



## **DELRAY BEACH** CRA COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

### **MEMO**

**TO:** CRA Board of Commissioners

**THROUGH:** Jeff Costello, CRA Executive Director

**FROM:** Elizabeth C. Burrows, Economic Development Manager

**DATE:** July 5, 2018

**RE:** Curb Appeal Program

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At the CRA Regular Board Meeting on June 11, 2018, the Board approved two funding requests for the Curb Appeal Program. As the Board deliberated on the applications, several questions were raised about sales restrictions, financial impact to property owners, and program participation. While some answers were provided at the meeting, CRA Staff has prepared the information below to further address the Board's questions and comments.

A more comprehensive program review will be presented at the CRA Board Workshop scheduled for July 16, 2018.

- **Additional Funding Sources** – The City's Neighborhood Services Division (NSD) of the Community Improvement Department administers the Curb Appeal Program and other initiatives that work to enhance neighborhoods by funding improvements to single-family homes. Whenever possible, the City leverages Curb Appeal funding with Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding, or available general funds in the Neighborhood Services budget, to maximize impact and ease financial burdens for applicants.
- **Monitoring Period** – NSD Staff monitors completed improvements for one year after installation, during the standard warranty period. After that time, it becomes the homeowner's responsibility to maintain the improvements accordance with the City's Code requirements. Before finalizing the scope of any project, NSD Staff explains the proposed improvements and maintenance requirements to the homeowner in detail, working to ensure that they understand any potential maintenance costs. When financial ability is a concern, landscape plans are designed to minimize watering requirements so that plant materials can be maintained with minimal ongoing cost to the homeowner.

- **Post-Approval Property Restrictions** – Outside of the one-year warranty period, the City would not be notified if a property sale occurs, as participating properties are not subject to liens. NSD Staff has begun the process of analyzing properties that have previously received Curb Appeal awards to determine whether any sales have occurred. Findings will be shared with the CRA Board as soon as they are available, with recommendations to mitigate any negative trends that may be identified.
- **Recent Awards** – In the current fiscal year, the CRA Board has approved two applications, with a third scheduled for the July 12<sup>th</sup> agenda. NSD staff is working with an additional 11 potential applicants, each in various phases, eligibility, or project design, according to the most recent Curb Appeal quarterly report submitted to the CRA (see attached). In FY 2016/17, no applications were approved, largely due to the evolution of the City’s procurement policy, which affected the project bidding process and schedule. NSD Staff has noted, however, that program interest and eligibility has significantly increased in the last year, after the CRA Board approved several changes to the program funding amounts and eligibility requirements, at the suggestion of NSD Staff.
- **Recruiting Efforts** – NSD Staff generally keeps an active list of prospective Curb Appeal applications in various phases of qualification, design, and contractor procurement. While many program inquiries are the result of word of mouth within the community, NSD Staff also works to recruit applicants by distributing door hangers in targeted neighborhoods, promoting the program at various neighborhood association meetings, and directly referring applicants whose properties suffer from maintenance issues that could be addressed through the program.
- **Complete Neighborhoods Strategy** – CRA & NSD Staff has noted the suggestion offered from the CRA Board to target homes along the roads where the City is implementing capital improvement projects, to deepen the impact of the “Complete Neighborhoods” improvement strategy. This will be taken into consideration before the next outreach effort.
- **Reclaimed Water** – CRA & NSD Staff has also noted the Board’s suggestion to connect irrigation systems to existing or planned reclaimed water lines whenever possible, to reduce future irrigation costs when new landscaping materials are installed as part of a Curb Appeal project.
- **Water Collecting in Driveway Aprons** – CRA Staff will be coordinating with the City Engineer and Public Works Department to address these issues as part of the overall capital (infrastructure) improvement program.