



Chipley Redevelopment Agency  
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January 1, 2026

Dear Mayor and Council Members,

We are pleased to provide this month's update on the continued progress of the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA). The new fiscal year continues to build momentum, with increased activity in the grant program and steady engagement from property owners and business operators throughout the district.

### **Project Activity**

No projects reached completion during November; however, several approved projects are currently preparing for their construction and improvement phases. CRA staff are working closely with grant recipients to support efficient project startup and ensure compliance with program guidelines as work progresses.

### **Director's Report**

#### **Grant Documentation Review and CRA Plan Considerations**

During a recent review of existing grant documentation, we identified the need to update and clarify what activities and improvements are eligible for grant funding. While the grant materials have been streamlined over time, continued refinement is necessary to ensure clarity, transparency, and accessibility for applicants.

Based on direct feedback, it is evident that current documentation does not clearly communicate to residents and business owners which property repairs or improvements are eligible or ineligible for funding. To address this gap, staff recommends the development of a detailed "How-to-Apply" checklist with clear, step-by-step instructions written in plain language. This approach will reduce confusion, improve compliance, and support equitable access to CRA grant opportunities.

The CRA should consistently provide the most accurate, viable, and understandable information possible to community applicants. To that end, CRA Administrator Susan Williams and I have requested a working session with the City Administrator and CRA support staff. The purpose of this meeting is to better understand operational needs, align expectations, and determine how best to support staff while ensuring the community receives the most current and accurate grant information.

## **CRA Plan Update Consideration**

Additionally, based on my attendance at the Florida Redevelopment Association (FRA) Conference this past October, it is clear that while the State does not mandate updates to CRA Plans on a fixed schedule, best practice strongly supports periodic updates. CRA plans are intended to be living documents and are expected to evolve to remain relevant, defensible, and implementable.

CRA Plan updates commonly occur through amendments tied to:

- Changes in redevelopment priorities
- Expansion or reconfiguration of project scopes
- New funding realities
- Strategic repositioning of investment and incentive programs

## **Rationale for Updating the CRA Plan**

The current CRA Plan was developed under economic and market conditions that differ from those of today. Updating the plan would allow the City to realign redevelopment priorities with current realities, ensure the responsible and strategic use of tax increment financing, and strengthen the CRA's ability to leverage private investment and pursue grant funding.

This update would represent a proactive governance measure, reinforcing fiscal accountability, legal defensibility, and long-term return on investment for the community.

## **Round Table: (Item b. Minutes Nov 18<sup>th</sup> )**

- i. Item b. of Nov. 18 Agenda - Director asked for clarification and Board alignment regarding the CRA Grant Program by handing out a form for all board members to fill out. Chair asked all board members to fill out and email (do not reply to all) to Director and Administrator. Any questions not answered will be discussed at next board meeting (Dec 16, 2025 meeting)
- ii. At this time no board members replied with answers to CRA Director's questions or completed the form.
- iii. Director emphasized the need to provide updated documentation and update CRA Plan. Was advised that Chair has archives and to look to Heather Lopez for other documentation.

Shirley R. Parrado, MA CRA Director

## **Looking Ahead**

The CRA remains committed to fostering revitalization, economic growth, and reinvestment across the district. With new grants approved and additional applications under review, we anticipate steady project activity in the months ahead. We look forward to another productive year strengthening our community through strategic redevelopment efforts.

## **Grant Program Update**

During the November meeting, the CRA Board reviewed and acted on the following items:

### Grant Review and Decision

- Application 2-2026 – Thomas Simmons, 1237 Church Ave.  
The Board voted to table the application. The Board determined that clarification is required, including:
  - If grant can be given due to scope of work or if applicant needs to apply for the loan program.
- Grant 01-2026 has been finished and waiting on check from City.
- Sister's Southern Charm LLC building has been sold and payment has been made.  
Waiting on confirmation from City.

## **New Business**

Documentation was received by Thomas Simmons and will be presented at Decembers board meeting.

### 2026 Officer Nominations

The Board conducted officer nominations for the 2026 calendar year:

- Vice Chair: Summer Thomas was nominated by Crystal Abel and seconded by Tracy Bell. The motion passed unanimously.

An Email was sent to remind the City of Chipley of the City Tax Increment Financing payment due to the Chipley Redevelopment Agency Trust Fund account that should be deposited on or before January 1, 2026. Awaiting response.

Thank you for your ongoing support and partnership as we continue advancing the CRA's mission.

Sincerely,  
Susan Williams  
CRA Administrator