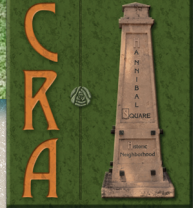




winter park

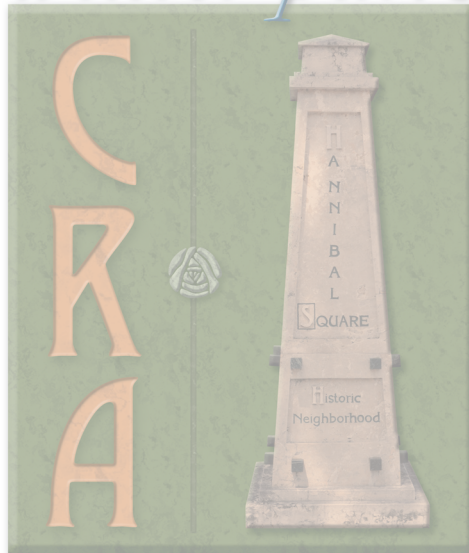


community  
redevelopment  
agency

# ANNUAL REPORT

fiscal year 2023

*winter park*



**community**  
redevelopment  
agency



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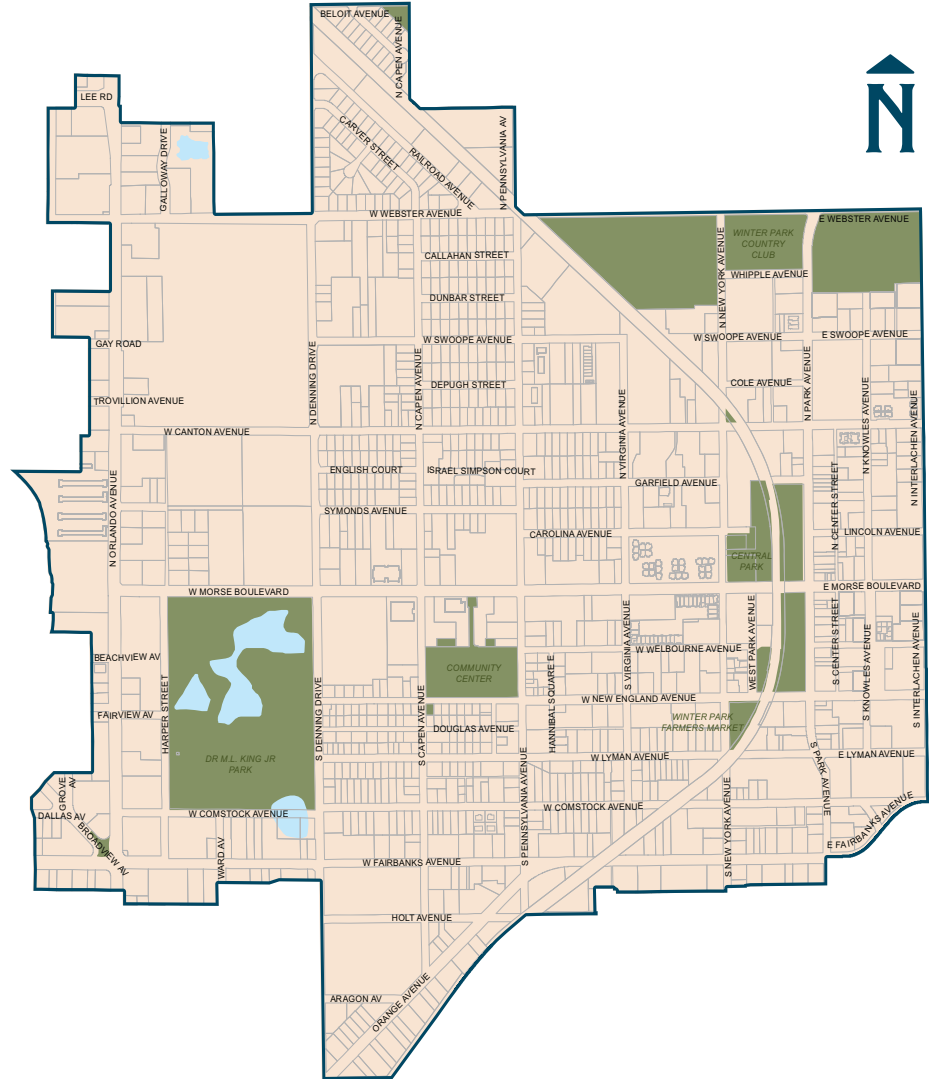
# mission

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To preserve and improve the residential viability and livability of the neighborhoods within the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) district by encouraging and initiating activities which empower residents to effect change and to enhance and improve the commercial areas of the CRA by encouraging and implementing activities that promote economic growth.

