



FISCAL YEAR 2022-2023

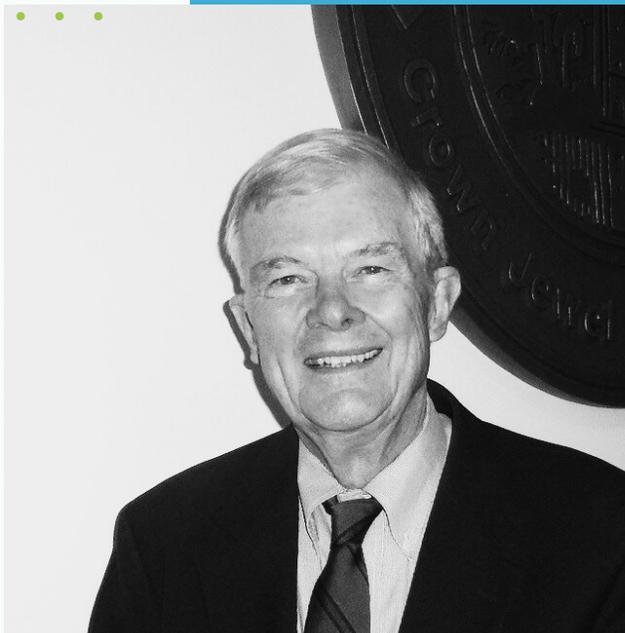
# ANNUAL REPORT

LAKE WALES COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY



201 W. Central Ave, Lake Wales, FL 33853

P: 863.678.4182  
lakewalescra.com



# MESSAGE FROM THE LWCRA CHAIR

**ROBIN GIBSON**  
LWCRA Board Chairman

*The continued advances of the Lake Wales Community Redevelopment Agency are a real source of pride. We aid in the successful redevelopment and progress of many projects and programs within the CRA District. All of this would not be possible without dedicated and supportive partners who have a passion for building strong communities.*

*When reflecting on the past year, our commitment to attainable housing and redevelopment has been transformative. We have increased property values in both our Downtown and Northwest Neighborhood with high quality design. The emphasis on economic development is replenishing the CRA Trust Fund and enhancing the quality of life for everyone in our City.*

*I'm proud of the impact our Legacy Housing Rehabilitation Program has had on our Northwest Neighborhood senior population. We host ribbon cutting ceremonies for each recipient to showcase their revitalized homes, which is always an emotional yet rewarding experience.*

*I am excited about the upcoming work set forth by the CRA Board for another productive year ahead – making Lake Wales “a bit better or more beautiful” for our residents and visitors.*

**-Robin Gibson, LWCRA Chairman**

# MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**JAMES SLATON**  
LWCRA Executive Director



*The goal of the Lake Wales Community Redevelopment Agency is to revive areas considered as slum and blighted, and begin to change the economics of distressed areas in the district. This is done by forming plans, in concert with the community, and strategically implementing those plans to improve the economic climate and conditions in various target areas.*

*Over the past year, we have placed a big focus on economic development to make us a strong and healthy community. We partnered with the Florida Development Corporation to create the City's first business incubator, which has already created forty-four new jobs.*

