

Delray Beach

COMMUNITY
REDEVELOPMENT
AGENCY

25th Anniversary Report

1985 - 2010

A RETROSPECTIVE LOOK AT REDEVELOPMENT IN DELRAY

then & now

The picture of Delray Beach in the 1980s was bleak. The downtown was plagued by abandoned storefronts, vacant lots, and rundown buildings that depressed property values. Most businesses closed at 5pm, making the city's main thoroughfare a dark and deserted place in the evenings. High crime rates, narrow sidewalks and neglected streetscapes were uninviting to pedestrians and businesses.

Many of the older residential areas that surrounded the downtown core were also deteriorating. Crime, poverty, and low owner-occupancy rates were destroying the fabric of many neighborhoods. There was a great need for infrastructure improvements, infill housing and quality places to live.

Today, Delray Beach is a different place. Downtown is a robust and inviting place where families and businesses want to be. Neighborhood planning and

we've come a long way...

improvement projects have helped restore many of the older residential areas, while new townhouse developments and apartment complexes have helped create an urban living scene.

Delray's come a long way from where it once was, and that is not by accident. The city's leaders have made deliberate choices to fight against the economic decline that affected every area of our community. For the last twenty-five years, the Delray Beach Community Redevelopment Agency has played a major role in those efforts.

Since 1985, the CRA has worked to rebuild neighborhoods, create a sustainable downtown, promote economic development, and preserve the heritage of Delray Beach. This report is a retrospective review of the CRA'S redevelopment efforts, an acknowledgement of the challenges and a celebration of the successes.



dollars & sense

financing redevelopment



Many cities and counties throughout Florida have created Community Redevelopment Agencies (CRAs) to spearhead local redevelopment efforts and encourage involvement from the private sector. Since 1985 the Delray Beach CRA has invested in a wide range of infrastructure improvements and economic development projects. While the major focus has been on eliminating blight, the Delray Beach CRA has been an important force in restoring vibrancy to Delray's downtown and nearby neighborhoods. From downtown revitalization, historic preservation and public safety efforts to affordable housing, cultural support, parking and transportation, the CRA has been a critical partner in building Delray Beach's future through a financing tool called *Tax Increment Financing* (TIF).

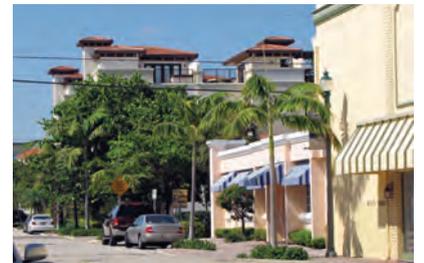
How Does TIF Work?

The CRA is funded through TIF funding, which earmarks a specific portion of property tax dollars for redevelopment within the CRA District without levying any additional taxes. Within the CRA District, both Palm Beach County and the City continue to receive property tax revenue based on the property values of the area in 1985—the CRA's base year. Since then, 95% of the increase in annual collected property taxes has been applied to the CRA's tax increment trust fund. Twenty-five years of continuous redevelopment efforts by the City and CRA has increased the taxable value of the CRA District from \$245 million to more than \$1.2 billion, giving the CRA the funding it needs to re-invest in the community.

TIF funding has been a great asset to Delray Beach, keeping millions of county dollars in the city. This year, the CRA will receive more than \$4 million in TIF revenues from Palm Beach County. Over the past twenty-five years, Palm Beach County has contributed more than \$32 million—funds that likely would have been redirected to other areas of the county without the Delray Beach CRA.

The City, however, has contributed the largest portion of the CRA's TIF revenues, totaling more than \$52 million since 1985. In turn, the Delray Beach CRA reinvests all of these funds into city infrastructure and capital improvements, beautification projects, municipal parking, affordable housing and economic development within the CRA District.

In Delray Beach, the CRA has successfully partnered with members of the public, private and nonprofit sectors to help fund and create many initiatives that have helped shape the vibrant downtown, productive business atmosphere and diverse community we now enjoy.



economic development

taking care of business



In addition to funding physical improvements to the District, the CRA has created a variety of initiatives to attract businesses and promote job creation. Together, this combination of activities has strengthened the local economy and enhanced the tax base of the CRA District.

