

A Great Egret is captured in mid-flight over a body of water. The bird's wings are fully extended, showing a mix of white and light blue feathers. Its long, sharp beak is pointed forward, and its long legs are trailing behind. The water below is a deep blue with gentle ripples. The overall scene is serene and natural.

City of Eustis, A Superior Lakefront Community

**2024 Downtown and East Town Community Redevelopment Agency
Annual Report**

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CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

2024 was a milestone year for the Downtown and Eastown CRA. After many years in the planning process, Duke Energy began upgrading its electrical lines that run through the City and the CRA to improve service reliability and accommodate future growth. The Bates Ave Wastewater Treatment Plant expansion project was completed. It will support the City and CRA's 20-year projected population growth needs. The Ferran Park Seawall is undergoing repairs that will allow residents and visitors to continue enjoying leisure and event activities along the lakefront.

A very substantial increase in new residential construction on infill lots, is helping revitalize and improve the quality of life in the CRA. Work on a CRA-commissioned Downtown Master Plan was completed and will be presented to the Board for approval in mid to late 2025. It will project a board vision and concepts for future development and redevelopment in the downtown area.

These projects highlight only a few of what has been a year filled with exciting progress toward achieving the Redevelopment Plan goals of Downtown and East Town CRA. I am honored to work alongside a group of dedicated board members who have exceptional leadership skills and are passionate about revitalizing an area of the City that once, and will again pulse with vibrancy.

