

OCALA COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

REVITALIZING OUR COMMUNITY

**FISCAL YEAR 2023
CRA ANNUAL REPORT**

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY?

There are over 220 Community Redevelopment Agencies currently operating in Florida. A Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) is a special district created by a local (city or county) government to carry out redevelopment activities in a specifically defined geographic area. The enabling legislation giving a city the authority to create a CRA is found in Chapter 163 Part III of the Florida Statutes. As prescribed in the statute, CRA redevelopment activities focus on making improvements to the physical environment within the redevelopment area – buildings and sites, streets and sidewalks, parks, and infrastructure.

These physical improvements are accomplished by the CRA funding capital improvement projects and partnering with the private sector. Redevelopment agencies invest public funds in redevelopment activities with the intent of encouraging private investment into properties. CRAs reinvest tax increment financing funds to attract private investment into economically distressed areas. The end product, resulting from these redevelopment efforts, is the transformation of underutilized properties and facilities into productive assets of the various communities within the CRA, as well as the city as a whole. A CRA can only expend funds to conduct redevelopment activities within the legally described CRA area. CRAs are also regulated under Chapter 189 as a ‘Special District’.

OCALA CRA

The Ocala CRA is divided into four subareas: Downtown, North Magnolia, West Ocala, and East Ocala. There are four Advisory Committees, one dedicated to each subarea, which make recommendations to the CRA Board on projects and programs. Each of the four subareas has its own redevelopment plan that reflects the unique challenges and goals within their respective areas.

Subarea	Establishment Date	Expiration Year
Downtown	May 24, 1988	2038
North Magnolia	November 2, 1999	2038
West Ocala	November 17, 2015	2045
East Ocala	May 17, 2016	2045

CRA REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Section 163.371 of the Florida Statutes specifies the annual reporting requirements for CRAs.

A community redevelopment agency must file an annual report with the county or municipality that created the agency and publish the report on the agency's website. The report must include the following information:

1. **Audit** - The most recent complete audit report of the redevelopment trust fund as required in s. 163.387(8).
2. **Performance data** for CRA including the:
 1. Total number of projects started and completed and the estimated cost for each project.
 2. Total expenditures from the redevelopment trust fund.
 3. Original assessed real property values within the community redevelopment agency's area of authority as of the day the agency was created.
 4. Total assessed real property values of property within the boundaries of the community redevelopment agency as of January 1 of the reporting year.
 5. Total amount expended for affordable housing for low-income and middle-income residents.
3. **Plan Goals & Objectives** - A summary indicating the extent to which the community redevelopment agency has achieved the goals and objectives set out in its community redevelopment plan.

The above three items are addressed in two separate documents.

Document 1 - Audit

In previous years, the CRA audit and financial statements were done as a part of the City's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR). Beginning in FY 2020, the CRA had a stand-alone, independent audit performed.

Document 2 – Performance Data & Plan Goals & Objectives

These items are contained in this report, which highlights the CRA activities and achievements.

CRA ADVISORY COMMITTEES – FY 22-23

Downtown

Ted Schatt, **Chair**
Dr. Rhella Murdaugh, **Vice Chair**
Rachel Laxton
Summer Gill
Tom McDonald
TaMara York
Kendall Drake

North Magnolia

Angie Clifton, **Chair**
Toni Yoder, **Vice Chair**
David McCollister
Mike Needham
Clark Yandle
Floyd Hershberger
Frank Zadnik III

West Ocala

Elgin Carelock, **Chair**
Ruth Reed, **Vice Chair**
Reginald Landers, Jr.
Dwan Thomas
Carolyn Adams
Antoinette Hunt
Dr. Barbara Brooks

East Ocala

Rachel Perez, **Chair**
Van Akin, **Vice Chair**
Greg Blair
Tito Comas
John Gamache
Karl Kunz
Ronnie Santana

CRA AGENCY BOARD FY 22-23

James P. Hilty Sr., **Chair**
Barry Mansfield, **Vice Chair**
Ire J. Bethea, Sr.
Kristen Dreyer
Jay A. Musleh

CRA STAFF – FY 22-23

Gus Gianikas, <i>CRA Manager</i>	Holly Lang, <i>Fiscal Manager</i>
Aubrey Hale, <i>Economic Development Director</i>	Jeff Shrum, <i>Development Services Director</i>
Tye Chighizola, <i>Growth Management Director</i>	Patricia Hitchcock, <i>Planning Director</i>
Roberto Ellis, <i>Economic Development Specialist</i>	TiJuana Jenkins-Wood, <i>Secretary</i>
Gabriela Solano, <i>Secretary</i>	Carol McKeever, <i>Secretary</i>

CONSISTENCY OF CRA ACTIVITIES WITH REDEVELOPMENT PLANS AND SUMMARY OF GOAL ACHIEVEMENT

S. 163.387(6) states moneys in the redevelopment trust fund may be expended for undertakings of a community redevelopment agency as described in the community redevelopment plan only pursuant to an annual budget adopted by the board of commissioners of the community redevelopment agency.

