



Business Redevelopment
&
Historic Building Grant Program

City of Florence
Downtown Development Office
324 West Evans Street
Florence, SC 29501
843-665-2047

Business Redevelopment & Historic Building Grant Program

City of Florence

Effective 2/9/15

Eligibility Requirements

The City of Florence desires to encourage appropriate redevelopment activity within the City's Historic Overlay District (H1) by supporting efforts in the preservation of buildings, structures and cultural artifacts which have significant historic value. To assist in these goals, the City is providing redevelopment grants for buildings in the Historic Overlay District (H1). To be eligible for the financial incentives a development must be fully compatible with, and meet all requirements of, the Historic Overlay District.

For complete terms and conditions of this grant, please reference City of Florence Resolution Number 2015-03.

Application Process

The amount allocated annually by the City to this grant program is limited. Once all funds have been expended in a given fiscal year, no additional applications will be accepted in that year. All grant years stand alone, and an application submitted and not funded in any given year must be resubmitted in the following year. Grant applications shall be considered on a quarterly basis and are due to the City by the second week of the first month of the quarter beginning each January.

Awards shall be made by the City on a quarterly basis by or before the end of the third month of each quarter. Priority will be given to those buildings or business locations that have not received a prior Downtown Business Redevelopment and Historic Building grant.

An applicant is not eligible to apply if the applicant has previously received an economic development incentive from the City pursuant to Section 2-200 through 2-207 of the Code of Ordinance for Florence. (This does not include Façade Grants).

Submit grant request to the City of Florence Downtown Development Office, 324 West Evans Street, Florence, SC 2950.

Application Requirements

The applicant must be using the building for the operation of a business or have a lease pending with a qualified tenant. Where applicable, a copy of the lease shall be included with an application.

The applicant must provide sufficient documentation/detail to provide an understanding of the project. Documentation may include but is not limited to building plans (architectural, electrical, plumbing, or mechanical); business development plans; photographs or other evidence that gives a description of work; pending or executed leases; description of a scope of work from a contractor with pricing information. In all cases, the appropriate city staff shall determine when sufficient documentation is available to make a recommendation regarding the grant request.

Only one price quote is required with the application, however, prior to awarding the grant, the City reserves the right to require two additional price quotes. All quotes must be from licensed contractors.

Reimbursement Requirements

All grants are on a reimbursement basis. The City shall either reimburse applicant after the City has inspected and approved the specified work or reimburse the contractor directly. Upon completion of the work the grant recipient shall submit a “Request for Reimbursement Form” complete with all invoices and other supporting documents to the City of Florence Downtown Development Office, located on the second floor of the City Center, 324 West Evans Street, Florence, SC 29501.

Guidelines

Unless otherwise agreed in writing, all work must commence within ninety (90) days of the awarding of the grant and must be completed in a timely manner. Requests for extensions must be submitted in writing at least ten (10) days prior to the expiration of the ninety day period. The City of Florence reserves the right to revoke the grant if work does not commence or is not completed per the terms of the grant.

Projects that involve any exterior changes to a building must be approved by the local Architectural Design Review Board. In the event that a grant is awarded and the project does not meet the design standards, the City of Florence reserves the right to revoke the grant.

Available Grants:

Note: Due to funding limitations, an applicant may only receive one of the three Downtown Business Redevelopment and Historic Building Grants listed below.

Historic Building Maintenance Grant:

This Grant opportunity is directed at existing buildings located within the H-1 Florence Historic District. The Grant is to be used only for repairs that will stop the intrusion of water into a historic building. All buildings within the H-1 District are eligible, however, priority will be given to those buildings either listed as a contributing member to the National Register boundary within the Downtown Area or individually listed on the National Historic Register. The grant shall not be used as a match for the City’s façade grant program or used to comply with the City’s maintenance and appearance codes.

The Grant is specifically designed to provide funding to include items such as roof repair or the replacement or repair of other exterior elements (non-architectural) that are allowing rain to enter the building and damage the interior structure of the building. Therefore, a proposed project should eliminate the deficiency causing the deterioration of the interior of the building.

