

City of Florida City

Community Redevelopment Agency

Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2019-2020

Prepared effective 09-30-2020

Introduction

The Florida City Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) was created in 1996 and completed its 25th full year of operation in FY 2019-20. The CRA continued to facilitate a number of private development projects in the Community Redevelopment Area (CR Area) in the current year. The CRA also continued the on-going series of neighborhood streetscapes. The streets in and around the Coral Bay Manor Subdivision in the CR Area are 100% complete. Phase 1, Phase 2, and Phase 3 of the streetscapes in the Northwestern part of the CR Area, begun in FY 2010-11, are also complete. Except for two blocks near the Snake Pit, all of the streets in the 80-block area bordered by NW 6th Ave, Redland Road, Lucy Street, and Davis Parkway have been completed. Construction is complete on the SW 1st Street Streetscape. The CRA completed streetscapes on NW 1st Street, and NW 2nd Street in FY 2018-19. Streetscapes will begin on the NW 7th to 9th Avenue corridors south of NW 2nd Street in 2020-21, and **design is complete for four streetscape projects in the area encompassed by the Busway, Lucy Street, NW 6th Avenue, and Davis Parkway. The fourth of four permit approvals were received from DERM in December, 2020, so staff anticipates issuing a call for construction bids for this significant road improvement in Spring, 2021.**

During 2009, the CRA completed a revised Community Redevelopment Plan (CR Plan) and worked with County staff to get the 2009 revised CRA Plan through the County's review and approval process. The focus of the original 1995 CRA Plan had been on the recovery from Hurricane Andrew, the facilitation of revenue enhancing commercial development projects and the development of public/private partnerships to generate new construction. The 2009 revision of the CRA Plan provided for the expansion of the CRA Area. The expanded CRA Area contains a large residential area in Northwest Florida City in which the infrastructure was deficient and many of the structures are older or dilapidated. Much of the focus and spending of the CRA over the past seven years was, and in the coming years will be, the correction of this infrastructure deficit and upgrading the appearance and quality of life in this predominately African-American neighborhood. Emphasis will also be on arresting the blighting effects of dilapidated structures in this residential neighborhood through rehabilitation of some structures and the demolition of others that are beyond redemption. The CRA's focus in the 2009 CR Plan was broadened to include more proactive projects initiated solely by the CRA.

In 2019, the CRA completed a Finding of Necessity (FON) and a Community Redevelopment Plan for an expansion of the Community Redevelopment Area to include the residential area between NW 2nd Street, Davis Parkway, Redland Road, and the Busway.

With the Agency scheduled to sunset in 2025, discussions were held with the County to develop a Restated Interlocal Agreement that both enlarged the Redevelopment Area, as proposed in the 2019 FON, as well as proposed an extension to the permitted life of the Agency through 2055. The County provided a draft Agreement, which was approved by the Florida City Commission in Resolution 20-34 on June 17, 2020. The Agreement was submitted to the County for its approval. On September 9, 2020, the Restated Interlocal Agreement was reviewed by the County's Housing, Social Services and Economic Development Committee and forwarded to the Board of County Commissioners. The Board of County Commissioners approved the Agreement through the passage of Resolution R-936-20 on October 6, 2020.

For FY 2019-20, the CRA Budget was \$8,511,663 in expenses and revenue. The details of the FY 2020-21 budget are attached in Exhibit A.

This report will address the primary operating aspects of the CRA, revenue growth and significant projects for FY 2019-20, as well as the proposed budget and CRA plans for FY 2020-21.

I. Staffing and operating expenses

After 12 years of leading the Agency, the former Executive Director, Richard Stauts, retired on Jan. 1, 2020.

Jon Ward joined Florida City as the Agency's Executive Director and sole full-time employee in FY 2019-20. Ward leads the Agency after serving 6 years as the Executive Director of the West Palm Beach CRA and 8 years as Director of Urban Redevelopment and Executive Director of the CRA for the City of Fort Pierce. He began his public sector career as Director of Cultural Affairs for St. Lucie County, FL, after a number of years as a sales and marketing executive in the private sector. Ward served terms on the Boards of the Florida Arts Council and the Florida Humanities Council and is a graduate of Leadership Florida's Cornerstone Class XXVII.

Florida City's Finance Director, Chad Burkhalter, continues as the Treasurer of the CRA. Jennifer Evelyn, City Clerk, serves as the Board Secretary.

Employee salary and fringes are divided into two categories, administrative and operating. During FY 2011-12, the CRA's consultant, Willdan Financial Services, Inc., completed an Indirect Cost Allocation Plan to identify the indirect costs that the CRA pays for city services. These shared costs include services provided by City Administration, the Finance Department and the City Clerk, as well as other shared expenses, such as City Hall rent, insurance, utilities and maintenance. This cost allocation method was first fully implemented during the FY 2012-13 budget cycle and has continued to be used during subsequent

fiscal years, as there have been no City/CRA structural changes that would render the calculation methodology obsolete.

