



***Institute for Senior Professionals
Of Northwest Florida State College***

***City of Niceville
Community Redevelopment Act
(CRA)***

Draft Plan Support

April 27, 2015

INTRODUCTION

This report responds to a request from City of Niceville Manager Lannie Corbin and the city's CRA Consultant Bill McCartney. It is on a fast track in order to have its contents available to include in an Okaloosa County RESTORE Act project proposal application. Specific sections of the application are cited in the final paragraphs. The report was written by Art Miller and Michael Flynt.

BACKGROUND

Request.

On March 17, 2015 the City of Niceville Community Redevelopment Act (CRA) Consultant Bill McCartney sent the attached email on behalf of the City Manager requesting assistance in preparing an application for funding of one part of the plan from the Okaloosa County RESTORE Act Committee (ORAC) (Atch 1). The email was summarized and sent as an email to appropriate ISP members and leaders (Atch 2).

Request Background: In 2012, the Niceville City Council voted unanimously to explore the establishment of a CRA Plan to: "Eliminate blighted conditions in the old settlement area as a result of inadequate transportation facilities, . . . deteriorating sites . . . high vacancy rates, . . . obsolescence of properties. . ."

Authorization for such projects is found in Section 163.335 Florida Statutes, (4). It says, ". . . coastal resort or tourist areas . . . which are economically distressed . . . be revitalized and redeveloped in a manner that will vastly improve the economic and social conditions of the community."

The City Manager and CRA Consultant believe Okaloosa County RESTORE Act funding can give this very viable economic development a quick start from a plan to a project.

Focus

Recent studies have shown that the areas of the Old Settlement, now titled as the Historical Downtown District, are deteriorating owing to: inadequate street layout; faulty layout of commercial properties in respect to accessibility; size; and outdated density patterns of individual structures; diversity of ownership; inadequate transportation and parking facilities; lack of functional open space; deteriorated structures and properties; inadequate access to major transportation routes; a large number of vacant properties; and overall deterioration.

Main Component

The City of Niceville administration says, "...redevelopment of the "old village" on Boggy Bayou will have major implications for the success of the City's CRA Program. Fundamental to this is the purchase and development of a public landing on the bayou to serve as the center piece of the commercial restoration of the district." City Administration has identified a shoreline area ideal for the project. It consists of three small parcels on Bayshore Drive in the center of the oldest commercial district of the city. The City Administration has contacted owners of the three needed parcels and believe the land can be bought for \$500,000.

Vision

To turn around decline of the Historical Downtown District, this vision is offered to guide necessary actions. The overall vision of this effort is to:

"Create a unique park that is innovative in design and amenities, anchored in the best of the culture and history of the bayou, and that offers a new experience with every visit."

APPROACH

In keeping with the City of Niceville's resolution and with Florida Statutes, The City of Niceville is resolved to:

- redevelop and enhance the Historical Downtown District of the city
- provide residents and visitors with unique, positive experiences
- make a significant impact on the local economy
- improve the image and attractiveness of the community

The Historical Downtown commercial area is located along the north shore of Boggy Bayou. It is triangle shaped bounded by Bayshore Drive from its intersection with John Sims Parkway (SR20) east to the eastern boundaries of parcels on the east side of Edge Avenue north to John Sims Parkway at Jones Avenue and west to the starting point., It consists of an estimated 1,101,632 square feet of space or roughly 23 acres.

The designated area has significant potential as a year round venue for cultural, historic, recreational, and culinary experiences, all of which would create positive experiences for visitors, and provide economic stimulus to the city, to property owners, and to businesses. In addition, the CRA area is adjacent to the City of Niceville's existing Turkey Creek Recreational District adding accessible outdoor experiences such as tubing, a boardwalk for wildlife viewing, running and benches for rest. The creek's swimming holes are a favorite too. The CRA Plan calls for connection of the two areas tto enhance the value of both.

