

City of Clearwater
Community Redevelopment Agency
Business Spotlight Program



A. Program Overview

The purpose of the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) ***Business Spotlight Program*** is to recognize and promote outstanding businesses within the Downtown Clearwater and North Greenwood Redevelopment Areas. Building upon the foundation of the original Business Spotlight Program, the expansion aims to uplift businesses that contribute to the area's economic vitality, cultural richness, and community pride. The initiative provides exposure through marketing campaigns, promotional activities, and public recognition.

The approval of the program will be established by the Community Redevelopment Agency Trustees on an annual basis. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis. The application form is available by clicking on the link provided **XXX**.

This program directly promotes the goals and objectives of the 2018 Clearwater Downtown Redevelopment Plan and the 2023 North Greenwood Community Redevelopment Area Plan, specifically:

2018 Clearwater Downtown Redevelopment Plan

- **People Goals** (page 46): Downtown shall be a place that attracts residents, visitors, businesses, and their employees and enable the development of community. The City shall encourage a vibrant and active public realm, recreation and entertainment opportunities and support the community and neighborhoods.
 - **Objective 1D:** Encourage a variety of office-intensive businesses, including finance and insurance, IT/Software, professional services, data management, analytics and services, and medical to relocate and expand in Downtown to provide a stable employment center.

2023 North Greenwood Community Redevelopment Area Plan

- **Goal 3: Poverty Reduction (pg. 93)**
 - **Objective:** Increase access to high paying jobs for residents of the North Greenwood CRA within and outside the area through workforce development, business assistance programs, and support for entrepreneurs.

- **Goal 5: Quality of Life (pg. 94)**
 - **Objective:** Sustain a high quality of life through community engagement, recreational access, celebrating the unique culture of North Greenwood, improving public health, and protecting the environment.

Program Eligibility

The Community Redevelopment Agency staff will administer the ***Business Spotlight Program***. Approval for this program is contingent on the CRA Trustees. Application submission does not guarantee approval. Applications will be reviewed for completeness and compliance with the program criteria. Applications that do not comply with the program criteria and conditions will not be eligible.

All applications must meet the following criteria:

- **Location:** The business must be physically located within the boundaries of either the Downtown Clearwater Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) or the North Greenwood Redevelopment Area. (See attached maps)
- **Legal Compliance:** The business must be legally registered and compliant with all local, state, and federal regulations.
- **Operational Status:** During the application process, the business should be actively operating and open to the public.
- **Eligible Business Types:**
 - Retail and restaurant businesses
 - Personal Services Industries (e.g., barber and beauty shops, health spas, dance studios, photography and art studios, tailoring, and other similar services)
 - Galleries, theaters, other cultural and community gathering spaces.
- **Commitment to Community:** Businesses must demonstrate meaningful engagement with the local community through participation in neighborhood events, support for local initiatives, partnerships with area organizations, or similar contributions to community well-being.
- **Business Recipient Requirements:** Selected businesses are required to participate in program-related activities, including promotional events, marketing campaigns, and any community engagement efforts coordinated by the CRA.

Legacy Recipient Eligibility

In recognition of long-standing contributions to the community, Legacy Recipients will be selected as part of the program. To qualify, a business must:

- Have been in continuous operation for at least 10 years within the North Greenwood Redevelopment Area
- Meet all other standard eligibility criteria listed above

C. Program Process

Businesses interested in participating in the ***Business Spotlight Program*** must complete and submit an official application. CRA staff will oversee the review and selection process. Once an application is completed and in compliance with the program, the selection committee will contact approved applicants to proceed with the next steps of the process. A total of nine (9) businesses will be selected comprised of Legacy Recipients and Spotlight Winners. Below is a comprehensive outline of the procedural steps involved in the program:

- **Application Submission:** Interested businesses within the designated Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) submit their applications through the designated portal on the Community Redevelopment Agency website, hand-delivered, or via email to **XXX**. Each application will undergo review to ensure alignment with the objectives outlined in the Downtown Redevelopment Area Plan and the North Greenwood Community Redevelopment Area Plan. A representative from the CRA will provide general guidance and support to potential applicants throughout the application process. Incomplete applications will not be accepted.
- **Review and Evaluation:** The selection committee reviews all received applications to ensure they meet the eligibility criteria outlined for the program. This may involve verifying the business's location within the CRA boundaries, legal compliance, and operational status. The property must be free from any liens (except mortgage liens), judgments, or encumbrances (except easements) of any kind, and all city obligations must be current. The applicant must possess a current City of Clearwater Business Tax Receipt and must be the business owner or a registered agent. Applications that meet the criteria proceed to the evaluation stage.
- **Selection Process:** A selection committee comprised of representatives from the CRA, the City of Clearwater, and community stakeholders evaluates the eligible applications. They consider factors such as the business's alignment with program goals, its potential impact on the community, and its readiness to participate in program activities.
- **Notification of Selection:** Businesses selected to participate in the program are notified of their acceptance via email followed by a scheduled one-on-one meeting. They will receive detailed information about the program guidelines, including expectations, benefits, promotional activities, opportunities for engagement, and next steps.

- **Business Recipient Requirements:** Throughout the program duration, selected businesses actively engage in promotional activities coordinated by the CRA. This may include participation in marketing campaigns, attendance at community and networking events and/or CRA council meetings.

D. Program Timeline

The proposed program timeline begins with presenting the ***Business Spotlight Program*** for approval by the CRA Trustees at a CRA meeting. Following approval, the Business Spotlight Program will follow a marketing and communications plan. The application window will be open for four (4) weeks to allow businesses to submit their applications. Subsequently, committee members will dedicate four (4) weeks to carefully review and assess all received applications. Upon completion of the review process, approved businesses will be notified, and one-on-one meetings will be scheduled to discuss timelines, expectations, and other pertinent details. Finally, at future CRA meeting, a representative from the CRA will formally present the final recipients of the Business Spotlight, culminating the selection process and recognizing the chosen winners.

E. Next Steps

If you are interested in learning more about the Business Spotlight program, please click on the link provided XXX or contact [CRA representative] at XXX [email].