

# *W*INTER HAVEN

*The Chain of Lakes City*



**COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT  
AGENCY (CRA)  
Annual Report  
2020-2021**

## MESSAGE FROM THE CRA BOARD CHAIR



The Winter Haven Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) is continuously working to transform blighted areas in our community. There are two districts within the Winter Haven CRA – Downtown and Florence Villa. We are dedicated to revitalizing and redeveloping both areas into thriving districts that are sought out by both businesses and residents.

A key aspect of our focus is to rebuild an environment where new investment can grow and prosper. In doing so, we strive to improve the social and environmental conditions that will gradually reverse the blighted conditions we see in some areas of our community.

A handwritten signature in blue ink on a light-colored background, reading "J.P. Powell".

-J.P. Powell, CRA Board Chairman

## MESSAGE FROM THE CRA MANAGER

We are very pleased to report on the activities and progress of the Winter Haven Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) for FY 2020-2021. The purpose of the CRA is to eliminate blight and enhance our tax base, while encouraging economic growth and development. This is done by forming plans in concert with the community and strategically implementing those plans to improve the economic climate and conditions in our redevelopment areas.



During the pandemic, we experienced unprecedented changes in our community. COVID-19 has caused us to pivot and become more resourceful. The CRA is focused on revitalization in both of our redevelopment areas. We are committed to developing effective incentive programs and partnerships to impact our two districts.

Reflecting on the year, we launched several new programs, one of which was a grant program aimed at helping residential property owners with exterior improvements. The program was created to help eliminate the visual blight in our neighborhoods, and to bolster a pride-in-ownership for the community.

Great things are in store for our community in the upcoming years, including leading the way with new initiatives and programs that add value in our districts.

A handwritten signature in blue ink on a light-colored background, reading "Deena Ware".

-Deena Ware, CRA & Neighborhood Programs Manager

## **ABOUT THE COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY**

### **Background**

The Winter Haven Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) is led by a seven-member Board of Directors and receives input from an advisory committee for each district.

<b>CRA BOARD</b>	<b>DOWNTOWN ADVISORY COMMITTEE</b>	<b>FLORENCE VILLA ADVISORY COMMITTEE</b>
L. Tracy Mercer	Robert Sammons - Chair	Joey Hilliard – Chair
Nat Birdsong	Julie Sands – Vice Chair	Tymesia Ellis – Vice Chair
Brian Yates	Dave Dershimer	Joe Halman
Brad Dantzler	Cyndi Threlkeld	Melodie Stevenson
James H. (JP) Powell - Chair	Christopher M. Collany	Betty Smothers
James B. Threlkel	Jessie Skubna	Deldrick Leonard
Clifton Dollison	Rick Renardson	JaQuis McCullough
	Panogiotis Iakovidis	Derrick Baker
	Chris Sexson	Miriam L. Tillman
	Steve Kalogridis	Kamesha Williams

Established in 2000, the Winter Haven Community Redevelopment Agency fosters and promotes community redevelopment activities in two designated districts: Downtown and Florence Villa. A CRA is a “special district” under Florida law that encourages redevelopment within the district. Activities of the Winter Haven CRA are detailed in plans tailored for each district which include:

- Infrastructure improvements
- Streetscaping or beautification
- Affordable housing
- Recreation and park facility improvements
- Economic development
- Transportation improvement
- Neighborhood enhancement

The CRA is primarily funded through Tax Increment Financing (TIF), a process of capturing property tax revenues that would normally go to Polk County and the City. TIF funds are deposited into a Redevelopment Trust Fund that can then be spent on specific projects or used to leverage additional financing for larger projects.





*South Central Park*

## **CRA FINANCIALS**

The primary funding source for the Winter Haven Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) is Tax Increment Financing (TIF). TIF revenues are calculated based on the Polk County Property Appraiser's Office Redevelopment Reports that determine the taxable value of the CRA districts. The Winter Haven CRA was created by Resolution R-00-05 (Downtown) and Resolution R-00-06 both adopted March 13, 2000, with an original assessed real property value of \$171,310,567 for the Downtown District (District 22) and \$39,596,809 for the Florence Villa (District 21).

