

**West Palm Beach
Community Redevelopment Agency**

**Downtown/City Center CRA
District**



MERCHANT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Downtown/City Center Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) Merchant Assistance Program

About the Program

The Merchant Assistance Incentive Program (Program) is designed to assist merchants in increasing sales through training and merchandising techniques. The Program is available only to restaurant and retail businesses located in the Downtown/City Center CRA. The incentive is limited to the following activity; re-merchandise an occupied space, evaluate and create a marketing strategy for the business, train restaurant and retail business operators in advertising, marketing, promotion, sales and service techniques and other related tools, and to stimulate sales for business retention purposes.

Criteria

- Must be an established restaurant or retail business for a minimum of three (3) consecutive years in this location and be located in the Downtown/City Center CRA.
- Must be able to justify economic distress and/or outside factors that are negatively affecting sales/cash flow and sustainability.
- Business owner must be willing to attend courses or work one-on-one with a retail consultant provided by the CRA in merchandising, advertising, promotion and related training.
- Business owner must continue to use materials provided including materials for display, visual representation of merchandise, and other instruments recommended by the consultant.
- Business owner must attempt to implement recommendations related to sales and customer service techniques.

Program Goals

- Create a more viable merchandise mix.
- Provide interior renovations that have a substantial visual impact.
- Provide training to merchants and their employees.
- Increase sales of existing business to ensure viability and retention.
- Attract additional business to the district by upgrading the existing.

Program Specifications

The CRA will provide a grant of up to \$15,000 per business inclusive of consultant's time to be used for training as well the aesthetic improvements to the interior of a business including but not limited to painting, lighting, accessories, interior décor and display materials.

Businesses listed for sale may not apply. Properties and/or businesses that are sold within twenty-four months of receiving assistance and/or grant funding must repay the full amount. Implementation of the prepared marketing strategy must begin within One Hundred Eighty (180) days following CRA approval process.

Please Note

Property to be improved must be free of all municipal and county liens, judgments or encumbrances of any kind. This provision can be waived by the CRA Board of Commissioners if development plans for said property meet the goals and objectives as set forth in the Downtown/City Center CRA Five Year Strategic Finance Plan. Upon grant approval, said property must remain free of all municipal and county liens, judgments or encumbrances of any kind under the term of the agreement.

The Merchant Assistance Program benefits are contingent upon funding availability and CRA approval and are not to be construed as an entitlement or right of a property owner or applicant. Properties in the designated CRA areas are not eligible for CRA funded programs when such funding conflicts with the goals expressed in the CRA Strategic Finance Plan or Community Redevelopment Plan.

MERCHANT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM APPLICATION

Date of Application _____

1. Address of Business requesting assistance:

2. Name of Applicant:

Address of Applicant:

Phone:

Fax:

Email:

3. Does the applicant own property? _____ Yes _____ No

If "No" provide valid lease and written letter of consent from the property owner indicating their approval for the use of this program.

4. How long have you been in business in the Downtown/City Center CRA? _____

5. Business Description:

6. Have sales decreased in the last 1 year _____; 2 years _____; 3 years _____
(Check all that apply)

7. What actions have you taken to try to increase sales or improve business; attach advertisements or describe other materials or techniques used to improve sales.

8. Are you willing to attend training courses related to your business? Yes No Maybe

9. Describe the physical improvements you believe would help increase sales.

10. Describe other improvements you believe your business could make that would increase sales.

Authorized Representative:

Business Owner Signature

Property Owner Signature (If different)

Print Name

Print Name

The Merchant Assistance Program benefits are contingent upon funding availability and CRA approval and are not to be construed as an entitlement or right of a property owner or applicant. Properties in the designated CRA areas are not eligible for CRA funded programs when such funding conflicts with the goals expressed in the CRA Strategic Finance Plan or Community Redevelopment Plan.

Please Note

Property to be improved must be free of all municipal and county liens, judgments or encumbrances of any kind. This provision can be waived by the CRA Board of Commissioners if development plans for said property meets the goals and objectives as set forth in the Downtown/City Center CRA Five Year Strategic Finance Plan. Upon grant approval, said property must remain free of all municipal and county liens, judgments or encumbrances of any kind under the term of the agreement.