Over the years, the CRA has offered numerous grant programs for commercial properties and businesses, each designed to address a particular need within the business community. The Site Development Assistance Program,

established in 1991, offers a partial reimbursement for costs associated with exterior improvement and building expansion projects. A variety of businesses, including restaurants, retail shops and offices, have used the program to leverage other funds and make additional improvements.

Other Economic Development Tools

- ♦ From 1991 through 2004 the CRA offered the Subsidized Loan Program to encourage economic development and property improvements. The program subsidized the interest on loans made to borrowers from private lending institutions for renovations to qualified commercial and residential properties. Over the life of the program the CRA paid out more than \$714,000 to subsidize 228 loans totaling approximately \$4.8 million, helping to create more than 500 full-time and part-time jobs in the District.



- ♦ The Business Development Assistance Program, first established in 1995, has helped generate economic activity downtown by offering a partial rent subsidy to new businesses locating within the boundaries of the Downtown Development Authority district. Thus far more than \$90,000 has been allocated through the program, assisting 19 new businesses during their critical first year of operation.



- ♦ Several businesses have used CRA grant funds to leverage funds from Palm Beach County's Development Regions Grant Program. Businesses creating new jobs throughout the county would compete for funds to support their start-up and expansion projects. Winning projects within the CRA District received matching funds from the CRA. The grants assisted businesses with costs related to construction, equipment, site improvements, property acquisition and more. The CRA administered funds on the county's behalf and monitored grant recipients to document job retention. Many businesses, including Salon 301 in Atlantic Grove and Donnie's Place on NW 5th Avenue, benefited from the program before the county discontinued it in 2007.



Donnie's Place



CityWalk, Pineapple Grove

Looking into the future

In 2009 the CRA hired an Economic Development Director to help attract new business activity to Delray Beach. Through this position, which is funded jointly by the CRA and City, a new business-oriented web site has been established and six new economic development programs have been established. The incentive programs offer financial rewards to encourage the construction of Class A office space, promote job creation, and stimulate the development of vacant land. Businesses and developers may receive assistance from the CRA in the form of loan subsidies, reimbursement for relocation expenses, and deeply discounted land lease

rates, as well as funds to offset personnel costs and infrastructure improvements. These new incentives target industries that have been identified by the state and county as high priorities, including clean energy, corporate headquarters, emerging technologies and life sciences.

www.BusinessDelray.com

This website is a public-private partnership between the Chamber of Commerce, CRA, the City and several private organizations, designed to highlight Delray's location in Florida's Southeast Economic Region and strengthen the Delray Beach Business Brand.



Amazing Creations Florist

beautification

putting our best foot forward

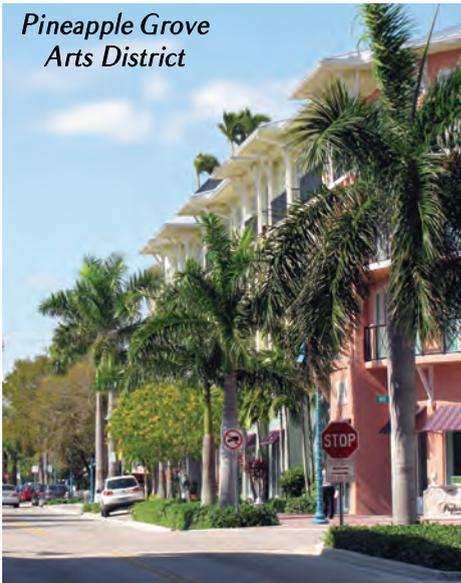
Twenty-five years ago, East Atlantic Avenue suffered from poor physical and economic conditions, and improving the main downtown thoroughfare was one of the first challenges facing the City and CRA. The agency contributed \$1 million to beautify Atlantic Avenue between Swinton Avenue and southbound Federal Highway (East 5th Avenue) by adding landscaping, replacing narrow cement sidewalks with wider paver brick sidewalks, installing decorative lighting, burying utilities, and improving signage. Those improvements were later extended to the section between the Intracoastal Waterway and A-1-A, creating the charming and traditional historic downtown setting that we all enjoy.

Similar improvements have been installed along the West Atlantic Avenue corridor, with more than \$2.5 million invested in streetscape improvements from Swinton Avenue to West 12th Avenue. The planned installation of additional landscaping within the medians along West Atlantic will help to create a seamless, pedestrian friendly downtown, from Interstate-95 to the beach.



