

Panama City Community Redevelopment Agency



March 31, 2020

Dear Citizens,

We are very pleased to once again report on the activities and progress of the Panama City Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) for FY 2018/19. The agency is required by Florida Statutes 163 Part III to issue this Annual Report updating the citizens of the community and the CRA funding partners on our progress.

The Vision of the CRA is to preserve, unify, and enhance the historic character of the City of Panama City, while encouraging economic growth and development. Our Mission is to remove the damaging influences of slum and blight, and begin to change the economics of distressed areas in the City. 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. There are four (4) CRA Areas designated in Panama City - Downtown, Downtown North, Millville and St. Andrews. A key aspect of the CRA's focus and mission is to rebuild an environment where new investment can grow and prosper. This will, of course, improve the social and environmental conditions found in the community that will gradually reverse the blighted conditions we see in some portions of our community.

Unfortunately, Panama City along with other cities and counties within the panhandle of Florida was devastated by a category 5 hurricane on October 10, 2018. Many, if not all, of the accomplishments achieved were lost as a result of the storm. The community remains dedicated to the recovery process and we are determined to stand firm and together, as we are #PanhandleStrong.

The focus after the storm was securing the City, locating staff, damage assessment and basic emergency management tasks. I am pleased to provide you with this report so the citizens and funding partners can learn more about the outstanding recovery being made by the CRA. If you are interested in learning more or volunteering your time, please feel free to contact me by calling our CRA offices at 850-691-4587. Thank you for the privilege of serving you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that appears to read "S. Brudnicki".

Greg Brudnicki, Community Redevelopment Agency
Chairman

Panama City Community Redevelopment Agency



Introduction

The Panama City Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) consists of 4 Districts which include:

Downtown – created in 1984

St. Andrews – created in 1989

Downtown North – created in 1993

Millville – created in 2004



CRA Financial Information FY 2018

CRA District	Assets	Liabilities	Revenues	Expenses
Downtown	\$611,223	\$2,618	\$384,518	\$145,219
Downtown North	\$1,178,880	\$42,382	\$1,318,658	\$1,061,366
St. Andrews	\$623,170	\$27,751	\$491,139	\$197,297
Millville	\$189,940	\$10,345	\$451,059	\$155,743
Total	\$2,603,213	\$83,097	\$2,645,374	\$1,559,625

*Note: All financial information was provided through a preliminary audit report from Tipton, Marler, Garner & Chastain CPA firm.

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Community Policing

"Community policing innovation" means a policing technique or strategy designed to reduce crime by reducing opportunities for and increasing the perceived risks of engaging in criminal activity. This is done through visible presence of police in the community including, but not limited to, community mobilization, neighborhood block watch, citizen patrol, citizen contact patrol, foot patrol, neighborhood storefront police stations, field interrogation, or intensified motorized patrol.

This fiscal year initiated the seventh amendment to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Panama City Police Department. The funding levels are between the Downtown, St. Andrews, and Downtown North areas. The understandings and commitments contained in the original MOU remained as stated in the original MOU.

- Officers were assigned based on acreage; Downtown – 1 officer
- St. Andrews- 1 officer
- Downtown North – 4 officers

The scope of services for the MOU was

- In all districts, officers will focus on working with code enforcement regarding boarded up houses and businesses and other forms of environmental blight which can lead to criminal activity. In both the Downtown and St. Andrews' district there will be additional focus on vagrancy, traffic and crime related concerns, forming business and residential watches to facilitate crime prevention efforts. In the Downtown North district additional focus will be given to complaints from citizens regarding random and targeted violence, drug activity and its associated blight; firearms crime, street level robberies and prostitution.

World Changers

For the third year, the Downtown North and Millville CRA partnered with First Baptist Church of Panama City to provide sites for World Changers. The Mission of World Changers is to equip students to share and work within communities by painting and performing minor repairs to homes where homeowners cannot afford the repair. Many applicants for these services are elderly and also live alone. These services are free to the selected applicants. The Downtown North and Millville CRAs entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the First Baptist Church of Panama City to provide over 30 sites for World Changer students to provide volunteer work.



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DOWNTOWN DISTRICT

Since 1984, the objective of the CRA Redevelopment Plan has been to leverage downtown's existing assets to support the revitalization of the downtown area and remove the blighting influences identified in the original "Finding of Necessity" study. The Downtown CRA plan is designed to prepare a realistic action plan for the next 20 years based on sound economic principles reflecting the community's vision.

While planning and implementing the strategies within the Downtown Redevelopment Plan, on October 10, 2018, Panama City was hit by a category 5 storm.



