



# High Springs CRA Extension

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Johnson

# Brief History

- Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) is a public entity created by the City of High Springs in 1986 to implement the community redevelopment activities outlined under Chapter 163 and Chapter 189, Florida Statutes. The CRA Board of Commissioners is composed of the elected city commissioners. Each year, the board elects a Chair and a Vice Chair. In 2014, the board hired an executive director to manage the CRA.
- Agency was scheduled to sunset in December 2016

# Brief History Continued

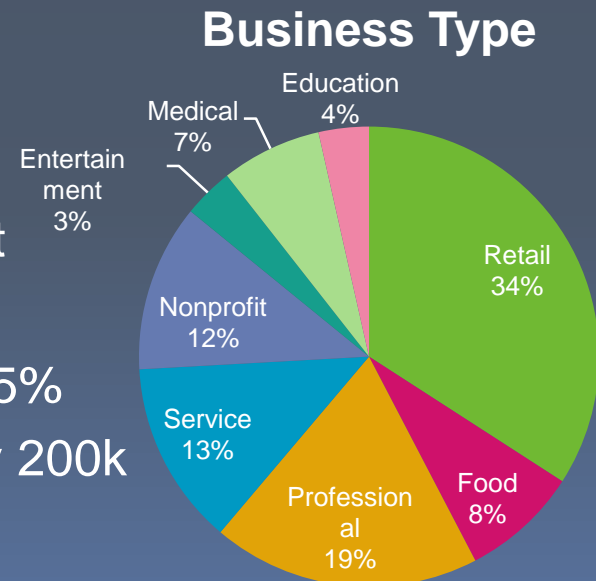
- University of Florida helped draft first CRA plan and create the CRA
- Population of around 6,000 residents



# High Springs CRA by the numbers

- Currently, there are 88 commercial and nonprofit businesses located in the district.
- The average business has 7 employees
- 27% of businesses have been located in the CRA District less than 5 years.
- 46% of businesses have been located in the CRA District 20 or more years.

- There are 95 residential units.
- The total land area is 119 acres
- The CRA is overlaid by the historic district
- Three highways US 27, US 41, US 441
- Annual property assessment increase of 5%
- Annual TIF and City contribution of nearly 200k
- Year End Appropriations of 270K





# Extension Background

- County staff prepared memorandum regarding issues in municipal CRAs (7 in County)
- City first contacted County staff in 2013 for extension
- No one knew the process
- Extension v. a new CRA
- Automatic v. Control
- New Executive Director

