



**WAUCHULA COMMUNITY  
REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY**

**Annual Report**

**FY 2020 - 2021**

# BACKGROUND

The Wauchula Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) was established in 1997 under Chapter 163, Part III, Florida Statutes, which authorizes municipalities to create a community redevelopment agency after finding that there were existing areas of slum and blight within the municipality.

Like other rural communities in the area, Wauchula has, and continues to face challenges including stagnant population growth, decline in employment in many primary industries, fewer development opportunities, extreme weather events, and uncertainty associated with primary economic anchors. Historically, the City has been known for its agriculture (primarily cucumbers and citrus) and phosphate mining industries, cattle ranches, and affordable seasonal housing for retirees. (KHA Redevelopment Plan Update 2019)

The initial CRA area included 1,536 acres, covering over 2.4 sq miles of the City of Wauchula. Upon adoption in 1997, the CRA was established for 25 years. In 2010, the CRA conducted another Finding of Necessity and determined that an additional 16 parcels within the city boundaries met the qualifications necessary to be included within the CRA. This brought the CRA boundaries to 1,579.6 acres or 79% of the city at the time. This Finding of Necessity also found value in extending the life of the CRA an additional five years, to the 30-year maximum allowed by statute. A new sunset date was adopted in 2010 as 2027. In 2019, upon meeting criteria set forth in the statute, the life of the CRA was extended again another 30 years. The CRA will sunset in 2057.

The CRA Board is comprised of the five commissioners elected to office to serve the City of Wauchula. Their terms as board members will follow their terms of office.



**DISTRICT 1**  
Mayor Pro Tem  
Neda Cobb



**DISTRICT 2**  
Russell Graylin Smith



**DISTRICT 3**  
Mayor  
Keith Nadaskay



**DISTRICT 4**  
Sherri Albritton



**DISTRICT 5**  
Gary Smith

## CRA RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES

**Resolution 97-09** - the City of Wauchula (City) determined and declared there existed a need for a community redevelopment agency to function in the City to carry out redevelopment purposes pursuant to the Act

**Resolution 97-10** - the Commission declared itself the CRA in the City

**Ordinance 97-834** - the Commission readopted and reaffirmed Resolutions 97-09 and 97-10, and established a Redevelopment Trust Fund pursuant to Section 163.387 of the Act

