



**Agenda
City of Cocoa
Diamond Square Community Redevelopment
Agency Regular Meeting**

**April 21, 2025
6:00 PM
65 Stone Street, Cocoa, FL 32922**

I. CALL TO ORDER

1. Invocation
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll Call

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

1. Agenda: Regular Meeting of the Diamond Square CRA on April 21, 2025.
2. Minutes: Special Meeting of the Diamond Square CRA on February 24, 2025.

III. DELEGATIONS

IV. PRESENTATIONS

V. ACTION ITEMS

1. Request Agency acceptance of the FINAL DRAFT of the CRA Plan Update (2024-25) and provide any recommended changes.
2. Request Agency consider additional compensation for Inspire Placemaking Collective to compensate them for extra time and effort required to complete the Diamond Square CRA Plan Update. Authorize City Manager to complete a BAF to adjust the budget to pay for the Change Order. Request is for \$9,000 in additional funds, representing a 15% increase in total cost.

VI. ATTORNEY'S REPORT

VII. UPDATES AND STAFF REPORTS

VIII. NEXT MEETING DATE

IX. ADJOURNMENT

NOTICE TO PUBLIC:

This is a public meeting. All interested parties may attend. The facility wherein this meeting will be held is accessible to the physically handicapped. Please be advised that more than one

member of the City Council may attend. Pursuant to Section 286.0105, Florida Statutes, the City hereby advises the public that: if a person decides to appeal any decision made by this board with respect to any matter considered at its meeting or hearing, that person will need a record of the proceedings and for such purpose, affected persons may need to insure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, and such record shall include the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based. This notice does not constitute consent by the City for the introduction or admission into evidence of otherwise inadmissible or irrelevant evidence, nor does it authorize challenges or appeals otherwise allowed by law. This agenda is posted on the Municipal Bulletin Board and at the Central Brevard Library and Reference Center in Cocoa for public review.

DIAMOND SQUARE CRA AGENDA ITEM

Memo Date: 02/26/2025
Agenda Date: 4/21/2025
Prepared By: Ryan Browne, Redevelopment Coordinator
Through: Charlene Neuterman, Community Services Director
Requested Action: Request Agency approval of the Agenda for the Diamond Square CRA Regular Meeting of Monday, April 21, 2025 at 6 PM.

BACKGROUND:

Agency members approve the Agenda at the beginning of the meeting.

PRIORITY AREA CONNECTION:

BUDGETARY IMPACT:

None.

PREVIOUS ACTION:

N/A.

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

Request Agency approval of the Agenda for the Diamond Square CRA Regular Meeting of Monday, April 21, 2025 at 6 PM.



DIAMOND SQUARE

REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Tracy Moore
Chairperson

Crystal McQueen
Vice Chairperson

Larry Brown
Board Member
*(Appointed
by Brevard
County)

Brenda Fox
Board Member

Jackie Isom
Board Member

Angelia Smith
Board Member

Marilyn Smith
Board Member

DATE: Monday, April 21, 2025
TIME: 6:00 p.m.

Location: Dr. Joe Lee Smith
Community Center
415 Stone Street

I. CALL TO ORDER
INVOCATION
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
ROLL CALL

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

AGENDA: Regular Meeting of April 21, 2025
MINUTES: Special Meeting of February 24, 2025

III. DELEGATIONS

IV. PRESENTATIONS

V. ACTION ITEMS

1. Request Agency acceptance of the FINAL DRAFT of the CRA Plan Update (2024-25) produced by Inspire Placemaking Collective for the Diamond Square CRA and provide any recommended changes.
2. Request Agency consider additional compensation for Inspire Placemaking Collective to compensate them for extra time and effort required to complete the Diamond Square CRA Plan Update, including repeatedly needing to exceed the agreed upon number of revisions, in order to get the plan to meet agency standards. Authorize City Manager to complete a BAF to adjust the budget to pay for the Change Order, if approved. Staff fully support the additional funds as fair compensation to an outstanding performing consultant who we wish to be able to maintain positive relationship with for possible future projects. Request is for \$9,000 in additional funds, representing a 15% increase in total cost.

VI. ATTORNEY'S REPORT

VII. UPDATES AND STAFF REPORTS

VIII. NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting of the Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Agency is Monday, May 19, 2025, at 6:00 PM. The meeting will be held at the Cocoa City Hall, Council Chambers, located at 65 Stone Street, Cocoa, FL 32922.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

NOTICE TO PUBLIC:

This is a public meeting. All interested parties may attend. The facility wherein this meeting will be held is accessible to the physically handicapped. Please be advised that more than one member of the City Council may attend. Pursuant to Section 286.0105, *Florida Statutes*, the City hereby advises the public that: if a person decides to appeal any decision made by this board with respect to any matter considered at its meeting or hearing, that person will need a record of the proceedings and for such purpose, affected persons may need to insure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, and such record shall include the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based. This notice does not constitute consent by the City for the introduction or admission into evidence of otherwise inadmissible or irrelevant evidence, nor does it authorize challenges or appeals otherwise allowed by law. This agenda is posted on the Municipal Bulletin Board and at the Central Brevard Library and Reference Center in Cocoa for public review.

DIAMOND SQUARE CRA AGENDA ITEM

Memo Date: 02/26/2025
Agenda Date: 4/21/2025
Prepared By: Ryan Browne, Redevelopment Coordinator
Through: Charlene Neuterman, Community Services Director
Requested Action: Request Agency approve Minutes from Special Meeting of February 24, 2025, either as written or as amended.

BACKGROUND:

Agency Members approve the Minutes at the beginning of the meeting.

PRIORITY AREA CONNECTION:

BUDGETARY IMPACT:

None.

PREVIOUS ACTION:

N/A.

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

Request Agency approve Minutes from Special Meeting of February 24, 2025, either as written or as amended.

**MINUTES
CITY OF COCOA
DIAMOND SQUARE CRA
SPECIAL MEETING
February 24, 2025**

The Special Meeting of the Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Agency was held on February 24, 2025, at the City of Cocoa, City Hall, 65 Stone Street, Cocoa, FL, as publicly noticed.

I. Call to Order

Vice Chairperson **McQUEEN** called the meeting to order at **6:05 pm**.

