



## **Executive Director's Report**

### **Chipley Redevelopment Agency**

**4.8.2025**

#### **Honorable Mayor and City Council Members,**

I am pleased to present an update on the ongoing revitalization efforts within our community. We continue to make meaningful progress on several key restoration projects, thanks to the unwavering dedication of our local business owners and the steadfast support of the CRA Board and City Council. These projects not only preserve the historic charm of our downtown but also contribute to sustained economic development and a deeper sense of community pride.

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#### **Project Updates**

##### **• The Old Blackburn Building (1265 Church Ave., 1267 Church Ave., 793 Main St.)**

The Corbitt Family has officially entered Phase 2 of the restoration of the historic Blackburn Building. Their efforts reflect a deep commitment to honoring the past while building for the future. With steady momentum, they are transforming this treasured structure into a lasting legacy for generations to come. We are incredibly grateful for their vision and dedication, and the CRA remains fully supportive of their continued progress.

##### **• 781 Main St.**

Ms. Curlett has made commendable progress in the revitalization of her historic downtown property. Phase 1, which focused on interior renovations, has been successfully completed. She is now moving into Phase 2, which includes exterior improvements. Current efforts involve the repair of rotting wood and preparation for a fresh coat of paint. Upon completion, the property will serve as an AirBnB, adding both character and economic value to the district. We are excited to see this venture come to life and look forward to its contribution to the local hospitality landscape.

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#### **Grants & Legislative Concerns**

This month, we successfully closed out three long-standing grants. We are actively managing six open grants and currently have three additional applications in the final paperwork phase, pending CRA Board approval. These upcoming projects are thoughtfully designed to further enhance the beauty, accessibility, and vibrancy of Downtown Chipley.

However, we must also address an urgent concern. House Bill 991 and Senate Bill 1242—proposing the dissolution of all Community Redevelopment Agencies across the state—are rapidly advancing through the legislative process. If enacted, these bills would effectively eliminate CRA funding after July 2025, preventing us from launching any future projects under this program.

We urge all who have seen and supported the positive transformation in Chipley to reach out to our state legislators. Your advocacy is crucial in preserving the CRA's role in revitalizing our community and sustaining the momentum we've built together.

In the meantime, we are focused on making the most of our current resources. Should these legislative changes move forward, we are prepared to utilize our Special Projects budget to ensure we complete impactful, lasting initiatives that reflect the heart and spirit of Chipley.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Leah Pettis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "L" and a prominent "P".

Leah Pettis  
Executive Board