

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



THE MISSION

The mission for the CRA is to generate new development, foster revitalization, and garner community investment—spurring private development and municipal improvements to enhance the overall quality of life in St. Cloud.

The St. Cloud Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) was established in 2005 with the signing of an interlocal agreement between the City of St. Cloud, FL (“City”) and Osceola County. The Agency encompasses an area of slightly over 706 acres, representing approximately 14% of the City’s overall area.

When established, the assessed value within the CRA boundaries was \$148,563,458. As of 2022, our taxable value is \$237,868,252, a 9% increase over the previous year, and over \$89 million dollars in increased value over the life of the CRA.

OUR BRAND STORY

Whether St. Cloud is your hometown, where life led you, or a home for your business, one thing is certain—it’s at the center of it all. With theme parks, major metropolitan areas and rapidly expanding cities surrounding its borders, St. Cloud is the heart of Central Florida, and it’s that heart that makes it like no other place.

From the moment you cross the city limits, you are enveloped in hometown pride. Festivals and events fill the picturesque lakefront and historic downtown streets, inspiring a tradition of close-knit connections and community. That sense of togetherness can be found in every corner of our city, remaining true to the authentic nature and spirit of life in St. Cloud in the midst of growth and new opportunities. For businesses looking to put down roots, St. Cloud means a prime location with the resources and amenities needed to drive growth.

Here, established businesses share walls with up-and-comers and value community over competition—it’s just our nature. For a young family, it means a safe neighborhood and a big backyard for growing kids. A short drive from everything yet tucked away from the bustle of city life, it’s where your heart can call home.



ST. CLOUD CITY HALL



COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY DISTRICTS

The St. Cloud Community Redevelopment Agency is subdivided into three distinct areas or districts, each with its own unique character and individually identified vision and goals. These districts are where the adventure takes place.

The CRA Districts include the City's main business corridor and impacts the entire City. Members of the City Council and two resident business owners serve on the CRA Board, setting the Agency's goals and providing direction for staff, with City Manager Veronica Miller serving as Executive Director. In 2022, the CRA saw a new board member, Adam Wagner of 10th Street Produce joined the board.

DOWNTOWN DISTRICT

The Downtown District is the social and entertainment hub of the city. It encourages economic vitality and growth with a unique mix of shopping and living experiences. The CRAs' role ensures that redevelopment complements the historic and architecturally significant buildings to a pedestrian- friendly, mixed-use main street environment.

CENTRAL DISTRICT

The Central District provides a welcoming passageway leading into the Downtown and Gateway Districts. The CRAs' goal is to create a traditional urban district with smaller-scaled businesses located close together on smaller lots that enhance the overall image of the CRA area.

GATEWAY DISTRICT

The Gateway District is the western entry point into St. Cloud and the center of major retail activities. The Gateway District to serves as a portal signifying arrival and to establish a unique sense of place with high quality architectural design and signature elements that distinguish the CRA along the U.S. 192 corridor.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

Shown are the financials of the St. Cloud Community Redevelopment Agency for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2022. Although legally separate, the CRA is included as a government fund type component unit into the primary government of the City of St. Cloud. CRA information shown has been extracted from the unaudited City of St. Cloud's 2022 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.

DID YOU KNOW?

The CRA has awarded \$759,154 through its redevelopment grants for commercial properties, over its lifespan.

REVENUES

Intergovernmental Revenues (TIF)	\$1,111,415.00
City's TIF	\$329,197.92
Investment Income	<\$152,412,257
Other Revenue	\$0
Total Revenues	\$1,287,700.67

EXPENDITURES

Other Uses	\$718,534.00
Economic environment	\$1,018,722.58
Total Expenditures	\$1,737,256.58
(Deficiency) Excess of Revenues (Under)	\$449,555,917

OTHER FINANCING SOURCES (USES)

Transfers in	\$29,198
Transfers out	\$718,534
Net Change in Fund Balances	\$449,556
Fund Balance (Deficit), Beginning of Year, Restated	\$1,179,496
Fund Balances, End of Year	\$579,936

BALANCE SHEET (UNAUDITED)

Prepaid Expenditures and deposits	\$2,125
Cash Investments	\$3,353,925
Total Assets	\$3,456,050

Accounts and Retainage Payable	\$24,060
Due to Other Funds	\$2,749,804
Accrued Liabilities	\$2,249
Total Liabilities	\$2,776,113

Nonspendable	\$2,125
Restricted:	\$677,812
Total Fund Balances	\$679,937
Total Liabilities and Fund Balances	\$3,456,050

Welcome to

ST. LOUIS
FLORIDA

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PROJECTS

PHASE 3 MIXED-USE PROJECT

Due to increased activity in the entertainment district of the Downtown CRA and the ongoing construction associated with the Downtown Revitalization Phase II Project, lack of parking has become an issue.

