



ROCKLEDGE *Florida*
Preserving the past...planning the future

Community Redevelopment Agency

2023 Annual Report

1600 Huntington Lane
Rockledge, FL 32955
Phone: 321-221-7540

Fiscal Year 2022-2023
Published March 2024

About the City of Rockledge

The City of Rockledge was founded on August 7, 1887, making it the first incorporated municipality in Brevard County. The name “Rockledge” is attributed to Gardner S. Hardee, an early settler, and comes from his observation of the many ledges of coquina rock that line the Indian River in an area Hardee originally referred to as “Rock Ledge”.

Operating under a Council-Manager form of government, the City of Rockledge is well known for its political stability. The City Council reflects an enduring legislative legacy of public service and longevity and had itself been served by only two city managers from 1963 to 2016, when the third Rockledge City Manager began her tenure.

As a full-service community, the City of Rockledge provides law enforcement, fire and advanced medical life support, solid waste and recycling collection, building services, wastewater and water reclamation, stormwater management, and a Public Works Department.

The City of Rockledge, strategically located in the geographic center of Brevard County on Florida’s east coast, is a hub to a number of major thoroughfares, including U.S. Highway 1 and Interstate 95 giving direct passage to all continental U.S. points north and south. State Roads 520 and 528 provide easy access to Orlando, the Orlando International Airport and the west coast of Florida. The Florida East Coast Railway also runs parallel to U.S. Highway 1.

The City of Rockledge is approximately 13 square miles and as of the 2020 Census, approximately 27,678 residents call Rockledge home. Although the City of Rockledge is primarily a residential community, it does have a stable base of clean, light industry and a growing variety of commercial and retail businesses to meet the needs of its residents. Anchored by Steward Health Care and Rockledge Regional Medical Center, the city is home to six public schools, three private schools and churches of various denominations. Along with considerable assets more often found in larger urban centers, the City of Rockledge greatly benefits from a high level of community engagement bringing the charm of a “hometown” feel to those who reside in and visit the city.

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I. Annual Report Requirements

Chapter 163.371 (2) of the Florida Statutes, requires that Community Redevelopment Agencies file an annual report of their financial activities with the taxing authorities by March 31st of each year for the preceding fiscal year. The details in this report comply with Brevard County and the State of Florida requirements for annual reporting on the Community Redevelopment Agency.

City of Rockledge

Community Redevelopment Agency
1600 Huntington Ln, Rockledge, FL 32955
321-221-7540 x 112 / Fax 321-204-6356
cra@cityofrockledge.org



March 24, 2024

CERTIFIED MAIL#

Sherrill F. Norman, CPA
Florida Auditor General
111 West Madison St
Claude Pepper Building, Suite G74
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1450

RE: Rockledge Community Redevelopment Agency Annual Report

Ms. Norman:

In accordance with Florida Law (Chapter 163, Part III) you will find attached the submittal of the Rockledge Community Redevelopment Agency's Annual Report for fiscal year 2022-2023. The Community Redevelopment Agency Annual Report was filed with the City of Rockledge on March 23, 2024. If you have any questions in regards to this submittal, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John W. Cooper".

John W. Cooper
Planning Director
jcooper@cityofrockledge.org

CC: Florida Department of Financial Services
Florida Department of Economic Opportunity
Brevard County Property Appraiser
Rockledge Community Redevelopment Agency
Rockledge City Council
Brevard County Board of Commissioners
Brevard County Manager

II. Mission, Overview and History

Mission:

The mission of the Rockledge Community Redevelopment Agency is to:

- Foster revitalization of the specifically identified sub-districts through public investments in order to improve infrastructure and aesthetics, resulting in an inviting area in which the private sector will want to more actively invest;
- Create a wide variety of opportunities to generate interest in and return people to the City of Rockledge to live, shop and work;
- Pursue economic development opportunities, while also serving as a liaison and advocate for the existing business community.

The vision of the Agency is to:

- Stimulate economic growth;
- Promote private-sector development opportunities;
- And maintain a safe and prosperous community.

...all while enhancing the quality of life for the City's families and citizens.