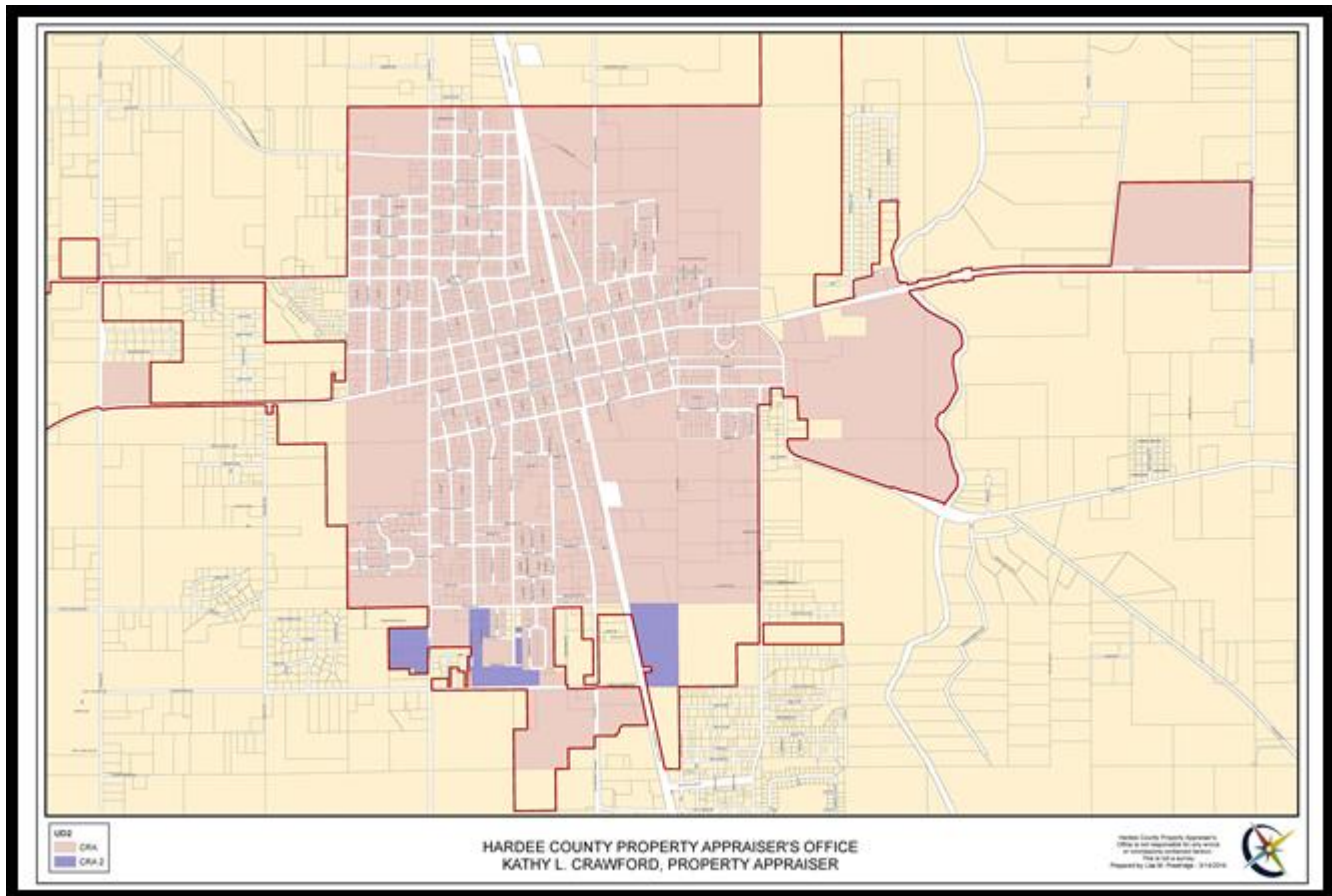
**Resolution 2009-25** - the CRA and Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. ("KHA"), entered into an agreement through which KHA provided an evaluation and comprehensive update to the Community Redevelopment Plan (the "Plan") emphasizing programmatic and project-specific implementation consistent with the CRA boundary

**Resolution 2010-24** – on August 9, 2010, the City modified the community redevelopment plan following presentation of the Plan Update 2010 to the City of Wauchula Planning and Zoning Board (the "P&Z") on June 21, 2010 and a public hearing by the CRA on July 12, 2010

**Resolution 2011-01** – the CRA expanded the boundaries of the area and extended the timeframe to provide redevelopment activities within the CRA boundaries after supporting data and analysis found the existence of conditions that warranted these updates

**Resolution 2019-10** – on September 16, 2019, the CRA adopted Plan Update 2019 following a public hearing held on September 9, 2019 with amendments focused on: 1. Updated capital improvements plan (CIP) and related tax increment (TIF) projections, 2. Neighborhood impact, including affordable and workforce housing, 3. Downtown parking study, 4. Parks and recreation facilities, 5. Extension of the CRA term date from 2027 to 2057

## REDEVELOPMENT AREA



The Wauchula Community Redevelopment Area currently consists of 1,688 parcels within the limits of the City of Wauchula.

(214 of those parcels do not generate property tax)

## FUNDING SOURCE

The CRA Trust Fund is funded through tax increment financing (TIF). TIF revenue is a unique tool used by cities and counties for the purpose of redevelopment activities. The goal of this tool is to leverage public funds to promote private sector activity within the redevelopment area.

TIF collected by the CRA is equivalent to 95% of the value of property taxes collected for that year, minus the base year.

