



DREAMS DON'T BUY BUT DO

WORKING TOGETHER

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY

REALIZING DREAMS



2020
ANNUAL REPORT

LAKELAND CRA
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY



The year 2020 was an anomaly to say the least. The impact was similarly felt globally and locally, and that offered the unique opportunity for unity through shared experiences. We focused on what we could control, and we kept plowing ahead. Mirrorton Apartments, in Downtown Lakeland, is now home to its first residents due to the CRA's private-public-partnership with Framework Group. The 305-unit development, valued at \$60 million, will reset the Downtown rental market. In addition,

Summit Consulting invested \$50 million to build 135,000 square feet of office which will help Lakeland retain top talent beginning with Summit's 450 high-wage earners. Within a stone's throw of Summit, downtown Lakeland also welcomed The Joinery, Lakeland's first food hall, thanks to a \$250,000 investment from the CRA.

After years of community planning, the CRA constructed a one-mile shared use bike and pedestrian path. Envisioned as an amenity for lakeside residents, the CRA partnered with the Polk County School Board to create an art walk featuring student interpretations of the history of the City of Lakeland, and now, the path is a destination for the creative and curious alike.

To address ongoing housing affordability issues and attract partners, the CRA committed to a \$250,000 annual set aside over the next decade for Midtown. In addition, an Affordable Housing Land Bank Program rolled out. The program establishes a clear and streamlined process to help developers acquire and construct affordable units on vacant land held by the CRA and City.

Closing the year, the CRA solidified a partnership with Dr. Sallie Stone whose dream was to provide a space for professional development, training and education geared towards underrepresented populations. The CRA will build a new 4,700 square foot facility that aligns with the Mass Market area plan which comes closer to fruition with every project in the area.

2020 taught us quite a bit. We learned that redevelopment and resilience go hand-in-hand. We learned that CRA Staff members may not be essential workers but are critical to continuity. We learned that, despite the traditional need to lock arms to show solidarity, we can still impact lives standing six feet apart because energy resonates.

ALIS DRUMGO
CRA MANAGER



EDDIE LAKE

CHAIRMAN, CRA ADVISORY BOARD

Although 2020 has been a year marked with extreme ambiguity and strain, the Lakeland CRA has been a light in the midst of the wandering darkness of difficulty and stress. We are extremely proud of promoting unity within the Lakeland CRA districts. In addition, we are excited about aiding home owners and small business owners to realize their dreams and reach their goals. Together we create a force of passion and progress that shatters barriers. In real time, we get to walk through the challenges and difficulties with our citizens and see manifested the words of Les Brown; "If the dream is big enough, the odds don't matter".



CHAD McLEOD

CITY COMMISSIONER

These are exciting days for the City of Lakeland, as we are experiencing a renaissance of growth and redevelopment in many areas of our city. The CRA plays a critical role in our City Commissioner's vision by helping to bring new projects to life in Dixieland, Midtown and Downtown Lakeland.

The positive impacts of the work we are doing now in these areas will be felt for many years to come. Through partnerships with small businesses, developers and community organizations, the CRA creates a collaborative environment that helps move Lakeland forward and improve the quality of life and the culture of our city.

