

HOW CAN WE?

2013

LAKELAND COMMUNITY
REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

ANNUAL REPORT 2013



LakelandCRA
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY



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INTRODUCTION

The Lakeland Community Redevelopment Agency (LCRA) Fiscal Year 2013 Annual Report covers all activities for the period October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2013. The report includes a complete financial statement of the LCRA's revenues and expenses, amount of tax increment funds collected and a summary of the LCRA activities for the year.

This year's theme, "**How Can We?**" is based on a question that was posed by IDEO, an innovation and design firm hired in late 2012 by the Lakeland Economic Development Council, a private non-profit economic development agency, separate from the City of Lakeland and the LCRA. IDEO was charged with helping to identify and develop a vision for what Lakeland could become by facilitating collaborative sessions with numerous community representatives.

While their project was much broader than the geography and work of Lakeland's Redevelopment Agency, it was significant in its outcome. Specifically their query, as it related to encouraging and facilitating business investment, citizen engagement and participation; the position of always asking the question, "**How Can We?**" How can we provide better information for our customers? How can we create incentives that are more responsive to development needs? How can we include more citizens in public process?

It is with this spirit that we hope to approach all that we do with the LCRA.

Keeping Up With Our Citizens

Each year we try to continue to improve our methods of communication with our citizens. Increasingly, we are turning to technology as a means of sharing information about Lakeland Community Redevelopment Agency initiatives, new projects and happenings which may be of interest to the Lakeland community. We are constantly updating our website, www.lakelandcra.net, to provide the most current information about both available properties and property incentives. Social media, through instruments like Facebook, Twitter and now the CityCHIC blog, provides the ability to both broadcast and narrowcast information to various interest groups. In addition, this year, we were excited to add video to our arsenal; a Dixieland Brand Video was created for us by a very talented local company, Indie Atlantic Films. This gave us an opportunity to showcase a number of Dixieland businesses and to convey the fun, vibrant, diversity of the Dixieland Community Redevelopment Area. The positive feedback about the piece also helped to solidify that video is a very effective way of communicating ideas and information and will be a tool that we continue to use in the future.

We are always open to new ideas and ways of sharing information about the Lakeland Community Redevelopment Agency with the public so don't hesitate to lob in suggestions by phone (**863-834-6011**), email (**lcra@lakelandgov.net**) or Twitter (**@DixieCRA**).

As always, if you have not already, we invite you to visit www.lakelandcra.net to learn more about how Lakeland is Open for Business!

LAKELAND COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Mayor Gow Fields

Commissioner Keith Merritt

Commissioner Don Salvage

Commissioner Justin Troller

Commissioner Phillip Walker

Commissioner Howard Wiggs

Commissioner Edie Yates

LAKELAND COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Tamara Sakagawa
CRA Manager

Patricia Hendler
CRA Project Manager

Nicole Travis
CRA Project Manager

CITY OF LAKELAND STAFF

Douglas B. Thomas
City Manager

Tony Delgado
Deputy City Manager

Brad Johnson
Assistant City Manager

Jim Studiale
Director of Community Development

Steve Bissonnette
Assistant Director of Community Development

Jason Willey
Economic Development Coordinator



CityCHIC



FAQS

What is a Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA)?

A Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) is a dependent taxing district established by local government for the purpose of carrying out redevelopment activities that include reducing or eliminating blight, increasing the tax base, and encouraging public and private investments in the redevelopment area. The members of the City Commission also serve as the Board members of the Lakeland CRA.

Why create a CRA?

CRA's are created to assist local governments in pursuing redevelopment in targeted areas that are characterized by blight and disinvestment. By establishing a CRA, local governments are given a financial and planning mechanism by which to redevelop areas where private market forces aren't working.

Where are the designated CRA areas?

Lakeland has four CRA target districts, or Community Redevelopment Areas. They are Downtown, which was established in 1979, Dixieland and Mid Town which were created in 2001, and Williams which was created in 2002.

What type of activities will happen in CRA areas?

Redevelopment activities are outlined in each of the CRA district redevelopment plans. The Redevelopment Plan is a document that is approved by the City and the County at the time that each CRA district is created. The Redevelopment Plan outlines the goals and objectives for the district, and more importantly, outlines the specific programs and capital improvements designed to reach those goals. Possible programs include master planning, street improvements, park improvements, development of infill housing, recruitment of new businesses and partnerships. Most programs are designed to leverage public funds by encouraging private developers to invest in CRA districts.



How are redevelopment activities funded?

Activities in CRA districts are predominantly funded by tax increment. Tax increment is calculated based on the dollar value of all real property in the Community Redevelopment Area at the time CRA district is created, also known as the “frozen value”. Taxing authorities who contribute to the tax increment continue to receive property tax revenues based on the frozen value. However, any tax revenues from increases in real property value, referred to as “increment”, are deposited into the Community Redevelopment Agency Trust Fund and dedicated to the redevelopment area.

It is important to note the property tax revenue collected by the School Board and any special district (ex: SWFWMD) are not affected under the tax increment financing process. Tax increment revenues can be used immediately, saved for a particular project, or bonded to maximize the funds available. Any funds received from a tax increment financing area must be used in accordance with the Redevelopment Plan for specific redevelopment purposes within the targeted area, and not for general governmental purposes.

How can I get involved?

Each CRA district is governed by volunteer Advisory Boards, the members of which are appointed by the City Commission. The Downtown CRA actions are governed by the members of the Lakeland Downtown Development Authority (LDDA) Board, plus one member appointed by the City Commission who represents the larger economic development interests for the City of Lakeland, one member who represents the Board of Directors of the Downtown Lakeland Partnership and one member who represents downtown residents. Because the LDDA is a special taxing authority, its Board members are elected by property owners and electors within the LDDA boundaries. Members of all CRA Advisory Boards are required to live, work and/or own property within their respective districts. Advisory Boards are responsible for making budget, policy and project recommendations to the City Commission. The City Commission, acting as the Community Redevelopment Agency, has the final authority to approve all actions.

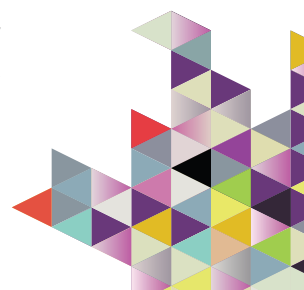
If you would like to volunteer to serve any of these Advisory Boards, please visit the City of Lakeland’s website to download a copy of the Boards and Committees Application. In addition, all Advisory Board meetings are open to the public and held monthly in the City Commission Conference Room on the third floor of City Hall. For more information, visit www.lakelandcra.net

Lakeland Downtown Development Authority

The Lakeland Downtown Development Authority (LDDA) is a special taxing district created by the State Legislature in 1977. Property owners within the boundaries of the LDDA pay an additional 2.0 in millage, providing the basis for LDDA’s budget. Six Board Members are elected by downtown property owners and electors along with one City Commissioner appointed by the Mayor. LDDA projects include marketing efforts and events support, pilot projects such as container gardens and Preservation Alley, and the oversight of streetscape, brick crosswalks and residential development in Downtown. The LDDA serves as the Advisory Board to the Downtown Community Redevelopment Area. The LDDA’s website is www.ldda.org

Downtown Lakeland Partnership

The Downtown Lakeland Partnership (DLP) is a membership organization of businesses in downtown who work together to promote shopping, restaurants, and events in downtown. The DLP holds “First Friday” events every month, plus various holiday activities in December, including the annual Holiday Walkabout. The DLP is also responsible for Central Florida’s premier craft beer festival, Brewz Crewz, as well as ZombieFest. Find out more about the DLP at www.downtownlakelandfl.com



DOWNTOWN

community redevelopment area
advisory board

Jim Malless

Wiley & Malless, LLC

Macon Tomlinson

Tomlinson Construction, LLC

Todd Baylis

Qgiv, Inc.
Cipher Integrations, Inc.

Eric Belvin

Linksters Taproom

Matt Clark

Broadway Real Estate
Services

Ford Heacock III

Heacock Insurance
Group, Inc.

