



LAKELAND CRA
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

PEOPLE
PARTNERSHIPS
& PROGRESS '18

LEVERAGING *Connections*



Reflecting on the year, the CRA built upon the added engagement and interest generated from 2017's steadfast social media campaign. In turn, the barrage of inquiries provided our organization with more opportunities for collaboration. We were challenged with better educating our citizens and our leadership and intently guiding the discussion on improving quality of life and economic viability for residents. We realized we can't possibly do all things, and we embraced the living, breathing advocates that were helping to move the community forward.

While return on investment is the ultimate measure of the success of a dollar spent, there is no means of quantifying the relationships between a redevelopment agency and its people other than to catalog the stories and highlight the achievements of those we serve. At the foundation of the mountain of work before us, the people are the base, and collectively we intend to build on our partnerships to reach the peak of progress.

In the coming pages, we ask you to bond with the residents, entrepreneurs and leaders who thought, for the greater good, it necessary to partner with the redevelopment agency. From launching fact finding missions in adjacent cities to observe best practices, to believing a mound of dust would produce a home that will someday transform a life and a neighborhood, the people have joined the march onward and upward. We encourage you to do the same. Ad Inexplorata!

Alis Drumgo

Alis Drumgo, Interim CRA Manager



LAKELAND COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

William "Bill" Mutz
Mayor

COMMISSIONERS

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Stephanie Madden
Bill Read
Justin Troller
Phillip Walker

CITY OF LAKELAND STAFF

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City Manager

Brad Johnson
Deputy City Manager

Shawn Sherrouse
Assistant City Manager

Nicole Travis
Director of Community
& Economic Development

LAKELAND COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY STAFF

Alis Drumgo
Interim CRA Manager

Valerie Ferrell
Project Manager

Michael Smith
Project Manager

D'Ariel Reed
Project Associate

Jasmine Denson
Office Associate II

Jonathan Rodriguez
Social Media Specialist



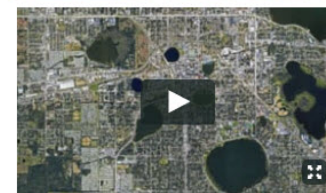
1. Chairman
Ben Mundy
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2. Vice-Chairman
Pastor Eddie Lake
midtown

3. Brian Goding
dixieland

4. Zelda Abram
downtown

5. Brandon Eady
downtown



welcome,
we're so happy you're here.

Click the image to watch a short welcome video.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U1d1K25Y>



6. Cliff Wiley
downtown

7. Dean Boring
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8. Frank Lunsford
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9. Harry Bryant
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10. Cory Petcoff
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11. Commissioner
Stephanie Madden
mayoral appointment

Inspire. Educate. Connect.

That is the vision for the Everett Taylor Urban Farm at Mass Market. Fresh, delicious food is aplenty at this special place where students, teachers, volunteers, and community come together to get their hands dirty and cultivate seeds into shared sustainable produce.



Jennifer Canady & Ahmad Taylor



The Lakeland CRA previously redeveloped a city block Mass Market, having made a significant impact in the Midtown redevelopment district. This corner, currently housing the Farm, was formerly a green space with a dilapidated playground, having ample shade and a grassy area. It needed to be more purposeful. In conversation, an opportunity for partnership arose with Lakeland Christian School, via its Research Innovation Science and Engineering (RISE) Institute. They had a school-based garden that provided agriculture curriculum, but were already outgrowing their space. The program director, Jennifer Canady, offered to partner on the use of the space with the CRA providing infrastructure and the school providing all material for the plantings and ongoing maintenance. The partnership seed was planted and immediately took hold.

The farm supports both education and community outreach objectives that help students discover solutions to real-world problems. One primary problem RISE students have been passionate about is nutrition – teaching kids to grow fresh foods makes them more likely to eat healthy foods. Mrs. Canady shares a passion for teaching and instilling students with the skills needed to make smart choices and create solutions to access those healthy choices. Affirming this passion, Canady said, “We believe that we can make a difference in the long-term health of our community with the Everett Taylor Urban Farm.”