The Winter Park CRA is guided by a CRA Plan. The CRA Plan is designed to explore the critical factors that have shaped Winter Park and to identify opportunities to create a quality environment for residents and businesses. The CRA Plan has been the foundation for establishing and defining the vision and mission for revitalizing the Winter Park CRA district. The CRA Plan and the CRA Plan Amendment were adopted in August 1994 and February 1999, respectively.

# district map



# history



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Since 1994, the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) has played an integral role in the removal of blight and adding value to the downtown area and surrounding community. Established initially in the central business district and historic Westside neighborhood of Winter Park, the CRA expanded its boundaries to include the U.S. Highway 17-92 corridor in 1999. Today, the CRA encompasses 15% of the city's land area, has approximately 8% of the residential population, and contains over 50% of all businesses in the City of Winter Park. The CRA fulfills its goals by investing tax increment financing (TIF) revenues into capital improvements, incentive programs, and offering numerous initiatives to meet the needs of the community it serves. The CRA receives increment revenue from both the city and county for the area it encompasses.

In 1994, the CRA's taxable value of all properties was \$194 million. In 2023, that value has increased to over \$1.3 billion. This represents a 9.6% increase from the prior year. Taxable valuations for CRA properties have shown positive growth over the past year. This has allowed the CRA to further leverage TIF revenue to execute successful projects and programming for overall improvements in the district.

# history



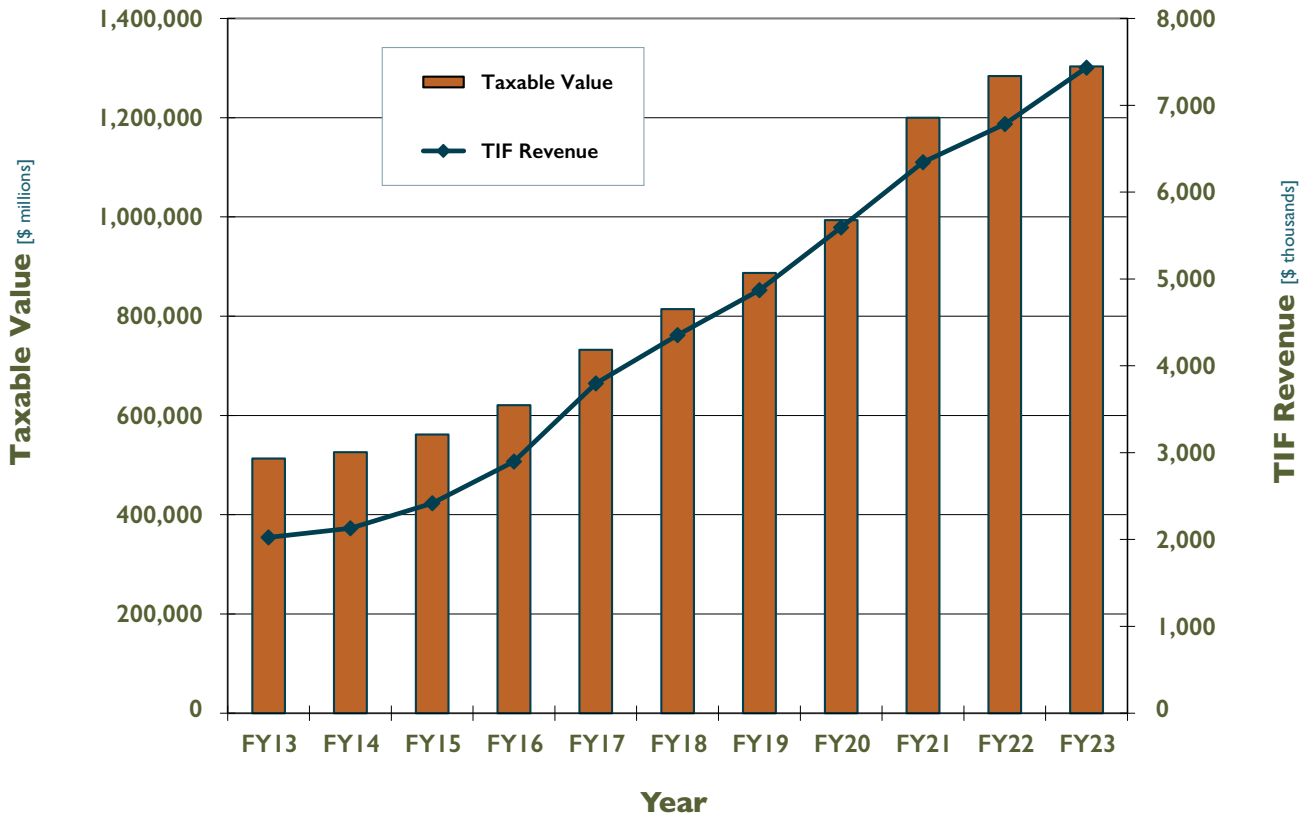
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Once again, the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) has been effective in achieving its goals set out by the CRA Plan. The 1994 and 1999 plan articulate several overarching goals relating to economic vitality, transportation, social development, public safety, business, property value, communication and housing.