Christopher McArthur

Black & Brew
Coffee House & Bistro

**Commissioner
Don Selvage**

City of Lakeland

Julie Townsend

MIDFLORIDA

Brandon Eady

Downtown Resident

**Commissioner
Don Selvage**

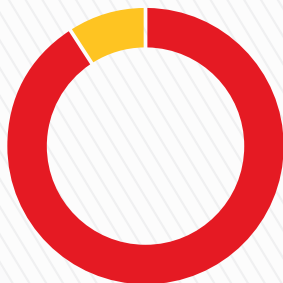
City of Lakeland



DOWNTOWN FINANCIALS

FISCAL YEAR 20 THIRTEEN

*Tax increment revenues shown are based on the prior tax year

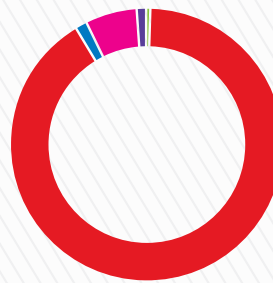


REVENUES

■ Tax Increment Revenues*
\$952,827

■ Transfer from
Public Improvement Fund
\$91,690

\$1,044,517



EXPENSES

■ General Government \$988

■ Professional Services \$17,114

■ Economic Development Incentives \$58,321

■ Debt Service \$955,000

■ Maintenance \$13,094

\$1,044,517

Unaudited financials

TAX INCREMENT REVENUE SOURCES*

City of Lakeland
\$340,108

Polk County
\$498,261

LAMTD
\$36,458

LDDA
\$78,000

**Total
\$952,827**



Downtown Office Leasing was HOT in 2013

Downtown Lakeland real estate activity in the 2012-13 fiscal year was a huge success for office buildings over 20,000 SF. Although there was leasing activity in retail and smaller office buildings, the big story for Downtown was the leasing of medium to large previously vacant space in large office buildings. Most important, some of the largest spaces leased had been vacant for many years.

The 21,000 SF McKay Building at 100 S. Kentucky Avenue signed four new tenants with total square footage of 5,287 square feet bringing the vacancy rate in the building at the end of September to just under 10%. Citizens Bank and Trust Building at 402 S. Kentucky Avenue, a 71,000+ SF building, leased 23,160 square feet and went to just under 80% occupancy after having been at less than 50% occupancy for several years. New large users at Citizens, MidAmerica Administrative & Retirement Solutions, Inc. and Clifton Larson Allen, LLP, both of whom were located in small single occupancy buildings Downtown, made the transition to full service Class A office in Downtown. The biggest story regarding the leasing of previously long term vacant space was the lease of 32,300 SF in SunTrust Plaza by Lakeland Regional Medical Center (LRMC). LRMC leased multiple floors and will be the first occupant of the fourth floor of this full service office building built in 1999. LRMC also leased space for administrative offices in Heritage Plaza, a 40,000 SF full service building at 225 E. Lemon Street. At this same location, Morgan Stanley renewed their lease on 6,500 SF. Another office leasing success story is the 80,000 SF Century Plaza building at 500 S. Florida Avenue. In addition to lease renewals and expansions totaling 6,430 SF, new tenant Saddle Creek moved into 7,030 SF. In the 39,500 SF Gray Robinson Building, Ademero leased 5,400 SF which took the property to 100% occupancy. Other Downtown multi-tenant office buildings which had steady leasing activity include Colonial Square, a 36,882 SF building at 124 S. Florida Avenue, where Juice Source, a tenant new to Downtown, leased 4,018 SF and 101 W. Main Street a 29,000 SF building which leased 3,300 SF to new tenants and had expansions of over 2,000 SF. The sum total of this acceleration of leasing activity over the fiscal year was a vacancy rate for office buildings with over 20,000 SF being lowered to approximately 10%, a very healthy number and a great improvement from the 20%± fluctuation of the previous four years.

DOWNTOWN LAKELAND LEASING ACTIVITY IN LARGE OFFICE BUILDINGS FISCAL 2012-2013

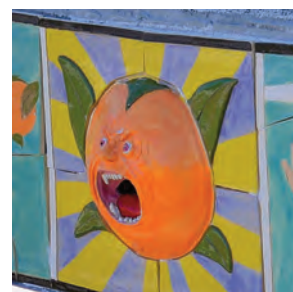
Building Name	Address	Anchor	Total Office SF	Total SF Leased/ Renewed FY 2012-13	Leased/ Renewed as Percentage of Total SF
Century Plaza	500 S. Florida Ave	CenterState Bank	80,000	13,460	16.83%
Citizens Bank and Trust	402 S. Kentucky Ave	Citizens Bank and Trust	71,190	23,160	32.53%
SunTrust Plaza	210 S. Florida Ave	SunTrust	60,000	32,300	53.83%
Heritage Plaza	225 E. Lemon St	Peterson & Myers	40,000	6,500	16.25%
Gray Robinson	1 Lake Morton Dr	Gray Robinson	39,560	5,400	13.65%
Colonial Square	124 S. Florida Ave	Regions Bank	36,882	4,258	11.54%
101 West Main Street	101 W. Main St	—	29,004	7,050	24.31%
McKay Building	100 S. Kentucky Ave	Merrill Lynch	25,000	5,287	21.15%

Leasing activity in buildings with under 20,000 SF of office space though not as dramatic, was stable. The Vanity Fair Building at 116 N. Tennessee Avenue ended the year with only 500 SF out of 3,000 available when Madden Corporate Services moved Downtown and then expanded to a total of 1,800 SF. Sam Houghton, Atty. leased the last available suite at 625 E. Lime Street bringing that building to 100% occupancy. Folsom Construction Management, LLC opened up at 113 S. Florida Avenue, then expanded and moved to 101 S. Florida Avenue occupying a full floor which had been vacant for quite some time. Herring & Company Commercial Real Estate renovated and repurposed the 14,000+ SF second floor of their building at 231 N. Kentucky Avenue to offer Executive Suites in the Downtown market. Space went quickly and they achieved over 70% occupancy within the first six months. Swan Development Advisors leased their entire first floor in the redeveloped mixed use building at 229 N. Tennessee Avenue with new leases to TMR Creative Inc. and Maximize Social Media. Further south at 123 S. Tennessee Avenue, Sihle Waller Insurance moved into 2,118 SF of space to bring that building to 100% occupancy. This was space that had been vacant for more than one year. Patterson Publishing, publisher of *The Lakeland*, relocated to Downtown leasing the entire 2,200 SF at 214 Traders' Alley, and Recondo Technology moved from Sun Trust Plaza to lease the 4,018 SF first floor at 201 E. Main Street.

Finally one of the most significant Downtown office real estate transactions this fiscal year was the purchase of 205 E. Orange Street, a 43,000 SF office/retail building, by Smith, Luffman, Golotko of CPS Investment Advisors who plan to move their business to this prominent location. This is the first major office building purchase Downtown since the purchases in 2008, 2009, and 2010 of the 40,000 SF building at 230 S. Florida Avenue by LRMC, the 30,000+ SF former Holland & Knight building at 450 MLK, Jr. Avenue by Florida United Methodist Center, and HPC HealthCare's 17,800 SF purchase at 320 W. Main Street respectively. The significance of the Orange Street purchase is twofold, it is not only the first major purchase since 2010, but it is the first major purchase since the economic downturn by a profit making entity reversing a trend where the Downtown CRA saw the loss of over 87,800 SF of office buildings removed from the property tax roll. Looking back over the office space activity in buildings large and small, it seems clear that the 2012-2013 fiscal year will be recognized as a turning point in the economic recovery of Downtown.

Platform Art: Party on the Bridge

For the second time in as many years, the Lakeland Community Redevelopment Agency partnered with Platform Art, a non-profit arts organization, to effectuate some of the goals outlined in the Downtown Redevelopment Plan.





Vincent Sansone of Crealdé School of Art showcasing his work on the Orange Street Bridge.

Party on the Bridge was an event which celebrated the completion of the Orange Street Bridge tile installation project, which had begun in 2011. The tiles, which span both the north and south sides of the bridge, are the result of a request from the LCRA to Platform Art to assist in creating events and/or art pieces which connect the east and west sides of Downtown Lakeland. The north side of the bridge, with artwork by ceramicist Beatte Marston of St. Petersburg, Florida, was completed in 2011. Marston's piece was part of Platform Art's Art in AgriCulture theme and includes realistic images reflective of Lakeland's landscape and history of agriculture. The south side of the bridge, completed this year, was executed by Vincent Sansone, of the Crealdé School of Art in Winter Park, Florida. In contrast to the Marston piece, Sansone's work is whimsical, witty and a little bit wild.

HOW CAN WE INCORPORATE ART INTO REDEVELOPMENT?

Described by Sansone as an "86-foot long cartoon strip", the high-fire stoneware tile mosaic reflects the artist's creativity, irreverent sense of humor and love of puns. Anthropomorphized rabbits are featured prominently, consistent with the artist's self-described Bunnidom phase. Bunnies appear in a famous painting by Edouard Manet, as operators of a cleaning service (dust bunnies) and as pilots keeping the skies above Lakeland safe (hare planes). As a nod to the agricultural heritage of Lakeland, Sansone has included images of citrus, including blood oranges, which become vampires during the harvest.

Platform's Orange Street Bridge tile installation is one of a number of public art pieces distributed throughout Lakeland's central business district and serves as a catalyst for future projects linking regional artists to community redevelopment. For more information about this project, please visit our website at www.lakelandcra.net.