The Everett Taylor Urban Farm is named in honor of Everett Taylor, a community leader who advocated for sustainable agriculture and urban farming in Lakeland. Mr. Taylor formerly worked with the Florida Department of Citrus and Department of Agriculture, and was also a master gardener who was passionate about mentoring children. To incorporate art in the project, Everett Taylor’s son, Ahmad Taylor, who is also a muralist, partnered with the CRA to create an expansive mural that complements the aesthetic of the site and pays homage to many iconic Lakeland sites.



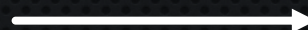
Scan the QR code to watch a short clip of our grand opening on October 26, 2017.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gby2W75Keil>

The Urban Farm at Mass Market has been transformed from a vacant lot to an oasis of color, scent and flavor. Mrs. Canady reflects on the partnership and its many bounties that contribute to give back to students and visitors alike, saying, “We grew more than 50 varieties of heirloom vegetables, dozens of fruits and spices from around the world, and welcomed more than 1,000 visitors to the Everett Taylor Urban Farm at Mass Market. The strong partnership between Lakeland Christian School and the CRA has resulted in an exciting new space to learn about how fresh food grows.”

Print Edition has QR codes so those reading can scan with their smartphones to view embedded videos.



Digital Edition has embedded videos so reader can click and view videos within document.



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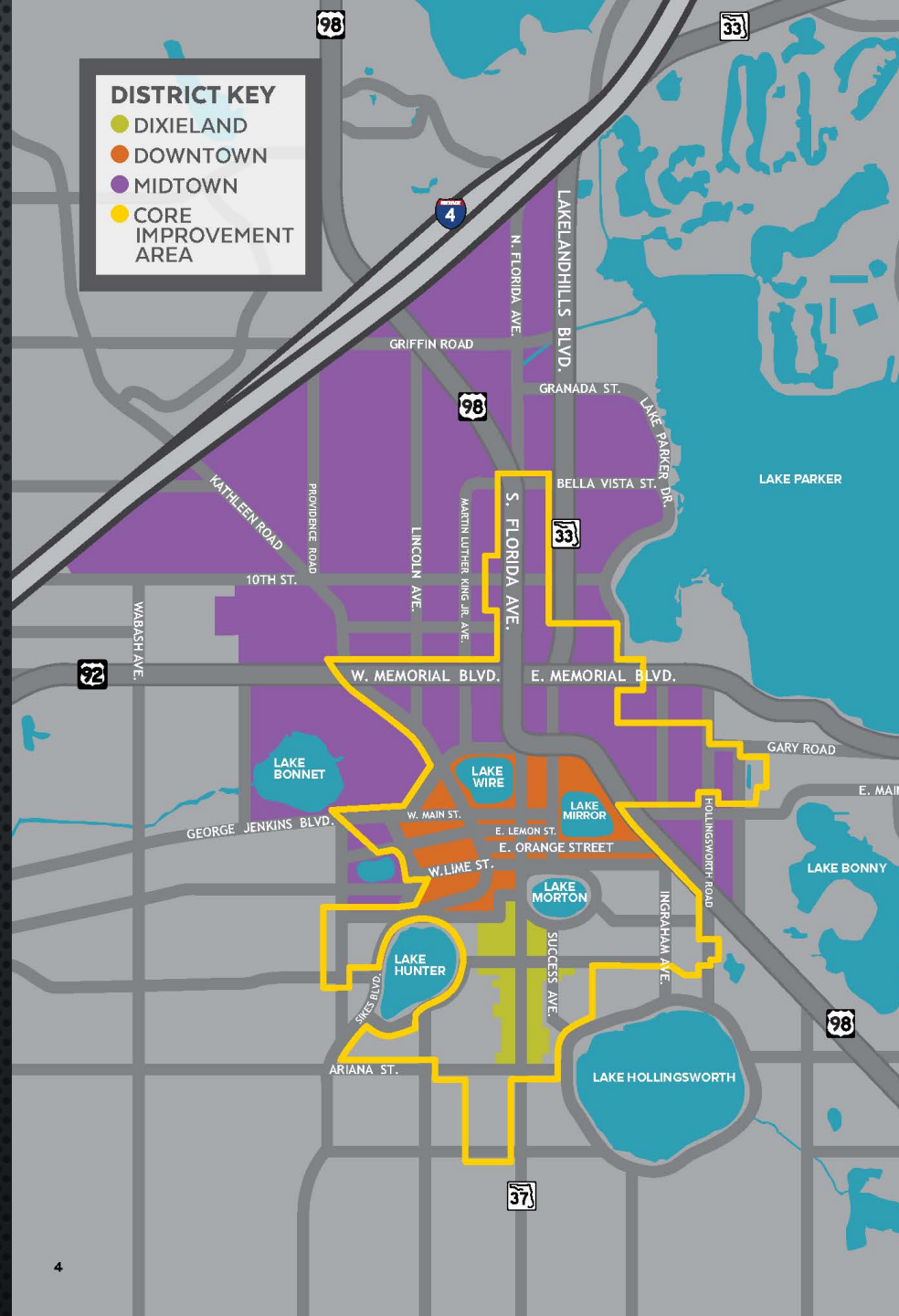
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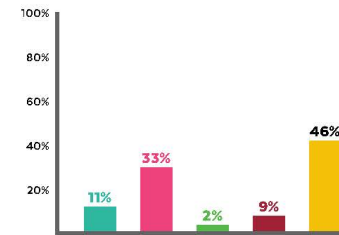
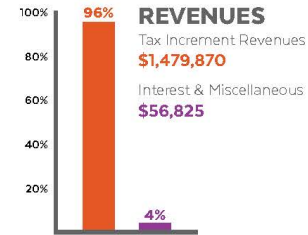
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<https://vimeo.com/240744477>