*West Atlantic Avenue
Beautification Project*

*Pineapple Grove
Arts District*



Revitalizing Delray through Investment

- ♦ **Making A Grand Entrance:** A Gateway feature at the intersection of Interstate-95 and West Atlantic Avenue will mark the entrance to Delray's downtown. Efforts were made to solicit community input with the goal to create a feature that will reflect Delray's history and diverse heritage. The \$1 million plan includes six decorative 30-foot columns, a unique set of trellises, landscaping, sidewalks, and improved crosswalks.
- ♦ **Partnering with Pineapple Grove:** The CRA has supported redevelopment within the Pineapple Grove Arts District by contributing funding to the Pineapple Grove Main Street program and investing more than \$3 million throughout the district for parking, landscaping, lighting, signage and sidewalks.

♦ **Reviving Historic 5th Avenue:** The three-block commercial corridor along NW and SW 5th Avenue was once the commercial hub of the African American community, but it experienced economic decline in the 1970s and 1980s. In 2003, the CRA brought in Miami artist Gary Moore to collaborate with residents and business owners to design a project that would reflect the area’s culture and history. The CRA invested more than \$1.2 million—along with City and County funding—adding streetscape improvements, landscaping, decorative lighting, bronze medallion inlays, and banners. On-street parking, which had been removed during an earlier beautification project, was replaced.



Historic Fifth Avenue

♦ **Enhancing MLK (NE/NW 2nd Street):** In 2008, the City created a planning committee comprised of residents, property owners, City and CRA staff to help design a beautification project along the Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive corridor. The design includes landscape improvements, crosswalks, and a series of commemorative plaques featuring quotes by Martin Luther King, Jr. to be embedded in the sidewalks. Two pocket parks will also be created.

The improvements will span the entire length of MLK Jr. Drive, along NW and NE 2nd Street, from I-95 to the Intracoastal Waterway. The CRA has allocated \$750,000 for the project, to be combined with the City of Delray Beach’s \$300,000 contribution. Construction will be underway in 2011.



Proposed Column Design for Gateway Feature

♦ **A Safer US-1:** In order to address speeding and aesthetic issues along the US-1 corridor downtown, the CRA funded traffic studies, roadway improvement designs, and a year-long trial that eliminated a travel lane in each direction from SE 10th Street to George Bush Blvd (NE 8th Street). The trial, which used temporary modifications to test traffic and safety patterns during peak and off season periods, resulted in reduced vehicular speeds and

fewer accidents without causing significant traffic delays. In the future, permanent improvements will add bike lanes, wider sidewalks, on-street parking and landscaping to make the corridor safer and more attractive.



US-1 Corridor (Now)



Proposed Rendering of US-1 Corridor

sustaining the renaissance

ensuring downtown's continued viability

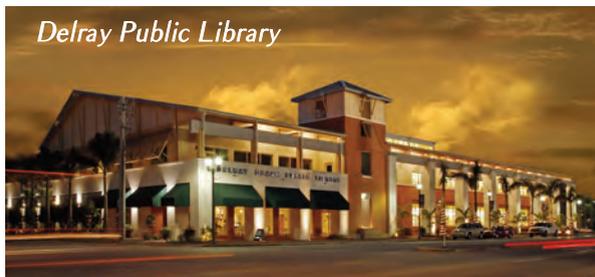
A combination of smart growth principles, development incentives, a diversified retail base and urban housing has helped transform downtown Delray Beach into a vibrant social, cultural, and economic center. But the City and CRA have worked to create more than just a collection of trendy shops and restaurants. A sustainable downtown is one that enhances the quality of life for residents and meets the needs of all ages, incomes and interests, offering opportunities for entrepreneurs and attractions for residents and visitors. These characteristics strengthen the downtown so that the City can benefit from good economic conditions, and withstand difficult times in the future.

Creating A Cultural Center

The CRA recognizes the role of art and culture in attracting visitors and improving a community's livability, and has supported the City's significant cultural institutions. In the mid 1980's a group of concerned citizens began to explore options to save an abandoned school campus located in the center of downtown. Known today as Old School Square, the 4-acre site with historic school buildings was restored and converted to a cultural arts center that includes a 300-seat theatre, an arts museum, an outdoor pavilion and meeting space. The campus serves as an anchor for the downtown, hosting cultural festivals, visual and performing arts exhibits, classes and events. The CRA has supported Old School Square by paying down a portion of its renovation loan (\$300,000) and providing annual operational support (\$285,000 in 2010).



