

WEST OCALA BUSINESS REVITALIZATION & ACCESSIBILITY GRANT PROGRAM APPLICATION

The City of Ocala has available a total of \$50,000.00 (up to \$15,000.00 per parcel) in matching grant money for business building and accessibility improvements. The required match of the applicant is 25%. Each property applied for must have a separate, distinct application.

Program opening: **Monday, October 24, 2016**

Applications are available at www.ocalafl.org or from the Revitalization Strategies Department, 201 SE Third Street, 2nd Floor, Ocala, FL 34471.

Applications will not be accepted after **5:00 PM, Wednesday, November 30, 2016**

Return applications to the Revitalization Strategies Department. Mail to: 201 SE 3rd St., Ocala, FL 34471 or email scanned applications to brich@ocalafl.org.

As applications are received, City staff will review the applications for completeness and verify the eligibility of the applicant in preparation for a Grant Committee Review meeting. Prior to the Grant Committee Review meeting, staff will meet with the applicant to review the application and to complete a walk-through of building interior/exterior. Grant Review Committee will evaluate all eligible applications on or before **Monday, December 12, 2016**.

Applicants will be notified of an award by **Thursday, December 15, 2016**. Completion of this application DOES NOT guarantee that grant monies will be awarded to the applicant. Prior applicants may not be eligible for an award this cycle. Awards are made at the discretion of the review committee.

Only work approved in the grant and begun **after** the Notice to Proceed is given will be eligible for payment/reimbursement.

Applicants will meet with staff to finalize grant agreements and make any adjustments to the proposed scope of work. Contractor(s) presence may be required.

Once an applicant enters into an agreement, he/she can proceed with any permitting and plan review process as required under city ordinance.

All permit applications must be submitted to the City no later than **Monday, January 16, 2017**.

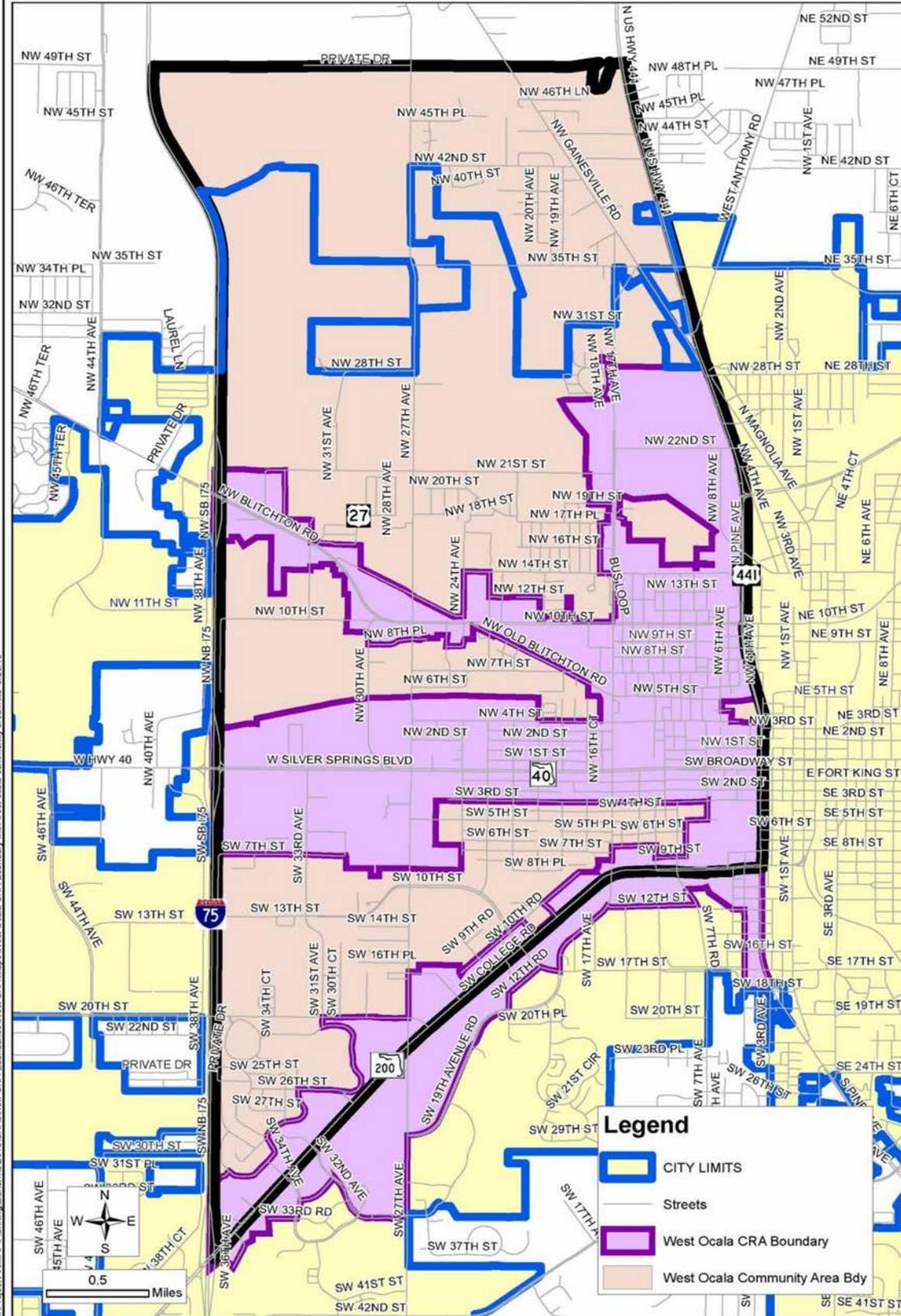
Upon completion of work, city staff will inspect the project to verify compliance with project application. Final inspection will take place concurrently by the Building Division.

