



2025 Annual Report

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CRA Boundaries

The map below shows our CRA boundaries. The area in green represents the Diamond Square CRA, while the area in blue represents our Cocoa CRA.



Overview

Under Florida's Community Redevelopment Act (F.S. 163, Part III), the City of Cocoa has established both the Cocoa and Diamond Square CRA's.



Cocoa CRA
City of Cocoa Ordinance No. 10-81,
Apr 14, 1981



Diamond Square CRA City of Cocoa Ordinance
No. 13-98, March 24, 1998 (delegated
authority by Brevard County BOCC)

Section 163.345, F.S., encourages the rehabilitation or redevelopment of the community redevelopment area by private enterprise and s. 163.287(6), F.S., governs the expenditures of redevelopment trust funds.

Additionally, section 163.370 (2)(c), F.S., governs the community redevelopment and related activities that a CRA may undertake with the community redevelopment area. Consistent with Cocoa CRA's respective community redevelopment plans, agencies offer or have participated in the following general activities and programs:

- Infrastructure – engineering, design, and construction
- Stormwater improvements
- Streetscape design and construction
- Affordable and workforce housing development
- Land acquisition, development, and redevelopment through public/private partnerships.
- Community policing programs and partnerships
- Commercial façade grants

Each CRA is responsible for developing and implementing its own Community Redevelopment Plan that addresses the unique needs of the targeted area. The plans include specific examples of how the approved community redevelopment plan will benefit and has already benefitted, the purpose for which the special district was created, and the overall goals for the redevelopment area.

The overall goal of each CRA is to reduce and eliminate slum and blight conditions, promote private investment and economic development, and enhance property values within the CRA's area. The perception of "image" is a driving force that impacts the level of investment in a community. The projects within the CRA play a strong role in enhancing the image and build the sales tax business income tax and real estate tax base for Brevard County and the State of Florida.

Redevelopment activities in the Community Redevelopment Plan are funded primarily by tax increment financing (TIF), leveraged with public funds to promote private sector activity in the targeted area. CRA's may also issue debt or revenue bonds to fund projects as well.

Since the City of Cocoa is financially accountable for the activities of the Cocoa CRA and the Diamond Square CRA, we have prepared this report in accordance with F.S. 163.356(3)(C). All financial activities of the CRA's are in accordance with the provisions of the Community Redevelopment Act and governed by the City of Cocoa Financial Operations Manual as well as reported in the City of Cocoa Annual Budget, Audited Statements, and the City of Cocoa Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR).

Our Fiscal Year is October 1 through September 30 of each year. This report is for the period of October 1, 2024, through September 30, 2025 (Fiscal Year 2025).

Cocoa CRA

The Cocoa CRA was established through City of Cocoa Ordinance No. 10-81 and is governed by a seven-member board. This CRA redevelopment area includes the waterfront located along the Indian River Lagoon with vibrant Historic Cocoa Village, the Heart of Cocoa, S.R. 50, the Southern portion of the U.S. 1 Corridor and an uptown area north of the Cocoa Village and S.R. 520.

The Cocoa CRA is generally bounded on the northern boundary by Mitchell Street, with the western boundary at the Florida East Coast Railroad, eastern boundary along the western shoreline of the Indian River Lagoon and the southern boundary at Rosa L. Jones Drive.

In 2008, the Cocoa CRA approved the Cocoa Waterfront Master Plan and implementation strategy for the Cocoa CRA with particular focus on improving the activity and connectivity of the waterfront. With the devastation to the Cocoa Waterfront brought on by Hurricane Irma, the Cocoa CRA Board felt compelled to cast a new vision for the waterfront. The result was a 2018 Waterfront Master Plan Update and Cocoa CRA Update which will guide the CRA and the City of Cocoa in the rebuilding of existing waterfront infrastructure, the development of new amenities and addressing waterfront resiliency and sustainability. The implemented plans will result in an important social and economic center and serve as a catalyst for redevelopment activity and business growth.

Meetings take place on the first Monday of each Month at 6:00 pm in City Council Chambers.

Cocoa CRA Board

- Five members of City Council and two members appointed by the City Council
- Two members appointed for 4-year terms and Council members change due to election.