S. 163.371(2) (c) F.S. states a community redevelopment agency shall file an annual report and the report must include a summary indicating to what extent the community redevelopment agency has achieved the goals set out in its community redevelopment plan.

To show consistency, the table below cites the applicable plan sections for each CRA activity. The table also indicates progress to achieving the goals and objectives. Each CRA subarea has its own Redevelopment Plan.

CRA Activity	Progress / Status	Goals & Objectives
Downtown Grant Programs	On-going annual program	<p><u>Strategy 4.1.4:</u> Facilitate adaptive re-use opportunities and the creation of flexible and convertible spaces in <u>Downtown/Midtown</u>. The Fund may be used to provide incentives for development in the Downtown Redevelopment Area. The incentives may be provided in the form of cash contributions, loans, tax rebates, and gap financing.</p> <p><i>Downtown Master Plan (2004), Midtown Master Plan (2017)</i></p>
N. Magnolia Grant Programs	On-going annual program	<p><u>Goal 4:</u> Economic Development - To maintain an economically sound industrial/business area in Ocala.</p> <p><i>Objective 4.1:</i> Enhance the commercial tax base, promote business development, by encouraging the reuse of vacant and underutilized buildings.</p> <p><i>Strategy</i>– Develop Incentive and grant programs to encourage property improvements.</p> <p><i>North Magnolia CRA Plan (2019)</i></p>

CRA Activity	Progress / Status	Goals & Objectives
West Ocala Grant Programs	On-going annual program	<p>Goal 1: <u>Coordinate public and private resources to increase private capital investment on commercial corridors.</u></p> <p><i>Objective 4:</i> Expand the city's business revitalization grant program.</p> <p><i>Strategy:</i> Provision of grants for property improvements and property redevelopment.</p> <p><i>West Ocala CRA Plan (2015), West Ocala Vision & Community Plan (2011)</i></p>
East Ocala Grant Programs	On-going annual program	<p>Goal 3: <u>Improve vacant, dilapidated and nuisance properties which are barriers to corridor and neighborhood redevelopment.</u></p> <p>Objective 4: Establish programs to remediate these conditions for property reuse.</p> <p><i>East Ocala CRA Plan (2016)</i></p>
Downtown Redevelopment Agreements	Negotiated Agreements with catalytic projects in which incentives are based on return of investment (ROI) of City and CRA funding.	<p>Strategy 4.1.4: <u>Facilitate adaptive re-use opportunities and the creation of flexible and convertible spaces in Downtown/ Midtown.</u></p> <p>The Fund may be used to provide incentives for development in the Downtown Redevelopment Area. The incentives may be provided in the form of cash contributions, loans, tax rebates, and gap financing.</p> <p><i>Downtown Master Plan (2004), Midtown Master Plan (2017)</i></p>

CRA Activity	Progress / Status	Goals & Objectives
<p>Imagine North Magnolia</p>	<p>Activities in 2023 involved land development planning; publishing and processing Invitations to Negotiate (ITN) for redevelopment opportunities. These activities will continue through FY 24. The construction of a Neighborhood park is ongoing and will be completed in 2024. The Engineering Dept. will also commence construction of infrastructure improvements in FY 24.</p>	<p>Goal 2: <u>Property Redevelopment. To encourage private sector investment to redevelop undeveloped properties.</u></p> <p><i>Objective 2.1:</i> Ensure undeveloped properties are development-ready to increase their feasibility for redevelopment.</p> <p><i>Strategy 2.1.1.</i> Purchase, assemble, and prepare sites for redevelopment. Prepare sub-area conceptual development beginning with the Imagine North Magnolia subarea.</p> <p><i>North Magnolia CRA Plan (2019)</i></p>
<p>Mary Sure Rich Community Center at Reed Place</p>	<p>Construction of the Center was completed during December 2022 and the building was officially opened in January 2023. The newly created 41,750 square foot, two-story building includes designated indoor space for senior, youth, and family programs; a banquet/event space; fitness equipment and indoor walking track; two full basketball courts; a library and multi-purpose studio rooms.</p>	<p>Goal 1: <u>Coordinate public and private resources to increase private capital investment.</u></p> <p><i>Objective 5:</i> Encourage the location of a Competitive Intelligence Center (Library) and assist in the development of a and a new multi-purpose center in West Ocala.</p> <p><i>West Ocala CRA Plan (2015), West Ocala Vision & Community Plan (2011)</i></p>
<p>Heritage Trail</p>	<p>Construction started March 2021. Site work has been completed. The art installations will be completed in 2024.</p>	<p>Goal 2: <u>Enhance gateways, corridor segments and crossroads.</u></p> <p><i>Objectives 1 & 2:</i> Design and construct streetscape improvements at neighborhood entrances</p> <p><i>West Ocala CRA Plan (2015), West Ocala Vision & Community Plan (2011)</i></p>

