



Commercial Façade Improvement Program Trenholm Acres and Newcastle Neighborhood (TANN) – CDBG Funding

Commercial Façade Improvement Program Overview and Purpose

The Richland County Neighborhood Improvement Program (NIP) has developed a Commercial Façade Improvement Program (CFIP) for selected segments within the Trenholm Acres and Newcastle Neighborhood (TANN) to encourage businesses to improve the exterior appearance of their buildings, storefronts and signage. This program provides up to \$15,000 per activity in funds to finance exterior improvements to a property owner or tenant's commercial building. The program is designed to retain and attract businesses, strengthen the commercial corridor, increase utilization of existing businesses, restore economic vitality, and enhance property values.

Funding

The program provides for a one-time maximum funding of \$15,000 of County investment per project/improvement for businesses and properties. Eligible projects do not require a funding match, with the County providing 100% of possible funding up to \$15,000.

Payment will be issued to approved vendors upon receiving invoices on a business letterhead. Richland County will be responsible for all procurement processes. NIP shall pay the approved vendor directly on behalf of the applicant for eligible improvement expenses not exceeding the approved amount. The Commercial Façade Improvement Program funds shall not be applied retroactively to work started prior to the start of the program nor can it be applied to costs accrued as part of the application submittal process.

Applicant Eligibility and Requirements

Eligibility for the program is for commercial businesses fronting Shakespeare Road from the 3600 block to Fontaine Road and businesses fronting Parklane Road, from Claudia Drive to I-20. The target area is within the Trenholm Acres and Newcastle Neighborhood (TANN) area and Community Master Plan, adopted by Richland County Council in 2010.

Applicants must be either the owner or tenant of a commercial, retail, or professional business/property with a current structure. If you are a tenant, a copy of the lease along with a Letter of Agency must be signed by the owner of the building with approval for exterior improvements to be completed. Applicants of multiple buildings/businesses may receive funding for more than one building/business, though they must complete separate applications for each. Likewise, all applicants must be currently registered and licensed with the Richland County Business Service Center with all County taxes up to date.

All awardees will be assessed for compliance with the program conditions for a three [3] year period. If the awardee closes, sells, or moves the business location for any reason, to include property sale, foreclosure, lease termination and/or any other legal action, within the three year period of the receipt of the program funds, the applicant will be considered in default of the program agreement. The awarded businesses/properties will be required to maintain a current business license throughout the three year period, as well as, keeping all taxes non-delinquent. Awarded businesses/properties must undertake proper maintenance of their site and are not to receive any type of building, zoning, sheriff, public works or any other code enforcement citations or violations during the 3 year period which are not brought into compliance. Property owners who are awarded shall not increase rent for current tenants during the three year period. Awardees shall not make any changes to the façade improvements undertaken without written consent and approval from NIP during the three-year period. Richland County Government

reserves the right to request immediate repayment of the entire funded amount, or any portion thereof, deemed fit from the awardee who defaults on the program conditions.

Eligible Improvements:

Can do any combination of eligible improvement elements including, but not limited to:

- Exterior signs
- Exterior painting
- Parking lot resurfacing or repaving
- Outdoor lighting upgrade or installation
- Security features upgrade or installation
- General façade work
 - Landscaping – trees, shrubs, or other vegetative plantings
 - Building maintenance – façade/masonry/brickwork/wood repair, replacement or other treatment including windows and doors
 - Awnings or other exterior elements
 - Others as needed and approved

Ineligible Improvements

Funds shall not be used for improvements that are not permanent, mounted, or affixed to the sidewalk.

Ineligible uses include, but are not limited to:

- Vinyl letter signage (windows);
- Portable signs, such as sandwich boards or A-frame signs, signs not mounted or attached to storefronts or inflatable signs;
- Flags or banners;
- Benches and trash receptacles;
- Tables, chairs or umbrellas;
- Statues and fountains;
- New construction/additions to property, beyond façade repairs or reconstruction or signs;
- Interior improvements.