Cocoa CRA Board Members

- Chairperson Michael C. Blake - Mayor
- Vice Chairperson Patricia Weeks - Deputy Mayor
- Agency Member Alex Goins - Councilman
- Agency Member Lorraine Koss – Councilwoman
- Agency Member Levander Hearn – Councilman
- Agency Member Janne Etz
- Agency Member Candace Rogers

Cocoa CRA Highlights

During FY25, Cocoa CRA Accomplished:

The Waterfront Engineering Design and Permitting FIND Grant (Phase 1) was completed in FY25. As of FY26 we are on Phase II (Building Barrier System) of the project.

Projects

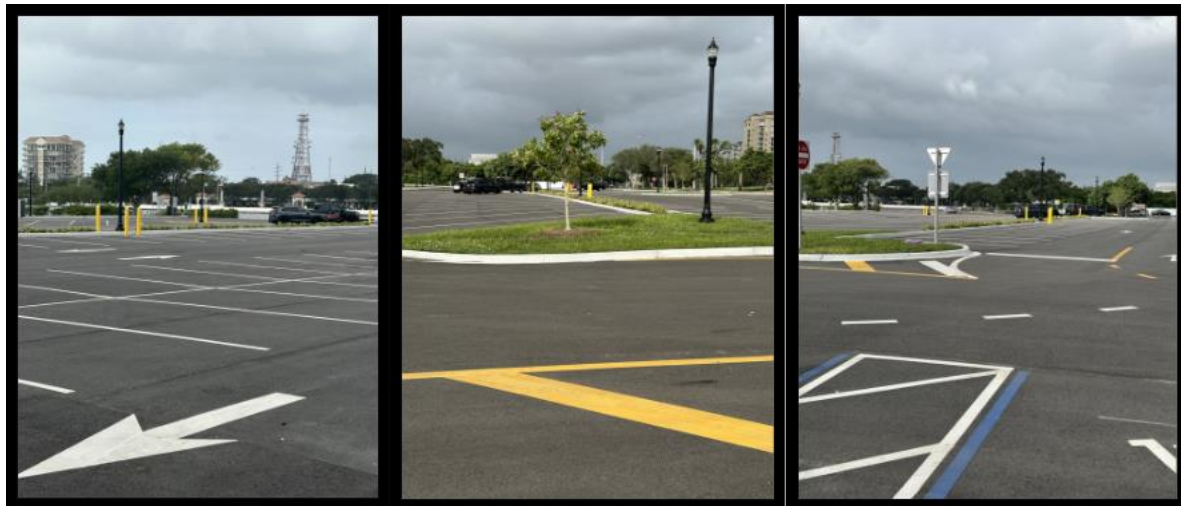
Lee Wenner Park New Docking System and Breakwater

In March 2023, the Cocoa CRA applied to continue their work on the restoration of the waterfront that was devastated by two back-to-back hurricanes, Ian and Nicole. The Florida Inland Navigation District (FIND) Grant of \$84,000, which along with a 50% match from the CRA of \$84,000, will provide a total of \$168,000 in funding to complete Phase I: Engineering Design and Permitting. Phase I was completed in FY25 and as of FY26 we are in Phase II.

The Strategic Plan identified for this purpose is Infrastructure and Redevelopment. By improving the waterfront infrastructure, the Cocoa Waterfront will see increased development, thus improving our economic base for the City.

Lee Wenner Park Parking Lot Reconstruction Project

In April 2024, the CRA approved \$1.2 million for the reconstruction of the Lee Wenner Park Parking Lot. This reconfiguration was to improve flow and add 74 additional parking spaces to the park. In order to complete this project, Lee Wenner Park had to be closed from Labor Day 2024 to Labor Day 2025. So, by the end of FY25 this project was completed.



Workforce Housing and Mixed-Use Development

In May 2024, Cocoa CRA approved the selection of 360 Hospitality Group, LLC to develop the site at 603 Brevard Avenue, the site of the old City Hall, to become the newest attraction – a Mixed-Use Hotel Project. As of 2025 they are beginning their development application and site plan.

