

OCALA COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

REVITALIZING OUR COMMUNITY

**FISCAL YEAR 2021
CRA ANNUAL REPORT**

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY?

There are over 220 Community Redevelopment Agencies currently operating in Florida. A Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) is a special district created by a local (city or county) government to carry out redevelopment activities in a specifically defined geographic area. The enabling legislation giving a city the authority to create a CRA is found in Chapter 163 Part III of the Florida Statutes. As prescribed in the statute, CRA redevelopment activities focus on making improvements to the physical environment within the redevelopment area – buildings and sites, streets and sidewalks, parks, and infrastructure.

These physical improvements are accomplished by the CRA funding capital improvement projects and partnering with the private sector. Redevelopment agencies invest public funds in redevelopment activities with the intent of encouraging private investment into properties. CRAs reinvest tax increment financing funds to attract private investment into economically distressed areas. The end product, resulting from these redevelopment efforts, is the transformation of underutilized properties and facilities into productive assets of the various communities within the CRA, as well as the city as a whole. A CRA can only expend funds to conduct redevelopment activities within the legally described CRA area. CRAs are also regulated under Chapter 189 as a ‘Special District’.

OCALA CRA

The Ocala CRA is divided into four subareas: Downtown, North Magnolia, West Ocala, and East Ocala. There are four Advisory Committees, one dedicated to each subarea, which make recommendations to the CRA Board on projects and programs. Each of the four subareas has its own redevelopment plan that reflects the unique challenges and goals within their respective areas.

Subarea	Establishment Date	Expiration Year
Downtown	May 24, 1988	2038
North Magnolia	November 2, 1999	2038
West Ocala	November 17, 2015	2045
East Ocala	May 17, 2016	2045

CRA REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Section 163.371 of the Florida Statutes specifies the annual reporting requirements for CRAs.

A community redevelopment agency must file an annual report with the county or municipality that created the agency and publish the report on the agency's website. The report must include the following information:

1. **Audit** - The most recent complete audit report of the redevelopment trust fund as required in s. 163.387(8).
2. **Performance data** for CRA including the:
 1. Total number of projects started and completed and the estimated cost for each project.
 2. Total expenditures from the redevelopment trust fund.
 3. Original assessed real property values within the community redevelopment agency's area of authority as of the day the agency was created.
 4. Total assessed real property values of property within the boundaries of the community redevelopment agency as of January 1 of the reporting year.
 5. Total amount expended for affordable housing for low-income and middle-income residents.
3. **Plan Goals & Objectives** - A summary indicating the extent to which the community redevelopment agency has achieved the goals and objectives set out in its community redevelopment plan.

The above three items are addressed in two separate documents.

Document 1 - Audit In previous years, the CRA audit and financial statements were done as a part of the City's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR). Beginning in FY 2020, the CRA had a stand-alone, independent audit performed.

Document 2 – Performance Data & Plan Goals & Objectives These items are contained in this report, which highlights the CRA activities and achievements.

CRA ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Downtown

Ted Schatt, Chairman
Dr. Rhella Murdaugh, Vice Chair
Jaye Baille
Summer Gill
Tom McDonald
Joe Reichel
Jimmy Walton

North Magnolia

Mike Needham, Chairman
Angie Clifton
Floyd Hershberger
Ken Kebrdle
Lisa Midgett
Clark Yandle
Toni Yoder
Frank Zadnik III

West Ocala

Reginald Landers, Jr. Chairman
Elgin Carelock, Vice-Chairman
Carolyn Adams
Gorham Black III
Dr. Barbara Brooks
Adam Lombardo
Ruth Reed
Dwan Thomas

East Ocala

Kristen Dreyer, Chairman
Van Akin, Vice Chairman
Greg Blair
Tito Comas
Ken DePasquale
John Gamache
Karl Kunz
Steven Mendez
Timothy Rogers

CRA AGENCY BOARD

Justin Grabelle, Chair
Brent Malever, Vice Chair
Ire Bethea, Sr.
Jay Musleh
Matthew Wardell

CRA STAFF

Tye Chighizola, Growth Management Director
Gus Gianikas, CRA Manager
Holly Lang, Fiscal Manager
Ian Rynex, Redevelopment Analyst / Planner

CONSISTENCY OF CRA ACTIVITIES WITH REDEVELOPMENT PLANS AND SUMMARY OF GOAL ACHIEVEMENT

S. 163.387(6) states moneys in the redevelopment trust fund may be expended for undertakings of a community redevelopment agency as described in the community redevelopment plan only pursuant to an annual budget adopted by the board of commissioners of the community redevelopment agency.