OUR TEAM



LAKELAND COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY STAFF

ALIS DRUMGO
CRA MANAGER

TERRILYN BOSTWICK
SENIOR PROJECT MANAGER

D'ARIEL REED
PROJECT MANAGER

DAMARIS STULL
PROJECT MANAGER

IYANNA JONES
PROJECT ASSOCIATE

HEISEL ORTIZ RODRIGUEZ
OFFICE ASSOCIATE II

LAKELAND COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS



EDDIE LAKE
CHAIRMAN



STEPHANIE MADDEN
CITY COMMISSION APPOINTEE



DEAN BORING
MIDTOWN



HARRY BRYANT
MIDTOWN



FRANK LANSFORD
MIDTOWN



CORY PETCOFF
DIXIELAND



BRIAN GODING
DIXIELAND



BRIAN WALLER
DIXIELAND



ZELDA ABRAM
DOWNTOWN



BRANDON EADY
DOWNTOWN



CLIFF J. WILEY
DOWNTOWN

LAKELAND CITY COMMISSION

WILLIAM "BILL" MUTZ
MAYOR

STEPHANIE MADDEN
COMMISSIONER - AT-LARGE

CHAD McLEOD
COMMISSIONER - AT-LARGE

PHILLIP WALKER
COMMISSIONER - NORTHWEST

SARA ROBERTS McCARLEY
COMMISSIONER - SOUTHWEST

BILL READ
COMMISSIONER - NORTHEAST

SCOTT FRANKLIN
COMMISSIONER - SOUTHEAST

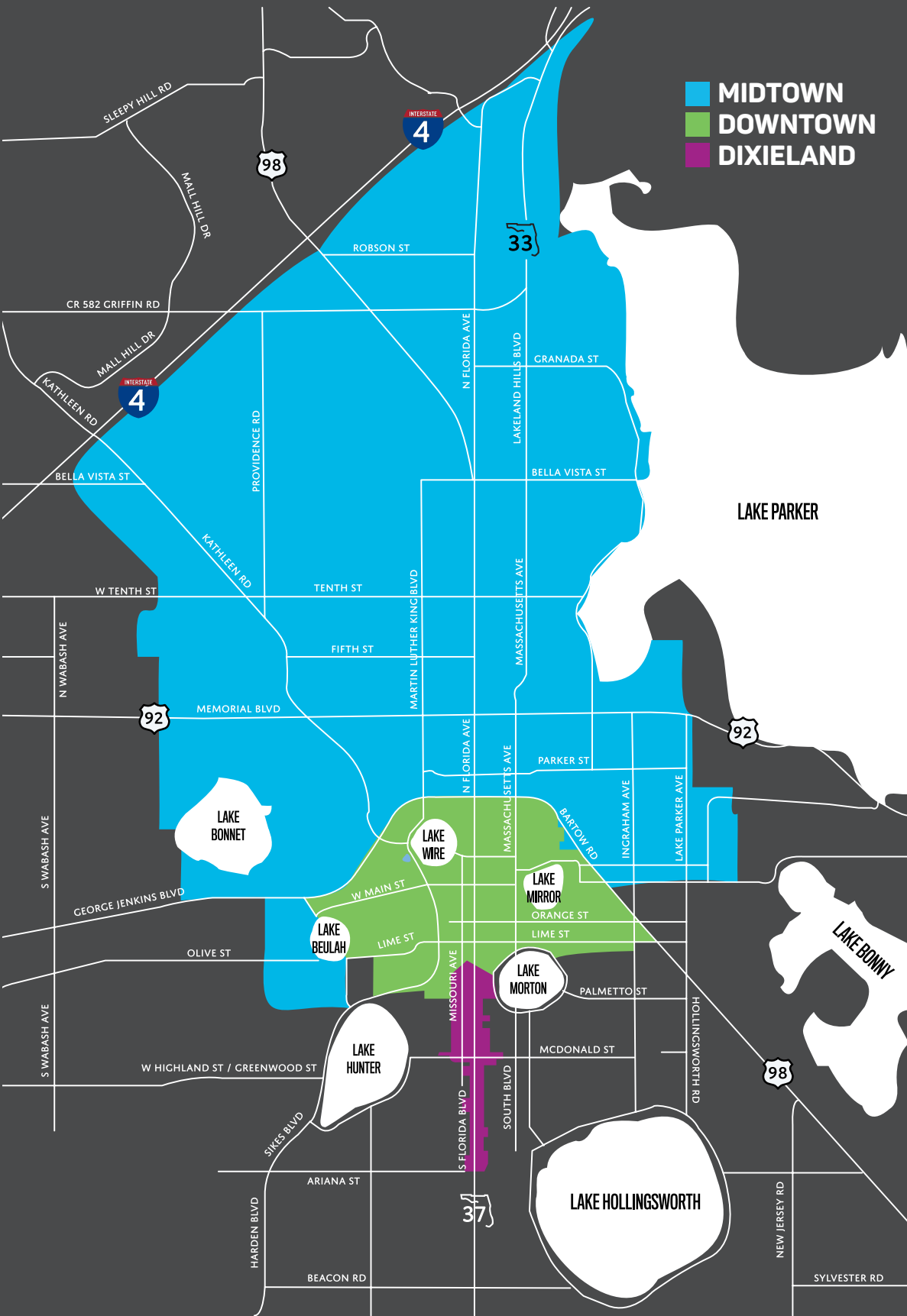
CITY OF LAKELAND LEADERSHIP

SHAWN SHERROUSE
CITY MANAGER

EMILY COLON
ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER

NICOLE TRAVIS
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

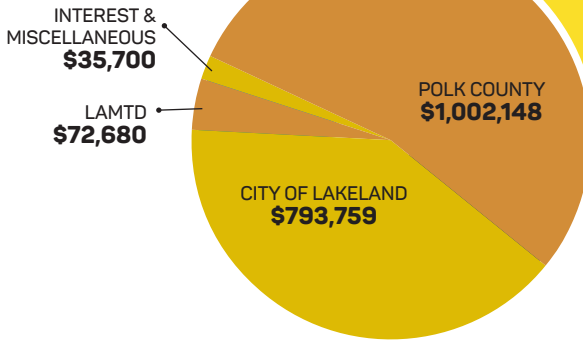
- MIDTOWN
- DOWNTOWN
- DIXIELAND



FINANCIALS

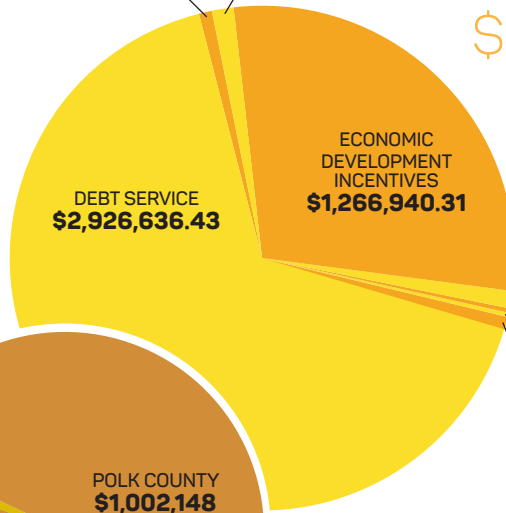
DOWN TOWN

REVENUES
\$1,904,287



COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES
\$29,859.96

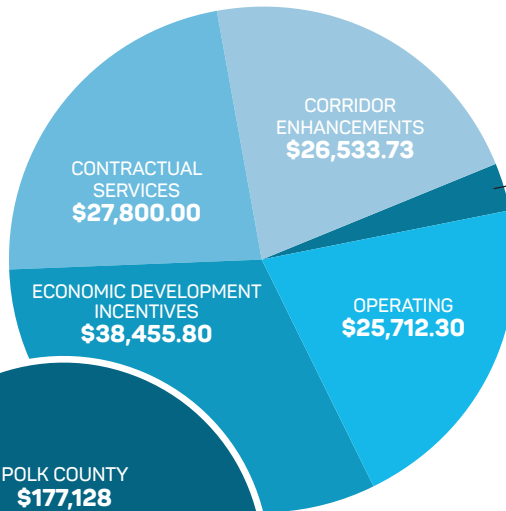
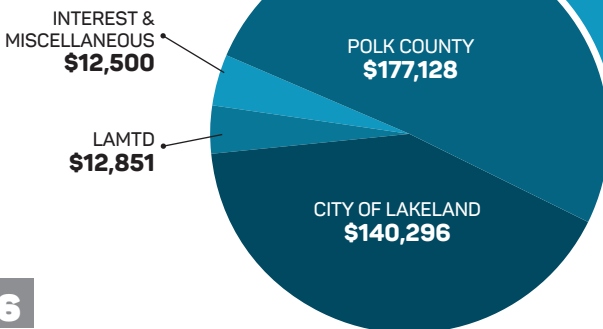
OPERATING
\$68,262.00



