



2008 2009

annual report



“ If we did all the things we are capable of doing, we would literally astound ourselves. ”
—Thomas Edison

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Sherod Halliburton
Executive Director

Leading the Way Through Collaboration

Thanks to the work of nearly four dozen partner organizations, civic, and community leaders, it is my privilege to report that the CCRA had one of its best years ever.

Over the past fiscal year, our agency made a direct investment in the Central Community Redevelopment Area of over \$1.8 million, and successfully leveraged significant additional dollars and other resources from public and private partners. Most important of all, the CCRA worked hands-on and helped improve the quality of life for residents of our community.

All of our work at the CCRA is guided by the philosophy that the physical revitalization of the area is tremendously important, but that individual people and families are the heart and soul of our community. We can and will build more houses and attract new employers to the district, but our job does not end there. We are committed to preparing residents for home ownership and giving them access to training and development to increase their ability to secure quality employment. We also view small and micro-business development as an essential component to ensuring that the CCRA will achieve its full potential as an engine for economic revitalization.

That's why - alongside our investment in "bricks-and-mortar" projects - the CCRA partnered with the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, Gulf Coast Community Foundation of Venice and other organizations in order to take a lead role in the development of our area's labor force. It is an honor for the CCRA to represent the City of Bradenton as the Operational Lead in the Manatee Sarasota Workforce Funders Collaborative. We are pursuing the prestigious designation as a National Fund for Workforce Solutions site, and if achieved we will have the distinction of being the first public agency to do so. We will also be the first site located in the Southeastern USA. Strengthening organizations, training business owners to be more effective, expanding the services available to our residents, and helping families grow their base of savings and assets is what we are committed to achieving at the CCRA.

None of it would have been possible without the unyielding commitment of our staff, volunteers and partners. Their work deserves our deepest gratitude. The CCRA is committed to leading the way through collaboration to a more prosperous life for all of the residents and business owners in central and east Bradenton.

Please call on me anytime with your ideas, suggestions, questions, and needs.

At your service,

Sherod A. Halliburton,
Executive Director

CAPITAL PROJECTS



Remaking Martin Luther King Ave into a Commercial Corridor

MLK Mixed Use Project

After nearly two years of pre-development, 2009 was a watershed year for the CCRA's "MLK Mixed Use Project," located at the southwest corner of the intersection of 3rd Street East and Martin Luther King Avenue East. Originally designed to be the agency's "signature project," the initial concept for the project was to build nine residential units atop 5,000 square feet of commercial and retail space. Yet, the housing market crash that culminated in 2009 led the CCRA to evaluate alternate plans. Plans that are currently being considered include the creation of a commercial office and retail facility, or the continuation of the original plan with the residential properties being converted from ownership to rental.

During the 2008-09 fiscal year, the CCRA completed the acquisition of one of the two remaining parcels that comprise the project site (bringing the total to 1.2 acres now owned by the agency); retained Urban Development Solutions to conduct a financial feasibility analysis for the second design option; and worked with the architecture firm of C. Alan Anderson, P.A. to complete site plans and renderings for both potential uses of the facility. Project designs are available for review through the CCRA office.

The CCRA maintains a commitment to the completion of this project, and will continue its development once market conditions determine the appropriate strategy and time to move forward.

Meeting the need for High-Quality Child Care

Community residents have repeatedly voiced the need for affordable, accessible child care in the area – particularly for low-income residents transitioning into the workforce or completing career training.

During 2008-09, the CCRA executed an agreement to convert one of its residential holdings to a commercial use daycare facility. In addition, the agency entered a lease contract with a local daycare provider to operate the center; issued a Request for Proposals, and selected a qualified general contractor to perform the work. Following an assessment of whether to rehabilitate the property or rebuild, the CCRA Board made the decision that a newly constructed center would better serve the needs of the area's children. Demolition of the existing structure and construction of a new facility is scheduled to commence during the 2009-10 fiscal year. The CCRA also invested in additional renovations to one of its properties that had previously housed a daycare center and welcomed a new tenant.

These projects are in keeping with the expressed opinions from community residents who have requested that Martin Luther King Avenue be restored to its historic state as a commercial corridor.

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Phase I Completed – Phase II Underway at Norma Lloyd Park

The Norma Lloyd Park project made impressive gains in its development in fiscal year 2008-2009. Under the project management oversight of the Manatee County Neighborhood Services Division, and funded by federal, state, local, and private partners, this \$6 million, 20-acre complex is in the second phase of its development. The CCRA invested \$901,133 in the project in the fiscal year 2008-09.