205 East Orange Street – Smith Luffman Golotko LLC

A very exciting redevelopment project was introduced at the close of the Summer of 2013. Property located at 205 East Orange Street, formerly owned and occupied by Wells Fargo Bank, was purchased by Smith Luffman Golotko LLC in July 2013. The site, just over one acre in size, is bounded by E. Orange Street on the north, S. Kentucky Avenue to the east and S. Tennessee Avenue to the west, and included two structures. As part of the project, the 24,000 square foot, 3-story concrete office building on the east side of the site will be rehabilitated and occupied as leased office space. As part of the renovations, the exterior of the office building will be dramatically improved with stucco, paint and sunshades. In addition, streetscape improvements will be added around the perimeter of the property. This will result in the completion of streetscape along the south side of Orange Street from Kentucky to Tennessee, and in front of the property on both the Kentucky and Tennessee sides. The remaining 17,000 square foot single story concrete structure on the west side of the site and the covered drive-through banking area will be demolished to make way for parking and an outparcel for future development. The project architect is Mike Furr of Furr Wegman and the contractor is Rodda Construction.

Total project costs are estimated to be \$2.3 million with occupancy of the third floor of the office building scheduled for Summer 2014.

This project was awarded a Tax Increment Development incentive which will allow for the reimbursement of tax increment generated by the increased value in the property following improvements. We look forward to seeing the project completed and occupied with new Downtown employees. For more information about the Tax Increment Development incentive please visit our website at www.lakelandcra.net

Downtown Parking Task Force

In 2013 the Downtown Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) Advisory Board created the Downtown Parking Task Force which was charged with taking a more comprehensive look at parking in Downtown Lakeland. Made up of volunteers representing merchants, property owners, office workers, residents, visitors and local government; this group approached the project from the standpoint of answering the question, "How can we make Downtown parking a more positive brand experience?" As such, the Task Force is reviewing data about the supply of both public and private parking in Downtown Lakeland and is gathering data about enforcement issues, as well as customer awareness and perceptions about parking. The Task Force's goal is to develop a series of recommendations to be presented to the Downtown CRA Advisory Board and then on to the City Commission for action. Information about the Task Force is being posted regularly to Facebook and CityCHIC and all comments are welcome. Visit www.lakelandcra.net for more information.

The Federal Building

The Federal Building which was deeded to the City of Lakeland by the United States General Services Administration in 2005, was originally slated for redevelopment by MIDFLORIDA for use as a conference and office space. However, in the Spring of 2012, MIDFLORIDA withdrew from the project. The City remained committed to the restoration and reuse of the property and as such, in early 2013, City staff completed feasibility and cost analysis for a possible reuse of the historic property. The City Commission approved the remediation of interior environmental concerns including asbestos and mold and mildew abatement, as well as the restoration of the exterior of the building in order to prevent water intrusion. The budget for this work was \$875,000 in FY 2014. Remediation work is expected to begin in March 2014 with exterior restoration work to begin shortly thereafter. Following this work, the property will again be released through a public Request for Proposals process for private development in the hopes of capturing the interest of a user to rehabilitate the interior and occupy the space.



New Southern Square – Residential Development

White Challis Redevelopment Company of Daytona Beach was selected in 2011 as the developer for the Bay Street Redevelopment Project. The project, called New Southern Square, included a three-story mixed use building with retail/office space and residential studios on the ground floor and nine residential lofts on each of the second and third floors. It had a second component of fourteen, two and three-story townhomes complete with two car garages and roof decks.

Following the completion of market study and focus group work in the Spring of 2012, developers Jack White and Chris Challis moved on in 2013 to raise local equity for the project. The sourcing of local capital was slow and in late January 2014 the developers requested a 9-month contract extension in order to allow for more time to continue with the project. The time extension would move their next required submittal date to December 2013 and construction of the first phase to 2015.

Due to the amount of time that it takes to complete a selection process for developers, the Downtown CRA Advisory Board agreed to recommend the extension for White Challis rather than reopen the proposal process. As a result, the extension was granted and there is much hope that this development will come to fruition.





HOW CAN WE?

LCRA ANNUAL REPORT 2013

DIXIELAND COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AREA

DIXIELAND

community redevelopment area
advisory board

Greg Myers

Southside
Cleaners-Launders

Melissa Chambers

The Chambers House

William Haskell

Dixieland Neighborhood
Association

Jim Steinbauer

South Lake Morton
Neighborhood Association

Tom Waller

The Waller Group

Cory Petcoff

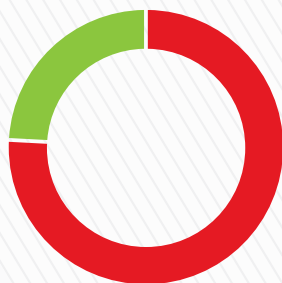
Baron Realty



DIXIELAND
FINANCIALS

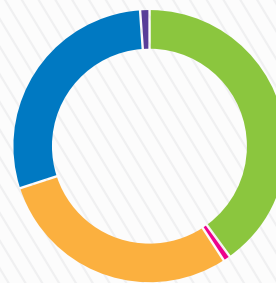
FISCAL YEAR | 20
THIRTEEN

**Tax increment revenues shown are based on the prior tax year*



REVENUES

- Tax Increment Revenues* \$168,668
 - Unappropriated Surplus \$54,427
- \$223,095**



EXPENSES

- General Government \$88,608
 - Professional Services \$2,047
 - Economic Development Incentives \$64,066
 - Transportation Improvements \$67,242
 - Maintenance \$1,132
- \$223,095**

Unaudited financials

TAX INCREMENT REVENUE SOURCES*

City of Lakeland
\$65,319

Polk County
\$96,336

LAMTD
\$7,013

Total
\$168,668

Dixieland Community Redevelopment Area Plan Update

The Dixieland Commercial Corridor Redevelopment Plan is a road map that addresses the unique needs of the Dixieland Community Redevelopment Area (CRA). The plan, which was adopted in 2001, includes the overall goals for redevelopment and identifies the types of projects planned for the area. Some of the projects identified in the plan include: streetscape and roadway improvements, building renovations through Façade Improvement Programs, new infill development and creating identifiable gateways into the district.

As a result of economic changes and progress made with the implementation of goals identified in the 2001 plan, by 2013 it was time to address the changing conditions in an updated redevelopment plan.

In the Fall of 2013, the Dixieland CRA Advisory Board hired AECOM, a planning consulting firm, to assist with the Dixieland CRA Plan Update, a refreshed plan that would identify strategies, issues and opportunities for the redevelopment district over the next ten years. Specifically, staff asked AECOM to focus on strategies that would enhance Florida Avenue, protect the historic neighborhoods and offer development predictability to both businesses and residents.

It will be important to incorporate the ideas and vision of a diverse set of the stakeholders from the beginning in order to develop and successfully implement an updated redevelopment plan. As a result, AECOM's scope of services includes a site tour of Dixieland's South Florida Avenue Corridor with a wide range of participants from the City of Lakeland's Community Development, Public Works, and Parks and Recreation Departments, as well as staff from the Florida Department of Transportation. Their work will also include small focus group sessions and will culminate in a larger evening workshop open to all members of the public. Individuals and stakeholder groups who have been specifically identified as critical participants include:

- Business Owners
- Property Owners
- Tenants
- Lake Morton Neighborhood Association
- Architects, Contractors and Private Developers
- Dixieland Neighborhood Association

Following this input CRA staff will work with AECOM to flesh out strategies to address stakeholder concerns and to capitalize on all of the wonderful things that already exist in the redevelopment district. Ongoing redevelopment provided by key private and public sector projects in the district contribute to the overall enhanced quality of life for its citizens and will ensure the continued success of the Dixieland Community Redevelopment Area. The Plan Update is expected to be complete by spring 2014.

**HOW
CAN
WE
CAPITALIZE
ON
DIXIELAND'S
SUCCESSSES
AND
ENVISION
ITS
FUTURE?**





The Dixieland Brand

LCRA staff is constantly working on improving communication with the public regarding business and development opportunities within the Dixieland Community Redevelopment Area. The goal of the in-house marketing efforts is to attract other investors, businesses and visitors with the idea that interesting, unique, edgy businesses like to cluster and Dixieland offers a somewhat unfettered environment for creativity. The end result has been the creation of a very positive, funky Dixieland brand that conveys the message that the district is an exciting, fun and prosperous place to do business. A particular source of pride for us is that the Dixieland brand is one which is also associated with “community” and “neighborhood”; a perfect message in the redevelopment environment where the synergies between local business and local residents are critical to long term health of the community.

