

CRA INFO

In 1969, the Florida State Legislature enacted Part II, Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, enabling local units of government to set up a Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA). The overall goal of the legislature was to encourage local initiative in downtown and neighborhood revitalization and to provide maximum opportunity for private enterprises to participate in the redevelopment/revitalization of the designated areas. The five primary objectives of the redevelopment legislation are:

1. To address the physical, social and economic problems associated with slums and blighted areas;
2. To encourage local units of government to improve the physical environment (i.e. buildings, streets, utilities, parks, etc.) by means of rehabilitation conservation, or clearance/redevelopment.
3. To convey to local community redevelopment agencies the powers of eminent domain, expenditure of public funds, and all other general police powers as a means by which slums and blighted areas can be improved.
4. To enhance the tax base in the redevelopment areas by encouraging private reinvestment channeling of tax increment revenues into public improvements with the designated areas; and
5. To eliminate substandard housing conditions and to provide adequate amounts of housing in good condition to residents of low or moderate income, particularly to the elderly.

To be designated as a redevelopment area, the area must meet the criteria outlined in Chapter 163.340, Florida Statutes. Areas can be designated as blighted if:

1) There is a substantial number of slum, deteriorated, or deteriorating structures and conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes or one of more of the following factors which substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth of a county or municipality and is a menace to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare in its present condition and use:

- a. Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout;
- b. Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness;
- c. Unsanitary or unsafe conditions;
- d. Deterioration of site or other improvements;
- e. Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the air value of the land; and
- f. Diversity of ownership or defective or unusual conditions of title which prevent the free alienability of land with the deteriorated or hazardous area; or

2) There is faulty or inadequate street layout; inadequate parking facilities; or roadways, bridges, or public transportation facilities incapable of handling the volume of traffic flow into or through the area, either at present or following proposed construction.

On March 14, 2000 the Board of County Commissioners made a finding of necessity and of blight conditions and adopted Resolution 2000-82. All of the conditions or “blight” except the

one dealing with tax delinquency, were met. The Board of County Commissioners also found that “the rehabilitation, conservation or redevelopment, or a combination thereof” of the designated areas was necessary in the interest of the public health, safety, morals or welfare of the residents of Collier County, Florida.”

The Board of County Commissioners further adopted Resolution 2000-83 on March 14, 2000, which established the Collier County Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) and declared the Board of County Commissioners to be the CRA Board, in accordance with Section 163.357 of the Florida Statutes. The section states that members of the governing body may be members of the Agency, but such members constitute the head of a legal entity, *separate, distinct, and independent* from the Board of County Commissioners. Section 163.370, Florida Statutes outlines the powers of Community Redevelopment Agencies. These powers include:

1. Executive contracts;
2. Hiring staff;
3. Disseminating community redevelopment information; and
4. Undertaking and implementing community redevelopment and related activities (property acquisition, demolition and removal of buildings; installation, construction, or reconstructions of streets, utilities, parks, playgrounds, and other improvements necessary to carry out the plan; and disposition of any property acquired) within the community redevelopment area.

Resolution 2000-83 also provided for the creation of advisory boards for each component area of the community redevelopment area in the unincorporated area of Collier County, to be composed of citizens, residents, property owners and business owners or persons engaged in business in the area. The responsibilities of the advisory boards were determined by a separate resolution of the CRA, and appointments were made in Spring and Summer of 2001. To learn more about the CRA Advisory Boards, please see the link located on the first page of this website and click on “advisory boards.”

As required by State Statute, a redevelopment plan that provides the framework for effective redevelopment of the Community Redevelopment Area was prepared and presented to the Collier County Planning Commission, the CRA Board and the Board of County Commissioners. The Plan was adopted by the BCC on June 13, 2000 by Resolution 2000-181. In addition to providing flexibility for implementation of the goals outlined for the community area, the Plan also recognizes several funding sources for implementation including the use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF).

Tax increment Financing realizes the incremental increase in property tax revenues resulting from redevelopment and uses it to pay for public improvements needed to support and encourage new development. As value of property rises due to redevelopment investments, increased property taxes that result will be available to repay the public infrastructure costs associated with redevelopment. TIF is designed to allow local governments to finance, over the long term, front-end-costs associated with adoption of a redevelopment plan, repaving or rerouting of streets, providing open space, housing, redevelopment assistance or incentives and property acquisition.

For purposes of calculating the amount of tax increment revenues, the frozen tax base is generally the final 1999 tax roll.

Tax increment revenues can be used for the following purposes when directly related to redevelopment in the designated redevelopment areas:

- Administrative and overhead expenses incidental to a redevelopment plan;
- Redevelopment planning and analysis;
- Acquisition of real property in the redevelopment area;
- Clearance and preparation of redevelopment sites, and relocation costs;
- Repayment of indebtedness and payment of expenses incidental to indebtedness;
- Development of affordable housing within the redevelopment area;
- Development of community policing innovations; and
- Construction of streets, utilities, parks, public areas, parking garages, and other improvements necessary to carry out the redevelopment plan.

To more effectively use the tax increment revenues, the CRA and the County will use other County, State and Federal funding sources, such as advances, loans, tax increment revenue bonds and grants, as appropriate and available to carry out the provisions of the plan.

The Plan is intended to provide a framework for policy decisions and public improvements and, therefore, recommends that the CRA use any and all methods necessary towards implementing the land as authorized by law. It also recommends that the plan be in effect for 30 years from the date of adoption by the Board of County Commissioners. Recognizing that opportunities and situations will change over the years, the plan is based on a five-year action plan; however, it may be modified or amended by the Board of County Commissioners during a noticed public hearing. The Board also has the ability to sunset the redevelopment program at any time.

To assist in redevelopment efforts, local CRAs were mandated to establish Redevelopment Trust Funds to serve as the depository for tax increment revenues. On June 13, 2000 the Board of County Commissioners adopted Ordinance 2000-42, establishing the Redevelopment Trust Fund and authorizing the annual appropriation of tax increment revenues. Monies allocated to this fund may be used by the CRA to finance or refinance any community redevelopment activity undertaken pursuant to the approved redevelopment plan.

Over the 30-year life of the redevelopment trust fund, incremental tax revenues can be spent as they accumulate. However, the common practice among redevelopment agencies is to invest in capital improvements early in the redevelopment process by using borrowed money that will be repaid by the tax increment revenue stream.