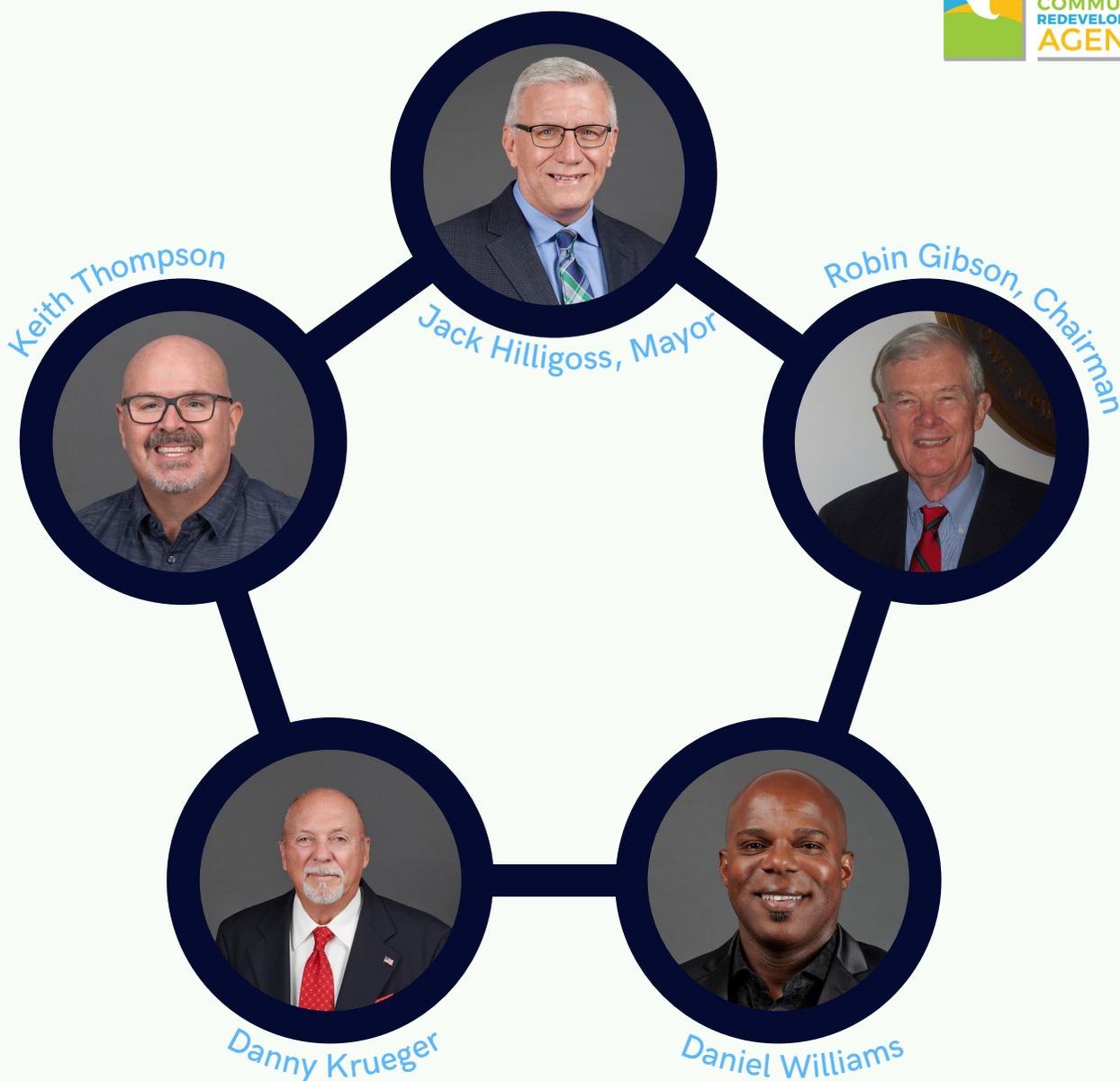
*We continue to tackle the need for attainable housing in our Northwest Neighborhood through partnerships with Keystone Challenge Fund and various private developers. We provide several programs (Developer Incentive Program, Homebuyer Down Payment Assistance Program, and Legacy Housing Rehabilitation Program) to ensure housing is attainable for citizens.*

*Our revitalization project of Park Avenue and Market Plaza will create a welcoming environment to easily commute to businesses in a botanical-rich environment. Enhancements for the project include enlarged sidewalks, brick paved streets, and a garden-esque scenery.*

*Moving forward, we plan to continue to actively recruit new and diverse businesses to create more jobs in the area. Lake Wales is the Crown Jewel of the Ridge and the secret is out!*

**-James Slaton, Executive Director**

# CRA Board members:



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## CRA Staff:

- JAMES SLATON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
- RONALI WOOD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, LAKE WALES MAIN STREET, INC.
- CHERYL BAKSH, CRA COORDINATOR
- DARRELL STARLING, CRA CONSULTANT



# INTRODUCTION

In 1985, the City Commission of the City of Lake Wales, Florida established a Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), in accordance with the Community Redevelopment Act of 1969. A CRA is a dependent taxing district established by local government for the purpose of carrying out development activities that include reducing or eliminating blight, improving the tax base, and encouraging public and private investments in the redevelopment area. CRAs encourage redevelopment in targeted areas that are characterized by blight and disinvestment. By establishing a CRA, tools, funding and strategic planning are available to concentrate on redevelopment in order to incentivize private investment. Examples of eligible CRA projects include: Streetscaping and improvements, development of infill housing, recruitment of new businesses, park improvements. In short, CRAs are designed to leverage public funds by encouraging private developers to invest in CRA districts.