HOW CAN WE KEEP DIXIELAND'S BRAND POSITIVE, FRESH AND FUNKY? (IN A GOOD WAY)

Until FY 2013, marketing of the brand included promoting the district in electronic and printed publications, use of social media, press releases and rack card promotions. However, in July 2013, the Dixieland CRA Advisory Board approved the creation of a Dixieland brand video to profile the range and depth of businesses in the district, as well as to provide a video interpretation of the feel of the area. Indie Atlantic Films (a Dixieland business) was hired to capture the diversity and excitement of the district; unique retail experiences, delicious dining options and great locations to enjoy live music. The Dixieland video was shared through social media and is posted on the LCRA website.

To further the branding of the district, staff created the Restaurant and Retail Guide to help visitors familiarize themselves with all of the shopping, dining and entertainment options within the district. The guide includes a map and is intended to get visitors to extend their stay and enjoy more than one business during their visit. To further this idea, a group of businesses has created the Dixieland Alliance, and launched a *Last Friday* event. On the *Last Friday* of the month, participating businesses stay open later, offer special discounts, music and appetizers.

We are thrilled that the community has embraced the Dixieland brand and that the district continues to have a positive, progressive and business-friendly vibe. We are excited about all that the future holds for this area!



Coming Soon: Hillcrest Coffee!

Hillcrest Coffee, an urban coffee shop, may be the new hub for social activity and catalyst for more neighborhood-based businesses in the Dixieland Historic Neighborhood. The red brick bungalow located at 119 Hillcrest Street is just one block west of busy South Florida Avenue, on the corner of Hillcrest Street and Missouri Avenue. Property owners Brian and Catherine Goding have envisioned their business to be a small, relaxing neighborhood coffeehouse with shaded outdoor seating. Consistent with the emerging themes in Dixieland, Hillcrest Coffee will showcase local artists; visual art will be on display inside the building, along with local musicians performing in the evening. To assist with developing their vision for this property, the Godings received a Design Assistance Grant and requested to work with SCMH Architects.



119 Hillcrest Street was built as a residence in 1925 and maintains many of its original features. The structure was converted to office use in 1989 and the oversized front porch was enclosed in 1996. To accommodate the Godings' vision of outdoor seating they are proposing to reopen the porch and add additional areas to accommodate customers. Hillcrest Coffee will offer a homey spot that will not only draw in residents and customers, but it will generate activity that can lead to additional neighborhood development. Construction is expected to begin in early 2014.



Dixieland's Development Incentive Programs

It is always exciting when commercial property owners take advantage of development incentives offered in the Dixieland Community Redevelopment Area. In 2013, Mary Norman, owner of Bomar Trophy, benefited from two of these incentives, the Design Assistance Program and the Façade Improvement Matching Grant. The Design Assistance Program connects property owners with local architects to help create illustrations of potential façade improvements. Ms. Norman selected SCMH Architects to assist with developing a new façade for 1051 S. Florida Avenue. The design concept, which included the removal of the existing damaged mansard canopy and the addition of signage, was presented to the Historic Preservation Design Review Committee and was approved.

Ms. Norman was also awarded a \$15,000 Façade Improvement Matching Grant by the Dixieland CRA Advisory Board to assist in offsetting the cost of making the designed improvements. Waller Construction, another Dixieland business, was hired to complete the exterior renovations of the 1926 historic structure. Renovations included the removal of a 1970s mansard canopy and restoration of the façade. While the changes to the historic structure are significant, the new signage located between the first and second floor of the building is the most noticeable enhancement.

Other property owners who took advantage of the Façade Improvement Matching Grant were Dan and Mary Kiehl of DanJo Managed Properties, a new business located at 931 S. Florida Avenue. The 1954 masonry commercial building was previously used as retail on the east side of the building and office space accessed off of the alley to the west. In addition to the cantilevered cap and stucco diamond pattern band below the cap, the owners created a new entrance on the north façade. This is now the primary entrance for the office space to the rear of the building. DanJo Managed Properties was awarded \$15,000.

In FY 2013, for every \$1 in Façade Improvement Matching Grant funds expended, property owners spent \$5.01 of their own funds.

**HOW
CAN
WE
LEVERAGE
CRA
FUNDS
TO
ACCELERATE
IMPLEMENTATION
OF
THE
PLAN?**





HOW CAN WE?

LCRA ANNUAL REPORT 2013

MID TOWN COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AREA

MID TOWN

community redevelopment area
advisory board

Earl Johnson

Watson Clinic, LP

Dean Boring

Boring Business Systems

Deborah Beall Boynton

Beall Insurance

Tim Mitchell

Parker Street Ministries

Ryan Reis

Keiser University

Michael Spake

Lakeland Regional
Medical Center

**Commissioner
Phillip Walker**

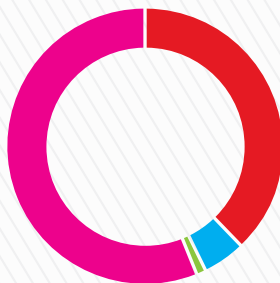
City of Lakeland



MID TOWN
FINANCIALS

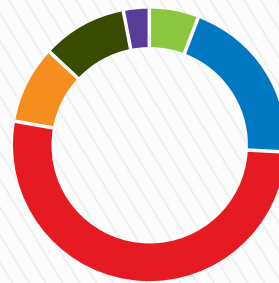
FISCAL YEAR | 20
THIRTEEN

*Tax increment revenues shown are based on the prior tax year
**(\$191,997) in Unappropriated Surplus and (\$73,268) in Interest and Misc.



REVENUES

- Tax Increment Revenues*
\$1,475,516
 - Rental Income
\$186,268
 - Intergovernmental
\$25,000
 - Land Sales Proceeds
\$2,175,472
- \$3,596,991****



EXPENSES

- General Government \$229,789
 - Professional Services \$711,424
 - Property Acquisition \$1,877,275
 - Housing & Development \$314,060
 - Transportation Improvements \$346,168
 - Maintenance \$118,275
- \$3,596,991**

Unaudited financials

TAX INCREMENT REVENUE SOURCES*

City of Lakeland
\$578,116

Polk County
\$834,412

LAMTD
\$62,988

Total
\$1,475,516



Lakeland Tax Collector Service Center

In September 2013, the Lakeland Community Redevelopment Agency approved a \$600,000 investment in the renovation of property located at 916 N. Massachusetts Avenue for use as the Lakeland Service Center for the Polk County Tax Collector's Office.

The 2.48 acre property includes a 25,000 square foot Art Deco structure which was constructed in 1953 for use as a Publix Supermarket. It was most recently used as a car dealership followed by an auto detailing shop. The property was purchased in January 2013 by Greenfield Four, LLC, a company whose managing member is Howe Whitman, developer of Heritage Plaza. It was purchased to be renovated and sold upon completion to the Polk County Tax Collector's Office for use as the new Lakeland Service Center, a full service Tax Collector and Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) customer center. This facility is one of three Polk County Service Centers which are being created to better serve the County's citizens. The Lakeland site is intended to serve the entire western portion of Polk County, with estimated usage of 1,200 customers per day.

The project has been designed by Straughn Trout Architects, LCC to the Tax Collector's Office's specifications, and construction is being completed by Rodda Construction. The work includes a complete gut rehabilitation of the main 1953 structure, demolition of a number of metal sheds on the south side of the building, and construction of an enclosure to incorporate the former car service area as part of the building. The project will also include extensive improvements to the parking lot, including landscaping, restriping and construction of a decorative wall along the Massachusetts Avenue frontage. Total cost of acquisition, improvements and fit out is \$4.6 million. The project is scheduled for completion in November 2013.

916 N. Massachusetts Avenue is strategically located within the Mid Town Community Redevelopment Area, just south of Memorial Boulevard and to the north of Salvation Army's Center of Hope property which was purchased by the LCRA in November 2012. The property lies within an area that has also been the focus of a Small Area Study, which identified the Massachusetts Avenue corridor as a critical area for commercial property investment, and is anticipated to be a catalyst for additional development.

**HOW
CAN
WE
FACILITATE
POSITIVE
CHANGE
THAT
ALTERS
THE
PUBLIC'S
PERCEPTION
OF AN
AREA?**



HOW CAN WE ADDRESS PROPERTIES THAT ARE CURRENTLY CAUSING THE GREATEST HARM BUT HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO DO THE GREATEST GOOD?