EXPENSES
\$4,379,769.76

DIXIE LAND

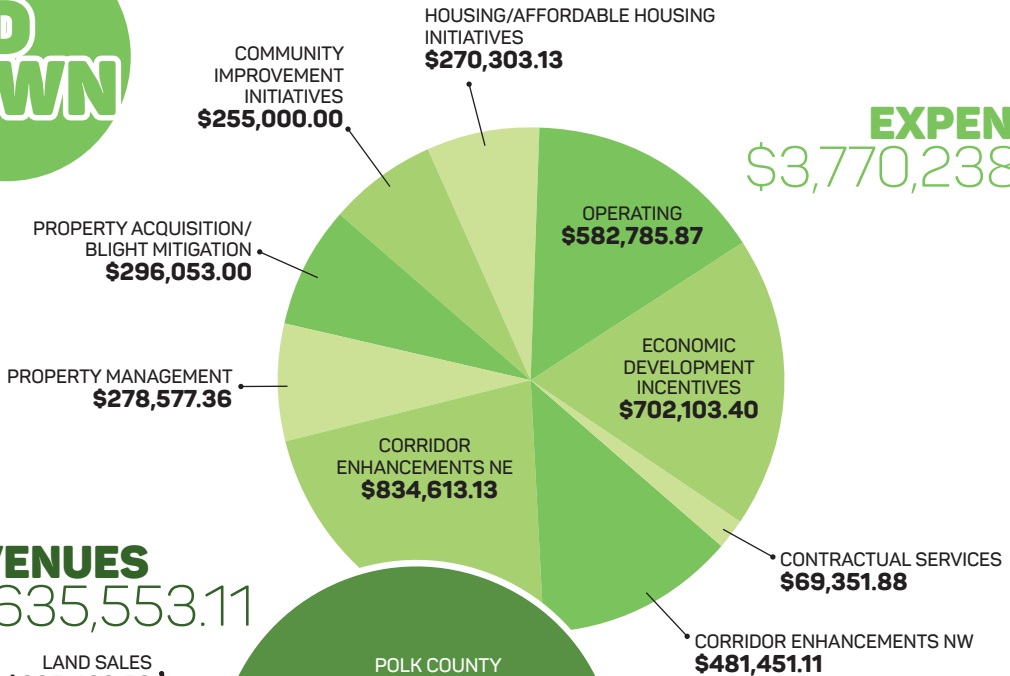
REVENUES
\$342,775



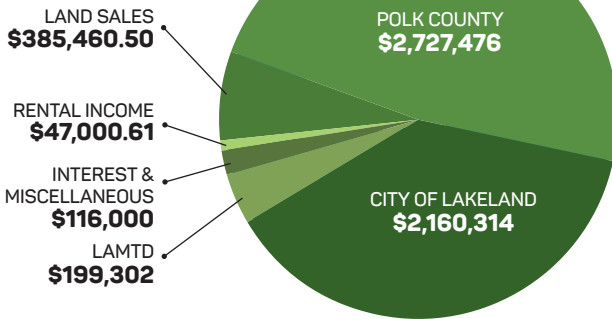
EXPENSES
\$122,121.41



EXPENSES \$3,770,238.88



REVENUES \$5,635,553.11



COMMERCIAL INCENTIVES

DOWNTOWN

Tax Increment Financing	\$150,938.36
Infill Adaptive Reuse	\$80,695.80

MIDTOWN

Design Assistance	\$15,950.00
Facade and Site Improvement	\$369,106.24
Infill Adaptive Reuse	\$332,997.16
Job Creation Incentive	\$210,000.00

DIXIELAND

Design Assistance	\$2,940.00
Facade and Site Improvement	\$35,515.80

RESIDENTIAL INCENTIVES

DOWNTOWN

Fix-It Up (Garden District)	\$6,948.13
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MIDTOWN

Down Payment Assistance Program	\$22,000.00
Fix-It-Up (Target Areas)	\$56,909.82
Infill New Home Construction	\$53,065.34
Builder's Line of Credit	\$117,007.59

PROPERTY VALUES 2019-2020

**DOWN
TOWN**



4.14%

**DIXIE
LAND**



4.3%

**MID
TOWN**



6.05%

AFFORDABLE HOUSING INITIATIVES

Midtown Lofts \$162,000

Twin Lakes Apartments Phase II \$150,000

Vermont Avenue Apartments \$50,000

Banyan Reserve Apartments \$75,000

Affordable Housing Land Bank Program \$225,357¹

Notes:

1. In FY20, eighteen (18) lots were awarded to developers for the construction of affordable housing units.

MINORITY-OWNED BUSINESSES

With the goal of promoting inclusion and economic empowerment, the City of Lakeland's CRA has solidified partnerships with businesses owned by women and people from diverse backgrounds. These partnerships foster inclusion for minorities seeking to do business within the City of Lakeland. Those business owners include:

Dr. Sallie Brisbane-Stone

THE WELL

Crystal Davis

CRYSTAL'S WORLD OF DANCE

Dr. Brenda Reddout

TALBOT HOUSE MINISTRIES

Dr. Jeanene Robinson-Kyles

KYLES COUNSELING & TESTING SERVICES

Lorenzo and Virginia Robinson

PAUL A. DIGGS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Jennifer Batts

THE YARD ON MASS

Laura Shannon

HAUS 820

Andrew Williams and Sonji Coney-Williams

CONY FUNERAL HOME

CRYSTAL DAVIS

Crystal's World of Dance

"Dance is for everyone"

Crystal Davis owner of Crystal's World of Dance believes that dance should be accessible to all children who have the desire to dance. Crystal's World of Dance has been servicing children in the Lakeland area for 18 years!



Elizabeth Hults

ARTIFACT STUDIO

Jennifer Canady

EVERETTE TAYLOR URBAN FARM

David Hernandez and Diana Cortes

DOU BAKEHOUSE

Rene and Sandra Vargas

TAPATIOS

Titus Newborn

FUSION LOGISTICS

Marcos Fernandez

NINETEEN61

Sarah Bucklew

THE JOINERY



DIANA CORTES

DOU Bakehouse

DOU Bakehouse is an artisan pastry shop. We make from scratch and by hand all of our items. Our best sellers are French macarons and chocolate bars. We are a women minority owned business and 80% of our staff is female. We have had the pleasure of working with the CRA for the last couple of years since we moved to Lakeland. Alis, D'Ariel, Iyanna, and all of the CRA team have been truly amazing.





MURALAT SOUTHSIDE CLEANERS

ARTIST: Tim Haas |  @timhaasartistry | 863-224-1396



DESIGN

ASSISTANCE

GRANT

If you own a property in the Dixieland or Midtown CRA, help is available if you want to improve the façade of your building. Design Assistance is provided to selected property owners through contracts that the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) has with architectural design firms. Design Assistance is available for all commercial property owners along target corridors. For more information, or to schedule an appointment with CRA staff, call 863-834-5200.

DESIGN ASSISTANCE GRANT PERSONAL STORIES:



AARON BANKS

AIA LEED AP architect at Furr, Wegman & Banks Architects, P.A.

“Over the years Furr, Wegman & Banks Architects, P.A. has had the pleasure of partnering with the talented and forward-thinking team at the Lakeland CRA in creating many meaningful additions to the culture, economic vitality and architectural context of the City of Lakeland. Through the Lakeland CRA’s Design Assistance Grant, our firm has collaborated with community partners including local businesses and entrepreneurs to “Create the Vision” for their architectural project.

Our firm’s mantra is “Inspire | Collaborate | Transform.” For a concept to manifest into reality, there is a process of “inspiration” in which our design team collaborates with the community partner and Lakeland CRA to research precedents and context, collaborate on programming and space layouts, complete façade studies and explore building colors, materials and details as necessary to literally “paint the picture” for the entire team through detailed 3-D Visualization tools.

The Design Assistance Grant is really the catalyst that takes a dream to reality by funding necessary design work and cost estimating that ultimately gives the community partner a level of assurance that they can achieve the physical parameters of their dream within their project budget.”



DR. SALLIE STONE

Founder and CEO of The Well

In 2018, Dr. Stone submitted a proposal to the City of Lakeland to help increase the economic liability of the Midtown area, hoping to create culturally enriched activities for people.

“I proposed to them a space that would be poised with providing professional development training and education, infused with technology with a nod toward underrepresented populations. I saw where the CRA was trying to close that gap.”

Dr. Stone said The Well is intended to be a space to provide training, education, networking and collaboration in an inclusive environment.

“You may have anything from a lunch and learn to a local caterer doing a product shoot to a saxophonist playing in the corner,” Dr. Stone said.

The Well at 114 E. Parker St. will be completed December 2021.

“The CRA is phenomenal,” Dr. Stone said. “For me, it was the realization of a dream, and them coming on board in a partnership to collaborate with me. They helped push the concept forward.”

PROJECT SUCCESSES



1

PATRIOT COFFEE ROASTERS

When Chris McArthur moved into the Dixieland CRA, he was sharing space with a bakery. Soon, both businesses began to expand rapidly. This expansion prompted McArthur to look for a larger space, so he asked the CRA for funding to assist with his expansion.