S. 163.371(2) (c) F.S. states a community redevelopment agency shall file an annual report and the report must include a summary indicating to what extent the community redevelopment agency has achieved the goals set out in its community redevelopment plan.

To show consistency, the table below cites the applicable plan sections for each CRA activity. The table also indicates progress to achieving the goals and objectives. Each CRA subarea has its own Redevelopment Plan.

CRA ACTIVITY	PROGRESS / STATUS	GOALS & OBJECTIVES
Downtown Grant Program	On-going annual program	The Fund may be used to provide incentives for development in the Downtown Redevelopment Area. The incentives may be provided in the form of cash contributions, loans, tax rebates, and gap financing.
N. Magnolia Grant Program	On-going annual program	<p>GOAL 4: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - To maintain an economically sound industrial/business area in Ocala</p> <p>Objective 4.1: Enhance the commercial tax base, promote business development, by encouraging the reuse of vacant and underutilized buildings.</p> <p>Strategy 4.1.2– Develop Incentive and grant programs to encourage property improvements.</p>
West Ocala Grant Program	On-going annual program	<p>Goal 1: Coordinate public and private resources to increase private capital investment on commercial corridors</p> <p>Objective 4: Expand the city’s business revitalization grant program</p> <p>Strategy: Provision of grants for property improvements and property redevelopment.</p>
East Ocala Grant	On-going annual program	<p>GOAL 3: Improve vacant, dilapidated and nuisance properties which are barriers to corridor and neighborhood redevelopment</p> <p>Objective 4: Establish programs to remediate these conditions for property reuse.</p>

Downtown Redevelopment Agreements	Negotiated Agreements with catalytic projects in which incentives are based on return of investment (ROI) of City and CRA funding.	The Fund may be used to provide incentives for development in the Downtown Redevelopment Area. The incentives may be provided in the form of cash contributions, loans, tax rebates, and gap financing.
Imagine North Magnolia	Activities in 2021 involved land development planning; publishing Invitations to Negotiate (ITN) for redevelopment of City property and negotiating with builders and developers for redevelopment	<p>GOAL 2: PROPERTY REDEVELOPMENT. To encourage private sector investment to redevelop undeveloped properties.</p> <p>Objective 2.1: Ensure undeveloped properties are development-ready to increase their feasibility for redevelopment.</p> <p>Strategy 2.1.1. Purchase, assemble, and prepare sites for redevelopment. Prepare sub-area conceptual development beginning with the Imagine North Magnolia subarea.</p>
Multi-purpose Community Center	Construction started February 2021. Opening scheduled for December 2022	<p>Goal 1: Coordinate public and private resources to increase private capital investment</p> <p>Objective 5: Encourage the location of a Competitive Intelligence Center (Library) and assist in the development of a and a new multi-purpose center in West Ocala.</p>
Heritage Trail	Construction started March 2021. Site work and heritage art will be completed in 2022.	<p>Goal 2: Enhance gateways, corridor segments and crossroads</p> <p>Objectives 1&2: Design and construct streetscape improvements at neighborhood entrances</p>
Tucker Hill Affordable Housing Project	Properties purchased, rezoning, platting and site design completed	<p>Goal 3: Improve vacant, dilapidated and nuisance properties which are barriers to corridor and neighborhood redevelopment</p> <p>Objective 7. Identify suitable areas of West Ocala for development of new housing opportunities</p>
West Ocala Property Purchases	Purchase Property on NW 21 st Street Dec. 2020	<p>Goal 1: Coordinate public and private resources to increase private capital investment</p> <p>Objective 6&7: Establish land acquisition program</p>
Downtown Streetscape	Improvements made to Magnolia & E 1 st Ave.	The Downtown Master Plan recommends streetscape, pedestrian and bike connections and traffic calming.