Invocation: Vice Chairperson **McQUEEN** provided the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance: Vice Chairperson **McQUEEN** led the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

ROLL CALL:

Tracy A. Moore	Chairperson
Crystal McQueen	Vice Chairperson
Larry Brown	Agency Member
Brenda Fox	Agency Member
Jackie Isom	Agency Member
Angelia Smith	Agency Member
Marilyn Smith	Agency Member
Joseph Colombo	Agency Attorney
Ryan Browne	Recording Secretary

PRESENT:

Tracy A. Moore	Chairperson
Crystal McQueen	Vice Chairperson
Larry Brown	Agency Member
Brenda Fox	Agency Member
Jackie Isom	Agency Member
Angelia Smith	Agency Member
Marilyn Smith	Agency Member
Joseph Colombo	Agency Attorney
Ryan Browne	Recording Secretary

ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT:

Community Services Director NEUTERMAN, City Manager WHITTEN. Agency Liaison GOINS absent.

II. Approval of Agenda and Minutes:

AGENDA:

Agenda - Special Meeting of February 24, 2025.

MINUTES:

Minutes – Special Meeting of January 27, 2025.

***MOTION by Vice Chairperson McQUEEN; SECONDED by Agency Member ISOM to approve the Agenda for the Special Meeting of February 24, 2025 and the Minutes for the Special Meeting of January 27, 2025, both as written. Vice Chairperson McQUEEN combined the approval of both the Agenda and the Minutes into one vote.**

AYES: MOORE, McQUEEN, BROWN, FOX, ISOM, A. SMITH, M. SMITH.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (7-0)

III. Delegations:

- 1.** Lisa McDermott. 2231 Canterbury Street, Melbourne, FL 32935. In & Out Liquors, Inc. on 1035 King Street, Cocoa, FL 32922.
 - i.** General Manager. Try to get some support of May 12, 2023 Zoning Verification Letter purchased 1035 King Street. Closed Sept. 23, 2023. \$450k for Liquor License. Dec. 13, 2024 to Dec. 23, 2024 Special Ordinance. Denial Letter. \$650,000 invested in the property; \$450,000 for liquor license; help with the Council to get a BTR. Zoning did not change until after; feel they should be approved a BTR ‘grandfathered in.’ She has all the paperwork.
 - ii.** Agency Member BROWN asked if the City Manager can bring us up to date. This is the Old Hess Station, across from Wawa, on the corner of Fiske and SR 520.

- iii. Agency Attorney COLOMBO: The Agency Board lacks “Subject Matter Jurisdiction.” We do not have any action you can take, you can ask questions.
- iv. Agency Member BROWN: did you consider the church, King Street Baptist, or his church, both less than half mile away and two other churches and Provost Park – all nearby. At Wawa, they can purchase alcohol; they come in and they leave.
- v. Chairperson MOORE asked the City Manager for details.
- vi. Manager WHITTEN explained that this location is the site of the old Hess Station. Corner of SR 520 and Fiske. A Zoning Verification Letter was sent in May explaining the current zoning and the future land use. Subject to change. Proposed Project deemed according to Code; City of Cocoa, disclaims any liability. Regulations could change; letter does not give you authority to do a project. Change the Use of the Property, Site Plan Approval Process. BTR says only that you have a license to operate. Not issued. Advised by Staff, you must do a Site Plan Amendment. The Ordinance is being modified. Policy direction no BTR be issued for those properties want to redevelop next to those churches, etc.
- vii. Rebuttal: BTR. Currently under review. Charlene Neuterman email; John Haight email. Still awaiting reply. Manager WHITTEN: planners work for him. Zoning allowed, at time, but Council changed that and notified of the intent to change, as required. Minor Site Plan, gets approved by City Manager. Allowed under Zoning, not Site Plan Review; it’s not done. Had a year to start the process; they did not do that.
- viii. She claims that is not fair.
- ix. Agency Attorney COLOMBO reminded the Agency that she can speak, but, no weight; unless Owner or Attorney; This Board can take no action. She wants support with Council.
- x. Manager WHITTEN: ordinance has not been changed yet; Notice of Intent to Change it, you are governed by that notice.
- xi. Chairperson MOORE: I will take the lead from our attorney; we appreciate your dilemma, we have to follow the process; we are waiting as you are; we suggest, follow those means, we can only listen, and we have.
- xii. Thank you for listening.

IV. **Presentations:** None.

V. **Action Items:**

- 1. Request Agency approval to increase the standard reimbursement for the Commercial Façade Improvement Program (CFIP) grant from \$10,000 per grant to a maximum of \$20,000 reimbursement and to use Contingency via BAF # 25-

036-A for \$10,000 to increase the Commercial Façade Improvement Program budget for FY25.

i. Introduction. Director NEUTERMAN introduced the item.

ii. Discussion.

1. Chairperson MOORE asked if the budget is okay?
2. Director NEUTERMAN responded that it can; funds are available. We can discuss for one per year or if you want to increase for FY26. This is also recommended because Cocoa CRA already approved the same measure already. This will allow both CRAs to match.
3. Agency Member FOX asked why the need for the increase?
4. Director NEUTERMAN replied that it is due primarily to the precipitous increase in material costs in recent years. Too little of an incentive to use it at current rate.
5. Chairperson MOORE asked about the status of the Commissary Kitchen that was working on an application previously. Director NEUTERMAN replied that they are still working with the Planning Division to complete their required Site Plan.

iii. Vote.

***MOTION to approve by Vice Chairperson McQUEEN; SECONDED by Agency Member BROWN, as written.**

AYES: MOORE, McQUEEN, BROWN, FOX, ISOM, A. SMITH, M. SMITH.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (7-0)

2. Request Agency approval of a Commercial Façade Improvement Program (CFIP) grant application for an amount not to exceed \$20,000 for the property located at 625 Peachtree Street and authorize the City Manager to complete and execute a CFIP Agreement.

iv. Introduction. Director NEUTERMAN introduced the item. Met requirements. Staff recommends approval.

v. Applicant Presentation.

1. Ray Rivera and his wife, Susan. She is presenting he said, because she understands plants.

2. Chairperson MOORE asked how long have you been at this property? Response, since 2016.
3. Susan Rivera. Goal is to protect the property, while also beatifying the neighborhood. Walked through the presentation PowerPoint presentation.

vi. Discussion.