Cocoa CRA- Plan Amendment

In Late 2022, The Cocoa CRA approved the 2022 Cocoa CRA Redevelopment Plan Update that is related only to incorporating a community policing program. Generally, the Update includes the following language related to Community Policing Initiatives:

The intent and purpose of this Program is to proactively enhance the current level of police patrol and provide a more personal level of service through a direct liaison between the Agency Board/Downtown community and the Cocoa Police Department.

In FY 25, police officers continued in their assignments to a special shift detail to maximize the effectiveness of the Program. Police officers proactively form partnerships with residents and businesses to promote crime prevention, prevent disorder and improve public safety by addressing specific issues indigenous to the Downtown Area.

Yearly Highlights

The Cocoa CRA has welcomed 45 new businesses during FY25 which has increased the number of jobs within the CRA.

The Commercial Facade Grant has continued to benefit businesses within the Cocoa CRA by matching funds up to \$20,000 for repairs and renovations on building exteriors.

Yearly Events

Cocoa Village hosts many special events, some recurring favorites, and other new and exciting Programs such as the ones listed below.

- Survive 1st 5K Fun Run Walk
- Brevard County Fire Fighter Annual Chili Cook-Off
- Martin Luther King Peace March and Service
- Space Coast Runners Mural Run
- Deuterman Productions “Mardi Gras”
- Central Brevard Mardi Gras Paws in the Park
- Family Promise Big Brunch
- Cocoa Village Brewers Bash
- Melanin Pop Up Event/ Small Business Expo
- Cocoa Rotary Party in the Park Concert Fundraiser for the Boys and Girls Club
- Brevard County Dog Training Club “Woof it Up in the Park”
- AEG Southeast Concert “Violent Femmes”

- AEG Southeast Concert “Chase Rice”
- Historic Cocoa Village Mainstreet Book Festival
- Space Coast Runners Space Coast Classic Fun Run/Walk
- Preeclampsia Awareness Walk
- Rockledge Youth Football and Cheerleading League Easter in the Park
- Pictures with the Easter Bunny Fundraiser for Rescue Rebels Cash for Canines
- Deuterman Productions Concert “The Movement”
- Deuterman Productions Concert “Collie Buddz
- AEG Southeast Concert “Slightly Stoopid”
- Deuterman Productions Concert “Stephan Marley”
- Dirty Oar Street Parties
 - Anniversary Party
 - Dirty Oar/Running Zone Brewery Running Series
- Deuterman Productions “Longdoggers Employee Appreciation Bash”
- Generation Rising Worship in the Park
- Alzheimer’s Foundation “Walk to End Alzheimer’s
- Blessing of the Animals
- Cool Runnings “Space Coast Triathlon”
- Historic Cocoa Village Mainstreet Art and Craft Fairs
 - Spring
 - Summer
 - Fall
 - Holiday
- St. Mark’s Academy Fall Festival
- Space Coast Freewheelers Century Ride
- Game On Events “Riverfront Triathlon”
- Historic Cocoa Village Mainstreet Halloween Golf Cart Parade
- Historic Cocoa Village Hot Cocoa Holidays Events
 - Moonlight and Music on the Promenade
 - Cocoa Holiday Boat Parade
 - Cocoa Holiday Bike Parade
- Historic Cocoa Village Mainstreet Concours Car Show
- Village Idiot Bar Street Party Events
 - Spring Street Party
 - Anniversary Party
 - Halloween Party
- Brevard Authors Society Book Festival

- Deuterman Productions Concert “Parmalee”
- Deuterman Productions Concert “Green Sky”
- In Power Events “Veg Fest”
- Running Zone/Space Coast Runners “Space Coast Runner Marathon and Half Marathon”
- Historic Cocoa Village Mainstreet Sip and Shop
 - Spring
 - Summer
 - Fall
 - Winter
- Mathews Hope Fun Run/Walk
- Sommer Sports Advent Health 5K
- **City Sponsored Events**
 - Annual City of Cocoa/KBB Trash Bash Cocoa Clean-up
 - Annual City of Cocoa Memorial Day Remembrance
 - City of Cocoa Juneteenth Festival
 - Annual City of Cocoa/City of Rockledge Independence Day Celebration Featuring the Brevard Symphony Orchestra
 - City of Cocoa Fall Festival
 - City of Cocoa Holiday Tree Lighting
 - City of Cocoa and City of Rockledge Holiday Parade
 - City of Cocoa Holiday Festival

Cocoa CRA Community Redevelopment Rules

The Cocoa CRA focused on many of its goals as set forth in the 2022 Cocoa CRA Redevelopment Plan Update.