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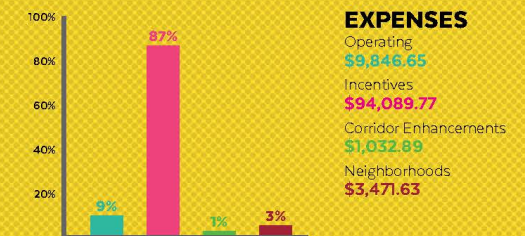
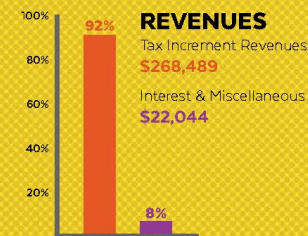
downtown

the FINANCIALS



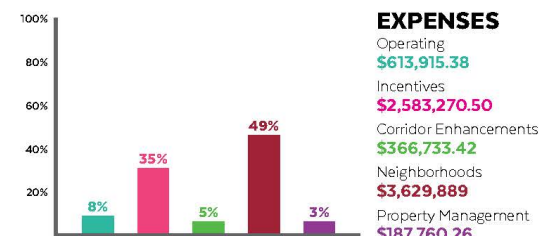
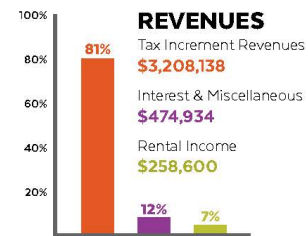
TAX INCREMENT REVENUE SOURCES	POLK COUNTY	CITY OF LAKELAND	LAMTD	TOTAL
	\$812,880	\$666,990	\$59,987	\$1,536,695

dixieland



TAX INCREMENT REVENUE SOURCES	POLK COUNTY	CITY OF LAKELAND	LAMTD	TOTAL
	\$147,479	\$121,010	\$10,874	\$279,363

midtown



TAX INCREMENT REVENUE SOURCES	POLK COUNTY	CITY OF LAKELAND	LAMTD	TOTAL
	\$1,762,203	\$1,445,934	\$131,267	\$3,339,404

*LAMTD payment received after the closing of the fiscal cycle.



December 2017
\$25,000 Allocated for
Arts & Culture Funding

Mirrorton Renderings Unveiled



April 2018
Armature Works Site
Visit & Tour

June 2018
\$250,000 Awarded for Lakeland
Food Hall Concept



August 2018
Arts & Entertainment
Focus Groups



May 2018
Crystal's World of Dance
Grand Opening



July 2018
Builder's Line of Credit
Program Approved!