II. Administrative Procedures

The Agency's By-laws and the Restated Interlocal Agreement with the County establish the CRA Board composition, purpose and powers, meetings, notice requirements and administrative procedures. The Agency Board is composed of the Mayor, four elected City Commissioners and two representatives of the CRA business and residential community. The By-laws designate the Mayor as the Board Chairman and the Vice-Mayor as the Vice Chairman of the Board. The CRA adopted City policies and procedures as CRA policies and procedures, except where the variances are approved by the CRA Board.

The CRA Board meets on an as-needed basis, but the meetings have averaged bi-monthly during FY 2019-20. The Board typically meets immediately prior to a City Commission meeting on either the second or fourth Tuesday of the month.

III. Community Redevelopment Plan Implementation

In 2009, the Agency adopted a rewrite of the original 1995 CRA Plan. The Plan and expansion areas were approved by the County and an amended Interlocal Agreement was executed on July 10, 2009.

In 2019, the CRA proposed an update of the Community Redevelopment Plan to the County.

The updated Restated Interlocal Plan, approved by the City and CRA on June 17, 2020 and by the County on October 6, 2020, contains an expansion to the Community Redevelopment Area that encompasses the area between the Busway, Davis Parkway, Redland Road and NW 2nd Street. It also extended the life of the Agency through 2055, to give adequate time to continue addressing the needs of the community.

Development and Infrastructure Projects Funded During FY 2019-20

Commercial and Industrial Façade Program: The CRA adopted a Commercial and Industrial Building Façade Program in FY 2007-08 to assist building owners within the CRA to upgrade the appearance of their buildings. The façade rehabilitation project was budgeted for \$30,000 in FY 2019-20 but the Agency received no applications for funding during the year.

Pioneer Museum and Depot Building Improvements: The CRA budgeted \$10,000 for building repairs and improvements at the Pioneer Museum. Staff began discussions with the Board of the museum in June, 2020 to propose a potential relocation of the facility as well as construction of an onsite storage building. Discussions on the issue will continue and funding will be proposed to begin site planning for the new

proposed location, adjacent to City Hall.

Acquisition of Property in the Northwest Neighborhood: \$300,000 was budgeted for the acquisition of property and dilapidated structures in the Northwest Neighborhood. Delays caused by the Coronavirus pandemic and the negotiation of the Restated Interlocal Agreement with the County delayed the acquisition program.

Demolish Houses and Relocate Tenants in Northwest Neighborhood: The Coronavirus pandemic rules did not allow for any tenant relocations during the latter portions of 2020 and no funds were used for this purpose.

Commercial Building Improvement Grant Program: Again, the Coronavirus situation had a significant impact on small businesses ability to survive, much less reinvest in facility improvements. No funding was requested under this program.

NW 1st Street and NW 2nd Street Streetscape, Phase 1: The streetscape includes new street paving, sidewalks, curb and gutters, drainage, and landscaping on NW 1st and 2nd Streets between NW 3rd Avenue and NW 7th Avenue. The project was finished in FY 2018-19, at a cost of \$1,122,198. No further funding was required in the current fiscal year.

Rebuilding Together-Miami: In 2019-20, the CRA budgeted \$100,000 for the repair of substandard residences in the CRA in a partnership with the non-profit Rebuilding Together-Miami.

Green Reuse Area: Recognizing the challenge of redeveloping potentially environmentally contaminated properties, in January, 2020, the City Commission designated (Resolution 20-01) the entire CRA district as a Green Reuse Area, a new term for what used to be referred to as a “brownfield.” The Green Reuse Area designation provides potential economic incentives to the current owner, or to a potential buyer, to address contamination, whether real or perceived, found on a site. The CRA contracted with the Goldstein Environmental Law Firm, P.A. to assist in developing the necessary legal requirements. The cost for these services was \$35,000 plus the costs of printing and mailing notices to all property owners contained within the Green Reuse Area (\$1552.00) and the publication costs of required legal notices.

Washington Park Redevelopment: In June, 2019, Stantec Consulting was hired to develop a redesign proposal for Washington Park. Three concepts were developed and, after consultation with City staff, the designers focused on Concept 3. In June, 2020, Stantec submitted a cost estimate to build out the park for \$750,000. The 2019-20 budget had a \$180,000 line item for the project. \$29,000 was expended for design services, so the project was scheduled to be bid in late 2020 and constructed and funded in FY 2021. As staff prepared to issue the RFP for construction of the park project, the Agency discovered that the land occupied by the park was owned by the County. Having made significant

improvements to the property in previous years, the discovery came as a surprise to City Administration. Staff has begun negotiations with the County for the potential transfer of the land to the City, for the purpose of redeveloping the park, and construction will be delayed until that is achieved.

Other CRA Activities: CRA staff was designated the lead entity for the City for several additional projects and activities in the CRA Area.