Willie Hawkins,
Chairman

Community Redevelopment Agency Board

Mayor Willie Hawkins, Chair

Vice Mayor Gary Ashcraft, Vice Chair

City Commission Member George Asbate

City Commission Michael Holland

City Commission Emily Lee

East CRA Representative Tanya Wilder

West CRA Representative Lori Pittsley



Mayor Willie
Hawkins, Chair



Vice Mayor Gary
Ashcraft, Vice Chair



Commissioner
Michael Holland



Commissioner
Emily Lee



Commissioner
George Asbate



Advisory Board Member
Tanya Wilder

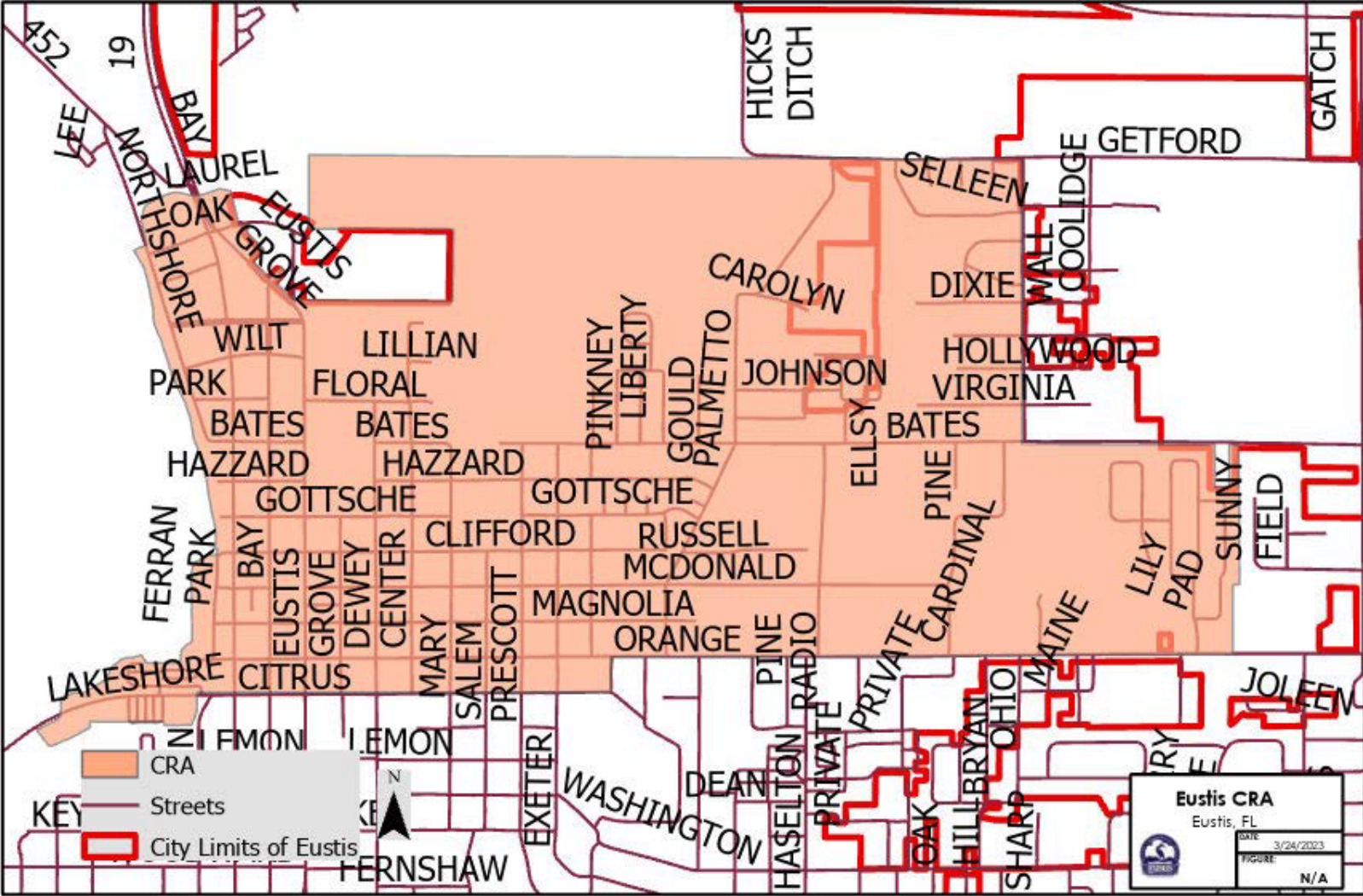


Advisory Board Member
Lori Pittsley

MISSION

The mission of the CRA is to generate new development and redevelopment by facilitating programs and initiatives that spur economic development, improve physical characteristics, and encourage investment in the Downtown and East Town area. The Downtown and East Town CRA is a dependent special district created by the City Commission in 1990 for the purpose of eliminating and preventing slum and blight, and promoting the preservation and enhancement of the tax base in the redevelopment area. In 2018, the CRA expanded and now encompasses nearly 1,000 acres.

CRA BOUNDARY MAP



Overview of Community Redevelopment Agency Area

The area of the Downtown and East Town CRA is approximately 1.8 miles by 1.6 miles and includes downtown Eustis, Ferran Park, the Orange Ave Commercial Corridor to just beyond Cricket Hollow Lane, and the East Eustis neighborhood. The downtown area comprises approximately one-fourth of the community redevelopment area.

CRA Administrative Powers and Redevelopment Plan

The Community Redevelopment Agency is responsible for administering and implementing the redevelopment plan. Florida Statutes grant the CRA all powers necessary or convenient to carry out the purposes and provisions of the Redevelopment Plan, including the power to: distribute community redevelopment information; to host fundraising and community events, to solicit requests for proposals for redevelopment, enter into contracts; acquire property by purchase, lease, gift, grant, etc., complete redevelopment and revitalization projects as outlined in the Redevelopment Plan, to close, vacate, or plan roads; to enter any building or property within the CRA for inspection, surveys, appraisals, etc., to borrow money and apply for and accept advances, loans, grants or contributions, to invest any CRA funds held in reserves. In summary, the Agency is given all power necessary to realize the vision of the CRA.



Redevelopment Focus Areas

The **Downtown Area** of the CRA is the social and retail hub of the City. It encourages economic vitality and growth with a unique mix of shopping and living experiences. The CRA Board ensures that redevelopment complements the historic and architecturally significant buildings to a pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use closely configured street and building environment. Several new businesses established in the downtown in 2024 including American Dream Kitchen Design, Uncorked Wine Bar, Pinesmoke Bee Co., and Magnolia Breeze Restaurant.

The **East Town Area** of the CRA contains approximately 18% of the City's residents, a large amount of the City's public housing, and City public service amenities, Eustis Memorial Library, Women's Center and Carver Park. The Eustis Housing Authority. **Pictured below:** In addition to expanding its services and increasing its use of technology, the Eustis Memorial Library will be performing maintenance on the air conditioning system, installing new entry doors and getting a fresh coat of paint.

Downtown Master Plan

The 2025 Downtown Master Plan was completed in November of 2024. It provides a conceptual context to guide future growth and development. It outlines future land uses, building projects, and community improvements and enhancements. The proposed development options included in the Master Plan are based on the City's uniqueness, which was derived from public input, analysis of planning initiatives, existing development, physical characteristics, and social and economic conditions.