Environmental Quality

- Public Infrastructure Improvements
 - Accomplishments
 - Redesign and Redevelopment of Lee Wenner Park to increase vehicle and boat trailer parking for visitors and residents to the amenities in the Cocoa Village and the waterfront area.
 - Design initiated for the Oleander West Parking area to increase parking opportunities for visitors and residents to Cocoa Village.
 - Improvements to the curb and sidewalks throughout Cocoa CRA to improve safety for visitors and residents.

- Added flashing stop sign indicators to improve safety for pedestrians and drivers in Cocoa Village.
- Encourage private sector restoration and reconstruction of commercial/residential structures.
 - Accomplishments
 - Awarded two Commercial Façade Grants to improve the commercial and historic structures in Cocoa CRA.

Crime Prevention

- Encourage the development and support of community policing initiatives within the CRA.
 - Accomplishments
 - Continued efforts to enhance community policing within the CRA using increased law enforcement presence.

Urban Design Improvements

- Enhance downtown vibrancy and sustainability by increasing opportunities for mixed-use residential development in the CRA.
 - Accomplishments
 - Negotiation with a large developer to construct new mixed-use apartments in the CRA.
- Strengthening the identity of Cocoa Village through improved gateways, internal wayfinding, and branding downtown Cocoa.
 - Accomplishments
 - Partnering with Historic Cocoa Village Main Street to develop wayfinding and branding within the CRA.
- Improve the pedestrian walkability and livability of streets within the district, particularly the major arterials that bisect and border the CRA district such as State Road 520 and US 1.
 - Accomplishments
 - FDOT improvements to SR 520 to improve walkability.
 - Repair/replacement of damaged sidewalks to improve safety for pedestrians.
- Improve boater accessibility to Cocoa Village and improve connectivity of open spaces along the riverfront.
 - Accomplishments

- Completed design of day slips and revetment (breakwater) project to be funded in 2025-2026.
 - Preparing the design of T-Dock to repair/replace damaged T-Dock. Applying for FIND Grant in 2026.
- Build upon the existing artistic, cultural, and historic assets of Cocoa Village by re-introducing past traditions and promoting new community events.
 - Accomplishments
 - Through partnerships with Historic Cocoa Village Main Street and the City of Cocoa, events are scheduled that promote the history and the traditions of Cocoa Village.
- Improve the appearance and image of the community by addressing derelict properties, improving controls on noxious aesthetics, and creating a more consistent appearance and quality.
 - Accomplishments
 - Through partnerships with the City of Cocoa Code Enforcement Division, the CRA has made strides to improve the appearance and quality.
 - Approval of the Noise Ordinance to streamline the process will improve quality in the CRA.
- Improve the success of business downtown by uniting merchants and creating shared standards for retailing.
 - Accomplishments
 - Through the partnership with Historic Cocoa Village Main Street, the merchants work together to create a standard for Cocoa Village that will keep visitors coming to Cocoa Village.

Heart of Cocoa

- Encourage production and development of affordable houses by the private sector in the Heart of Cocoa Neighborhood.
 - Accomplishments
 - The CRA secured the purchase of 203 Orange Street to redevelop the property into affordable housing in the Heart of Cocoa Neighborhood.

(Due to technical difficulties the financials are not available at the moment, but they will be added within 45 days).

Diamond Square CRA

The Diamond Square CRA was established in April 1998 through a Resolution by the City of Cocoa and Brevard County and a City of Cocoa Ordinance No. 13-98 and is governed by a seven-

member board. A Redevelopment Plan was updated and approved in 2022. The Redevelopment Plan is based on Five Strategic Frameworks for Change: Community Living; Community Places; Community Connections; Community Identity; and Community Opportunity. The Diamond Square CRA is generally bounded by the southern border of the city and encompasses the area bounded by Pineda Street on the west, School Street on the north, the Florida East Coast Railroad on the east, and Rosa L. Jones Drive on the south.

