

**City of Clearwater  
Downtown Clearwater – Community Redevelopment Agency  
Placemaking and Resident Engagement Grant Program**

**A. Program Overview**

The purpose of the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) Placemaking and Resident Engagement grant program is to provide support and funding to those who are interested in making a positive change through placemaking that assists in transforming Downtown Clearwater into a destination filled with a variety of active, beautiful, and creative public places. Placemaking is the collaborative process that fosters a greater sense of place, ownership, and pride within your community for all to enjoy.

Grants may be awarded to property owners, tenants, organizations, or individuals for placemaking and resident outreach programs within the CRA district. The CRA will review each funding request and establish the grant amounts per the individuality of each project. The funding amount for the grant program will be established by the CRA Trustees on an annual basis. All grant awards are subject to budget availability. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis. The application form is available at [www.downtownclearwater.com](http://www.downtownclearwater.com).

The **Placemaking and Resident Engagement grant program** directly promotes goals and objectives of the 2018 Clearwater Downtown Redevelopment Plan, specifically:

**Policy 25** (page 50) – The City shall continue to encourage neighborhood associations that empower residents to improve their neighborhood and strengthen ties between residents and government.

**Downtown Gateway District, Policy 7** (page 80) – Encourage community-led public art.

**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 1E:* Maintain Cleveland Street as Downtown’s Main Street which is valued for its historic character and pedestrian scale.

*Objective 1H:* Maintain, activate and program parks, plazas and recreational areas.

*Objective 1J:* Recognize and celebrate the unique features of Downtown neighborhoods.

**Accessibility Goal** (page 46) – Downtown will have a connected network with mobility choices.

*Objective 2B:* Strengthen Cleveland Street, Osceola and Fort Harrison Avenues as local, pedestrian-oriented streets. Identify other local streets to be reinvigorated with active ground floor uses.

*Objective 2H:* Support temporary techniques that improve the street environment such as murals, temporary planters, sharrows, bike lanes and painted intersections until permanent improvements are made.

**Amenity Goal** (page 47) – Downtown will be a memorable place to be enjoyed that is enhanced by Clearwater’s waterfront location, natural resources, built environment and history.

*Objective 3D:* Utilize portions of the library for alternative uses that may include a restaurant, special events, group gathering, and expansion of art galleries

*Objective 3F:* Promote the visual and performing arts.

*Objective 3G:* Create and activate space to work as signature destinations, including civic plazas, markets and retail gathering places that promote economic growth for Downtown.

The Placemaking grant program’s **objectives** are as follows:

- Infuse downtown with innovative and thriving public spaces.
- Increase and diversify placemaking within downtown by making it easier for new producers and community leaders to enhance the community.
- Incentivize those looking to energize downtown by connecting employees to downtown and connecting residents to downtown, providing opportunities for these groups to take pride in their community.
- Provide additional support for those who wish to engage downtown employees, children and implement art/tech projects.

## **B. Program Eligibility and Activities**

CRA staff will administer the Placemaking and Resident Engagement grant program. Funding for this grant program is based on budget availability and will be considered on a first-come, first-served basis. Application submission does not guarantee approval. Applications will be reviewed for completeness and compliance with program criteria to determine eligibility for grant funding. Applications that do not comply with the program criteria and conditions will not be eligible for funding. No grants will be awarded for work completed prior to an executed grant agreement. The funding decision of CRA staff is final.

No more than one active grant application may be awarded to the same applicant at a time. An applicant must successfully complete one project prior to applying for another grant. Grant funding from multiple city programs cannot be applied to the same program.

### Type

Each project must fall within one of the following four categories:

#### 1. Standard Placemaking

Often known simply as “placemaking” or Traditional Placemaking, is the universal term for the process of creating places where people want to be. Usually, this process consists of small projects and/or activities that engage and empower people while improving the quality of a place for a period of time.

#### 2. Creative Placemaking

Brings arts and cultural activities to the forefront with projects limited only by the creative forces that fuel each unique idea. Creative Placemaking animates spaces bringing diverse people together to celebrate, inspire, and be inspired within each place.

### 3. Tactical Placemaking

Is the process of creating quality places through small projects and short-term activities. These planned projects are often temporary, low-cost, completed in phases, or take place in already established public spaces. These projects work to efficiently generate new uses of spaces and maximize their use for enhanced purposes.

### 4. Resident Outreach

Programs that connect Clearwater residents to downtown to create new advocates for downtown's public spaces and businesses.

Applicants must identify a category on their application. Applications may qualify under multiple categories.

## Place

Eligible grant requests must enhance public spaces or provide public benefit within the CRA boundaries. Eligible locations include:

- Cleveland Street closure (400-500 blocks)
- Pinellas Trail
- Prospect Lake Park
- Station Square Park
- Underutilized or under beautified locations
- Vacant lots/storefronts
- Other locations where need for change can be demonstrated, approved on a case-by-case basis

## Eligible Grant Expenditures

Eligible projects must provide a positive public impact to the space in which they occur. Improvements can vary from temporary to semi-permanent enhancements. Outdoor projects must be viewable from the public right of way. Indoor projects must be viewable for public enjoyment.