The Eustis Downtown Master Plan marks a pivotal step toward revitalizing the city center while preserving our unique charm. With a clear vision in place, once the plan has been approved, the CRA Board can focus on the implementation phase, addressing infrastructure needs, development projects, and funding strategies. Ongoing community input will continue to help guide details and ensure alignment with our

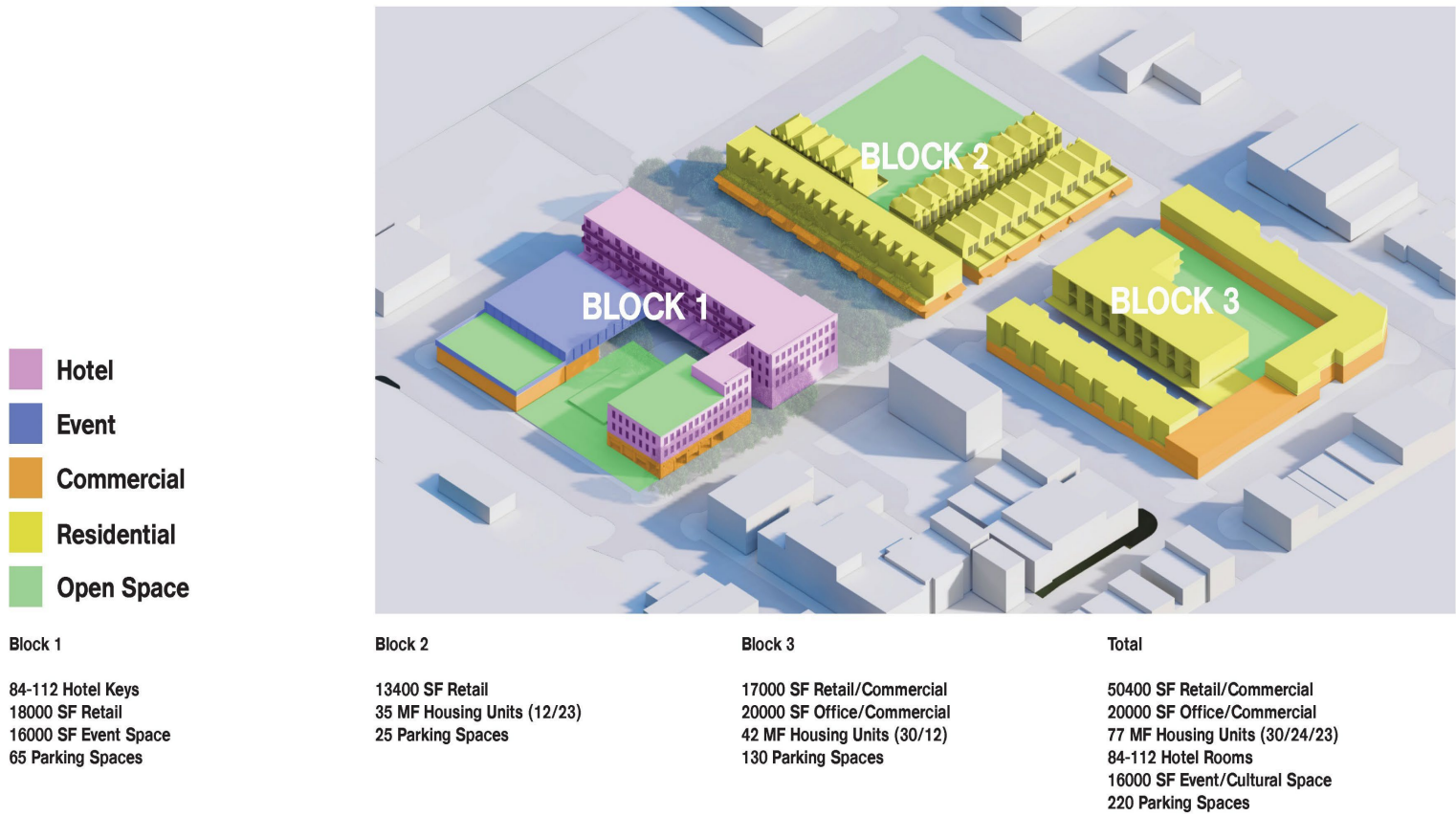
community values. As the project moves closer to construction, collaboration between all stakeholders will be key to transforming the Downtown Master Plan vision into a vibrant, sustainable downtown for Eustis. The Master Plan development process began and ended with a community meeting of residents, stakeholders, businesses and public officials. Additional opportunities for public input while held in between.