After the success of the 2015 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) resulting in a highly visible Denning Drive complete street project as well as the designs for the improvements for Orlando and New York Avenues, staff was able to continue that momentum into new capital projects for the future. This includes a continuation of the CRA's buildout of a CIP through 2027, updated annually. The intent was to provide guidance on the remaining years of the CRA as well as plan strategically for the future.



## 10-YEAR HISTORICAL CRA TAX BASE & REVENUES



# capital improvement plan



With the taxable value in the district increasing this past year, more dollars from tax increment financing are needed to be allocated. After an initial Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) in 2015, staff has updated annually when projects are completed, new priorities are identified, providing the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) a ‘one stop shop’ view of capital investment on the horizon. The CRA has taken several steps towards implementation including design and execution of streetscape improvements, social and residential enhancements, and working in partnership with the initiatives of the city and county. This included several projects for 2023, including remaining work on the Central Park main stage, parks improvements, streetscape designs, improvements to history and culture, as well as others. All these items will be discussed in greater detail within this report.

Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 began with the completion of the Central Park Main Stage Renovation Project. With this project completed and being greatly enjoyed by the community, the efforts have moved toward setting the stage for future plans and installations. The Central Park Main Stage Project was also reported in the FY22 annual report.

Designs were completed for a new playground at Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK) Park with several productive community meetings resulting in valuable input to the design. In addition to the new playground design, there will be a memorial corner for the MLK Park, including a larger-than-life bronze likeness of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in an installation named *Ripples*. This installation has been the result of significant community input.

# capital improvement plan



In the heart of Hannibal Square, work also began on the Art and History Installation in Shady Park to tell the story of the important role the Black community played in the incorporation of Winter Park.

In addition to the playground improvements, work began on some much-needed traffic improvements on Orlando and New York avenues. Support was also provided to the community in several forms including guidance for community groups and coordination for entrepreneurship and business mentoring. Support was started in FY23 and will continue to carry through the next fiscal year.

As part of this CIP, there are several projects highlighted in the 'Projects' and 'Programs' section of the report. During FY23, CRA staff identified a total of six projects begun or completed, including downtown enhancements, MLK Park improvements, etc. There were also 11 categorized programs managed along with an additional four significant initiatives in development, working with stakeholder groups, or already in capital project design or contracting for execution. Projects, programs and initiatives are ongoing and can sometimes take several years (includes enough money to execute a project). This means funds for projects may carry over to ensure (1) total expenditure of CRA fund dollars (2) develop a fully collaborated project, or (3) be redesigned or reconsidered. To that end, total expenditure of the trust fund may not equal the total value of the projects described. Total expenditure from the redevelopment trust fund on these projects is estimated at \$1,314,735. Total value of all projects and programs at full implementation is valued at \$8,210,552.



# capital improvement plan

The Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) is committed to maintaining and creating programs that will accomplish both the continued implementation of the redevelopment plans, as well as address some of the immediate needs of our businesses, property owners and residents. Copies of the CRA Plan, previous annual reports, and recent updates can all be found on the city's official website at [cityofwinterpark.org/cra](http://cityofwinterpark.org/cra).