The recently constructed 46,700-square-foot Delray Public Library provides a variety of valuable community programs and services. With a collection of 250,000 volumes, computers labs, free wireless internet access, and a variety of educational and cultural programs, the nonprofit library is a major resource for students, residents and visitors. By contributing to the library's annual operations (\$308,000 in 2010), the CRA has helped solidify the organization's role as an economic anchor along the West Atlantic corridor. The CRA also provides operating funds annually to support the Spady Cultural Heritage Museum (\$182,000 in 2010), and helped fund the restoration of the historic buildings located on the site. In 2010 the CRA purchased a 15,000 sq. ft. warehouse in Pineapple Grove, with plans to convert it to an arts incubator.



Bringing Visitors Downtown

In 1993, the CRA pooled resources with the City, Chamber of Commerce and Downtown Development Authority to create a unified entity to market the downtown to visitors. Known as the Downtown Marketing Cooperative (DMC), the nonprofit organization works to strengthen the local economy by promoting downtown's dining, shopping, entertainment, and cultural destinations. The DMC leverages public funds and raises private sponsorship dollars to produce the July Fourth Celebration, the 100-Foot Christmas Tree, the First Night New Year's Eve celebration, and the Art & Jazz on the Avenue series, which have attracted hundreds of thousands of people to Delray Beach. The CRA has contributed over \$2.8 million to support the DMC's promotional efforts over its 17 years of operation.



Since 1996, the CRA has funded the Delray GreenMarket—an open-air market that has become a popular tradition among many year-round and seasonal residents. The family-friendly Saturday morning destination offers free entertainment and fresh produce from local growers, as well as plants, baked goods, organic food products, and other specialty gourmet items from local merchants from October through May. Each year, the market and its signature special events, such as the Easter Bonnet Pet Parade and the Chili Cook-Off, attract thousands of residents and visitors to the downtown area.

The municipal Tennis Center and stadium have played a major role in the viability of West Atlantic Avenue and the overall downtown. In 1992, the CRA contributed \$481,000 to the rehabilitation of the facility to make it a more competitive venue for sporting events and other attractions. Over the years, the Tennis Center has hosted major tennis tournaments, including the FedCup, the Davis Cup quarter-finals, the International Tennis Championship, and the Chris Evert Pro-Celebrity Tennis Classic. In recent years, the CRA has contributed \$500,000 annually to help sponsor the ITC tennis tournament, which brings an estimated \$8 million in annual economic impacts to Delray Beach.



Protecting The Investment

Both public and private redevelopment efforts have successfully attracted more businesses, residents and visitors to the downtown. In turn, increased maintenance and public safety measures are a necessity to protect the investment that has been made and to help ensure the sustainability of this growth. The Clean and Safe Program was created to address cleanliness and safety along the main areas of the downtown. In 2010, the CRA allocated more than \$1 million to the program, which provides dedicated police patrols, increased code enforcement, and concentrated efforts to maintain lighting and landscaped areas. The Clean and Safe Program also provides improved signage and wayfinding throughout the area to make it easier for visitors to navigate the area and locate destinations. Together, these elements help ensure that downtown Delray Beach remains a safe and attractive village by the sea where people can live, work and play.

Clean & Safe Team



land assembly

creating opportunities



Land assembly is one of the Delray Beach CRA's most practical redevelopment tools. The process involves the strategic acquisition of small adjacent properties in order to assemble them into bigger parcels suitable for large-scale redevelopment projects. Once a site has been assembled and prepared, the CRA issues a request for proposals (RFP)—a competitive bidding process through which the agency solicits development proposals for the property. Over the years, this has resulted in several successful developments in the downtown area, with plans for several more projects in the future. Here's a look at some of the projects brought to fruition as a result of CRA land assembly efforts:

◆ **South County Courthouse and Delray Beach Public Library:** The CRA has been involved in this effort since its inception in 1986, helping to put the land together to make the original courthouse project possible. After the CRA acquired additional land on the adjacent block, the courthouse proceeded with its expansion project, nearly doubling the size of the facility. The expansion included a parking garage to serve the courthouse and the new Delray Public Library, which was also constructed on land acquired by the CRA.

