

COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

NW 7TH AVENUE

ANNUAL REPORT 2018 - 2019

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N.W. 7th AVENUE COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

FY 2018-19 ANNUAL REPORT

(October 1, 2018 to September 30, 2019)



Mae Bryant, PhD
Chairwoman



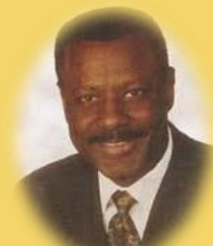
Eugene Lomando
Vice-Chair



Mack Samuel
Secretary



Charesse Chester



Lesly Prudent

“The N.W. 7th Avenue CRA is perfectly positioned to set the tone and be an active partner in the revitalization of one of the most significant corridors in Miami-Dade County.”

-Dr. Mae Bryant, Chairwoman

INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to Chapter 163.356(3) of the Florida Statutes, the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) of the NW 7th Avenue Community Corridor must file with its governing body (Miami-Dade County) on or before March 31st of each year, a report of its activity for the preceding fiscal year. This report includes a complete financial statement setting forth the assets, liabilities, income and operating expenses as of the end of the prior fiscal year (September 30, 2019).

This report will be available for review in the Miami-Dade County Clerk's Office and online at:

www.miamidade.gov/global/government/boards/northwest-7th-avenue-cra.page

CRA BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

In accordance with the Community Redevelopment Act of 1969, the NW 7th Avenue Corridor Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) was established by Miami-Dade County on March 16, 2004, when the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) adopted Resolution R-293-04, declaring the area to be slum and blighted, and authorized the County Manager to prepare a plan for the redevelopment of the area. Resolution R-780-04 and Ordinance 04-124, adopted by the BCC on June 22, 2004, approved the redevelopment plan and established the Agency's Trust Fund respectively. The CRA completed its fourteenth year of operation in Fiscal Year 2018-19. The CRA lies within County Commission Districts 2 and 3, represented by Commissioner Jean Monestime and Audrey Edmonson.

The N.W. 7th Avenue has historically been an important commercial corridor in North Miami-Dade. Prior to the construction of Interstate I-95, Route 441, which includes all of NW 7th Avenue, was the main North-South highway connecting Miami to Atlanta. Although undergoing a period of decline in the 1960's and 1970's, N.W. 7th Avenue is poised to play an important role in the future of the Miami-Dade regional economy.

The Community Redevelopment Area Market Area — the 3-mile radius surrounding the Area, is a major regional sub-market. Over 483,000 people live within the Agency Market Area — if it was its own city, it would be the second largest City in Florida. The Area's Market Area is home to just over

9,596 business establishments, employing over 120,000, representing 12% of the County's businesses and 13% of its jobs base. 201,717 employed workers



live within the Market Area, representing 17% of the County's employed workers. Total annual household income in the Area's Market Area is over \$7.5 billion, or 13% of Miami-Dade County's.

The Area and its Market Area have continued to grow since the recession, expanding business establishments by 9%, paid employees by 20%, and total business payroll by 42%. Its growth has surpassed the County, which grew businesses by 10%, employees by 15%, and total payrolls by 28%. The Area is home to a diverse mix of 396 primarily small businesses, which employ over 2,800 persons, in retail, education, automobile dealers, parts and repairs, health care, and electronic and precision equipment repair and maintenance. Recent new businesses in the Area, some developed with the help of funding received from the Agency, include a high-end print company capable of 3D printing, personal health care products manufacturer, law firm, a national chain 200-room hotel and *Magnus Media*, singer Marc Anthony's global music production and talent management agency.

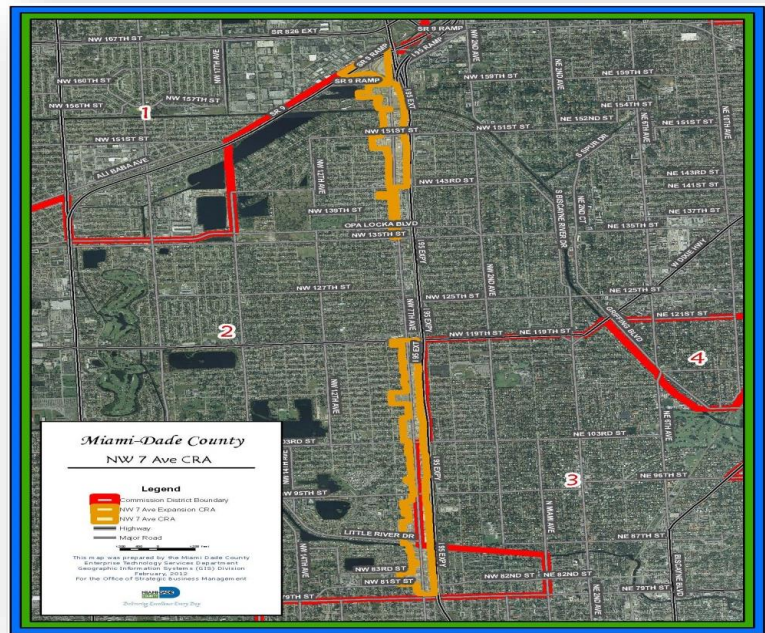
The CRA is a legal entity, separate, distinct and independent from the BCC and tasked with eliminating slum and blight within the approved redevelopment area. Redevelopment endeavors are implemented through a public body, which is known as a community redevelopment agency. Community redevelopment agencies have the ability to utilize a designated funding tool, known as Increment Financing, which is available to cities and counties for redevelopment activities through the use of property tax revenues. Increment Financing is used to leverage public funds to promote private-sector activity in the denoted area or areas.