CRA staff serves on two County committees related to the County's Smart Plan transit development. All of the Busway in Florida City is within the Community Redevelopment Area. Staff participated in architectural design meetings as well as joined the Mobility Study group.

The CRA coordinated the successful application for a \$750,000 State of Florida Small Cities CDBG Neighborhood Revitalization grant for parking to serve Loren Roberts Park, the removal of the debris from a former wastewater treatment plant and to hook up an inter-connection with the Miami Dade County Water Department. The project was put out to bid out in June, 2020, with construction costs coming in at \$868,377. The CRA will furnish a \$100,000 match to cover the shortfall from the grant proceeds. Construction is anticipated to begin in February, 2021.

The CRA is administering the reconstruction of East Palm Drive, including the culverting of the canal, from US 1 eastward to NW 172nd Avenue. The cost of the total project was initially estimated in 2017 to be approximately \$6,300,000 but is now anticipated to cost as much as \$8,100,000, including the City-funded engineering costs. The City procured EAC Consultants, Inc. for engineering of the project, although the project has required EAC to undertake a number of issues outside their initial scope of work. The City entered into a Joint Participation Agreement with the County for funding in the amount of \$3,100,000. The City is paying the remainder. The roadway is within the CRA and the development along the south side of East Palm Drive will be within the Community Redevelopment Area. After a significant delay, construction began in early 2019 and will be finished in the Spring of 2021.

The CRA is coordinating the Miami-Dade County, City of Homestead, and Florida City collaboration of the widening of East Lucy Street. The County agreed to fund the cost of expanding East Lucy Street to three lanes with curb and gutter, drainage, landscaping and sidewalks between NW 167 Avenue and US 1. The County began construction on the roadway in October, 2017. Construction should be complete in late 2021.

During November, 2019, the CRA held a public auction and sold ten of its infill lots for affordable housing. An assembly of six lots on Lucy Street and 4 scattered site lots on NW 11th and 12th Streets. All lots went under contract but neither of the two buyers closed on the properties. In November, 2020, the Agency cancelled the contract for the Lucy Street assemblage and pressed the buyer of the four scattered site lots to close or the Agency would cancel their contract, as well. Two lots are scheduled to close in January, 2021 with the balance two lots within 30 days of the first closing. The Lucy Street lots will be re-offered

at a subsequent auction, anticipated for late January, 2021, along with several other CRA-owned parcels.

The CRA has begun the process of developing a linear park on NW 3rd Avenue. In FY 2016-17, the County donated a small sliver of the site to the City. The City now owns a little over half of the property needed for the park and the CRA is negotiating an agreement for the development of the public park to be performed by the developer who is purchasing the adjacent City-owned campsite, at their expense.

The City has a contract with The Treo Group, Inc. to purchase and develop the City-owned camper site on Krome Avenue. The 14.7 acre site is within the CRA and staff is participating with the City Planner and Administration to coordinate the sale and related development sites including the site of the Pioneer Museum and the proposed Linear Park on Third. The Treo Group filed for a zoning change to PUD on July 15, 2020 for its “Caribbean Village” but has not closed on the land purchase, as of this writing.

The CRA continues administering repairs and upgrades to the sanitary sewer system required by Miami Dade County as part of its settlement with USDEP. Most of the repairs are within the Community Redevelopment Area and are being funded by an FDEP Revolving Loan Fund. The amount sought from FDEP is \$7,585,189 over four contracts. The City has completed the engineering portion of the projects and is in construction of a number of force mains, pump stations and related upgrades.

In June, 2020, the City, through CRA staff, worked with consultant Angie Brewer and Associates to successfully apply for a second DEP RLF agreement to fund planning for improvements to the City’s drinking water system in the amount of \$157,000.

The CRA is administering the Florida City component of the Miami-Dade County, City of Homestead, and Florida City collaboration of the widening of West Lucy Street. The County has agreed to fund the cost of expanding West Lucy Street to three lanes with curb and gutter, drainage, landscaping and sidewalks between Redland Road and US 1. The City has obtained dedications of rights of way from several property owners, but five locations were taken by eminent domain by Florida City in the assemblage known as the “Snake Pit.” Final negotiations for the amount to be paid to the former owners are currently ongoing. The CRA handled the demolition of the former Ford store and is still in negotiations for the Jefferson parcel. The County’s construction plans are nearly complete and it is hoped that construction will begin in 2021.