Any deviation from the approved plan must be reviewed and approved by the City.

All final receipts must be submitted no later than **Friday, June 30, 2017**. After submission of complete documentation, payment/reimbursement to applicant or vendor on behalf of applicant will be made within 30 days. Submissions must include documentation such as: dated itemized invoices for all work performed with details of work clearly expressed; copies of cancelled checks and paid receipts for all materials; and lien waivers from all contractor(s) and sub-contractors. Reference Section 5 of attached Program Guidelines.

The City reserves the right to deny payment if any completed work is inconsistent with the approved project. A reduction of the award is possible if the project varies substantially from the proposal, if the required 25% applicant match is not reached, or if the project costs are less than the proposed costs.

West Ocala CRA & West Ocala Community Area Boundaries



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Prepared by CITY OF OCALA REVITALIZATION STRATEGIES DEPARTMENT

**WEST OCALA BUSINESS REVITALIZATION & ACCESSIBILITY GRANT
PROGRAM APPLICATION**

(Completed application and all required materials must be submitted NO LATER than **5:00 PM, Thursday, December 15, 2016**, see Section 4, Application Materials, of Program Guidelines).

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Project Name: _____

Project Address: _____

Parcel Number: _____

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Applicant's Name: _____

Name of person to receive all correspondence if different from applicant:

Applicant's Business Name (if applicable): _____

Ocala Business Tax Certificate Number _____ (if existing business)

Type of business: _____

Applicant's Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____ Fax Number: _____

E-mail address: _____

Applicant is the: _____ Property Owner _____ Business Owner/Tenant

How long has the business been at the current location? _____

When does your current lease expire? _____

PROPERTY OWNER INFORMATION

(If different from applicant)

Property Owner's Name: _____

Property Owner's Business Name (if applicable): _____

Property Owner's Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____ Fax Number: _____

E-mail address: _____

SCOPE OF WORK

Scope of Work – Check all that apply:

- ADA accessibility
- Removal of bars from doors and windows.
- Purchase and installation of security systems including alternatives such as lighting, cameras and fencing.
- Vacant buildings being converted to active use, which must be disclosed in the application.
Improvements made to a vacant building for the sole purpose of placing it on the market for sale do not qualify for a grant.
- Primary façade
- Secondary façade
- Rear façade
- Demolitions
- Creation of a new surface parking lot
- Main entryway/door
- New addition
- Signage
- Site improvement/improvements to an existing surface parking lot
- Landscaping as part of a larger project
- Interior improvements to occupied buildings
- Architectural/design services
- Secondary means of egress / Vertical accessibility

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Write a short statement describing the proposed project and how it will positively contribute to the City’s redevelopment efforts and provide a positive impact on the immediate area. Would the proposed improvements be made without the assistance of this grant program? If not, please explain. (Use additional sheets as necessary.)