◆ **Grove Square:** This restaurant, retail and entertainment complex west of the FEC railroad on East Atlantic Avenue—was another early land assembly project by the Delray Beach CRA. The project resulted in several new restaurants and an outdoor entertainment facility (the original City Limits pavilion), and was a catalyst for activity and nightlife in the downtown core.



Grove Square Complex

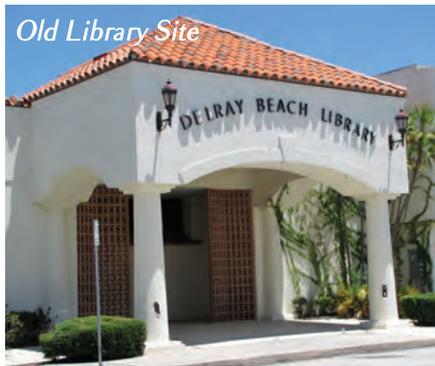
◆ **Worthing Place:** This downtown mixed use development was constructed on land that included CRA and City-owned parcels. The project consists of more than 200 luxury apartments, approximately 12,000 square-feet of retail space, a parking garage for tenants and customers and a separate 200-space public parking garage on the adjacent block. The public parking garage was constructed at no cost to the City as part of the developer's contribution.

- ♦ **Atlantic Grove:** The CRA spent several years and nearly \$2 million assembling and preparing 4.6 acres of land just west of the Delray Beach Tennis Center for redevelopment, and issued an RFP. The selected redevelopment team consisted of a private firm—New Urban Communities—and two nonprofit organizations—the Delray Beach Community Development Corporation (CDC) and the Center for Technology, Enterprise and Development (TED Center). This unique partnership allowed 49% of the project’s returns to be reinvested into the community in support of affordable housing and small business programs. The team built two 3-story mixed-used buildings fronting Atlantic Avenue with restaurant and retail space on the ground floor, offices on the second floor, residential condominium units on the third floor, and townhouses to the rear. Ten units were sold to low/moderate-income home-buyers.



Atlantic Grove

- ♦ **Old Library, New Plans:** After the Delray Beach Public Library relocated to its new facility on West Atlantic Avenue, its former site on SE 4th Avenue became available for redevelopment. In 2006 the CRA issued an RFP for the 1.57-acre Old Library Site, including the adjacent public parking lot and the Greater Delray Beach Chamber of Commerce building, which created combined frontage for the parcel on both SE 4th and SE 5th Avenues. The selected proposal includes approximately 50,000 square-feet of retail and office space, a boutique-style hotel, a public-private shared parking structure, and public open space. As part of the proposal the developer will build out new office space for the Chamber of Commerce on the ground floor of the Old School Square parking garage on NE 1st Street before demolishing its current office building. Construction is expected to commence at the end of 2011.



Old Library Site

- ♦ **Focus on West Atlantic:** The CRA has assembled several significant redevelopment parcels along the West Atlantic Avenue corridor. The two largest sites have frontage along the south side of the road—one at SW 9th Avenue and the other at SW 7th Avenue. The CRA Plan and Downtown Master Plan, as well as other redevelopment plans and feasibility studies, call for a mixture of retail, restaurant, office, and residential uses along the West Atlantic Avenue corridor. With access to Interstate-95 and various public transportation routes, the western portion of the Central Business District still holds great potential for future development. The recently completed West Atlantic Beautification Project, the construction of the public plaza on SW 5th Avenue, the upcoming Gateway Feature and plans to develop new public parking will continue to strengthen the marketability of the area.



South County Courthouse

affordable housing

taking ownership

Sometimes success can have unintended consequences. Redevelopment may accelerate an increase in property values, posing challenges to housing affordability. Since its inception, the CRA has been sensitive to ensuring that quality housing is available to residents of all income levels.

Among the CRA's initiatives:

- ♦ **Infill Housing:** Since 1992, the CRA has been developing infill housing in the Northwest and Southwest neighborhoods, adjacent to the West Atlantic Avenue corridor. In 1995, the CRA became a partner in the City's Renaissance Program, helping more than 170 first-time buyers purchase affordable homes.
- ♦ **Development Without Displacement:** A core value of the CRA is to improve neighborhoods without displacing the very residents who live there and have a stake in its redevelopment. A community effort involving the CRA, residents, city staff and the FAU/FIU Joint Center developed this guideline of tools to help maintain affordability and minimize displacement as redevelopment occurs.
- ♦ **Delray Beach Community Land Trust:** Many traditional affordable housing models are based on down payment subsidies that impose affordability restrictions for a specified period, allowing the homes to eventually be sold at market rates. In contrast, the community land trust model creates a permanently affordable housing supply by holding the land beneath the home "in trust", thus removing land costs from the price of the housing. The resale price is also restricted so that homes remain affordable in perpetuity. The CRA was instrumental in the creation of the Delray Beach Community Land Trust in 2006. To date 48 low- and moderate-income families have purchased homes through the trust. The CRA has donated land and provided subsidies to the DBCLT, and provides annual administrative funding.