Overview:

The Rockledge Community Redevelopment Agency was originally established on January 23, 2002. The Community Redevelopment Agency is divided into four sub-districts. Sub-District 1 is the Florida Avenue sub-district that encompasses the commercial areas along Florida Avenue from the northern city limits south to Orange Avenue. Sub-District 2 is the Barton Boulevard sub-district which serves as an important connector route, linking the residential areas surrounding Fiske Boulevard with the residential communities along the riverfront and offering passage through the commercial core of Barton Boulevard. Sub-District 3 is the Rockledge Boulevard (U.S. Highway 1) sub-district that starts just south of Eyster Boulevard and goes south on U.S. Highway 1 to Barnes Boulevard. Sub-District 4 is the Barnes Boulevard sub-district which starts just east of Fiske Boulevard and goes all the way to Riomar Drive.

Per the 2018 inter-local agreement between the City of Rockledge and Brevard County, the Community Redevelopment Agency will sunset on September 30, 2026.

History:

- A. The Community Redevelopment Agency was created on January 23, 2002
- B. The plan was amended on December 5, 2012
- C. Applicable Resolution(s) and Ordinances:
 - i. Resolution 2002 - 481
 - ii. Resolution 2012 - 721

III. Board Members and Staff

The Rockledge Community Redevelopment Agency Board of Commissioners is comprised of several members in the community. As of the end of the 2022-2023 fiscal year (September 30, 2023) below is the team who believes in the future vision of the Community Redevelopment Agency and moving it closer to that goal.

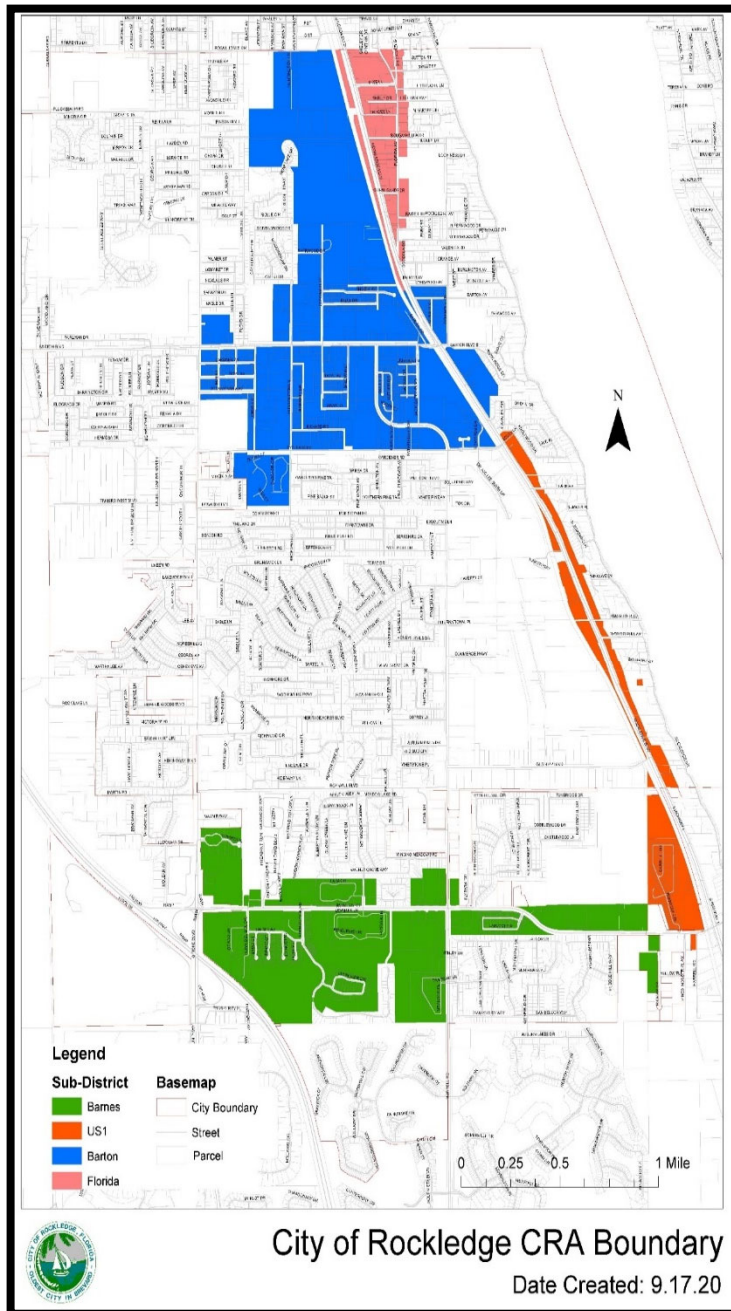
Board of Commissioners	
Edward Inman	Chairman
David Bucher	Vice Chair
Frederick Sanders	Commissioner
Steve Lum	Commissioner
April Fearon	Commissioner
Al Siefert	Commissioner
Martha Rich	Commissioner

