

## Storefront Grants Available

By JOYCE McKENZIE

[jmckenzie@tampatrib.com](mailto:jmckenzie@tampatrib.com)

Alan White calls the city's commercial Façade Improvement Grant Program a "win-win" proposition.

He and business partner Raymond Proch of TWA Firestone Tire, Wheel and Automotive Services will save more than \$4,700 on landscaping and painting enhancements to their property and building on the southwest corner of Busch Boulevard and 56th Street.

In an effort to help business owners in the community's redevelopment district spruce up the outside appearance of their facilities, the city will reimburse 50 percent of the costs of improvements that total \$10,000 or less, or a maximum of \$5,000 for property enhancements with a price tag of more than \$10,000.

In spring 2007, the Firestone dealership spent \$7,586.60 on new shrubbery and was reimbursed \$3,793.30 through the grant program.

Last week, the Temple Terrace Redevelopment Agency approved a request to paint the building's tile roof a reddish color to fit in with the Mediterranean Revival architecture of the projected redevelopment endeavor southeast of 56th Street and Bullard Parkway. The painting is expected to cost \$1,900 and the city will reimburse the company \$950.

"I have gotten so many compliments on the landscaping and it has made our business so much more appealing," White said. "We're hoping we'll get even more compliments when the roof is repainted."

Façade reconstruction, painting, landscaping, improved exterior lighting, wall improvements and installation of awnings are among the eligible improvements. Reimbursements for general repairs and maintenance are not allowed.

Grant applicants must comply with guidelines that include specific color, landscape, signage, lighting and accessory structure requirements.

Generally speaking, an applicant may only apply once a year for a grant. In Firestone's case the stipulation was waived because both requests totaled less than \$5,000.

City Manager Kim Leinbach said although the city has received several inquires about the program since it was implemented in 2007, Firestone is the only business that has applied.

"I can't believe other businesses haven't taken advantage of this," White said. "It's gone pretty smooth for us."

A total of \$50,000 in funding is available each fiscal year.

For details and an application form, contact the city's redevelopment department at (813) 506-6460 or e-mail Lisa Cosky at [lcosky@templeterrace.com](mailto:lcosky@templeterrace.com).