The Agency owns 32 lots in the part of the CRA Area known as the Snake Pit. This area is specifically referenced in Section IX(A)(3) in the Community Redevelopment Plan as an area in which the CRA should acquire and assemble properties. The CRA was approached by HD Home, LLC about buying these lots and HD Home, LLC made an offer of \$2,400,000 for the lots. The CRA advertised that it had an offer for these lots on August 17, 2018 in the South Dade News Leader. The CRA advertised that the offer would be open for 30 days as required by Chapter 163.380(3)(a), Florida Statutes. Just before the advertising period closed, the CRA received a second offer from the Housing Trust Group for \$2,500,000. The CRA accepted the Cash offer from HD Home, LLC because it was not subject to a HOME funds competitive

application cycle. A sales contract has been signed and the buyer is in their due diligence period. CRA staff are involved with addressing title issues on several parcels plus the complications of the eminent domain of two parcels mentioned above. Staff anticipates a closing in the Spring, 2021.

The CRA is administering the City's Hazard Mitigation Grant with FDEM for a drainage project #4337-255-R for the area between NW 7th Avenue, Redland Road, NW 2nd Street, and Palm Drive. The application was for \$899,000 and the CRA will be matching the grant with \$300,000 in CRA funds. This will provide flood relief in one of the lowest areas of the Community Redevelopment Area. The Agency received the Phase 1 contract for engineering costs on March 18, 2020, in the amount of \$61,511.

CRA staff continues to coordinate with the City Engineer and FDEP to administer the successful application for the NPDES (National Pollution Discharge Elimination System) permit for the City. Tasks include development and distribution of best practices brochures and annual permit updates. Staff was informed by FDEP staff that the permit will be issued following a public comment period in January, 2021.

IV. Tax Base Growth and Proposed Budget

The continuing goal of the CRA is the increase of the property values within the CRA district to the maximum extent possible and to improve the physical quality of life for the businesses and residents in the district, consistent with the adopted Community Redevelopment Plan. The 2020 property tax base of the original CRA district has grown to its present value of \$250.5 million, an increase of over 585% since the CRA's inception in 1995. In 2020, property tax values increased in the original portion of the CRA Area by \$15.06 million (or 6.4%) over 2019. The proposed FY 2020-21 CRA Annual Budget (see Exhibit A) summarizes the planned financial program for the CRA in the coming year. Total funds available in FY 2020-21 are expected to be \$8,335,409. Of this amount, \$1,371,650 is the annual City increment revenue contribution and \$890,834 is the Miami-Dade County increment revenue contribution. The remainder constitutes \$3,642,925 in carryover funds from FY 2019-20, sale of property at \$2,400,000 and projected interest and other income of \$30,000. The carryover funds are dedicated to capital projects over the next three years. The primary reason for the large carryover is to assemble funds to complete the four-segment streetscape project in the Northwest Neighborhood. The worldwide health crisis certainly caused delays in implementing projects as businesses were understandably hesitant to invest in facilities, most businesses completely revamped how they did business, often operating remotely, creating delays in general communication and information flow. It was certainly a situation that none of us had ever experienced and, as the fiscal year comes to a close, the Agency is taking a conservative, steady-as-she-goes attitude about implementing projects and programs.

During FY 2009, the CRA, with County approval, added additional blighted parts of the City to the CRA Area. The Redevelopment Plan was updated to outline the City and Agency plans for these four areas, including the Northwest Neighborhood, a small residential area near the Florida City Busway Park and

Ride facility, the state-owned Pineland conservation area on West Palm Drive and an infrastructure deficient agricultural-based property south of Palm Drive and west of Krome Avenue. It is not anticipated that these areas will contribute significantly if at all to increment revenue for a number of years. The values in the expansion area had fallen over 44% % during the 2009-2014 period. Although values have bottomed out and have been rising since 2015, the current 2020 valuations reflect a value of \$54.3 million, over 10% less than the original 2009 base valuation. For 2021, much of the residential rehab work done with Rebuilding Together will be focused on these areas.

PROPOSED FY 2020-21 Expenses (See Exhibit A)

Administrative Expenses

1. The *administrative* salary costs charged to the CRA will be as follows:

60% of Executive Director	\$84,000
Employee Fringes (32.5% of Salary)	\$27,500

Employee fringes are such things as FICA, Workers’ Compensation Insurance, FRS contribution, health insurance, life insurance, and unemployment compensation. Employees pay 100% of the insurance for family members.

Note: The operating salary and fringe costs are listed in the “Operating Expenses” section below.

2. Indirect Cost Allocation (\$158,374)

The CRA commissioned a cost allocation study in FY 2010-11 to be able to better determine its fair share of City administrative and indirect costs. A contract was executed with Willdan, Inc. from Orlando to conduct the study and the allocation of indirect costs using the Plan was first implemented for FY 2012-13. Indirect costs are such expenses as the CRA’s contribution to the cost of the Finance Department, the City Clerk’s Office, Human Resources, Administrative Services, office rent and utilities, shared office equipment, building cleaning and maintenance, and facility insurance

3. Advertising and Notices (\$7,500)

The CRA continues to advertise public notices for Requests for Qualifications and for Invitations to Bid for infrastructure and other projects, and publishing other legal notices as required. Public notice requirements for the NPDES permit will cost at least \$1,500 alone. The CRA developed an economic development relief grant program for local businesses, the “Fighting Chance” grant, which required multiple display ads. CDBG grants carry public notification requirements, etc.