City Staff	
Dr. Brenda Fettrow	City Manager (Registered Agent)
Joseph Miniclier	Agency Attorney
Matthew Trine	Finance Director/Asst City Manager
John W. Cooper	Planning Director
Jennifer LeVasseur	Recording Secretary

IV. Community Redevelopment Agency Boundary Lines

After determining it was necessary to tackle the blighted conditions that were threatening the City's commercial core, the City of Rockledge created four contiguous sub-districts, which together comprise the entire Rockledge Community Redevelopment District.

Focused around the City's major arteries and collector roadways these four sub-districts include:



- Sub-District 1: Florida Avenue
- Sub-District 2: Barton Boulevard
- Sub-District 3: U.S. Highway 1
- Sub-District 4: Barnes Boulevard

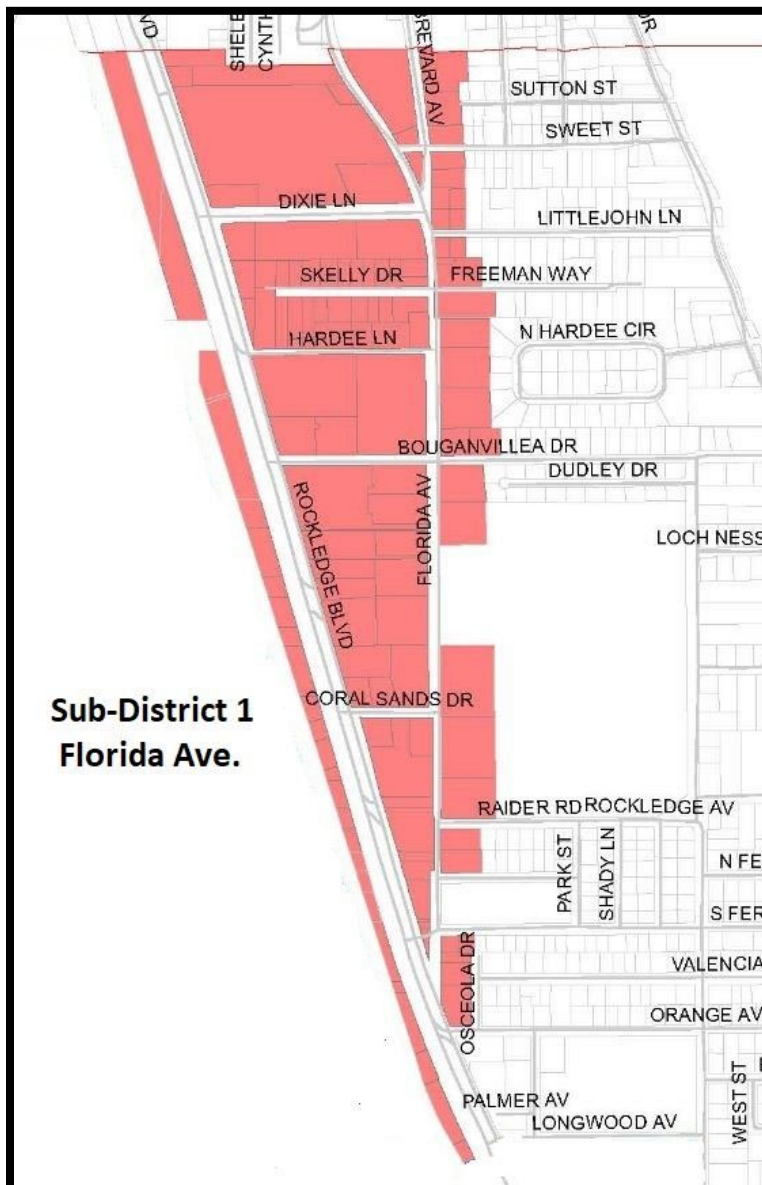
The Rockledge Community Redevelopment District covers about 2,794 acres and does not contain any portion of the City's industrial area.

