

# DeLand Downtown Community Redevelopment Agency

## Annual Report

FY 2011- 2012

Prepared by

City of DeLand

City Manager's Office and Finance Department

With Assistance from the:



## **Downtown Community Redevelopment Agency**

### **2011 -12 Downtown Community Redevelopment Agency**

#### **Board Membership**

**Robert F. Apgar, DeLand Mayor, Seat 1**

**Charles Paiva, DeLand Commissioner Seat 2**

**Vonzelle Johnson, DeLand Commissioner Seat 3**

**Phil Martin, DeLand Commissioner Seat 4**

**Leigh Matusick, DeLand Commissioner Seat 5**

**Scott Price, Downtown Business Representative**

**Joe Valente, Downtown Business Representative**

## INTRODUCTION

The City of DeLand's Downtown Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) was created in 1984, and the first Community Redevelopment Plan was adopted in 1985. For over twenty-five years, the DeLand Community Redevelopment Agency has played an integral role in the revitalization of the downtown area and the surrounding community. The downtown area has faced many challenges similar to those in other areas of Florida and the nation. The vision of the downtown area was established by residents who attended workshops in the 1980's and 90's and determined a set of goals and priorities that have evolved over the years. The last full update of the redevelopment plan, adopted in 2005, provides a foundation for redevelopment and maintenance operations in the downtown area.

Today, Downtown DeLand is an award winning MainStreet community where we have learned to cherish that which is special about our past while embracing the 21st Century. Residents and businesses love to share the history and small town charm of their City and offer a yearlong schedule of programs and events that bring people together. Beautifully restored buildings hold an eclectic mix of high quality shops, restaurants and art galleries that line the downtown boulevard and intersecting streets. Workers associated with the operation of the County Seat contribute to the lively bustle. A variety of small parks, murals, and flowers on every corner make it a special place to spend an hour or a day.

The downtown DeLand Community Redevelopment Agency does not rest on its past achievements. DeLand is dynamic and its redevelopment plan calls for many new strategies including:

- Development of mixed use projects on undeveloped parcels
- Maintaining a wide variety of retail and service uses
- Creation of new streetscapes and public amenities
- Establishment of residential units within the downtown area
- Creation of a hospitality and conference area to complement the restored Athens Theatre

In Fiscal Year 2011-2012, the Community Redevelopment Agency took bold steps to envision the addition of new mixed-use buildings on infill lots by initiating a rezoning and working to establish a public-private partnership agreement for redevelopment of city owned property as a mixed commercial/residential use project; awarding construction bids for a new streetscape along West New York Avenue to attract travelers along this major east-west corridor; and awarding grant funds for redevelopment of a largely vacant and underutilized building at a principal downtown intersection. These three projects are aimed at increasing the area's capacity to accommodate new growth while preserving the historic character of the community. These projects will help the City attract sustainable growth and maintain a unique sense of place in a central community of which all residents and downtown workers can be proud.

The Downtown CRA encompasses approximately 92.6 acres of land located in the heart of DeLand. Properties on both sides of Woodland Boulevard are included within the CRA which is roughly bounded on the west by the western block face of Florida Avenue and on the east by Alabama Avenue. Michigan Avenue serves as the northern boundary for the CRA and Voorhis Avenue is the Southern border.

## REVENUES

Historically, the Downtown CRA has had a steady, but low, Tax Increment Revenue each year since the inception of the CRA. However, in FY 2005-06, the CRA Trust Fund increased significantly due to the “real estate bubble” experienced throughout Florida. The subsequent national economic downturn that we have experienced since that time has caused revenues to fluctuate with FY08-09 being the only year to have positive growth since FY06-07.

**Table One: Tax Increment Revenues by Year**

<b>FY03-04</b>	<b>FY04-05</b>	<b>FY05-06</b>	<b>FY06-07</b>	<b>FY07-08</b>	<b>FY08-09</b>	<b>FY09-10</b>	<b>FY10-11</b>	<b>FY11-12</b>
<b>246,231</b>	<b>282,407</b>	<b>436,436</b>	<b>498,600</b>	<b>420,780</b>	<b>462,716</b>	<b>359,294</b>	<b>227,474</b>	<b>202,964</b>

The Tax Increment Financing (TIF) revenues for the Downtown CRA have been unpredictable. Revenues increased substantially until FY06-07 and then began an erratic decline to FY11-12. The CRA was able to sustain operations and maintenance activities and engage in new projects by utilizing savings from prior years, rent receipts from a building owned by the City of DeLand, and sharing expenses for certain items with the City.