Based on research into other similar projects that have been successfully developed elsewhere over the past few decades, the following elements are frequently included in such projects:

- ✓Cultural: the arts; galleries; diverse restaurants; festivals and events; cultural diversity, farmers' markets, nightlife, entertainment
- ✓Historic: buildings, museums, libraries, artifacts, photographs, businesses
- ✓Recreation: scenic views, boat rides, docks, parks, playgrounds, multi-purpose paths, fishing
- ✓Culinary: diverse dining opportunities, local foods and locally grown products.

Other historical restoration projects in Florida and the rest of the nation form a basis for this concept of characteristics of the Boggy Bayou Landing redevelopment program.

Area Character and identity

- ✓ Scaled for unhurried personal experiences
- ✓ Environmentally sound materials and construction
- ✓ Venues for special events
- ✓ Enhanced environmental features implementing the city stormwater management utility plan
- ✓ Safe family areas

Bayou-related amenities

- ✓ Bayou Landing boardwalk with areas for visiting boat tie-ups
- ✓ First-hand experience of the beauty of the bayou
- ✓ Rentals of kayaks, canoes, paddleboards

Potential District Features

- ✓ Restaurants, family and up-scale
- ✓ Children's splash pad, fountain
- ✓ Swings
- ✓ Seasonal food and refreshments
- ✓ Dog park
- ✓ Iconic cultural features
- ✓ Farmers Market
- ✓ Rental pavilions
- ✓ Game tables
- ✓ Areas to display outdoor art
- ✓ Wi-Fi Hotspot

Potential Events

- ✓ Fourth of July fireworks viewing area, public celebrations
- ✓ Novelty boat races, for example team based milk carton canoe races
- ✓ Themed art shows
- ✓ Start and Finish lines for biking, fun runs, etc.
- ✓ Fishing tournaments (red fish, trout, catfish, etc.)
- ✓ Public performances, bands, variety acts, outdoor plays
- ✓ Mattie Kelly Environmental Institute annual family day
- ✓ Boat parades
- ✓ Waterfront events complementing the Mullet Festival
- ✓ Historical re-enactments such as the Walton Guards

Such projects normally limit, or eliminate, vehicular traffic so that visitors have freedom to move about without concern for traffic. Creation of pedestrian-only areas is desirable.

Among the important redevelopment projects under consideration for the Niceville Historical Downtown District are:

- ✓ Niceville Public Landing Acquisition (2015)
- ✓ Public Land Construction (2016)
- ✓ Historic Downtown Streetscapes and Lighting (2016)
- ✓ Public Landing and Walkway Construction (2015-2017)
- ✓ Historic Downtown Cleanup (2015)
- ✓ Restoration of Mill Pond and Habitat (2015)
- ✓ Development of Public Parking Areas (2016)
- ✓ Development of Crosswalk to Turkey Creek Recreation Area (2016-2017)
- ✓ Landscape Enhancements (2015-2016)

Proximity of the Turkey Creek Recreation District to the Historic District will complement the attractiveness of both districts. In addition to the strategies for the Historic Downtown District, numerous projects have been identified for the Turkey Creek Recreational District, such as a resource facility, canoe recovery area, amphitheater, tennis courts, boardwalk completion, land acquisition, informational kiosks, multi-purpose paths, storm water improvements, and pedestrian access improvements. Both districts will offer a variety of visitor options with every visit.

The CRA project Highlands District includes projections for improvement of commercial and retail business, multi-family housing, enhancement of streetscapes, and code enforcement.

The John Sims Parkway District of the CRA project includes incentives for business and enhancement of streetscapes.

Throughout the CRA, an investment needs to be made for development costs, hiring staff, developing design guidelines, public utilities, utility relocation, gateways, rezoning

traffic studies, and incentives for redevelopment. Grants and planned tax increment financing (TIF) are expected to contribute to the entire CRA project.

ESTIMATED COST PROJECTIONS

At this conceptual phase of the Historical District redevelopment project, costs the economic impact can be approximated based on local experience and similar historical restoration areas.