1. Agency Member BROWN stated that he had met them at the Economic Showcase. He asked what they produce? Ray responded that he as been in the solid waste business for over 40 years, working with landfills, help them capture gases from landfills; calibrate instrumentation, package filters; perimeter monitoring, off-gassing of waste sites, provide analysis. How many employees? 8. How many live in DS? None. How is Diamond Square benefitting? Would you employ someone from Diamond Square? Ray, responded, please send me someone! I'm short-staffed. We have people traveling. He lives in Mims. Agency Member BROWN said he would love to see Diamond Square residents working there – even if just summer internships; Ray would love to support that, he responded. He said that if you have candidates who are interested in Biology and Chemistry – we would love to speak with them.

vii. Vote.

***MOTION to approve by Agency Member BROWN; SECONDED by Agency Member M. SMITH, as written.**

AYES: MOORE, McQUEEN, BROWN, FOX, ISOM, A. SMITH, M. SMITH.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (7-0)

(Out of Order discussion)

Chairperson MOORE asked how long they have to complete this project? Director NEUTERMAN responded that they have one year to complete this project.

Agency Member BROWN asked if staff goes out to monitor them? Director NEUTERMAN responded that yes, our inspectors will look at it; P&Z (Planning & Zoning) will also verify compliance.

Chairperson MOORE mused that she hopes others in the community will see this and be inspired. Director NEUTERMAN offered that we can create a CFIP Grant Awardee sign, so that others can see and be inspired.

Agency Member BROWN asked if we did a sign for “Just for Kids?” Director NEUTERMAN said, yes, but, the sign disappeared after two days.

3. Request Agency approval of a Budget Resolution to Amend the FY25 Budget, BAF # 25-035-A, in the amount of \$10,000, to top-off the Contract Services account, to allow it to contain full funding for the fiscal year for both programs that it pays for.
 - i. Introduction. Director NEUTERMAN introduced the item. We increased ANR (Alliance for Neighborhood Restoration) this year by \$10,000 this year; this cleans up for Contract Services, to add those funds.
 - ii. Discussion. None.
 - iii. Vote.

***MOTION to approve by Vice Chairperson McQUEEN; SECONDED by Agency Member BROWN, as written.**

AYES: MOORE, McQUEEN, BROWN, FOX, ISOM, A. SMITH, M. SMITH.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (7-0)

4. Provide direction to Staff on the Major Abbie Sweetwine sign for the Habitat for Humanity Female Veteran’s Village in Diamond Square on the amount that the Agency will contribute to the project. Authorize City Manager to Adjust the FY25 Budget if Approved.
 - i. Introduction. Director NEUTERMAN introduced the item. Habitat Village Sign; recalled her work, English named her “The Angel at Platform Six” – Laid to rest in Arlington National Cemetery.
 - ii. \$3,650 total estimated cost. Plan to split three ways between Habitat, City, and CRA.
 - iii. Her image has been updated to be in her military uniform, as requested.
 - iv. There will be a QR code that will take you to the military write-up and her accomplishments website.
 - v. How much would you like to contribute?
 - vi. Discussion.
 1. Agency Member BROWN asked if this was the correct price?
 2. Director NEUTERMAN replied, yes.

3. Agency Member BROWN stated that this seems to be a significant discount. One third would be approximately \$1,200? Correct.
4. Chairperson MOORE asked what the height of the sign would be? Director NEUTERMAN replied that is dependent on the visibility for Right of Way for Traffic. MOORE: is this the correct Coloring? NEUTERMAN: I believe it is a rendition of the coloring.
5. Agency Member BROWN asked about lighting. Director NEUTERMAN said that Habitat is looking into securing solar lighting.
6. Chairperson MOORE:
 - a. 1/3 – DSCRA
 - b. 1/3 – City
 - c. 1/3 – Habitat.
 - d. \$1,217. “Not to exceed.”
 - e. Motion?

vii. Vote.

***MOTION to approve by Vice Chairperson McQUEEN; SECONDED by Agency Member BROWN, as amended: Authorize the City Manager to pay a share of the Sweetwine Sign, not to exceed \$1,217, representing a one-third split, between three entities: Habitat for Humanity, the City of Cocoa, and the Diamond Square CRA.**

AYES: MOORE, McQUEEN, BROWN, FOX, ISOM, A. SMITH, M. SMITH.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (7-0)

VI. **Attorney’s Report:** None.

VII. **Updates and Staff Report**

1. Director NEUTERMAN:
 - i. Various Administrative Updates.
 1. Rosa L. Jones Property; copy of DEED, you have at your dais. Reverter clause; approved March 2010. Reverter clause states four years if not developed, reverts to the City of Cocoa.
 2. Agency Member BROWN stated that we should have been informed; On Nov. 16, 2020, we paid a consultant \$3,100 to survey those two lots. March 10, 2014 reverted. Why did we pay for an appraisal. Wants the \$3,100 back.

3. Manager WHITTEN: that's fair; we became aware looking at the deed. City property, no problem paying back the \$3,100.
 - a. Chairperson MOORE: concerned with the property itself. She thought it belonged to DSCRA.
 - b. Agency Member BROWN: Rose Garden wanted it for parking.
 - c. Chairperson MOORE: when did you become aware.
 - d. Manager WHITTEN: he had a meeting let me look at the property – the DEED, 2014 – he happened to look at those when he found it.
 - e. Agency Member FOX: is there a reason the City can't just give back to DSCRA?
 - f. Manager WHITTEN: property must properly dispose of the property. Despite whoever owns it, the Agency will have a say it was is developed on that site, because it is within the Agency boundaries. If you want to make a Request to Council to convey the property; and put a timeline on it, you are welcome to do so.
 - g. Agency Member BROWN wants to withdraw the request for the \$3,100 survey and instead wants to value of the property back; estimated at \$50,000.
 - h. Chairperson MOORE: City Manager, we have say, even if we don't own it. It bothers her that we were not told. Community Garden couldn't be kept clean and had to give back. Discussion about housing, etc. for use of that property. Leaves us with no property. Future plans we have nothing that we own. How can we make this right?
 - i. Agency Member BROWN: City Manager come back at the March 17, 2025 Meeting with what will the City be able to do to "make it right?" Someone should have caught it!
 - j. Manager WHITTEN: make a motion to ask City Council to convey the property in pursuit of something consistent in the plan. Your Attorney will help you.
 - k. Agency Attorney COLOMBO: I was here twenty years ago; the City, he believes already refunded the \$50,000 to the CRA. Accounting will have to verify to be certain.
 - l. Director NEUTERMAN confirmed: budget adjustment. Funds were transferred to the Agency.
 - m. Agency Attorney COLOMBO: not on anyone's radar. You can make a motion.
 - n. Manager WHITTEN: we wouldn't make plans without DSCRA oversight.

