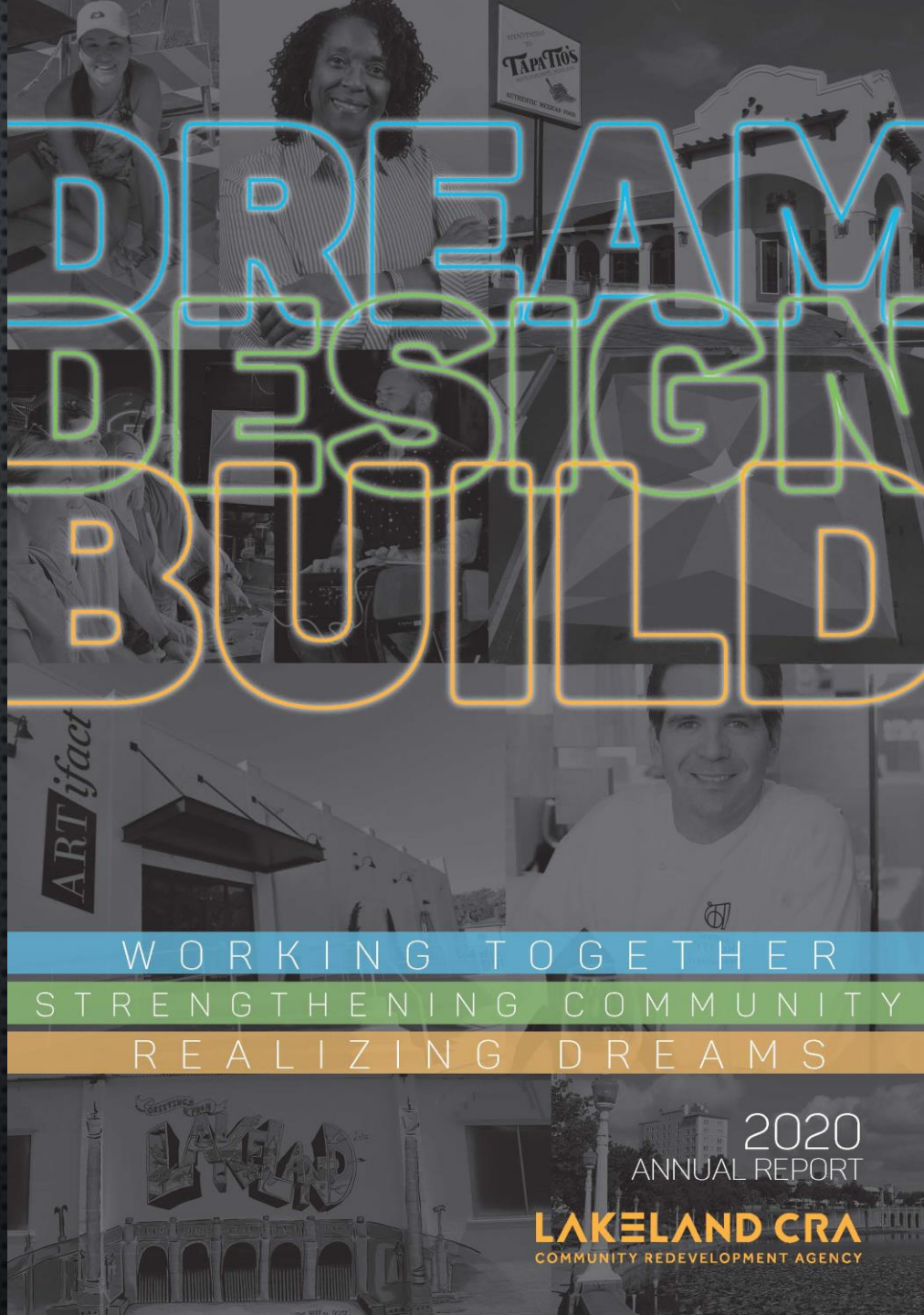


Front  
Cover



## 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

PHOTO CREDIT:  
**TOM HAGERTY**

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**LAKELAND CRA**  
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Back  
Cover

**Working Together.  
Strengthening Community.  
Realizing Dreams.**

JOIN US

CRA Advisory Board

**1st Thursday at 3:00pm**  
City Commission Conference Room

City Commission Meetings

**1st and 3rd Mondays at 3:00pm**  
City Commission Chambers

Lakeland Downtown  
Development Authority

**3rd Thursdays at 8:00am**  
City Commission Conference Room



228 S Massachusetts Ave • Lakeland, Florida 33801 • 863.834.5200





The year 2020 was an anomaly to say the least. The impact was similarly felt globally and locally, and that offered the unique opportunity for unity through shared experiences. We focused on what we could control, and we kept plowing ahead. Mirrorton Apartments, in downtown Lakeland, is now home to its first residents due to the CRA's private-public-partnership with Framework Group. The 305-unit development, valued at \$60 million, will reset the downtown rental market. In addition, Summit Consulting invested \$50 million to build 135,000 square feet of office which will help Lakeland retain top talent beginning with Summit's 450 high-wage earners. Within a stone's throw of Summit, downtown Lakeland also welcomed The Joinery, Lakeland's first food hall, thanks to a \$250,000 investment from the CRA.