Over the three year period from the present until 2018, the CRA Draft Plan of March 15, 2015 projects these redevelopment costs:

-Land Acquisition for Landing	\$400,000 - \$700,000
-Parking	\$400,000 - \$500,000
-Stormwater Management	\$500,000 - \$700,000
-Restoration Improvements	\$500,000 - \$750,000
-Multi-Purpose Trail	\$800,000 - \$900,000
-Land Acquisition for Parking	\$400,000 - \$500,000

City of Niceville Administration negotiations with property owners for the intended Bayou Landing site indicate that the three parcels can be bought for \$500,000.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE OKALOOSA COUNTY RESTORE ACT (ORAC) PROJECT APPLICATION

A. Project Summary. ORAC Data Collection Form, Part A. Item A.1. This information is offered for the Project Summary:

Economics of the project. This application is limited to funding purchase of about 120 feet of Boggy Bayou shoreline property in the neighborhood where the earliest commercial settlement occurred. The site is central to the Historical District portion of the Niceville Community Redevelopment Act (CRA) Draft Plan dated March 15, 2015. The lion's share of expenditures both long- and short-term will be made through a combination of sources characteristic of CRA projects. The CRA Plan calls for the city to construct a 60 foot wide pier type landing about 100 feet into the bayou along with upland public parking. Subsequently, a boardwalk is planned to connect with the amenities of Turkey Creek Walk Park. The Florida Department of State publication *Economic Impacts of Historic Preservation in Florida, Update 2010* reports that public investment in historic preservation in Florida between 1996 and 2008 resulted in 1.6 times the investment in matching funds. Using that as a multiplier it would mean an \$800,000 impact for the \$500,000 requested here. The city estimates the whole CRA project will have average annual revenues of \$875,000 from CRA and Tax Increment Financing, loans, grants and private contributions. Initial investment for the proposed project will be for construction of the pier and upland parking after award of RESTORE Act funding. After completion of the pier, city revenues associated with this application

will come from fees and rental of the pier for private events. The pier will anchor other developments in the Historic District that will result in increased ad valorem and sales taxes for the city.

Specific Objectives. The Boggy Landing pier will anchor redevelopment of the “old town” Historic District. It will be the attraction and public space that will draw entrepreneurs and investors to build on the unique character of existing amenities on the bayou. New development is expected to include high-end dining and shopping that take their identity from the Historic District. Boggy Landing will be the heart of the old town community with its heritage of water travel for timber and turpentine, sport and commercial fishing, and retreat residences for the wealthy escaping northern winters. This shoreline property will attract public and private events ranging from sporting activities and fine dining to children’s play areas and weddings and the many other activities found in similar developments across Florida and the nation. Outdoor recreation opportunities will draw those looking for access to the bayou for boating and fishing. The many reasons to visit Boggy Landing will make it an attractive place with new experiences possible with each visit.

Jobs Created Short Term employment will involve engineering and construction of the pier and upland parking. The CRA plan estimates some \$1,000,000 for land acquisition plus pier construction.

Long Term employment on the Landing will include long term routine maintenance of the structure and management of its use. City of Niceville Public Works will provide maintenance and a part time manager for public use will be needed. It is also likely that commercial vendors for rental watercraft such as kayaks will want to use the property most months of the year. City and recreational service wages will probably be in the \$17,000 to \$20,000 Leisure and Hospitality range reported by the Florida Legislature Office of Economic and Demographic Research in January 2015.

More significant will be jobs resulting from businesses drawn to the Historic District by the signature Bayou Landing. Section B.1.6 below describes food service, retail and recreational amenity jobs ranging from managers with salaries upwards of \$60,000 to entry level dishwashers making about \$10.00 per hour. Other job possibilities exist as well. Historic preservation districts have their own flavor and employment opportunities will grow as the district matures and expresses its character.

B. Jobs Created. ORAC Data Collection Form, Part B. Quantitative Scoring Model, Economic Factors. Item B.1.6.

Purchase of property with proceeds from RESTORE Act funding will not directly result in job creation. Job creation will result from city financed development of a pier on the shoreline property described in this application. Short term salaries and wages will be the result of contracts for engineering services and marine construction. Follow-on redevelopment of the Historic District will result in long term employment. Data here are

from the Bureau of Labor Statistics reporting on Florida (See www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_fl.htm).

Short Term Jobs – These jobs will be covered by the contract for pier construction and will be filled by engineers who draw the pier plans and construction workers who build it.