CRA Activity	Progress / Status	Goals & Objectives
Tucker Hill Affordable Housing Project	Properties purchased, rezoning, platting, site plan, and infrastructure plan completed. Infrastructure improvements scheduled to begin 2024.	<p>Goal 3: <u>Improve vacant, dilapidated and nuisance properties which are barriers to corridor and neighborhood redevelopment.</u></p> <p><i>Objective 7.</i> Identify suitable areas of West Ocala for development of new housing opportunities</p> <p><i>West Ocala CRA Plan (2015), West Ocala Vision & Community Plan (2011)</i></p>
Downtown Streetscape	Various improvements including the sidewalk expansions.	<p>Strategy 1: <u>Linkages and Connections.</u> <u>Physical streetscape and mid-block connections that link key activity nodes within the city center and connect the Downtown to nearby districts and the greater region.</u> The Downtown Master Plan recommends addressing streetscape, pedestrian and bike connections and traffic calming to improve the quality of the public realm.</p> <p><i>Downtown Master Plan, Midtown Master Plan</i></p>

CRA GRANT PROGRAMS

The CRA Commercial Building Improvement Grant Program is the largest activity in the CRA work program in terms of staff time usage. Each CRA subarea has its own grant program. The framework of each program was developed based on the needs and budget of each sub-area. The programs address key statutorily defined blight conditions that currently exist in the CRA including vacant or underutilized commercial space, obsolete or substandard interior spaces, inadequate life safety and/or accessibility provisions, and deteriorating or inappropriate facades. The intention of the grant programs is to encourage private investment into blighted properties located in CRA subareas.

CRA Subarea	Framework	Grant Max & Match
Downtown	Priority work elements are: (1) Improvements to meet Building Codes for Accessibility; Fire Protection; and Life Safety; (2) Conversion of upper floor space to residential; (3) Removal and replacement of inappropriate or incomplete exterior restoration of original façades, including installation of appropriate store front windows; (4) Other fixed improvements related to build-out or additions.	\$25,000 / 50%
North Magnolia Commercial Building	Priority work elements are: (1) Cleaning, repairing and painting exterior walls; (2) Repair and replacement of front, side, rear, façade details including doors, windows, lighting, wall signs and awnings; (3) New landscaping; and (4) Parking lot resealing and striping.	\$10,000 / 75%
North Magnolia Marion Heights Residential	Eligible work elements are: (1) Exterior painting/paint removal for the entire building; including exterior cleaning and/or repair/replacement of facade details/materials - doors, walls, trim and exterior lighting; (2) Repair or replacement of windows, awnings; (3) New landscaping area (trees and shrubs) visible from the street/sidewalk. Removal of hazardous trees; (4) Fencing; (5) Reroofing; (6) Connection to City sanitary Sewery.	\$10,000 / 75%

CRA Subarea	Framework	Grant Max & Match
West Ocala	Priority work elements are: (1) Vacant buildings being converted to active use; (2) ADA Accessibility; (3) Security system, including lighting, cameras, and fencing; and (4) Façade improvements.	\$15,000 / 75%
East Ocala Commercial Building	Priority work elements are: (1) Vacant buildings being converted to active use; (2) New signs following CRA design guidelines, including removal of inappropriate signs; (3) Façade improvements – windows, doors, awnings, exterior security and safety lighting, painting; (4) New landscaping; and, (5) Parking lot resealing and striping.	\$20,000 / 60%
East Ocala Residential Paint	Project work elements are: Exterior painting – colors must be approved by Committee and pressure washing and other work to repair and prep for painting	\$4,000 /75%
East Ocala Historic Building	The purpose of the grant is for restoration and renovation of historic buildings. The buildings would also be eligible for other East Ocala Façade Grant programs. (1) Improvements to meet Building Codes for Accessibility, Fire Protection, and Life Safety; (2) Roof; (3) Removal and replacement of inappropriate or incomplete exterior restoration of original façades, including installation of appropriate windows; must meet requirements of Historic Preservation Code; (3) Other fixed improvements related to interior build-out.	\$40,000 / 60%
New Construction Incentive	The new construction grant is intended to support new construction and major renovations within each CRA subarea that have the potential for catalytic impact within a subarea. An eligible project must exceed \$1,000,000 in total capital investment. Based on scoring, a maximum grant reimbursement for a project is \$100,000 per year. However, in no case shall the grant exceed 10% of the estimated capital investment. The grant can be for up to three (3) years consisting of equal payments, for a maximum possible total grant of \$300,000.	\$300,000/ 10%