After years of community planning, the CRA constructed a one-mile shared use bike and pedestrian path. Envisioned as an amenity for lakeside residents, the CRA partnered with the Polk County School Board (PCSB) to create an art walk featuring student interpretations of the history of the City of Lakeland, and now, the path is a destination for the creative and curious alike.

To address on-going housing affordability issues and attract partners, the CRA committed to a \$250,000 annual set aside over the next decade for Midtown. In addition, an Affordable Housing Infill Land Bank Program rolled out. The program establishes a clear and streamlined process to help developers acquire and construct affordable units on vacant land held by the CRA and City.

Closing the year, the CRA solidified a partnership with Dr. Sallie Stone whose dream was to provide a space for professional development, training and education geared towards underrepresented populations. The CRA will build a new 4,700 square foot facility that aligns with the Mass Market area plan which comes closer to fruition with every project in the area.

2020 taught us quite a bit. We learned that redevelopment and resilience go hand-in-hand. We learned that CRA Staff members may not be essential workers but are critical to continuity. We learned that, despite the traditional need to lock arms to show solidarity, we can still impact lives standing six feet apart because energy resonates.

**ALIS DRUMGO**  
CRA MANAGER



**EDDIE LAKE**  
CHAIRMAN, CRA ADVISORY BOARD

Although 2020 has been a year marked with extreme ambiguity and strain, the Lakeland CRA has been a light in the midst of the wandering darkness of difficulty and stress. We are extremely proud of promoting unity within the Lakeland CRA districts. In addition, we are excited about aiding home owners and small business owners to realize their dreams and reach their goals. Together we create a force of passion and progress that shatters barriers. In real time, we get to walk through the challenges and difficulties with our citizens and see manifested the words of Les Brown; "If the dream is big enough, the odds don't matter".



**CHAD McLEOD**  
CITY COMMISSIONER

These are exciting days for the City of Lakeland, as we are experiencing a renaissance of growth and redevelopment in many areas of our city. The CRA plays a critical role in our City Commissioner's vision by helping to bring new projects to life in Dixieland, Midtown and Downtown Lakeland.

The positive impacts of the work we are doing now in these areas will be felt for many years to come. Through partnerships with small businesses, developers and community organizations, the CRA creates a collaborative environment that helps move Lakeland forward and improve the quality of life and the culture of our city.



# OUR TEAM



## LAKELAND COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY STAFF

**ALIS DRUMGO** CRA MANAGER   **TERRILYN BOSTWICK** SENIOR PROJECT MANAGER   **D'ARIEL REED** PROJECT MANAGER   **DAMARIS STULL** PROJECT MANAGER   **IYANNA JONES** PROJECT ASSOCIATE   **HEISEL ORTIZ RODRIGUEZ** OFFICE ASSOCIATE II