“We needed to get out of that shared space quickly, and we had recently acquired Publix as a customer but didn’t have the space to accommodate the business they wanted to give us,” McArthur said. “In order to keep up with that opportunity and fulfill those purchase orders, we needed more square footage. Having that CRA assistance gave us the capital to be able to do that.”

McArthur didn’t have to look far to find exactly what his business needed.

“There was a space across the parking lot that was used as office space by the owner of that building,” McArthur said. “The CRA had grants for improving spaces to be used as food-related businesses. We were able to take advantage of funds to install a grease trap, improve electrical plumbing and bring the space up to construction standards.”

McArthur’s craft coffee roasting business doubled in size from 500 sq. ft. to 1,000 sq. ft. The CRA contributed \$25,000 for the \$51,000 renovation. Now, Patriot Coffee Roasters has room to source high quality coffees from around the world, and sell to retailers across the United States.

For McArthur, working with the CRA was a win-win situation.

“It was a really positive experience for us,” McArthur said. “They were looking for ways to set us up for success throughout the process. It enabled us to stay in city limits, and continue to be a part of the city.”



MIRRORTON

During a March 2020 groundbreaking ceremony, the City of Lakeland, Framework Group, Barclay Group and Flournoy Construction Group celebrated the start of construction for Mirrorton apartments, located on East Bay Street.

Mirrorton features 305 units presented as a mixture of townhouses and three-to-four story flats, providing an urban housing option in the City's vibrant Downtown.

An amenity building at Mirrorton houses a fitness center, coffee bar, spa, meeting and work areas, pet spa and areas for social gatherings that include an attached outdoor terrace and pool. The design of the site is focused on concepts that include establishing connectivity to the Downtown core.

The CRA leveraged \$1.76 million in incentives which yielded a 30:1 return on investment.



THE JOINERY

The Joinery, Polk County's first food hall and craft brewery, is located on the banks of Lake Mirror in Downtown Lakeland. The owners, Sarah and Jonathan Bucklew, were able to close the funding gap on their \$1,000,000 renovation with \$250,000 from the CRA.



NORTH DOWNTOWN

The CRA retained the Lunz Group to facilitate the North Downtown Small Area Study, which was a collaborative effort with area stakeholders geared towards optimizing area development.

The plan addressed the area's challenges, and provides a strategy for infill development. The build-out analysis considers height, density and desired uses. The study also complements the existing Catalyst Planning efforts with a focus on parking, and additional connectivity for pedestrians.



MIDTOWN LOFTS

Green Mills Group acquired a 1.8 acre property in the Parker Street neighborhood from the CRA. Midtown Lofts will consist of 80 affordable apartments, targeting low-to-moderate income families. The CRA contributed \$162,000, resulting in a private investment of over \$16,000,000.



SUMMIT CONSULTING

During the spring of 2020, site work began on Summit Consulting's eight-story office building at 117 N. Massachusetts Avenue in Downtown Lakeland. Summit bought the property on Lake Mirror from the City of Lakeland. The \$50 million project sits on a 1.2-acre site next to Allen Kryger Park.

"Summit's employees are our greatest resource," Sipe said. "They are the key to our success. The ability to provide an office environment which is enriched by all the amenities that Downtown Lakeland has to offer is perfect. Not only will it assist us in attracting and retaining top talent, but in a post-COVID world, it will make working at the office very desirable."

Sipe said the economic benefit for the City of Lakeland is key.

"I am very pleased and proud that we have maintained our corporate headquarters here, even through multiple acquisitions," Sipe said. "I believe that bringing 450 high-wage earners to the downtown area will be great for stimulating that economy. I am also hopeful that our decision will serve as a catalyst for others to invest in Lakeland. It offers such a unique blend of a strong business environment and a special quality of life."





THE WORK SHOP SPACE

The Work Shop Space, 945 and 947 S. Florida Avenue, sat vacant for some time, so the owners felt an improvement to the façade would help attract interest.

The CRA contributed grants for Design Assistance for \$1,820, and façade and site improvement for \$35,515. The owners also applied for interior renovation grants.

The parcel at 947 S. Florida Avenue is being leased by Whiskey Way Boutique, while 945 S. Florida Avenue is being leased by High Class Barber and Salon.



CONEY FUNERAL HOME

The Coney family has operated a funeral home business in Midtown for several generations. In order to secure a bank loan of \$1.4 million, Sonji Coney-Williams and Andrew Williams sought a \$165,000 grant from the CRA.

