



City of Eustis

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TO: EUSTIS CITY COMMISSION
FROM: TOM CARRINO, CITY MANAGER
DATE: OCTOBER 17, 2024
RE: DISCUSSION OF CRA PRIORITIES

Introduction:

On September 5, 2024, the Eustis City Commission asked to have a CRA priorities discussion on October 17, 2024

Background:

On September 5, 2024, the Eustis City Commission heard presentations from the Eustis Housing Authority and KTE Foundation regarding two community projects. As part of that discussion, the Eustis City Commission decided to schedule a more thorough discussion on CRA priorities.

Related to current finances, estimated recurring revenue for FY 24-25 is \$1,601,251, which includes \$896,578 from the City of Eustis, \$624,673 collectively from Lake County, and \$80,000 in interest. Excluding the Waterman site loan, CRA expenses for FY 24-25 are approximately \$1,300,000. Revenues are estimated to exceed expenses by about \$300,000, and if those funds remain unallocated, they will be reserved for future projects. The estimated funds reserved for future projects at the end of FY 23-24 was \$1,859,784.

Below is a list of current and future CRA projects.

Seawall - \$975,000 - FY 23-24 and 24-25

This is a project to repair cracking and avoid failure of the seawall on Lake Eustis.

Bay Street Drainage - \$145,000 – FY 23-24

The area along Bay Street between Orange Avenue and Magnolia Avenue has historically had flooding issues and insufficient stormwater infrastructure. These funds have been reserved to improve drainage in the area.

Street Rehab - \$50,000 to \$70,000 annually

These funds are budgeted annually to improve roads in the CRA and make possible a higher level of service than outside the CRA.

Sidewalk Rehab - \$45,000 to \$70,000 annually

These funds are budgeted annually to improve sidewalks and plantings in the CRA and make possible a higher level of service than outside the CRA.

Palmetto Plaza Hardscape and Shade Structure - \$469,000 – FY 23-24

This project is a continuation of improvements at Palmetto Plaza to include a shade structure, additional parking, play structures, and other amenities.

Carver Park Basketball Pavilion - \$400,000 – FY 23-24

The pavilion was proposed to protect the outdoor basketball at Carver Park from the elements.

Residential Rehabilitation - \$100,000 - FY 24-25

The CRA has funded residential rehabilitation projects through a program administered by the Lake Community Action Agency. Originally funded at \$250,000, the CRA board supplemented the remaining \$60,000 with an additional \$40,000 in new funding for a FY 24-25 total of \$100,000.

Former Waterman Site Debt Service - \$200,000 annually - \$2,600,000 balloon - FY 24-25

Originally purchased in 2020, the former Waterman site has a balloon payment due at the end of FY 24-25.

Former Waterman Site Redevelopment Project – TBD – Not Budgeted

The redevelopment of the former Waterman site could require an incentive package that may include subsidized land, infrastructure improvements, and/or rebates on incremental property taxes. That package will be dependent on yet-to-be determined factors.

Tour Boat Related Dock Improvements – TBD – Not Budgeted

The City issued a solicitation for tour boat operations in Ferran Park. The respondent to the solicitation is requesting dock and infrastructure improvements that may require an investment by the CRA.

Master Plan Improvements – TBD – Not Budgeted

The Downtown Master Plan is currently being finalized. That plan will outline a number of improvements that will need to be prioritized and budgeted.

Housing Authority Community Building - \$350,000 requested – Not Budgeted

This project has been planned for several years. The formal presentation and request was made on September 5, 2024.

Educational Facility – TBD – Not Budgeted

The Eustis City Commission authorized Vice-Mayor Emily Lee and staff to explore the possibility of an educational facility in the CRA. This has included working with educational partners to determine their facility needs. Staff is working on a Carver Park Master Plan to include this proposed educational facility.

Recreational Facility – TBD – Not Budgeted

The Recreation Department has identified a need for additional facilities City-wide, including Carver Park. Concurrently, Commissioner Hawkins and Sam Brinson have been working with KTE Foundation (an organization affiliated with Keon Ellis) on a facility that includes recreation, professional/personal development, tutoring, and other programming. The Carver Park Master Plan will include options for this facility.

Historically, the City and the CRA have held community meetings and public input opportunities to help in establishing CRA priorities. On January 25, 2022, the CRA Review Committee held a public input meeting at the Curtright Center to solicit input from the community on desired projects and initiatives. That meeting included a brief presentation, a review of existing goals, and solicitation of ideas within that goal framework. Following that effort, all attendees were given five dots to place next to projects and initiatives that they found important. Below are the results of the dot exercise.

Engaging Youth Activities/Youth Low and No Cost Programs/Multi-Use Rec Center	32
Attracting Community Serving Businesses	24
Traffic calming Bates/Clifford/McDonald	22
Aesthetically enhance downtown/mixture of activities/complementary uses	19
Support community development through design standards	15
Further define East Eustis Neighborhood Business District	13
Upgrade, enhance, unify waterfront/expand arts and culture	12
More City-wide events (Palmetto Plaza)	11.5
Street Lighting	11
Education Programs/Workforce/Professional Development	10
Support for Affordable Housing	10
Leverage City and CRA resources to support private investment	9
Establish linkages between downtown and East Eustis neighborhood business district	5
Expand Gateway Grant Program	4
Multipurpose facilities to host local events	3.5
Support a positive police presence	3
More business/showcase events	1
Bates Avenue Streetscape	0
Development of Spec Space and Rent Subsidies	0
Outdoor Market at Palmetto Plaza	0

Staff is seeking direction from the City Commission on projects and priorities moving forward.

Budget and Staffing Impact:

Establishing project and budget priorities will impact the budget moving forward, but it is not possible to estimate those impacts at this time.

Prepared by:

Tom Carrino, City Manager