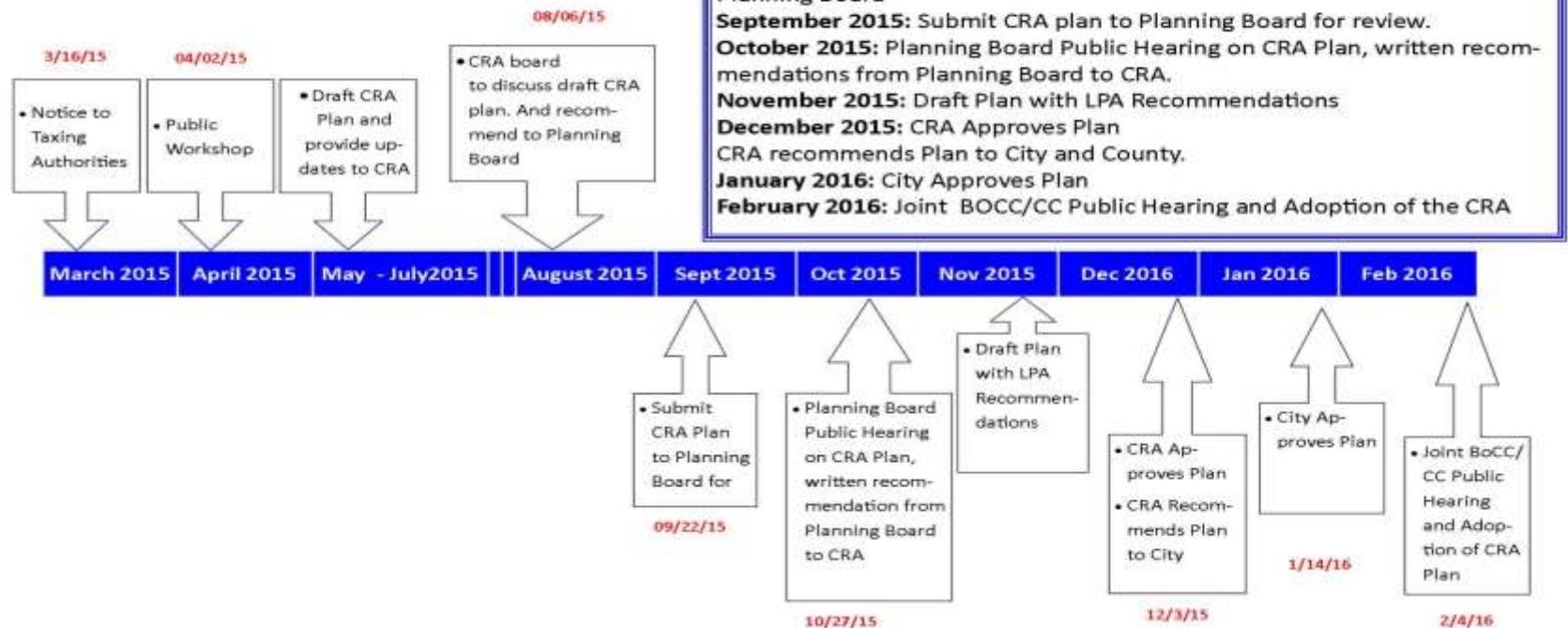


# Our Initial Timeline

## High Springs CRA Timeline

(tentative)

Revised 2/24/15



**WE GOT THIS!**



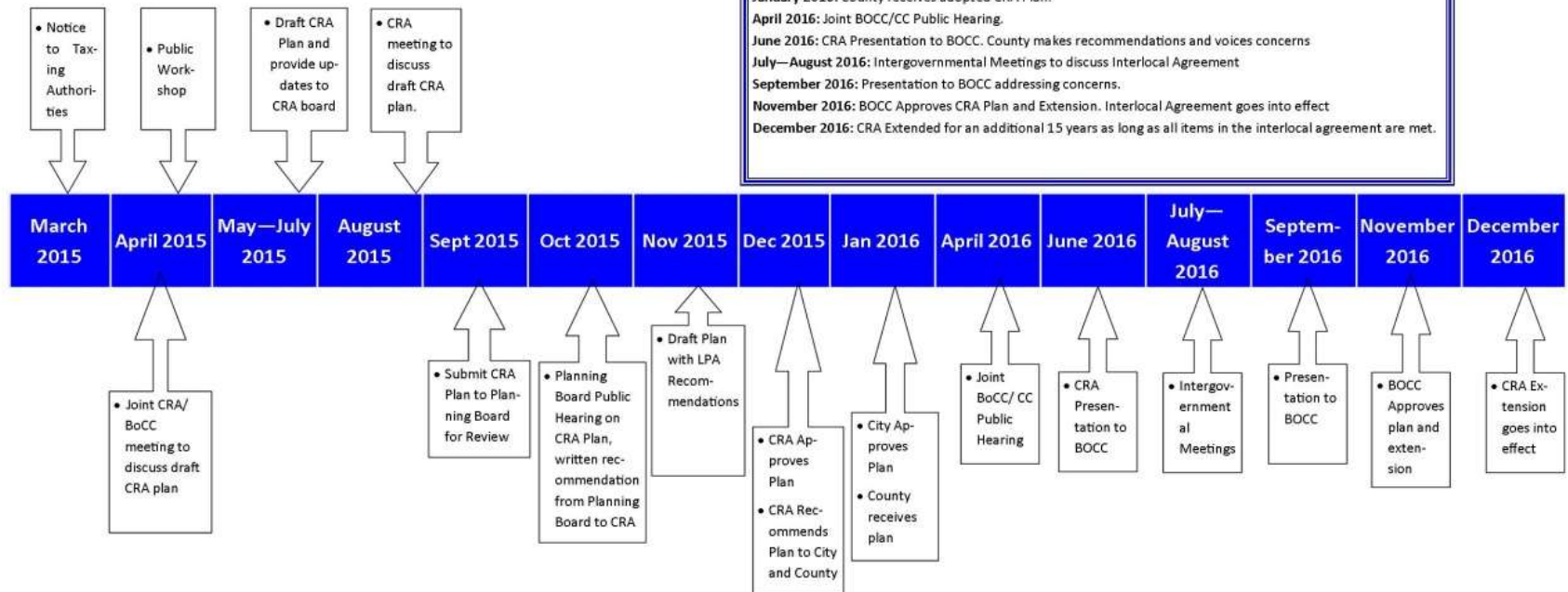


# Not so fast!!!



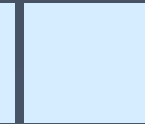
# Our Actual Timeline

## Actual High Springs CRA Extension Timeline 2015-2016 (22 months)



You thought this would be easy!!!





