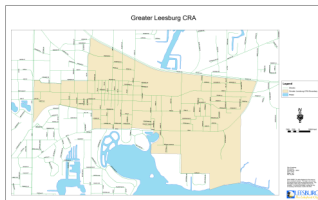


## What Is a CRA?



Greater Leesburg CRA

A community redevelopment area (CRA) is an area targeted for redevelopment and/or revitalization. The term CRA is sometimes used to identify a community development agency as well.

There is a general misconception that the CRA designation applies only to slums, and the general public may become concerned that an area of their city would be labeled as such. However, an area must only meet the criteria outlined in the Flor-

ida Statutes to be designated a CRA, provided the area does not encompass more than 80% of a municipality.

A CRA is established to prevent or eliminate slum or blighted areas for the benefit of the public health, safety and welfare, and the life of a CRA can be up to 40 years. The CRA is governed by a community redevelopment agency and improvements are planned and outlined in a community redevelopment plan. These improvements are paid for by the redevelopment trust fund. (See Page 2 for more information).

The funded improvements, such as roadway and drainage improvements, street-

scapes, landscaping, ornamental lighting, pedestrian seating, etc. are intended to leverage private investment in the CRA by creating a sense of place.

The intended end result when designating CRAs is the creation of vibrant communities. Orlando's Church Street Station and Tampa's Ybor City are two stunning examples that show CRAs can result in vitality and economic viability where there once was none.



Ybor Street, Tampa

### CRA Facts:

- AUTHORIZED BY FLORIDA STATUTES CHAPTER 163, PART IIII ([WWW.LEG.STATE.FL.US](http://WWW.LEG.STATE.FL.US))
- THERE ARE 178 IN FLORIDA
- LAKE COUNTY HAS SEVEN (7)
- THE FLORIDA REDEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION ([WWW.REDEVELOPMENT.NET](http://WWW.REDEVELOPMENT.NET)) IS DEDICATED TO THE REVITALIZATION AND PRESERVATION OF FLORIDA'S COMMUNITIES.

## What Is a Community Redevelopment Agency?

A community redevelopment agency is a public body created by a county or municipality to implement a community redevelopment plan. The agency may be comprised of government officials (i.e. the Board of County Commissioners), appointed individuals, or a

combination of the two. It consists of five (5) to seven (7) "commissioners." Commissioners receive no compensation for their services, but they are entitled to reimbursement of necessary expenses. An agency may also employ an executive director and other staff as required.

The Florida Statutes limit the powers of a community redevelopment agency to those which are directly related to redevelopment purposes. For more information see Page 3.

### Inside this issue:

WHAT IS A REDEVELOPMENT PLAN?	2
WHAT STEPS ARE TAKEN TO CREATE A CRA?	2
WHAT CAN CRAS DO?	3
WHAT IS TAX INCREMENT FINANCING?	3
LAKE COUNTY'S CRAS A LOOK AT THE NUMBERS	4

## Department of Economic Growth & Redevelopment Educational Series Community Redevelopment Areas

### What Is a Redevelopment Plan?



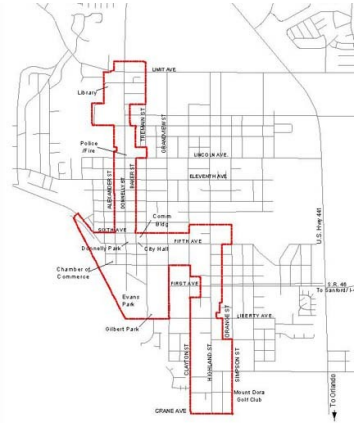
City of Clermont  
Signage & Streetscape

A redevelopment plan is a comprehensive plan that maps the boundary of the CRA, addresses the vision for the community, includes redevelopment goals and specifies revitalization projects. This is a living document that can be updated to include additional projects as initial improvements are completed and the future needs of the CRA are determined.

Redevelopment plans generally include projects such as

streetscapes (sidewalks, landscaping, etc.), roadway improvements, building renovations, new building construction, water and sewer improvements, surface water management upgrades, parking lots and garages, and neighborhood parks.

Some plans offer redevelopment incentive programs that provide for grants or loans to businesses wishing to complete aesthetic improvements to their properties.