Examples of eligible projects include, but not limited to:

### Beautification

- Public art installations, murals, sculptures
- Decorations
- Street, alley, parking lot, vacant lot, park or plaza improvements

### Activations

- Activations of arts, cultural programming and performance art
- Park enhancements, parklets, people spots
- Window or storefront displays
- Interactive and technological advancements

## Engagement

- Community relationship building (book clubs, bicycle rides, lecture series, play days)
- Place Branding
- Community gardens
- Recreational spaces, physical activities, bike or pedestrian improvements

### **C. Grant Process:**

Property owners, tenants, organizations, or individuals first complete an online grant application. An internal committee of CRA and City staff will review the application for funding eligibility. Once an application is determined complete and in compliance with the grant program, CRA staff will execute a grant agreement that outlines the approved funding amount, total project costs, project timeline and scope of work.

The application form is available at [www.downtownclearwater.com](http://www.downtownclearwater.com).

### **Application Submission**

1. Applications must be submitted online. Once an application is submitted staff will provide the applicant with general guidance on the proposed project and if the project qualifies for grant funds. Incomplete applications will not be accepted. Rejected applications will receive the reason(s) for rejection in writing.
2. Each application will be reviewed according to the following criteria:
  - Consistency with the goals of the Downtown Redevelopment Plan
  - Consistency with the goals of the grant program and selected category type
  - Feasibility of the proposed scope of services and timeline
  - Ability to meet the program objectives, legal and financial requirements of the grant program
  - Commitment to engage designated target audience
3. If the application is approved by the CRA Director, the applicant shall sign and complete a funding agreement. After the funding agreement has been executed, the applicant may begin work on the project.

### **Application Details**

Applicants must provide detailed answers to all questions on the application. Including submission of all requested supporting documents. Failure to answer all questions will lead to delays in reviewing application or denial of the application. Questions include:

- Ability to demonstrate **who** this project will benefit and how they learn about this project, complete with a detailed marketing plan.
- Ability to demonstrate **what** the project goals are, complete with a detailed project description.
- Ability to demonstrate **when** the project will happen, complete with a detailed project timeline and schedule.
- Ability to demonstrate **where** the project will happen, complete with a detailed site plan.
- Ability to demonstrate **why** change is needed for this project to be funded, complete with an explanation detailing how your request for grant amount was determined.
- Ability to demonstrate **how** your funding will be spent to make the project happen, complete with a

detailed project budget.

### Support for Program

Applicant must demonstrate support from the community for their placemaking grant request. Letter of support will be accepted from local nonprofit organizations, chamber of commerce organizations, condo or community associations, or a minimum of two businesses or two residents within the CRA boundaries.

### Program Requirements

Eligible projects must identify the following on their application:

- Placemaking type
- Placemaking location
- Target Audience

Complete applications must include the following:

- Complete online application with all requested attachments
- Site Plan
- Support Letter
- Detailed Budget

### Project Funding

Applicant may request up to 50% seed funding to start the project. All other funding will be issued on a reimbursement basis following the complete submission of all expenses.

Grant award amount is determined per applicant.

Funding will be awarded to projects under the following scale:

- Small – total project cost up to \$2,999
- Medium – total project cost \$3,000 - \$9,999
- Large – total project cost \$10,000 - \$25,000
- Projects with a target audience of downtown employees, children and/or incorporate art/tech will be eligible for funding up to 100% of project costs
- Projects led by Clearwater neighborhood associations will be eligible for funding up to 100% of project costs

### Permitting

For scopes of work that require a permit, permits must be obtained prior to the execution of a grant agreement. For placemaking projects incorporating events within their programming please be advised that Special Event permits must be submitted at minimum 60 days prior to the event. Any work requiring a permit must be performed by a licensed and insured contractor and comply with the Downtown Design Guidelines of the City of Clearwater Code of Ordinances. Projects requiring a building permit will need to submit proof of a Certificate of Occupancy or Completion prior to requesting reimbursement.

## Reimbursement

Grant funds will be disbursed by the CRA to the applicant on a reimbursement basis for eligible project expenses. CRA staff must review and approve all reimbursement requests. Applicants must submit an itemized list of expenses with proof of payment. Summary of completed program with requested metrics from the grant approval letter and before and after photos are due prior to issuance of funding.

The CRA Director has the authority to extend time limits for project completion based on extenuating circumstances. Grantees must request an extension in writing and if approved, an amendment to the grant agreement will be executed. The CRA Director has the authority to modify the payment process based on extenuating circumstances.

## **D. Next Steps**

If you are interested in learning more about the Placemaking and Resident Engagement grant program please visit [www.downtownclearwater.com](http://www.downtownclearwater.com) or contact Eric Santiago at [eric.santiago@myclearwater.com](mailto:eric.santiago@myclearwater.com).