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FLORENCE URBAN RENEWAL ALLOCATES \$100,000 TO FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS WITHIN THE DISTRICT

The Florence Urban Renewal Agency (FURA) is kicking-off their Preservation and Rehabilitation Program at the Florence Business Expo on Feb. 18th. The Agency has allocated \$100,000 in grant money to promote the revitalization of Florence's Urban Renewal District. "This money provides financial assistance to property owners and independent businesses that are tenants of commercial properties in the District," states Assistant City Manager Jacque Morgan, "as a way to encourage them to enhance the appearance and commercial viability of the District."

Most assistance under FURA's Preservation and Rehabilitation Program is available on a first-come first served competitive basis. Criteria have been established to guide the review Committee's decision in awarding FURA assistance. Funding is available for storefront enhancements, façade improvements and development and redevelopment projects.

Gift Grant funding is awarded between the amounts of \$1,000 to \$5,000 maximum and is subject to FURA approval and funding availability. Projects must meet pre-established guidelines for projects desirable in the District and the improvements must be reviewed and approved by FURA. Competitive bids are not required.

There are also 50/50 Grants available and funding is awarded subject to FURA approvals and funding availability. Matching funds will be awarded to building owners and commercial tenants other than the building owner, up to 50% of the project cost from a minimum of \$1,000 to a maximum of \$12,500. That corresponds to a project cost between \$2,000 and \$25,000. The total cost of the project may exceed \$25,000 but only the first \$25,000 will be eligible for the 50% match.

“This funding is a great opportunity for those businesses in the District that want to enhance their appearance” states Morgan “It is our hope that this allocation of funding will help simulate revitalization even during this dreariest of financial times.” For more information on the guidelines please visit the Florence Urban Renewal Agency booth at the Florence Business Expo on Thursday February 18th from 3-7 p.m. at the Best Western Pier Point Inn.

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