Lincoln Square Apartments

In 2011, LCRA began work in the Paul A. Diggs and Webster Park Neighborhoods to begin to address the need to stabilize these two neighborhoods. One of the action items for this area which had been adopted by the Mid Town CRA Advisory Board, was the desire to stabilize the properties that have the potential to do the most harm and can create the most benefit to the neighborhood. As part of this action item, LCRA staff successfully purchased Lincoln Square Apartments, a 120-unit functionally obsolete multifamily property in the midst of these two neighborhoods. This property was the subject of a bankruptcy and foreclosure and had a history of crime, code enforcement and other issues which impacted the immediate community. Within three months following the purchase of the property, all residents were successfully relocated and plans for asbestos abatement and demolition of the structures could proceed.

Abatement and demolition of Lincoln Square Apartments began in earnest in FY 2013. Although the project had gone to bid in the previous fiscal year, the extreme range of the bids was so great that staff was concerned that the scope of work was unclear. The decision was made to start over with the bid process. A rewritten Request for Proposals for Abatement and Demolition was released in April 2013. Of the six proposals returned, the lowest responsive bidder was Lakeshore Environmental Contractors, LLC, of Birmingham, Alabama. They were awarded the contract in May 2013 and abatement began at the end of June 2013. Abatement oversight and monitoring services were provided by Cardno TBE, a consulting firm out of Clearwater, Florida. They and their sub consultants were responsible to monitor activities at the job site and confirm that all asbestos abatement activities were completed in accordance with all appropriate laws and regulations. In addition, Cardno TBE and LCRA staff hosted a number of neighborhood meetings to explain the process of asbestos abatement and to answer questions about the project from concerned residents. Abatement and demolition activities are anticipated to be complete in December 2013. Following demolition, the LCRA will work with neighborhood residents and community stakeholders to plan an appropriate reuse of the property.

Bella Vista Signalization Project – 20 Years in the Making

The intersection of US98N and Bella Vista Street has long been a source of concern for residents and employees in Northwest Lakeland. High traffic volumes combined with high speeds and a very wide roadway made this intersection nearly unusable during peak hour traffic. Because of the location of Fire Station No. 6 at this intersection, an emergency signal had been installed in the 1980s, however there were ongoing requests to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to install a fully-operational signal as the surrounding neighborhoods continued to develop, and plans for a more dense Medical District were revealed for the east side of the roadway. In FY 2013, thanks to the persistence of the community and the City Commission, Mayor Fields approached Billy Hattaway, District One Secretary for FDOT, and laid out the request

for improvements. The creation of a fully-operational signal was consistent with the City of Lakeland's overall mobility strategy to encourage multi-modal transportation within the Central City. It was also consistent with the continued development of the City's Lake-to-Lake Bikeway network; which FDOT was already supporting through this area with the award of Multi-Use Trail funds. FDOT agreed to the change and signal upgrades were completed in the Fall of 2013. The signal is now fully functional and has become a safer location for both vehicles and pedestrians to travel east and west through this portion of the community.



THE MID TOWN CRA REDEVELOPMENT PLAN: THE LAKELAND HILLS MEDICAL CENTER

- Economic Development**
- Increased tax base
 - Job creation
- Neighborhood Stabilization**
- Prevent commercial intrusion into neighborhoods
 - Create neighborhood-serving commercial
 - East-West connectivity
- Organization and Identity**
- Enhanced appearance
 - Efficient circulation/walkability



MID TOWN MEDICAL DISTRICT

- Walkable/accessible campus environment
- Supportive uses (retail, office, hotel/housing) along North Florida Ave
- Increased access to transit
- Connection to other Activity Centers
- Regional draw, local control
- Shared infrastructure and open space spine through central block



Medical District

Since the creation of the Mid Town Community Redevelopment Area in 2000 and the subsequent adoption of the Mid Town CRA Redevelopment Plan, the area around Lakeland Regional Medical Center and the Watson Clinic has been identified as one of five distinct activity centers within the redevelopment district. The redevelopment plan states:

"The Lakeland Hills Medical Center hosts the Lakeland Regional Medical Center and Watson Clinic. The District is about 140 acres in size. The district already is the location for hospital and clinic parking, offices, specialty clinics and other support activities. The cooperation of the two medical centers on issues of mutual interest, such as parking, stormwater management, security and training, could create an activity center that work to the advantage of the City and both organizations."

The economic and community benefits of encouraging and facilitating the future development of this district were underscored with the development and adoption of the US 98N/North Florida Avenue Corridor Study in 2004. The study, completed with the assistance of the consulting firms, Kimley-Horn & Associates and Wallis Murphey Boyington Architects, made a number of recommendations regarding public improvements and enhancements to encourage redevelopment along the corridor. More importantly, the study encouraged the facilitation of a long-term master plan for medical office expansion in order to alleviate pressure on the neighborhoods to the east of Lakeland Hills Blvd. while opening up economic opportunities for neighborhoods to the west of US 98N. The specific recommendation was:

"... should be developed as a "medical campus" to provide expansion space for the existing medical services community. The medical services industry has been identified nationally as one of the most rapidly growing segments of the economy, and regionally as a major economic engine for Central Florida. The market study review noted that medical office and related services were supportable activities in this corridor. In addition, in the public meetings, the adjacency of the medical services was noted as an amenity in the US 98/North Florida Avenue corridor."

At the time that the US 98N Corridor Study was completed, the area between LRMC and Watson Clinic, with the exception of the commercial frontages on Lakeland Hills Blvd. and US 98N, continued to be a small, single-family residential enclave. In an effort to implement both the redevelopment plan and the corridor study, LRMC, Watson Clinic and LCRA staff began to more actively assemble the site for future medical district expansion. By the end of 2012, the LCRA had purchased 20 properties in the area between LRMC and Watson Clinic and had effectively completed the assembly of all of the remaining residential properties in the block.

During the property assembly process, both the Watson Clinic and LRMC, first separately, and then jointly, worked with City and LCRA staff on a series of Master Planning exercises for their own institutional expansions. LRMC is in the process of implementing their resulting Master Plan; first with the addition of a new building, and second, with the relocation of the Emergency Department and a number of other activities to a new facility proposed on the north side of Parkview Place. This expansion to the north required them to acquire thirteen (13) properties owned by LCRA. This sale transaction took place in the Spring of 2013. LCRA staff is currently in the process of working with AECOM, a planning consulting firm, to develop a zoning overlay to facilitate the development of the Medical District. This overlay will provide the regulatory framework for development and will guide the type and appearance of future development and public improvements.

HOW CAN WE EXPEDITE THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MEDICAL DISTRICT THAT CAN POSITIVELY ENHANCE THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL WELL-BEING OF OUR COMMUNITY?





Roadway Enhancements

One of the Guiding Principles for the Mid Town CRA Advisory Board is that the Board “is concerned with public and private improvements that boost the ‘image’ of the district”. As a result, roadway enhancements, which often include landscaping and beautification, are very visible ways to improve the visual perception of an area, and often are a means to address safety or operational concerns. In FY 2013, the East Main Street Beautification Project, a road diet and landscaping project from Bartow Road to Lake Bonny Drive, improved the look of this part of the redevelopment area and added improved facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and transit users. The project, designed by the City of Lakeland’s Public Works Engineering Division and constructed by Florida Safety Contractors, was funded in part through the Florida Department of Transportation’s Enhancement Funds and the Lakeland Community Redevelopment Agency (LCRA).

Also in FY 2013, design of the Lake Beulah Trail Enhancement project was completed. The project, designed by Kimley Horn & Associates, and funded by the Florida Department of Transportation and LCRA, is intended to beautify this gateway into Lakeland and the surrounding neighborhoods and to improve conditions for bicyclists, pedestrians and transit patrons. Through this project, the existing five-foot wide concrete sidewalk will be replaced with an eight to ten-foot wide asphalt multi-use trail. This project also includes the installation of decorative lighting along the trail, landscaping and transit stop improvements including the construction of a new transit shelter at the Hartsell Avenue intersection. The City of Lakeland’s Construction and Maintenance Division will begin construction in December 2013, with completion anticipated by Spring 2014.

Kimley Horn & Associates is also in the process of designing the Bella Vista Trail Project. This project extends along Bella Vista Street from W. Lake Parker Drive to Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue and includes the construction of an eight to ten-foot wide multi-use pathway that will connect Lake Parker with the community facilities at Simpson Park. This trail will be a part of the City’s Lake-to-Lake Bikeway network and will assist in improving connectivity in this part of our community. Design is to be finished in the Spring of 2014, with construction scheduled for FY 2015.

HOW
CAN
WE
ENHANCE
THE
IMAGE
OF
OUR
CRA
DISTRICTS?

Parker Street Ministries Vermont and Peachtree Rehabilitation Projects

Parker Street Ministries purchased 609 and 613 Vermont Avenue and 728 Peachtree Street from the Lakeland Community Redevelopment Agency through a Request for Proposal process at the end of June 2012. The Mid Town CRA Advisory Board had been reluctant to demolish the buildings which had been vacant for several years and were prime examples of the bungalow style which is prevalent throughout the neighborhood. Ongoing participation in the revitalization of the neighborhood by Parker Street Ministries convinced them that finding either tenants or home buyers for the properties after renovation would be likely and would further stabilize the already dramatically improved neighborhood. Interior demolition on the two Vermont properties commenced in October of 2012 and permits for the renovation phase were issued December 4, 2012.