Occupation	Mean Hourly	Mean Annual
Engineer	\$43.80	\$91,000.00
Construction Manager	42.47	88,330.00
Construction Helper	13.27	27,610.00

Long Term Jobs These are representative. Many other possibilities exist depending on how the Historic District evolves to express its own character. The range of annual salaries can be expected to cover other jobs.

Occupation	Mean Hourly	Mean Annual
Restaurant Manager	\$30.78	\$64,020.00
Chef	11.78	24,500.00
Restaurant Staff	10.60	22,040.00
Dishwasher	9.38	19,500.00
Retail Manager	20.68	43,000.00
Retail Clerk	11.80	24,700.00
Cashier	10.00	19,740.00
Food Service Concessionaire	10.39	21,610.00
Recreation Workers	11.65	24,230.00

C. Economic Factor #2. ORAC Data Collection Form, Part B. Quantitative Scoring Model, Item B.2., Revenues.

The B.2.1 Revenue Table is Attachment 3. The table gives expected revenues for the entire CRA Project. Two lines give information relating to the Bayou Landing. Total Revenue from City Government is estimated to contain an average of \$10,000 annually for pier maintenance. The Total Sales Revenues line estimates concession fees for recreational equipment rentals and food concessions on the pier. The Sales Revenues level off after the facility matures and establishes a steady activity level. With 10-year city expenditures of \$100,000 for maintenance deducted from expected sales revenues of \$120,000 provides a modest profit. The significant benefit to the city will result from increased ad valorem taxes and municipal revenue sharing of sales taxes collected.

D. Economic Factor #2. ORAC Data Collection Form, Part B. Quantitative Scoring Model, Item B.2.2.

The Bayou Landing is a venue for service sales. *Food and Drink.* Existing restaurants near the site will be joined by others, probably with specialties such as seafood, Cajun and traditional southern cooking. Special and weekend events should include food concessionaires offering comfort food on or near the pier. Establishment of one or more bars with a view of the bayou can be expected. A specialty café serving fine coffees and teas would do well at any time. *Leisure activities.* Rentals of kayaks, canoes and paddle boards from concessionaires on the Landing are expected. The beauty and calm waters of Boggy Bayou are a natural attraction. Renters will also be able to cross under the John Sims Parkway bridge over Turkey Creek to enjoy its cool waters and abundant wildlife. *Retail.* Recreational activity on the bayou should lead to retail sales of personal equipment and small water craft such as kayaks. Special events envisioned by the city should lead to shops catering to visitors and local families. The unique character of the Landing is expected to draw specialty clothing and other stores. *Special Events.* The Bayou Landing will host a variety of special events. They may include art shows, antique automobile shows, musical events, canoe or kayak races, foot race and bicycle race start/finish, and many more. Each out of town visitor will need to eat and some a place to sleep generating sales in the city.

CONCLUSION

The Historic District Community Redevelopment plan responds to many of the criteria set by the RESTORE Act for selecting projects for funding. It offers new public access to Florida's recreational waters and opportunities to learn to appreciate the natural environment, it adds jobs and businesses to the city, and it strengthens Niceville as a sustainable city in times of natural disaster and economic downturns. The amount requested is modest compared to the entire CRA plan for the city. It appears to this writer that an Okaloosa County RESTORE Act Committee recommendation for project approval will be a wise step for the city and Okaloosa County.

Attachments:

1. City of Niceville CRA Consultant email, March 17, 2015, at 10:57 AM.
2. Michael Flynt email, March 27, 2015, 8:55:31 AM. Economic Development Project Request.
3. Table B.2.1, 27APR2015

ATTACHMENT 1

Subj: **Niceville CRA/BP Landing Project-Economic Impact**
Date: 3/17/2015 10:57:25 A.M. Central Daylight Time
From: bill.crlands@gmail.com
To: Mflynt6905@aol.com
CC: corbinl@niceville.org

Mike, Thanks for meeting with Lannie and me last week. We are getting all our "ducks in a row" to present a ground breaking application to the OKRAC for BP funding. As we discussed, both the environmental and economic outcomes from the redevelopment of the "old village" on Boggy Bayou will have major implications for the success of the City's CRA Program. Fundamental to this is the purchase and development of a public landing on the bayou to serve as the center piece of the commercial restoration of the district. As we discussed, we will need some projections of the economic impact of this effort , both short term and long term. The assistance of your group at NWFSC could provide a reasonable assessment of the overall economic benefits of this proposed project. I hope you all will agree to assist us.