The projects and programs highlighted in this report are outlined in adopted redevelopment plans and are guided by a volunteer advisory board that make recommendations to the Community Redevelopment Agency Board. This board is comprised of the Winter Park City Commission and an appointed representative from Orange County. Redevelopment initiatives are coordinated by CRA staff and implemented in partnership with city departments, the Florida Department of Transportation, local non-profits, community groups, city boards, private sector vendors, and the public at-large. As part of additional steps taken in Fiscal Year 20, staff followed appropriate guidelines to ensure safety protocols as a part of the pandemic moving forward.

# board

The Board consists of the Mayor and City Commissioners, as well as an appointed Orange County Commissioner Representative. They are the decision-making body.



**left to right** ~ Commissioner Marty Sullivan, Vice Mayor Sheila DeCiccio, Mayor Phil Anderson, Commissioner Kris Cruzada and Commissioner Todd Weaver

**not pictured** ~ Orange County Representative Hal George

# advisory board

The Advisory Board is an up-to seven-member volunteer committee made up of residents and business owners appointed by the Mayor and City Commission. City staff works with the CRA Board and Community Redevelopment Advisory Board to carry out the CRA Plan.



**board members** ~ Jay R. Trent, Maria Bryant, Lindsay Eriksson and Carlos M. Benitez

**not pictured** ~ Matthew Downs, Sherwin Sargeant and Anjali Vaya

# city staff

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**city staff** ~ Assistant Division Director Kyle Dudgeon; CRA/ED Coordinator Anne Sallee and Director Peter Moore

**not pictured** ~ Streetscape Attendants Barry Carson, Conor Schudel and Mike Stiff





# projects

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## NEW YORK AVENUE

Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) staff continued to follow the Capital Improvement Plan by finalizing design plans on New York Avenue. Running parallel to Park Avenue, the right of way has great potential at its intersections for enhanced pedestrian connectivity and beautification. The road is also unique as it has railroad crossings at two points providing for larger than normal intersections. Staff went through several iterations of proposed improvements ultimately leading to an efficient and fiscally responsible scope of work. This includes bump outs, midblock crossings, intersection improvements for bus and pedestrian travel, and an increase to the total number of on street parking spaces.

The project is split into two phases. The first phase was at the intersection of New York and Fairbanks avenues, with a large amount of funding dedicated to street light mast arms. This stage of the project is complete with substantial completion concluding in Fiscal Year 2023. The next phase included the intersections of New York and New England avenues as well as Welbourne Avenue and Morse Boulevard. This project is near completion, with only milling and paving remaining. The estimated total cost of both phases is \$1 million.



# projects





# projects

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## MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. PARK IMPROVEMENTS

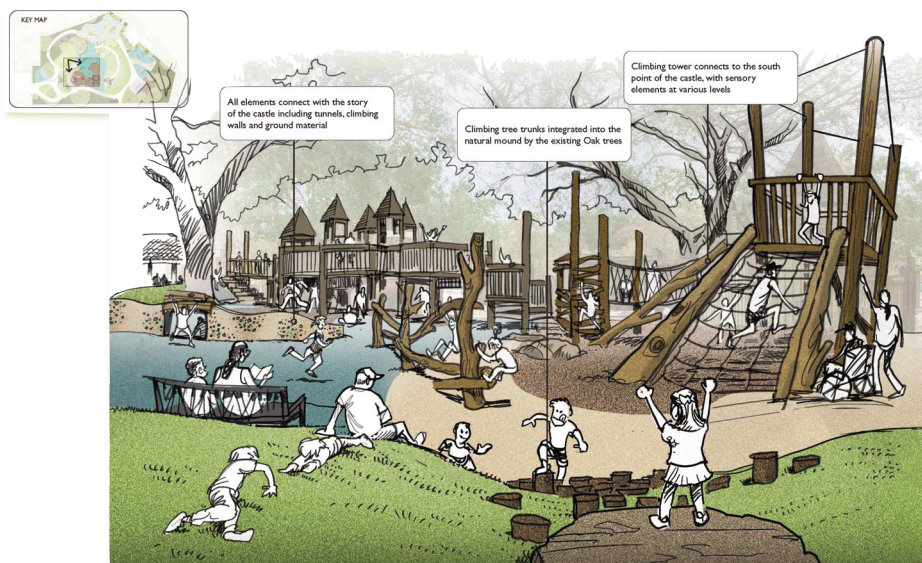
The Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) Plan amendment from 1999 makes several references to Martin Luther King, Jr. Park including “Lake Island Park is a huge hidden asset.” It further discusses the need for improvements to the area such as lake edge enhancements, landscaping, signage, street trees, plantings, parking and stormwater improvements.