- o. Manager WHITTEN: sure we would change the zoning on that. Its in the CRA district, so must come to you.
- p. Agency Member ISOM: put a clock on it?
- q. Manager WHITTEN: yes, it is helpful to get you to develop it.
- r. Director NEUTERMAN: reminder, the current sunset date of the CRA is September 30, 2032.
- s. Agency Member FOX: is all of DSCRA zoned for single family?
- t. Manager WHITTEN: no; however, there is a lot to fix; the visioning process – East to Fiske, etc. good place to discuss, as it will involve a number of discussions on SR 520, may involve Comp Plan changes and Zoning changes. RU 210 – may be, the proper zoning when the time comes.

NOTE FOR THE RECORD: Agency Liaison GOINS joined the meeting @ 7:38 PM.

- 4. Chairperson MOORE: we need office space. We have that problem in the UpStart Program. Not change for this property, but, something we need to think about. Since we don't own, we don't have anything. Wants a Motion to retrieve this lost property.
 - a. Vice Chairperson McQUEEN: can we purchase other property? Director NEUTERMAN: commercial property is currently out of your price range. McQUEEN: high-rises, businesses, stacked on top of – mixed use? Manager WHITTEN: high limit is 5 stories. Mixed-use concept is what you are referring to. Self-contained. 2032 Sunset date. You have seven years; suggest you ask City Council to ask the County Commission to extend the CRA timeframe.
 - b. MOORE: a motion to reacquiring.

VIII. **Agency Member BROWN: I make a motion to ask the City Council to revert the Old Ritz Condominium to the DSCRA; and allow five years to develop the property. Second McQUEEN.**

1. **Vote. AYES. Unanimously.**

IX. **Agency Member BROWN: motion to Formally direct Council to get on the Agenda for the County Commission to extend the CRA at least to 2041. Second: Agency Member ISOM.**

1. **Vote. AYES. Unanimously.**

X. Additional comments by Chairperson MOORE: 9 additional years.

1. Agency Member BROWN: County Commissioner GOODSON is in support of CRAs

2. WHITTEN: revenue restriction. Request to remove.
- XI. Chairperson MOORE: we had to make concessions.
- XII. Director NEUTERMAN: US1 we had to kill, to keep DSCRA alive. This is the first time the Cap of \$150,000 has been breached.
- XIII. **Agency Member BROWN: motion to request the remove the Cap on the TIF from County. Second by Agency Member ISOM.**
1. **Vote: AYES. Unanimous.**
- XIV. Chairperson MOORE: question? Hinderance.
- XV. Manager WHITTEN: the cap lift; and extend.
- XVI. Chairperson MOORE: vote could go one way or the other? Wise?
- XVII. Agency Attorney COLOMBO: motion to combine.

Agency Member BROWN: motion to consolidate Motions 2 & 3. Concerning the DSCRA extension and Cap removal of the TIF (Tax Increment Financing). Second by Agency Member ISOM.

Vote. AYES. Unanimous.

Update: Manager WHITTEN: Michael C. Blake Subdivioin –fsLennar March 4 P&Z Meeting; under review; will get copies to you; hopefully bring in March 18 to City Council. Then kickoff for Visioning for SR 520. Upcoming. March 18 bring Surplus Property for Affordable Housing most are in 70% in DSCRA.

Agency Member BROWN: pictures at Lennar online.

Manager WHITTEN: we showed you the elevations. 17 lots, to 32. Paying to split lots. We can resend you the Elevations again. Bedroom on bottom floor. Discussion still working. Agency Momma bearBROWN: property south of Moore Center. We will double check. Show you the lots plan again.

Agency Liaison GOINS: Report. Speed bumps on Blake. Requested and installed. Stop signs with flashing lights on Stone. Board asked to pay before; this time the City took over this time. Appreciate for Council to fix.

March 4 – Budget Workshop. Another opportunity; Wants to support the Museum. Does not know where it will go, wants to be functional, open, not sure what partnering will look like; volunteer route. Get a non-profit run it; not sure what that will look like. Allow RFP to do it instead. Museum is in the heart of DS. Asking you to consider he may come back on a split. Want to accomplish. Tired of seeing it closed. Asking for your support. Property, you have power in your motions. You have a group make a motion, you don't have a lot of time. I only have two years – he does not know who will come behind them – lets make motion; get done; get votes on it and push now to get things done. Shoot your ideas to your Council members. March 4 – Council Priorities Workshop at 5 PM. Another one in April. Please come and speak. Let him know, he can get yelled at later.

MOORE: booklets, passed out last time; future projects, visioning, coming up, our Plan coming up. (Need Copy for Spartanburg – examples) Murals, and art and in the street decorative. Museums. Pursue partnerships. PNC Bank? Partner. Corporate Directive to do CRA Projects. She will share that with City. We should gather info. And pursue.

XVIII. Next Meeting Date:

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the **Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Agency** will be on **Monday, March 17, 2025 at 6:00 pm** at the City of Cocoa, City Hall, 65 Stone Street, Cocoa, FL, unless a business need arises earlier.

XIX. Adjournment

***MOTION to adjourn by Agency Member BROWN; SECONDED by Agency Member ISOM.**

AYES: MOORE, McQUEEN, BROWN, FOX, ISOM, A. SMITH, M. SMITH.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (7-0)

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED at 8:10 pm.

Tracy Moore, Chairperson

Respectfully Submitted by:

Ryan Browne, Recording Secretary

DIAMOND SQUARE CRA AGENDA ITEM

Memo Date: 04/14/2025
Agenda Date: 4/21/2025
Prepared By: Ryan Browne, Redevelopment Coordinator
Through: Charlene Neuterman, Community Services Director
Requested Action: Request Agency acceptance of the FINAL DRAFT of the CRA Plan Update (2024-25) and provide any recommended changes.

BACKGROUND:

Request Agency acceptance of the FINAL DRAFT of the CRA Plan Update (2024-25) produced by Inspire Placemaking Collective for the Diamond Square CRA and provide any recommended changes. If the CRA approves the proposed draft CRA Plan, Staff will initiate the formal plan amendment process under applicable provisions of law.

PRIORITY AREA CONNECTION:

Organizational Effectiveness

BUDGETARY IMPACT:

None.

PREVIOUS ACTION:

N/A.