Former Waterman Site Development

With the completion of the Downtown Master Plan, the long-anticipated redevelopment of the former Waterman Hospital Site is moving closer to reality. Pending CRA Board approval, the Downtown Master Plan recommendations for the development of the currently vacant 4.8 acres, 3 block area will be implemented. The Plan was created with broad-level, comprehensive public input. The presentation of the final draft at the concluding Master Plan Review Community Meeting, at the Eustis Women’s Center, received very positive feedback and enthusiastic support for moving forward.

Waterman Site



Infrastructure Projects Supporting Redevelopment
Infrastructure serves as the backbone of a thriving economy, paving the way for sustainable progress and enhanced living standards. Infrastructure improvements projects underway by the City of Eustis and the CRA will play a vital role in supporting redevelopment and enhancing the quality of life within the CRA. Investments in better roads, utility systems, water, wastewater treatment, and stormwater will result in improved access to clean water and sanitation, which promotes overall well-being. Smoother roads with access to previously inaccessible homes and infill lots. More reliable power supply

allowing for upgrades to the communication systems e.g, broadband networks. Increase in redevelopment and development opportunities, leading to more residential and business growth. Altogether these and many other associated benefits of the current infrastructure improvement projects will provide a brighter and more vibrant future for CRA residents and businesses.



Bates Ave Wastewater Treatment Plant Expansion

Work began on the Bates Ave Wastewater Treatment Plant in June of 2023. This \$12.2 million dollar upgrade will increase plant capacity from 2.4 MGD to 3.2 MGD. The City now has comprehensive water and wastewater master plans to assist staff in planning for future growth as well as to troubleshoot future infrastructure challenges in a more efficient manner. Approximately 1,200 existing homes in the service area, including CRA residents will also offered connection to the sewer system, which will reduce the number of septic systems. With the upgrades the expanded system will process and make more reclaimed water available for irrigation, reducing the city's need for groundwater withdrawals.

Coolidge Street Drainage Project

The Coolidge Area/Rosenwald gardens Project focuses on improving utility services in the eastern area of the city. It includes the installation of an 8-inch diameter water main and a 12-inch diameter gravity sewer with manholes to meet future capacity requirements.

The project aims to enhance the utility system serving the area including water, sewer, stormwater, streets, sidewalks, fire hydrants, etc. Balances utility flows, improves infrastructure, better access for public safety, and facilitates workforce housing will also be derived from this project. The area land that will be made accessible development will support the building of house for police, firefighters, teachers, nurses, medical assistants, hospitality workers, and service industry, etc.



McDonald Avenue Sewer Upgrade

This project, when completed, will reroute the gravity sewer main to avoid interference with possible future developments and correct the pitch to prevent future maintenance issues. It also involves putting in a new sanitary line on McDonald Ave from the west side of Bay St /SR 19 to an existing line just west of McCulloch's Alley. The project will facilitate the redevelopment for the Waterman site.