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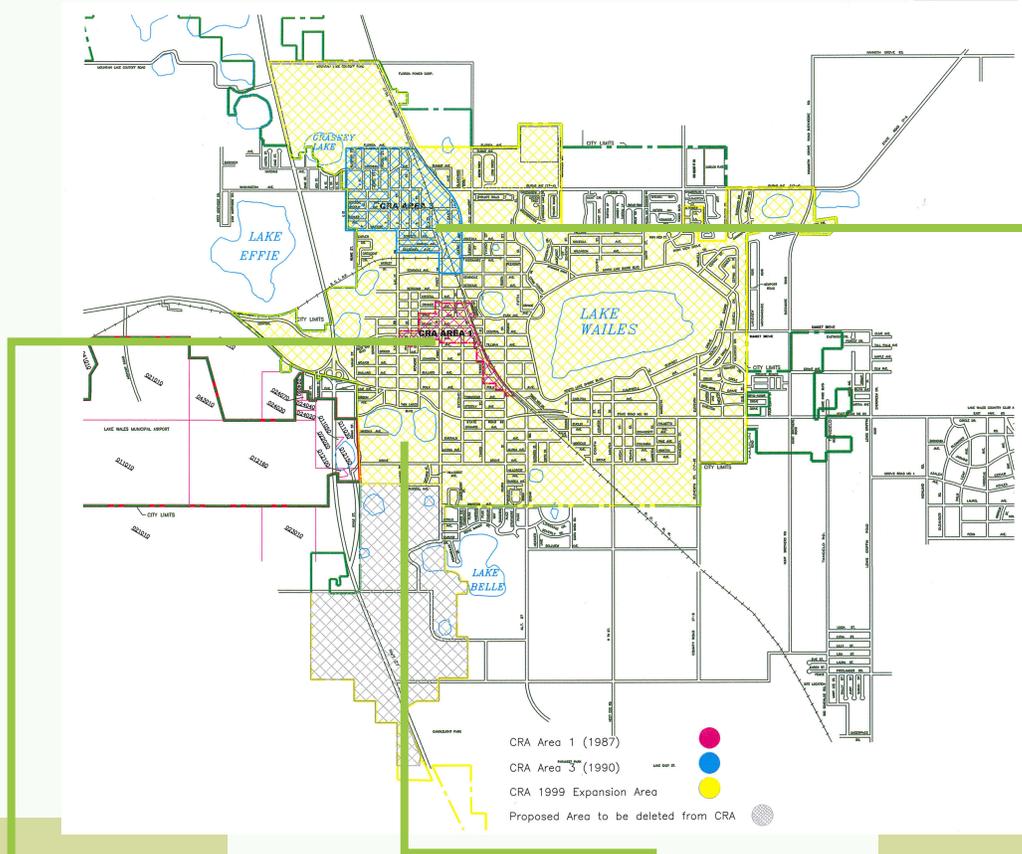
## PURPOSE

As stipulated in Florida Statute Section 163.356(3) (c), each Community Redevelopment Agency is required to file an annual report of activities for the preceding fiscal year which runs from October 1st through September 30th of each year. This report, which is being filed to comply with that requirement, includes a description of projects, activities and expenditures as well as a complete financial statement setting forth the assets, liabilities, income, and operating expenses of the City of Lake Wales CRA as of the end of Fiscal Year (FY) 2022-2023. Other supporting financial data attached to this report include the annual line item budget.



*BizLINC Workshop,  
B Street Community Center*

# Location:



**01** **CRA I**  
Historic Downtown, red area

**02** **CRA II**  
Refers to everything shaded in 'pale yellow'

**03** **CRA III**  
Also known as the Northwest Neighborhood, blue area

## CRA Board Meeting Dates/Time

Typically, the meetings of the Board are on an 'as needed' basis at Lake Wales City Hall, and occur on the 2nd Tuesday of each month. The time of meetings depends on the complexity of the agenda. Normally a meeting commences at 2:00PM .

For confirmation of meeting dates/times, please contact the City Clerk at 863.678.4182 EXT 1254

# PROGRAMS, PROJECTS, & MORE...



## Groundbreaking Ceremony, Signaling Start of Revitalization

(January 12, 2023) - Lake Wales Main Street along with city staff kicked-off construction on the redesign of Park Avenue and Market Plaza in the downtown historic core. The groundbreaking ceremony took place at Market Plaza on Park Avenue.

The project is one of 69 deliverables included in the "Lake Wales Connected" plan, a multimillion-dollar project designed to revitalize the historic core of the city.

"This celebration is four years in the making," said Karen Thompson, Executive Director of Lake Wales Main Street.

The redesign of Park Avenue is geared to create a hospitable environment for residents and visitors to easily commute to area establishments in a botanical-rich environment. Market Plaza will be equipped with outdoor seating areas and public gathering spaces for exhibits and large community gatherings.

"Our goal is to create a city in a garden. Cathedral live oak trees, rain gardens and hanging-flower baskets will line Park Avenue," said Michael Manning, Assistant to the City Manager.

Other enhancements include enlarged sidewalks, clay-brick street pavers and on-street parking.



**"THERE WILL BE A  
POINT IN TIME WHEN  
THIS WILL BE A CASE  
STUDY FOR OTHER  
COMMUNITIES ON  
HOW TO REDEVELOP.  
I PROMISE YOU  
THAT."**

*-James Slaton, City Manager  
Quote from speech at groundbreaking*

# PROGRAMS, PROJECTS, & MORE...



## CRA Bus Tour 2023

(January 30, 2023) - The Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) hosted a tour with representatives from various financial institutions looking to invest in the community.

CRA Project Manager Darrel Starling began the tour in the northwest neighborhood, sharing the plans from the City's "Lake Wales Connected" plan geared to revitalize the area. Redesign plans for Lincoln Avenue include enhanced sidewalks, streets lined with trees, outdoor seating areas and enhanced lighting.