Atlantic Park Square Home



*Palm Manor
(Before)*



*Palm Manor
(After)*

Milestones in Affordable Housing

Delray is considered a leader in affordable housing, as illustrated by the following CRA and CLT projects:

- ◆ The CLT is currently constructing homes in the Atlantic Park Square subdivision in the Southwest Neighborhood. The CRA acquired blighted properties along a one block stretch of SW 14th Avenue and turned them over to the CLT to make room for seventeen new single-family homes. The homes' garages are located to the rear and accessed by alleys that were installed with CRA funds, allowing room at the front for porches and attractive yards with picket fences. The CRA also made streetscape improvements to support the development, including on-street parking, landscaping and sidewalks.



West Settler's Building

- ◆ In 2004 the CRA acquired a blighted two-story mixed-use building located at 135 NW 5th Avenue. With assistance from the City's SHIP funds, the CRA undertook an extensive interior and exterior renovation of the building. Today, the two-bedroom West Settler's condominium units are available to low- and moderate-income homebuyers. Additionally, two commercial bays on the ground floor of the building will provide space for new business activity on the Historic Fifth Avenue corridor.

- ◆ In December 2004, the City adopted the Family Workforce Housing Ordinance, allowing for density bonuses when affordable units are included. One resulting project was CODA, which produced six affordable 3-bedroom townhomes. The CRA has made down payment assistance and purchase subsidies available to moderate-income buyers purchasing these units, which are located just south of the Delray Public Library.

- ◆ The CRA has also worked to provide more affordable rental opportunities within the District. The CRA acquired the historic La France Hotel on NW 4th Avenue and gathered input from commu-



La France Apartments

nity stakeholders to determine the best use for the property. As a result, the CRA renovated the hotel into an affordable

apartment complex for low-income seniors. The CRA also owns and maintains nine affordable rental units at Carolyn Quince Court on NW 5th Avenue and twenty-five units at Palm Manor Apartments on SW 9th Avenue. The CRA has invested more than \$5 million in land acquisition and renovation costs associated with these affordable rental complexes.



CODA Townhomes

historic preservation

DBHS Hunt House



preserving our heritage

Historic preservation has played a crucial role in the revitalization of Delray Beach. The CRA has forged partnerships with businesses, property owners, residents and other government agencies in order to preserve historically significant structures while allowing for their adaptive reuse. Not only has historic preservation proven to be a smart economic tool, but it has also enhanced the cultural vitality of our community. Examples of the CRA's commitment to preservation include:

- ◆ **Restoring Historic Banker's Row:** In the 1980s, the Banker's Row neighborhood located along the 200 block of NE 1st Avenue consisted of sixteen historic homes that were suffering from major deterioration and slated for demolition. In an effort to preserve the area, the City and CRA worked with residents and property owners to create a master plan that called for brick paver sidewalks, lighting, landscaping, on-street parking, a public parking lot and flexible zoning to allow the conversion of homes into office and retail space. The CRA funded 75% of the improvement costs and acquired the land to build the parking lot. All of the homes on Banker's Row have since undergone significant renovations and have experienced substantial increases in property values.



- ◆ **Historic Façade Program:** The Historic Façade Easement Program allows the CRA to obtain an easement over the façade of a historic structure in exchange for a grant to be applied to the cost of eligible improvements (primarily exterior and structural renovations). Property owners reduce their total outlay for renovations, while the public receives the benefit of the resulting physical improvements

and the preservation of an historic structure. The CRA retains architectural control of the historic facade in perpetuity, ensuring that it retains its original character.