## LAKELAND COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS



**EDDIE LAKE**  
CHAIRMAN



**CHAD McLEOD**  
CITY COMMISSION APPOINTEE



**DEAN BORING**  
MIDTOWN



**HARRY BRYANT**  
MIDTOWN



**FRANK LANSFORD**  
MIDTOWN



**CORY PETCOFF**  
DIXIELAND



**BRIAN GODING**  
DIXIELAND



**BRIAN WALLER**  
DIXIELAND



**ZELDA ABRAM**  
DOWNTOWN



**BRANDON EADY**  
DOWNTOWN



**CLIFF J. WILEY**  
DOWNTOWN

## LAKELAND CITY COMMISSION

**WILLIAM "BILL" MUTZ**  
MAYOR

**STEPHANIE MADDEN**  
COMMISSIONER - AT-LARGE

**CHAD McLEOD**  
COMMISSIONER - AT-LARGE

**PHILLIP WALKER**  
COMMISSIONER - NORTHWEST

**SARA ROBERTS McCARLEY**  
COMMISSIONER - SOUTHWEST

**BILL READ**  
COMMISSIONER - NORTHEAST

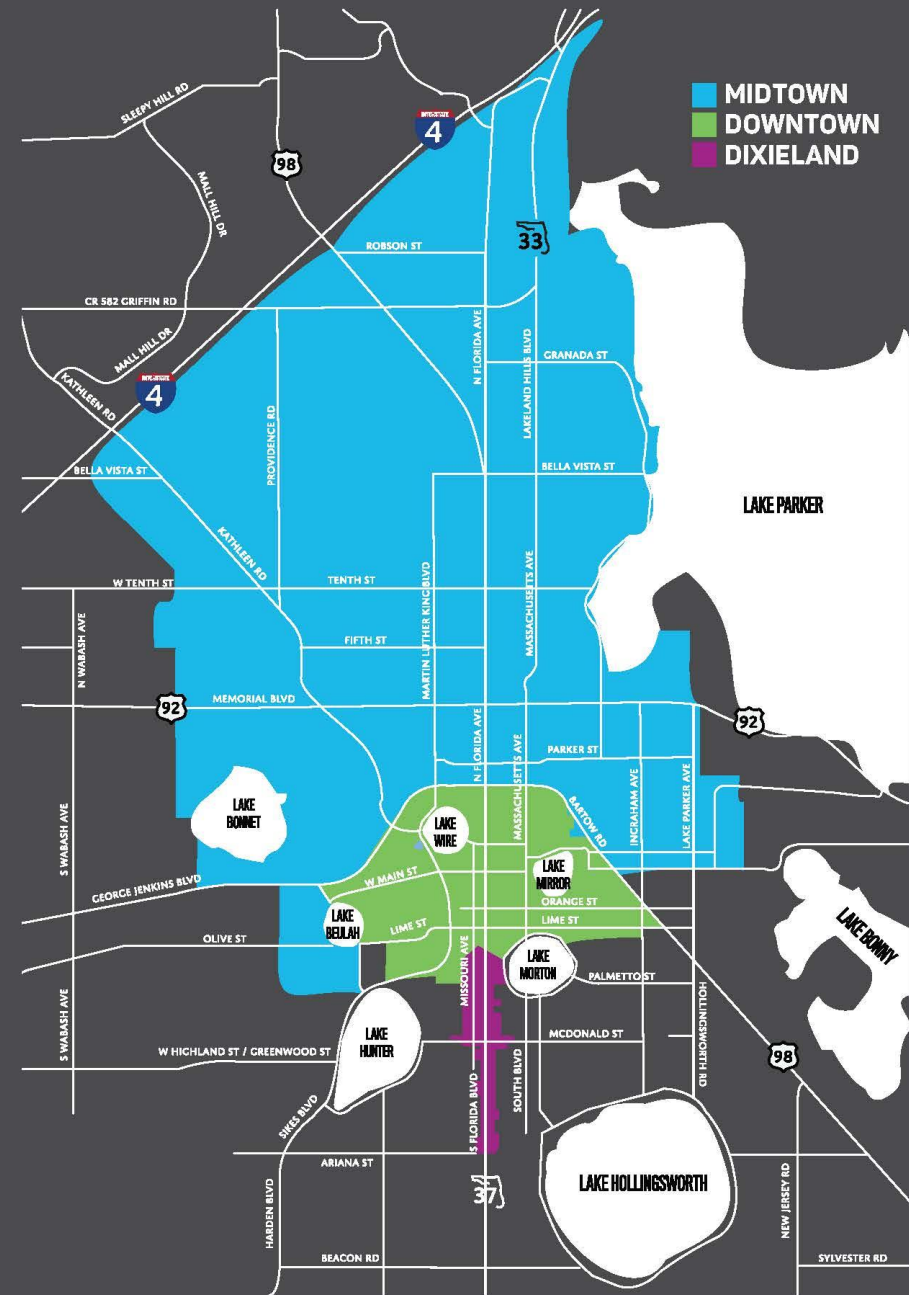
**SCOTT FRANKLIN**  
COMMISSIONER - SOUTHEAST

## CITY OF LAKELAND LEADERSHIP

**SHAWN SHERROUSE**  
CITY MANAGER

**EMILY COLON**  
ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER

**NICOLE TRAVIS**  
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



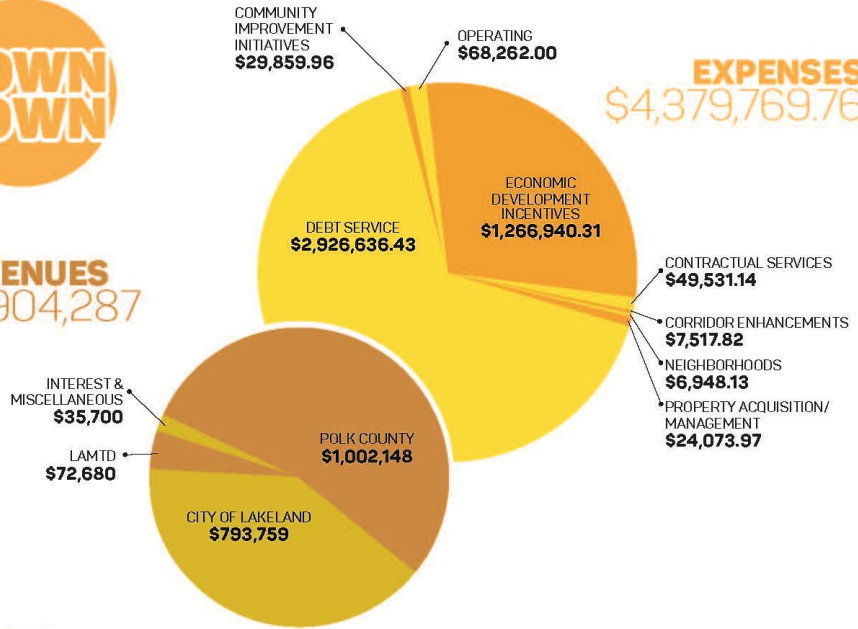
**LAKELAND CRA**  
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY



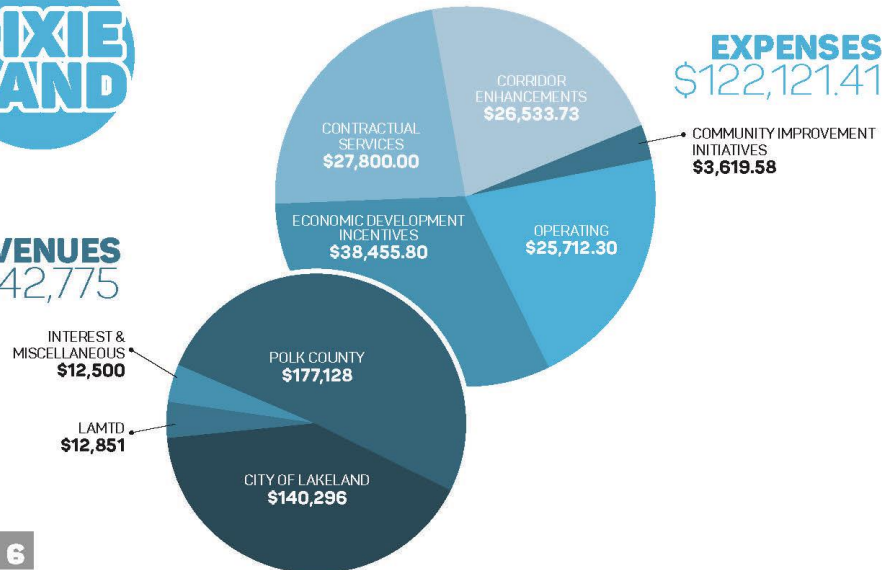
# FINANCIALS



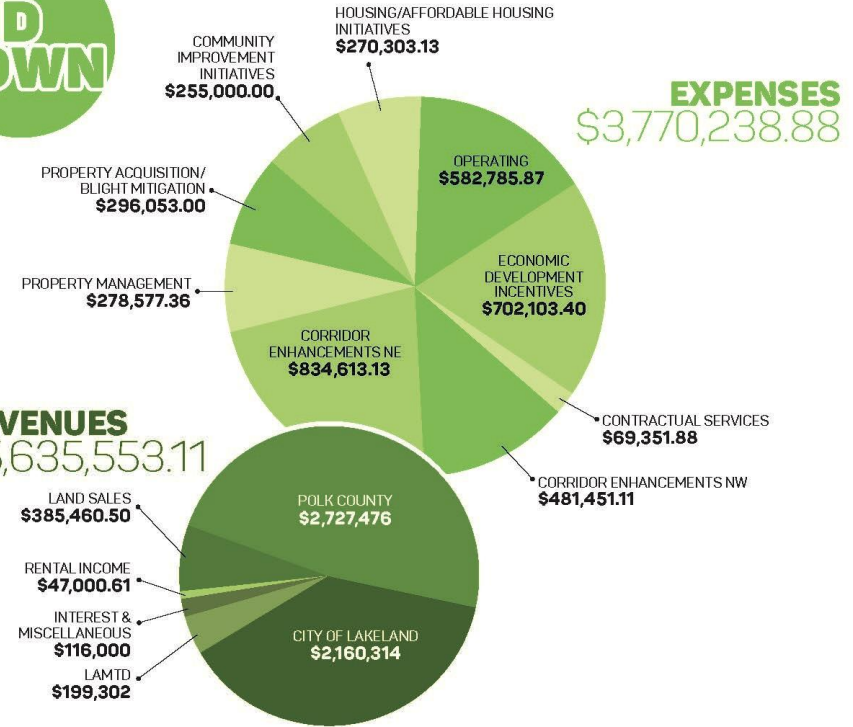
**REVENUES**  
\$1,904,287



**REVENUES**  
\$342,775



**REVENUES**  
\$5,635,553.11



## COMMERCIAL INCENTIVES

### DOWNTOWN

Tax Increment Financing	\$150,938.36
Infill Adaptive Reuse	\$80,695.80

### MIDTOWN

Design Assistance	\$15,950.00
Facade and Site Improvement	\$369,106.24
Infill Adaptive Reuse	\$332,997.16
Job Creation Incentive	\$210,000.00

### DIXIELAND

Design Assistance	\$2,940.00
Facade and Site Improvement	\$35,515.80

## RESIDENTIAL INCENTIVES

### DOWNTOWN

Fix-It Up (Garden District)	\$6,948.13
-----------------------------	------------

### MIDTOWN

Down Payment	
Assistance Program	\$22,000.00
Fix-It-Up (Target Areas)	\$56,909.82
Infill New Home Construction	\$53,065.34
Builder's Line of Credit	\$117,007.59



# PROPERTY VALUES 2019-2020

**DOWN  
TOWN**

4.14%

**DIXIE  
LAND**

4.3%

**MID  
TOWN**

6.05%

# AFFORDABLE HOUSING INITIATIVES

**Midtown Lofts** \$162,000  
**Twin Lakes Apartments Phase II** \$150,000  
**Vermont Avenue Apartments** \$50,000  
**Banyan Reserve Apartments** \$75,000  
**Affordable Housing Land Bank Program** \$225,357<sup>1</sup>

Notes:

1. In FY20, eighteen (18) lots were awarded to developers for the construction of affordable housing units.

# MINORITY- OWNED BUSINESSES

With the goal of promoting inclusion and economic empowerment, the City of Lakeland's CRA has solidified partnerships with businesses owned by women and people from diverse backgrounds. These partnerships foster inclusion for minorities seeking to do business within the City of Lakeland. Those business owners include:

**Dr. Sallie Brisbane-Stone**  
THE WELL

**Crystal Davis**  
CRYSTAL'S WORLD OF DANCE

**Dr. Brenda Reddout**  
TALBOT HOUSE MINISTRIES

**Dr. Jeanene Robinson-Kyles**  
KYLES COUNSELING & TESTING SERVICES