As we look ahead, the Plan will be reviewed and updated as the community changes and new projects are brought to the forefront of the Agency.

CRA BOUNDARY MAP/REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

During fiscal Year 2005, the agency negotiated a development agreement that would implement the primary redevelopment project, identified in the Plan as being a new automotive retail marketing, sales and distribution center, commonly referred to as the "AutoMall." On December 7, 2005, the developer, Potamkin development I-95 LLC, decided to discontinue negotiations.

April 4, 2011, the BCC adopted resolution 223-11 finding the proposed expansion area of the CRA to be blighted. The expansion area is generally bounded by the City of Miami Gardens on the north, City of North Miami on the south, on the west by the westernmost property lines of the parcels that abut the westerly right-of-way along NW 7th Avenue and on the east by Interstate 95. On September 6, 2012, the BCC adopted Resolution 661-12, accepting an amended redevelopment plan for the agency, and approving the expansion of the boundaries.



In order to assist the CRA with implementation of its Redevelopment Plan, the Agency released a series of requests for proposals in 2018 seeking the services of a grants coordinator; economic development coordinator and business engagement coordinator.

As we look ahead, the Plan will be reviewed and updated as the community changes and new projects are brought to the forefront of the Agency.

CRA BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

In accordance with Ordinance 06-18, adopted by the BCC on February 7, 2006, the NW 7th Avenue Corridor Board of Commissioners shall consist of not fewer than five or more than nine commissioners. In accordance with Ordinance 11-55, also adopted by the BCC on July 11, 2011, the NW 79th Street CRA Board of Commissioners shall consist of not fewer than five or more than nine commissioners.

On October 2, 2018, BCC Ordinance, O-17-100, appointed Dr. Mae Bryant, Gene Lomando and Mack Samuel to their third and fourth terms, respectively. The same Ordinance, sponsored by then BCC Commission Chair Jean Monestime (District 2), appointed Lesly Prudent as its newest Member. On October 2, 2018, Chairman Monestime appointed Charesse Chester to the Board (R#1038-18) for a second term. On September 8, 2019, due to other competing commitments both locally and abroad, Lesly Prudent resigned from the Board. Therefore, as of September 30, 2019, four (4) of the nine seats were filled.

The CRA Commissioners during this reporting period were: Dr. Mae Bryant (Chairwoman), Eugene Lomando (Vice-Chairman), Mack Samuel (Board Secretary), and Charesse Chester (Board Marketing Rep).

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFFING

The NW 7th Avenue Corridor CRA Board was staffed on a part-time basis by Miami-Dade County (County) professional staff: Jorge M. Fernandez, Jr. and Chimene Y. Graham of the County's Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Legal assistance was provided by the County Attorney's office through Assistant County Attorney Terrence A. Smith.



Several local, small businesses are engaged by the CRA to provide valuable support services in support of the Redevelopment Plan. Economic Development planning and implementation services are provided by UrbanCentric Analytics, Inc., led by Kevin T. Greiner. The grants administrator is Neighbor and Neighbors Association, Inc. (NANA) operated by Leroy Jones. The contracted firm responsible for coordinating business engagements experiences and the annual culture festival is the Miami Urban Contemporary Experience (MUCE), which is owned and operated by Ashlee Thomas and Bart Marvil.



The services provided by the economic development coordinator include update of an Action Plan based on the Board's goals; real-time data collection and trend analysis, stakeholder engagement, implementation of the Plan, coordination with the CRAs grants and business engagement firms and oversight of the CRAs annual Uptown Avenue 7 Festival which welcomes well over 2,000 participants.