# Issues

1. Past mistakes in accounting, records management, and previous projects
2. The amount of money the city and the county were each contributing to the trust fund
3. Whether the High Springs CRA has successfully completed the initiatives that were originally identified.
4. Other CRAs
5. Establishing Ordinance-Trust Fund





# Issues Continued

6. Growth projections
7. Operating expenses v. administrative expenses
8. No County standards-accounting, coordinating costs
9. Economic Development/Private business v. brick and mortar/infrastructure

# Accounting and records management

1. Missing Payments

2. Forensic Audit

3. Best Practices-  
Resolution in 2017



# TIF Contributions

- Alachua County's 2016-17 millage rate was 2.5 mils higher than the City of High Springs 2016-17 millage rate.
- County paying substantial sums to other CRAs
- Equal partners
- Reset County contribution rate (City's rate)

# Repayment

- City failed to provide for deposit for City's tax increment into Trust Fund for 2002-2003, 2003-2004, 2004-2005, 2005-2006;
- Totaling \$199,824.02
- Neither party knew consequences
- First 5 years of extension-repayment period
- No pre-payment penalty
- No bonds during this period (no leverage) without County approval



# Monitoring and Evaluation

- Actual
- Philosophical





# Interlocal Agreement

- July 5, 2016
- Best way to have creative solutions to problems without answers-uncertainty and risk of litigating the issues
- Resolved all pre-existing issues
- Allows County more control –more assurances
- 15 year term with possibility of 15 more years with approval
- Premature ending of County's Obligations
  - Fails to make any payment
  - Major objectives met





WE GOT OUR EXTENSION!

...with no time to spare 😊

# Lessons Learned

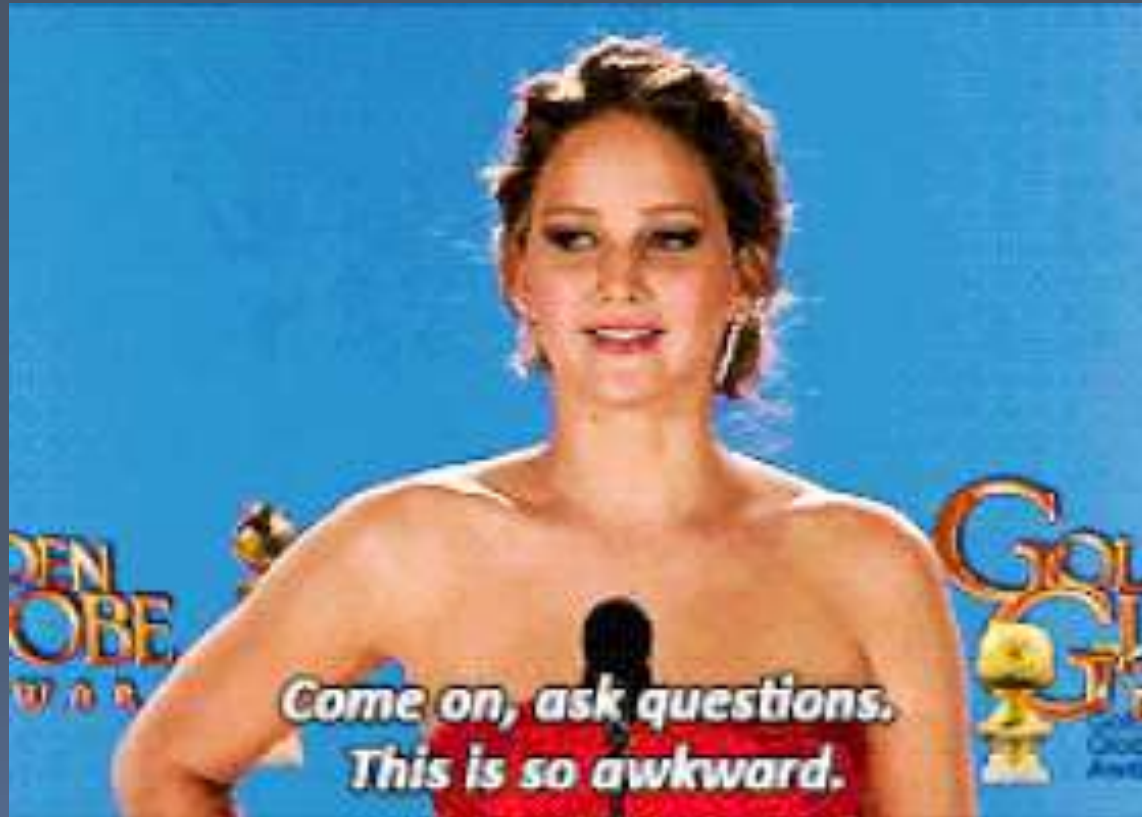


# LESSONS LEARNED

- Start early
- Bring in all departments-  
coordination
- Pick your battles
- Involve elected officials
- Don't assume
- Explain the process
- Keep the faith/Keep smiling



# Questions and Comments:





# Additional Information

- High Springs CRA Plan, Interlocal Agreement, and Resolutions - <http://highsprings.us/community-redevelopment-agency/cra-plan/>
- Extension Report – Email Amanda Arnold Rodriguez at [arodriguez@highsprings.us](mailto:arodriguez@highsprings.us)