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

Request Agency acceptance of the FINAL DRAFT of the CRA Plan Update (2024-25) and provide any recommended changes.



◆ ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ◆

COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATORS

<i>Community Services Director</i>	Charlene Neuterman
<i>Redevelopment Coordinator</i>	Ryan Browne

DIAMOND SQUARE CRA BOARD MEMBERS

<i>Agency Chairperson</i>	Tracy Moore
<i>Agency Vice Chairperson</i>	Crystal McQueen
<i>Agency Member</i>	Larry Brown
<i>Agency Member</i>	Brenda Fox
<i>Agency Member</i>	Jackie Isom
<i>Agency Member</i>	Angelia (“Angie”) Smith
<i>Agency Member</i>	Marilyn Smith

CITY COUNCIL

<i>Mayor</i>	Michael C. Blake
<i>Deputy Mayor</i>	Patricia Weeks
<i>Council Member</i>	Alex Goins
<i>Council Member</i>	Lavander Hearn
<i>Council Member</i>	Lorraine Koss

CITY MANAGER

<i>City Manager</i>	Stockton Whitten
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CITY OF COCOA STAKEHOLDERS

CITY OF COCOA STAFF

<i>Director of Communication & Economic Development</i>	Samantha Senger
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CITY OF COCOA CITIZENS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments	
Table of Contents	
Introduction	
INTRODUCTION	
History	3
Timeline	4
Administration & Governance	6
Previous Plans & Studies	7
Public Engagement	8
INVENTORY & ANALYSIS	
Existing Conditions	12
Analysis Approach	13
Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT)	22
STRATEGIES	
CRA Goals	26
Opportunities Map	30
Opportunities Visioning	31
IMPLEMENTATION	
TIF Projections	36
CRA Budget	37
Implementation	38
APPENDIX	
i. Compliance	43
ii. Neighborhood Impact Element	45
iii. Statutory Criteria	46
APPENDIX (Supplemental Materials)	
Legal Description	
Tech Memos	
Public Engagement Records	
Project Website Results	



INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Plan Update is to provide a comprehensive guidebook for revitalizing and enhancing the Community Redevelopment Area. This update aims to address both current and future needs by identifying aspects of the previous plan that are appropriate to continue as well as new initiatives for economic growth, infrastructure improvements, and community development. This Plan update is designed in accordance with Chapter 163 Part III of the Florida Statutes governing Community Redevelopment Agencies. The updated CRA Plan will guide Diamond Square’s growth by fostering long-term sustainable development, enhancing residents’ quality of life, and attracting investment while ensuring that redevelopment efforts align with the community’s vision for its future.

The Plan update is designed to focus on Diamond Square, aiming to revitalize and enhance its economic and social vitality. Most importantly, the Plan must align with the City’s overarching Mission, Values, and Vision ensuring that any changes contribute positively to the community’s long-term objectives. By integrating these elements, the Plan seeks to foster sustainable development while addressing the specific needs and aspirations of the community.

MISSION STATEMENT

To enrich the quality of life for our unique and diverse community by delivering Professional, Responsive, Innovative, Dedicated and Exceptional public services!

Serving our community with P.R.I.D.E.

VALUES

Integrity
Conducting ourselves in a moral, ethical, and honest manner.

Accountability
Citizens, Staff and City Council taking ownership and responsibility to promote public trust.

Community Engagement
Encouraging community participation, inclusivity and awareness so that all residents feel they have an opportunity to participate in their city government.

Professionalism
Serving the community competently and efficiently with character and a positive attitude.

Excellence
Providing responsive and exceptional customer service.

Respect
Treating the public and one another with dignity, consideration and compassion.

VISION

We envision Cocoa as a safe, vibrant, and diverse city that values its rich history and environmental resources, while promoting an engaged and inclusive community with ample employment, housing, recreational, and social opportunities for all.

CONTEXT

DRAFT

01





HISTORY

The City of Cocoa is situated on the western shore of the Indian River in Brevard County, Florida. Cocoa is a coastal community bordered by Rockledge to the south, the Indian River to the east, and unincorporated Brevard County to the north and west. Originally settled in the 1860s under names such as ‘Scrub City’ and ‘Magnolia Point’, Cocoa was officially platted as Indian River City in 1882 and incorporated in 1895. In 1895, the population of this burgeoning community stood at approximately 50 individuals; among them were four African Americans: three laborers and one preacher who played an instrumental role in laying down roots for what would become a vibrant black community around Orange Street and Hughlett Avenue. Cocoa’s first black community, known as “Diamond Square”, had emerged as a vibrant neighborhood just west of Cocoa Village. The City began as an agricultural hub producing oranges, lemons, pineapples, bananas, and cane syrup. The advent of steamships revolutionized transportation logistics and attracted businesses that relied on regional transportation. Thus, Cocoa saw further growth with Henry Flagler’s Florida East Coast Railway arriving in 1896.

By 1905, Cocoa’s prosperity was evident through its diverse stores, attractive homes, and numerous schools downtown. Commercial developments concentrated around the waterfront while residential areas expanded outward beyond core business district boundaries due to increased automobile ownership rates which rose dramatically during the years spanning the early mid-century timeframe.

Limited by Jim Crow segregation laws, the Diamond Square neighborhood grew into a self-sustaining community, furnished with grocery stores, retail, schools, and many churches to support residents both for spiritual guidance as well as for political organization. Stone

Street became the neighborhood’s main commercial hub. During the 1960’s and 70’s, Diamond Square experienced a downturn due to urban renewal efforts, which led to many successful Black-owned businesses being condemned, the destruction of homes, and dismantling of institutions that provided vital services to the Black community. These efforts displaced many long-time residents, forced surrounding businesses to be shut down, and left a void of community, culture, and infrastructure, leaving the neighborhood weakened and empty.

To address these issues, the City Council initiated a “Vision Planning” process to explore potential solutions. In June 1996, they adopted recommendations from this plan, which included establishing a Community Redevelopment Agency for the Diamond Square area. Following a “Finding of Necessity” study that confirmed the need for redevelopment, the City Council formed this Agency and appointed a seven-member Board of Directors. The Diamond Square CRA was thus established in 1998 to help rebuild the area. This appointed board is responsible for developing and implementing the Community Redevelopment Plan in accordance with Florida Statutes. The plan was last updated in 2014.