The Downtown CRA has participated in a number of projects in the 11-12 Fiscal Year:

- Construction of New York Avenue Streetscape
- Creation of a Mixed Use Development Plan for undeveloped and underutilized city property
- Acquisition and Sale of Abandoned Property
- Underutilized Building Improvement Grant Programs

## NEW YORK AVENUE STREETScape

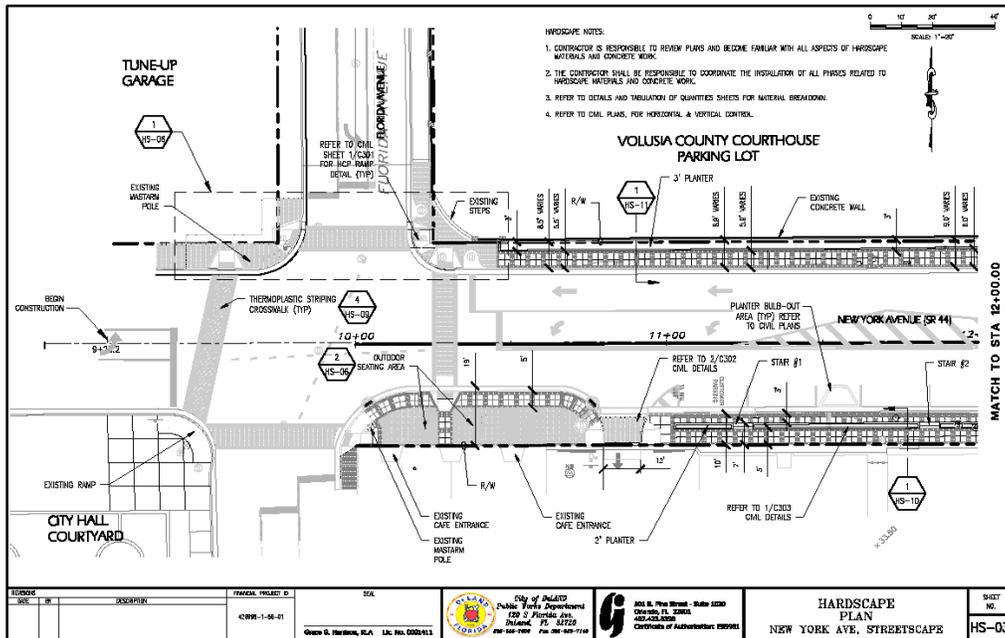
The New York Avenue Streetscape Plan is a wide-scale tourism and walking space project intended to improve the major east-west corridor through downtown along State Road 44 (New York Avenue) so that travelers and visitors along this corridor will be encouraged to stop and visit.



The Streetscape will correct ADA deficiencies in the block between Florida Avenue and Woodland Boulevard and visually connect the Volusia County Historic Courthouse, Chess Park, DeLand City Hall and the businesses along New York Avenue to Woodland Boulevard.

The project will adjust the horizontal alignment, provide greater pedestrian activity, shaded areas, on-street parking, include directional signage, wider sidewalks, landscaping, and removal of overhead utility lines. Design for the project was completed; construction documents were prepared, placed out for bid and awarded; and construction commenced this fiscal year.





Below is a brief timeline of the project:

<b>Approval of LAP Agreement</b>	<b>October 2010</b>
<b>Construction document preparation</b>	<b>September 2010 through June 2011</b>
<b>Approval of agreement with Progress Energy for relocation of overhead lines</b>	<b>April 2011</b>
<b>Construction bid documents advertised</b>	<b>June through September 2011</b>
<b>Bid negotiations and award of contract (both construction and inspection)</b>	<b>November through January 2012</b>
<b>Construction (includes construction break to accommodate fall elections)</b>	<b>May 2012- March 2013</b>
<b>Grand Opening</b>	<b>April 2013</b>

## PREPARE FOR MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT

A Public Lands and Parking Space Needs Analysis was prepared by Walker Parking Consultants and Pizutti Solutions in 2008. The land use analysis indicated that the residential presence in the downtown area is very limited, and should be promoted as an opportunity in any future redevelopment efforts by the City. An increased level of residential use in the core downtown is thought to have a positive effect on the overall area. In FY 2008-09 DeLand Planning staff processed an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan that would allow increased densities in the very specific target area of the downtown CRA. This was approved and subsequently adopted by the DeLand City Commission in early 2009.