IV. Community Redevelopment Agency Boundary Lines

Sub-District 1: Florida Avenue

The Florida Avenue Sub-District encompasses the commercial areas along Florida Avenue in the northern portion of Rockledge. This sub-district also includes U.S. Highway 1 (Rockledge Boulevard) from the northern City limits, south to Orange Avenue.

Currently, a number of medical offices that serve to support Rockledge Regional Medical Center maintain a strong presence in this sub-district, and, in adhering to the principles of the Agency's Community Redevelopment Plan, this area will continue to be promoted as a medical hub for the central Brevard area.

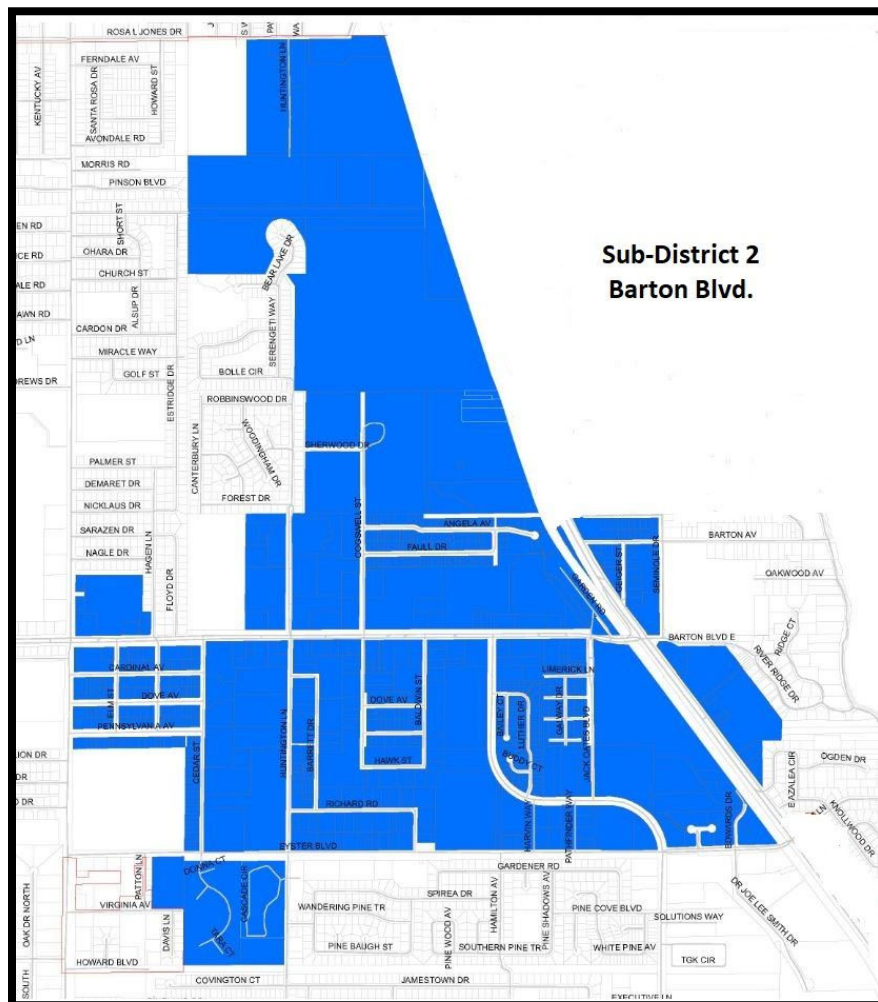


IV. Community Redevelopment Agency Boundary Lines Sub-District 2: Barton Boulevard

Barton Boulevard serves as one of the most important connector roadways in the City of Rockledge, as it links the residential areas surrounding Fiske Boulevard and the residential communities along the riverfront to the diverse commercial core of Barton Boulevard.

In 2008, this strategically located thoroughfare saw substantial enhancements, including the installation of decorative lighting, extensive landscaping, and sidewalk improvements. The wide-scale project garnered the 2009 Florida Redevelopment Association’s Best Capital Project / Beautification Award.