Also this year, after several years of planning and fundraising, the historic 13th Avenue Community Center broke ground on its new facility on the north side of the park. The multi-purpose soccer field was completed with funding from the State of Florida and match dollars provided by the CCRA. The Pittsburgh Pirates and the Tampa Bay Rays teamed up to renovate the baseball fields on the north side of the park. This provides Norma Lloyd Park with the distinction of being one of the only little league complexes in the country with two major league baseball teams as sponsors. Their commitment to the project extends beyond the rehabilitation to involvement in baseball programming on a long-term basis. The landscaping at last year's Kaboom! playground project was enhanced this year on Florida Arbor Day with, hearty, low-maintenance, native plants provided by project partner Keep Manatee Beautiful.

The work continues into the next fiscal year, and the completed park will consist of renovated baseball fields, a bridge to connect the north and south sides of the park, a walking trail, a multi-purpose field, parking lot, park pavilions, basketball courts, press box and concession stand, a renovated football field, multiple playgrounds and new fencing.

Future unfunded elements in the park plans include an open air amphitheatre, as well as a splash park. Thanks to each of these agencies, Norma Lloyd Park is fulfilling the goal of becoming the educational, recreational, and cultural heart of East Bradenton.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Small Business Development: CCRA Launches New Strategy

Since 2005, the CCRA has provided one-on-one technical assistance and training to existing and emerging small businesses in its Enterprise Center. But in 2008-09, the CCRA made a significant change in the way it serves the area's business community. In addition to expanding the agency's focus on micro businesses (i.e., businesses with less than 5 employees that are owned by low-income individuals), the agency designed a new partner-based strategy that will significantly expand the number of businesses served, and the types of services they can access through the agency. This strategy allows us to serve business owners residing outside the boundaries of our district; expand the course offerings available to local business owners; and give our local business community access to the full complement of trainings, technical assistance, including assistance with preparing loan applications, and the development of business plans.

Another key piece of the strategy is the CCRA's work with partners to develop a loan program. The program is designed to serve micro businesses that, with support, can demonstrate a likelihood of success. "The need to access funds has been identified as the major challenge for business owners being served by the Enterprise Center. This has inspired the development of a loan fund to provide much needed capital to committed business owners," said Sherod Halliburton, Executive Director. The CCRA has a goal to increase the potential for success through making loans available to business owners while providing technical assistance and serving as a bridge to traditional banking relationships.

Suncoast Community Capital Corporation

The CCRA was a central force behind the creation of the new Suncoast Community Capital, a non-profit organization created by a dynamic group of 12 area leaders. Suncoast Community Capital was founded for the purpose of developing the human, social, and financial capital of underserved areas of Manatee and eventually Sarasota Counties. Suncoast Community Capital will serve as an intermediary to public and private partnerships, channeling investments into targeted areas. Through a partnership with Suncoast Community Capital the CCRA hopes to leverage significant economic development resources necessary to accomplish its redevelopment goals. Most of these resources would traditionally not be available to government entities.

In response to public budget cuts experienced by economic development agencies throughout the County, during 2008-09, CCRA representatives participated in the design of Suncoast Community Capital's new "Shared Services Platform." The Platform is a streamlined and integrated set of four services that are vital to economic development, but which are cost-prohibitive for any one agency to offer on its own, especially during the current economic downturn. The current and planned activities of Suncoast Community Capital include commercial development support services, business development services, workforce development support, and asset building services. This organization will provide a funding mechanism for all of these activities.

The CCRA's Executive Director, Mr. Sherod Halliburton, met with several of his CRA Director counterparts in Manatee County to help design the new platform. Their efforts led the vision of:

- Creating a shared infrastructure of technology, staff, and services
- Reducing the cost of providing vital services
- Expanding the provision of services that maximize economic development outcomes in the CRAs
- Strengthening the business community and "third sector" of non-profit organizations who can be an ally in reaching economic development goals
- Developing an environment more conducive to commercial investment

Free Tax Preparation Serves 10 Times More Clients This Year

The CCRA completed its third year of its free income tax preparation program as a partner to the Asset Building Coalition (ABC), increasing from just 19 clients at its location in its first year to 195 filers in 2009. Working in partnership with the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) and the U.S. Internal Revenue Service VITA program, the program helped CCRA residents receive tax returns totaling \$275,103. The coalition served 2,849 income tax filers countywide and brought back \$2,186,289 in refund dollars to taxpayers through this free service.