YEAR	REAL VALUE	CITY TIF	HC TIFF	TOTAL TIF
1997	49,606,576.00	BASE YEAR	BASE YEAR	0.00
1998	49,697,530.00	433.00	756.00	1,189.00
1999	53,463,866.83	18,395.00	32,064.00	50,459.00
2000	54,358,701.00	22,429.00	39,095.00	61,524.00
2001	56,775,965.00	33,957.00	57,498.00	91,455.00
2002	58,610,200.00	42,383.00	71,764.00	114,147.00
2003	62,965,725.00	60,488.00	97,619.00	158,107.00
2004	66,750,022.00	71,457.00	123,939.00	195,396.00
2005	66,311,246.00	64,911.00	118,503.00	183,414.00
2006	87,855,237.00	163,290.00	292,751.00	456,041.00
2007	105,030,345.00	231,018.00	364,750.00	595,768.00
2008	107,884,517.00	251,523.00	395,356.00	646,879.00
2009	107,225,708.00	248,117.00	390,002.00	638,119.00
2010	98,430,945.00	202,649.00	318,533.00	521,182.00
2011	90,623,689.00	172,260.00	260,868.00	433,128.00
2012	95,001,510.00	178,072.00	269,699.00	447,771.00
2013	85,794,162.00	168,029.00	254,460.00	422,489.00
2014	85,921,642.00	168,905.00	266,106.00	435,011.00
2015	88,352,787.00	181,501.00	285,952.00	467,453.00
2016	93,823,536.00	210,798.00	332,109.00	542,907.00
2017	98,850,941.00	237,776.00	374,611.00	612,387.00
2018	101,788,080.00	252,949.00	399,442.00	652,391.00
2019	107,059,323.00	281,169.00	448,542.00	729,711.00
2020	113,370,109.00	310,361.00	492,032.00	802,393.00
2021	119,512,654.00	342,766.00	543,172.00	885,938.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,296,385,944.83</b>	<b>3,915,636.00</b>	<b>6,229,623.00</b>	<b>10,145,259.00</b>

### OTHER FUNDING SOURCES FY 2021

\$143,247.00	FDEP Recreational Trails Program Grant – FUNDS RECEIVED
\$ 31,554.68	Sale of 2019 & 2020 Voluntary Clean-Up Tax Credits – FUNDS RECEIVED
\$ 51,200.00	Private Contribution for Farr Field – FUNDS RECEIVED
\$300,000.00	Mosaic Grant – FUNDS RECEIVED
\$409,697.00	Department of Economic Opportunity – FUNDS AWARDED
\$ 15,631.98	Voluntary Clean-Up Tax Credits 2020 – CERTIFICATE PENDING
\$225,000.00	Florida Division of Historic Resources, Special Category Grant - APPLIED
\$200,000.00	Florida Division of Cultural Affairs, Cultural Facilities Grant - APPLIED

# MASTER REDEVELOPMENT PLAN UPDATE 2019 GOALS



2019 Wauchula CRA – Community Redevelopment Plan September 2019

## IV. CRA GOALS

The 2019 Plan has broad-based CRA Goals, identified below, which serve as a guide for capital improvements and programming of projects in the following chapters of this Plan. The goals touch upon a variety of topics and aspects of the City, including land use, economic development, and transportation and mobility. These categories are an encompassing approach to all aspects of duties and responsibilities of the CRA, from actual physical improvements to marketing and support services for businesses in the CRA.

### Land Use

- Adaptive reuse and redevelopment of buildings
- Identify and support partnerships with private properties with emphasis on historic building renovations
- Use infrastructure investments to leverage, focus, and shape the location and intensity of development
- Continue brownfield clean up and redevelopment
- Provide incentives to provide for both single-family and multi-family housing, as well as affordable and workforce housing, as needed
- Focus on infill housing developments and develop assistance/partner on programs for home ownership

### Economic Development

- Cooperation and continued partnership with Main Street Wauchula Inc. to promote economic development and to raise awareness of businesses in the CRA boundaries
- Keep open potential for bonding of improvements in the future
- Establish a prioritization of grant projects and assistance including ROI (TIF revenue thresholds)
- Continue to identify additional non CRA funding options including but not limited to grants and private funding

### Transportation & Mobility

- Improved traffic flow
- Monitor parking in the downtown and evaluate the need for additional parking (should the need arise)
- Explore opportunities for multimodal services, as needed
- Safer travel ways for pedestrian and bicyclists, including development of more sidewalks and general roadway improvements
- Reduced heavy vehicle impacts
- Increased traffic safety

### Cultural & Recreational Resources

- Unify the community through activities in City parks including fitness activities, music, and movies
- Redevelop Crews Park and begin construction of Peace River Park
- Identify new park opportunities including those at the neighborhood level
- Follow and implement park redevelopment per parks master plan where economically feasible
- Work with local partners to bring cultural activities to historic City auditorium



## 2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND PROJECT UPDATES

### MULTI-FAMILY WORKFORCE HOUSING - ONGOING

Following the Land Use goal to “Provide incentives to provide for both single-family and multi-family housing, as well as affordable and workforce housing, as needed”, the CRA has continued to work with Palmetto 8 in hopes of seeing this project come to fruition.