Other development projects featured include: LincPlaza, a new multiplex building comprising retail shops and mixed-use housing; a proposed sports-complex at Frasier Field; and a community garden designed to grow fruits and vegetables.

The number of new houses in the area caught the attention of the representatives. The new development is part of the City's affordable housing program. Several first-time home-buyers qualified for down payment assistance through the City's partnership with SouthState Bank.



It's important we invite bankers to explore Lake Wales to see the potential first-hand," Slaton mentioned.

The second half of the tour took place in the downtown historic district. Executive Director of Main Street Karen Thompson shared the vision to add executive housing to downtown. "The tour was to provide banking officials the full scope of our needs within the entire CRA," Thompson said. Opportunities to strengthen business retention and business recruitment were also addressed.

The financial institutions that participated in the tour include: Centennial Bank, Woodforest National Bank, Wauchula State Bank, Wells Fargo and Office of the Comptroller of the Currency.

The Community Reinvestment Act requires federal banking regulators to encourage financial institutions to invest in the communities in which they do business.

Creating a better and brighter future for tomorrow through redevelopment.

**CONTACT US:**

<p><b>DARRELL STARLING</b> CRA PROJECT MANAGER COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT</p> <p>© 888.676.4362 EXT. 352 E: dstarling@lakewalesfl.gov W: lakewalescra.com</p>	<p><b>KAREN THOMPSON</b> EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR LAKE WALES MAIN STREET, INC.</p> <p>© 888.676.3764 E: karen@lakewalesmainstreet.com W: lakewalesmainstreet.com</p>	<p><b>JAMES SLATON</b> EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR LAKE WALES COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY/CITY MANAGER OF THE CITY OF LAKE WALES</p> <p>© 888.676.4362 E: jslaton@lakewalesfl.gov W: lakewalesfl.gov</p>
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"MAKE YOU THE WORLD A BIT BETTER OR MORE BEAUTIFUL BECAUSE YOU HAVE LIVED IN IT" -EDWARD W. BOK

# PROGRAMS, PROJECTS, & MORE...



## Legacy Housing Rehabilitation Program

SENIORS LIVING IN THE NORTHWEST NEIGHBORHOOD  
COMPLIMENTARY HOME IMPROVEMENTS

APPLY NOW

APPLY NOW

APPLY NOW

CRA COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY Legacy Housing

Many seniors living in the northwest neighborhood of Lake Wales received free home improvements. The efforts are part of the Legacy Housing Rehabilitation Program facilitated by the City's Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA).

CRA Project Manager Darrell Starling said, "The program helps seniors who are not physically capable or financially able to tackle big projects at home."

The program is designed to help eligible homeowners 60 and older living in the northwest neighborhood with a variety of services, such as roof repairs, exterior painting, light construction and lawn cleanup.

Roosevelt Academy's Agriculture and Construction program donated a raised planter with flowers that was built by the students.

The program is one of many components to the "Lake Wales Connected" plan, geared to revitalize the City's historic core.

Lake Wales CRA Chairman Robin Gibson said, "From top to bottom there's a series of programs to strengthen the whole neighborhood."

Seniors interested in service are encouraged to apply by visiting [lakewalescra.com](http://lakewalescra.com) or contacting CRA Coordinator, Cheryl Baksh at 863.678.4182 EXT. 1337



Legacy recipient Carl Marion with City Staff, 8.9.2023



# 25

That's the # of homes that received assistance through the Legacy Housing Rehab Program since it's launch in June 2021.

# PROGRAMS, PROJECTS, & MORE...



## Keystone Phase III

(March 16, 2023) – City staff and new homeowners celebrated the completion of two (2) new affordable homes in the northwest neighborhood. The latest round of houses was through a partnership with nonprofit, Keystone Challenge Fund.

“We’ve completed 16 affordable homes in 15 months through nonprofit and private partnerships. Eleven new houses and five refurbished,” said City Manager James Slaton. *(Please note this quote was taken back on March 2023, we’ve added a lot more since!)*

The CRA partnered with SouthState Bank to offer financial assistance. \$170,000 was awarded to qualified first-time homebuyers - \$80,000 by the CRA and \$90,000 by SouthState Bank.

The CRA’s Developer Incentive Program has attracted a lot of attention. All impact fees including water and sewer have been waived to private developers building affordable houses in the city’s core improvement area.

“This incentive program is geared to help bring more affordable homes to the core of the city. It’s going to offer more opportunities to homebuyers,” Slaton added.

The affordable housing program aligns with the steps and goals included in the award-winning Lake Wales Connected Plan for the re-

vitalization of the city’s downtown historic district and northwest neighborhood.



**Keystone Phase III - Completed**



**New homeowners and City Staff Celebration**

# PROGRAMS, PROJECTS, & MORE...



## Community Garden Groundbreaking



(April 6, 2023) – Members of the community celebrated the groundbreaking of The Grove Community Garden in the northwest neighborhood at 315 Dr. MLK Blvd., Lake Wales.

