



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 promote local businesses within the community. It provides exposure and support to these businesses, helping them thrive and contribute to the economic growth and vitality of the area. The program involves showcasing different businesses through marketing efforts or other initiatives to attract customers and increase awareness of the products and services offered by local establishments. It will foster a sense of community pride and engagement by highlighting the unique offerings of businesses in the area.

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 **Business Spotlight Program** directly promotes goals and objectives of the 2018 Clearwater Downtown Redevelopment Plan, specifically:

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.

B. 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 applicant must be located within the boundaries of the Downtown CRA. (*see attached map*)
- **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.

- **Business Type:** The program may focus on the following kinds of businesses as defined in the Downtown Zoning code:
 - 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:** The business should demonstrate a commitment to the local community through involvement in community events, initiatives, partnerships, supporting local suppliers, or contributing to the overall economic development of the area.
- **Business Recipient Requirements:** The business is required to participate in program activities, such as marketing campaigns, and promotional efforts coordinated by the Community Redevelopment Agency.

C. Program Process

Business representatives must first complete a Business Spotlight program application. Selection committee reviews the application for eligibility. Once an application is completed and in compliance with the Business Spotlight program, the selection committee will contact approved applicants to proceed with the next steps of the process. 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. A representative from the Community Redevelopment Agency 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 Business Spotlight 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 Community Redevelopment Agency, representatives from 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 Business Spotlight Program are notified of their acceptance via email and official letterhead 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 Community Redevelopment Agency. This may include participation in marketing campaigns, attendance at community and networking events and/or Community Redevelopment Agency council meetings, and networking with fellow participants.

The application form is available by clicking on the link provided XXX.

D. Program Timeline

The proposed program timeline begins with presenting the Business Spotlight Application 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].