People walk past damaged stores after hurricane Michael passed through the downtown area of Panama City, Florida.



The Panama City Community Redevelopment Agency used its Commercial Improvement Assistance programs to assist our businesses in getting back on their feet. The mission of our grant programs is to offer leadership, resources and tools to directly assist in the redevelopment and revitalization of the city's four Community Redevelopment Areas. The CRA cannot possibly fund the immense task of redevelopment on its own and must therefore structure its programs to act as catalysts for redevelopment efforts by individual residents and businesses within the CRA, and to leverage investment by private enterprise. With limited resources available for redevelopment efforts, the Agency must allocate funding to projects and programs that will provide the most benefit for the dollars expended.

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Downtown CRA

		Grant Award	Total project cost
1	S.A. Daffin Trust	\$4,695.84	\$9,391.68
2	Michele Ferrucci/Ferrucci Restaurant	\$5,100.00	\$10,200.00
3	James Allen Branch/Purpose Brewed LLC	\$9,000.00	\$18,000.00
4	James Allen Branch/Trick Daddy Properties LLC	\$900.00	\$900.00
5	Chris Cramer/Harrison & Luverne LLC	\$25,804.16	\$60,929.25
TOTAL		\$45,500.00	\$98,521.00

DOWNTOWN CRA REVENUE		
County TIF	City TIF	Carry Forward
\$143,829	\$134,950	\$372,729

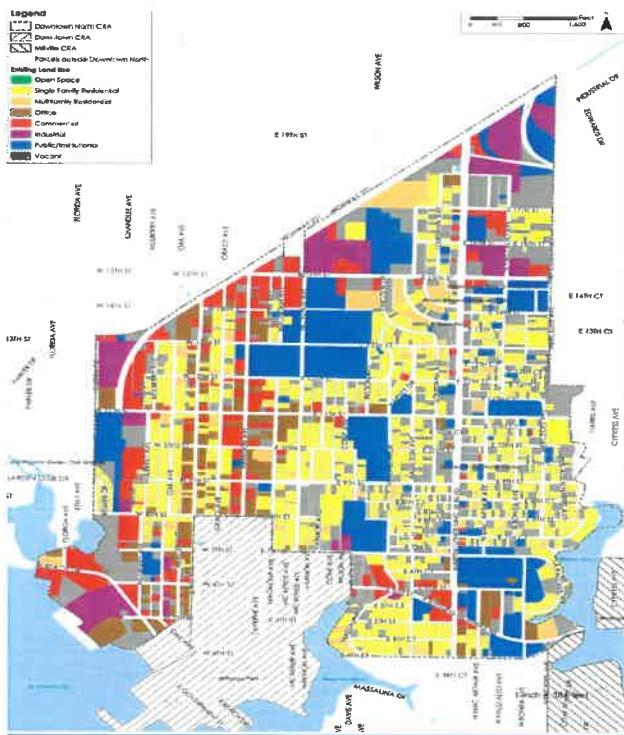
DOWNTOWN CRA EXPENSES		
Personnel	Operating	Cap Improv.
\$20,367	\$124,852	-

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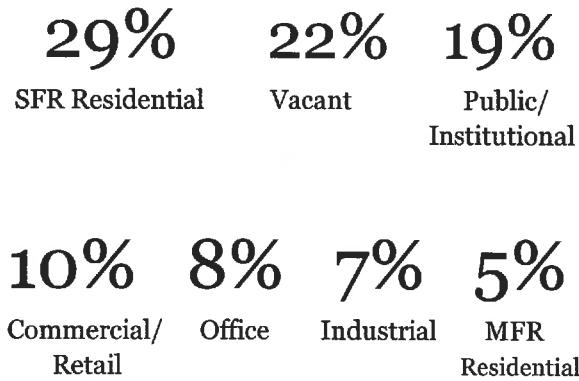


DOWNTOWN NORTH DISTRICT

Established in 1993 the Downtown North CRA was expanded in 2007 and 2018 to encompass 1,375 acres, excluding public right-of-way.



Existing Land Uses



The update of the Downtown North CRA plan began in August 2018. Plans were underway to complete a Finding of Necessity, (FON), allowing for the expansion of the boundaries. Community engagement sessions were rescheduled due to the storm and was completed later in the fiscal year. Resolution No. 20180925.3 was approved by the Panama City Commission and the Community Redevelopment Agency approving the expansion of boundaries for the Downtown North CRA.