Today’s Diamond Square reflects this rich history while embracing new opportunities for growth and development within Cocoa’s diverse community tapestry. It is essential to acknowledge the richness and depth of this community and to advance with projects that genuinely reflect the history and culture of its residents, including those who have been part of it for generations. This approach is vital for effectively rebuilding and revitalizing the area.



 1951 AERIAL

01

TIMELINE

FORMATION OF COCOA'S
AFRICAN-AMERICAN
SETTLEMENT

The Diamond Square area of Cocoa was originally part of the City's African-American settlement.



FLORIDA EAST COAST
RAILWAY TRANSFORMS
COCOA'S INDUSTRIES

With the arrival of the railway, travel and distribution shifted to rail, and industries moved near the tracks, boosting Cocoa's economy.



CONSTRUCTION OF DIXIE
HIGHWAY SHIFTS CITRUS
DISTRIBUTION

The Dixie Highway became a major transportation route for citrus, leading to new land use patterns in Cocoa.

»Pre-1885

»1893

»1915

»1885

»1895

»1920s



STEAMSHIP
CONNECTION SPURS
ECONOMIC GROWTH

A steamship link to Titusville spurred Cocoa's growth, leading to the development of fish and fruit industries, ice plants, canneries, and packing houses.



DIAMOND SQUARE

INCORPORATION OF
COCOA AND THE GREAT
FREEZE

Cocoa was incorporated, and W. L. Hughlett became the first mayor. The Great Freeze hit, reducing the population temporarily, but citrus production soon revived.

LAND DEVELOPMENT BOOM
IN COCOA

Cocoa experienced a boom, reflecting statewide trends in land development.



SLOW GROWTH ERA
Growth slowed during these decades due to national economic depression, but the community remained stable.



SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES' GROWTH CAUSES COCOA'S DECLINE
Growth in nearby areas led to a decline in Cocoa's market share, with strip commercial areas showing signs of economic and physical deterioration.

REASSESSMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT PLANNING FOR DIAMOND SQUARE
The Diamond Square CRA issued a Plan update, reflecting on the area's history and outlining future development recommendations.

INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT WITH COUNTY
The Plan update is approved and the Diamond Square CRA and Brevard County enter into an interlocal agreement

›1930s-40s

›1980s-90s

›2014

›2019-

›1950s-60s

›1996

2024



NASA'S SPACE PROGRAM BRINGS POPULATION GROWTH
Population grows significantly due to NASA's space program at Cape Canaveral, bringing new residents and transforming U.S. 1 and State Road 520 into major commercial corridors. Diamond Square is impacted by the east/west connection of State Road 520.

COCOA CITY COUNCIL ADOPTS VISION PLAN FOR REDEVELOPMENT
The City Council launched a Vision Plan, and established the Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) to address these challenges.

2024 PLAN UPDATE BEGINS
The Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Plan is updated, forming a strategic framework for the CRA's remaining operational timeframe.



ADMINISTRATION & GOVERNANCE

This document has been prepared under the guidance of the Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Agency, in compliance with the Community Redevelopment Act of 1969, F.S. 163, Part III. Recognizing the necessity to address and eradicate slum and blighted conditions within our community, this Act grants counties and municipalities the authority to engage in “Community Redevelopment.” For this Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Plan, we adhere to the definition provided by Florida Statutes: “Community Redevelopment” or “Redevelopment” encompasses activities or projects undertaken by a county, municipality, or community redevelopment agency within a designated area. These efforts aim at eliminating and preventing slum and blight or providing affordable housing options for low- or moderate-income residents, including seniors. This may involve slum clearance and redevelopment or rehabilitation and conservation within such areas as outlined in a community redevelopment plan. The Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) operates under Florida Statutes, which require that a redevelopment area be identified as a slum, blighted, or lacking affordable housing for low to moderate-income residents, including seniors. On August 19, 1997, the City of Cocoa adopted a resolution recognizing the need to redevelop blighted areas. Following a Blight Study, a resolution was passed on March 24, 1998, establishing a redevelopment area based on specific findings under Section 163.355 of the Florida Statutes.

These findings stipulate that the City of Cocoa cannot exercise redevelopment authority until a resolution, backed by data and analysis, confirms that the area’s conditions meet the criteria outlined

in sections 163.340(7) or (8). The resolution must declare that: (1) One or more slum or blighted areas, or areas with a shortage of affordable housing for low to moderate-income residents, including the elderly, exist within the city; and (2) The rehabilitation, conservation, redevelopment, or a combination of these efforts, including the development of affordable housing, is necessary for the public health, safety, morals, or welfare of the city’s residents. The redevelopment boundaries were defined to include properties identified as slum and blighted.

Establishment of the Community Redevelopment Agency

Following a “Finding of Necessity” by the governing body and recognizing the need for a Community Redevelopment Agency to operate within the county or municipality for redevelopment purposes, any such entity may establish a public body known as the “Community Redevelopment Agency.” This agency is considered a public instrumentality, and its powers under F.S. Chapter 163, Part III are regarded as essential public functions.

The Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), originally named Census Tract 626, was established August 18, 1997 through City of Cocoa Ordinance No. 13-98 and is governed by a seven-member board.

The Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) operates under a redevelopment plan approved by the City Council, as required by the Community Redevelopment Act and funded through tax increment financing. Similar to the City’s Comprehensive Plan, this document is dynamic and requires regular evaluation and amendments to align with evolving conditions and community

goals. The updated Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Plan reaffirms priorities while setting a vision for the redevelopment area beyond the CRA’s operational timeframe. This process involved significant contributions from city residents, businesses, property owners, and other stakeholders within the redevelopment area. The Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Area is located on the southern border of the City. The boundaries of this area are as follows:

- North: School Street
- South: Rosa L. Jones Drive
- East: Florida East Coast Railroad
- West: Pineda Street

The Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) encompasses approximately 430 acres, or 0.67 square miles, representing just 4.6% of the city’s total area of 8,960 acres (14.75 square miles). The area features mostly single-family residential homes, with King Street and Peachtree Street as the commercial corridors. It is home one of the City’s cultural destinations, the Leon and Jewel Collins Museum of African American History and Culture. A notable historic building in this area is the Harry T. Moore Center which was part of the historic Rosenwald School Program, which was an effort to establish African-American schools within the Southeast from the 1910s to the 1930s.