Included as part of its Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), the CRA identified the park as an area for reinvestment. In 2021, staff met with the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board and Community Redevelopment Advisory Board regarding new improvements to the park. Financially, the CRA is anticipating a multi-year allocation within its current CIP towards MLK Park enhancements through Fiscal Year 2023. Currently, that is set at \$4.2 million. In 2021, the Agency approved \$625,000 for some of these improvements including fields, hardscape around the fields for future shade structure, sidewalks, sod, landscaping, and a memorial corner. The future \$2.4 million would be allocated to fund enhancements including but not limited to, restrooms and picnic pavilion, playground, connectivity and pedestrian pathways, fencing, gates, entry gateways, signage, stormwater and lighting. As the project progresses, staff anticipates a new estimate would be needed in order to determine updated costs.

Final design was completed for an upgraded playground, to add additional accessibility and safety features as well as improve the overall appeal and value of the playground while

# projects

retaining the Community Playground affectionately called “Castle Park” in response to community input. A ground level water feature will be added to the existing playground.



Another addition to the park as the result of a great amount of community involvement will be a bronze likeness of Martin Luther King, Jr., in an installation named *Ripples*. The project has been in planning for some time and when a committee was tasked with identifying naming opportunities to honor the memory and accomplishments of renowned 1964 Nobel Peace Prize winner Martin Luther King, Jr., Lake Island Park was renamed Martin Luther King, Jr. Park by the City Commission.



# projects

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## SHADY PARK ENHANCEMENTS

In coordination with improvements to park space, Policy 7.3A of the 1994 CRA Plan states the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) shall enhance public spaces. In addition, Policy 8.6D states open spaces shall be coordinated to provide a cohesive neighborhood. Shady Park fills this role in the Hannibal Square neighborhood.

Public process for the project included input by the residents, children, seniors, board members and community center program participants through several mediums including Nextdoor, online and written surveys, board and community meetings, door hangers and signage. Staff worked to integrate these thoughts into several key features. These include increased green/event space, elevated landscape, accessibility improvements, updated seating areas, kids' features, and highlighting the history and heritage of the neighborhood. To that end, the installation of a historical art feature was proposed for display on the north end of the park.

The art installation, which will tell the story of the Hannibal Square community members who were key players in the incorporation of the city, has been designed and is in the final stages of creation. With much communication between the artist and committee, construction is slated for spring 2024. The CRA has budgeted \$300,000 for this project.

# projects



- Heritage & History Memorial
- Increased greenspace & event space
- Addition of interactive gaming spaces
- Rehabilitation & highlighting of current historic markers
- ADA accessibility improvements, elevated landscape in key areas, hardscape & site amenity improvements, along with replacement of sod & trees as needed, will be done throughout the exhibit.

# projects

## DOWNTOWN ENHANCEMENTS

During this fiscal year, the Community Redevelopment Advisory Board and staff continue work to improve downtown.

## STREETLIGHTS, GARBAGE & RECYCLING CONTAINERS, COMMUNITY POLICING AND SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS

Every year, the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) works with several departments including Parks & Recreation, Electric Utility, Public Works & Transportation, and the Facilities Management Division, to identify opportunities to further improve downtown. This includes the rehabilitation and refurbishment of trash cans, street lights and sidewalks, to provide a more updated aesthetic. CRA staff is committed to maximizing the unique, but consistent look for the downtown area that is consistent with the district's charm and style. The CRA also supported elevated levels of community policing within the CRA district including weekly additional security details at key points in downtown. Total cost was \$104,017.





# projects

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## **DENNING DRIVE & WEBSTER AVENUE ROAD IMPROVEMENTS**

Continuing the work provided in Fiscal Year 2016, the Denning Drive rightsizing project has seen several benefits. The promotion of multi-mobility within the corridor with the creation of buffer space between residential and commercial properties, has sewn a closer pedestrian connection between Martin Luther King, Jr. Park and Mead Botanical Garden with safety enhancements including the installation of Rapid Rectangular Flashing Beacons (RRFB) for pedestrians to safely reach adjacent partnered parking facilities.