The strategic locale of both Rockledge City Hall and Rockledge Civic Hub at Barton Boulevard and Huntington Lane in the Barton Boulevard Sub-district, serves as a focal point for events and community gatherings. These events have a dual purpose in that they engage the community, but they also bring exposure and publicity to the businesses along this corridor.



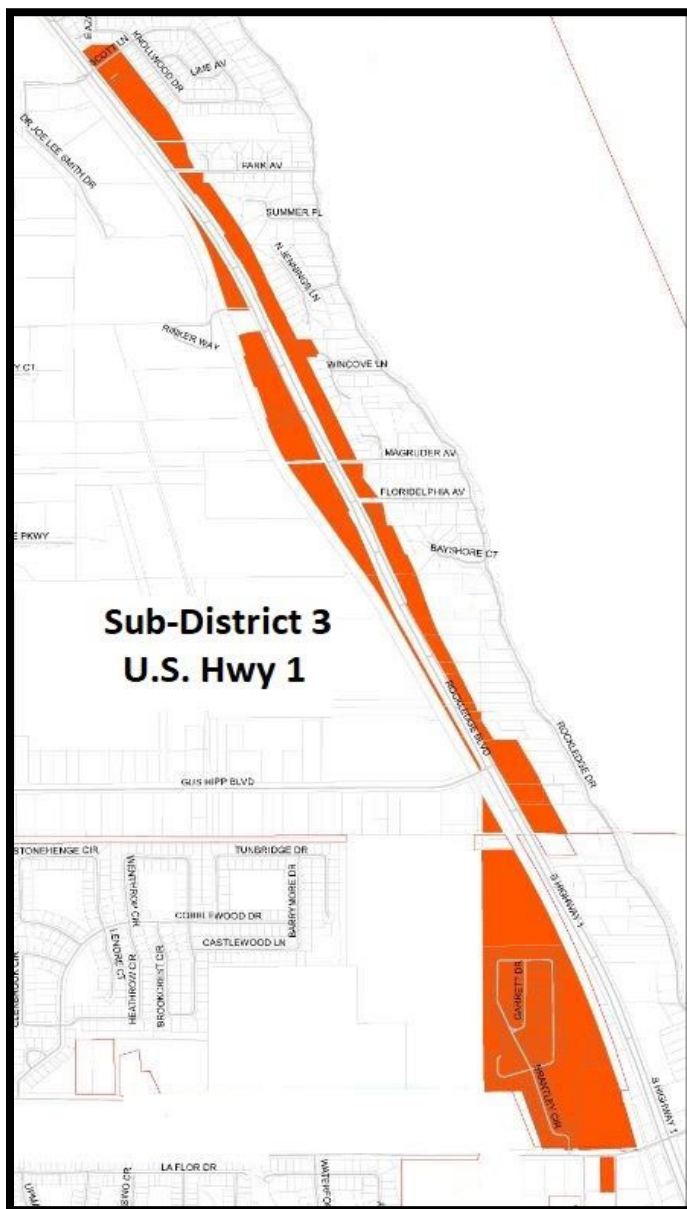
IV. Community Redevelopment Agency Boundary Lines

Sub-District 3: U.S. Highway 1

The widening of U.S. Highway 1 was completed in 2010, and a grand re-opening celebration was held in December of that year to commemorate this landmark achievement.

Stylish lighting, picturesque landscaping, aesthetic signage, and new, meandering sidewalk designs were incorporated into the project.

Through the Façade Improvement Grant Program, a significant number of businesses have entered into façade grant renovations and additions which greatly lift the visual appeal of the entire area. The Community Redevelopment Agency looks forward to continuing these vital business community endeavors.



IV. Community Redevelopment Agency Boundary Lines Sub-District 4: Barnes Boulevard

Throughout the past several years, the Barnes Boulevard Redevelopment Sub-District has attracted the majority of new development. This development is highly desirable for the City of Rockledge and the Redevelopment District, but led to an increased strain on the existing infrastructure. As a result, in 2014, the City of Rockledge invested approximately \$2 million into the Brevard County Road Widening Project, which widened Barnes Boulevard from two lanes to four lanes from Fiske Boulevard to just east of Murrell Road. This project was completed in 2018. And as of June 2021, by resolution, Brevard County conveyed that section of Barnes Boulevard to the City of Rockledge.