#RedevelopmentWorks



The Works

In a bid to continue the redevelopment momentum around Mass Market, the CRA sponsored an exploratory visit to Tampa to generate ideas. Community leaders and entrepreneurs packed a bus for an afternoon and perused Armature Works which operated 100 years ago as a Tampa Electric streetcar storage and maintenance facility. Now, the space is a vibrant \$20 million dollar space on the Hillsborough River front. Overall, the 73,000 SF property is multi-use, but most of the attention was focused on Heights Public Market.

The Public Market is comparable in size to Haus820, Artifact Studios and the CRA's recently acquired buildings along Parker Street. Attendees were asked to consider uses, functionality and ability to integrate components of the space in Lakeland. The trip provided real insight into the operation of high performing public space, and feedback from attendees was key to the understanding of the impacts of a similar project locally. Commissioner and CRA Advisory Board Member Stephanie Madden said, "It was fun to be a part of a collective indoor-outdoor space of different food vendors and to see how they had meeting space and see how that might work with our Mass Market meeting space and allow some other creatives and chefs to try their entrepreneurial skills in a collective space here in Lakeland."

Ultimately, costs for renovating CRA property was estimated at \$5 million dollars, so the CRA Advisory Board moved to facilitate the redevelopment of a defunct downtown brewery on Lake Mirror. The entrepreneurs inspired to take on the venture, Sarah and Jon Bucklew, had seats on the bus.



Sarah & Jon Bucklew own a design/build furniture company, Seventeen20, specializing in modern industrial minimalist design. They are drawn to Lakeland's small town feel and the positive reception to young visionaries that has grown over the last five years. After witnessing the success of Laura Helm with Haus820 and Ashton Events and being prompted by CRA Advisory Board Member Cory Petcoff, the Bucklews approached the CRA to build a multi-use hub for artisans—somewhere they could put their furniture shop as well as a showroom, but where other artisans could also showcase their goods.

After visiting Armature Works on the CRA sponsored trip, they decided to pursue a modern food hall and craft brewery called The Joinery. From a design perspective, "We were thinking it'd be along the lines of The Shed in Healdsburg, California or The Source in Denver, Colorado." Ideally, The Joinery will be a space the community could come to hang out, eat, drink, and enjoy the beauty of downtown.



Sarah & Jon Bucklew

On support they've received from the CRA, the Bucklews stated, "Overall, very positive. There's definitely a learning curve to understanding the ins and outs of how the CRA works and what types of programs there are and what the rules and limitations are, but the people we've worked with at the CRA have been our advocates and we've very much appreciated their guidance and wisdom in navigating those protocols." With the lakefront addition of The Joinery, Jon feels that, "Lakeland could be every bit as known for its culture and style as similarly sized cities like Franklin, Tennessee, Asheville, North Carolina, or Bend, Oregon."

FOLLOW THE JOURNEY

Instagram: @thejoinerylkd | Website: thejoinerylkd.com
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bW75uJ6bmUQ>



The concept of Crystal's World of Dance was a grassroots initiative by a local youth advocate, Crystal Davis. Opening in 2003, Mrs. Davis saw a need for youth in the community to find a form of release, communication and sharing of self through the art of dance. Crystal's provides a unique pathway leading youth towards dance training and performance exposure, resulting in more positive community interaction and avoiding patterns of crime and violence associated with out-of-school hours.

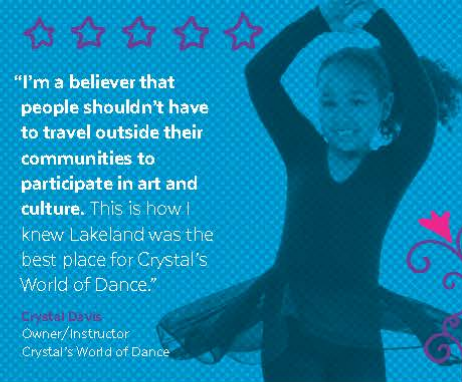
Being originally from Massachusetts, Mrs. Davis sought the variety of performing arts she was accustomed to seeing in neighborhoods and urban areas back home. She quickly discovered Lakeland has a valuable and talented community, especially within its youth, toward which her passion for mentoring is set. There was also a large opportunity for diverse dance instruction such as West African Dance and African Modern Dance.