Mount Dora  
CRA Boundary Map

**FIRST,  
A FINDING  
OF  
NECESSECITY  
MUST BE  
ADOPTED**

Resolution No. \_\_\_\_

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF\_\_\_\_, FLORIDA RELATING TO COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT; FINDING THE EXISTENCE OF BLIGHT IN AN AREA OF THE CITY; MAKING CERTAIN FINDINGS AND DETERMINATIONS; FINDING A NEED FOR CREATING A COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY; PRIVIDNIG FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVINGINA AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Sample Resolution Title  
for Adopting Finding of Necessity

### What Steps are Taken to Create a CRA?

Before a CRA can be established, a Finding of Necessity must be prepared. It provides a project boundary and details the conditions of blight that qualify an area for a CRA designation. Some of the criteria that defines blight in the Florida Statutes includes: defective or inadequate street layout, parking facilities, etc., deterioration of site improvements, failure of assessed values to increase over five (5) years, falling lease rates and higher vacancy rates compared to remainder of city or county, higher incidence of crime and EMS calls.

Once the Finding of Necessity is complete, it is brought before the governing body of the city or county who adopts a resolution that finds conditions in the area meet the criteria described in the Florida Statutes.

The next step is creation of a public body—the Community Redevelopment Agency (Agency)—to administer the community redevelopment plan. As previously mentioned, this board can be comprised of the local governing body, appointed individuals, or a combination.

The Agency then oversees the preparation of the redevelopment plan. (This may also occur concurrently with the Finding of Necessity; however, the redevelopment plan cannot be brought before the governing body until the resolution adopting the Finding of Necessity is approved). First, the redevelopment plan is reviewed by the Local Planning Agency (LPA) for compliance with the Comprehensive Plan. After approval by the LPA, the governing body (city council or board of county commis-

sioners) and the taxing authorities have an opportunity to review the plan, and a public hearing is scheduled. The governing body then approves or disapproves the plan based on conditions of the Florida Statutes, as well as public input.

Finally, following approval of the redevelopment plan, a redevelopment trust fund is established. Monies allocated to this fund are used by the Agency to finance improvements outlined in the redevelopment plan. It is in this fund that revenues from Tax Increment Financing (TIF) are deposited. See Page 3 for more information on TIF.

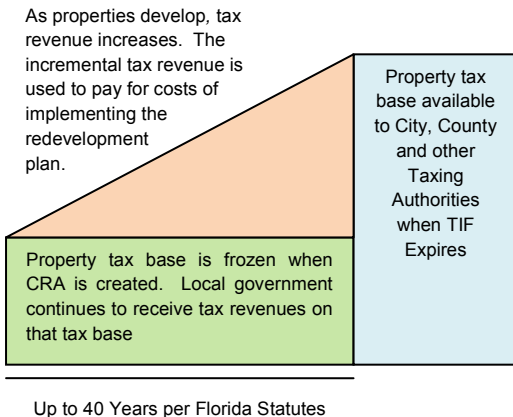
## What Can CRA's Do?

The Community Redevelopment Agency is responsible for administering and implementing the redevelopment plan. The Florida Statutes grant the Agency all powers necessary or convenient to carry out the purposes and provisions of the redevelopment plan, including the power to: distribute community redevelopment information; to host fundraising and community events, to solicit requests for proposals for redevelopment, enter into contracts; acquire property by purchase, lease, gift, grant, etc., complete redevelopment and revitalization projects as outlined in the redevelopment plan, to close, vacate, or plan roads; to enter any building or property within the CRA for inspection, surveys, appraisals, etc., to borrow money and apply for and accept advances, loans, grants or contributions, to invest any CRA funds held in reserves.. Basically, the Agency is given all power necessary to realize the vision of the CRA. The Agency is not endowed with powers reserved to the local governing body.

### The Community Redevelopment Agency CANNOT:

- Exercise the powers of eminent domain;
- Determine an area to be slum or blighted, designate an area as a community redevelopment area, or hold public hearings regarding same;
- Increase property taxes;
- Construct government buildings (unless agreed by taxing authorities or is part of community policing innovation);
- Fund general government operating expenses not related to the redevelopment plan;
- Authorize issuance of revenue bonds;
- Approve community policing innovations;
- Acquire property outside CRA;
- Act as a for profit agency;
- Manage community facilities.

