

2022 Annual Report



Auburndale Community Redevelopment Agency

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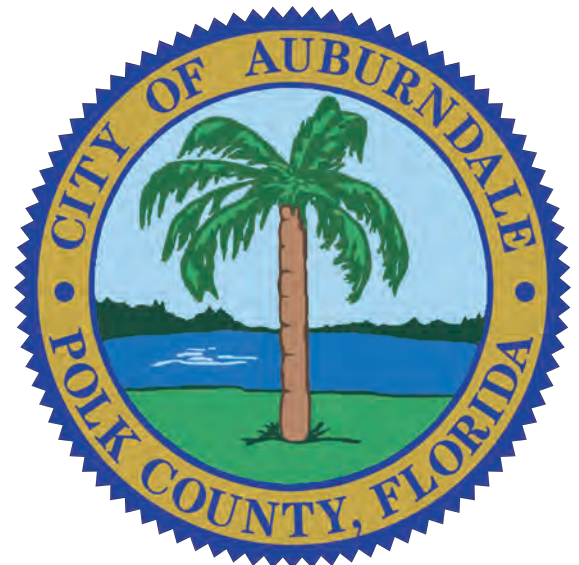
City Hall - 1 Bobby Green Plaza

Auburndale, FL 33823

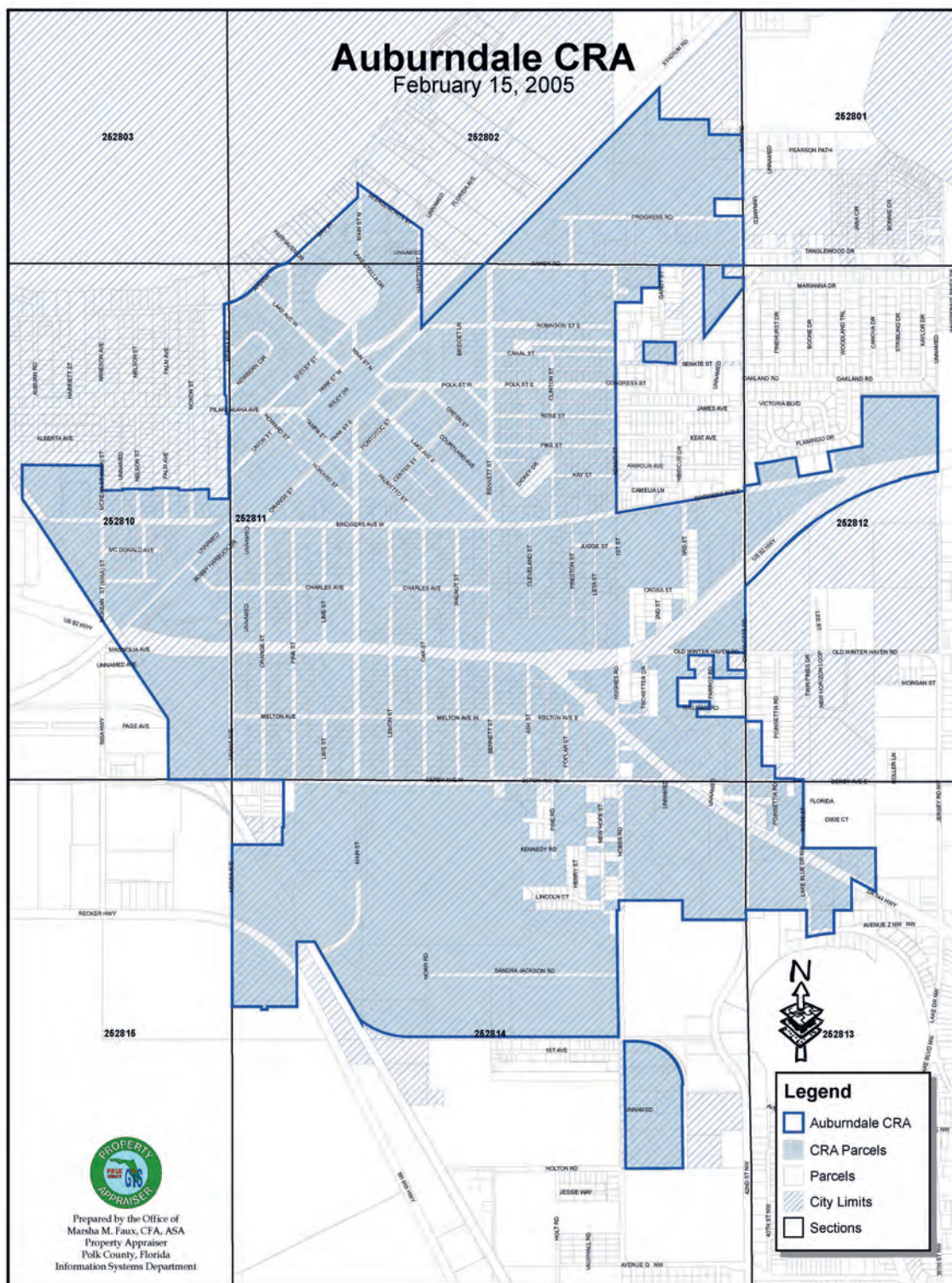
Phone: (863) 965-5530

Website: www.auburndalefl.com/cra/

Fiscal Year 2021-2022



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Historical Perspective

On February 3, 1992, The Auburndale City Commission passed Resolution No. 92-5, which found that the Downtown Business District, Downtown Residential District, and surrounding commercial and retail properties were in need of redevelopment, rehabilitation and conservation in the interest of the public health, safety, morals and welfare of the residents of Auburndale. The Auburndale Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) was formally established on February 17, 1992, with the adoption of Ordinance No. 769 by the Auburndale City Commission.