Masonic Lodge Building (Before)



Masonic Lodge Building (After)



♦ **Preserving Our Cultural Heritage:** The Spady Museum, operated by the nonprofit organization Expanding & Preserving Our Cultural Heritage (EPOCH), is housed in a 1926 two-story Mission-Revival style home, once owned by Palm Beach County's first African American school principal. At EPOCH's request, the City acquired the home in 1997 and contributed \$100,000 to convert the structure into a cultural museum. The CRA oversaw the renovations to the museum building and contributed funding to the project. The CRA has made annual contributions to EPOCH to support the museum's operating expenses since the facility opened in 2001 and has budgeted funds for the renovation of the Munnings Cottage.



♦ **Preserving A Special Part of Delray's Past:** In 1996, the City established the West Settler's Historic District, a neighborhood that includes the city's first churches and pioneer family settlements. The district, which includes the two northern blocks of the commercial Historic Fifth Avenue corridor, contains many homes from the early 1900s. Over time, many historic structures were demolished after falling into disrepair. The CRA established the West Settler's Grant and Loan Programs to help property owners rehabilitate their homes and preserve the integrity of the structures. The CRA also established the West Settler's Advisory Board in 2003 to engage citizens in the preservation process. Overall, the CRA has invested more than \$150,000 to help fund the rehabilitation of fourteen homes. Today, there are twenty-eight contributing structures in the West Settler's Historic District.



♦ **Rescuing Structures from Demolition:** The CRA has saved several historic structures from demolition by relocating them to sites within the CRA District. The current CRA office (1939 Monterey House) and the office building next door (1925 Bungalow) were in the path of the Palm Beach International Airport expansion when they were moved to their current location on Swinton Avenue. The CRA relocated the Munnings Cottage to the Spady Museum campus and is relocating the historically contributing home at 36 SE 1st Avenue to 186 NW



5th Avenue, just north of the Museum.

neighborhoods

taking care of home

Residential areas account for a majority of the Community Redevelopment Area, each neighborhood having a unique set of characteristics and needs. There are both historic and newer neighborhoods, cottage-style homes from the 1930s as well as modern townhouse and condominium complexes. The CRA invests a great deal of resources into infrastructure improvements to address the physical condition of residential areas, as well as neighborhood planning to help structure the overall impact of these improvements.

Here's how the CRA has made a difference:

- ♦ **Seacrest/Del Ida – A True Partnership:** In 1998, the City adopted the Seacrest/Del Ida Neighborhood Improvement Plan, which aimed to beautify the neighborhood, add parking and slow traffic in this northeast community. The plan was funded through a combination of City and CRA dollars, as well as property owner contributions from a special assessment district. A CRA grant program helped fund the conversion of several duplexes into owner-occupied single-family homes, which helped stabilize the neighborhood. Most of the improvements outlined in the plan, such as the installation of various traffic calming measures, parking lots,

removal of back-out parking, and reconstruction of NE 3rd Avenue, were completed by 2006.

- ♦ **The North Federal Hwy. Redevelopment Plan:** Approved by the City Commission in 1999, the plan seeks to improve the visual appearance of the corridor by eliminating inappropriate land uses and stabilizing the surrounding residential areas such as the La Hacienda neighborhood. With strong input from the area's residents, the CRA coordinated and funded landscaping and sidewalk improvements as well as the installation of a pocket park. The CRA is also funding the installation of a new roadway connection between Federal and Dixie Highways.



- ◆ **The Southwest Plan:** The CRA has been instrumental in the implementation of the Southwest Area Neighborhood Redevelopment Plan since its adoption in 2003. The plan generally applies to the southwest quadrant of the CRA District, an area that has historically contained the bulk of the city's older and poorer quality housing. The plan emphasizes stabilization and revitalization of the area neighborhoods through beautification and infrastructure improvements, the elimination of substandard housing, the creation and preservation of affordable housing units and a job training facility. Highlights include: three pocket parks completed, the establishment of a Neighborhood Resource Center on SW 12th Avenue, numerous landscaping and infrastructure projects.



Street Improvements along SW 14th Avenue

Major beautification projects on SW 2nd Street and SW 12th Avenue are in the design phases and will be constructed through CRA and City funds.

- ◆ **Brownfield Remediation:** The CRA took the lead in addressing environmental issues at the Carver Square subdivision, where homes constructed over a former dump site suffered from structural damage caused by unstable ground conditions. The CRA acquired nineteen properties including 12 homes, provided relocation assistance for residents, and demolished the damaged homes. The CRA invested \$500,000 to remediate soil conditions within this two-block area and prepare it for new affordable single-family housing.



