



CITY OF CLEARWATER

COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

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MEMORANDUM

TO: City of Clearwater Community Redevelopment Agency Trustees

FROM: Jesus Nino, Executive Director, Community Redevelopment Agency

DATE: December 27, 2024

SUBJECT: Cleveland Street Activation and Mobile Vendors Initiative Update

SUMMARY:

The Cleveland Street Activation and Mobile Vendors Initiative aims to reinvigorate the 400-500 blocks of Cleveland Street, from Osceola Avenue to Garden Avenue, through targeted efforts across four focus areas:

1. Mobile Vendors
2. Special Events
3. Public Art and Pop-ups
4. Streetscape and Placemaking

This initiative aligns with the CRA's goals of economic growth, cultural vibrancy, and community engagement. Collaborative efforts across city departments, community stakeholders, and strategic partners will drive its success.

CURRENT STATUS:

Significant progress has been made in planning and executing this initiative:

- 1. Mobile Vendors:**
 - Brick-and-mortar businesses will have the first opportunity to host mobile vendors.
 - Vendor options will include retail offerings, such as jewelry and pottery carts, to complement existing businesses and avoid service duplication.
 - Staff has begun engaging potential vendors at Market Marie and other markets to secure participation.
- 2. Special Events:**
 - Plans include developing seasonal markets and introducing recurring vendors.
 - A pilot Cleveland Street Activation and Mobile Vendor event is scheduled for Q1 2025, featuring special events, art pop-ups, and mobile vendors managed entirely by city staff.

- Future event programming will include music trucks, DJ booths, and potential bandstands to create vibrant entertainment options.
3. **Public Art and Pop-ups:**
 - Plans include new public art installations, temporary pop-up art displays, and artistic enhancements to mobile vendor setups, developed in collaboration with St. Petersburg College (SPC) art students.
 4. **Streetscape and Placemaking Enhancements:**
 - Key upgrades will include elegant lighting, gateway identification signage (future idea), expanded kiosks, banners, bike racks, landscaping, and mobile restroom facilities.

PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION:

SPC will play a pivotal role in developing a seasonal market program featuring multiple mobile vendors starting in April 2025. This collaboration will integrate entrepreneurial and fine arts programs, with SPC handling their portion of the project for under \$50,000.

We are also leveraging relationships with Amplify Clearwater, Clearwater Arts Alliance, Parks and Recreation, Arts and Cultural Affairs, Public Communications, Public Works, and other city departments to broaden outreach, attract diverse demographics, and ensure robust marketing strategies.

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN:

Staff will develop a comprehensive communications plan in coordination with Public Communications. Elements include:

- **Social Media Campaigns:** Engaging and consistent content to promote events and showcase progress.
- **Print and Digital Flyers:** Visually appealing materials for strategic distribution.
- **Media Outreach:** Press releases and proactive engagement with local media.
- **Community Engagement Events:** Merchant roundtables and Q&A sessions to foster collaboration.
- **Internal Communication:** Regular updates to Trustees, city administration, and stakeholders.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), such as attendance, vendor sales, merchant participation, and social media engagement, will provide actionable insights to refine strategies.

BUDGET AND FUNDING:

The total proposed budget for the initiative is **\$500,000**, with contributions as follows:

- CRA: **\$200,000**
- Downtown Development Board (DDB): **\$300,000**

Allocations:

- Partnership and Program Coordination: **\$50,000**
- Mobile Vendors and Special Events: **\$150,000**
- Arts and Entertainment Enhancements: **\$100,000**

- Streetscape Enhancements: **\$200,000**

GOALS AND ALIGNMENT:

This initiative aligns with the CRA's strategic goals and the City's strategic priorities:

CRA Goals:

- **People Goal:** Maintain Cleveland Street's pedestrian scale and historic character; activate parks and plazas.
- **Accessibility Goal:** Strengthen Cleveland Street as a pedestrian-friendly, vibrant corridor.
- **Amenity Goal:** Promote visual and performing arts; create signature gathering destinations.

City Priorities:

- **High-Performing Government:** Systematically maintain public infrastructure.
- **Economic & Housing Opportunity:** Support entrepreneurship, eco-friendly enterprises, and tourism.
- **Community Well-Being:** Empower community pride and identity.

NEXT STEPS:

1. Finalize plans for the Q1 2025 pilot event and present updates to Trustees at the January meeting.
2. Collaborate with Legal to amend codes and regulations for year-round vendor opportunities.
3. Continue stakeholder engagement, including merchant participation and external vendor outreach.
4. Develop and execute the communications plan, ensuring community awareness and participation.

CONCLUSION:

The Cleveland Street Activation and Mobile Vendors Initiative is poised to transform the 400-500 blocks into a vibrant and unique destination. Through collaboration, strategic planning, and community-focused enhancements, this initiative will foster economic growth and cultural vitality while celebrating Clearwater's unique identity.