The Dance Studio began in a small strip center in the Parker Street area of town, within the Midtown CRA district, known for a concentration of social services, crime, poverty



Scan the QR code to watch a Grand Opening recap of Crystal's World of Dance.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QSGkEC3hs5o>



"I'm a believer that people shouldn't have to travel outside their communities to participate in art and culture. This is how I knew Lakeland was the best place for Crystal's World of Dance."

Crystal Davis
 Owner/Instructor
 Crystal's World of Dance

and a dense homeless population. Quickly outgrowing the space there, the Studio had to split its time and moved to two of the City's facilities: Simpson Park Community Center and the Coleman Bush Building. As Crystal's continued to grow and flourish, the community became aware of the unique dance instruction being offered, but enrollment was constrained due to availability and space limitations. In 2016, the Lakeland CRA staff proposed a solution which would eventually lead Crystal's World of Dance right back to the neighborhood in which it began 15 years prior. A dilapidated 1920s building, with significant structural issues and a collapsing roof, was reimagined into a tastefully designed and flexible dance studio.

Opening in May 2018, Crystal's World of Dance prides itself with providing affordable classes and programs to make learning accessible on all levels and offering instruction in Ballet, Tap, Jazz, Modern, Hip Hop and West African Dance. The classes offered are not only technical in nature but also are designed to foster confidence, discipline, creativity, as well as problem solving techniques. The partnership between the Lakeland CRA and Crystal's World of Dance has been extremely positive. Mrs. Davis reflects on her experience and shares that it has been empowering and a valuable investment, not only into the business, but into the community and youth as well.





WELCOME *home*

Two years ago, Lincoln Square was nothing more than five acres of open field next to Lincoln Avenue Academy, a top International Baccalaureate program and the #1 elementary school in Polk County. Last year, the redevelopment housing project was nothing more than a list of potential buyers. Over the course of a year, the landscape changed significantly as every home pre-sold prior to breaking ground, and droves of former residents of the Paul A. Diggs and Webster Park neighborhoods realized an opportunity to return to the neighborhood they once thought was in decline. Today, it is the prototypical architecture that defines the streetscape and has already seen the first residents begin to move in.

One of the first new residents is Heather Celoria, an ordained minister, marketing manager and third generation Lakeland resident who serves on the City's Advisory Committee for Affordable Housing. Heather wanted to move into Lincoln Square to become part of a community that she indicated 'has a little more intentionality.' She lives with her two college-aged children and has enjoyed meeting the new neighbors. When she described her partnership with the CRA she said, "It was a little bit of a leap of faith to go through the process on having a home built in Lincoln Square, but we are thrilled with the quality of the home and the support that we received from CRA through this process."



"Lakeland is doing great things! It has been fun to see the growth of Lakeland as a community that values diversity, arts and culture, and business investment. I think this is a strong investment in Lakeland that will pay dividends in our quality of life."

— Heather Celoria, Home Buyer



Scan the QR code to learn more about the impact of Lincoln Square project.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zsldlpE9Bmo&t=13s>

Incoming residents have called Lincoln Square a life-altering opportunity. Buyers are paying \$125,000 despite the appraisal prices of \$150,000. With the CRA not being profit-driven like a private developer, the increased benefits are passed along to buyers after a ten year homestead. Families are already talking about sending their children to college or starting future businesses. Heather added, "Lakeland is doing great things! It has been fun to see the growth of Lakeland as a community that values diversity, arts and culture, and business investment. I think this is a strong investment in Lakeland that will pay dividends in our quality of life."



Curb Appeal

Lakeland residents Kirk and Lavina Culmer sought some added curb appeal and couldn't afford to renovate on their own. They contacted the CRA, and became one of fifteen Fix-It-Up grant recipients. When asked of the process, the Culmers stated, "The process was prompt and well organized. The contractors and painters finished the work in a timely manner. The CRA team was great navigating us through the program. We're truly thankful, blessed, and proud of our home." Overall, the CRA spent just over \$160k on such projects improving the curb appeal and quality of life in target areas.