During FY 2013-14, the CRA adopted its new action Plan and began implementing several elements from the Action Plan, including re-branding of the CRA, marketing the re-branded CRA to businesses, and re-tooling one of the grant/incentive programs designed to assist businesses within the area, as well as attract additional businesses to the area.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

The Agency's by-laws establishes the composition, purpose, powers, meetings notice requirements and administrative procedures. The by-laws, that established operating guidelines for the Citizens Board of Commissioners, were adopted by the CRA Board on July 13, 2009.

INTERLOCAL COOPERATION AGREEMENT

On October 3, 2009, the BCC adopted Resolution R-1360-09 delegating the CRA certain redevelopment powers which had previously been vested in the BCC. Some of the terms of the Interlocal Cooperation Agreement (Interlocal) were:

- o Administrative expenses for the CRA are capped at 20% of each year's budget.
- o The County is to be reimbursed annually for the cost of staff support, advertising, legal, publications and consultants.
- o Approval by the BCC is required for amendments to the CRA Redevelopment Plan.
- o Approval by the BCC is required for new indebtedness.
- o One or more members of the BCC or other Miami-Dade County representative may be appointed to serve on the CRA Board of Commissioners.
- o Annual budgets and progress reports must be submitted to the County. Except for debt service payments on existing obligations financed with tax increment revenues, no funds may be spent from the Trust Fund until the annual budget has been approved by the BCC.
- o Community involvement and citizen input shall be obtained in the planning of redevelopment activities.
- o An independent audit by a Certified Public Accounting firm is required annually and can be accessed at the following Miami-Dade County government website: <https://www.miamidade.gov/finance/library/CAFR2018-complete.pdf>.

TAX BASE GROWTH

The goal of the NW 7th Avenue CRA is the expansion of the property value base of the area to the maximum extent possible, through re-development strategies consistent with its adopted Redevelopment Plan and Action Plan.

The base year (2003) taxable value for the original CRA Area is \$131,292,949. The base for the expansion Area (2012) is \$493,525,205.

The 2018 Preliminary Tax Roll within the CRA area as reported by the Miami-Dade Property Appraiser is \$198,957,885 reflecting an 85 percent increase over the base year taxable value. The 2018 values reflect a 7.2% increase from 2017 values (\$188,959,114). The CRA's FY 2018-19 budget of \$2,717,124, was approved by the Agency on October 10, 2018 (Resolution CRA-11-2018) and by the Board of County Commissioners on January 23, 2019 (Resolution No. R-55-19). FY 2018-19 TIF revenues totaled \$588,041. Of this amount, \$171,931 was from the Unincorporated Municipal Service Area (UMSA) tax increment contribution and \$416,110 from County countywide funds.



FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Detailed below is a Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balances.

Fiscal Year Ended September 30, 2019	
REVENUES	
Tax Increment	\$588,041
Interest Income	\$67,643
Total Revenues	\$655,684
EXPENDITURES	
General Government	\$146,430
Debt Service	0
Capital Outlay	0
Total Expenditures	\$146,430
Excess/Deficiency of Revenues	
Over Expenditures	0
Other Financing Source	
Operating Transfers In	0
Operating Transfers Out	0
Total Other Financing Sources	0
Net Change in Fund Balance	\$507,122
Beginning Fund Balance	\$2,153,080
Ending Fund Balance	\$2,660,202

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The CRA did not complete any affordable housing initiatives during this reporting year. However, discussions are underway to explore the feasibility of partnering with an entity via a public-private joint venture.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

The CRA Board began discussions centered around developing streetscape standards for businesses along the Corridor, re-vamping the grant programs and securing a parcel for possible development. The previous update of the "Action Agenda," continued to guide the Board's policy and programmatic decisions.

While the initial goals will remain the same: build the CRA's TIF income; develop alternative funding for CRA programs and investments; develop alternatives to the State Enterprise Zone program; and support expansion and growth of local CRA businesses, the update to the Action Agenda, placed emphasis on identifying and completing a signature project or acquiring a parcel of land for development and continued brand recognition (i.e., streetscape standards and continued sponsorship of a cultural business/community festival).

CRA GRANT PROGRAMS

Fiscal Year 2018-19, the Board continued discussions with local businesses about the effectiveness of the CRA's grant programs through its monthly meetings and business engagement series coordinated by the MUCE. The Board approved a budget for a re-tooled grants program with a new category for streetscape mural painting. During FY 2018-19, the CRA amended the program to lower the maximum grant award amount and will award up to 10 grants.

The **Commercial Improvement Program** (CIP) was created to assist commercial and industrial property owners in upgrading their properties. The CRA budgeted \$200,000 for the program in FY 2018-19. Eligible improvements for the grant program include painting, roof repairs, lighting, exterior signage, window and door replacement, awnings, canopies and shutters, and storefront restoration among other improvements.