This and other CCRA initiatives are part of its focus on helping residents increase their base of savings and assets.





Workforce Development: New Regional Workforce Collaborative Secures Over \$1.5 Million to Help Move Lower-Income Workers into Higher Paying Jobs

During the 2008-09 fiscal year, the CCRA was a founding partner and funder to the emerging, bi-county workforce collaborative that has to date raised over \$1.5 million to invest in training and development initiatives that move low-income, low-skill workers into higher-income, higher-skill jobs in four of the region's highest-growth industries – healthcare, manufacturing, transportation and technology.

The CCRA Executive Director Sherod Halliburton, was a key driver in the formation, and serves as Co-Chairman of the new Manatee Sarasota Workforce Funders Collaborative. The Collaborative was awarded a \$1 million grant from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, along with \$150,000 from the Gulf Coast Community Foundation of Venice, \$200,000 from the Downtown Development Agency, a \$25,000 contribution from Bank of America, and a \$20,000 contribution from Manatee Community Action Agency. Ongoing discussions are taking place regarding a partnership and the alignment of resources from the Suncoast Workforce Board. The CCRA made the initial financial contribution to the collaborative in the amount of \$200,000 over five years, and will soon serve as the operational hub of the initiative, providing 4,000 square feet of office and training space to the project. All staff of the Collaborative will be housed at the CCRA and will report to the CCRA Executive Director under the direction of the Collaborative.

In the 2009-10 fiscal year, the Collaborative will seek to become the 23rd organization in the country (first in the Southeast) to be designated as a National Fund for Workforce Solutions site. The National Fund is a partnership unprecedented in its scope. Nearly 200 funders are investing millions of dollars in local communities to help get people back to work and ensure that American businesses are able to compete. The National Fund is dedicated to preparing jobseekers and employees for a career, not just a job. The National Fund brings together local and regional leaders from the private, public, and nonprofit sectors to spark and drive innovation, working hand-in-hand to create practices and systems that can help employers and employees succeed in a post-recession economy.

Other founding partners to the Collaborative include the Manatee County Economic Development Council, the Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce, the Manatee County EDC, Sarasota United Way, and the Suncoast Workforce Board.

"This is a great opportunity for organizations in both counties to work together on a significant issue: creating high paying jobs," said Mark Pritchett, vice president for community investment for Gulf Coast Community Foundation of Venice, and Co-Chair of the collaborative.



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



Rebuild Manatee Becomes a Reality

The CCRA completed plans for a new home rehabilitation project this year. Through its commitment of a \$60,000 allocation and planning grant, the CCRA will work with the Manatee County Government and Volunteer Manatee to organize volunteers to rehab the homes of low-income residents. The initial pilot project will cover the cost rehabilitating five homes – the success of which will help the CCRA pursue a large federal allocation to be used to expand the scope of the program. CCRA residents identified the need to create programming that will assist residents of the community with home rehabilitation projects, and this project was created to meet that need while fulfilling master plan objectives.

New Heights for the Washington Park Neighborhood Association

The Washington Park Neighborhood Association, forged in 2007, made new strides again this year, including being honored by the Manatee County Neighborhood Services division for National Neighbor Day with County's "Best Neighborhood" award. JoAnn Spencer, President of the Association, cites the neighborhood's increased trust, cohesion, and confidence to become involved in neighborhood projects as one of its top accomplishments in the past year. Five of the Association's members have been investing volunteer time on a weekly or biweekly basis in the mentoring program at the G. D. Rogers Elementary Garden School, including service on the School Advisory Council. Going into the next fiscal year, Ms. Spencer says the Association's top priority is the development of a neighborhood newsletter to connect residents to new and existing resources coming into the area, such as the Jobs Etc. program that now operates a satellite office in the CCRA facility to help 18-24 year old job seekers with support and placement.