The 2020-2021 total taxable value for the Downtown District was \$347,260,311 producing TIF revenues of \$2,288,147. The total taxable value for the Florence Villa District was \$73,993,447 producing TIF revenues of \$447,313.



	<u>Downtown</u>		<u>Florence Villa</u>	
	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>
<b><u>Revenues</u></b>				
Ad Valorem Taxes-City	\$1,134,964	\$1,134,964	\$223,126	\$221,875
Ad Valorem Taxes-County	1,153,961	1,153,183	226,710	225,437
Interest Earnings	20,000	3,093	4,000	435
Parking Space Rent	4,200	3,300	0	0
Sales of Assets	0	0	0	0
Cares Act	0	11,199	0	4,800
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,313,125</b>	<b>\$2,305,739</b>	<b>\$453,836</b>	<b>\$452,547</b>
<b><u>Expenditures</u></b>				
Administration	\$252,410	\$259,124	\$77,957	\$67,125
Parking Garage	65,050	35,693	0	0
Transfer-Transportation	0	15,000	15,000	65,000
Transfer-Dark Fiber	12,600	12,600	4,200	4,200
Transfer-General Fund	767,610	767,610	106,179	106,179
Transfer-2015 Construction Fund	0	100,000	100,000	100,000
Main Street	45,000	133,000	0	0
Economic Development	475,000	67,718	0	0
Ritz Theatre	47,000	47,000	0	0
Capital Expenditure	1,336,667	24,550	537,000	87,821
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,001,337</b>	<b>\$1,462,295</b>	<b>\$840,336</b>	<b>\$430,325</b>
<b><u>Excess of Revenues</u></b>				
Over <under expenditures>		\$843,444		\$22,222
Beginning Fund Balance		\$928,281		\$405,749
Ending Fund Balance		\$1,771,725		\$427,971

## CRA Development Agreements

In FY 2014 the City signed a Development Agreement with Physicians Partnership to rebate the County tax increment on their property until \$239,107 has been amortized. In FY 2021 no payment was made. Payment was issued in FY 2022, prior to the drafting of this report. Payment to Physicians Partnership is current and payment will be reflected on the FY 2022 annual report.

In FY 2017, the City signed a Development Agreement with First Street, North LLC to rebate 60 percent of the tax increment on their property for a period of 10 years. In FY 2021, \$31,684.78 was paid.

In FY 2017, the City signed a Development Agreement with Dundee Self Storage, LLC to rebate 50 percent of facade improvement, up to \$15,000, at 335 Magnolia Avenue, SW. In FY 2021, \$377.26 was paid.

In FY 2017, the City signed a Development Agreement with Six/Ten, LLC to rebate tax increment revenue of \$5,000 per multi-family residential unit for a period of up to 10 years. In FY 2021, \$25,306.46 was paid.

In FY 2017, the City signed a Development Agreement with Taylor Hotel, LLC to rebate 50 percent of tax increment for a period not to exceed 10 years or \$308,001.75. This agreement has expired as a new Development Agreement with Onicx Group LLC, incorporated the lands subject to this agreement. No payment was made on this agreement.



*Conceptual Rendering for Onicx Group, LLC. – Marriott Residence Inn*

In FY 2017, the City signed a Development Agreement with 750 Ave. C SW, LLC to rebate tax increment revenue of \$5,000 per multi-family residential unit for a period of up to 10 years.

In FY 2021, no payment was made. The project is expected to earn and increment and be issued a payment beginning in FY 2023.

In FY 2020, the City signed a Development Agreement with Central South, LLC to rebate 50 percent of façade improvements, up to \$15,000, at 150 3<sup>rd</sup> Street SW. In FY 2021, no payment was made. Payment is expected to be made beginning in FY 2023.



*Commercial Façade Improvement – 150 3<sup>rd</sup> Street SW*

In FY 2020, the City signed a Development Agreement with Winter Haven, FL 0721, LLC to rebate 90 percent of the tax increment revenue on their property for a period of 10 years. In FY 2021, no payment was made. Payments are expected in future years.