This improvement builds on this critical infrastructure, extending multi-mobility north of Denning Drive and Webster Avenue by providing a mixed-use path to Solana Avenue and the northern boundary of the CRA. As it exists today, this section of road is in dire need of repair. The concept showcases a 10-foot mixed-use path, 10-foot buffer space for shade trees, and two 10.5-foot vehicle lanes for traffic. The plan also contemplates a 6-foot pedestrian crossing with RRFBs north of Carver Street, which is in close proximity to the existing driveway aprons and parking area for the Orange County Public School's site.

# projects

## DENNING DRIVE & FAIRBANKS AVENUE INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS

With the purchase of the now demolished dry cleaner and spa properties near the Denning Drive and Fairbanks Avenue intersection, staff has moved forward with the design and construction of an extended southbound right turn lane at that location. Proposed improvements have been designed by a private consulting firm. The intention of the design is to provide relief for this traffic movement by installing a 120' turn lane and alleviating backed up congestion on Denning Drive. The project is slated for completion in Fiscal Year 2024.





# projects





# programs

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The CRA supports a number of initiatives devoted to improving the health, education and environment of the people and businesses it serves.

## **AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

Programs under this designation are designed to ensure safety and maintain the character of residential neighborhoods by completing necessary rehabilitation work to distressed single-family homes. In Fiscal Year 2023, the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) spent \$120,230.87 on total affordable housing projects. To date, approximately 148 homes have been improved through the Home Rehabilitation Program with over \$1.9 million since its inception. Given the nature of pandemic related inflation, the CRA also discovered the need to reevaluate total project costs for each project and its ability to make an impact. Through work with the Community Redevelopment Advisory Board, staff raised the total amount for each successful applicant by 50%, from \$20,000 to \$30,000. Coupled with other affordable housing initiatives, that total rose to \$3.9 million.

During the administration of the program, the priorities of expenditures started with safety improvements, which left a void in improving the aesthetic value of the home. Because of this, the Residential Driveway & Paint Programs were created. These programs focus on elevating the cosmetic, yet important aesthetics, by providing funds for driveway construction/rehabilitation as well as new paint for existing structures. Since inception, 37 homes have been supported with the upkeep and preservation of residential neighborhoods within the district.

# programs



Project Cost \$13,426  
Improvements: New roof, screens and paint



Project Cost \$19,263  
Improvements: General Cleaning, Painting, Exterior/Pressure Wash/Prime/Paint, Repair Walls, Repair Soffit on Multiple Sides, Repair Downspouts, Electrical Repairs, Replace 15 Windows, and Minor Landscaping in Back Yard



Project Cost \$13,426  
Improvements: New Patio Slab, New Fence, Exterior Paint, and Pest Control

# programs

## BUSINESS FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

This program provides matching grant funds up to \$20,000 toward exterior improvements to businesses within the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) District, supporting economic stability and maintaining the character and quality of commercial districts. To date, the program has successfully leveraged 71 projects with a 13:1 ratio of private to public funds. Total funds spent during Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 were \$88,780.





# programs

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## **QUALIFIED TARGETED INDUSTRY INCENTIVE PROGRAM**

The CRA promotes the expansion, growth and development of high-wage jobs to maintain the City of Winter Park's competitiveness as a location for major employers; incentivizing continued long-term investment and involvement in the community. The city and CRA have been successful with this incentive program by committing to adding up to 237 new jobs over the next six years – all of which come with an average annual wage over 200% of the average in Orange County. Total local support for FY23 was \$44,245.90.



# program support

The Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) provides funding to a selection of community partners that promote community leadership, healthy lifestyles and learning activities.

## **COMMUNITY CENTER PROGRAMMING**

Program selection is managed by a CRA partner – the city's Parks & Recreation Department. It includes participation by over 52,000 resident and visitor interactions per year from senior to after-school programs.

## **SUMMER YOUTH ENRICHMENT PROGRAM**

The CRA, in partnership with numerous local nonprofit organizations, provides paid internships and local summer camp opportunities to CRA high school students. The internships focus on providing real-world work experience while developing business etiquette skills to aid in future career success.

The program has been accountable for 220 students during its lifetime, and several have found full-time employment with the nonprofit for which they interned. The summer 2023 cohort had two students continue into a job following the program – one part-time at the Community Center and one full-time at one of the city's golf courses.

