

CITY OF MILTON

CRA ANNUAL REPORT

2017

The CRA Board is made up of the eight members of the City Council. The CRA Board sets the goals, determines the strategy for the Agency, and approves its budget and spending activities. All CRA Board meetings are open to the public and are held every month in the Council Chambers prior to regular City Council meetings on the second Tuesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. We encourage you to attend!

Milton, is a city rich in history and cultural heritage. The Panhandle of Florida offers an enhanced quality of life and Milton, as part of the region, offers an authentic hometown experience. With its charming neighborhoods, inviting storefronts, and cozy restaurants Milton is a unique destination location located on the Blackwater River. Milton was founded in 1844 making it one of the oldest cities in the state. Evidence indicates it was in fact a one time “mill town”. Our Veterans Memorial Park, the Riverwalk and historic district complement the community.

Today, Milton remains an engaging family-oriented place with its highly-rated school system and close proximity to major Florida employers and tourist destinations; yet, it maintains its cozy small town feeling. Milton is the ideal place to live, work, and play!

CRA Goals

- **Aggressively pursue redevelopment/revitalization to enhance economic vitality and livability utilizing available incentives**
- **Implement the waterfront redevelopment plan in function, activity and form**
- **Improve CRA district conditions in both physical and social quality while preserving the areas historical significance**

The Milton Community Development Agency (CRA I) was established in 1982 with an anticipated 30 year life as a redevelopment district. In 2012 the Districts life was extended for an additional 30 years. In addition to assisting with several major projects the CRA also funds programs which aid in re-development and revitalization of the downtown district by stimulating economic activity.

The CRA continues to be instrumental in the improvement of the downtown economy and aesthetics within the CRA area.

The downtown area has many valuable assets that still need to be revitalized, and a great deal of structures and open space that should be better utilized. Additionally private property values have illustrated the importance of extending the CRA.

The City of Milton in conjunction with the CRA Board hired Peter J. Smith and Co. in 2014 to develop a Master Plan. The Riverfront Master Plan may need to be revisited in light of recent decisions in regard to the Courthouse. Highway 90 also poses its challenges to the community and options to resolve the question of crossing the Blackwater River continue to be explored. The Florida Department of Transportation will soon release the results of a multi-year Project Development and Environmental Study (PD&E) identifying a preferred alternative of those analyzed.

In 2017 the City of Milton created CRA's II North and III South. In the process of establishing both the County identified that a portion of the property enrolled in CRA III south was inadvertently historically included in CRA I. The City is working with the County to reestablish appropriate boundaries for the new Southern CRA and our existing CRA. CRA II North has been finalized and TIF revenue is not anticipated until additional investment in the area occurs. The City is modeling the area for future development.

ACTIVITY SUMMARY

During the reporting period, October 2016 – September 2017, the City of Milton Community Redevelopment Agency placed an emphasis on promotional events in the Downtown area. These events have been tremendously successful. Attendance has risen each year since the City placed an emphasis on these activities.

Events

The CRA Board funded a number of promotional events and activities that increased traffic, materially engaged, and promoted the CRA district. In total there are 40 weekends programed in a calendar year. The number of events just keeps growing.

- Bands on the Blackwater (20)/ Market Nights
- Waterfest (2)
- Movie Night (6)
- Annual Scratch Ankle

Other Events

- Mardi Gras Parade
- Riverwalk Art Festival
- 4th of July Riverfest
- Memorial Day Celebration
- Veterans Day Celebration
- PumpkinFest
- Light Up Milton

The Community Redevelopment Agency supported eight more special events during the 2016-2017 fiscal year. Each unique event contributed to the local economy and the CRA's mission to improve the quality of life in the City of Milton. The listing found here is not inclusive.

Current areas of Interest

- Finalize CRA III establishment
- Research Façade Improvement Loan Program
- Establish a Park Strip along the Blackwater River in CRA II North
- Pursue the Milltown Village Development Concept
- Explore Staffing the CRA
- Explore future use of the Courthouse grounds

Capital improvement/Rehabilitation projects

- Link Carpenters Park to the Heritage Trail system
- Link Trail system to Historic CBD
- Link Historic CBD to the Village of Bagdad

Studies & other initiatives

- Update Riverfront Master Plan
- Complete Carpenters Park Planning Process

Festival and Event Area

The Festival and Event Area project addresses some major issues that are keeping our downtown area from realizing its full potential. Recognizing that our existing festival and area is in need of some major improvements and addressing those needs, is truly what is at the heart of the project. The project will be completed in phases when funding is adequate starting with infrastructure, streetscape, sidewalks, landscaping, and parking that will make using the downtown a more pleasant activity area. In addition, the project will help to turn the downtown area into a place of varied activities where people will want to come and stay all day and to make an experience out of it. The project will be a catalyst for new business, more restaurants, more housing, more activities, and more events for users of all ages.

Looking Forward

Recognizing that the downtown CRA district is the historic heart of our city and as such reflects our history and culture the CRA embraces the City's Riverfront Master Plan and its associated activities. Moving into 2018/2019 the CRA will partner with the City to maintain alignment with Master Plan and move forward with the implementation and development of the plan. This plan will require partnerships with business owners, developers, city staff, personnel and community stakeholders alike. With this in mind the CRA and the City will identify issues that are barriers to economic growth and work with our partners to address those needs. Identifying solutions to those issues, within the downtown CRA, is a common goal that is in alignment with our citizen's vision for the district. We believe that the empty storefronts are a deterrent to new business and an eye sore on the community. We will develop programs to address this issue and through partnerships will help to grow our economy and provide for other economic opportunities.

Below is the City of Milton CRA 2017 Revenue and Expense Report:

DESCRIPTION	BUDGET	ACTUAL	BALANCE
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D/town redevelopment rev			
Other Grant Revenue			
O/S Rev from Local Units	44,947.00	44,947.00	
City Portion of TIFF	23,873.00	23,873.00	
Special Events			
Promotional	30,450.00		30,450.00
5K Run		235	-235
Band on the Blackwater		30,700.00	-30,700.00
Movie Night		5,650.00	-5,650.00
Scratch Ankle		1,550.00	-1,550.00
Market			
DT-Other		1,275.00	-1,275.00
Milton in May		8,500.00	-8,500.00
Water Festival		775.5	-775.5
Wine & Food Festival		325	-325
Miscellaneous Revenues			
Interest income		36.78	-36.78
Amount Brought Forward			
Misc Donations			
O/S Rev from Local Units			
Transfr from General Fund			
Trnsfr from W&S Fund			
Interfund Transfer In	68,070.00	68,069.41	0.59
Funds Brought Forward			
LS:	167,340.00	185,936.69	-18,596.69

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