Rosemont Park

- ◆ **Block by Block, House by House:** Homes in the Southwest as well as in Northwest area neighborhoods can benefit from the CRA-funded "Curb Appeal" Residential Improvement Program, which provides up to \$10,000 for exterior improvements, such as painting, landscaping and driveway repairs.



Curb Appeal Project (Before)



Curb Appeal Project (After)

parking & transportation

a community on the move

An adequate supply of parking and an efficient traffic circulation system are critical to downtown's success. CRA dollars have been a major source of funding for transportation improvements over the years, including the following projects:

♦ **Public Parking:** In 2004, the CRA invested \$334,000 toward the construction of the City's first parking garage, which includes 371 spaces that are shared by the South County Courthouse and the Delray Public Library. The agency also acquired property and contributed \$6.5 million toward the construction of a 505-space garage just east of the Old School Square campus. Over the years the CRA also invested significant dollars beautifying surface parking lots, adding signage, and creating on-street parking.



♦ **Free Shuttle Service:** In 2006, the City and CRA pooled resources to create the Downtown Roundabout for Delray Beach residents and visitors. This free downtown shuttle service takes riders from the Tri-Rail Station on Congress Avenue all the way to the beach, stopping at convenient locations along the way. The Downtown Roundabout helps people get around while reducing vehicular traffic congestion in the City's commercial core.

♦ **Downtown Bypass Conversion:** To further improve mobility throughout the downtown area, the Downtown Master Plan calls for the conversion of the one-way bypass system to two-way traffic. The CRA has contributed more than \$1 million to this project, which has included upgrades to water and drainage systems, new railroad crossings, signal lights, and other streetscape improvements. The majority of NE 1st Street opened to two-way traffic in June 2009 and SE 1st Street will be converted at a future date.



♦ **Green Parking:** In 2010, the CRA completed a surface parking lot located on NE 3rd Avenue in the Pineapple Grove Arts District. Green construction techniques, including pervious concrete pavers, decorative LED lighting, and low-volume irrigation, were incorporated into the project. The lot also has a bike rack, landscaping, a courtyard, benches, and areas where artwork can be displayed in the future.

beyond 2010

the future of redevelopment in Delray

The collective efforts of the City, CRA, and private sector have resulted in many successful redevelopment projects. The downtown area is a thriving hub of culture and commerce that supports a variety of businesses and attracts residents and visitors year-round. Improved streetscapes and upgraded infrastructure have created an inviting atmosphere for pedestrians and merchants, and has generated private investment in many cases. Historically significant structures are being restored and adapted for new uses, allowing the character of the city's historic districts and downtown to be preserved. And developers as well as nonprofit and government organizations continue to create new affordable housing opportunities.

Still, some of the challenges that faced Delray Beach twenty-five years ago remain. The city is not immune to shifting economic conditions, as demonstrated by the ups and downs in the housing market and the ongoing recession. As unemployment rates soar, the need for new jobs and quality affordable housing becomes more pronounced. Infrastructure and beautification improvements must be maintained, or the deteriorated conditions that once plagued the District will return. And Delray Beach will always compete with nearby cities to attract new businesses and new residents.

In order to remain effective, the CRA must continually assess the needs of the community and adjust its redevelopment strategies. The CRA plan, which guides the agency's work, must be updated regularly to ensure that its redevelopment initiatives are aligned with the vision of city leaders and residents. Much has been accomplished, but there is yet more potential for growth.

Now that downtown has been established as a vibrant retail and entertainment center, future efforts will seek to create a more balanced mix of businesses. New incentive programs will help attract larger businesses and higher paying jobs, to complement the existing base of restaurants, shops and services. Arts-based incentives will strengthen Delray's position as a tourist destination and cultural community.

The CRA is also investing significant resources in the continued development of the West Atlantic Avenue corridor. Vacant lots are prime locations for new office and retail ventures, with easy access to Interstate-95 and public transportation such as Palm Tran and Tri-Rail. The newly completed West Atlantic Avenue Public Plaza is set to become a center of activity in the community. The CRA will continue to assemble land, improve infrastructure and create parking to support future development in this area.

This retrospective has been a celebration of what has been accomplished, but it is also renewal of the commitment the CRA has made to help make Delray Beach a great place to live, work and play—now and in the years to come.



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