Design Guidelines

- All improvements must adhere to County and State regulatory codes, and be properly permitted throughout all phases of the improvement process found in Chapter 6 & 26 of Richland County's Code of Ordinances
- *Signage*
 - All signs will meet the County's sign ordinance found in Chapter 26
 - Sign materials will be compatible with the design of the face of the façade where they are placed
 - Signs must be proportionate and appropriately scaled to the elements of the façade
 - Signs must be consistent with sign locations on adjacent buildings
 - Signs must be located within close proximity to the entrance of the business
 - Businesses must only have one projecting sign from the face of the façade
 - Window signs must not cover more than 50% of the area of each window
- *Awnings or Canopies*
 - Awnings or canopies must be incorporated into the façade of the building

- Awnings or canopies must be made of durable, commercial grade fabric, canvas, or similar material having a matte finish
- Frame and supports must be painted or coated metal or another non-corroding material
- Awning or canopy shape must relate to door or window openings, where round should complement round and rectangular to rectangular.
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- *Windows and Doors*
 - Doors must be colored as accent colors to compliment the façade color and attract prospective customers visually
 - If doorway features are changed or replaced (besides replacing the door itself) then the entranceway must be of the necessary width for ADA compliance
 - Replace reflective or dark tinted glass with clear or translucent glass
 - Windows must not have metal, wood or other opaque materials to allow for the use of displaying products, services and providing visibility into businesses
- *Lighting*
 - All lighting will meet the County's lighting ordinance found in Chapter 26.
 - Lights must shine only on the business, for entranceways, parking areas, signage or outdoor facilities, and avoid glare onto streets or adjacent properties
 - Placement of lighting elements must be placed in an inconspicuous manner, so as not to draw attention from other elements of the façade
 - Lighting which flashes, moves or makes noise shall be avoided
- *Exterior Façade Elements*
 - Building elements such as fire escapes, ladders, pipes, vents, etc. must be painted as accents to provide pops of color or as the primary color of the building façade to blend in with the façade exterior
 - Security systems must be installed in an unobstructed manner along the exterior to capture the entrances and windows of businesses, likewise, security gates and bars must be changed for less obstructive equipment such as interior security gates, security devices, alarm systems, or unbreakable window material as alternative security measures
- *Parking Lot Repairs*
 - Repairs to parking lots must meet the County's parking requirements found within Chapter 26 of the Code of Ordinances
 - Repairs to parking lots, including resurfacing and striping, must be completed to meet compliance with American Disabilities Act (ADA)

Application Process

The program shall be open for submittal during the application period as determined by NIP. Applicants will submit a completed application and other relevant forms available from NIP. Applications can be obtained from the NIP office located at 2020 Hampton St, 1st Floor, Columbia, SC 29204, or requested via email, phone, and obtained from the Department webpage. Completed applications should be returned to NIP either via **email at NIP@richlandcountysc.gov**. Applications will be accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis until the date below or all funds are expended, whichever occurs first. Applications will be reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis. Applications missing any required documentation will be given conditional denial until all submittal elements are received as they would be otherwise incomplete.

Following review, the applicant will be notified of approval or denial via email, or conditional approval. If the applicant has been given conditional approval, they will be required to submit additional materials



needed to fulfill the application process to move forward in the award process. Conditional approval does not guarantee approval and awarding of funding, as priority will be given to complete applications as they are submitted. Once the applicant has been notified of their award status, a project agreement form will need to be signed and returned to NIP before moving forward with the façade improvements.

Once the agreement is completed, the applicant will be provided notice of an approved vendor(s) to begin the necessary improvements up to the awarded amount. Once the work has been completed, an invoice will be submitted for the approved funding amount, along with photo documentation of the improvements. The invoice will be paid by NIP to the vendor on behalf of the applicant.

Required Application Documentation

The CFG application must include, but is not limited to, the following elements for submittal:

- Completed CFG application
- Completed Improvement Details sheet
- Current photographs
- Current proof of ownership (If Owner applicant)
- Letter of Agency and copy of current lease (If Tenant applicant)
- Proof of good standing
 - Copy of current property tax receipt (as applicable)
 - Copy of current business license
 - Copy of property and liability insurance for site

Applications can be submitted via email to NIP@richlandcountysc.gov with the subject line “*The Trenholm Acres and Newcastle Neighborhood (TANN) Façade Program*”:

Important Dates

Applications will be accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis until the date below or all funds are expended, whichever occurs first. Applications will be reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis.

- Application Submittal Period Opens – April 12th, 2021
- Application Submittal Period Closes – June 1st, 2021

Contact Information

Questions regarding the application process should be directed to the Neighborhood Improvement at NIP@richlandcountysc.gov by email or 803.576.2190 by phone. The Neighborhood Improvement Program office is located at 2020 Hampton St, 1st Floor, Columbia, SC 29204.

NOTE: Vendors, on behalf of CFG participants, will be required to submit for and obtain all permits and design approval through the Richland County Community Planning and Develop Department’s Development Services Division. All projects must adhere to all appropriate local, state and federal codes and guidelines. Proper maintenance of the improvements will be monitored for a period of three [3] years. The Neighborhood Improvement Program may waive or amend these requirements at any time during the administration of this program as necessary and appropriate.