ASSESSED VALUES – BASE YEAR & CURRENT YEAR

DOWNTOWN			
	Base Year	Previous Year	Current Year
Year	1987	2022	2023
Taxable Value	\$45,259,727	\$104,644,360	\$125,717,794
NORTH MAGNOLIA			
	Base Year	Previous Year	Current Year
Year	1987	2022	2023
Taxable Value	\$22,392,439	\$57,036,589	\$70,907,869
WEST OCALA			
	Base Year	Previous Year	Current Year
Year	2015	2022	2023
Taxable Value	\$475,687,550	\$475,687,550	\$697,114,487
EAST OCALA			
	Base Year	Previous Year	Current Year
Year	2015	2022	2023
Taxable Value	\$208,290,128	\$265,306,302	\$342,305,061

DEBT SERVICING FY 23

West Ocala Subarea- Mary Sue Rich Community Center at Reeds Place	
Principal	\$400,000
Interest	\$80,000
Downtown Subarea- Municipal Parking lot	
Principal	\$78,065
Interest	\$1,061

FINANCIAL SUMMARY OF CAPITAL PROJECTS FY 23 EXPENDITURES

23 Project Description	Subarea	Amount
Downtown		
Downtown Streetscape		\$79,872
North Magnolia		
Imagine North Magnolia Redevelopment		\$28,112
West Ocala		
Mary Sue Rich Community Center at Reed Place		\$224,058
Tucker Hill – Affordable Housing Project – Property Purchase, Platting		\$9,000
Wayfinding Signage		\$2,280
Total		\$343,322

FINANCIAL SUMMARY OF BUILDING IMPROVEMENT GRANTS FY 23

Subarea	Approved FY 2023	Amount Approved	Completed FY 2023	Grant Amounts Reimbursed	Total Project Investment (Completed)
Commercial					
Downtown	1	\$25,000	2	\$28,390	\$93,637
East Ocala	--	--	2	\$20,000	\$59,800
N Magnolia	2	\$18,119	1	\$8,119	\$10,825
West Ocala	--	--	--	--	--
Residential					
East Ocala	2	\$8,000	--	--	--
Marion Heights	--	--	--	--	--
Historic Building					
East Ocala	2	\$80,000	2	\$42,268	\$78,611
TOTAL	7	\$131,119	7	\$98,777	\$242,873

Grant projects typically extend into the next fiscal years. For example, grants approved in FY 23 may not be completed until FY 24 and grants completed FY 23 may have started in FY 22.

CUMULATIVE SUMMARY OF COMPLETED BUILDING IMPROVEMENT GRANTS – FY 19 to FY 23

Subarea	Completed FY 19 - 23	Grant Amounts Reimbursed	Total Project Investment (Completed)
Commercial			
Downtown	26	\$490,106	\$2,703,699
East Ocala	17	\$96,765	\$707,177
N Magnolia	30	\$153,878	\$280,953
West Ocala	10	\$83,476	\$153,327
Residential			
East Ocala	3	\$2,500	\$6,035
Marion Heights	1	\$3,599	\$4,799
Historic Building			
East Ocala	2	\$42,268	\$78,611
TOTAL	89	\$872,592	\$3,934,601