Anticipated start date: _____

(No later than Monday, January 16, 2017)

Anticipated completion date: _____

(No later than Friday, June 30, 2017)

Estimated costs of project: _____

How much funding assistance are you requesting? _____ (Not to exceed \$15,000.00)

Do you intend to pursue any State or Federal tax incentives or energy rebates? Yes / No

If yes, what type? _____

GENERAL CONDITIONS

It is expressly understood and agreed that the applicant shall be solely responsible for all safety conditions and compliance with all safety regulations, building codes, ordinances, and other applicable regulations.

It is expressly understood and agreed that the applicant will not seek to hold the City of Ocala, the Grant Review Committee (Committee) and/or its agents, employees, board members, officers and/or directors liable for any property damage, personal injury, or other loss relating in any way to the Program.

It is expressly understood and agreed that the applicant will hold harmless the City, its agents, officers, employees and attorneys for all costs incurred in additional investigation or study of, or for supplementing, redrafting, revising, or amending any document (such as an Environmental Impact Report, specific plan, or general plan amendment) if made necessary by said proceeding and if the applicant desires to pursue such approvals and/or clearances, after initiation of the proceeding, which are conditioned on the approval of these documents.

The applicant authorizes the City of Ocala to promote any approved project including but not limited to displaying a sign at the site, during and after construction, and using photographs and descriptions of the project in City of Ocala materials and press releases.

If the applicant fails to perform the work approved by the Committee, the City reserves the right to cancel the grant. Only work begun **after** award and written Notice to Proceed will be eligible for a grant. Work in progress or performed before award will not be eligible.

Completion of this application by the applicant DOES NOT guarantee that grant monies will be awarded to the applicant. Prior applicants may not be eligible for an award this cycle. Awards are made at the discretion of the review committee.

Applicant

I, _____, business owner/tenant of the building at

_____, have read and understand the terms and conditions of the Program and agree to the general conditions and terms outlined in the guidelines of the Program.

Signature _____ Date _____

Owner Approval for Tenant Applicant

I, _____, owner of the building at

_____ have read and understand the terms and conditions of the Program and agree to the general conditions and terms outlined in the guidelines of the Program. If awarded, I give my consent to the applicant to move forward with improvements on the building as outlined in the Scope of Work section of this application.

Signature _____ Date _____

WEST OCALA BUSINESS REVITALIZATION & ACCESSIBILITY GRANT PROGRAM GUIDELINES

The appearance and use of buildings and structures is the basis of the public's overall impression of Ocala; it plays an important role in marketing Ocala as a special place to live, play and prosper. Improving the physical appearance and use of buildings will promote the attraction and retention of business operations, halt property value deterioration, and promote economic growth.

1. Purpose

The Program is designed to encourage revitalization by means of private investment through renovations, restorations, and quality improvements in the visual appearance of building façades, building interiors, and to improve accessibility to structures within the West Ocala CRA and West Ocala Community Area. A maximum of \$15,000 in 75% city/25% applicant matching funds will be offered for exterior and/or interior improvements in order to make businesses functional for their intended use. Special consideration will be given to vacant buildings and properties located along corridors and in proximity to gateways and catalytic sites within the West Ocala CRA, with first priority given to proposals within the West State Road 40 corridor.

The grant area is approximately bounded by I-75 on the west, the City Limits to the north, Pine Avenue/US 441 to the East, and SR 200 to the South. There are a variety of businesses, offices and industrial uses within the program area, all of which are eligible for the Program.

The Program will:

- a. provide financial assistance to property and/or business owners;
- b. preserve the unique character of West Ocala and foster a sense of place;
- c. encourage repairs and improvements using quality materials and workmanship in the renovations;
- d. attract new businesses;
- e. compliment other revitalization efforts; and
- f. provide an attractive, comfortable place to shop, work, live and socialize.

2. Eligibility Requirements

- a. Applicants for the Program can be either the property owner or tenant. The tenant must provide the City of Ocala with permission from the property owner for improvements.
- b. Existing tenants must have a minimum of 2 years remaining on their lease or an option to renew for an additional 2 years.
- c. The building or property must be located within the West Ocala CRA and West Ocala Community Area.
- d. All work completed must be in accordance with the City of Ocala Code of Ordinances and all required permits must be obtained.
- e. Grants cannot be used to correct outstanding code violations.
- f. Only work approved in the grant and begun **after** the Notice to Proceed is given will be eligible for payment/reimbursement. Work in progress or performed before award will not be eligible.