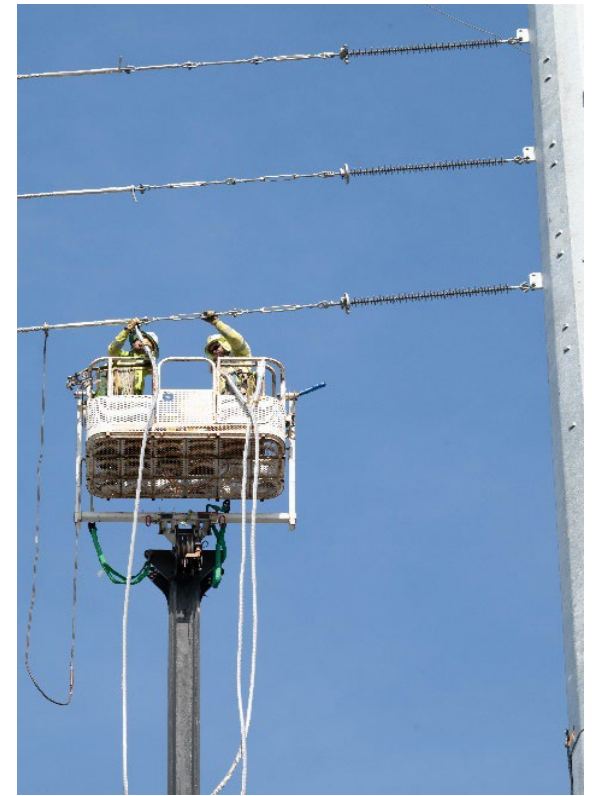
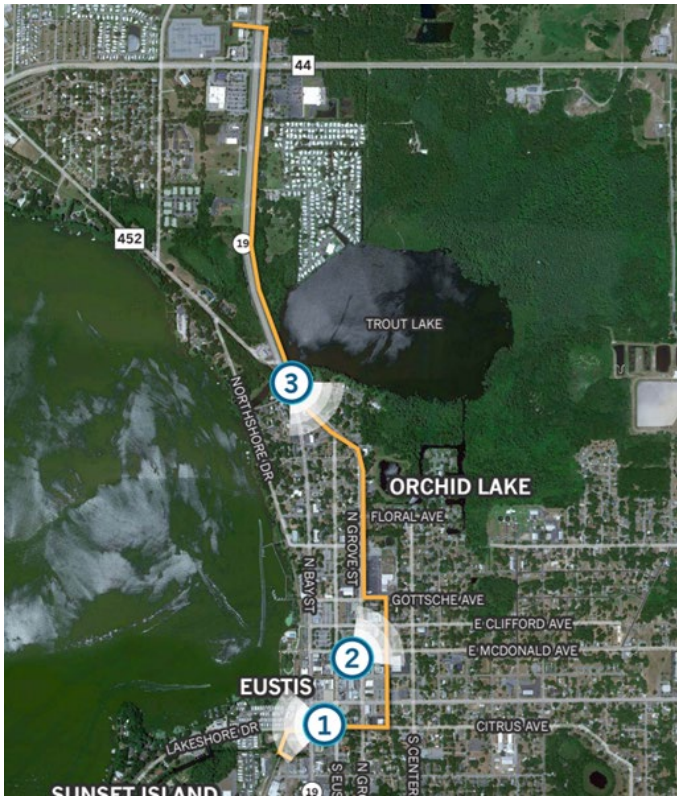


Eustis Transmission Reliability Project/ Duke Energy Power Supply Upgrades

Duke Energy is making improvements to its transmission system in and around the City of Eustis to provide additional power capacity to support the growing energy demand in the Eustis and help prevent outages and improve restoration times. While this is not a CRA project, it will have an extremely significant impact on the CRA. It will enhance home values, improve energy efficiency, and support the integration needs of smart home devices.

Duke Energy is working on the Eustis-Dona Vista Transmission Reliability Project to improve service reliability and accommodate future growth in Eustis, Florida. The project involves rebuilding and partially rerouting a 2.2-mile transmission line from the Dona Vista substation to the Eustis substation. Approximately 1.4 miles of the line will be relocated along a new route, while 0.8 miles will remain in the existing utility easement area.

The upgraded transmission line will be built on steel monopoles, standing 90 to 150 feet above ground, and will add capacity to support the growing energy demand in the region. This initiative aims to enhance system reliability and minimize the risks of customer outages.



FDOT Road Improvement Projects

On August 26 the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) began two road improvement projects on State Road (SR) 19 that run through Downtown Eustis.



The \$12.4 million projects are intended to improve safety by upgrading multiple intersections within the SR 19 corridor and resurfacing the roadways. The road is split along this section, with the northbound portion known as Grove Street and the southbound portion known as Bay Street.

Improvements to the roadways include constructing raised intersections to reduce vehicle speed on Grove Street at Magnolia and Gottsche Avenues, and on Bay Street at Magnolia, MacDonald, and Clifford Avenues. Additional work includes reconstructing and extending curbs to promote safe turning speeds and reconstructing traffic signals at Orange Avenue and at Clifford Street.

The project will also add shared lane markers on Grove Street and Bay Street. These markers will denote a shared lane for cyclists and motorists. Upgraded lighting, drainage, landscaping, signs, striping, and pavement markings will be included. FDOT recently installed Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons and additional pedestrian crossing signage on both Grove and Bay Streets.



Rendering of a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon & Raised Crosswalk

Waterfront CRA Area

Ferran Park Lake Walk on the eastern shore of Lake Eustis affords sunset views, 20 boat slips and 4 gazebos. This iconic park is located on the shores of beautiful Lake Eustis provides a glimpse into our history which includes the beautiful, restored sea wall running along the lakefront to the Mediterranean style bandshell (listed on the national historic register) located at the northern end of the park. along the walk's expanse or by resting on one of its many shaded benches.