4. Travel and Training (\$6,000)

This category includes educational and business events relating to community redevelopment as well as conferences. The Executive Director represents the CRA at meetings of the Florida Economic Development Council, the Florida Community Development Association and the Florida Housing Coalition, etc. Since COVID has cancelled most in-place conferences, they are held online but the various organizations still charge for participation fees. The Agency will also purchase ZOOM licenses to be able to host real estate auctions and project meetings.

5. Auto Expenses (3,500)

Maintenance on City-furnished vehicle. Vehicle is 7 years old and has over 70,000 miles on it.

6. Office Equipment and Furniture (\$1,000)

The computer, scanner, and printer are all over five years old.

7. Other Administrative Expenses (\$12,000)

Administrative expenses such as office supplies, postage, minor equipment replacement, phone expenses, CRA share of copy machine and reproduction costs, coffee and supplies, water, internet, etc.

8. County Administrative Charge (\$13,363)

Required County fee - 1.5% of County's tax increment contribution.

Operating Expenses

1. The operating salary cost charged to the CRA will be as follows:

40% of Executive Director	\$56,000
Employee Fringes (32.5% of salary)	\$18,200

Employee fringes are such things as FICA, Workers' Compensation Insurance, FRS contribution, health insurance, life insurance, and unemployment compensation. Employees pay 100% of the insurance cost for family members.

Note: The administrative salary and fringe costs are listed in the "Administrative Expenses" section above.

2. Contractual Services (\$300,000)

This line item provides funding for architectural, engineering, and survey professionals for infrastructure and building projects. Other costs are for realtor services and required appraisals for the acquisition of foreclosed and abandoned properties. A CDBG grant writer was secured by contract to assist the CRA in obtaining CDBG grants, such as the Loren Roberts Park grant.

3. Audits and Studies (\$40,000)

The CRA is considering redevelopment activities that require potential economic development assessments or engineering studies to assist the Agency in acquiring grants for potential projects.

4. Printing and Publishing (\$2,000)

All of the Agency's Best Practices and Grants brochures are 7-10 years old and require updating. Additionally, the elected officials and Board members, whose names appear on the documents, have changed.

5. Membership and dues (\$3,000)

This line item pays for CRA memberships in the Florida Redevelopment Association, the Florida Economic Development Council, the Florida Community Development Association, the Florida Housing Coalition, and the Florida Special Districts Program.

6. Legal Services/ Court Costs (\$50,000)

The CRA incurs legal expenses when it acquires property in the CR Area and attorney fees associated with using the County Unsafe Structures Board to demolish unsafe buildings in the CR Area. The CRA will also be paying for the legal cost of eminent domain action in the "Snake Pit."

7. Property Maintenance (\$3,000)

The CRA pays the City Public Works Department to cut the grass and maintain the CRA-owned properties.

8. Property Acquisition and Demolition (\$400,000)

Demolition of any dilapidated structures and those acquired in the "Snake Pit" eminent domain actions. List of Lands. The CRA has developed acquisition plans for six sections of the CRA district.

9. Infrastructure Improvements (\$4,048,972)

Roadway redevelopment between Davis Parkway and Lucy Street, 5th and 6th Avenue, to be bid in Spring, 2021. Overage construction costs for Loren Roberts Park. Construction costs for Washington Park. Design and construction for Pioneer Museum.

10. Assistance to Non-Profits (\$10,000)

Operating subsidy for the Florida Pioneer Museum Association, Inc, to operate the Florida Pioneer Museum. The Museum is a major tourist attraction on Krome Avenue within the CR Area.

11. Housing Assistance Projects (\$200,000)

Rebuilding Together-Miami is a national non-profit organization doing rehabilitation on homeowner occupied houses. The CRA is contributing up to \$200,000 to assist with the cost of material that will not be donated and tradesman who cannot be located to do volunteer work.

12. Redevelopment Façade Grants and Commercial Building Improvement Grant Programs (\$30,000)

Façade rehabilitation projects undertaken by owners of commercial or industrial buildings.

13. Building Construction and Improvements (\$40,000)

Repairs to the Pioneer Museum Building and the Depot Building.

14. Transfer out to others (\$350,000)

Enhanced police services/community policing within the CR Area. These three officers devote 100% of their time to the CR Area.

15. Police security cameras in Commercial District (\$60,000)

Additional cameras and software upgrades for the commercial areas, monitored by the Police Department in conjunction with other cameras being monitored by the Police.

16. Acquisition of Tax Certificates (\$10,000)

The CRA bids on tax certificates each year. There are properties in the CRA Area that the CRA wants to acquire as part of an assemblage for development. These tax certificates are usually on properties that have been abandoned or have so many liens that the owner simply ignores the property.