The development of the garden is through a partnership between the Lake Wales Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) and Department of Health-Polk (DOH-Polk).

“The purpose of the garden is to reduce urban blight while increasing the supply of fresh produce to area residents. We’re essentially turning a vacant lot owned by the City into a community garden,” said Cheryl Baksh, CRA Specialist.

DOH-Polk determined the area to include high rates of food insecurity, behavioral health

concerns and health inequity. Area residents met with City and County staff and agreed the inclusion of a garden will help boost the supply of fruits and vegetables.

“The Grove Community Garden is intended to be for the community and by the community,” said Jessica Napoleon, Public Health Planner with DOH-Polk.

DOH-Polk is planning to work with the Boys & Girls Clubs of Polk County and neighborhood residents over the summer to decide how the garden will look and function. Other collaborators include Health Council of West Central Florida and Central Florida Health Care.

Invitees for the groundbreaking ceremony include Lake Wales Mayor Jack Hilligoss, Lake Wales City Commission, representatives from DOH-Polk, Polk County Food Security Council, Healthy Communities of Florida Taskforce, KidsPACK, and the Health Council of West Central Florida.

Volunteers needed and welcomed! For more information, contact the CRA at 863.678.4182 EXT 1337 or send an email to [cbaksh@lakewalesfl.gov](mailto:cbaksh@lakewalesfl.gov).



*Former Commissioner Terrye Howell addresses the crowd during the groundbreaking ceremony.*

# PROGRAMS, PROJECTS, & MORE...



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## Developer Incentive Program

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((March 31, 2022) – Created by Project Manager, Darrell Starling, the CRA now offer's the Development Incentive Program. This program waives certain impact fees and offers qualified homebuyers down payment assistance.

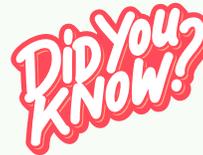
The City's impact fees including water and sewer will be waived (upon approval from the Utilities Department) to private developers building affordable houses in the city's core improvement area.

"We saw quick growth and fast home sales with our efforts in the Northwest Neighborhood," said CRA Project Manager Darrell Starling. "We hope to see the same type of growth in the core of the city," he added.

The CRA's core improvement area lays alongside US Highway 27 and Scenic Highway between Florida Ave., Emerald Ave. and SR 60. Plans to revitalize the area include streets lined with trees, enlarged sidewalks, a multiuse trail and much more.

The Developer Incentive Program requires developers to sell houses to buyers at or below 120% area median income.

For more information, please visit our website at [lakewalescra.com](http://lakewalescra.com)



During fiscal year 22/23, the CRA was able to

waive \$104,579.16 in impact from the City of Lake Wales for developer's that built affordable homes inside our core improvement area. This number doesn't even include the county's impact fees, which are also waived!

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## BizLINC

(July 11, 2023) – The 3,570 square-foot business incubator is located in the city's historic northwest neighborhood.

"Giving local entrepreneurs the tools to succeed will positively impact Lake Wales. New business will open and citizens will have more options," City Manager James Slaton said.

BizLINC staff will provide qualified entrepreneurs a variety of training and business-related services, such as strategic planning, financial reporting, technical assistance, ecommerce support, public-speaking certifications, office space and much more.

# PROGRAMS, PROJECTS, & MORE...



## BizLINC Continued.....

BizLINC is facilitated by the Florida Development Corporation (FDC) through a three-year grant agreement with the Lake Wales CRA.

“During construction, we received more than 60 applications from entrepreneurs and business owners interested in becoming members,” Derrick Blue, Chief Operating Officer at FDC said.

Panel interviews were conducted, and more than half the applicants were selected. Twenty businesses will occupy the building.

Select members have dedicated-private office spaces and some occupy a desk in the open-work area. Virtual members receive physical addresses.



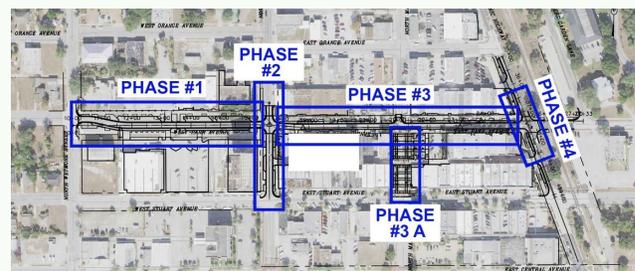
FDC is a real estate development company. The founders of FDC have more than 60 years of

collective experience in affordable housing development, weatherization, financial, project management and community and economic development.

## Park Avenue Redesign

The primary goal is to create a fantastic street lined with trees, flowers and landscaping to create a beautiful environment for residents and visitors to commute to area establishments. Cathedral live oak trees, rain gardens and hanging flower baskets will line Park Avenue. Other enhancements include enlarged sidewalks, clay-brick street pavers and on-street parking. We call it a City in a Garden.