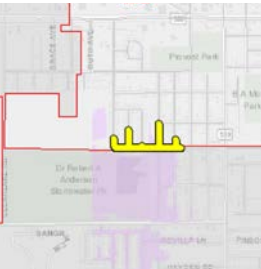
PREVIOUS PLANS AND STUDIES

The previous Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Plan was developed in 2014 and identified five key themes that drove the plan’s vision: Community Living, Community Places, Community Connections, Community Identity, and Community Opportunity. The findings of this plan were evaluated and considered during the analysis and public input phases of this Plan update. The five key themes have been preserved as the framework for the Diamond Square CRA Plan update.

The Resilient Cocoa Plan, developed in 2020 by the East Central Florida Regional Planning Council for the City of Cocoa, addresses resiliency concerns like storm surge, flooding, and sea level rise. It includes a vulnerability assessment, public engagement to identify community priorities, an Economic Impact Analysis using the REMI PI+ model to compare the costs of mitigation versus inaction, and an Action Plan based on these findings. Public input emphasized the need to improve stormwater infrastructure, protect businesses, and address flooding. The Action Plan outlines tasks across four areas—Leadership and Strategy, Economic and Society, Infrastructure and Environment, and Health and Well-Being—each assigned to a specific City Department.

Resiliency in Diamond Square is crucial for sustaining its community and infrastructure in the face of natural disaster challenges. During the Plan update process, several goals were carefully considered to ensure alignment with the Resilient Cocoa Plan. These goals included enhancing the area’s ability to withstand economic and environmental pressures, fostering community engagement, and promoting sustainable development practices. By integrating these objectives, the updated plan supports long-term resilience, ensuring that Diamond Square can adapt and thrive amidst changing conditions.

Key Findings affecting Diamond Square CRA:



Segments of Rosa L. Jones Dr. and surrounding residential areas within FEMA designated flood zones



Southeast corner of the Diamond Square CRA is a Flood-prone area.

Goals and Objectives of the Resilient Cocoa Plan

GOAL #1

Leadership & Strategy

- Promote leadership, education, and empowerment to foster resiliency
- Incorporate resiliency into local plans, policies and objectives.
 - Plan fiscally to implement resilient and sustainable solutions to long term impacts.
 - Implement strategies to promote adaptive measures that keep people and property safe.
 - Engage and educate private sector stakeholders, elected officials, and others about ways to increase community resiliency.

GOAL #2

Economic & Society

- Provide opportunities to foster economic prosperity and social equity
- Protect high value assets from natural hazards.
 - Educate businesses about access to funding and financial services related to resiliency.
 - Facilitate and support the efficient recovery of business operations after an event.
 - Improve social inclusion in decision making processes.

GOAL #3

Infrastructure & Environment

- Encourage responsible development and infrastructure solutions
- Improve water quality in surface water bodies.
 - Incorporate resiliency into local plans, policies and objectives.
 - Preserve and adapt the built environment to keep people and property safe.
 - Improve community mobility while improving vulnerable transportation infrastructure.

GOAL #4

Health & Well Being

- Facilitate opportunities to improve community and environmental health
- Improve the capacity of the City to better respond to hazard events.
 - Improve capacity of medical facility operations to prepare for and recover from hazards.
 - Promote sustainable practices in government-owned facilities.
 - Engage residents and business owners with locally relevant information.
 - Improve access to resources for the homeless, special needs, elderly and poor.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

As part of the Community Redevelopment Plan update two key public engagement events were held to gather community feedback and inform the next steps in the redevelopment process. The first event was an Open House, held on September 25, 2024, at the Dr. Dr. Joe Lee Smith Community Center. The purpose of this first event was to introduce the community to the Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Plan update. The event aimed to engage residents, business owners, CRA Board members, and local stakeholders in discussions about the project's scope and gather early input on the community's priorities and vision. The event was attended by approximately 15-20 people, including representatives from the Inspire and City of Cocoa project teams. The event was promoted through various outreach methods, including the City's calendar, social media, newsletters, and mailed postcards, both in English and Spanish.

During the Open House, several boards were presented to gather input from attendees. A PowerPoint presentation provided an overview of the CRA and Tax Increment Financing (TIF). A series of interactive boards prompted participants to share their thoughts on topics such as where they live, work, and play, what they'd like to see in the CRA, and their preferences for placemaking features. The CRA Prioritization board helped participants rank the areas they felt the redevelopment efforts should prioritize, and the Placemaking board explored preferred elements of public spaces, like parks, transit improvements, and public art.

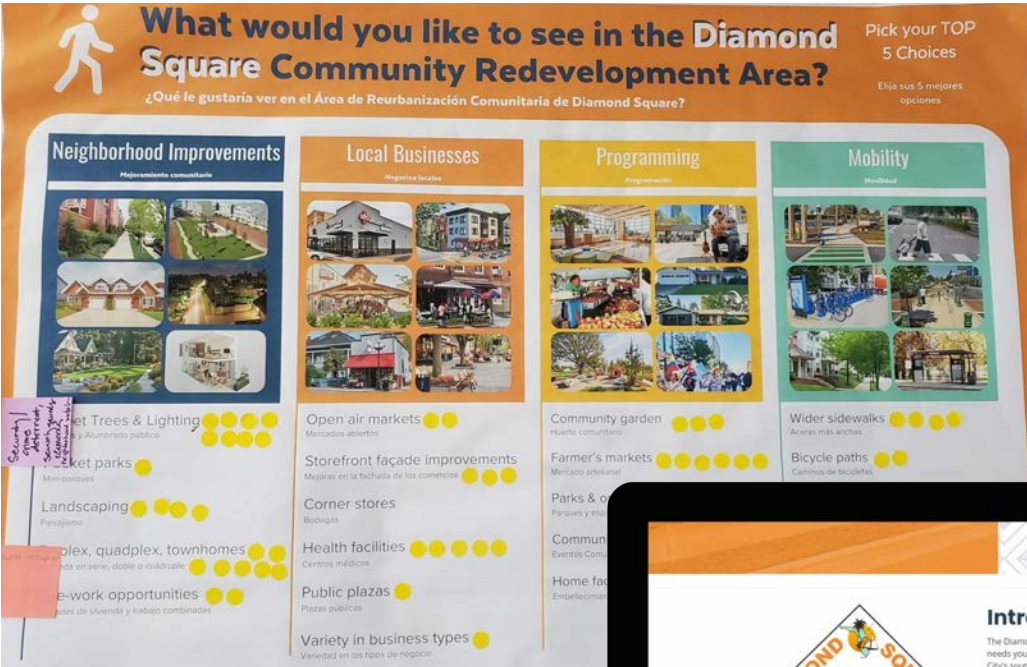
Input from the Open House emphasized a desire for improved placemaking, safer street design, and more diverse housing options to fill the gap in missing middle housing, offering alternatives between single-family homes and large apartment buildings. There was also strong support for the revitalization of public spaces, including parks and recreational areas, and a desire for improved commercial options, such as a grocery store. The prioritization of infill development was noted, as well as a need for better stormwater infrastructure and resilience measures to combat flooding. The Placemaking board at the Open House revealed a strong preference for public transit improvements, pocket parks, and enhanced landscaping, among other features, to foster a more vibrant community. Feedback also highlighted the need for more local businesses, a focus on crime prevention, and the importance of neighborhood programs.