CRA GRANT PROGRAMS

The CRA Commercial Building Improvement Grant Program is the largest activity in the CRA work program in terms of staff time usage. Each CRA subarea has its own grant program. The framework of each program was developed based on the needs and budget of each sub-area. The programs address key statutorily defined blight conditions that currently exist in the CRA including vacant or underutilized commercial space, obsolete or substandard interior spaces, inadequate life safety and/or accessibility provisions, and deteriorating or inappropriate facades. The intention of the grant programs is to encourage private investment into commercial properties in the Downtown CRA area

CRA Subarea	Framework	Grant Max.& Match
Downtown	Priority work elements are: (1) Improvements to meet Building Codes for Accessibility; Fire Protection; and Life Safety; (2) Conversion of upper floor space to residential; (3) Removal and replacement of inappropriate or incomplete exterior restoration of original façades, including installation of appropriate store front windows; (4) Other fixed improvements related to build-out or additions.	\$25,000 / 50%
North Magnolia	Priority work elements are: (1) Cleaning, repairing and painting exterior walls; (2) Repair and replacement of front, side, rear, façade details including doors, windows, lighting, wall signs and awnings; (3) New landscaping; and (4) Parking lot resealing and striping.	\$10,000 / 75%
West Ocala	Priority work elements are: (1) Vacant buildings being converted to active use; (2) ADA Accessibility; (3) Security system, including lighting, cameras, and fencing; and (4) Façade improvements.	\$15,000 / 75%
East Ocala	Priority work elements are: (1) Vacant buildings being converted to active use; (2) New signs following CRA design guidelines, including removal of inappropriate signs; (3) Façade improvements – windows, doors, awnings, exterior security and safety lighting, painting; (4) New landscaping; and, (5) Parking lot resealing and striping.	\$10,000 / 50%

FINANCIAL SUMMARY OF CAPITAL PROJECTS FY 21

FY 20 Project Description	Subarea	AMOUNT
East Ocala		
Wayfinding Signage		\$8,172
Downtown		
Wayfinding Signage		\$21,197
Osceola Trak		\$25,889
North Magnolia		
Wayfinding Signage		\$12,896
N Magnolia Ave, Streetscape – Landscape		\$959
Imagine North Magnolia Redevelopment – Master Planning		\$39,357
West Ocala		
Mary Sue Rich Community Center at Reed Place		\$3,423,809
Heritage Trail – Construction		\$112,442
Tucker Hill – Affordable Housing Project – Property Purchase, Platting		\$2,265
Property Acquisition – NW 21 Street		\$166,702
Wayfinding Signage		\$32,825

ASSESSED VALUES – BASE YEAR & CURRENT YEAR

DOWNTOWN		
	Base Year	Current Year
Year	1987	2021
Value	\$45,259,727	\$96,170,261
NORTH MAGNOLIA		
	Base Year	Current Year
Year	1987	2021
Value	\$22,392,439	\$54,105,745
WEST OCALA		
	2015	2021
Year	2015	2021
Value	\$475,687,550	\$593,418,124
EAST OCALA		
	2015	2021
Year	2015	2021
Value	\$208,290,128	\$255,436,936

FINANCIAL SUMMARY OF BUILDING IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

Subarea	Approved FY 2021	Amount Approved	Completed FY 2021	Reimbursed to Completed Projects	Total Project Investment (Completed)
<u>Commercial</u>					
Downtown	8	\$168,075	4	\$97,105	\$460,277
East Ocala	1	\$10,000	2	\$20,000	\$54,794
N Magnolia	5	\$40,000	5	\$35,437	\$73,497
West Ocala	3	\$23,699	3	19,450	\$38,514
<u>Residential</u>					
East Ocala	0	0	2	\$1,500	\$3,535
TOTAL	17	\$241,774	16	\$173,582	\$630,616

Grant projects typically extend into the next fiscal years. For example, grants approved in FY 21 may not be completed until FY 22 and grants completed FY 21 may have begun in FY 20.