I will be in Niceville tomorrow to secure a copy of the CRA Plan for your Committee to review. Please let me know how to get it to you.

Lannie and I look forward to working with you in this effort. Bill McCartney

Niceville CRA Support

Monday, April 27, 2015 AOL: MFLynt6905

ATTACHMENT 2

Subj: **Re: ISP Niceville CRA Project Meeting April 1st at 0900**
Date: 4/1/2015 7:37:40 A.M. Central Daylight Time
From: bill.crlands@gmail.com
To: MFlynt6905@aol.com
CC: corbinl@niceville.org

Yes, thanks Mike. The need is two fold. 1. To provide an assessment of the "Old Town" CRA on the local economy and 2. A reasonable assessment of Public Access to and from the Water for a landing facility. Apalachicola, for example, uses its landing for many public assemblies (Santa arrives every year by shrimp boat) as well as access to the city for local and traveling boaters. These facilities have a number of names, such as River Walk, Landing, City Docks, Bayou Park, etc. The major purpose of the facility is to jump start the down town redevelopment and serve as an area specific economic stimulus. The project is one of only 5 major initial recommendations in the CRA Plan. Sorry I can not make the meeting but Lannie and I had a good review yesterday. Bill Mc

On Tue, Mar 31, 2015 at 11:53 PM, <MFlynt6905@aol.com> wrote:

Thanks Bill. Sorry you won't be there. The main thrust of our meeting is to put some boundaries on what is needed so we can determine if ISP has the resources for the job. Seeing the highlights in the Parts A & B it appears we will only be asked to contribute to those fields. Also, not sure if you are asking for economic impact of the whole proposal, or just the Historic District part. It sounded as if the need is for the Historic District redevelopment. Is that correct?

Mike

In a message dated 3/31/2015 6:32:39 A.M. Central Daylight Time, bill.crlands@gmail.com writes:

Mike, I'm cooking lamb for 80 people for a Sadder Supper on Wednesday. I will not be able to attend. I will be able to meet with you and/or others anytime next week. Bill Mc

On Mon, Mar 30, 2015 at 5:15 PM, <MFlynt6905@aol.com> wrote:

Greetings: Lanny Corbin is providing us a room in Niceville City Hall and will meet with us to answer questions about the Community Redevelopment Project described in an earlier email.

Let's meet in City Hall at 9:00 AM on Wednesday, April 1st (no foolin'). Please give me an OK by return email to confirm the date, time, and location are good for you.

Thanks,

Mike
496-0836 (cell)

Niceville CRA Support

Monday, April 27, 2015 AOL: MFlynt6905

ATTACHMENT 3

REVENUES										
Entire CRA Plan including the RESTORE Act Grant										
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
Estimated Annual Revenue by Source										
Total Revenue from RESTORE Grant	500,000									
Total Revenue from City Government ¹	400,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Total Revenue from County Government										
Total Revenue from State Government (CRA Grants) ²		1,600,000	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000
Total Sales Revenues (user fees, lease fees, product revenue, etc.) ³		5,000	10,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
Other Private Contributions (donations, private grants, etc.) ²		50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
Loan ²	75,000									
CRA/Tax Increment Funding ²	10,000	20,000	40,000	120,000	240,000	400,000	400,000	400,000	400,000	400,000
TOTAL REVENUES	985,000	1,685,000	610,000	695,000	815,000	975,000	975,000	975,000	975,000	975,000
TOTAL REVENUE									\$9,665,000	

1. Estimate for public parking development plus annual maintenance on the Bayou Landing Pier.
2. City of Niceville CRA Draft Plan, March 10, 2015.
3. Estimate of user fees for use of Bayou Landing Pier for private events. Amount levels off after three years due to schedule saturation.