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Snowflake Lights – "Simply Breathtaking"

Christmas 2009 saw the arrival of snow on Martin Luther King Avenue East and 13th Avenue East with the installation of seasonal holiday snowflake lighting for the first time ever. The lights made the major district thoroughfares breathtakingly beautiful, and addressed the beautification element of the master plan. The acquisition of this lighting demonstrates our agency commitment to responsive action to community requests for programs and projects that make the community aesthetically pleasing and attractive for work, recreation, and commerce





Grocery Store Concept Sees the Day of Light

CRA's throughout the state have positioned grocery store development projects as a central component of their redevelopment strategies. This is primarily because grocery stores are viewed as catalytic to redevelopment goals. They attract a stronger base of local retail traffic, inspire confidence on the part of other retailers whom the CRA is seeking to attract, create a large number of "living wage" jobs, and provide an amenity to other potential tenants in the area – office, institutional and residential. In cases such as the City of Fort Myers, the development of a new Publix Supermarket was pivotal to attracting new residential tenants and homebuyers to the City's downtown Riverfront area.

For these reasons, the Board of the CCRA agreed to launch its search for a grocery store developer and tenant during 2010.

To that end, during 2008-09, the CCRA took three important steps. First, in November 2008, the agency completed a "land swap" deal with the City of Bradenton to secure ownership of the project site at 301 Boulevard/1st Street and 13th Avenue West, in the heart of its redevelopment district. Second, the CCRA commissioned a preliminary impact and feasibility analysis to determine the ideal terms to offer potential developers and tenants. Finally, the CCRA enlisted the City's Planning Department, under the direction of Director Tim Polk, to draft a Request for Proposals for qualified developers.

The RFP will release spring of 2010.

Enterprise Center

Since 2007, the CCRA has been pursuing the creation of a state of the art, green, 25,000-40,000 square foot Enterprise Center to house a "One Stop" hub of service providers.

Multiple organizations have independently undertaken activities focused on the alleviation of poverty and the elimination of blight through employment skill training, business development services, technical assistance, neighborhood redevelopment, and commercial revitalization initiatives. The Enterprise Center concept will facilitate the co-location of organizations and allow for the effective coordination and delivery of a myriad of services and resources. Apart from coordination, the Center would aid the organizations in expanding the quantity and quality of services they offer, and make those services more accessible to local residents.

Projected sites have been identified by the CCRA along the commercial corridor within the Washington Park Neighborhood in Bradenton. Ongoing discussions have occurred with all parties regarding procurement of the properties. The projected completion date is summer 2012.



CCRA Board

CCRA Board

Stephen W. Thompson, Esq., Chairman
Irene Ingram, Vice Chairperson
Lynette Edwards
Steven Lezman
Mike Rosario

City of Bradenton Mayor and City Council Members

Mayor Wayne Poston
Ward 1 Councilman Gene Gallo
Ward 2 Councilwoman Marianne Barnebey
Ward 3 Councilman Patrick Roff
Ward 4 Councilman Bemis Smith (CCRA City Council Liaison)
Ward 5 Councilman Harold Byrd, Jr.

CCRA Staff and VISTA Volunteers

Sherod Halliburton, Executive Director
Rebekah Brightbill, Program Manager
Cecilia Love-Hopkins, Property Manager
JoAnn Spencer, Outreach Coordinator VISTA
Henry Blyden, Workforce Development VISTA
Bob Terry, Economic Development VISTA

AmeriCorps VISTA Program

The federal AmeriCorps VISTA program made it possible for the CCRA to more than triple its investment of human resources into the work of the agency. The generous support of Volunteer Manatee, local partners, and the federal Corporation for National and Community Service covered 60% of the cost of employment of three new full-time professionals. Mr. Bob Terry, the new Economic Development VISTA, comes to the agency with 40 years of economic development and planning experience. Ms. JoAnn Spencer brings her years of business and community organizing experience to the agency. Mr. Henry Blyden has joined the agency after a long career in military and management in human services.

Their work is already expanding the CCRA's service capacity. As one example, Mr. Terry was able to play a vital role in the development of a comprehensive database of the area's business owners – a tool that was subsequently used to expand the CCRA's marketing to include direct mail, telephone calls, and e-mail updates. As a result, the agency continues to recruit new business owners to take part in business training and to apply for micro loans.

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BUDGET

REVENUE

Carryover from 07/08 FY	1,000,550
County TIF Funding	\$ 731,999
City TIF Funding	519,051
FRDAP Grant Reimbursement	289,000
Rental Income	140,000
Knight Foundation	75,000
County General Fund	12,000
Interest Income	2,000
Total Revenue	\$2,652,909



EXPENDITURES

Capital Projects	\$ 975,000
Debt Service	447,637
Economic Development	306,000
Operating	231,100
Strategic Plan Initiatives	151,100
Special Projects	82,000
Property Expense	75,000
Total Expenditures	\$2,267,837





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