**Lorenzo and Virginia Robinson**  
PAUL A. DIGGS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

**Jennifer Batts**  
THE YARD ON MASS

**Laura Shannon**  
HAUS 820

**Andrew Williams and  
Sonji Coney-Williams**  
CONEY FUNERAL HOME

**Elizabeth Hults**  
ARTIFACT STUIDOS

**Jennifer Canady**  
EVERETTE TAYLOR URBAN FARM

**David Hernandez  
and Diana Cortes**  
DOU BAKEHOUSE

**Rene and Sandra Vargas**  
TAPATIOS

**Titus Newborn**  
FUSION LOGISTICS

**Marcos Fernandez**  
NINETEEN61

**Sarah Bucklew**  
THE JOINERY



**DIANA CORTES**  
DOU Bakehouse  
DOU Bakehouse is an artisan pastry shop. We make from scratch and by hand all of our items. Our best sellers are French macarons and chocolate bars. We are a women minority owned business and 80% of our staff is female. We have had the pleasure of working with the CRA for the last couple of years since we moved to Lakeland. Alis, D'Ariel, Iyanna, and all of the CRA team have been truly amazing.

**CRYSTAL DAVIS**  
Crystal's World of Dance  
"Dance is for everyone"  
Crystal Davis owner of Crystal's World of Dance believes that dance should be accessible to all children who have the desire to dance. Crystal's World of Dance has been servicing children in the Lakeland area for 18 years!





# PROJECT SUCCESSES



## PATRIOT COFFEE ROASTERS

When Chris McArthur moved into the Dixieland CRA, he was sharing space with a bakery. Soon, both businesses began to expand rapidly. This expansion prompted McArthur to look for a larger space. So McArthur asked the CRA for funding to assist with his expansion.

"We needed to get out of that shared space quickly, and we had recently acquired Publix as a customer but didn't have the space to accommodate the business they wanted to give us," McArthur said. "In order to keep up with that opportunity and fulfill those purchase orders, we needed more square footage. Having that CRA assistance gave us the capital to be able to do that."

