF BUSINESS: _____

NORTHBANK BUSINESS ADDRESS: _____

BUSINESS TAX RECEIPT #: _____

ESTIMATED COST OF IMPROVEMENTS: _____

FORM OF OWNERSHIP:

Sole Proprietorship _____ Partnership _____ Corporation

Subchapter S _____ Other _____

Present Owner of Building (Name and Address):

The business owner is to provide two bid estimates for the build-out costs to make the space usable for their business. The business is to be in operation for at least one year and provide:

Business Plan to include:

Concept and target market

Advertising/marketing plan

Source of cash injection and cash flow analysis

Three-year projected operating pro-forma

Design for the storefront and interior

Plan for merchandising (inventory levels, brands)

Minimum one-year **corporate and three year's** personal tax returns (exceptions will be considered for start-ups to accept three year's personal tax returns).

Copy of lease that meets the requirements of the Grant

Evidence of ownership consisting of a current property tax statement or deed

Detailed written description and scaled elevation drawing depicting the size, dimension and location of the improvements and modifications, with samples when applicable

Legally binding agreement with a licensed contractor registered with the State of Florida

Notarized statement from the property owner authorizing the construction and improvements, unless the property owner is the applicant

If the business tenant is applying for grant funding, the property owner/landlord is required to contribute a minimum of three months free rent or the equivalent thereof to the business owner in lieu of the property owner having to share the cost of the improvements.

The landlord is to provide a notarized letter that states the dollar amount of incentives being provided to the business owner.

The undersigned warrants that the information contained in this application (and any supplemental information) is, to the best of my knowledge, true and correct. The undersigned further understands that the use of this information is only for consideration of the Downtown Jacksonville Retail and Restaurant Recruitment Recoverable Grant Program. I acknowledge that I have received, read and will comply with the guidelines of this program. The undersigned grants authorization to verify any answers contained herein.

Business Owner Signature

Date

Print Name

Title

Property Owner

Date

Print Name

Property owner agrees to provide \$_____ value of incentives to assist the business owner with build-out of the property.

Property Owner: _____

Date: _____

Print Name: _____

Downtown Retail Enhancement District