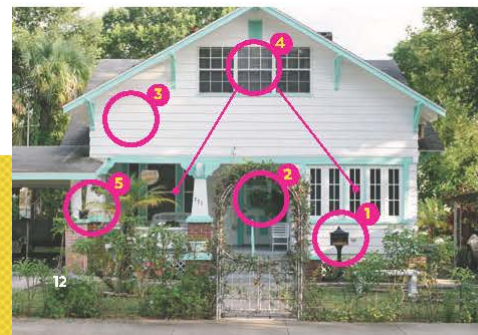


What all was done?

1. Installed mailbox
2. Replaced door and modified door frame
3. Pressure washed, repaired damaged wood and painted house
4. Replaced 14 leaking windows
5. Painted front porch and rails

Not pictured

6. Repaired rear door
7. Installed connecting chain-link fence



On Tap

FALL 2019

Where the backyard fun happens, and you don't need an invitation because **everyone is welcome!**

On a former used car lot at the corner of Massachusetts Avenue and Parker Street, an eager community awaits the buzzing of construction crews to begin work on The Yard on Mass. The Yard will bring a new food truck park and beer garden to the heart of the Midtown redevelopment district. The location anchors the CRA's Mass Market complex and will add a different flavor of retail commercial investment in the Massachusetts Avenue corridor. Founders Craig Morby and Jennifer Batts share their experience in Lakeland real estate and hugely successful business venture in Boulder, Colorado that led them toward the decision to open a food truck park in Central Florida.

There is much more to do before the beer taps are flowing! Construction drawings will be finalized and groundbreaking is expected in late spring 2019. The partnership between the CRA and The Yard on Mass team has been phenomenal, so expect to see more exciting news coming soon!



"This is a community that deserves investment. We're here to invest in our community. We want to be partners with them. And this is kind of our gift back to the community that raised my husband and I. My kids were born here."

- Jennifer Batts, Co-Founder

"Our city has become more diverse as we have grown and it continues to be a great place to live. Our downtown has transformed, we have more retail and restaurant choices, entertainment venues, and we'll never stop being the convenient place to live between Tampa and Orlando. Many thanks to the CRA for their work that allows this growth to continue and thrive. Our experience with the CRA has been nothing but top notch so far. Our calls are always returned, requests promptly answered, and negotiations have been fair. The CRA staff feels as much like friends as they do business partners."

- Craig Morby, Co-Founder



Scan the QR code to watch the logo release for The Yard On Mass.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HlSMhHmHuSw>

QUESTIONS?

Sweet,

we have the answers to some of the most commonly posed questions right here



Q. How does the CRA fit into the City of Lakeland's overall vision?

A. The CRA districts encompass the City's central core and plays a critical role in energizing commercial areas as well as creating stable neighborhoods. We assist the City in accomplishing its vision statement: *to create a vibrant, innovative, culturally inclusive, world-class community.* We are the implementation piece of the City's strategic goals in pre-determined target areas.

Q. Did the CRA's social media accounts change?

A. Yes, while we will continue to inform and engage in CRA-related projects, we also want to highlight collaborative efforts with Code Enforcement, Housing, Building Inspection, Economic Development, Planning and GIS! Together, we're Lakeland CED (Community & Economic Development), and it takes the entire team to eliminate blight and move neighborhoods forward. Give us a follow if you haven't already.

Q. Does the Redevelopment Plan ever change?

A. If the needs of the community change, the redevelopment plan can change through a defined public process. The City of Lakeland's redevelopment plans are old, but the issues are still relevant and we are continuing to implement projects outlined in the plans.

Q. How can I get involved?

A. **ENGAGE:** follow us on social media and be a part of the conversation! We want your input and feedback on our projects. **SHARE:** help us raise awareness about our projects and incentives by sharing content and spreading the word with those in your community. **CONNECT:** if you have ideas or proposals for redevelopment in the districts, feel free to contact us to explore the possibilities, or if you know someone please refer them to us! It takes a team effort to revitalize a community. You are a part of the team!

Q. How does one contact the CRA?

A. Well you can always start by emailing us at lcra@lakelandgov.net or give us a call Mon-Fri. 8 am-5 pm at (863) 834-5200. Most of our information is available on our website at lakelandcra.net. Feel free to private message us on social media. We look forward to answering any questions you may have!