*Conceptual Rendering for Winter Haven, FL 0721, LLC – Staybridge Hotel*

In FY 2020, the City signed a Development Agreement with Katina Campbell to rebate tax increment revenue of \$10,000 per unit for a period of 10 years. In FY 2021, no payment was made. Payments are expected in future years.

## Grants/Incentive Programs

- **Residential Improvement Grants**

This grant provides property owners a maximum of \$5,000 to make exterior improvements to their homes. Eligible work includes: repair or replacement of eaves, fascia board, gutters and downspouts; scraping and painting or other protective covering repairs; screen repairs, landscaping, window repair and replacement, damaged wood replacement, fence repairs and front door enhancement or replacement.



1245 6<sup>th</sup> Street NE

620 Avenue A NE

- **Commercial Façade Grants**

This program provides non-residential and multi-family property owners to make exterior improvements with a maximum of \$10,000 (no matching funds required in the Florence Villa District). The Downtown District requires a 50% match of the project costs up to a maximum amount of \$5,000.



260 Avenue A SW

213 Avenue O SW

- **Housing Investment Program (HIP)**

This program provides for \$10,000 per unit in tax increment refunds, following completion of the project.

Smart City Bonus: Both A. and B. above could also receive \$1,500 per unit grant upon completion of construction when the project includes three or more approved Smart City technologies as provided by the Smart City Advisory or City Staff.

- **Outdoor Café Furniture Grant**

This grant is designed to help with recovery of Downtown restaurant businesses, improve the economic vitality and vibrancy of the community, encourage safe distancing measures as may be needed from time-to-time, and to compliment the recently budgeted design and construction of new outdoor café space. The Outdoor Café Furniture Grant Program enables qualified property owners or restaurant tenants to furnish approved outdoor, side-yard, or sidewalk café areas, within the C-1 (Downtown) Zoning District, with outdoor furniture consistent with the ‘brand’ of downtown Winter Haven by making available one-time grants of up to 90% of outdoor furniture cost, up to \$3,000, for purchase and installation of approved outdoor dining furniture.

- **Real Estate Development Accelerator (REDA)** This incentive provides for up to 60% Tax Increment Financing for projects of \$5 million or more.

- **Real Estate Development Accelerator (REDA)**

This incentive is for large-scale development projects that enhance the economic diversity of the CRA and are anticipated to increase the ad valorem Taxable Value of the subject site by **\$15 million or more**. This incentive can be utilized in the form of land mark-down (if city-owned land is needed), infrastructure improvements, Tax Increment Financing rebates, water/sewer fees or similar types of assistance. Each project to be negotiated on an individual basis with city staff, based on an evidenced economic gap in a development pro forma. Incentive typically to be paid as a reimbursement to the developer. Incentives to pay for water, wastewater, and similar fees may be internally transferred from the CRA to the City as appropriate to offset certain expenses prior to construction. Annual incentive reimbursement payments to the developer not to exceed **90%** of the actual tax increment from the project.

- **Local Infrastructure Gap**

This incentive is designed to reimburse developers of new or existing buildings (rehabilitations of more than 50% of assessed value) within the Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) where city development code may require an off-site sidewalk connection in order to achieve a residential density bonus. Funding is available annually on a first come, first serve basis. All guidelines for reimbursement are included in the Application.

- **Façade and Exterior Improvement Program**

This program provides for reimbursement of 50% of a facade, not to exceed \$15,000, or up to \$25,000 in a targeted area.

- **Commercial Redevelopment**

This incentive provides for up to 50% Tax Increment Financing rebate for redevelopment projects that will increase the taxable value by at least 100%.

- **Capital Improvement Grant Program**

This program provides up to 50% of the previous year's interest only portion of a loan obtained for rehabilitation or renovation of a building.