On June 1, 1992, The Auburndale City Commission adopted the Community Redevelopment Plan as a strategy for the CRA to facilitate a comprehensive and coordinated revitalization of the designated CRA area. The Redevelopment Plan followed the adoption of a Finding of Necessity or “Blight Study,” which identified the redevelopment needs of the community.

By adoption of Ordinance No. 1117 on July 7, 2003, the CRA Board is comprised of the five (5) members of the Auburndale City Commission and two (2) appointed Auburndale residents. The purpose of the CRA is to undertake projects and programs in the CRA District that create a community which is economically viable and provides a good living environment in which to work, shop, and play.

The Auburndale Community Redevelopment Agency Board as of the end of the 2021-2022 fiscal year (September 30, 2022) was comprised of:

Tim Pospichal	Chair
Ellie Harper	Vice-Chair
Dorothea Taylor Bogert	Board Member
Keith Cowie	Board Member
Richard Hamann	Board Member
Jack Myers	Board Member
Bill Sterling	Board Member

Long-time Board Member Cindy Price, appointed to the CRA Board in 1992, retired from the Board at the close of the calendar year 2021.

Purpose of Annual Report

The Auburndale Community Redevelopment Agency is required by the Community Redevelopment Act to submit a progress report of the year’s community redevelopment activities, including a complete financial statement of assets, liabilities, income and operating expenses. This report is due and must be reported to the governing body on or before March 31st of each year.

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This report is being filed concerning the annual redevelopment activities of the Auburndale Community Redevelopment Agency for Fiscal Year 2021-2022. This report is prepared and filed consistent with Florida Statutes.

Additionally, the CRA is required to submit an independent financial audit of its trust fund to each taxing authority. The Governance Letter to the Community Redevelopment Agency Board, Financial Statements, and Independent Auditor's Reports are included with this report. A copy of this audit is made public and provided to each taxing authority upon completion and acceptance.

Taxable Value

In February 1992, when the CRA was established, the Base Year Taxable Value of the CRA was \$59,948,355. Since the inception of the CRA, property values have increased to \$215,834,753 year ending 2021. This represents a 360% increase in property values since 1992. The Current Year Tax Incremental Value is \$155,886,398, which is the difference from the Base Year Taxable Value and the Current Year Taxable Value. Funding for the CRA is generated based on this Current Year Tax Increment Value. The CRA budgets 95% (percent) of the Current Year Tax Increment Value, or \$148,092,078, multiplied by the current ad valorem tax rates of the participating jurisdictions, or TIF. The TIF generated \$629,613.47 from the City of Auburndale and \$1,021,687.25 from Polk County, given their respective ad valorem rates of 4.2515 for the City and 6.899 for the County. The total contributed from the City and County to the Auburndale Community Redevelopment Trust Fund equaled \$1,651,300.72 for FY 2021-2022. The below chart further explains the funding.

FY 2022 Auburndale Community Redevelopment Agency Funding

Current Year Taxable Value in CRA	\$215,834,753.00
Base Year Taxable Value in CRA	-\$59,948,355.00
Current Year Tax Increment Value	\$155,886,398.00
Portion on which the Payment is Based	x 95%
Dedicated Increment Value	\$148,092,078.10
Amount of Payment to Redevelopment Trust Fund from City	\$629,613.47
Amount of Payment to Redevelopment Trust Fund from County	\$1,021,687.25
Total Contributed to the Auburndale CRA Trust Fund for FY 2019-2020	\$1,651,300.72
Total Number of Activities Started	4
Total Number of Activities Completed	4
Total Amount Expended - Low & Middle Income Affordable Housing	\$0.00

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Projects

The Auburndale Community Redevelopment Agency was able to accomplish a number of significant projects in FY 2021-2022.

ACHIEVEMENT	CRA PLAN PAGE
Infrastructure – Signage/Landscaping	Pg. 17, 18
Infrastructure – Streetscape Updates/Sidewalk Repairs	Pg. 17, 22, 30
Economic Development – Park Street Commercial and Civic Center Design Reserves	Pg. 27, 28
Economic Development – Redevelopment Grants (2)	Pg. 21, 27, 28

STREETSCAPE UPDATE

Since 1992, the Auburndale CRA has completed numerous streetscape improvements that have helped preserve the quaint small-town feel of Auburndale. In FY 21/22, the CRA budgeted \$100,000 towards updating these streetscapes.