Another recommendation contained in this study was for the Commission to consider redevelopment of the site at the intersection of Woodland Boulevard and Church Street with a mixed-use project that could include retail first floor use. Second and third story space could be developed into office or live/work units. Additionally, the recommendation included the development of approximately 40 condominium or townhouse units further to the east within the areas that currently contain parking and open space. Although developing rental residential units would also attract vitality to the area, the creation of owner-occupied units would bring an increased level of stability and long-term neighborhood feel. During the summer of FY2008-2009, City planning staff began working with a citizens committee to determine whether to move forward with this recommendation. These work efforts resulted in a formal presentation to the CRA in November 2009, and a determination to issue an RFP for a redevelopment project. In December 2009, the CRA voted to issue a request for a mixed use project on 1.86 acres of property owned by the City of DeLand and located at the intersection of Woodland Boulevard and Church Street. On August 2, 2010, the CRA authorized staff to commence negotiations with White Challis Redevelopment Co.



Downtown DeLand is the envy of many cities due to its small-town charm, eclectic mix of retail establishments, & sense-of-place. While city planners appreciate the regular flow of visitors, they seek to make it possible for more people to live Downtown.

That's the motive behind an initiative that would add lofts, townhouses, retail shops, & more parking to the Downtown area.

The White Challis Redevelopment Co. proposal provides for fourteen loft condominiums, each having approximately 1,000 sq. ft., above 3, 900 square foot of commercial space located at the intersection of Woodland Boulevard and Church Street; eight 1,250 sq.ft. townhouse units on Church Street and eight townhouse units off of Rich Avenue. In addition to the covered parking provided for the residential units, 90 public parking spaces are provided in a surface lot accessible from one entrance off of Church Street and two entrances off Rich Avenue. Five on-street public spaces are also provided on Rich Avenue. A storm water management system is also proposed.

In May 2011, the CRA and City Commission approved the Letter of Intent for this project and directed staff to negotiate an acquisition and project agreement. In September 2011, the CRA and DeLand City Commission authorized Staff to process the Planned Development application while negotiating the contract with White Challis Redevelopment Co. and to bring them back to the boards concurrently with the Rezoning application.

During FY11-12, White Challis and the CRA obtained conceptual PD plan review through both the City of DeLand Technical Review Committee and the Planning Board. Following conceptual review, the formal rezoning application to PD was submitted and considered by both the TRC and the Planning Board. On September 19, 2012, the rezoning and PD agreement was recommended for approval by the DeLand Planning Board. During this time, the DeLand City Commission also adopted an Economic Enhancement District for this site and authorized staff to work with Cardno TBE to submit a grant application for community assessment which would include this property.

The City Commission is scheduled to hold its first hearing on this rezoning on October 29, 2012, and its second hearing on November 19, 2012. The Acquisition and Redevelopment Agreement - which outlines a public private partnership for development of the property - is also to be considered on those two dates by the CRA. (Author's note: both the rezoning and the agreement were approved by the DeLand City Commission and CRA.)

### **Acquisition of Abandoned Property**

The City of DeLand acquired a historic home in the CRA at 117 West Howry Avenue through a foreclosure action in November 2010. In October 2011, the City authorized staff to develop and issue a request for proposals so that the property could be sold or leased to a private business or individual who would restore the building and redevelop the site for commercial uses.



On the February 27, 2012, deadline, one formal proposal was received by Mr. Mark Shuttleworth. Mr. Shuttleworth proposed purchasing the property for use as a mixed retail/office/residential project. In July 2012, the City Commission approved sale of the property. The 1900 vintage wooden structure had suffered greatly from poor maintenance and was unoccupied for almost four years, thus rendering it vulnerable to roof leaks, water intrusion, broken windows, vandalism and theft. Copper wiring and pipes, air conditioning equipment and other materials in the structure were stolen over the four year period. The "historic" house was sagging from rotted porch columns and foundation beams.





