



Tampa Community Redevelopment Agency
306 East Jackson Street 2N
Tampa, Florida 33602
(813) 274-8325
tampa.gov/CRA

CALL TO ARTISTS:

West Tampa Artist Wrapped Signal Boxes

This is a Call for Artists Who:

- Have an interest in creating artwork for traffic signal boxes in West Tampa
- Recognize the value of celebrating the diversity of West Tampa through iconic imagery
- Are visual artists or who can transfer artwork to a digital format
- Live in Tampa

Budget Range: Up to \$2,000, depending on number of designs chosen.

Application materials must be received electronically by March 16th 2025 at Midnight

About:

The West Tampa Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) invites artists to apply to be considered for the creation of Traffic Signal Box artwork throughout the West Tampa CRA. The West Tampa CRA is specifically interested in wrapping signal boxes with vinyl wrap. Artists are not responsible for the management of the installation.

Eligibility /Qualifications:

This opportunity is open to all artists residing in Tampa Florida, both emerging and established artists, who have completed projects for private clients, public agencies or for grassroots/community projects. Prior Public Art experience is not a requirement to apply but is preferred. Artist will have to obtain a high-res scan and or vector file for submission of deliverables. Artists must follow FDOT and City of Tampa Guidelines for designs. These include: no numbers or text, road signs, and recognizable faces. No offensive imagery will be considered.

Locations:

- Albany and Main St (NW corner)
- Willow and Main ST (NW Corner)
- Main St and N Blvd (NE Corner)
- N. Blvd and Green St (SW Corner)
- Cypress and N Blvd (SE Corner)
- Willow and Cypress (SE Corner)
- Willow and Cass (NE Corner)
- Cass and N Blvd (NW Corner)
- Rome and Main St (NW Corner)

Selection Process:



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Information and materials submitted in response to this RFQ will be evaluated by a committee comprised of arts professionals, and West Tampa CRA designees to determine eligibility to apply for specific opportunities. Each Artist will include what Themes they would like to be eligible for. Each artist can pick as many themes as they want. From one theme or all themes. Please make sure to include which Themes you want to apply for. Artists are expected to do their own research to elaborate on these themes.

Themes:

Cigar History: Create a vibrant essence of West Tampa's cigar history. Some imagery to think of cigars, factory tools, old street scenes, cigar rolling tables, tobacco leaves, and glimpses of West Tampa's streets and smokestacks. At the heart of the factories were the lectores (readers), who sat on platforms, reading newspapers and literature to tabaqueros (cigar rollers), fostering education, activism, and cultural unity. Though later banned for inspiring labor movements, their legacy remains a symbol of knowledge and resistance.

Women in West Tampa: Create a design representing the strength and determination of these women who shaped the neighborhood. Women have been instrumental in shaping the community through activism, healthcare, and education. Clara Frye established a hospital for Black residents, addressing critical healthcare disparities in the area. Local women also played key roles in labor movements, particularly in the cigar industry, where they organized for better working conditions. Their contributions laid the foundation for West Tampa's growth and resilience, leaving a lasting impact on the neighborhood.

The Historic Heart of West Tampa/ Architecture: Capture the architectural essence of West Tampa, a neighborhood shaped by Cuban, Spanish, Italian, and African American communities since its founding in 1892. Its historic buildings blend European, Caribbean, and Southern influences, creating a unique visual landscape.

Main Street stands as a testament to this history, lined with vintage storefronts, old brick buildings, and palm-lined sidewalks that have witnessed generations of culture and commerce. Iconic churches, with their intricate facades and towering steeples, served as community pillars, reflecting the area's deep-rooted faith and traditions.

Domino Culture in West Tampa: Dominos, has been a part of Tampa's culture for as long as anyone can remember. Although it appears to have been invented by the Chinese, with the oldest known domino sets dating as far back as 1120 A.D., it has become a tradition in West Tampa culture. There are many versions of the game played throughout the United States and the rest of the world, but West Tampa, playing dominos is as much a part of our heritage as cigars.