The CRA has assembled several parcels of land for the purpose of development via public private partnership in the construction of a mixed-use parking garage project. This year, the CRA performed its due diligence including geotechnical surveys, appraisal, proposal development and identification of funding for incentives. The CRA will be seeking a proposal that will maximize the development potential of the site and act as catalyst for additional development. The Project Site has the strategic advantage of being a prominent site, next to City Hall and near the main street of the city, New York Avenue. The CRA anticipates the project will be out for bid solicitation in early 2024.

900 OHIO AVE & LEASE OF FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH SITE

In September 2003, the CRA purchased a residential property (900 Ohio Avenue in the Downtown District) for \$425,000 with the intent of creating additional parking. The CRA currently leases the adjoining lot at 1000 Ohio Avenue from the local church for overflow parking. In the long term, the goal is to work with the local church to create a permanent parking structure that encompasses both lots.

CRA Police Officers also performed a site assessment and crime prevention through an environmental design report of the residential area.

While the property site at 900 Ohio Ave is a residential property, this project does not qualify as affordable housing. Currently, the CRA has not spent funds on affordable housing projects.



DOWNTOWN PHASE II REVITALIZATION PROJECT: PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE

The Downtown Phase II Revitalization Project was completed this year. The project scope included the upgrade of water & sewer lines, sidewalk expansion, installation of brick pavers, addition of decorative street lighting and other ancillary improvements. With the completion of New York Avenue (Phase I), and now Pennsylvania Avenue, Downtown District has been reactivated. Within almost 100 businesses in the district, these changes have ignited activities and events within historic downtown St. Cloud that are shaping a new thriving social and cultural atmosphere in a once deserted space. New businesses have set up shop in once vacated retail spots.

The project cost for Phase II Pennsylvania Avenue was \$11,796,797 with the CRA contributing \$2,589,460 from the previously allocated project. The city contributed \$9,207,337 to ensure infrastructure improvements and upgrades that will support future use.



ST. CLOUD HOTEL

Privately owned by a foreign national company, this public private partnership has been developed over the past 6 years. Once abandoned and dilapidated, the historic building is in the process of being restored. The three-story historical building “St. Cloud hotel” is a landmark of downtown St. Cloud dating back to 1910. The building is being redesigned to add a bar, restaurant, coffee shop, and gym at the ground floor level, and 38 guest rooms and suites on the upper floors. The refurbishment project will preserve and restore the original look of the hotel while adding contemporary structures on the exterior.

The CRA has awarded a façade improvement grant in the amount of \$274,730 towards the roof, dormers, windows and sandblasting.

Owned by international development firm, ADCM International, the project is mostly self-financed.



WAYFINDING SIGNAGE STUDY

The City of St. Cloud and its CRA is undertaking major streetscape projects within their historic downtown area. As part of these downtown efforts, the CRA is proposing to replace and expand their current system of wayfinding signs. CRA is designing a comprehensive wayfinding package to be used as a bid document for future solicitation of a sign manufacturing company to prepare detailed construction shop drawings, fabrication, and installation of the signs. The new system will include an updated design palette and wayfinding logic, and is anticipated to include vehicular, pedestrian, and kiosk style signs.

ALLEYWAY IMPROVEMENTS STUDY

The CRA has engaged a consultant to prepare a planning study for the improvement of the alleys in downtown St. Cloud. The purpose of this study is to promote a more walkable environment with enhanced shopping, dining, and entertainment experiences for residents and visitors within downtown. The alley improvement study process involves strategically examining the existing built environment, the City's improvement plans for the downtown area including the proposed parking garage and Florida Avenue trail, and other anticipated development activities. Completion of the study is expected in the early Spring of 2024. Upon completion, a review of the cost estimates will assist staff in the determination of priorities and funding.

BUSINESS TAX REGISTRATION PROGRAM

The CRA started offering one-time grants to businesses looking to move into the CRA. Whether it's a pop-up or storefront, home-based or office suite, the CRA is a perfect location for small businesses to grow as well as new businesses to start. The program reimburses businesses that are applying for or may possess their local city and county business tax receipt, up to \$100. To date, there have been 10 businesses awarded (totaling \$884), which equates to 10 new businesses relocated into the CRA.

BUILDING SITE IMPROVEMENT GRANT

The Building and Site Improvement Grant (BSIG) Program is available for façade improvements for buildings located within any of the three CRA Districts. The grant program is a matching grant program that funds 50% of eligible expenses. Grant awards are based on building square footage and range from up to \$10,000 to \$65,000. Eligible Projects must be for façade improvements to a building or properties that are permanent or could be described as "beautification" projects that are visible (street-facing) portions of structure or site. In 2023, the CRA awarded \$75,000 to rehabilitate an historic retail shop. The scope of work includes exterior painting, awning replacement, new windows & doors, and wall repair.

Since Inception, there have been 63 grants awarded totaling \$759,154.37.



PLANT PAINT PAVE PROGRAM

The Paint, Plant, and Pave grant program launched early 2022. The program was created to immediately enhance the aesthetics of single-family and multi-family 2-unit properties within the residential neighborhoods of the St. Cloud CRA Downtown area and to improve curb appeal. The CRA offers up to \$2,000 per property (50/50 match) for exterior improvements. To date, there have been 3 homes renovated under this program.