V. Projects Overview

Since the inception of the Rockledge Community Redevelopment Agency in 2002, there have been many significant projects that have made an impact and exemplified the objective of redevelopment.

Critical roadway improvements, infrastructure, transformative and reuse endeavors have been of significant importance and have served as a channel for growth as well as renewed interest from the private-sector in retail and commercial investment in the City of Rockledge and the Community Redevelopment District.

- Signage: U.S. Highway 1 Gateway and Barton Boulevard Business District
- Public-Private Partnerships such as the creation of outparcels at Three Meadows Plaza
- Barton Boulevard Streetscape Project – recognized in 2009 with Florida Redevelopment Association’s “Best Capital Project Beautification” Award
- Phases I through V drainage improvements with the Cocoa-Rockledge Land Company
- Acquisition of Barton Boulevard properties for future mixed-use development
- Adaptive reuse project transforming the former police station into an office complex and reading room and book repository
- Barnes Boulevard widening and future roadway enhancements
- Florida Avenue Improvement Project – Phase 1 – Roadway milling, resurfacing, striping, and reflective pavement markers
- Civic Hub completion
- Completion of a Market Study of the Barton Boulevard and Florida Avenue sub-districts
- Acquisition of a mixed-use parcels located to the east side of Huntington Lane, north of City Hall
- Completion of the Lake Betsi/Don Griffin Trail resurfacing project which included the installation of an 8-foot sidewalk from Rockledge Flats Apartments to the new trail entrance along Angela Avenue

V. Projects Overview

The State of Florida, in its 2019 legislation, required that Community Redevelopment Agencies report on the total number of projects started and completed and the estimated cost for each project.

Total Projects in FY 2022-2023	Total	Total costs
Façade Improvement Grants		
New Projects started in FY 2022-2023	6	\$86,910.44
Neighborhood Improvements		
Multipurpose Facility	Started	\$1,257,706.90

V. Projects Overview

Community Redevelopment Agency Multipurpose Center

The City has started the development of a Multipurpose center that will be located on the west side of Cogswell within the McKnight Sports Complex. The center will contain sports courts for basketball, volleyball, pickleball and rooms for activities.



Rockledge Sports Complex



08-22-23



Rockledge Sports Complex



08-22-23



Rockledge Sports Complex



10-19-23



Rockledge Sports Complex



10-19-23



Rockledge Sports Complex



03-19-24



Rockledge Sports Complex



03-19-24

V. Projects Overview

Façade Improvement Grant Program

Outside of projects principally funded and managed by the Rockledge Community Redevelopment Agency, the Community Redevelopment Agency also administers a Façade Improvement Grant Program, which has been extremely successful in improving the aesthetics of properties located within the Community Redevelopment Agency. Since it was started in 2004, the Façade Improvement Grant Program has issued 134 grants and paid out over \$962,000 in grant award money, which represents approximately 3.7 million dollars invested by business owners located throughout the Community Redevelopment Agency. In FY 2023, 6 façade improvement grants were awarded, which represents \$86,910.44 invested by businesses owners located throughout the Community Redevelopment Agency.

Façade Improvement Grants Approved/Completed in FY 2022-2023			
Business Name	Address	Grant amount	Cost of Project
Baywash of Rockledge	1998 Rockledge Boulevard	\$7,275.00	\$14,550.00
Fur Shore Dog Grooming	1191 Rockledge Boulevard	\$5,224.00	\$10,448.00
Brevard Achievement Center	1845 Cogswell Street	\$6,392.50	\$12,785.00
Pizza Vola Express	910 Barton Boulevard	\$7,275.00	\$14,550.00
My Island Pancake House	165 Barton Boulevard	\$10,000.00	\$21,500.00
BeachFly Brewing Company	513 Barton Boulevard	\$6,538.72	\$13,077.44

VI. Financial Reports

A. Balance Sheet (Full Accrual)

FY 2022-2023 Assets:

Cash	\$1,890,063
Redevelopment Escrow	\$5,252,354
Prepaid Items	<u>\$6,050</u>
Total Assets	\$7,148,440

FY 2022-2023 Liabilities:

Accounts Payable	<u>\$398,414</u>
Total Liabilities	\$398,414

B. Statement of Revenues, Expenditures & Changes in Fund Balances (Modified Accrual)

FY 2022-2023 Revenues:

Increment Financing (County)	\$1,257,576
Misc. income	\$1,226
ARPA Grant Fund	\$5,950
Increment Financing (City)	\$1,906,312
Interest	<u>\$74,348</u>
Total Revenue	\$3,245,412

FY 2022-2023 Expenditures:

Personnel costs	\$ 0
Debt Service	\$ 0
Operating Expenditures	\$16,324
Capital Projects & Grants	\$2,045,706
Legal	<u>\$17,100</u>
Total Expenditures	\$2,079,130

FY 2022-2023 Changes in Fund Balance

Fund Balance – Beginning of the Year	\$5,583,744
Net Activity FY 2022-2023	<u>\$1,166,282</u>
Fund Balance	\$6,750,026
Less long-term debt	<u>\$ 0</u>
Net Position	\$6,750,026

VI. Financial Reports

C. Summary of Projects, Grants and Debt

The Community Redevelopment Agency engages in a variety of different activities to improve the district. The outbreak of COVID-19 and the variants in this past fiscal year has limited the ability to hold public events and fully engage in any large-scale redevelopment projects. Furthermore, despite the COVID-19 outbreak, numerous businesses still took advantage of the façade improvement program with 6 grants awarded during the fiscal year, and 1 which carried over from the previous fiscal year and nine which were started and completed in the 2020-2021 fiscal year. During this fiscal year, the Community Redevelopment Agency has honored its debts and is utilizing its working budget for improvements to the districts to create and maintain the property values for the residents and businesses within its boundaries. And when the Community Redevelopment Agency sunsets in September of 2026 there will be zero debt.

VII. Performance Information

A. Total projects started, completed and estimate cost for each project:

Façade Improvement Grants		
Completed or Ongoing Projects	Total	Amount
Projects completed in FY 2022-2023	6	\$76,821.14

Community Art Projects FY 2022-2023		
Project Completed	Don Griffin Trail Park Benches	\$6,090
Engineering/Design FY 2022-2023		
Project Started	McKnight Sports Complex	\$1,437,508.70
Neighborhood Improvements FY 2022-2023		
Project Completed	Barnes Boulevard Beautification	\$549,615.28

B. Number of Jobs created and sector of the economy from which these jobs were created within the Community Redevelopment Agency: *Although the Agency had two projects, this was completed through contractors who hired a variety of subcontractors to complete the projects. The number of direct jobs created is not known at this time and they were temporary through the time of the project.*

C. Number of Jobs retained within the Community Redevelopment Agency: *Although the Agency had two projects through a contractor, those jobs were temporary through the time of the project. The City of Rockledge has a list of properties developed or redeveloped in the district since the inception of the Agency.*

D. Assessed property values when the Community Redevelopment Agency was enacted vs. current assessed property values:

Taxable Year 2001, Fiscal Year 2002

County \$145,259,660

City \$145,259,660

Taxable Year 2022, Fiscal Year 2023

County \$490,043,819

City \$490,043,819

E. Total amount expended for affordable housing: *This is not a category eligible for Community Redevelopment Tax Increment Financing.*

VIII. Additional Annual Reporting Requirements

- A. Provide the Board of County Commissioner's the Community Redevelopment Agency's proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal year, 60 days prior to the beginning of the fiscal year: *The Community Redevelopment Agency prepares its budget in the spring and thus is compliant with the County's 60-day requirement prior to September 30, 2023.*

- B. Provide the Board of County Commissioner's any budget amendments to its operating budget within 10 days after the adoption by the Community Redevelopment Agency: *The Community Redevelopment Agency has had one budget amendment in FY 2022-2023 and complied with submitting this to the County Manager's office.*

As the Rockledge Community Redevelopment Agency positions itself to begin to consider priorities and projects to accomplish prior to its sunset, it is also a time to reflect upon the many achievements and success stories and to look forward to continued fulfillment of the Rockledge Community Redevelopment Plan.

The Agency administrators, coupled with the unfailing support and guidance of the Agency commissioners of the Rockledge Community Redevelopment Agency, will continue to bring tangible and meaningful value for the funds entrusted to the Agency and the City of Rockledge while being mindful of the goals and objectives of the Community Redevelopment Plan and adhering to its governing statutes.