Wildlife/ history: The area was nicknamed La Caimaneria, or "place of alligators," by the city's residents due to its swampy eastern end. This theme could also include native plants and other native wildlife.

History of Food in West Tampa: Explore the rich culinary history of West Tampa through visual storytelling. From the aroma of freshly rolled Cuban bread to the legacy of family-owned cafés serving café con leche and deviled crabs, food has long been at the heart of this vibrant community. Depictions of historic eateries, bustling kitchens, and the hands that crafted traditional dishes that highlight the cultural fusion that defines West Tampa's food scene.

Drum Major/ Marching band: Marching bands have been an integral part of West Tampa's history, with their performances central to parades, cultural celebrations, and civic events for over a century. Historically, these bands



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reflected the area's diverse cultural influences, blending Cuban, Afro-Cuban, Italian and African American musical traditions. Whether during fiestas, patriotic parades, or community gatherings, marching bands brought together the sounds of Latin brass and jazz, adding rhythm and energy to public life.

Today, Blake High School's award-winning marching band continues this legacy, representing the rich musical tradition of West Tampa. Their performances, both in local events and regional competitions, embody the community's enduring love for music and its vibrant cultural history.

Sounds of West Tampa : Celebrate the rich musical history of West Tampa, where jazz, gospel, and soul shaped the rhythm of the community. By the 1920s and 1930s, local clubs and bars became hubs for jazz, as African American musicians from West Tampa and nearby Ybor City blended swing and Latin rhythms, creating a unique sound that influenced the broader Tampa music scene.

Beyond the clubs, gospel music echoed through the neighborhood's churches, uniting congregations with powerful harmonies and deep spiritual roots. By the mid-20th century, soul music emerged, reflecting the struggles and triumphs of the community through heartfelt lyrics and infectious grooves.

Cigar Factories and Cuban Music: In the late 1800s, the cigar industry in West Tampa attracted thousands of Cuban immigrants. With them came Cuban son, danzón, and rumba—music forms that played a vital role in the social and cultural fabric of the community. In addition, trovadores (Cuban balladeers) would perform in the cigar factories, serenading workers as they hand-rolled cigars. The music fostered solidarity and helped preserve cultural identity. West Tampa also had a significant Afro-Cuban population, contributing rhythms like rumba and guaguancó. These genres, characterized by complex percussion and call-and-response vocals, became popular in community events and celebrations. Afro-Cuban music, with its blend of African and Spanish elements, laid the groundwork for the Latin jazz and salsa movements in the mid-20th century.

Indigenous History: Artists are invited to create works that celebrate the Indigenous peoples who first called West Tampa home. From the Tocobaga, who built shell mounds and thrived along the Hillsborough River, to the Seminoles, who hunted, fished, and traded in the region, Native communities shaped the land long before industrialization. Their resilience and traditions live on through historical research, cultural preservation, and storytelling.

Imaginative / Nonrealistic: This is an open-ended theme. This is something nonrealistic or imaginative in conjunction with West Tampa. Open Design concept.

The Application Process:

Artists are being asked to submit images of past works and resumes to be reviewed by a committee. **No new designs are to be submitted at this time.** Deliverables by artist(s) will be graphic image only. Please do not include pictures of your self in the images of the artwork. This should be artwork only otherwise these images will be disqualified.

A complete application consists of the following items:

- 1. Digital Images of past work (High RES and Vector files are needed):**



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- Please include up to 10 images (no fewer than 6) of completed art works or projects. Please have each image no larger than 3MB.
2. **Professional Résumé (PDF):**
- Maximum length two (2) pages.
 - Please be sure to clearly state name, address, email, phone, and website/social media on résumé.
 - Please include which themes you want to be considered for in the body of your email.

How to Submit:

Please email documents to tampaCRAarts@tampagov.net. All items for submission must be uploaded as one zipped folder or preferably a PDF labeled with artist's name. Mailed submissions will not be accepted. **Materials must be submitted electronically by March 16th 2025 at Midnight**

Questions? Contact the CRA Arts and Cultural Project Coordinator via email:

Email: TampaCRAarts@tampagov.net

Website: www.tampagov.net/cra