The “Lake Wales Connected” plan pays homage to the 1920s visionaries and landscape architects led by Frederick Law Olmsted Jr., also known for designing the landscape for Bok Tower Gardens and many prominent Washington, D.C. landmarks.



Construction Phases

The construction on Park Avenue & Market Plaza will take place in various phases.

Phase 1: Park Avenue between Wetmore Street to First Street (Ends June/July, 2023)

Phase 2: Intersection between First Street & Park Avenue (Starts early July, 2023 – Ends late October, 2023)

# PROGRAMS, PROJECTS, & MORE...



## Park Avenue Redesign...

Phase 3: Park Avenue between First Street to Scenic Highway (Starts early November, 2023 – Ends mid-April, 2024)

Phase 3 A: Market Plaza (Starts early November, 2023 – Ends mid-April, 2024)

Phase 4: Intersection between Scenic Hwy & East Park Avenue (Starts mid-April, 2024 – Ends late August, 2024)

\$1.2 million to make an impact on the infrastructure in the Northwest Neighborhood. Another \$1.3 million will be furnished by the Lake Wales Community Redevelopment Agency.

Lake Wales is one of ten Florida communities to receive funding through the Rural Infrastructure Fund and the Community Development Block Grant – CV Program, administered by the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity.

## NW Neighborhood Sidewalks & Street Tree Implication Plan

New sidewalks will be added along established streets without sidewalks. Select sidewalks will be widened and most preexisting damaged sidewalks will be rehabilitated. New street trees will be planted near the streets to beautify the area.

City staff identified a pedestrian safety concern for residents living in the Northwest Neighborhood. Staff submitted for a state grant and was awarded nearly

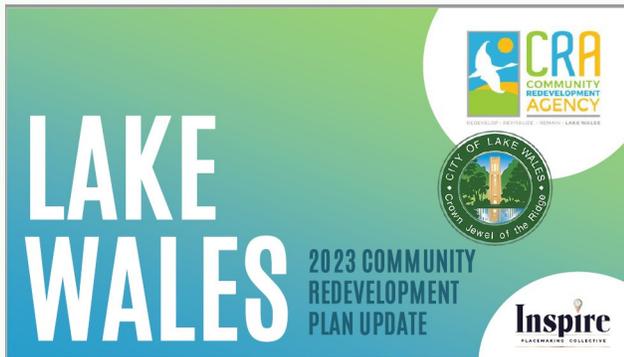


*Proposed Improvements*

# PROGRAMS, PROJECTS, & MORE...



## Finding of Necessity



The CRA Plan was last amended in 2018. Since that time, the CRA has sought to further address documented conditions of slum and blight present in the City and to expand the boundaries of the CRA. In 2022, the city retained Inspire Placemaking Collective to prepare a Findings of Necessity Study (FON). The FON determined that within the study area there exists certain conditions of slum and blight. Therefore, the City adopted Resolution 2023-01 to expand the Lake Wales Community Redevelopment Area boundaries to include the parcels identified in the approved FON study.

Inspire Placemaking Collective worked with CRA and city staff and held a public open house to collect data to support the update to the 2018 CRA Plan. A draft Plan Amendment was presented to the CRA Board on August 8, 2023 and the Plan Amendment, to include the expansion area, was adopted by the CRA on February 13,

2024. The next step is for the City Commission and Board of County Commissioner to consider adoption of Ordinances to fund the CRA IV Expansion area.

To read the full Finding of Necessity Report please visit [lakewalescra.com](http://lakewalescra.com) > Click on Plans & Annual Reports > Finding of Necessity Report.

## Facade Grant Program

The Lake Wales Main Street, Inc. Façade Grant Program is funded through the Lake Wales Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) and administered by Lake Wales Main Street, Inc.



The goals of the Façade Grant are twofold: to further the purpose of the CRA, by raising the tax base and property values; and to further the objectives of the historic downtown by providing a financial incentive to owners located within the historic downtown to restore, preserve, and encourage the reuse of downtown's historic resources, all of which will stimulate investment and raise property values.

As of fiscal year 2022/2023, four (4) applications have been submitted.

# PROGRAMS, PROJECTS, & MORE...



## Lifetime Achievement Award Honors Ronni Wood at 2023 Florida Redevelopment Association Awards



TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — The 2023 Florida Redevelopment Association (FRA) Awards witnessed a remarkable moment of recognition as Ronni Wood, a seasoned and dedicated professional in the field of downtown redevelopment, was honored with the prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award. The accolade was presented during the 2023 FRA Annual Conference and Awards Reception, where the outstanding contributions of community organizations, as well as individual excellence was

celebrated.