- g. Any changes to the approved plan will require a written request from the applicant and approval by the City in order to retain the grant. Following completion of project, staff will inspect the job to ensure program compliance.
- h. Grants may be subject to cancellation if not completed or significant progress has not been made by the project completion deadline. Requests for extensions will be considered only if made in writing and progress toward completion has been demonstrated.
- i. Storm water system improvements may be eligible as part of larger projects, but do not qualify for stand-alone grants.
- j. All work must comply with the program guidelines and be approved by the City.
- k. All contractor(s) and subcontractor(s) must be identified at the time of signing the grant agreement. The contractor(s) and subcontractor(s) must be licensed to work in the City of Ocala. The City does not warrant or assume responsibility for any issues arising between the applicant and its contractor(s) or subcontractor(s).
- l. The following types of property are **not eligible**:
 - 1. Tax delinquent property
 - 2. Property in litigation
 - 3. Property in condemnation or receivership
 - 4. Property or tenants with outstanding financial obligations to the City
- m. Special consideration will be given to vacant buildings and properties located along corridors and in proximity to gateways and catalytic sites within the West Ocala CRA, with first priority given to proposals within the West State Road 40 corridor.

3. Grant Amounts and Participation

There is \$50,000 in funding available for the Fiscal Year 2016-17 Program.

This program is a matching grant based on 75% city/25% applicant funds participation. This program is a payment/reimbursement-based program that offers up to \$15,000 or 75 percent (75%) of exterior/interior rehabilitation costs, whichever is less. Multiple improvements may be made under a single grant request. Owners with multiple properties can apply for assistance; however, the maximum funding shall not exceed \$15,000 to any one property. Payment/reimbursement will be made only after approved work is completed and proper submission of documentation indicating work completion along with all paid receipts has been reviewed and verified to meet the approved grant application.

Grant awards will be based on the following priorities:

- a. ADA Accessibility
- b. Removal of bars from doors and windows.
- c. Purchase and installation of security systems including alternatives such as lighting, cameras and fencing, provided all bars are removed from doors and windows.
- d. Vacant buildings being converted to active use, which must be disclosed in the application.
Improvements made to a vacant building for the sole purpose of placing it on the market for sale do not qualify for a grant.
- e. Primary façade
- f. Secondary façade
- g. Rear façade

- h. Demolitions
- i. Creation of a new surface parking lot
- j. Main entryway/door
- k. New addition
- l. Signage
- m. Site improvements/improvements to an existing surface parking lot
- n. Landscaping as part of a larger project
- o. Interior improvements to occupied buildings

A weighted value system for the aforementioned priorities will be developed and approved by the City. Additional weight will be given to those projects which are considered geographical priorities such as catalytic sites and gateways; additional weight will also be given to projects in which the property/business owners are investing a substantial sum of money into their projects.

4. Application Materials

- a. Applications are available for download at www.ocalafl.org or from the Revitalization Strategies Department, 201 SE Third Street, 2nd Floor, Ocala, FL 34471. Email brich@ocalafl.org to request a copy: Applications must be submitted to the City on or before the submittal deadline in order to be considered for the program. Application packages must include enough documentation to illustrate the visual impact of the project and its cost. **Failure to provide required information may delay the review process or may cause the application to be ineligible.**
- b. The items submitted should, at minimum, include:
 - 1. A completed application form.
 - 2. Proof of property Ownership or Option to Buy/Leasehold Agreement. Existing tenants must have a minimum of 2 years remaining on their lease or an option to renew for an additional 2 years.
 - 3. Color photographs of the existing conditions.
 - 4. Accurate scaled drawings of the proposed improvements
 - 5. Project Schedule
 - 6. Manufacturer's literature and specifications for windows, doors, etc. Samples of materials may be included or may be requested during the review process.
 - 7. Any other documentation necessary to illustrate the visual impact of the proposed project.
 - 8. At least 2 competitive bid proposals from contractors (licensed within the City of Ocala). These proposals must provide detailed information about the work to be completed, the costs, and the project schedule.
 - 9. Owners or merchants who are in the contracting business, and intend for their company to perform work on their own properties or businesses, must furnish at least 2 proposals other than their own for the work to be done.
 - 10. Owners and merchants (as private individuals) may perform work on their own buildings, as provided by law; however, they will not be reimbursed for their time while acting as contractor and/or installing material. Material cost and the labor of employees are reimbursable; however, documentation must be produced for the number of hours worked on

the project by the employees, the rate of pay, the employee's social security numbers, etc. Any contract over \$2,000 is subjected to Federal Labor standards; therefore, the contractor's employees must be paid the prevailing wage rate.