In 2016, a CIP grant was awarded to rehabilitate and re-open a Holiday Inn® hotel in the Redevelopment Area located at 7927 N.W. 7th Avenue.

After several years of construction and major re-hab, the 174-room hotel is scheduled to open January/February of 2019. During FY 2018-19, the CRA amended the program to lower the maximum grant award amount from \$100,000 to \$50,000 in order to assist more businesses in need of supplemental funding. For FY 2019, a maximum of four grants will be provided.



For the upcoming fiscal year, the CRA has signaled a desire to expand transform the CIP into a true commercial and rehabilitation/beautification grants program; with expanded categories of funding and targeting specific industries. For example, there may be more need for infrastructure and neighborhood improvement program grants than in prior years. In addition, the currently-in-progress Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Roads project, SR 934/NE/NW 79 Street, which traverses the Redevelopment Area, will improve capacity deficiencies/traffic operations and multimodal use along the corridor in order to address the historical congestion, future travel demand and address safety conditions.

The **Business Innovation and Improvement Grant** (BIIG) was created in an effort to further the economic viability of established small businesses in the redevelopment area. The BIIG makes capital available to fund the purchase of equipment and inventory, or for advertising and marketing. Technical assistance is also available to grant recipients, in order to assist businesses to become more efficient and competitive. The CRA budgeted \$100,000 for the program in FY 2018-19 and will make up to 10 grants available in the next fiscal year, with a maximum of \$10,000 each.



CRA ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS/WORK PROGRAM



The CRA continues crafting opportunities which best serve the businesses and residents of the CRA. A signature project, consistent brand messaging/signage and acquiring a parcel of land for development remain at the forefront. Additionally, the CRA initiated a business engagement series to activate more business participation year-round. This tactic yielded some success. The CRA will be looking to implement additional funding vehicles and enhanced business support for the existing and new businesses along the 7th Avenue corridor. Fiscal Year 2018-19 saw the continued restructuring and active implementation of the CRA's core redevelopment programs and outreach to its client businesses.

Below is a listing of accomplishments from October 2018 to September 2019:

- Developed RFPs for an Economic Development Coordinator, Grants Administrator and Street Fair Cultural Festival vendor (October 2018);
- Hosted the 2nd annual Uptown Avenue 7 Culture Festival (November 2018);
- Engaged the services of Florida International University, School of Architecture to design a uniform streetscape design program for the CRA to incorporate design standards for businesses interested in receiving CRA funding through the grant programs (February 2019);
- Approved the first marketing phase of the Streetscape Manual (March 2019)
- Revamped the major CRA grant program (April 2019);
- Expanded the CRA's electronic Business Directory (June 2019);
- Continued partnership with BankUnited for new loan products, requiring no credit scores, limited credit history and expedited processing, for grant recipients; and
- Continued providing support to more than two dozen existing and new grantees, businesses already in the CRA and those desirous of relocating into the CRA Area.



Items targeted for the upcoming Fiscal Year:

- Acquire parcel for public-private affordable housing, co-work, retail development deal;
- Expand the CRA's Business Development Training Series;
- Award up to \$500,000 in grant funding for targeted businesses within the CRA Enterprise Zone
- Partner with local Chambers and workforce agency to sponsor Job Fairs
- Sponsor 4th annual culture festival



CLOSING SUMMARY

The Redevelopment Area borders Interstate 95 on its east edge; one of the most heavily traveled sections of interstate highway in the country. The Redevelopment Area is also extensively served by every mode of transportation, making it Miami's, and one of Florida's, most connected and accessible corridors.

For the second straight year, the tax roll in the Area increased at a greater percentage than the County-wide growth; which indicates that there continues to be a steady pace at which the prior CRA businesses have remained and new ones have chosen to relocate into the Area. The Redevelopment Area provides a considerable opportunity for development and job creation. The more than 70 acres of vacant, underutilized and affordable property within the Redevelopment Area can accommodate a minimum of 1.3 million square feet of new development which can support a minimum of 3,200 new jobs. As a result, the CRA continues to attract significant, new investment, as a growing number of businesses and developers understand the value of the CRA's location, access, strong local business community and innovative incentive programs developed by the CRA.

The CRA has the potential to benefit from increases in residential and commercial developments throughout Miami-Dade County, especially in the urban areas adjacent to the CRA. The CRA will continue to benefit as this development increases property values throughout the Area. The continued redevelopment of the Corridor will fuel future growth and continue to reward the CRA and County. The primary challenges faced by the CRA is to continue attracting new businesses into the Area and the continued search for a development signature project with the right mix of business, retail, housing especially as property value continue to rise in the Area.

- **Jorge M. Fernandez**

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