With a career spanning several decades, Ronni Wood's journey in downtown redevelopment began in 1987 when she assumed the roles of Lake Wales Main Street Executive Director and CRA Director shortly after completing her M.B.A. During her tenure in Lake Wales, she demonstrated a deep commitment to the revitalization of the city's downtown area and graduated from the National Main Street Center Professional Certification Institute. Her dedication and expertise led to her election to the FRA Board of Directors in the early 1990s, culminating in her service as President in 1995.

After nine fruitful years with Lake Wales Main Street, Ronni accepted the position of Executive Director of Main Street Winter Haven. Under her leadership, downtown Winter Haven witnessed a remarkable transformation, with over \$36.6 million in new investment, the creation of more than 600 net new jobs, and the establishment of 100 new businesses.

Ronni's exemplary career took another turn when she was recruited to serve as the State Coordinator for the Florida Main Street Program at the Florida Department of State. In this role, she provided guidance and oversight to more than 50 local Main Street programs, leaving an indelible mark on community revitalization across the state.

Even in her "retirement" from the Department of State, Ronni's unwavering passion for downtown revitalization led her back to where her journey began—Executive Director of Lake Wales Main Street. With immense pride and enthusiasm, she continues to collaborate with both

# PROGRAMS, PROJECTS, & MORE...



## Ronni Wood (Continued....)

the public and private sectors to bring to fruition Frederick Law Olmsted Jr.'s 100-year-old vision for downtown: "A City in a Garden."

The Lifetime Achievement Award given to Ronni Wood at the 2023 FRA Awards not only recognizes her remarkable career but also serves as a testament to her enduring commitment to enhancing Florida's communities through downtown revitalization.

For additional information about the Florida Redevelopment Association (FRA) and the 2023 FRA Award recipients, including the Lifetime Achievement Award winner, Ronni Wood, please visit <https://redevelopment.net/2023-fra-awards/>.



**Credit:** This article was written by the Florida Redevelopment Association (FRA). Learn more about the FRA by visiting [redevelopment.net](https://redevelopment.net)

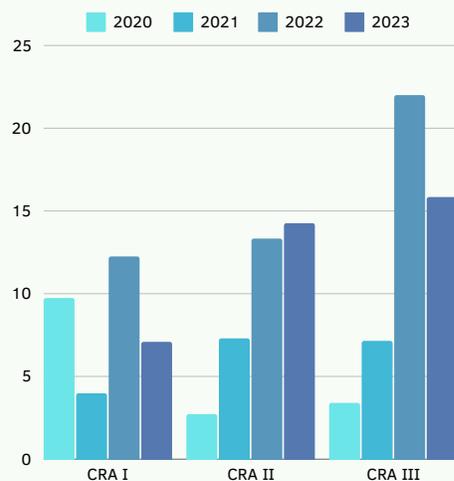
# GENERAL INFORMATION

Prefer hard data?  
Flip to the next page.

This bar graph reflects the percentage increase per year for property values and is further broken down per CRA District



Tip: hover your mouse over each bar for more details



# GENERAL INFORMATION CONTINUED...

Percentage Increase by Year of Lake Wales CRA Property Values				
CRA District:	2020	2021	2022	2023
Lake Wales CRA I	9.74%	3.98%	12.25%	7.09%
Lake Wales CRA II	2.72%	7.30%	13.33%	14.26%
Lake Wales CRA III	3.40%	7.15%	22.00%	15.84%

What does this table mean?



This table gives you the dollar amount per year per CRA district of property values.

2019-2023 - Lake Wales CRA Property Values					
CRA District:	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Lake Wales CRA I	\$ 20,420,604.00	\$ 22,409,389.00	\$ 23,302,028.00	\$ 26,157,876.00	\$ 28,012,550.00
Lake Wales CRA II	\$ 243,824,451.00	\$ 250,451,029.00	\$ 268,733,238.00	\$ 304,576,367.00	\$ 347,999,060.00
Lake Wales CRA III	\$ 15,328,069.00	\$ 15,849,870.00	\$ 16,983,408.00	\$ 20,719,926.00	\$ 24,001,398.00



**\$100,000** in down payment assistance (DPA) was provided during fiscal year 2022-2023.

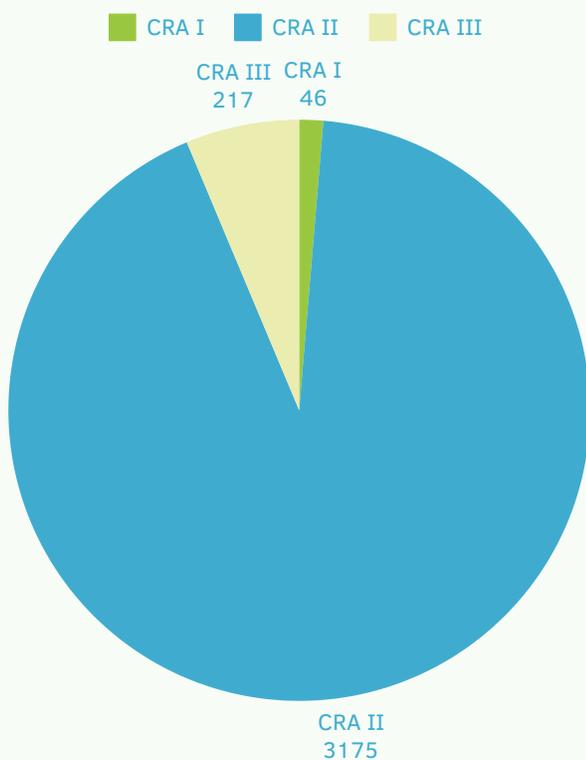
Since the launch of the CRA's DPA program, **\$190,000** has been issued to first time homeowners.