And McArthur didn't have to look far to find exactly what his business needed.

"There was a space across the parking lot that was used as office space by the owner of that building," McArthur said. "The CRA had grants for improving spaces to be used as food-related businesses. We were able to take advantage of funds to install a grease trap, improve electrical plumbing and bring the space up to construction standards."

McArthur's craft coffee roasting business moved into a new space in May 2019, when it doubled in size from 500 sq. ft. to 1,000 sq ft. The CRA contributed \$25,000 for the \$51,000 renovation. Now, Patriot Coffee Roasters has room to source high quality coffees from around the world, and sell to retailers across the United States.

For McArthur, working with the CRA was a win-win situation.

"It was a really positive experience for us," McArthur said. "They were looking for ways to set us up for success throughout the process. It enabled us to stay in city limits, and continue to be a part of the city."



## MIRRORTON

During a March 2020 groundbreaking ceremony, the City of Lakeland, Framework Group, Barclay Group and Flournoy Construction Group celebrated the start of construction for Mirrorton apartments, located on East Bay Street.

Mirrorton features 305 units presented as a mixture of townhouses and three-to-four story flats, providing an urban housing option in the city's energizing downtown.

An amenity building at Mirrorton houses a fitness center, coffee bar, spa, meeting and work areas, pet spa and areas for social gatherings that include an attached outdoor terrace and pool. The design of the site is focused on concepts that include establishing connectivity to the Downtown core.

The CRA leveraged 1.76 million in incentives which yielded a 30:1 return on investment.





## THE JOINERY

The Joinery, Polk County's first food hall and craft brewery, is located on the banks of Lake Mirror in Downtown Lakeland. The owners, Sarah and Jonathan Bucklew, were able to close the funding gap on their \$1,000,000 renovation with \$250,000 from the CRA.



## NORTH DOWNTOWN

The North Downtown Small Area Study was a collaborative effort with area stakeholders geared towards optimizing area development. The plan addressed the area's challenges, and provides a strategy for infill development. The build-out analysis considers height, density and desired uses. The study also complements the existing Catalyst Planning efforts with a focus on parking, and additional connectivity for pedestrians. The CRA retained the Lunz Group to facilitate the North Downtown Small Area Study, which was a collaborative effort with area stakeholders geared towards optimizing area development.



## MIDTOWN LOFTS

Green Mills Group acquired a 1.8 acre property in the Parker Street neighborhood from the CRA. Midtown Lofts will consist of 80 affordable apartments, targeting low-to-moderate income families. The CRA contributed \$162,000, resulting in a private investment of over \$16,000,000 dollars.



## SUMMIT CONSULTING

During the spring of 2020, site work began on Summit Consulting's eight-story office building at 117 N. Massachusetts Avenue in downtown Lakeland. Summit bought the property on Lake Mirror from the City of Lakeland. The \$50 million project on a 1.2 acres site is the former location of the Old Fire Station Lot next to Allen Kryger Park.

"Summit's employees are our greatest resource," Sipe said. "They are the key to our success. The ability to provide an office environment which is enriched by all the amenities that downtown Lakeland has to offer is perfect. Not only will it assist us in attracting and retaining top talent, but in a post-COVID world, it will make working at the office very desirable."

Sipe said the economic benefit for the City of Lakeland is key.

"I am very pleased and proud that we have maintained our corporate headquarters here, even through multiple acquisitions," Sipe said. "I believe that bringing 450 high-wage earners to the downtown area will be great for stimulating that economy. I am also hopeful that our decision will serve as a catalyst for others to invest in Lakeland. It offers such a unique blend of a strong business environment and a special quality of life."







7/8

## WORKSHOP SPACE

The Workshop Space, 945 and 947 S. Florida Avenue, sat vacant for some time, so the owners felt an improvement to the facade would help attract interest.

The CRA contributed grants for Design Assistance for \$1,820, and Facade and Site Improvement for \$35,515. The two spaces were vacant for some time, so the owners felt an improvement to the facade would help attract interest. They also applied for an Infill Adaptive Reuse and Food Related grant in case they ended up with tenants who qualified and wanted to make improvements to the interior.

The parcel at 947 S. Florida Avenue is being leased by Whiskey Way Boutique, while 945 S. Florida Avenue is being leased by High Class Barber and Salon.

