



City of Clearwater Community Redevelopment Agency Food and Drink Business Tenant Grant Program

A. Program Overview

The Community Redevelopment Agency's (CRA) **Food and Drink Tenant Grant Program** is a time limited opportunity for tenants to potentially receive support for investments they have made from January 1, 2018 through October 31, 2018 to properties within the CRA to establish food and/or drink businesses that are open on nights and weekends. The grant application period will open from November 1- December 15, 2018. Grants will be awarded in February 2019 by the CRA Trustees.

The **Food and Drink Grant Program** directly promotes goals and objectives of the 2018 Clearwater Downtown Redevelopment Plan, specifically:

People Goal (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 1E: Maintain Cleveland Street as Downtown's Main Street which is valued for its historic character and pedestrian scale.

Urban Design Goal (page 48) – Downtown will be a dynamic built environment of dense and livable patterns and active and attractive streets through the use of quality urban design and architecture.

Objective 4D: Encourage renovation, restoration and reuse of existing historic structures to maintain the character of Downtown's neighborhoods.

The Food and Drink Tenant Grant Program's main objectives are as follows:

- To provide limited financial support to tenants who meet the goals of the CRA's redevelopment strategy for downtown but were not eligible to participate in the former Anchor Tenant incentive program.
- To sustain food and/or drink establishments that are open on nights and weekends in the CRA to promote Downtown's ongoing revitalization as a dining destination.

B. Program Eligibility and Activities

Grant Activities:

For the purposes of this grant program, the CRA will distinguish between full service restaurants and bars. *Full service restaurants* operate a kitchen that serves hot and cold food that is prepared within the same site as the customers being served. They may or may not serve alcohol. *Bars* serve alcoholic drinks and do not have a kitchen or have limited cooking equipment. Bars serve pre-prepared food or food that is prepared in a different location from where customers are served.

The CRA will provide a grant to reimburse *full service restaurants* for eligible improvements made to the building for 35% of their costs, up to a maximum grant of \$100,000. The grant will be structured as a five-year loan to grant. The applicant must provide a signed grant agreement and financial performance guarantee that they will stay in operation for a minimum of five years.

The CRA will provide a grant to reimburse *bars* for improvements made to the building, new fixtures, new furnishings and signage for 100% of their costs, up to a maximum grant of \$30,000. The applicant must sign a grant agreement committing to remaining an eligible business for two years after the grant agreement is signed. Grant awards exceeding \$15,000 will be paid over two years to mitigate the risk of losing public funds in the event the tenant closes its business.

For grant applicants that are under construction during the grant period, the grant funds will not be released until a Certificate of Occupancy has been obtained and the business must open by July 1, 2019.

All grants require approval of the CRA Trustees.

Grant Applicants:

Eligible applicants are tenants who meet the following criteria:

- Business is located in the CRA area.
- Operate a business that serves food and/or drinks that is open a minimum of Wednesday through Saturdays from 5:00 pm to 10:00 pm on a weekly basis.
- Received a Certificate of Occupancy to open their food/drink business between January 1, 2018 through October 31, 2018 OR
- Pulled a construction permit after November 1, 2017 and are actively under construction to establish an eligible food/drink business.

Eligible Improvements for all applicants:

The general rule of thumb for building improvements that qualify is that the improvement should remain with the property, should improve the appearance and value of the property and should benefit tenants. Eligible interior and exterior building improvements include:

- ADA requirements
- Florida Fire Protection Code Requirements
- Mechanicals and HVAC systems
- Plumbing and electrical, including utility connections and upgrades
- Structure stabilization (repair and replacement of foundations, footers, load bearing walls, roofing systems)
- Room and space reconfiguration including wall relocations
- Grease traps
- Windows/Doors
- Outdoor hardscape improvements, landscape improvements and lighting
- Energy efficiency improvements
- General building or facade repairs and roof repair and replacement are eligible

Eligible Improvements for Bars ONLY:

- Furniture, fixtures, equipment and signage

C. Grant Process:

Applicants are required to submit a Tenant Food and Drink Grant Form to the CRA by December 15, 2018. CRA staff will review the grant form and confirm in writing if the applicant meets the eligibility requirements within 10 business days of submission to the CRA. CRA staff and the City Attorney's office will prepare a grant recommendation for adoption by the CRA Trustees at their February 2019 meeting.

The grant program form and timeline are available at www.downtownclearwater.com

D. Grant Implementation:

After the grant is awarded by the CRA Trustees:

1. The CRA executes the grant agreement, which includes a payment schedule and project milestones. Submission of receipts, invoices and other appropriate documentation will be required for payment.
2. All necessary permits and approvals are obtained from the City of Clearwater before additional work is commenced. All work is to be performed by a licensed and insured contractor; all work must comply with the Downtown Design Guidelines of the City of Clearwater Code of Ordinances and be properly permitted by the City of Clearwater Development Services Department.
3. Applicant completes a Grant Completion Form which includes AFTER pictures of the project, a copy of the Certificate of Occupancy and any final invoices for payment.

E. Next Steps

If you are interested in learning more about the Food and Drink Tenant Grant Program, please visit downtownclearwater.com or contact Anne Fogarty France at anne.fogarty-france@myclearwater.com