*Did You Know?*

SouthState Bank has donated \$90K towards the CRA's Down Payment Assistance Program!

# GENERAL INFORMATION CONTINUED...

## Total Acreage for Each District



*(Please note total acreage is approximated)*

## Our QR Code



For quick access to our website, scan the QR code:



Find our budget, audit reports and learn more about our current grant programs.



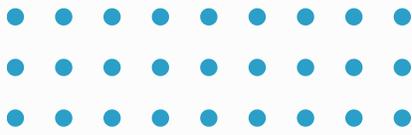
# GENERAL INFORMATION CONTINUED...

## Tax Increments

		2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024
City & County Tax Increment	CRA 1	\$155,346	\$176,762	\$185,526	\$217,604	\$250,322
			↑ 13.79%	↑ 4.96%	↑ 17.29%	↑ 13.07%
	CRA 2	\$1,780,797	\$1,848,566	\$2,109,817	\$2,490,083	\$3,172,530
			↑ 3.81%	↑ 14.13%	↑ 18.02%	↑ 21.51%
	CRA 3	\$85,731	\$92,409	\$108,191	\$151,240	\$204,493
			↑ 7.79%	↑ 17.08%	↑ 39.79%	↑ 26.04%

## Expenditures

Expenditures for Projects from Fiscal Year 2022/2023	Amount
Community Block Development Grant (CDBG)	\$ 424,319.99
Food Incentive Program	\$ 50,806.03
Down Payment Assistance	\$ 100,000.00
Legacy Housing Rehabilitation Program	\$ 386,908.00
Downtown Improvements	\$ 14,732.77
Park Avenue Design Phase	\$ 104,024.83
Park & Market Construction	\$ 4,466,731.49
Northwest Neighborhood Sidewalks and Street	\$ 32,116.90
Orange Avenue Streetscape	\$ 7,461.25
1st Street Design Phase	\$ 47,049.58
Connector Trail	\$ 36,256.43
Demo	\$ 14,948.00
Finding of Necessity and Plan Update	\$ 52,112.00
Legal Advertising	\$ 1,267.92
Cost of Bond Issuance	\$ 155,767.05
Environmental Assessments	\$ 12,700.00
Lincoln Community Development Corp	\$50,000
Lake Wales Main Street, Inc. Matching Grant	\$ 50,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 6,007,202.24</b>



# OVERVIEW

The implementation of the Community Redevelopment Agency’s (CRA) five-year plan ensured another successful year of meeting goals to make our community a ‘bit better’. The CRA’s five-year plan can be located on our website, lakewalescra.com. The three-points of the plan are: reestablish a vibrant downtown, develop quality affordable housing, and establish a pedestrian and bicycle friendly city.

Kicking off on Park Avenue, the CRA funded streetscape began construction with a good portion completed. The end result will address our need to make the downtown area more pedestrian friendly. We hope to have more local events once it’s completed.

Our partnership with Lake Wales Main Street, INC (LWMS) was a seamless continuation of their complementary work. Their support of small businesses in our downtown area helped develop an awareness and prepared merchants to transition through the implementation of the streetscape and other community revitalization projects. We sincerely appreciate our partnership with LWMS and we are honored to work with Ronali Wood, the recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Florida Redevelopment Association.

Lastly, our past and current efforts towards affordable housing has attracted and encouraged public/private partnerships. Along with those partnerships, we were blessed to obtain additional resources. We would like to thank and recognize the following organizations for their continued assistance and shared goal of revitalization: SouthState Bank, Charif Homes LLC, Roosevelt Academy, the Health Council of West Central Florida, FDOH, Lincoln Community Development Corporation, Ring Construction, Lake Wales Care Center, Lake Wales Heritage, Florida Development Corporation, and Keystone Challenge Fund.

With our sincerest gratitude,

*-City of Lake Wales CRA Staff*

Important Note:



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**THE AUDIT FOR FISCAL YEAR  
2022-2023 WILL BE COMPLETED  
BY APRIL 30, 2024.  
ONCE COMPLETED IT WILL BE  
AVAILABLE ONLINE AT  
[lakewalescra.com](http://lakewalescra.com)  
and  
[lakewalesfl.gov](http://lakewalesfl.gov)**