The owner and CRA are working together to put this property back into use. At the request of the CRA, the City of DeLand has repainted the on street parking space lines along Howry Avenue to facilitate commercial use of the property. The deteriorated asbestos shingle roof was replaced with new architectural shingles and the sagging foundations were realigned by the new owner. In addition, dangerous vandalized electric wiring and vandalized ductwork was repaired or replaced and two new AC/Heating systems were installed.



The restoration process is nearing completion in order to accommodate several interested future tenants who want to move into the structure by early February 2013.

## STREET SCULPTURES

On May 3, 2010, the CRA and the City Commission considered and adopted an amendment to the Downtown Redevelopment Plan to promote visual arts in the downtown CRA and provide for the possibility of expending CRA funds for this purpose. This amendment was made following a request by the Florida Museum of Art and was endorsed by MainStreet DeLand, Inc. At that meeting, several members of the CRA expressed the opinion that a visual arts program that includes street sculpture would serve as an economic, cultural and visual stimulus for the downtown area.

The CRA and the Museum cooperated throughout the summer, and the first of twelve sculptures was installed on September 19, 2010. The sculptures are on loan from the artists, who receive stipends for the use of their work from the Museum, and the statuary is installed and maintained by the CRA. The CRA and museum share the costs of insuring the works. The DeLand Sculpture Walk is looking forward to many years in Downtown DeLand. The CRA met its goal to rotate the sculptures every other year in October and to gradually increase the number of sculptures that are on display from twelve to eighteen, by adding three additional locations. In FY12-13, sculpture committee members began the process of identifying new and replacement art.



### ***“CONTINUITY”***

**Dan Faden**

Grant-Valkaria, FL

Aluminum and  
Stainless Steel

2011

140 N. Woodland Blvd - West Side  
Between Indiana and Rich Aves

## LANDSCAPING AND UPGRADES

The CRA has replaced plantings, lighting and street furniture throughout the downtown area. The CRA provides for general maintenance of the area and all unique streetscape infrastructure within the CRA. Although the CRA purchases the pots, mulch and annual flowers throughout the downtown area, DeLand Garden Club plants and maintains many of the spectacular displays found throughout the streetscape and park areas.



## **FILLING OF RETAIL SPACE, BUSINESS PROMOTION AND MARKETING**

The City of DeLand works with the MainStreet DeLand Association (a private not for profit 501(C) 3 organization) for a variety of activities. Filling vacant first floor spaces is a top priority for MainStreet DeLand Association, and this fiscal year the quarterly occupancy rate ranged from 93% to 97% throughout the year as empty spaces were rapidly refilled.

Keeping active business occupancies is one of the primary goals for promoting and marketing of the downtown area. MainStreet DeLand, the CRA, and the City of DeLand work together to sponsor several downtown events each year, and to assist other organizations in hosting their downtown events. The MainStreet DeLand Association organizes the "Cruise In" events, 4<sup>th</sup> Friday Art Walk, Tropical Nights, Hot Summer Nights, Veteran's Day Parade, DeLand Craft & Quilt Show, the DeLand Bike Rally and several Christmas events.

Additional duties undertaken by MainStreet DeLand include: annually formulating and executing a plan to promote and market the Downtown area; coordination of public participation in CRA meetings; dissemination of CRA information to downtown property owners including schedules for capital improvement and maintenance projects that would affect the downtown business community; certain maintenance activities; as well as advertising, ranking for CRA consideration, and administering the CRA grant programs. Funding in the amount of approximately \$75,000 has been allocated for all MainStreet DeLand activities including promotion. The topic of marketing, promotion and downtown event sponsorship was identified as the top priority for implementation during a MainStreet DeLand Workshop held in December, 2011. During this workshop, the need to establish a series of continuous business promotion activities was identified as a way of creating stronger relationships with local residential areas, Stetson University, and regional residents to attract consumers to downtown DeLand. MainStreet DeLand Association is equipped to take the lead in promoting business in the downtown area. MainStreet DeLand not only generates its own activities and promotions, but coordinates with other entities including the City of DeLand, the Chamber of Commerce, West Volusia Historical Society, Toys for Tots, Athens Theater and others in creating marketing materials, maps and brochures; media promotions; and web site and e-mail advertisements, to name a few examples.