Ferran Park Seawall Repair

It is critical to protect the long-term stability, function, community and economic development value of Ferran Park. Work has begun to restore the structural integrity of a 70-foot strip of the seawall supported by a pin pile system, concrete encasements, and replacement of the current steel cap. The work is expected to be completed by late Summer 2025.

New Business Openings

The CRA continues to experience new business openings downtown, which stimulates economic growth, provides an additional variety of products and services, and helps creates that vibe that attracts new customers and visitors.





East Town Infill Development

East Town is seeing a significant increase in new home construction on infill lots. The development of previously vacant parcels is helping revitalize the CRA. The completion of the City's Bates Ave Water and Wastewater Treatment Plant, and the Coolidge Street Utility Enhancement and Stormwater Drainage projects will make approximately 200 more lots available for construction, which will be served by the newly expanded services.

By filling in gaps between existing developments, infill growth will create more walkable and accessible neighborhoods. Infill development can reduce the cost of providing public infrastructure and services by concentrating development in existing areas. Also, the infill development is reducing the need for new infrastructure, conserving land, and protecting the City's existing natural resources by avoiding sprawl. *Picture below are: MacDonald Manor Apartments at the corner of Dewey Street and MacDonald Ave and; new homes at the corner of Prescott Street and MacDonald Ave.*



2024 FINANCIALS AT A GLANCE

The Eustis CRA is funded through the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) methodology. Incremental revenue is calculated based on the increase in taxable property values between the “base year”, and the current taxable value. Per the adopted Redevelopment Plan, the base year established for this purpose is 1990.

The incremental increase is deposited into the Community Redevelopment Trust fund for a steady source of funds to be used to finance the projects and programs identified in the Eustis Redevelopment Plan. The 1990 tax base for the Downtown and East Town CRA (and expanded) area was 37,095,164.

The taxable value for FY 2024 was 124,232,281. The tax value increased from 145,084,266 in FY 2023 to 160,606,415 in FY 2024, a taxable value increase of 11 percent.

**Community Redevelopment Trust Fund
Balance Sheet (Unaudited)
September 30, 2025**

Assets

Cash and Cash Equivalents	3,551,151
Accrued Interest	83,455
Prepays	326
Total Assets	3,634,933

Liabilities

Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities	30,804
Total Payables and Liabilities	30,804

Reserves for Future Projects

Nonspendable:	
Prepaid Expenditures	326
Restricted for:	
Redevelopment District	3,603,803
Total Reserves for Future Projects	3,604,129
Total Liabilities, Reserves for Future Projects	3,634,933

**SCHEDULE OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES, AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCE BUDGET AND ACTUAL
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT TRUST FUND, FOR THE YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2024**

	Original	Budgeted Amounts Final	Actual	Variance Final Budget
Revenues				
Intergovernmental:				
Incremental Tax Transfers	628,214	628,214	593,529	(34,685)
Miscellaneous:				
Interest	65,000	65,184	148,797	83,613
Total Revenues	693,214	693,398	742,326	48,928
Expenditures				
Current:				
General Government				
Operating	105,495	236,048	217,037	(19,011)
Direct Operating Allocations	128,323	5,000	-	(5,000)
Non-Departmental Incentive	245,000	851,583	324,771	(526,812)
Capital Outlay	934,000	1,482,039	107,731	(1,374,308)
Debt Service				
Principal	123,600	122,201	122,201	-
Interest	74,549	75,948	75,948	-
(Total Expenditures)	(1,610,967)	(2,772,819)	(847,687)	(1,925,131)
(Deficiency) Excess of Revenues Over Expenditures	(917,753)	(2,079,421)	(105,361)	(1,974,059)
Other Financing Sources (Uses)				
Operating Transfer to Other Funds	-	-	-	-
Operating Transfers from Other Funds	784,683	784,683	784,499	-
Total Other Financing Sources (Uses)	784,683	784,683	784,683	-
Excess of Revenues and Other Financing Sources Over Expenditures and Other Financing Uses	(133,070)	(1,294,922)	679,138	(1,974,059)
Fund Balance, Beginning of Year	2,924,991	2,924,991	2,924,991	-
Fund Balance, End of Year	\$2,791,921	\$1,630,069	\$3,604,129	\$(1,974,059)



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