HOW CAN WE ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT PRIVATE INVESTMENT IN HIGH-VALUE PROJECTS IN OUR RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS?

Parker Street Ministries has relied on volunteer workers throughout the project. Contractors have volunteered their time and services as well, and much of the material required for the gut rehabilitations has been donated. The use of volunteer labor, donated services and materials and staff responsibilities for the project in addition to their full-time jobs has meant that the renovations have been slow but steady. Each of the houses is being transformed from two bedroom, one bath to three bedroom two bath. Hardwood floors are being restored where possible and period details on the exterior preserved or restored when viable. Back and front porches have been rebuilt and beautiful custom carpentry work has returned the period look to the buildings. Work is anticipated to be finished on the Vermont properties in early 2014 and the Peachtree property to be complete in the third quarter of 2014.



The Williams CRA

In 2013 the primary activity relating to the Williams Development of Regional Impact (DRI) and Williams Community Redevelopment Area was campus development for Florida's twelfth State University, Florida Polytechnic University.

Construction on the first campus structure, the Innovation, Science and Technology Building, designed by world-renowned architect Santiago Calatrava, began in 2012 and continued through 2013. The building, which can be seen from Interstate 4, is an impressive 162,000 square feet and will house classrooms, labs, offices and common space. In addition, construction began on the 5,000 square foot Admissions Visitor Center which is expected to be open by December 2013. This was designed by the Lakeland design firm Straughn Trout Architects.

WILLIAMS | FISCAL YEAR | 20 THIRTEEN



REVENUES

■ Tax Increment Revenues*
\$13,753

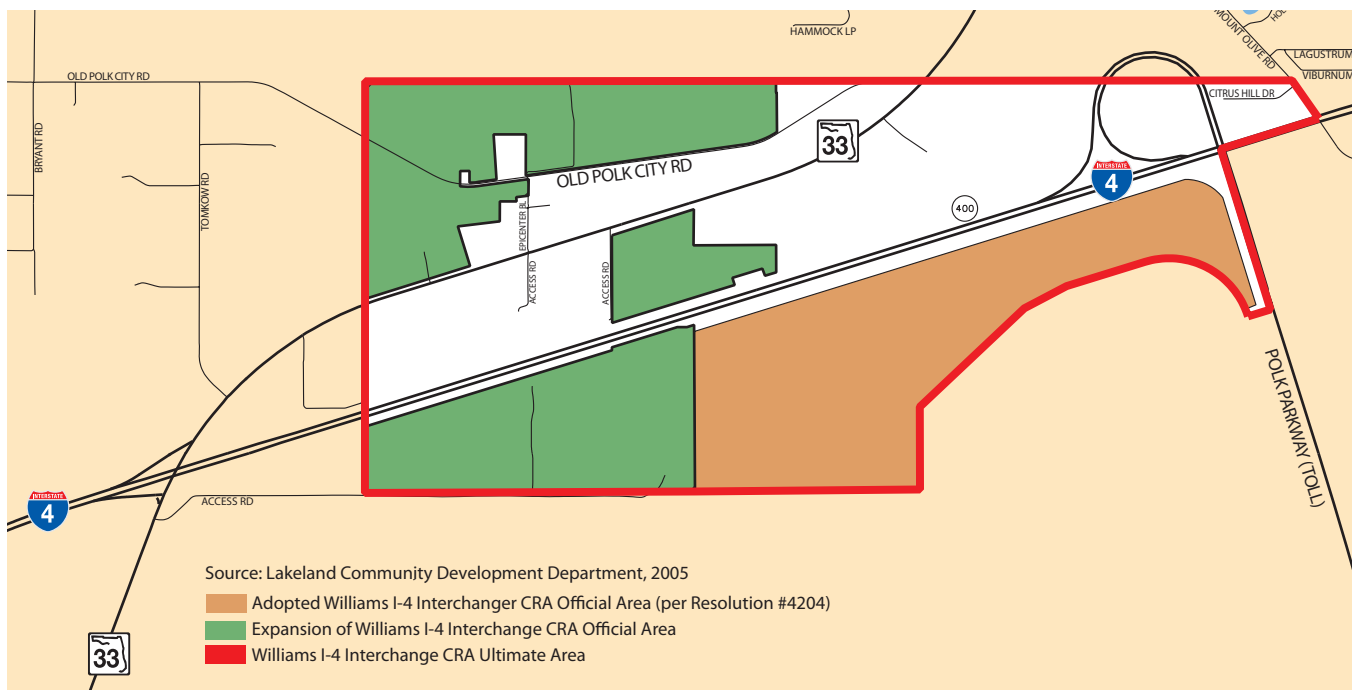
Unaudited financials

TAX INCREMENT REVENUE SOURCES*	
Polk County	\$8,190
City of Lakeland	\$5,563
LAMTD	\$0
Total	\$13,753

*Tax increment revenues shown are based on the prior tax year



Photos by: Jeane H. Vincent



Enterprise Zone

Lakeland's Enterprise Zone Agency has established a broad range of goals designed to create an economic development climate which will improve job opportunities and wages for employees, advance the community's employers and residents while encouraging public and private capital improvements. The goals established in the strategic plan focus on a range of topics that have been broken into three categories.

[Economic Development](#)

[Community and Workforce Development](#)

[Infrastructure and Land Development](#)

For more information about the Enterprise Zone Agency's specific goals and measurements, check out our FAQs below and visit the City of Lakeland's Economic Development website at www.lakelandcra.net



FAQS

What is an Enterprise Zone?

An Enterprise Zone is a specific geographic area targeted for economic revitalization. Enterprise Zones encourage economic growth and investment in distressed areas by offering tax advantages and incentives to businesses locating within the zone boundaries.

How do I find out if my property is located within Lakeland's Enterprise Zone?

Please log onto www.lakelandcra.net and enter your address in the address lookup window.

The maximum sales tax refund allowed for a business or individual is \$5,000. Is there an exception to this limit?

Yes. The refund may be raised to an amount of up to \$10,000 if more than 20 percent of the permanent employees live in the Enterprise Zone. The Enterprise Zone form provides a place to list the employees, or a separate sheet may be attached to the form.

What type of business equipment qualifies for the Business Equipment Sales Tax refund?

"Business property" is new or used equipment defined as "recovery property" in s. 38 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended. The "business property" must have a class-life of five years and a sales price of \$5,000 per unit. "Business property" that becomes a component part of improvements to real property would not qualify under this exemption.

What is the statute of limitations for the Enterprise Zone sales tax application for business equipment?

An application for a refund must be submitted to the Department within 6 months after the tax is due on the business property that is purchased. The date on the invoice is the date used to determine the 6-month deadline.

What is the statute of limitations for an Enterprise Zone sales tax application for building materials?

An application for a refund must be submitted to the Department within 6 months after the rehabilitation of the property is deemed to be substantially completed by the local building inspector, or by November 1 after the rehabilitated property is first subject to assessment.

**ENTERPRISE
ZONE**
advisory board

Paula Bohnstedt
PolkWorks

Scott Gardner
Bank of Central Florida

Stan Martin
Lakeland Police
Department

Brian Rewis
Neighborhood Services
Division, City of Lakeland
Administrative Staff

Claudia Tritton
Lakeland Economic
Development Council

Jason Willey
Economic Development
Coordinator





In 2013, Colo5, a Jacksonville-based independent data center operator, selected Lakeland for their second facility, a new Tier III data and disaster recovery center. Colo5's mission is to keep their clients protected and connected; meaning that state-of-the-art security, redundant power systems, a robust fiber network and a safe and centrally-located geographic location are critical to their business. Lakeland's land elevation, access to Interstate 4, fiber optic network and favorable cost of power provided by the municipally-owned Lakeland Electric, made this the ideal location for a facility to serve Colo5's Tampa Bay, Orlando and Miami customers.