Currently, the Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Agency is scheduled to sunset in 2032. Meetings take place on the third Monday of each month at 6:00 pm in City Council Chambers.

The Diamond Square CRA currently has no outstanding indebtedness.

Diamond Square CRA Board

The terms of the office of each Agency member will be for four years, except that three of the City appointed members shall be designated to serve terms of 1, 2, and 3 years from their date of appointment. No Agency member may serve more than two consecutive terms.

Diamond Square CRA Board Members:

- Tracy Moore – Chairperson
- Crystal McQueen - Vice Chairperson
- Larry Brown – Agency Member
 - Appointed by Brevard County
- Brenda Fox
- Angelia Smith – Agency Member
- Jackie Isom - Agency Member
- Marilyn Smith - Agency Member

Diamond Square CRA Highlights

In FY25, Continuation of the Diamond Square CRA Paint Grant Program and Beautification Grant Program.



Signs are placed in grantees yard after completion

Diamond Square CRA Paint and Beautification Grant Programs

Two programs that began in June of 2021; the Diamond Square CRA Paint Grant Program and the Beautification Grant Program continued in 2025. These are designed to improve the exterior of the residence and improve aesthetics of the community. Approved applications for the Paint program will have their home pressure washed, receive paint and painting supplies up to the amount of \$1,000 for the exterior of their home and the Beautification Grant Program will provide Florida-friendly landscaping up to the amount of \$500 for the front of their home. In both cases, grant recipients provide their own labor. These programs have benefited the community by improving the looks of the homes, creating a renewed sense of homeowner pride, and has a domino effect as more and more applications are submitted.

Commercial Facade Grant

The Diamond Square CRA sponsors a Commercial Facade Improvement Program to benefit property owners in the redevelopment area. Matching grants of up to \$20,000 are available to qualified business owners to fund exterior improvements such as awnings, landscaping, exterior lighting, fencing, and signage.

Summer Camp Scholarships

The Diamond Square CRA approved \$6,000 in scholarship funds for a dozen youth to attend the 2025 summer camp provided by Brevard County Parks and Recreation and held at the Dr. Joe Lee Smith Center in Diamond Square.

Diamond Square UpStart Small Business Program

At the February 8, 2021, Diamond Square CRA Meeting Agency Members approved the formulation of Upstart Diamond Square. This program was initially created as an incentive to promote the growth of minority-owned businesses throughout the Diamond Square Community. Now the program is open to all new business owners to help entrepreneurs start, grow, or expand their businesses. The program and forgivable loans are available to business owners with the goal to empower entrepreneurs to succeed in the Diamond Square community, attract new small businesses to the area, contribute to the economic vitality by promoting small business, and to cultivate a vibrant neighborhood. The DS Upstart Cocoa Loan program is designed as a three-year forgivable loan program with a community enrichment component to “pay back” 25% of the grant to the community within three years. After three years of maintaining the business in Diamond Square and successful completion of the “pay back” the loan will be forgiven at 100%

Projects and Funding Initiatives

Cops & Kids

Summer began with a partnership between LLC (Lifetime Counseling Centers) and the Cocoa Police Department. With this, opportunities were provided for the children to take swimming and water safety lessons. Field trips included Orlando Science Center, Fishing at Sebastian Inlet, Wekiva Springs and a tour of the Cocoa Police Department. Children participated in a variety of activities to include team building, arts, and more. With an emphasis on Mental Health, LCC counselors were provided for the 4-week camp and Second Harvest Food Bank provided breakfast each day.

Diamond Square Partnership with Alliance for Neighborhood Restoration

The Diamond Square CRA continued its partnership with the Alliance for Neighborhood Restoration (ANR), currently in its 12th year of youth programs at the Harry T. Moore Center primarily serving about 80% of Cocoa youth and the Diamond Square Community. With over 20% of children in Cocoa living below poverty level, the programs provided have become vital to the community it serves. Additionally, the Diamond Square CRA sponsored the community policing initiative, the Cocoa Police Athletic League (Cocoa PAL), for \$4,500. ANR and Cocoa PAL

quickly decided that service to society, specifically the Diamond Square Community, could be provided in different forms.