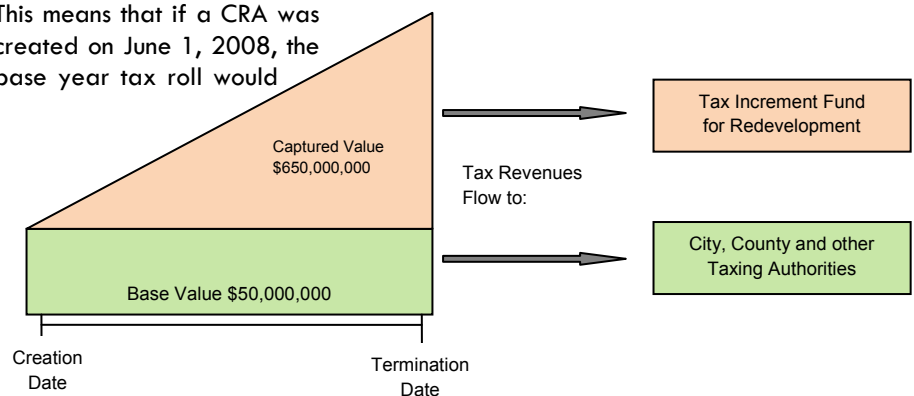
## What is Tax Increment Financing?



- (a) Ad valorem revenues levied each year within the CRA (excluding debt service millage) and
- (b) Ad valorem revenues that are generated by increases in value of existing properties and new development. This is the "captured value."

The base tax year is set for the January 1st prior to the creation of the Redevelopment Trust Fund and taxing authorities must remit tax increments by January 1st of each year.

This means that if a CRA was created on June 1, 2008, the base year tax roll would



Tax increment financing (TIF) is a tool used to fund economic development, and its use in CRAs is authorized by Chapter 163, Part III of the Florida Statutes. Both of the pictured charts represent how TIF operates.

Upon creation of the Redevelopment Trust Fund, the existing tax base for properties within the CRA are frozen. Until the expiration of the CRA, the local taxing agencies (with the exception of library, school, special assessment and water management districts) will receive tax revenues on only the frozen base value. The "increment revenues," which are determined annually, is the amount equal to 95 percent of the difference between:

be set as January 1, 2008. Deposit of TIF funds into the Redevelopment Trust Fund would then begin on January 1, 2010.

Since it takes time for TIF revenues to be generated, other financing options, such as governmental advances, developer advances, short term loans or lines of credit, would be needed in the early and intermediate years of a CRA to fund redevelopment. See Page 4 for information regarding typical TIF revenue for CRAs in Lake County.

CRAs  
AND  
TIFs  
ARE  
NOT  
PROPERTY  
TAX  
INCREASES

Department of Economic Growth & Redevelopment  
Educational Series  
Community Redevelopment Areas

PO Box 7800  
315 W. Main Street  
Tavares, Florida 32778  
Phone: 352-343-9899  
Fax: . 352-343-9480  
www.lakecountyfl.gov

## Lake County's CRAs—A Look at the Numbers

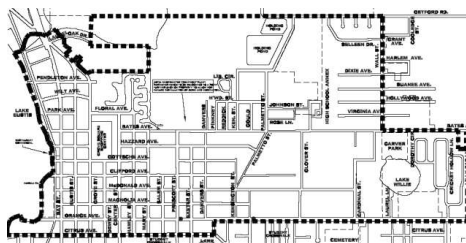
There are currently seven (7) CRAs in Lake County. The City of Mount Dora has the oldest CRA in the area. It was adopted in May of 1987. In 2007, the TIF revenue amounted to \$1,535,000. Since the city established the 420-acre CRA, they have completed projects such as roadway improvements and landscaping, directional signage, parking lot resurfacing, parking garage construction, Donnelly Park Improvements and much more.



The City of Clermont established their 157-acre CRA on May 27, 1997. In 2007, the TIF has generated \$900,175. Over the years, Clermont has utilized their funds to complete projects such as streetscape, signage and infrastructure improvements.



The City of Eustis created a 938-acre CRA in 1990. TIF revenues for Eustis last year resulted in \$518,000. Eustis has installed sidewalks, pedestrian crosswalks, and planted trees with their TIF Revenue.



Leesburg has had a CRA since December, 2001. The TIF on their 695-acre CRA generated \$619,437 in 2007. To date, Leesburg has completed roadway improvements, landscaping and pedestrian crossings.



A CRA has existed in The City of Tavares June 7, 1995. There are 396-acres within the CRA boundary. Their 2007 TIF revenues totaled \$224,255. Tavares has made roadway improvements, planted trees, installed decorative light-

ing and more with their funding, and they have big plans for the future!