DID YOU KNOW?

The CRA has awarded \$6,000 for residential properties for renovation projects.



COMMUNITY POLICING & CPTED

The St. Cloud Police Department (SCPD), in partnership with the CRA, developed an innovative comprehensive program to improve the actual and perceived security of the entertainment district within the CRA. Area residents, businesses, customers, and tourists are part of the ongoing effort to the Downtown District a destination location. Through its agreement, SCPD provided enhanced policing services including crime prevention through environmental design surveys and training, building safety inspections and reports, intelligence-led policing, consulting on new commercial developments and meeting with community stakeholders such as the Downtown Business Group and Monthly Market Subcommittee.



SMALL BUSINESS PROMOTIONS

SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY

The CRA has been very creative in creating placemaking through its marketing and promotion such as Small Business Saturday (SBS) video vignettes and Shop with Tinsel series. The SBS videos feature local businesses within the CRA showcasing their store. Interviewed by staff, the business owner describes—in their own words—the value to the community and why they choose the CRA to set up their operations.

SHOP WITH TINSEL

Modeled after the Elf on the Shelf, the CRA's Elf—named Tinsel, visits several locations in the CRA to encourage visitors and residents to stop by.

These photos were featured on social media along with the names and addresses of the businesses.



BITES & BIKES

The City of St. Cloud CRA's Bikes & Bites is a bi-annual event that takes place in the spring and fall. This unique culinary tour began and ended at our lakefront park through our downtown CRA District. This event was family-friendly, with over 60 participants ranging in age from 7 years to the elderly. The cyclists were led by the St. Cloud PD on bicycles and meandered 5 miles from the lakefront through our neighborhoods and into the historic downtown area. Cyclists were able to sample items from 9 different restaurants that offered many items to taste from soul food and barbecue to gourmet, custom popsicles and macarons.



EVENTS

BLACK BUSINESS INVESTMENT FUND ORIENTATION EVENT

BBIF is a Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI), private non-profit loan fund that specializes in providing loans and financial technical assistance services to Black, minority & underserved small businesses throughout Florida. Hosted by the CRA, the Orientation to the BBIF provided attendees an introduction to the local financial institution specializing in microloans. The half day event focused on the following topics: 5 C's of credit, technical assistance programming and loan products.

BBIF's is Florida's leading non-traditional lender and financial coach provider and is determined to develop and prepare individuals from the initial business start-up phase through qualifying for funding and financing. Many graduates of their cohort program have qualified for BBIF, Conventional Loans, and SBA loans.



VETERANS ENTREPRENEURSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

In partnership with the Veterans Entrepreneurship Initiative (VEI), our veteran program continued in its 2nd year. VEI's mission is to empower and support veteran entrepreneurs through business guidance, education and mentorship. The intent of the partnership is to encourage graduates to start or relocate their business within the CRA.

The program has two cohort-based training: VEI Launch and VEI Scale Up. VEI Launch introduces veterans to the Business Model Canvas and provides in-depth insight into the key steps needed to build a startup. The cohort will enable veterans at the idea stage or in the early stages of business development to learn how to rapidly develop and test ideas by gathering customer and marketplace feedback. VEI Scale Up is for veteran led companies generating revenue and looking to scale. The cohort helps veterans clarify business concepts or models by walking them through the steps of planning, adjusting and re-shaping the business model and/or growth plan.



HOLA ST. CLOUD

The City of St. Cloud won the 2023 FRA Roy F. Kenzie Award in the category of Cultural Enhancement. St. Cloud CRA partnered with the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Metro Orlando for an economic development expo focusing on arts, culture, Hispanic cuisine, and community service. Programmed experiences allowed businesses to have the opportunity to connect with over 80+ local business vendors. All attendees were also able to experience a Hispanic-influenced marketplace, unique cultural activities, dance, and folklore, and the opportunity to navigate through a sensory art experience. There was also Hispanic cuisine, live music, fun and entertainment throughout the day.



...Your **CRA** at Work

\$89M

Increased tax value
over life of CRA

52

Commercial
façade grants
awarded totaling

\$759,154

Taxable Value
\$237,971,862



+700 acres
representing

14%

of the City's overall area
1,300 parcels

3 residential
grants
awarded

**totaling
\$5,997**

\$29,000

awarded in
**Downtown
Marketing
Grants**

10

**Business
Tax Receipt
grants**

2023 FRA
Award winner
**Cultural
Enhancement**
(Hola St. Cloud)

Project Highlights

- i. Downtown Revitalization (Streetscape) Project
- ii. VFW Façade
- iii. Old Makinson Hardware/918 New York Ave.
acquisition & sale & renovation
- iv. Entertainment District Ordinance
- v. Bites & Bites (Culinary Bicycle Tour)
- vi. Downtown Monthly Market
- vii. Community policing