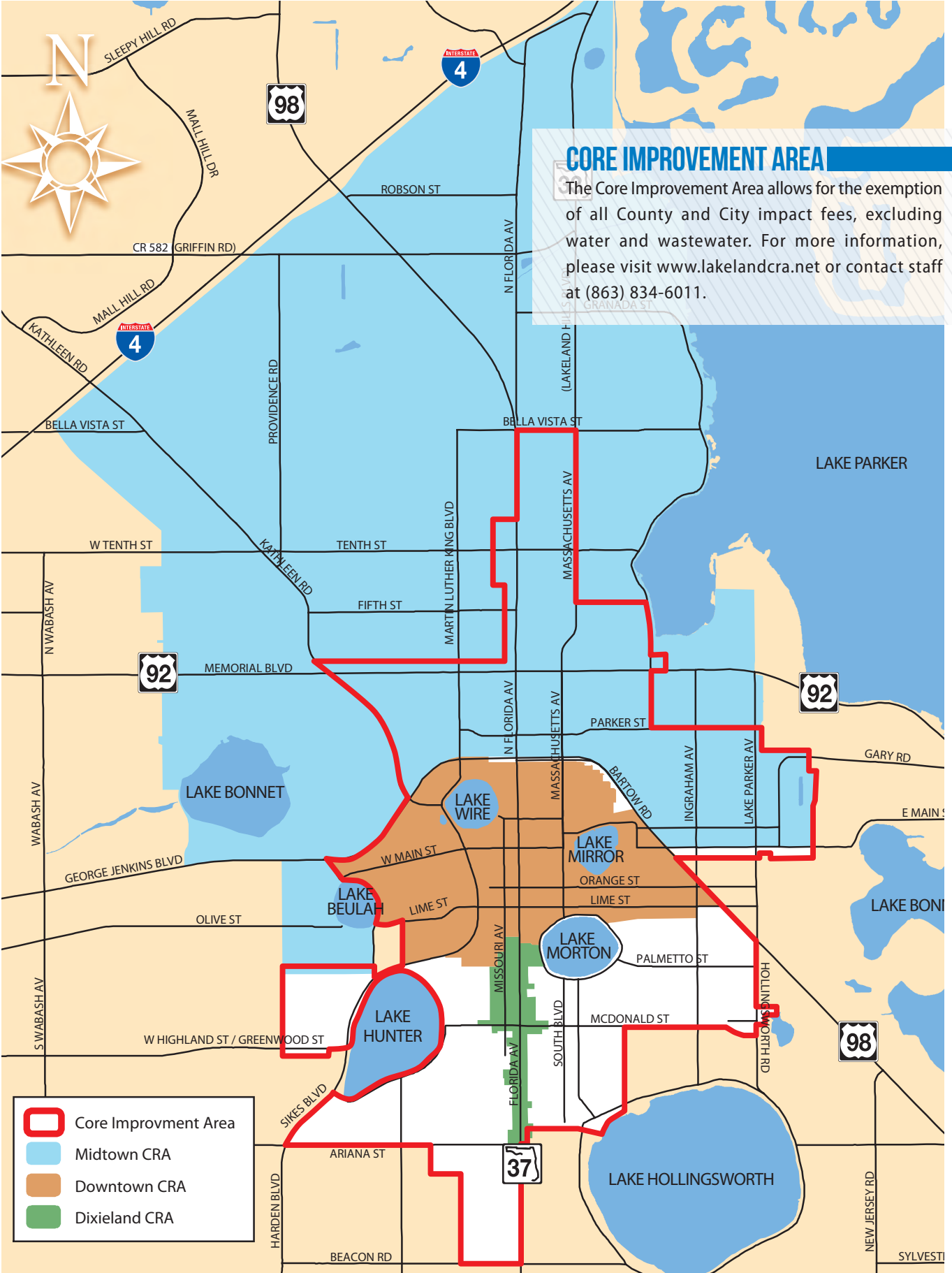
Colo5 plans to invest over \$20 million in the build out of their 105,000 SF facility in Lakeland's Interstate Business Park. The building includes 50,000 SF of raised data center space and 55,000 SF of disaster recovery, office and flex space. More significant to their business, the facility is a Tier III, Category 5 rated structure with redundant systems and multiple Telecom providers.

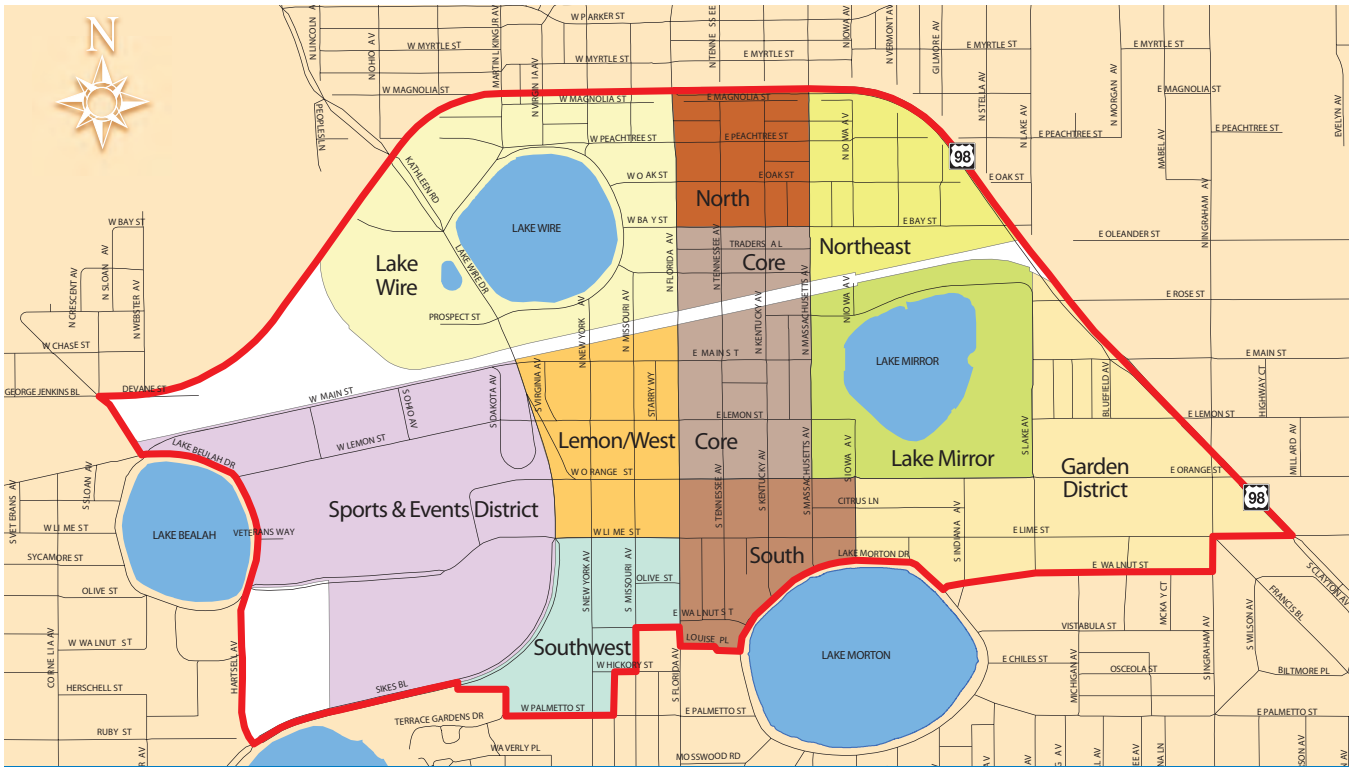
HOW CAN WE MEET THE GROWING INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS OF MODERN BUSINESS?

The City of Lakeland and Lakeland Electric played a large role in the completion of this project. Energy costs and availability are a key concern for this type of business. Although Lakeland Electric offers leading market rates for power, Colo5 was primarily concerned with reliability. Lakeland Electric's development team was able to quickly provide Colo5's representatives with specific details regarding loading and reliability for different development sites, as well as to assist in outlining a plan for the final site that met with Colo5's budget and electrical requirements.

