



Greater Frenchtown/Southside District

CRA 101 What is the CRA?

Welcome to the City of Tallahassee Community Redevelopment Agency (Tallahassee CRA) quarterly newsletter. Each issue of the newsletter will help strengthen your understanding of how the CRA operates, highlight CRA projects and programs and serve as a forum to further community conversations.

Many people have heard of the CRA but may not know exactly what it is, how it operates and why it's important in the community. During the coming year, we'll take a deep dive into these topics to help you learn more about the Tallahassee CRA.

What is a Community Redevelopment Agency?

Community redevelopment agencies (CRAs) have been used in Florida since the early 1970s to help revitalize designated areas of a community by providing a long-term source of funding to help address the physical, social and economic problems within those areas. A local government – city or county – is authorized under Chapter 163, Part III, of Florida Statutes to create a CRA in an area designated as slum or blight. The local government establishes its redevelopment area, identifies the blight condition, outlines the redevelopment goals with a community redevelopment plan and establishes a trust fund for the designated area. Funding is provided through a concept known as tax increment financing (TIF), which allows the agency to collect the increase in city and county taxable values (from the existing property taxes the city and county collect, not a new tax) within the redevelopment area for reinvestment only in the area from which the funds were collected. The reinvestment of the funds must be consistent with the community redevelopment plan.



The City of Tallahassee Community Redevelopment Agency

In June 1998, the Tallahassee City Commission approved the creation of the City of Tallahassee Community Redevelopment Agency (Tallahassee CRA). The Tallahassee CRA consists of two distinct redevelopment areas: the Greater Frenchtown/Southside Community Redevelopment Area (GFS District) and the Downtown District Community Redevelopment Area (DT District). The Tallahassee CRA is governed by a board that consists of the City of Tallahassee mayor and the four City commissioners.

When they convene as the CRA, they are CRA Board members, not City Commissioners. The actions of the CRA Board are distinct and separate from actions by the City Commission. The daily activities of the Tallahassee CRA are managed by an executive director that is designated by the City Manager.

The GFS District

In June 2000, the City Commission established the GFS District and adopted the Greater Frenchtown/Southside Community Redevelopment Plan. The GFS District consists 1,858 acres in three distinct geographic sections with 11 neighborhoods either fully or partially within the district. These neighborhoods include:

- Frenchtown
- Griffin Heights (along W. Tharpe St. only)
- Levy Park
- All Saints
- Myers Park
- Florida A&M Neighborhood Association
- Elberta Empire
- Providence
- Greater Bond (includes Villa Mitchell, Normal School and Saxon Street)
- South Bronough
- South City

The district also borders parts of Florida A&M University (FAMU) and Florida State University (FSU). The GFS District has been expanded twice, most recently in 2018 when the South City, lower Bond/Orange Avenue and Lake Bradford/Springhill Road study areas were added to the district. A map of the GFS District is available online at Talgov.com/CRA.



The GFS District Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) advises the CRA Board on redevelopment strategies to be addressed and implemented within the GFS District. Specifically, the CAC may make recommendations on expenditures and investments, changes to the redevelopment plan, district priorities and incentives to further redevelopment efforts.

There are nine members of the CAC, including four neighborhood representatives, two business representatives, an interested citizen representative

and non-voting representatives from FAMU and FSU. The CAC has played a key role in recommending a variety of redevelopment programs and projects since 2005, including the Business Façade Improvement Program. Recently, the CAC has been focusing on comprehensive strategies to address neighborhood needs. More information about the CAC, including the meeting schedule, is available online at Talgov.com/CRA

The DT District

In June 2004, the City Commission established the DT District and adopted the Downtown Community Redevelopment Plan. The DT District consists of approximately 440 acres located in downtown Tallahassee, between the northern and southern portions of the GFS District. The district is comprised of five sub-areas with distinct land uses, physical characteristics and functions. These sub areas are North Monroe Street, Downtown Core, Franklin Boulevard, Gaines Street and Capital Cascades. A map of the DT District is available online at Talgov.com/CRA. Like the GFS District, the DT District has an advisory committee – Downtown Redevelopment Commission (DTDRC), which also advises the CRA Board on redevelopment strategies in support of the DT District. Land uses in the DT District are predominantly office and commercial/retail, with some residential along Franklin Boulevard. Therefore, the DTDRC focuses primarily on major commercial developments. The DTDRC membership consists of nine representatives with extensive experience in the development and/or redevelopment of urban properties. This includes developers, real estate professionals, bankers or finance professionals, business owners and interested citizens.