### **Capital Projects (Downtown)**

In FY 2020-2021, the following payments were made:

Project

• Cypress Garden Water Ski Team (Facility Improvements)	\$12,169.49
• Grants	\$14,999.79
• Main Street Winter Haven (Christmas Lights)	\$25,000.00
• Main Street Winter Haven (Gateway Signage)	\$88,000.00
• Sidewalk Café	\$34,745.70
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>\$174,914.98</u></b>

### **Community Involvement Partnerships**

Organization

• Main Street Winter Haven	\$45,000.00
• The Ritz Theatre	\$47,000.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>\$92,000.00</u></b>

### **Transfers to the 2015 Construction Fund**

Project

• Lighting at MLK Park	\$100,000.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>\$100,000.00</u></b>

### **Transfers to the General Fund**

Transfer

• 55% of Sales Tax Bond Debt Service	\$389,322.00
• 18% of 2015A Bond Debt Service	\$187,688.00
• 18% of 2016A Bond Debt Service	\$91,822.00
• Community Policing in District	\$73,778.00
• Off Duty Police Officer	\$25,000.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>\$767,610.00</u></b>

During FY 2020-2021, \$15,000 was transferred to the Transportation Fund for sidewalks in the District and \$12,600 was transferred to Dark Fiber Fund for fiber to facilities.

### **Capital Projects (Florence Villa)**

In FY 2021, no development agreement, capital projects, community involvement partners, or construction fund project payments were made.

\$106,179 was transferred to the General Fund for debt service.

\$65,000 was transferred to the Transportation Fund for sidewalk improvements and Avenue K Street Project.



*Dr. MLK Blvd. Streetscape*

\$4,200 was transferred to the Dark Fiber Fund for fiber network improvements and “Big Belly” WiFi equipment.



*Big Belly WiFi Trash Can*

### **Affordable Housing Initiatives**

Funding allocation for a Down Payment Assistance program was established (\$10,000) to assist first-time homebuyers with the purchase of a home. While there was interest in the program, the challenge was finding housing within the districts due to the influx and volatility of the housing market.

### **Summary of Goals Accomplished in FY 2021**

#### Downtown

In FY 2021, work towards meeting the following goals contained in the Downtown CRA Plan occurred:

- Redevelopment Goal 1, Elimination of slum and blight: Payments were made to First

Street North, LLC, Dundee Self Storage, and Six Ten, LLC pursuant to Development Agreements designed to eliminate blight and redevelop property within the CRA.

- Redevelopment Goal 2, Prevent future occurrence of slum and blight: The CRA has invested in a number of preventative measures including facade grants, facility improvements, gateway signage, and an ongoing sidewalk café project. All of which encourage vibrancy in the district and prevent future blighted conditions. Continued support for the Ritz Theatre and Main Street Winter Haven also support this goal.
- Public Facilities Goal 3, Establish parks, recreation, open-space and beautification efforts: The CRA contributed funds used for additional lighting components with Martin Luther King Park.
- Public Facilities Goal 4, Reverse perception of crime in the downtown: Continued to fund a dedicated police officer to work within the downtown.



*Dr. Martin Luther King Park (aerial view)*

### Florence Villa

In FY 2021, work towards meeting the following goals contained in the Florence Villa CRA Plan occurred:

- Public Facilities and Services Goal 1, Provide necessary public facilities at acceptable levels of service to accommodate existing needs as well as new demands as proposed development occurs within the redevelopment district: \$4,200 was transferred to the Dark Fiber Fund to facilitate the expansion of broadband facilities and WiFi access in Florence Villa and \$65,000 was transferred to the Transportation Fund for sidewalk improvements and the Avenue K Complete Street Project.

## Annual Audit Report

The FY 2021 audit reports for the Downtown and Florence Villa CRA Districts are not fully available as of March 31, 2022. Upon their completion, the audit reports will be published to the City's website, [www.mywinterhaven.com](http://www.mywinterhaven.com), within 45 days.

“Blessed are the givers...and grateful are the receivers. Thank you so much for all of your help.”

*-Emma Ely, Residential Improvement Grant Applicant (Florence Villa CRA Resident)*