



and are energized and inspired by a statewide network of redevelopment professionals.

Technical Assistance: The FRA offers free technical assistance to a city or county on CRAs and other redevelopment issues, such as transit, financing, governance and housing. This program is called the Redevelopment Assistance Program.

Regional Representatives: FRA regional representatives are dedicated individuals who serve as liaisons between the membership and the FRA Board of Directors, educating and reaching out locally to promote the benefits of redevelopment.

Legal Resources: Free legal advice, state legislative lobbying, monitoring and advocacy, and judicial representation is available.

Public Relations: The FRA also provides free public relations and media guidance, customizable public relations tools such as PowerPoint presentations, media guides, and speaking points.

Tips for Success

Recognize all who volunteer, fund or help with your CRA or specific projects with awards, groundbreakings, opening ceremonies, press releases, memorial benches, commemorative bricks, signs and other markers. Celebrate your success!

Leverage funds — layer programs — get to know other agencies and persons who are trying to crack that same nut of redevelopment in your area.

Implement projects that will produce multiple positive outcomes, that are most visible to the most people, or helpful to the most people in your community.

Establish partnerships with any and all entities that can help you achieve success in the area. The private sector is especially important: banks, businesses, investors, property owners, chambers and non-profits.

Communicate and promote what is happening, and the benefits to the public as a matter of practice.



Invest in Your Community

Redevelopment is a wise investment, especially during tough economic times. Floridians recognize that CRAs work in their community's best interest. They develop a common vision and ensure the identity and long-term vitality of a city.

Redevelopment activities retain and create jobs. They also increase business opportunities for residents, merchants and investors.

Redevelopment efforts create unity and a sense of community among residents, as well as a wealth of culture and entertainment.

Redevelopment reduces crime rates within a community.

CRAs work to transform streetscapes, improve communities and encourage public interaction.

CRAs work to create affordable housing and homeownership opportunities for area residents.

Redevelopment preserves and showcases the history of an area, protecting the cultural heritage and renewing the spirit of pride within the community.

CRAs provide clean and safe environments through the redevelopment of storm water management systems.

Redevelopment supports the creation and rehabilitation of parks and recreation facilities that serve the needs of all residents.

CRAs have always reused, recycled and redeveloped — sustainable practices that define "green."



Building Better Communities for Florida

A Guide to Community Redevelopment Agencies



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BUILDING BETTER COMMUNITIES FOR FLORIDA

Look around your community — are there any revitalization efforts underway? Do you see the benefits of redevelopment? How does this happen? The activities and programs within a community redevelopment area (CRA) are guided by a state statute and a concerted effort by your local governments to revitalize areas that need redevelopment. Chapter 163, Part III, Florida Statutes allows a city or county to create a CRA board. This agency receives no state funds, but it reports annually to the state and local governments on its activities and budget. The board is composed of local government elected or appointed officials, but the ultimate responsibility for a CRA rests with its creating local government.

The steps to create a CRA (area or agency) are set out in the above statutes. First, the creating government sends out a notice for a public hearing

to discuss whether there is a need. Next, a board/agency and trust fund is established. A city or county may designate one or more redevelopment areas, but each area or district maintains separate trust funds, expenditures and budgets. Then a base year is established for calculating the "increment" and a community redevelopment plan is developed. This plan serves as the blueprint for all activities in the area. All expenditures must be in keeping with this plan, which addresses the unique needs of the community and provides a valuable opportunity for public-private partnerships.

The CRA is funded by "increment," or the difference between appraised property values from last year to this year in the area. The CRA trust fund receives this amount of money from each taxing entity yearly. The CRA, in accordance with the plan, leverages these funds with grants, donations, fees and loans to reverse the declining property values in that area. They are able to provide continuity of planning, leadership, vision and monetary incentives to make this happen. CRAs are unique — they work closely with the private sector and direct investment into the community.

Tools to Help You Succeed

CRAs exist for a limited time frame, and if the area does not increase in property value, there is no money in the trust fund. So, success is just not desired, it is required! How does a CRA achieve success? The Florida Redevelopment Association provides information on best practices throughout the state, and provides educational and networking opportunities for anyone interested in redevelopment in Florida. Here are some of the tools any CRA may use, many of which are available at www.redevelopment.net:

Publications: *Measuring Redevelopment's Economic Benefits: Helpful Hints from the*

FRA, a basic guide providing ways to calculate economic data for proving the success of a redevelopment program. Also, a complete list of CRAs and downtown development authorities (DDAs) are available at www.floridaspecialdistricts.org.

Annual Reports: CRAs must file several reports, as dependent special districts and as governmental agencies, to both local and state authorities. These include: 1) an annual audit; 2) annual report to taxing entities; 3) special district reporting to the Florida Department of Community Affairs; 4) an annual financial report to the Florida Department of Financial

Services ; and 5) annual budget reports to the local government that created them.

FRA Awards: A program honoring those who have created and/or led outstanding redevelopment programs and projects in their communities.

Legislative Outreach: The FRA supports local governments creating and effectively using CRAs to redevelop and revitalize their urban areas, including the use of increment revenue.

Training: Whether it is from outstanding conferences, workshops or regional events, attendees at any of the FRA sponsored educational opportunities always learn something new,