17. Other Operating Expenses (\$1,000)

Miscellaneous small operating expenses such as water provided for a road race in the CR Area, etc.

18. Reserve/Contingency (\$2,400,000)

This line item will provide a source of funds to pay for cost overruns or enhancements for infrastructure projects or unanticipated CRA costs. The source of the funds is the anticipated sale of the Snake Pit properties. Because the sale is anticipated but has not occurred, I did not build the dollars onto the infrastructure budget, as was the case in 2019-20. For that reason, the Infrastructure line item is significantly smaller in the current FY. Staff cannot budget what it has not received.

V. Future Development Projects and Other Agency Initiatives

The CRA continues to work with private developers and public funding agencies to recruit employment-generating businesses and to create affordable housing opportunities in the CR Area.

Private developers or property owners seeking assistance from the CRA must go through the CRA's project selection process, which involves application submittal, review by staff and City Engineer (where appropriate), funding recommendation from the CRA Executive Director, and eventual approval by the CRA Board.

During the period from FY 2003 through 2018, the CRA expended nearly \$2,000,000 in increment revenue to create public infrastructure on US 1, Krome Avenue, East Lucy Street, and Palm Drive as a direct incentive to businesses to locate there. There is still a significant amount of vacant land ready for development that is now served by this same public infrastructure. This investment in public infrastructure will continue to pay dividends to both the City and County for decades.

The CRA is assembling several sites for future housing or other redevelopment. Most of the acquisitions will occur in the six areas where acquisition plans have been created. These actions will address slum and blighting conditions in the CR Area as well as provide for future affordable housing.

The CRA does not have any indebtedness at this time.

VI. FY 2019-20 Public Improvements and Assistance to Private Developments

Commercial and Industrial Façade Program: The CRA has adopted a Commercial and Industrial Building Façade Program to assist building owners within the CR Area in upgrading the appearance of their buildings.

Commercial Building Improvement Grant Program: The CRA has budgeted for grants to assist new and expanding businesses to relocate into unused shopping center and commercial spaces. The program requires a match from the business and a contribution from the building owner as well. The use of the funds is limited to improvements that remain in the building as tenants change, such as lighting, flooring, partitions, water and electrical relocation, handicap access, etc.

Florida Pioneer Museum Building Improvements: The Florida Pioneer Museum building is owned by the City and the facility is operated by a non-profit that owns and displays the museum collection. The facility is a jewel that has drawn students and travelers in the past to the heart of the Community Redevelopment Area. The building is over 100 years old and is designated as a historic structure. It is one of the few original Florida East Coast Railroad Buildings that survive.

FEC Railroad Depot Building: The Florida East Coast Railroad Depot Building is a faithful reconstruction of the original Florida East Coast Railroad Depot building that served Florida City and Homestead in the early 1900's. It sits immediately behind the Florida Pioneer Museum Building on Krome Avenue. The original depot was destroyed by Hurricane Andrew in 1992 and was reconstructed in 1995.

West Lucy Street Expansion: The CRA is coordinating the Miami-Dade County, City of Homestead, and Florida City collaboration of the widening of West Lucy Street. The County has agreed to fund the cost of expanding West Lucy Street to three lanes with curb and gutter, drainage, landscaping and sidewalks between Redland Road and US 1. The City has obtained agreement with several property owners to donate needed right of way, but other locations have been taken by eminent domain. After the portion of the taken properties that is needed for right of way has been dedicated, the City will retain ownership of the remnants. The construction plans are nearly complete and it is hoped that construction will begin in 2021

NW 7th Avenue, 8th Avenue and 9th Avenue Drainage Project: The area bounded by Redland Road, NW 7th Avenue, Palm Drive and NW 2nd Street is one of the lowest areas in the City. The City applied for a Hazard Mitigation Grant in the amount of \$899,036 to address the drainage issue and to upgrade the infrastructure in the area while the construction is being done. The CRA will coordinate the grant administration and construction and will contribute \$300,000 for the costs that are more related to streetscape than drainage. The project will include new street paving, sidewalks, curb and gutters, drainage, parallel parking and landscaping.

NW 6th Avenue, 5th Avenue, 5th Court, and 4th Avenue Streetscape Project: This is the last of the new streetscapes for the 2009 expansion of the CR Area. The remainder of the streets have been redone and this area should be completed by Spring, 2022.

Washington Park Rehabilitation: Washington Park is a small one block park in the Northwest Neighborhood. It was designed as a children's park a number of years ago and over time, the equipment

and staging areas have become dilapidated. The CRA hired Stantec to conceptualize a new Washington Park to serve the children of the community. Construction will begin in late FY 20-21, depending on clearing up the property ownership issues with the County.

Other CRA Activities:

The CRA will continue coordinating with the City of Homestead and the County for the widening of Lucy Street between NE 6th Avenue and US 1. This project is being funded by the MPO. All of the right of way has been acquired and roadway construction should be complete in 2023.