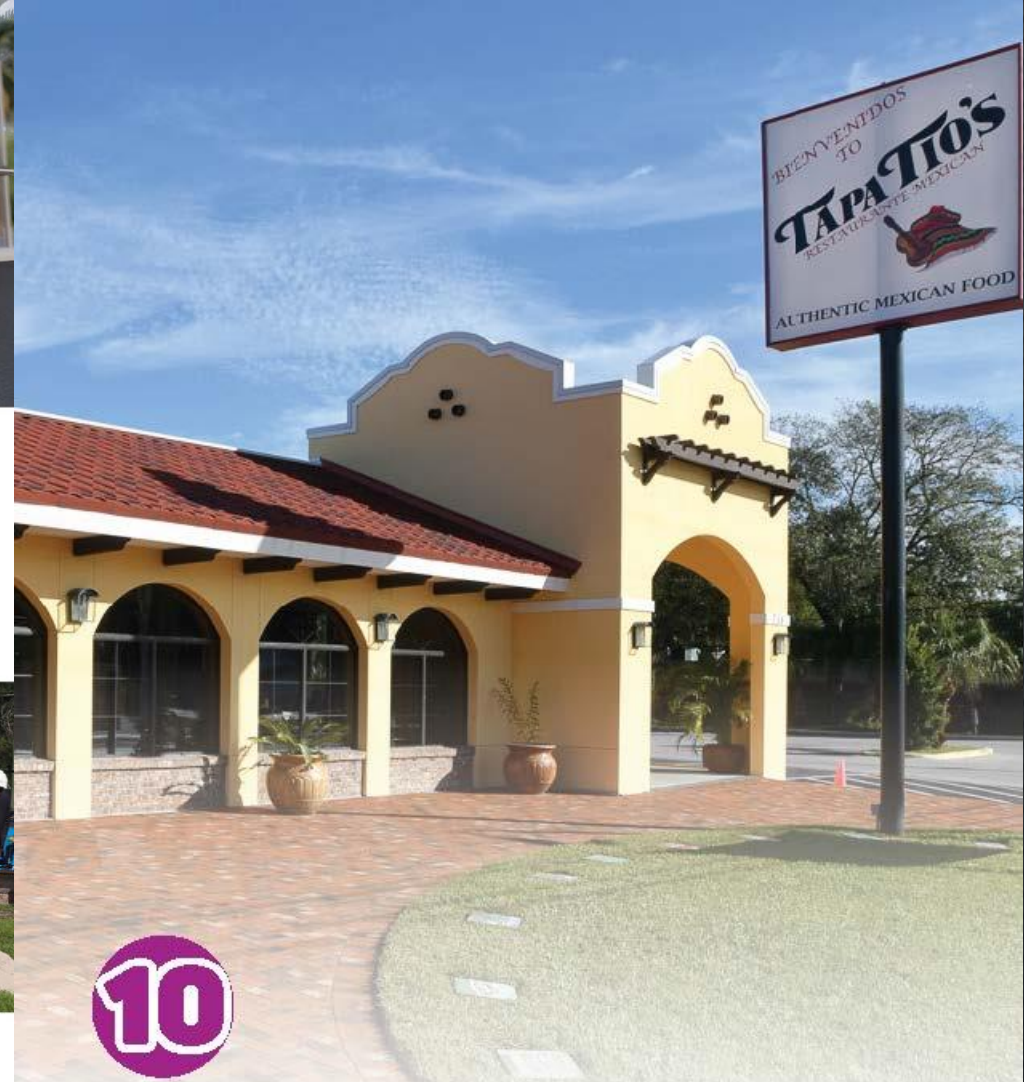


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## CONEY FUNERAL HOME

The Coney family has operated a funeral home business in Midtown for several generations. In order to secure a bank loan of \$1.4 million dollars, Sonji Coney-Williams and Andrew Williams sought a \$165,000 grant from the CRA.

"Everything fell right into place with the CRA coming on board and assisting us," said Andrew Williams. "Their support from the CRA was much appreciated. We worked hand in hand. We look forward to moving into the new building."



10

## TAPATIOS

Rene and Sandra Vargas decided to expand their restaurant, Tapatios. The owners applied for CRA funding to support their 3,000 sq. ft. expansion, which included kitchen reconfiguration, ADA improvements, exterior renovations, and new signage.

The CRA contributed \$340,000 to the overall project, which yielded a 4:1 private-to-public dollar investment.





## REC ROOM

The Rec Room, a barcade, located in the Downtown CRA, received a grant for \$35,000, which was 10% of the overall project budget.

The Rec Room is unique because it provides a family gathering space during the day, and a bar atmosphere in the evening, attracting all age groups to the business.