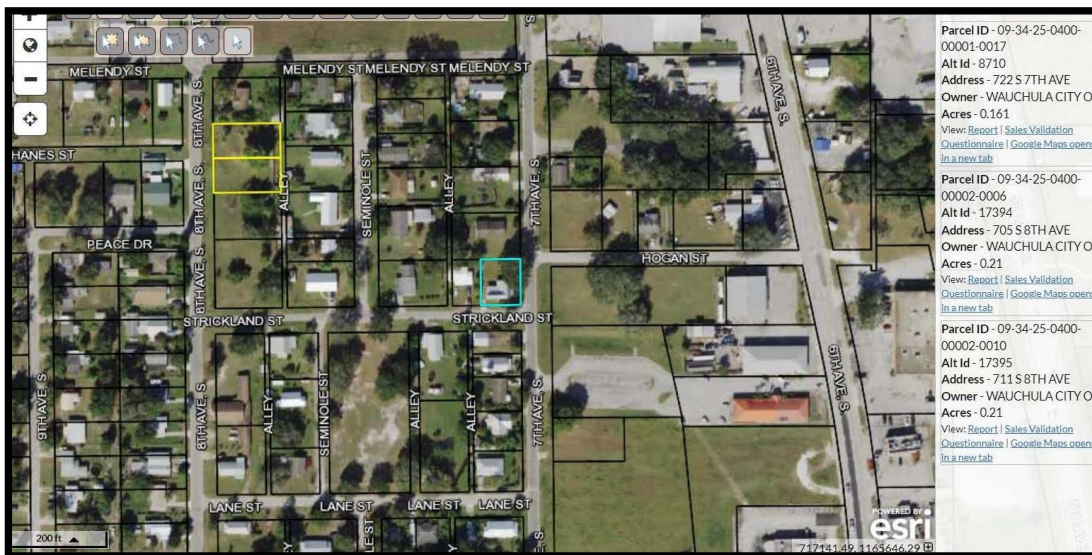
Palmetto 8 has experienced a number of delays over the 4 years. Little progress was made in 2021. On December 13, 2021, the CRA Board approved to extend the grant agreement to September 30, 2022 with no further extensions allowed.



ASSESSED VALUE						
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	% Value
West Park Place*	\$154,337	\$218,051	\$591,027	\$650,130	\$715,143	363%
Cobb Development*	\$40,098	\$68,847	\$75,732	\$83,305	\$2,370,974	5,813%
Palmetto 8**	\$276,411	\$276,411	\$289,560	\$256,099	\$257,164	ongoing
*Grant awarded November 2016						
**Grant awarded February 2017						

## IN-FILL HOUSING – ONGOING

In June of 2021, the CRA successfully sold the first house under the Home Assistance Grant Program. This program is designed to meeting a need for single-family workforce housing. Because the need is so great, the CRA approved in the 21/22 budget to construct another home under this program. In addition, the CRA is partnering with the Industrial Development Authority to receive a \$400,000 loan, allowing for the construction of an additional two homes on vacant lots.