The CRA is the lead City department for a FY 2017-18 State of Florida DEP Wastewater revolving loan to upgrade lift stations and replace some sewer lines within the CRA. The City acquired a loan for \$7,985,189 and several segments are presently under construction.

The CRA is also the lead City department for the construction of a culverting system to allow covering part of the Florida City Canal on East Palm Drive from US 1 to 167th Street. The significant road improvement project will be complete in Spring, 2021 and will have a final estimated cost of about \$8.4 million.

The CRA has begun the process of developing a linear park on NW 3rd Avenue. The CRA owns over half of the proposed site and is negotiating for the potential development of the site.

Because the construction will occur in the CR Area, the CRA is the city coordinator for the street work being done on Davis Parkway, on Krome Avenue, and on Palm Drive as part of the Homestead Bypass project. Construction is virtually complete on the Davis Parkway portion of the project. The Palm Drive portion of the project commenced in November, 2020. The street work is being funded by FDOT. The City is relocating some water lines and some trees that are in the path of the construction as elements of the RLF wastewater work and the work can now recommence now that the Davis Parkway component is complete.

VII. FY 2019-20 Housing Programs

Rebuilding Together-Miami Dade: The CRA will be coordinating housing rehabilitation and repair programs in 2020-21 and increased the budget line item for this purpose..

Green Reuse Plan: In 2020, the CRA was successful in designating a Green Reuse Area which includes all of the Community Redevelopment Area. The Agency is aware of some targeted commercial properties that could benefit from cleanup incentives and will start those conversations in 2021.

The CRA will continue to push for the development of affordable housing on infill lots during FY 2020-21. It is anticipated that the CRA will close on the sale of approximately sixteen additional infill lots in FY 2020-21.

The CRA is also working with a developer for the property assemblage known as the Snake Pit and believe a closing for the sale of the property will take place in Spring, 2021. It is anticipated that one hundred and 10 affordable housing units will be constructed at this location.

VIII. Enhanced Public Safety Program

Community Policing Program: The CRA will continue implementation of this special public safety program. This program enhances Florida City Police patrols, over and above normal service levels, for CR Area only. The cost of this program is \$350,000 for FY 2020-21. This innovative community policing program has been very effective in providing greatly increased police visibility and interaction with CR Area businesses and residents.

Policing Cameras in the Commercial District: The CRA continues working with the Police Department to position cameras in the commercial district to provide video and surveillance capability. The Police Department installs, monitors and maintains the cameras. The CRA has budgeted \$60,000 this year.

IX. Audit Requirements

Chapter 163.387(8), Florida Statutes requires that the CRA be audited each year as part of the City annual audit process. The City Audits are available on the City website at www.floridacityfl.gov.

X. Achievement of Goals in the Community Redevelopment Plan

The CRA continues to achieve the goals set out in its Community Redevelopment Plan. Obviously, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic impacted implementation of certain elements but the Agency showed flexibility by drafting a Florida City “Fighting Chance” grant for local businesses, funded by the County’s CARE Act dollars and, as of this writing, the City has provided over \$750,000 in direct grants to local small businesses.

Goal 1; Slum and Blight:

“Support the infill of vacant properties and the upgrade of low-value properties in order to facilitate the transition of neighborhoods and businesses characterized by value- growth properties.”

The CRA addressed slum and blight in several ways in FY 2019-20.

1. The CRA continued aggressive clean-up activities in the Snake Pit and demolished the former “Ford” store after the property was acquired by eminent domain.
2. The CRA continues to provide \$100,000 to Rebuild Together Miami-Dade, Inc, a local non-profit, to undertake rehabilitation on approximately 10 houses.
3. The Infill Housing Program auctioned ten lots to two developers in 2019-20. Unfortunately, one developer could not close on the sale and the other took a substantial amount of time to get to closing of the four lots purchased at auction. The lots will close in Spring, 2021.
4. The CRA executed a sales contract for 32 parcels in the “Snake Pit” to a developer who will be constructing 110 workforce housing units there.

Goal 2; Economic Development:

“Implement economic development strategies that will assist existing businesses, attract quality development and increase job growth.”

1. The CRA continues to offer its Façade renovation program and its Commercial Build Out program to pay part of the cost for businesses desiring to take advantage of them. The downturn created by the COVID pandemic has prevented businesses from reinvesting at this time.
2. The CRA coordinated the sales agreement for the City-owned 14 acre RV Park to TREO Group. They plan to develop 8 acres of upscale multi-family units and 6 acres of commercial space and will assume the development of the adjacent linear park on 3rd Avenue.
3. The CRA is promoting the use of the Opportunity Zone program. Most of the CR Area is located in the Zone.
4. The CRA achieved the designation of a Green Reuse Area to take advantage of available state incentives.
5. The CRA coordinated the acquisition of a \$1.5mm Community Redevelopment Block Grant to provide needed infrastructure to a potential hotel on East Palm Drive.
6. The CRA is coordinating the culverting of the Florida City Canal between US1 and SW 172 Avenue. This construction project created improved driving lanes where the canal is now situated encouraging the potential development of vacant commercial land on both sides of East Palm Drive. The project will be finished in mid-2021.