# program support

## PARK AVENUE DISTRICT

In December 2022, the Park Avenue Merchants were authorized by the State of Florida to become the city's first Main Street Program, the Park Avenue District. A Main Street District is often formed to create, preserve and add value to downtown community cores to help them thrive. The CRA helped foster this idea through their first year with a matching grant in the amount of \$50,000. The District was successful in surpassing its goals for first year fundraising and has provided a great benefit to the city, its merchants and guests.



# community support



The Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) works in partnership with several community organizations also devoted to improving the health, education and environment of the people and businesses it serves.

## ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT GRANT

With the understanding that partnerships can emerge between budget cycles, the organizational support grant was created to financially assist organizations with programming and events that produce direct benefit to the district. In the past, the grant has partnered with several organizations including the Center for Independent Living and Winter Park Chamber of Commerce to improve the lives of residents and draw guests to downtown providing a direct benefit to the district and local merchants.

The Hannibal Square Heritage Center also partnered with the merchants in Hannibal Square to host two events to attract visitors to the area for a street festival with art, music and food from the area restaurants. The CRA provided \$2,500 in funds to support community policing and dissemination of information.

The Winter Park Woman's Club is housed in a beautiful and historic building within the CRA. They provide a large number of scholarships for Winter Park High School students headed to college, and have regularly scheduled programming, open to the public, that is informative and entertaining. One of their primary missions is the preservation of the historic building that is their home. When they needed help with that task due to the discovery of dry wood termites, the CRA provided \$5,000 to help with the job estimated at \$21,000.



community support



ENZIAN THEATER  
POPCORN FLICKS IN THE PARK

# community support



## ENZIAN THEATER'S POPCORN FLICKS IN THE PARK

The Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) provides monthly films in Central Park. The free, family-friendly event showcases films that are appropriate for all ages and include holiday classics. Popcorn Flicks in the Park encourages families and friends to gather and build community. It also helps promote economic viability by bringing foot traffic to shopping and dining areas.

## WINTER PARK PLAYHOUSE

The CRA provides funding for programming to the Winter Park Playhouse located on Orange Avenue. The purpose of the funds is to assist with the Playhouse's programming for youth and elderly in the district as well as provide for free or reduced-price plays.

## CREALDÉ SCHOOL OF ART

The CRA provides funding for programming and exhibits at the Hannibal Square Heritage Center, managed by Crealdé School of Art. This year marks the 13th year of the Heritage Center including an acknowledgement by neighborhood residents providing recognition for those that understand the importance of this community asset. The CRA also supports the Annual Unity Heritage Festival.

# community support



## **WELBOURNE AVENUE NURSERY & KINDERGARTEN**

Continuing to carry out the social side of the CRA Plan, funding is provided to the Welbourne Avenue Nursery & Kindergarten for physical building improvements and assistance in social programming for the district.