Cocoa Police Athletic League (PAL)

The Police Athletic League is the oldest and largest law enforcement-based youth crime prevention program in the United States. The program is designed to equip each youth with the skills needed to become future leaders of PAL and the country. Character building, dedicated, honest hard work are the building blocks of PAL. At the core program for delivering youth the Cocoa PAL is a juvenile delinquency prevention program that provides athletic and academic activities to youth through the community.

The Youth Leadership Council

Is designed to equip each youth with the skills needed to become future leaders of PAL and the country. Character building, dedication, and honest hard work are the building blocks of PAL. Participants held regular meetings to discuss and plan activities, attend local and regional training, and volunteer with various agencies.

Police Athletic League After School Program

The 2024-25 school year began with registration for After-School, focusing on Career Readiness and Character Education. All of the children registered received daily homework assistance, career readiness, leadership development, social-emotional development, arts and crafts, physical fitness, and nutrition. A majority of participants were DS Residents. Second Harvest Food Bank continued to support After-School and Summer Programs with fresh, prepared meals.

State of Florida PAL Regional Training

Cocoa PAL hosted the State of Florida PAL Regional Training at the Joe Lee Smith Center with about 100 youth from around the State of Florida

Pal Leadership Training

The curriculum includes leader's traits and skills, team building, planning, and executing community projects, community needs assessments and civic responsibility. Training also included team building exercises and discussions about Social Justice. Tours and engagement included the Fire Department, Police Department and City Hall. The Youth planned and hosted a Political Forum for the City of Cocoa Candidates, Districts 1 and 2 and the Brevard County Commission, District 2 and was held at the Moore Justice Center.

Cocoa Pal Basketball

Cocoa PAL Basketball Season 24-25 held practices two days per week at the Joe Lee Smith Community Center. Games were scheduled for Saturdays during League competitions with

Brevard County Parks and Recreation. Cocoa PAL charged a modest fee of \$25 and registered more than 24 youth throughout the year.

Youth Employment Training/ Phase 1 and Phase 3

Everyone registered for the Youth Employment Training Program completed the four-week course. Speakers from various occupations shared information about their careers, including Judge Samuel Bookhardt and Sgt Marlon Buggs during a special tour of the Moore Justice Center. Course instruction included applications for employment, resumes, interviewing skills, dressing for success, financial literacy, and customer Service. Phase 3 Youth Employment Trainees completed job assignments with the City of Cocoa Leisure Services and Brevard County Parks and Recreation.

Yearly Highlights

The Diamond Square CRA welcomed 5 new businesses to the area, increasing the number of jobs.

Yearly Events

- Annual Winter Festival in Diamond Square
- Annual Fall Festival with the City of Cocoa
- Community Cleanup Project for After-School in Diamond Square
- Keep Brevard Beautiful Trash Bash with the City of Cocoa

Community Redevelopment Goals

The Diamond Square CRA achieved many of its goals as set forth in the 2014 Diamond Square CRA Redevelopment Plan Update.

- **Goal 1 – Enhance streetscapes and pedestrian connectivity (Pages 13-15)**
 - SR520 landscape enhancements - complete
 - Peachtree Street Complete Street - complete
 - Transportation terminus (SCAT) in DSCRA - complete
 - South Fiske Blvd landscaping and mid-block crossing – complete
- **Goal 2 - Increase partnerships with housing developments (Pages 15-17)**
 - Housing Authority of the City of Cocoa curb appeal – complete
 - Finance and home ownership programs – in progress
- **Goal 3 - Create Neighborhood Gateways (Pages 18-20)**
 - Neighborhood entry signage and historical/cultural significance - in progress
 - Street tree planting - in progress

- Sidewalk system infill and improvements – in progress
 - Stormwater and infrastructure – in progress
- **Goal 4 – Explore the feasibility of creating new community-based centers (Page 21-22)**
 - Joe Lee Smith Center upgrades and/or reconstruction – complete
- **Goal 5 – Enhance support for community-based organizations and educational institutions (Pages 23-24)**
 - Safe routes to school / pedestrian network – in progress
 - Role model and mentoring programs – in progress

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