Downtown events were also identified as a very effective way of attracting consumers to the Downtown DeLand marketplace, especially those consumers who are unaware of the merits of the area for shopping and dining. The effects of an event are both long term and short term. The short term effect is that the consumer makes purchases during the event at one of the downtown merchants. This is evidenced by a survey conducted by MainStreet DeLand Association which found that the eleven of the busiest days for restaurants in the downtown area coincided with special event days. The long term effect is that the consumer remembers the charm of the area and returns to shop after attending the event. A second long term effect of events is that some event participants may be candidates for opening a new retail or dining establishment within the downtown area. MainStreet DeLand, with the assistance of the City of DeLand's special events coordinator and appropriate support staff, are responsible for or assist in presenting nearly fifty events per year.

At present, over 50 different events are being conducted on an annual basis. Every third Saturday of the month the area hosts antique automobiles and classic cars at Downtown DeLand Cruisin' Car show; and once a month, the Fourth Friday in Artisan Alley and DeLand Art Walk is celebrated during the evening. A monthly listing of singular events conducted in the downtown area is provided below. Only seven of these receive any type of funding for additional services (such as street sweeping or policing) from the CRA. These are indicated with an asterisk (\*).

**October**

- DeLand Women's Organization Wine Tasting
- \*Homecoming parade
- Bar Camp
- DeLand Chili Cook-off
- \*Monsters on MainStreet
- Thin Man Watts Jazz Fest
- Fall Bike Rally



**November**

- Veteran's Day Celebration
- \*Fall Festival of the Arts
- DeLand Original Music Festival



**December**

- \*Christmas parade
- Merchant Open House



**January**

- MLK Parade
- Cruisin' Classic Car Show
- Taste of DeLand



**February**

- Craft Beer Festival
- \*Mardi Gras Dog Parade

**March**

- DeLanda Palooza
- \*Bike Rally
- St. Patrick's Day celebration
- Stetson Homecoming
- Wildflower/Garden Festival
- DeLand Outdoor Art Festival

**April**

- Green Street Fair
- Mystic Crew of Maravedi
- Port of Call Crawl
- Relay for Life
- Fireman's Pub Crawl

**May**

- Hatter Palooza
- Cinco de Mayo
- Merchant Open House

**June**

- MainStreet DeLand 25<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party



**July**

- Tropical Nights

**August**

- Hot Summer Nights
- Bar B.Q. & Blues

**September**

- \*Rivertown Craft (and Quilt) Show

## **FACADE IMPROVEMENT AND OTHER GRANT PROGRAMS**

Mr. Joe Daprile and Mr. Michael Munier, the new owners of the historic building at 100 East New York Avenue, submitted an application for an Underutilized Building Grant. The owners plan to renovate the building by repairing the roof and parapet cap, installing additional stairs and stairwell, repairing the south fire escape, and repairing the southern exposure exterior wall. The total project cost is estimated \$150,000 - \$200,000 for this fiscal year. This building has remained vacant for several years and will provide a great economic advantage to the community in terms of the creation of new jobs and an increased tax base once the building is renovated and occupied. A grant of \$20,000 was approved by the CRA to assist with this work in May 2012.

**City of DeLand, Florida**  
**Downtown Community Redevelopment Fund**  
**Financial Statement**  
**For The Year Ended September 30, 2012**

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	Actual
<b>REVENUES</b>	
Ad Valorem Taxes	\$202,964
Fish Building Rental Receipts	46,434
Special Events	0
Federal Grants	138,818
Donations	0
Miscellaneous Revenues	8,181
Total Revenues	<b>396,397</b>
 <b>EXPENDITURES</b>	
Operating Expenses	292,576
Capital Outlay	163,354
Debt Service:	
Principal	57,008
Interest and Fiscal Agent Charges	3,368
Grants and Aid	
Contingent Expenditures	0
Total Expenditures	<b>516,306</b>
 <b>OTHER FINANCING SOURCES (USES)</b>	
Funds Carried Over From Prior Years	0
Transfer from General Fund	0
Transfer from Reserves	0
Total Other Financing Sources (Uses)	<b>0</b>
Change in Fund Balance	<b>\$(119,909)</b>

## **Charting A New Course**

MainStreet DeLand has recognized that change is the only constant and that the Downtown DeLand Community Redevelopment Area still has “great potential” and many unrealized hopes for future development. To this end, they organized a steering committee and prepared a new vision document for the downtown area. The concepts were presented to the City Commission and CRA board on September 24, 2012. Staff is currently working with the MainStreet Group to incorporate requested changes into an amendment of the City’s Land Development Regulations.