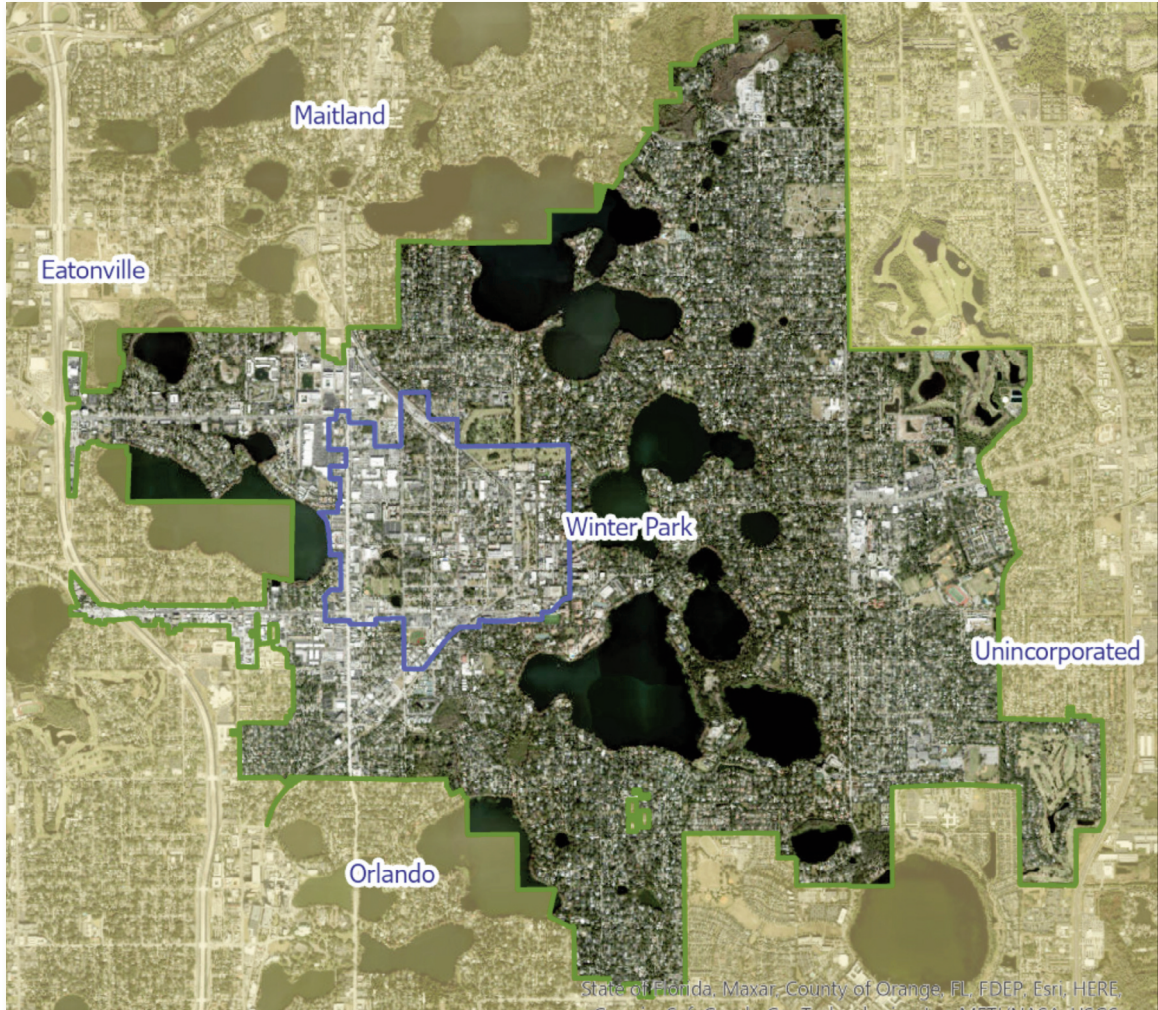
## **THE GARDENS AT DEPUGH NURSING CENTER**

Support for the social side of the CRA Plan is also carried out by The Gardens at Depugh Nursing Center. Funds are invested in the improvement of the building in order to provide additional capacity for social assistance.

# financials

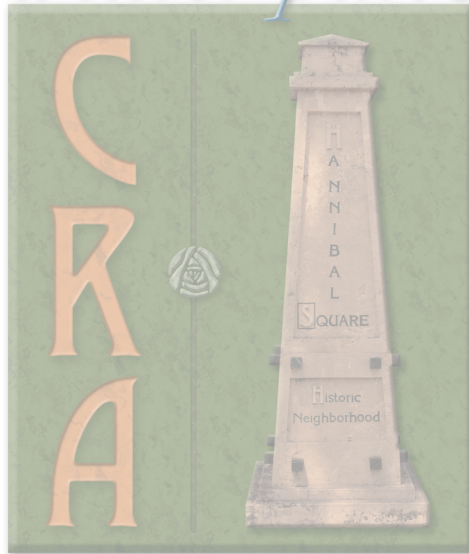
<b>REVENUES</b>	<b>Adopted FY 2022</b>	<b>Adopted FY 2023</b>
Intergovernmental Revenues	3,173,086	3,390,920
Charges for Services	—	—
Miscellaneous	50,000	—
Transfers	3,641,491	4,043,522
Fund Balance	271,814	—
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$ 7,136,391</b>	<b>\$ 7,434,442</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>		
Operating Expenses	582,920	1,132,386
Capital Projects	4,065,000	3,721,765
Debt Service	1,496,097	1,484,485
Organizational Support/ Community Initiatives	439,000	327,000
Reimbursement to Other Funds	123,974	62,759
Transfers to Other Funds	—	—
Contingency Reserve	—	706,047
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$ 7,136,391</b>	<b>\$ 7,434,442</b>
<b>EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER (UNDER) EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$ 0</b>	<b>\$ 0</b>

The most recent complete audit report of the Redevelopment Trust Fund as required in F.S. 163.387(8) may be accessed at [cityofwinterpark.org/finance](http://cityofwinterpark.org/finance).





*winter park*



**community**  
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