

City of Apalachicola CRA Plan Update Workshop

Agenda
April 24, 2019

- I. Call to Order
- II. Approval of Agenda
- III. Public Comment
- IV. Unfinished business
 - Public forum scheduling, format, location(s) and topics
 - CRA Plan Update Recommendations
- V. New business
 - None at this time
- VI. Adjournment

Apalachicola CRA Director's Plan Update Summary

Augusta R. West

April 24, 2019

Over the next few months we will continue to revise the CRA Plan, taking input from the public, board discussions, State agencies, City staff, and others.

I've had a number of discussions with Caroline Smith, an Economic Development Planner with the Apalachee Regional Planning Council since meeting her at a coastal resiliency workshop several months ago. The mission of the ARPC is to "serve citizens and local governments by providing technical assistance and a forum for communication and collaboration to preserve and enhance the economic, natural and social environments of the Apalachee Region." The CRA Board has had a long-standing plan to host a forum at the Holy Family Center to generate public input from the Hill. This will focus on obstacles and potential solutions to the challenges of blight, housing, and creating economic development. The ARPC has offered to facilitate a series of 2-3 forums in the June-July 2019 time frame, free of charge, to assist the CRA in obtaining wide community involvement from throughout the district. In order to implement this service, the CRA Board needs to consider the following:

- Scheduling: Should all the meetings be in the evening, or different times of day?
- Format: How should the forums be divided and/or structured thematically?
- Location(s): It has already been decided to host at least one forum at Holy Family. Would you also like to see one at the Community Center or other venue?

On another note, the Department of Economic Opportunity is looking at some potential dates in May for a site visit to meet with City staff on challenges and resources.

Additional potential sources of funding for CRA priorities have been incorporated into an updated grant matrix. This is a concise way to keep funding sources and their timelines handy when considering new projects.

As a reminder, our goal is to have an updated plan in place to coincide with the beginning of the next fiscal year and the production of the 2019-2020 budget. To facilitate this, I've extracted the strategy components of the existing plan, expanded them, and created a format that utilizes action steps as we discussed. This document is attached as food for thought and fodder for discussion. What would you add or change? I look forward to hearing your ideas.

Apalachicola CRA FY 19-20 Proposed Initiatives and Action Steps (Draft for Discussion Purposes)

The following initiatives were extracted from the existing CRA Plan and from discussions that have taken place over the past few months. They are presented here for discussion with proposed action steps to guide specific activities in the next fiscal year. Action steps with greater detail will be created for any initiatives that the board would like to focus on.

Initiative 1: The enhancement of the historic Hill residential neighborhood and commercial district

1. Partner with the FAMU Business Innovation Center and H'COLA to host a forum at Holy Family facilitated by the Apalachee Regional Planning Council. The forum will focus on the obstacles and potential solutions to the challenges of blight, housing, and creating economic development.
2. Conduct surveys to collect additional public input.
3. Organize volunteers to perform a neighborhood cleanup.
4. Coordinate with the City to provide additional garbage pickup services of large household goods to decrease illegal dumping.
5. Apply for a Competitive Florida grant to create an economic development strategy for the Hill.
6. Improve street lighting and provide sidewalks if desired, possibly with a USDA Rural Business Development grant.
7. Increase code enforcement of abandoned properties (details to be developed).
8. Write grants to promote the historic preservation of the Holy Family center as needed.
9. Consider design initiatives that would identify the district as a unique and historic area and create a welcoming environment.

Initiative 2: The preservation, rehabilitation, and development of affordable and workforce housing

1. Apply for grants that fund the rehabilitation of existing homes for low income residents.
2. Research and promote incentives and partnerships to increase the stock of affordable/workforce housing.
3. Promote the amendment of Tourist Impact Tax legislation and the levying of this 1% bed tax via local referendum. Funds generated would fund ongoing housing and/or infrastructure projects (a recurring amount of approximately \$130,000 per year paid for by visitors).

Initiative 3: Develop strategies to enhance the business environment throughout the CRA District

1. Utilize tools recommended by the Apalachee Regional Planning Council, DEO, and other agencies (to be enumerated).
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Initiative 4: The development of sustainable, resilient, environmentally sensitive infrastructure that protects the natural resources in the river and bay, including stormwater, parking, and wastewater infrastructure.

1. Submit appropriation requests annually to the state legislature
2. Pursue Apalachicola Environmental Stewardship legislation
3. Apply for grants to address infrastructure issues that impact the CRA district

Initiative 5: The enhancement of tourism through historic preservation and cultural programming

1. Apply for historic preservation grants as needed to preserve historic City structures.
2. Other?

Initiative 6: The vertical development of the commercial and sports fishing industry

1. Create a working group to make specific recommendations.

Initiative 7: The continued development of facilities to support sports fishing, recreational boating and eco-tourism

1. Apply for a FRDAP grant to expand/improve facilities
2. Create a working group to make recommendations for specific needs that align with upcoming grant opportunities.

Initiative 8: The encouragement of development of light compatible industry at the Apalachicola Airport that will sustain businesses within the CRA area

1. Discuss opportunities with DEO, ARPC, and others.
2. Create a local working group to study the issue and make recommendations.

Initiative 9: Community Design

1. Establish design standards for streetscape and landscape projects in the CRA District
2. Adopt stormwater-friendly pervious parking as the design standard for all parking projects (when feasible).
3. Adopt a xeriscape policy and best practices plant list.
4. Determine style of lighting, benches, bike racks, and other street furnishings for future projects.