## LAKE PARKER SHARED USE PATH

The Lake Parker Shared Use Path spans 1.1 miles along the lakefront of W. Lake Parker Drive. It is a segment of the City's Bicycle Connectivity Plan, and executed in tandem with a community report completed in 2016. As a result, the CRA constructed a 10-foot wide multi-use path. CRA invested approximately \$850,000 towards this amenity.

A partnership with the Polk County School Board was created in an effort to incorporate student art interpretations of Lakeland's history. Professional artists were commissioned to replicate student designs highlighting decades past. The path accommodates pedestrian and bicycle traffic in the neighborhood, and includes custom shade structures, education signage, and custom bike racks.



## WEST 14TH STREET PEDESTRIAN ENHANCEMENT

The residents of Lakewood Terrace Apartments requested a safety evaluation near W. 14th Street and Providence Road. City and CRA staff identified a school bus stop and pedestrian conflicts along the roadway.

The CRA invested \$224,000 in sidewalk and safety enhancements. Project is slated for completion by the end of April 2021.



## DIXIELAND CORRIDOR ARTS INFUSION

The Dixieland Art Infusion launched with the intent of inspiring artists and businesses to permeate new life into the commercial corridor along South Florida Avenue. In early 2020, Furr, Wegman & Banks was hired to evaluate potential mural locations along the corridor.

The projected budget for Dixieland is \$345,558, and \$150,000 for downtown.

The vision is to install murals that reflect the vibrant celebrations of music, arts and culture that represents the past, present and future of the district. With a fun and festive theme, visitors will be drawn to the art, photo opportunities, and improved shopping experiences.

In addition to murals, the program allows business owners the chance to refresh their buildings with new facade paint, awnings, and a mural.



[www.lakelandcra.net/artinfusion](http://www.lakelandcra.net/artinfusion)



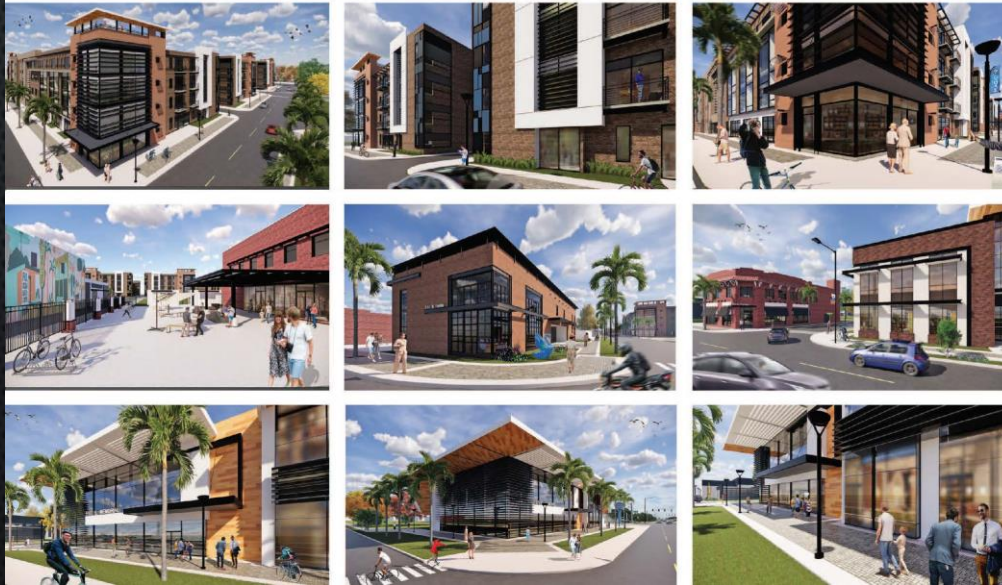


## MASS MARKET AREA

Since its grand opening in 2017, the Mass Market redevelopment project in the Parker Street neighborhood has helped anchor the growing Midtown district.

In 2020, the CRA staff created an Area Plan for Parker Street that could expand on the already established redevelopment. Proposed uses of parcels in the Area Plan include commercial office, mixed use and commercial, food and beverage, residential, medical, government, institutional, mixed use with residential, retail and parking.

With its assorted mix of uses, redevelopment potential in the Mass Market area is boundless.



The Affordable Housing Land Bank Program opened up applications in March of 2020. The program provides buildable City and CRA owned lots to qualified developers and builders to construct new residential unit to meet affordable housing needs in the City of Lakeland. The intent is to reduce the number of vacant and blighted properties and create affordable housing units on infill lots around the City.

The housing must be multi-family rental units or single-family units for home ownership. The application process involves a selection committee that consists of City representatives. The Committee awarded over 50 vacant lots to 17 developers.

**BUILD A HOME HERE**  
**FOR SALE**  
 Affordable Housing Land Bank Program