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And then came Hurricane Michael:



The Community Redevelopment Agency rallied to help residents of the City/CRA with services offered through the City's Community Development Department and the CRA. Services included Owner Occupied Rehabilitation program and the Housing Assistance Program. Additionally, Downtown North has participated in a partnership with the First Baptist Church and World Changers for the last 2 years. This service has been a great asset to help the elderly who cannot afford to repair their homes.

An example of the work by World Changers students is below:

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The CRA Commercial Improvement Assistance grant program provided assistance to the following small businesses:

The CRA provides funding to address the overall needs within the Community Redevelopment Areas as defined in each district's individual Community Redevelopment Plans. These overall needs are area-wide in scope and encompass some of the more serious problems that are prevalent throughout the area and contribute to the overall state of decline. The CRA grant process was a valuable tool to help our small businesses and residents that met eligibility for the program.

Downtown North CRA

		Grant Award	Total cost of projects
1	Aaron Rich/IJMY LLC	\$42,722.00	\$83,067.00
2	Amanda Boyers/Academy of Eye Care	\$2,117.50	\$4,235.00
3	Amanda Boyers/Academy of Eye Care	\$900.00	\$900.00
4	Richard Lovejoy/The Antique Cottage	\$1,740.00	\$3,480.00
5	James Allen Branch II/Speedy Car Wash	\$14,528.00	\$29,056.00
6	John Rutherford	\$50,000.00	\$598,145.76
7	Pearlene Reed	\$7,000.00	\$14,000.00
8	Vivian Mike(residential demolition)	\$3,246.00	\$6,492.00
TOTAL		\$122,253.50	\$739,376.00

DOWNTOWN NORTH CRA REVENUE			DOWNTOWN NORTH CRA EXPENSES		
County TIF	City TIF	Carry Forward	Personnel	Operating	Cap Improv.
\$632,310	\$593,276	\$901,885	\$74,064	\$942,572	\$44,730

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ST. ANDREWS DISTRICT

In 2017 the City of Panama City retained S&ME to update the 1989 St. Andrews Community Redevelopment Plan. In 1997, the St. Andrews area was designated as a Waterfront Florida Partnership Community, opening up new financial resources and technical grants to the Redevelopment Agency. The St. Andrews CRA has accomplished the majority of the objectives and capital improvements identified in the 1989 Redevelopment Plan, despite several economic downturns. In order to maintain the character of St. Andrews, building upon previous CRA capital investments will best position the Area for continued economic revitalization; St. Andrews Waterfront Partnership, the community advisory committee for the CRA, is committed to the following THREE-Point Action Plan:

- ❖ *Redevelop the St. Andrews Marina into a vibrant public space and working waterfront.*
- ❖ *Strengthen Neighborhoods through improved bike and pedestrian facilities and connections to the historic waterfront.*
- ❖ *Develop Incentive Programs designed to facilitate desired redevelopment projects.*

Hurricane Damage from Michael



Recovery

Hurricane Michael hit St. Andrews, but is recovering quickly with lots more to do. The Waterfront Partners are a driving force in the recovery effort and works closely with city government to advocate for improvements in St. Andrews, as well as spearheading projects that do not require government involvement. Without recovery efforts, safety becomes the biggest concern. There is a direct correlation between blight and crime, and that is something we all want to prevent. A concerted effort to clean up after the hurricane began immediately with collaboration between the city and county governments, public and private organizations, business owners and individual citizens. These efforts give residents a unified sense of community which strengthens the local economy and stability. Recovery depends on the generosity and support of individuals in the community as well as the support of the business community and local governments.

We encourage everyone to get involved, stay informed, volunteer and give financially to the preservation and revitalizations projects within the St. Andrews CRA. Every little bit helps with the ongoing mission.

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In collaboration with the St. Andrews Waterfront Partnership, the following accomplishments were completed in this fiscal year.

SUCCESSES

We have a lot to be thankful for in St. Andrews. The past year was challenging as we recovered from the effects of a devastating hurricane, but we are proud of our accomplishments and successes in our community's recovery, and we are proud to share them with you.

- Managed The Market at St. Andrews every Saturday for vendors to sell crafts, and other locally produced wares.
- Expanded the Market at St. Andrews to include complementary events, such as Halloween Fest, Salty Stuff Day, and Biker's Saturday, which created a fun, festive atmosphere resulting in more vendors, shoppers, and visitors to St. Andrews.
- Offered a free downloadable app of walking tour of St. Andrews. Search your App Store for "Florida Stories."
- Managed The Panama City Publishing Co. Museum, which was approved for the National Register in 2019.
- Launched a campaign for pedestrian safety along Beck Avenue, which resulted in installation of crosswalk flashers and slower traffic that now stops for pedestrians in the crosswalks.
- Provided several community events, which bring thousands to St. Andrews benefiting local businesses, including Salty Dog day, Halloween Fest at the Market, Santa in the Park, and numerous tours, exhibits, printing activities and demonstrations at The Panama City Publishing Co. Museum.