Goal 3; Land Use:

“Encouragement of innovative land uses and design techniques that enhance the development potential of each primary road corridor and neighborhood within the CR Area.”

1. Several of the conveyed infill parcels required the developer to rezone and re-plat adjacent parcels to be suitable for multi-family housing.
2. The creation of the Green Reuse Area will encourage the redevelopment of a number of pieces of property that had previously had contamination issues.
3. The CRA has modified its plans on NW 3rd Avenue for a linear park. The CRA is negotiating with an adjacent developer for the potential creation of the park as an element of their project.

Goal 4; Neighborhood Reinvestment:

“Improvement of the CR Area neighborhoods and the lives of its residents through infill development, home ownership, job training and education.”

1. The CRA coordinated the sales agreement for the City owned 14 acre RV Park to TREO Group. They plan to develop 8 acres of upscale multi-family units and 6 acres of commercial space. The CRA is negotiating with TREO for their development of the proposed adjacent linear park.
2. The CRA is promoting the use of the Opportunity Zone program. Most of the CR Area is located in the Zone.
3. The CRA created a Green Reuse Area to take advantage of available state incentives for job creation on sites with environmental challenges.
4. The CRA funded the conceptual redesign of Washington Park and will move forward with the redevelopment after clearing up land ownership issues with the County.

Goal 5; Environmental and Aesthetic Enhancement:

” Promotion of a clean, green and attractive community environment”

1. The design and DERM permitting for streetscapes between Davis Parkway, NW 6th Avenue, Lucy Street, and NW 4th Avenue was completed in FY 2019-20 and will be bid out next year.

2. The CRA continues to provide support for the Florida Pioneer Museum and the historic building which it inhabits.
3. The CRA created a Green Reuse Area to take advantage of available state incentives for addressing environmental pollution on various sites within the CR Area.

Goal 6; Public:

“Improvement of public safety and the perception of crime in the CR Area.”

1. The CRA continues to invest in community policing by paying for the cost of 3 police officers to service the CR Area.
2. CRA staff continue to notify Code Enforcement as issues are noticed within the Community Redevelopment Area.
3. The CRA is coordinating and partially funding a drainage project through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program to provide flooding relief to a low area of the City.

Goal 7; Public Facilities:

“Provision of necessary public facilities at adopted levels of service to meet the existing and future population and business needs.”

1. The CRA is coordinating a Community Development Block Grant for the creation of needed parking at Loren Roberts Park. The project was bid out in late 2020 and the CRA will fund engineering and grant administration costs of the project.
2. The CRA completed preliminary park design for Washington Park. The Agency continues to negotiate the transfer of the property from the County prior to beginning redevelopment of the site.
3. The CRA is negotiating with an adjacent developer to develop a linear park on 3rd Avenue, available to the public.

Goal 8; Administration:

“Establishment of the administration and financial mechanisms to achieve the goal, objectives and policies of the Florida City CR Plan.”

1. The CRA has established accounting processes to account for the spending of CRA funds on projects

and continues to have no findings or concerns in the City audit.

2. The CRA pursues outside funding sources such as CDBG and HMGP to supplement the increment revenue provide to the CRA by the City and the County.

3. The CRA created and drafted a Florida City “Fighting Chance” grant program for local small businesses severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and attendant economic turndown, funded through the County’s CARES Act dollars, in an amount in excess of \$750,000.

XI. Performance Data Pursuant to Chapter 163.371(2), Florida Statutes

The required performance data is included in Exhibit B.

XII. Summary

Staff wants to salute former Executive Director Richard Stauts for his 12 signal years at the helm of this Agency. Rick certainly formed the basis for future projects and had a successful record of public accomplishments during his administration of the CRA.

Executive Director Jon Ward was privileged to pick up a number of projects in mid-stream and move them toward completion. The Agency completed the complicated work of establishing a Green Reuse Area (what used to be known as a “Brownfield”) to allow participation in State and Federal funding programs to put contaminated properties back into reuse. The East Palm Drive/Palm Drive Canal culverting project is almost complete and staff has already applied for another grant to potentially fund additional work on Palm Drive. The City’s eminent domain work is almost complete, allowing the Snake Pit project to move forward with a sale to the ultimate developer. Design and permitting was completed for another significant segment of road and curb construction to begin and the upgrades to parking at Loren Roberts Park have been bid out and construction will take place in 2021. Much work is yet to be done, but Staff looks forward to the coming years and appreciates our guidance from the Florida City CRA Board and our partnership with MiamiDade County’s staff and elected officials.