Continued work to provide affordable housing in the CRA area aligns with F.S. 163 Part III and is specifically addressed in the CRA Masterplan Update 2019 under Land Use:

- Provide incentives to provide for both single-family and multi-family housing, as well as affordable and workforce housing, as needed
- Focus on infill housing developments and develop assistance/partner on programs for home ownership



## PARKS AT PEACE RIVER – ONGOING

The Parks at Peace River Project continues to be a focus for the CRA. This public improvement, five phase project, is covered under the CRA Masterplan Update 2019 under Cultural and Recreational Resources:

- Unify the community through activities in City parks including fitness activities, music, and movies
- Redevelop Crews Park and begin construction of Peace River Park
- Follow and implement park redevelopment per parks master plan where economically feasible

## PARKS AT PEACE RIVER PHASE II - ONGOING

Construction of the Crews Park Pavillion began in 2021 and is ongoing. The pavillion is Phase II of the five phase Parks at Peace River Project includes the construction of the main pavillion. This pavillion will include restrooms, a deck area for picnicing, a kiosk for a potential vendor, and a storage area for kayaks and canoes.

## PARKS AT PEACE RIVER PHASE III – ONGOING

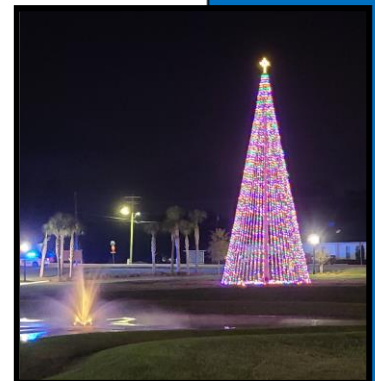
The playground in Crews Park was bid out with the contract being awarded to SEMCO in August of 2021. Due to supply chain issues, the playground will not be installed until early 2022.



Even though Phases II and III for Crews Park are not complete, the park has already become a real community asset.

## PARKS AT PEACE RIVER PHASE IV - V – ONGOING

This phase of the parks project includes additional primitive campsite, new and refurbished hiking trails, parking, picnic areas, signage, and a connecting path to Crews Park. In June of 2021 this phase was bid with the contract being awarded to Cobb Site Development. Since that time the CRA has been working with FDEP to provide appropriate documentation necessary to receive a Notice to Proceed under the Recreational Trails Program grant. Construction is anticipated to begin in the spring of 2022.



## **LANDSCAPE & LAWN CARE – ONGOING**

According to FDOT, there are an estimated 20,000 vehicles traveling Hwy 17 North and South daily and another estimated 4,500 traveling through downtown Wauchula. It is for this reason, as well as the pride of our residents, that the CRA continues to place a high priority on beautification.

## **BROWNFIELD - ONGOING**

The brownfield site at 226 W. Main Street continues to be monitored. Contamination levels have yet to decrease enough nor been maintained at a level allowing for closure. We continue to monitor and work with FDEP on further steps.



Fortunately, the remediation work has not impacted any business activity in the area and those businesses located on and around the site continue to thrive.

The CRA continues to help offset the cost of monitoring and remediation with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Voluntary Clean-Up Tax Credit Program. This program allows the CRA to claim 50% of the cost incurred during the year, for remediation of a brownfield site, in tax credits which are then sold on the open market. In 2021, the CRA received \$31,554.68 by selling the 2019 and 2020 credits.

## MAIN STREET WAUCHULA, INC

The CRA Redevelopment Plan Update 2019 lists “Cooperation and continued partnership with Main Street Wauchula, Inc. to promote economic development and to raise awareness of businesses in the CRA boundaries” as a goal to further economic development. This relationship has proven successful over the year for the CRA in part because the organizations goals align.

Main Street Wauchula, Inc. maintains both a Main Street America accreditation as well as a Florida Main Street designation. With the collaboration of many volunteers, the downtown business owners, and local government, Main Street Wauchula, Inc. strives to bring about economic development by preserving the very core of our community.

Highlights for the year include but are not limited to:

- Main Street Wauchula, Inc. was recognized as Non-Profit of the Year by the Hardee County Chamber of Commerce
- Logged 522.5 volunteer hour through a variety of activities that promoted downtown businesses, brought the community together in the downtown, created memories, and shared our history
- Awarded \$8,175.00 in grants to assist downtown businesses
- Hosted another successful Shop Small Saturday with businesses reporting an average increase of 108% in sales and 56% in the number of transactions
- Encouraged local talent and brought people together for a good time downtown with the monthly Open Mic events, October – March
- Brought people downtown Introduced Palooza in the Park, a variety of different fun such as trivia, bingo, cornhole, etc., held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of each month from October thru March
- Started a monthly downtown business owners meeting to encourage networking, education, and involvement with Main Street events and activities
- Purchased an additional 83 seat cushions for the Historic City Auditorium
- Promoted downtown businesses organically on social media with the inaugural Selfie Week
- Continued to foster an entrepreneurial spirit in our youth with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Student Business Fair – 25 vendors
- Promoted downtown and honored our Veterans with the Veteran Banner Program along Main Street
- Promoted downtown and showcased our talented students with the first Student Banner Program displaying works of art from 3<sup>rd</sup> thru 12<sup>th</sup> graders on the banners along Main Street