SUCCESSES

- Launched the Yard of the Month program to encourage residents to reclaim their lawns and gardens from Hurricane Michael.
- Planted Bee and Butterfly Gardens along Beck Avenue to encourage growth in bee and butterfly populations.
- Organized community clean-ups of St. Andrews in February and April to remove Hurricane-related trash and debris.
- Worked with the City government to replace street lights and advocated for solutions for blighted properties.
- Provided the Christmas display, lights, and activities in Oaks by the Bay Park every year with the help of more than 200 volunteers.
- Offered free guide walking tours of Historic St. Andrews every Wednesday and Friday beginning and ending at The Panama City Publishing Co. Museum.
- Hosted print press demonstrations and participated in events that highlighted the print operation of the museum.
- Hosted cultural displays at the museum to visitors offering tours to 3,200 visitors, so they could learn more of the hosting of St. Andrews, the West family, and the print operations.
- Promoted the St. Andrews community and businesses through our website, visitor's map and social media campaigns.

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Commercial Improvement Assistance Grants

To assure the CRA is receiving the intended results from its projects and programs, it is important that funding decisions are based on expectations of specific, measurable outcomes. Also, since the implementation of a few strategically placed well-funded programs may have a much greater impact on the overall area than many inadequately funded ones, programs must be evaluated in the context of the agency's overall goals, and implemented accordingly.

ST. ANDREWS CRA

		Grants Award	Project Total Cost
	Sean Lyon/Uncle Ernie's Restaurant	\$38,500.00	
	Total	\$38,500.00	\$77,000.00

ST. ANDREWS CRA REVENUE

County TIF	City TIF	Carry Forward
\$249,219	\$233,834	\$307,477

ST. ANDREWS CRA EXPENSES

Personnel	Operating	Cap Improv.
\$29,377	\$167,920	-

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MILLVILLE DISTRICT

The Redevelopment Plan for the Millville CRA is designed to address primary public concerns related to the conditions in the local neighborhoods, commercial strip development patterns, industrial intrusion, and waterfront development. The Millville neighborhood is located in the southeastern portion of Bay County within the city limits of Panama City along the St. Andrews Bay. Watson Bayou forms the western boundary of the Millville neighborhood and leads into St. Andrews Bay. This location on Watson Bayou has been an important factor in the evolution of the neighborhood.

Impact of Hurricane Michael



Commercial Improvement and Residential Assistance programs

The devastation created by Hurricane Michael is hopefully a once in a life time experience. To help our small business and residents within our CRA Areas we have available a grant process to assist with recovery. The primary objective of this matching grant program is to encourage redevelopment and revitalization of commercial buildings/sites by offering limited financial and technical assistance. The overall objective is to stimulate reinvestment in the CRA districts and to preserve or renew the traditional retail business areas and establish them as centers for pedestrian oriented commercial activities. This grant is the only CRA grant on an annual cycle basis to seek competitive projects. The following partnerships occurred after the storm:



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MILLVILLE CRA

		Grant Award	Project Total Cost
	Ann Bruner/Gene's Oyster Bar	\$3,800.00	\$26,500.00
	Melana Weems/Reality Check	\$900.00	\$900.00
	Angela LeVangie/Sailor Supply	\$850.00	\$1,275.00
	Fran Markham King	\$3,800.00	\$7,600.00
	Alvin & Sabrenia Bland	\$900.00	\$900.00
	Total	\$19,700.00	\$37,175

MILLVILLE CRA REVENUE		
County TIF	City TIF	Carry Forward
\$167,079	\$156,765	\$42,852

MILLVILLE CRA REVENUE		
Personnel	Operating	Cap Improv.
\$16,899	\$138,843	-

World Changers

The Millville CRA is also a partner in the World Changers' Memorandum of Understanding. Through this services we helped many families who could not afford to repair their home by provide some safety and security during this trying time.

The Recovery process is far from over and the CRA continues to be
Dedicated to Excellence... People Serving People.

Panama City Community Redevelopment Agency



FY 2018 CRA Board Members

Greg Brudnicki – Chairman

Jenna Haligas

Kenneth Brown

Billy Rader

Mike Nichols

Contact information

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See Our Website at <http://pcgov.org/163/Community-Redevelopment-Agency>