Interior Up-fit and Maintenance Grants:

This Grant opportunity is directed at existing or new businesses located within the H-1 Florence Historic District. The Grant is to be used only for repairs or up-fits to the interior of a building that will either repair or restore original architectural or structural elements of the building or up-fits that cause the building to be “retail ready”. Generally, all up-fits must be permanent improvements to the building and may include but not be limited to display windows; new construction such as bathrooms or changing areas; certain electrical, mechanical and plumbing work; and interior repairs to walls, windows and

flooring. In determining priority among grant applicants emphasis shall be given to the degree the project preserves or establishes “historic” or other like architectural features in the interior of the building.

Rent Subsidy Grants:

This Grant opportunity is directed at supporting business activities within the H-1 Florence Historic District. To be eligible for this Grant a tenant must be in one of the following categories: (a) a tenant which was located in the H-1 District as of January 1, 2015 in a building where “significant renovation”* occurred resulting in at least a 50% increase in the rent being charged; (b) a tenant that is a business start-up originating out of the North Dargan Innovation Center. Rent Subsidy Grants shall not be greater than fifty (50%) percent of the rent payment and are limited to the first two years of operation. The total Subsidy Grant may not exceed the maximum grant amount.

**See “Resolution Number 2015-03 for complete details on qualifying renovations.*

Grant Approval Process:

All grant awards will be made by City Council after a review and recommendation by City staff. This committee will use a scoring system to determine the grant recipients and make a recommendation to City Council.

By order of priority, grants shall be recommended using the following priority list:

1. Retail Trade (Sectors 44-45 in the NAICS listings) and Accommodation and Food Services (Sector 72 in the NAICS listings);
2. Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (Sector 54 in the NAICS listings); and
3. Finance and Insurance (Sector 52 in the NAICS listings).

In addition to the general eligibility criteria noted above, the following criteria shall also be taken into consideration:

- contribution that the development will make toward increased employment and earnings within the City
- increase in property tax revenues within the City
- increase in sales tax/fee revenues within the City
- preservation of key historical or architecturally significant buildings within the City
- extent to which the proposed business/project may meet a desired or unique niche in the marketplace and helps diversify the economy of the City.

Maximum Grant:

The maximum grant amount received shall be Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$30,000). No business location will be eligible to receive a grant award more than once every three years.

CITY OF FLORENCE REDEVELOPMENT GRANT APPLICATION

Applicant _____

Street Address _____

Mailing Address (if different) _____

Contact Person _____ Title _____

Daytime Phone _____ Cell: _____ Fax: _____

Email _____

Applicant is: Building Owner Building & Business Owner Business Owner

If applicant is not the building owner, please provide the following:

Building Owner Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Daytime Phone _____ Cell: _____

Email _____

Important: *If applicant is not the building owner, please include a letter from the building owner providing endorsement and permission for the proposed renovations.*

How long has the present building owner owned the property? _____

Are the upper floor(s) of the building currently occupied? YES N/A NO

Has any improvement costing more than \$2,500.00 been made to the building in the past 3 years?
 YES NO

If yes, please give a brief description and approximate cost:

Brief Description	Amount Spent

For which Redevelopment Grant are you making application?

Historic Building Maintenance Grant

Interior Up-fit Maintenance Grant

Rent Subsidy Grant

Brief Description of Proposed Work: *(Detailed Scope of Work is to be attached to application)*

Cost of Project: \$ _____ *(Include quote from licensed contractor)*

Estimated date that project will begin if grant is awarded _____

Estimated completion date for project _____

Is the building currently occupied?

YES

NO

If YES, name of tenant business: _____ Owner _____

Type of business: _____ Remaining years on lease _____
Include copy of executed lease with application

If NO, name of proposed tenant: _____ Owner _____

Type of business (be specific): _____

If new business, include a copy of complete business plan with application.

Length of lease _____ *Include copy of executed lease with application*

Certification

Under penalties of perjury, I certify to the City of Florence that all of the information contained in this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

_____ Date _____

Applicant's Signature