CITY OF WAUCHULA	
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY	
AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2021	
<b>ASSETS</b>	
CLAIM ON POOLED CASH	\$ 859,628.70
GRANTS RECEIVABLE	\$ 31,112.50
RENT RECEIVABLE	\$ 1,278.00
OTHER RECEIVABLE	\$ 29,503.63
DUE FROM HOUSING GRANT	\$ 20,000.00
	<b>\$ 941,522.83</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>	
AP POOLED	\$ (10,492.35)
DEFERRED REVENUE	\$ (22,705.00)
WAGES PAYABLE-PAYROLL A/C	\$ (2,886.41)
	<b>\$ (36,083.76)</b>
<b>FUND BALANCE</b>	
BUDGET FUND BAL. - SYSTEM	\$ (542,847.15)
ENCUMBRANCES CONTROL	\$ 12,475.97
RESERVE FOR ENCUMBRANCES	\$ (12,475.97)
FUND BALANCE	\$ 73,710.65
	<b>\$ (469,136.50)</b>
<b>REVENUE</b>	
RTP- CREWS PARK	\$ (143,247.00)
IDA GRANT DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT	\$ (200,000.00)
LOCAL GRANTS- FARR FIELD	\$ (60,527.42)
INTEREST -- CRA MM	\$ (1,058.72)
PARK PLACE LEASE	\$ (14,400.00)
SALE OF PROPERTY	\$ (142,295.00)
SALE OF VCTC	\$ (29,503.63)
CONT. SPECIAL PROJECTS	\$ (1,500.00)
CONT. HARDEE CO. TIF	\$ (492,032.00)
CONT. CITY OF WAUCHULA TIF	\$ (310,361.00)
	<b>\$ (1,394,924.77)</b>
<b>EXPENSE</b>	
EXECUTIVE SALARIES	\$ 87,017.51
PROF SERVICES - GENERAL	\$ 10,977.30
ACCOUNTING AND AUDITING	\$ 14,175.00
CONTRACTUAL SERVICES	\$ 60,286.00
BROWNFIELD CLEANUP	\$ 36,163.83
TRAVEL & PER DIEM	\$ 739.71
COMMUNICATION - TELEPHONE	\$ 962.13
RENTALS & LEASES	\$ 12,000.00
INSURANCE	\$ 2,104.79
PRINTING & BINDING	\$ 2,470.64
REP & MAINT- INCOME PROPERTIES	\$ 7,473.99
OPERATING SUP & EXP	\$ 1,343.91
BOOKS, PUBLICATIONS & ED	\$ 1,430.00
PROP TAX - INCOME PROPERTIES	\$ 3,006.67
IN-FILL HOUSING	\$ 2,705.00
FARR FIELD	\$ 60,527.42
CREWS PARK	\$ 145,309.08
PEACE RIVER PARK	\$ 126,929.22
GRANTS - RESIDENTIAL	\$ -
GRANTS - COMMERCIAL	\$ 350,000.00
CONTRIBUTIONS-MAIN ST PRO	\$ 33,000.00
	<b>\$ 958,622.20</b>

\*The CRA Fund is audited annually and included in the city's financial statements as a special revenue fund. At the time of this report the FY 20-21 report was not complete. The FY 19-20 report can be found at [https://flauditor.gov/pages/mun\\_efile%20rpts/2020%20wauchula.pdf](https://flauditor.gov/pages/mun_efile%20rpts/2020%20wauchula.pdf)



WAUCHULA COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY  
107 E. MAIN STREET  
WAUCHULA, FL 33873  
(863) 767-0330