"Everything fell right into place with the CRA coming on board and assisting us," said Andrew Williams. "Their support from the CRA was much appreciated. We worked hand in hand. We look forward to moving into the new building."



TAPATIOS

Rene and Sandra Vargas decided to expand their restaurant, Tapatios. The owners applied for CRA funding to support their 3,000 sq. ft. expansion, which included kitchen reconfiguration, ADA improvements, exterior renovations, and new signage.

The CRA contributed \$340,000 to the overall project, which yielded a 4:1 private-to-public dollar investment.



REC ROOM

The Rec Room, a barcade, located in the Downtown CRA, received a grant for \$35,000, which was 10% of the overall project budget.

The Rec Room is unique because it provides a family gathering space during the day, and a bar atmosphere in the evening, attracting all age groups to the business.



LAKE PARKER SHARED USE PATH

The Lake Parker Shared Use Path spans 1.1 miles along the lakefront of W. Lake Parker Drive. It is a segment of the City's Bicycle Connectivity Plan, and executed in tandem with a community report completed in 2016. As a result, the CRA constructed a 10-foot wide multi-use path. CRA invested approximately \$850,000 towards this amenity.

A partnership with the Polk County School Board was created in an effort to incorporate student art interpretations of Lakeland's history. Professional artists were commissioned to replicate student designs highlighting decades past. The path accommodates pedestrian and bicycle traffic in the neighborhood, and includes custom shade structures, education signage, and custom bike racks.





WEST 14TH STREET PEDESTRIAN ENHANCEMENT

The residents of Lakewood Terrace Apartments requested a safety evaluation near W. 14th Street and Providence Road. City and CRA staff identified a school bus stop and pedestrian conflicts along the roadway.

The CRA invested \$224,000 in sidewalk and safety enhancements. Project is slated for completion by the end of April 2021.



DIXIELAND CORRIDOR ARTS INFUSION

The Dixieland Art Infusion launched with the intent of inspiring artists and businesses to permeate new life into the commercial corridor along South Florida Avenue. In early 2020, Furr, Wegman & Banks Architects was hired to evaluate potential mural locations along the corridor.

The projected budget for Dixieland is \$345,558, and \$150,000 for downtown.

The vision is to install murals that reflect the vibrant celebrations of music, arts and culture that represents the past, present and future of the district. With a fun and festive theme, visitors will be drawn to the art, photo opportunities, and improved shopping experiences.

In addition to murals, the program allows business owners the chance to refresh their buildings with new façade paint, awnings, and a mural.

www.lakelandcra.net/artinfusion



MASS MARKET AREA

Since its grand opening in 2017, the Mass Market redevelopment project in the Parker Street neighborhood has helped anchor the growing Midtown district.

In 2020, CRA staff, collaborated with Straughn Trout Architects to develop the Mass Market Area Plan, creating synergy with the established redevelopment. Proposed uses of parcels in the Area Plan include commercial office, mixed use and commercial, food and beverage, residential, medical, government, institutional, mixed use with residential, retail and parking.

With its assorted mix of uses, redevelopment potential in the Mass Market area is boundless!



LAND BANK PROGRAM

The Affordable Housing Land Bank Program opened up applications in March of 2020. The program provides buildable City and CRA owned lots to qualified developers and builders to construct new residential unit to meet affordable housing needs in the City of Lakeland. The intent is to reduce the number of vacant and blighted properties and create affordable housing units on infill lots around the City.

The housing must be multi-family rental units or single-family units for home ownership. The application process involves a selection committee that consists of City representatives. The Committee awarded over 50 vacant lots to 17 developers.

BUILD A HOME HERE

FOR SALE

Affordable Housing Land Bank Program





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PHOTO CREDIT:
TOM HAGERTY

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LAKELAND CRA

COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

**Working Together.
Strengthening Community.
Realizing Dreams.**

JOIN US

CRA Advisory Board

1st Thursday at 3:00pm

City Commission Conference Room

City Commission Meetings

1st and 3rd Mondays at 3:00pm

City Commission Chambers

**Lakeland Downtown
Development Authority**

3rd Thursdays at 8:00am

City Commission Conference Room



228 S Massachusetts Ave · Lakeland, Florida 33801 · 863.834.5200