11. The applicant may be required to obtain a building permit for certain types of construction work. Building permit fees are based upon the value of work. Applicants should call the Building Division at (352) 629-8421, if they are interested in receiving an estimate of those fees.
12. The American with Disabilities Act requires some handicap upgrades when a building permit is required. Please contact the Building Division about possible additional costs and include these in your submittal.
13. All applicants are required to provide proof of property or liability content insurance (as applicable).

5. Grant Payment/reimbursement

- a. Payment/reimbursement shall be limited to no more than 75% of the total cost of eligible improvements, not to exceed \$15,000 per parcel.
- b. The City reserves the right to refuse payment/reimbursement of expenditures in whole or in part for work that:
 1. Does not conform to the program or design guidelines.
 2. Does not conform to the proposal(s) submitted with the application and authorized by the Committee.
 3. Is not commensurate with the workmanship and costs customary in the industry.
 4. Is not completed within the established time frame (typically 3 to 6 months depending on the scope of the project). Since the City cannot reserve funds for projects indefinitely, projects may be subject to cancellation if not completed or if significant progress has not been made by the progress deadline. Requests for extensions will be considered only if made in writing and progress toward completion has been determined.
 5. Staff will inspect work to ensure that it complies with the approved plans. Any changes to the approved plan will require a written request from the applicant and approval by the City in order to retain the grant.
- c. Payment/reimbursement can be expected in approximately 30 days after all of the following documentation has been submitted:
 1. Copies of all paid, itemized invoices and proof of payment such as cancelled checks, signed receipts, etc., for all of the work covered by the grant.
 2. Copies of the signed contracts with contractors chosen to do the work.
 3. Copies of lien waivers from all general contractors, subcontractors, and major material suppliers.
- d. Payment to the vendors on behalf of the applicant
 1. Dated itemized invoices.
 2. Copies of the signed contracts with contractors chosen to do the work.

3. Copies of lien waivers from all general contractors, subcontractors, and major material suppliers.
4. Certification of completion of work.

Any eligible property owners who intend to pursue State or Federal tax incentives, or energy rebates should contact the appropriate agency prior to beginning the application process. References to such intentions should be included in the grant application.

6. **Design Guidelines** - The Design Guidelines outline the standards that should be followed. All improvements are subject to Committee approval.

- a. **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 may also be eligible for grants. Rear or side façades that are viewable from a public street or pedestrian walkway may also be eligible for a grant.

- b. **Interior**

The interior grant is intended to give financial aid to applicants to perform general construction improvements or purchase certain fixtures to comply with current Florida Building Codes to occupy or expand the building. Fixture installation must be a permanent part of the structure and cannot be removed from the premises. Eligible improvements may include, but are not limited to: electrical, plumbing, and HVAC upgrades, installation of attached fixtures, grease traps, utility connections and upgrades, sprinkler systems, ADA accessibility, code required upgrades, floor repair and upgrades, hot water heaters, bathroom repairs and upgrades, exhaust hoods, commercial sinks, and wall/ceiling repairs and upgrades.

- c. **Storefronts**

When alterations are made to the first floor of buildings that currently have closed-up or opaque storefronts, the Grant Committee will usually require that the storefront be 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.

- d. **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. Deteriorated masonry should be replaced with new masonry that duplicates the old masonry material as closely as possible.

- e. **Windows**

Windows are very visible from the public right-of-way and should be restored when possible. To increase transparency, creating additional openings is encouraged. The window style and glazing configuration should be appropriate for the style of the building.

- f. **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.
- g. **Signs** All signs must conform to City of Ocala code requirements. Signs alone are not eligible for a 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:
 - 1. 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.
 - 2. Transom Signs – made of leaded glass letters that are built into the transom above the storefront display window or door.
 - 3. Neon signs are discouraged and will **not** be incentivized.
 - 4. 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.



b. Projecting Signs – Project off of the building.



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



h. 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, such as security systems, cameras and lights (see Page 6). If security systems are installed, grant funds cannot be used for ongoing subscription fees.

i. **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.

j. **Vertical Accessibility**

Improvements for secondary means of egress and/or vertical accessibility may include items related to elevator repair or chair lift installation. Other related improvements may also be considered on a case by case basis.

k. **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 may be eligible for a grant, provided they are located behind the primary or secondary façade of a building. Planters and retaining walls should be built of a materials, which complement materials of adjacent buildings.

l. **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 unless part of a larger project.