The DTDRC played a key role in evaluating and recommending a variety of major redevelopment programs and projects, including the Aloft Hotel at the intersection of Monroe and Tennessee streets and the mixed-use Cascades Project under construction adjacent to Cascades Park. Recently, the DTDRC has focused on ways to improve pedestrian connectivity in the downtown area. More information on the DTDRC, including the meeting schedule, is available online at Talgov.com/CRA.

If you have recommendations for future topics that you'd like to see covered in this newsletter, please call 850-891-8357 or email CRA@talgov.com. You can also come to one of our meetings to let us know how we are doing. The meeting schedule is available at Talgov.com.

CRA CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER

*Meeting dates, times, and locations subject to change. Call the Department of Communications at 850-891-8533 for information, or you may view the current meeting agenda online at Talgov.com. Follow @CityofTLH on Twitter for City news.

Meeting Dates

- 26 CRA Board Meeting at 4 p.m. in the City Commission Chambers, City Hall, 300 S. Adams St.
- 26 CRA Budget Hearing at 6 p.m. in the City Commission Chambers, City Hall, 300 S. Adams St.

CRA-Sponsored Event Dates

- 5 Cascades Goes Gold - Hang Tough Foundation, Cascades Park
 - 20 Smokey Hollow Reunion and Festival - John G. Riley Center / Museum, Cascades Park
- Every Saturday - Frenchtown Farmers Market from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Frenchtown Heritage Hub, 524 N. MLK Blvd.

OCTOBER

Meeting Dates

- 1 Downtown Redevelopment Committee Meeting at 9:30 a.m. in the Florida Room, City Hall, 300 S. Adams St.
- 7 GFS Citizen Advisory Committee Meeting at 6 p.m. in the second floor conference room at the Renaissance Center, 435 N. Macomb St.

NOVEMBER

Meeting Dates

- 14 CRA Board Meeting at 9:30 a.m. in the City Commission Chambers, City Hall, 300 S. Adams St.

CRA-Sponsored Event Dates

- Every Saturday - Frenchtown Farmers Market from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Frenchtown Heritage Hub, 524 N. MLK Blvd.

DECEMBER

Meeting Dates

- 9 GFS Citizen Advisory Committee Meeting at 6 p.m. in the second floor conference room at the Renaissance Center, 435 N. Macomb St.

CRA-Sponsored Event Dates

- Every Saturday - Frenchtown Farmers Market from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Frenchtown Heritage Hub, 524 N. MLK Blvd.

GREATER FRENCHTOWN SOUTHSIDE DISTRICT SPOTLIGHT



In the GFS District, business owners can get assistance to help enhance the exterior of their facilities. This is known as the Business Facility Improvement Program (BFIP). BFIP allows qualified applicants to receive up to \$50,000 in matching grant funds for exterior improvements to their properties. The first \$10,000 in grant funds does not require a match; funds in excess of \$10,000 require a dollar for dollar match. Earley's Kitchen previously participated in this program. Learn more about how they used the BFIP below.

Earley's Kitchen transformed a vacant former beauty supply building at 1458 South Monroe Street into a cafeteria-style restaurant with the assistance of a \$45,000 BFIP grant from the CRA.

The funds were used for a variety of exterior renovations, including the replacement of exterior walls, new storefront windows and doors, upgrades to the existing parapet with modern metal panels, new signage, a concrete patio on the front of the building for outdoor seating and parking lot improvements. The exterior and interior renovations, which were completed in 2014, cost over \$165,000. Prior to the renovations, the building was valued at \$164,000. After, the value increased to \$199,000. In addition to the increase in property value, the project served as a South Monroe Street success story, encouraging other investments along South Monroe and Adams streets.