Planters. Auburndale's streetscapes include large concrete planters that the CRA initially invested in installing. This past fiscal year, staff performed major maintenance on these planters by painting them, re-installing efficient irrigation, and replanting with native flowering plants that attract butterflies and other pollinators.



Old concrete planter before maintenance and replanting



*Concrete planter after maintenance and replanting with Blue Porterweed (*Stachytarpheta jamaicensis*)*

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Signage. Part of Auburndale's streetscapes also includes "Welcome" signage on knee-high brick walls at the City's gateways on Main Street and Hwy 92 and in Downtown. This past year, the CRA funded the restoration and maintenance of the signage with new lettering.

Top-right: "City Hall Plaza" sign before restoration



Above: Restored "Welcome to Auburndale" sign

Bottom-right: Restored "City Hall Plaza" sign



Sidewalk Repairs. One of the main objectives in creating the CRA Plan was to establish a pleasant pedestrian environment. The CRA continues to make sidewalk repairs within the district to enhance the pedestrian environment.



Top-left: Removal of a section of sidewalk for replacement



Above: Sidewalk repair on Palmetto Street



Bottom-left: Completed section of sidewalk around Lake Stella

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PARK STREET COMMERCIAL AND CIVIC CENTER DESIGN RESERVES

The Auburndale CRA maintains a 5-year Capital Improvement Plan to help plan and budget for projects in upcoming years that fall within the categories of redevelopment in the CRA Plan. In FY 15/16, the CRA Board identified a retail redevelopment opportunity on West Park Street, in the location of the City's Civic Center as a project for possible funding in FY20/21. The project would entail relocating the City's Civic Center, Senior Center, and Parks and Recreation office, to create a mixed-use redevelopment project on the northwest side of the Downtown Park. FY 20/21 was the first year that the CRA started budgeting a reserve account to accomplish this project. \$1,000,000 was budgeted for the "Park Street Commercial Reserves" and \$400,000 was budgeted for the "Civic Center Design" work needed to relocate the Civic Center and other ancillary activities. FY 21/22 continued to build reserves by adding an additional \$1,000,000 towards "Park Street Commercial Reserve" and an additional \$100,000 toward the "Civic Center Design". To date in FY 21/22, total funding reserved for the Civic Center project is \$2.5 million.



Aerial photo of West Park Street, the location of the current Auburndale Civic Center, Senior Center, and Parks and Recreation Office

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REDEVELOPMENT AND IMPACT FEE ASSISTANCE GRANTS

In 2014, the Auburndale CRA created two economic development incentive programs for property and business owners located in the CRA District. These incentives utilize the CRA's tax increment funding to leverage private investment that meet the goals of the CRA, which are to improve Auburndale's physical form, attract new growth and business, and create or maintain a sense of vitality.

Since 2014, the CRA has budgeted \$900,000, and expended \$522,684 through Redevelopment and Impact Fee Assistance Grants. In FY 2022, the CRA awarded two (2) Redevelopment Grants to private businesses that made significant capital improvements to their properties, in the amount \$79,450. In addition, the CRA committed \$21,919 to an additional redevelopment grant project in FY 2022 that is anticipated to be spent in FY 2023, leaving an available balance of \$455,396.88 for qualified grants in future Fiscal Years.

The two (2) businesses that received Redevelopment Grants were two redeveloped properties on Palmetto Street. One was a vacant lot that was redeveloped into a new office, and one was a daycare center that was also redeveloped into office space. Palmetto Street is the focus of a new Streetscape project that the CRA has listed in its Capital Improvement Plan in a future fiscal year.



Left: 221 Palmetto Street



Right: 217 Palmetto Street

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OTHER EXPENDITURES

Since 1992, the Auburndale CRA has completed numerous streetscape improvements, park enhancements, and other large capital expenditures that have helped preserve the quaint small-town feel of Auburndale. To maintain these improvements, a portion of the CRA's annual budget is dedicated to the upkeep and on-going maintenance of these projects. These maintenance costs include funding for two (2) Service Worker positions, vehicle repair and reimbursement, the bi-annual fertilization of almost two-hundred palm trees, the clock tower service contract, maintenance and repairs of the antique lighting, supplies for horticulture and CRA maintained landscape areas, utility expenses, sidewalk repairs, and palm tree replacement. In FY 2021/2022, these costs totaled \$222,808.

In Summary

The Auburndale Community Redevelopment has been extremely successful investing in infrastructure in the CRA area through streetscaping, park and recreational improvements, and working with business partners to increase the taxable value in the redevelopment area. Moving forward, continued investment in infrastructure projects that improve the economic vitality and living environment will encourage the taxable values to continue an upward trajectory.

A copy of the Auburndale Community Redevelopment Agency Budget, Audit, and Annual Report can be found on the City's website at www.auburndalefl.com. Please contact the Auburndale CRA at (863) 965-5530, if you have any questions in regards to redevelopment projects or grants.

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