CONCLUSION

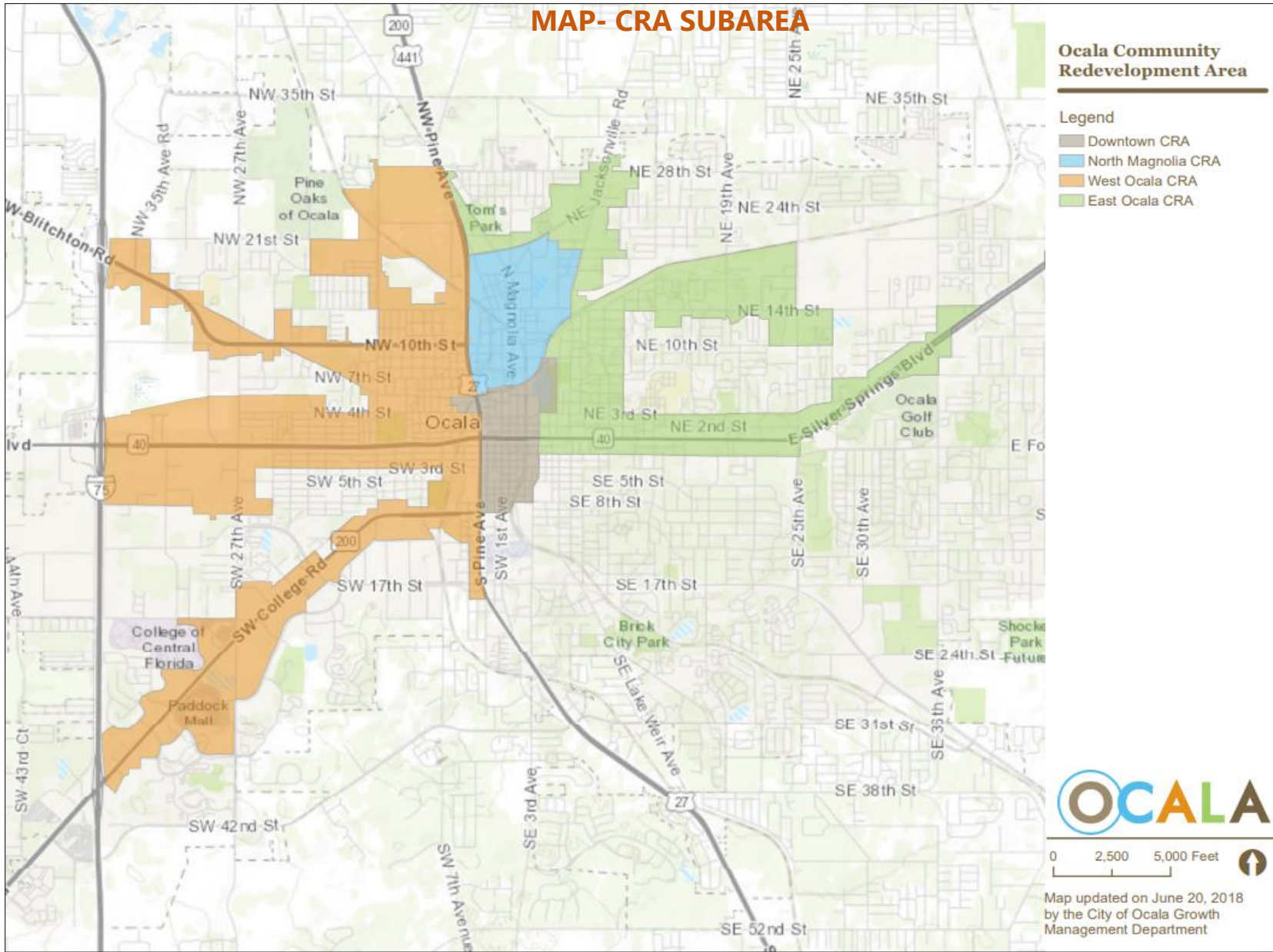
The Ocala CRA will continue to champion redevelopment by enhancing key areas within the city. Through the various programs, projects and initiatives, the CRA mirrors the City of Ocala's strategic priorities of developing an economic hub and improving quality of place. The current Ocala Vision 2050 planning will play a key role in the City of Ocala and the CRA subareas going forward. The Mary Sue Rich Community Center at Reed Place opened in FY23, is in part the result of Ocala Vision 2035. Incentive programs have largely been successful in leveraging private investments. Between 2019-2023, every dollar (\$1) provided through the grant programs has leveraged four dollars (\$4) of private investment towards improving property. The revitalization impacts are being seen through the improved residential and commercial built environment. In the wider macro-economic environment, favorable real estate valuations have had a positive impact on revenues allocated to the CRA subareas. In the coming year, the CRA aims to add even more incentives targeting various groups of residential properties. Interest in programs offered has remained stable in spite of increasing constructions costs and a changing economic climate. Affordable housing, arts and culture, historic preservation and creating beneficial partnerships in the community, will all be areas of focus in the coming years. Primary corridors and gateways will remain at the heart of the CRA revitalization activities to attract new businesses, retain current business operations and promote economic growth.



**Mary Sure Rich
Community
Center at Reed
Place, 1812 NW
21st Ave.**

Ribbon cutting
ceremony,
Tuesday, January
10, 2023.

MAP- CRA SUBAREA



**Ocala Community Redevelopment Agency
City of Ocala
Growth Management Department
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