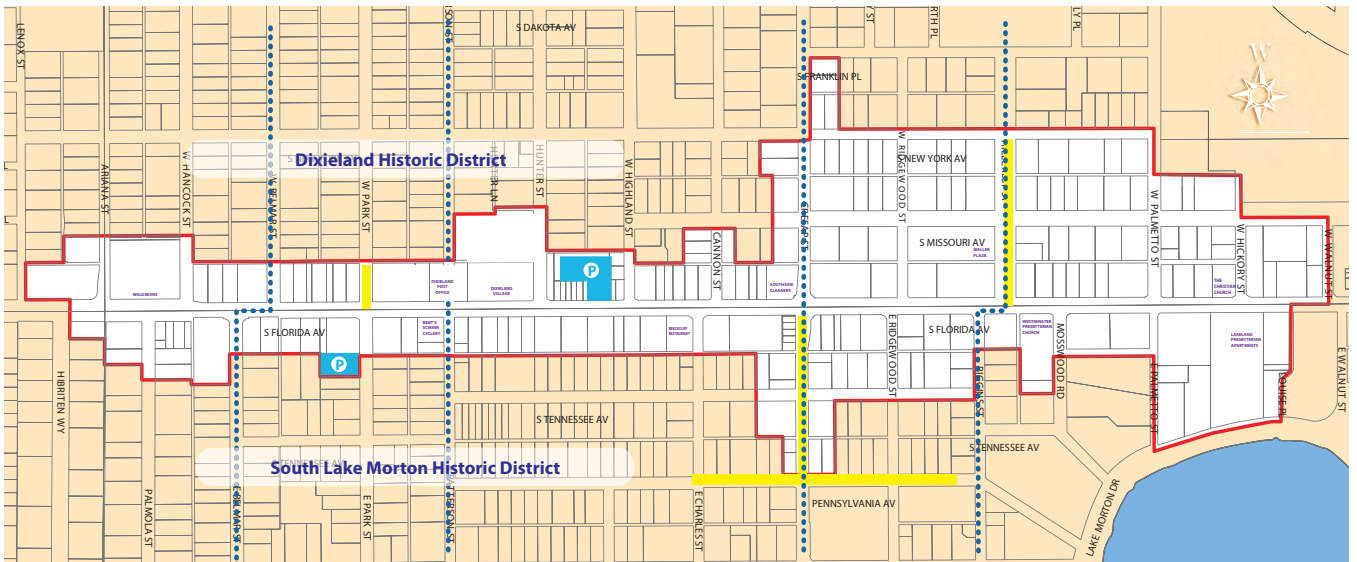
City of Lakeland staff coordinated the work of Lakeland Electric and all of the municipal utilities for this project, as well as assisted with the development review and permitting process. In addition, City staff has assisted with access to State incentives; Colo5 will be able to take advantage of business materials and equipment and sales tax incentives because they are within Lakeland's Enterprise Zone.

At full capacity, the data center will provide 50 new jobs and will house clients in industries such as banking, healthcare, retail and manages services. We are excited that they chose Lakeland as a community to expand their business.



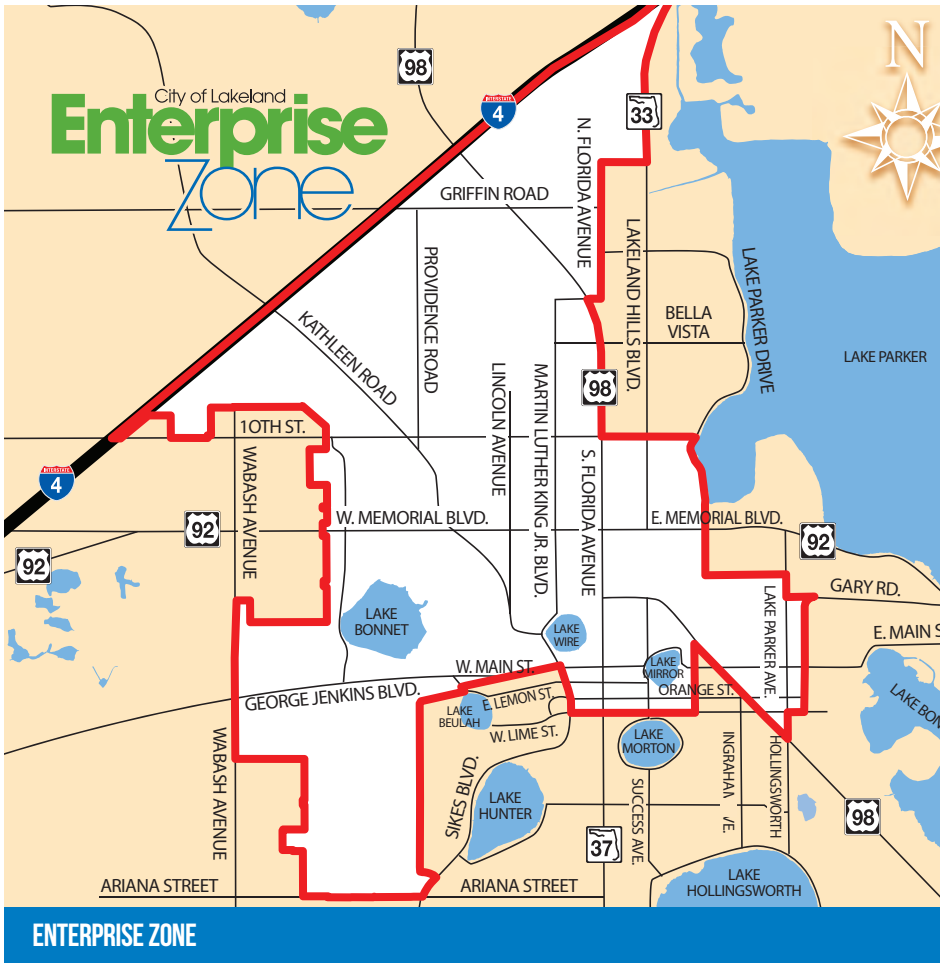


DOWNTOWN CRA

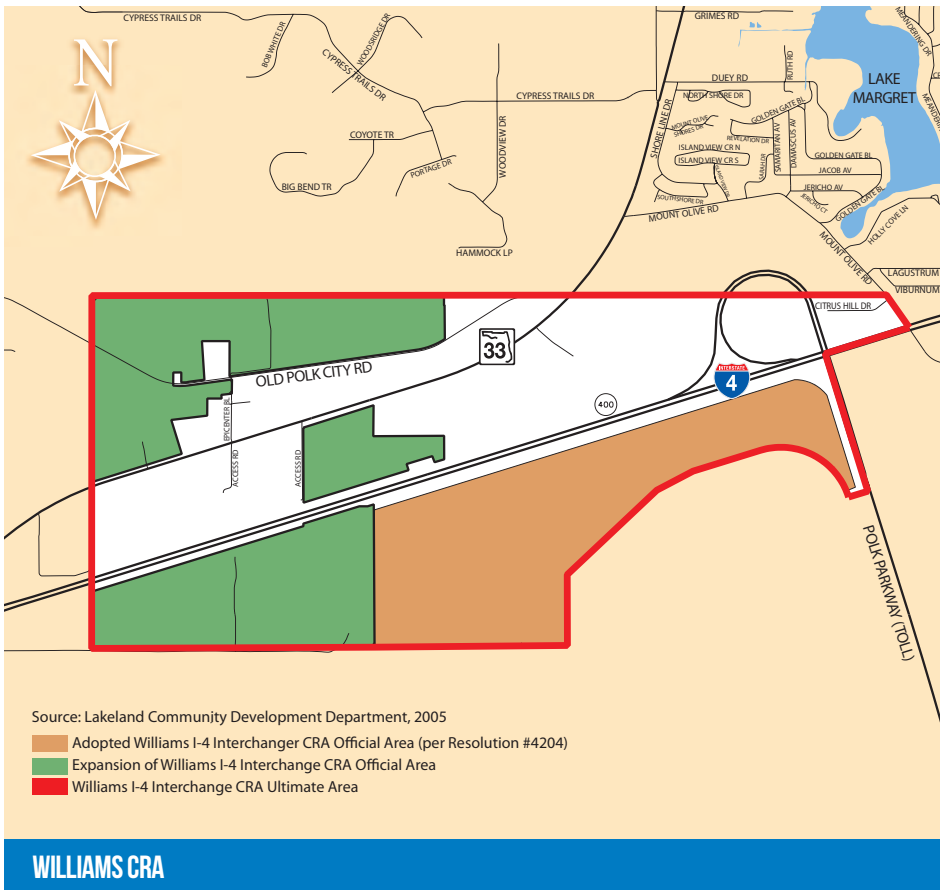


DIXIELAND CRA





ENTERPRISE ZONE



WILLIAMS CRA



MEETING TIMES AND LOCATIONS

City Commission

1st and 3rd Mondays
9:00 AM
City Commission Chambers

Planning and Zoning Board

3rd Tuesday
8:30 AM
City Commission Chambers

Zoning Board of Adjustments and Appeals

1st Tuesday
9:00 AM
City Commission Chambers

Historic Preservation Board

4th Thursday
7:30 AM
Building Inspection
Conference Room

Lakeland Downtown Development Authority

3rd Thursday
8:00 AM
City Commission Conference Room

Downtown CRA Advisory Board

1st Thursday
8:00 AM
City Commission Conference Room

Dixieland CRA Advisory Board

3rd Tuesday
4:00 PM
City Commission Conference Room

Mid Town CRA Advisory Board

1st Thursday
3:30 PM
City Commission Conference Room

Enterprise Zone

Meetings as called

Photo credit: Tom Hagerty

LakelandCRA
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

City of Lakeland • 228 South Massachusetts Avenue • Lakeland, Florida 33801
www.lakelandcra.net • 863.834.6011