A follow-up Workshop was held on November 6, 2024, at the Harry T. Moore Center in the heart of Diamond Square. This workshop focused on presenting the findings from the previous public engagement and aligning resources with the identified priorities while focusing on specific challenges and opportunities in the CRA. The workshop had around eight (8) attendees, including residents, business owners, CRA Board members, and the project teams. At the Workshop, more focused discussions took place based on the results of the Open House, where attendees engaged with a "Focus Areas Map" and "Focus Areas Budget Exercise." These activities helped to refine priorities across six focus areas: Public Spaces, Housing, Transportation/Mobility, Infrastructure & Resilience, Redevelopment/Infill Development, and Neighborhood Health & Safety.

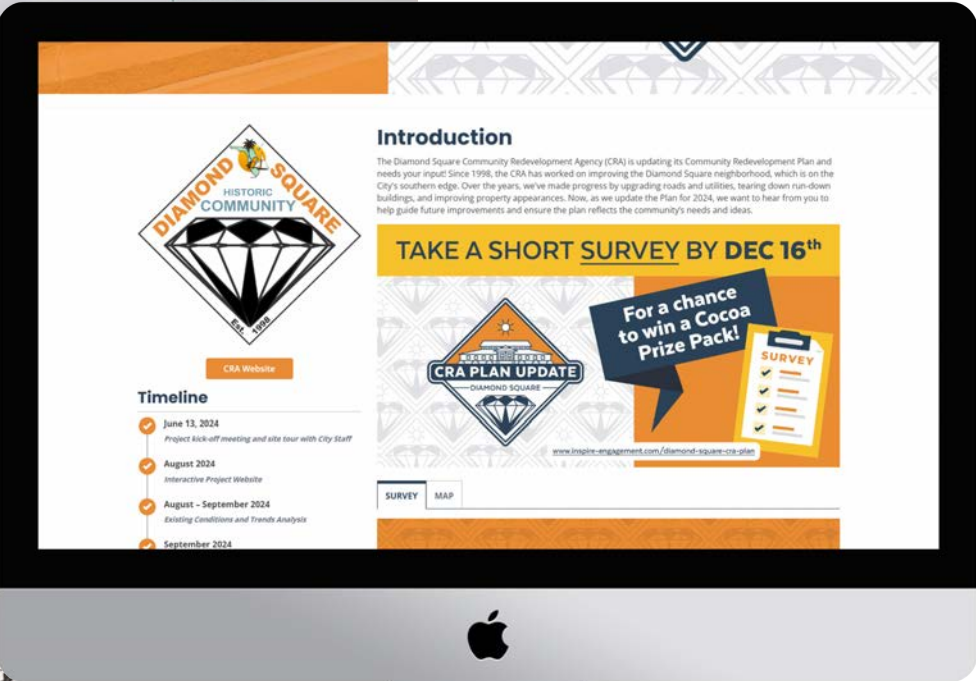


Interviews were conducted with key stakeholders who provided feedback on neighborhood improvements, local businesses, mobility, and programming needs. Stakeholders emphasized several priorities, including the need for affordable housing, safer streets, and more public spaces. There was a strong desire for a variety of housing types to cater to different income levels and age groups. Stakeholders also voiced concerns about crime and loitering, calling for implementation of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) measures to improve safety. The desire for more local businesses, especially health facilities and restaurants, was also emphasized, alongside the need for a more inviting public realm and community programming.

Overall, the public engagement efforts revealed a clear and shared vision among residents and stakeholders for the future of the Diamond Square CRA. The community seeks a more vibrant, safe, and inclusive neighborhood with a variety of housing options, enhanced public spaces, stronger economic opportunities, and better transportation options. With continued targeted investments and improved communication, stakeholders are optimistic that these priorities can help restore the CRA to its former vibrancy and potential.



ENGAGEMENT BOARD RESULTS



PROJECT WEBSITE



02

THE VISION

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The vision for Diamond Square is to create a vibrant, safe, and sustainable community that reflects the aspirations of its residents. The previous Plan update identified six key transformational initiatives for Diamond Square. These include enhancing streetscapes and pedestrian connectivity, fostering partnerships with housing developers, creating neighborhood gateways, assessing the feasibility of new community-based activity centers, bolstering support for community organizations and educational institutions, and establishing a diverse community-based committee to coordinate activities and strengthen non-profit capacities. These initiatives served as foundational elements supported by various incremental actions. Each initiative aligns with one or more strategic framework categories: *Community Living, Community Places, Community Connections, Community Identity, and Community Opportunity.*

This framework is informed by a collaborative process of public engagement, which reaffirms and identifies key priorities and concerns. The goals outlined below focus on enhancing public spaces, providing housing options, improving mobility, strengthening resilience, supporting redevelopment, and ensuring neighborhood health and safety. The outcomes and action steps provided for each goal aim to create tangible, measurable improvements over time.

COMMUNITY LIVING

Improve the quality, aesthetics, and availability of housing in Diamond Square to increase homeownership, increase property values, and attract investment from housing developers. Additionally, prioritize the development of affordable and diverse housing options that meet the needs of all income levels.

COMMUNITY PLACES

Enhance the parks and public spaces of Diamond Square in the CRA to create safe, inclusive, vibrant areas for leisure and community gatherings through more consistent maintenance, upgraded amenities, and meaningful programming. Foster partnerships with local businesses and organizations to support the neighborhood’s shared vision.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Enhance mobility in the Diamond Square neighborhood by providing consistent, incremental improvements to alternative transportation such as public transit and bicycle infrastructure. This includes upgrading bus services, and implementing Complete Streets projects to foster a culture of active mobility and access to safe, efficient transportation for all residents.



NECTIONS

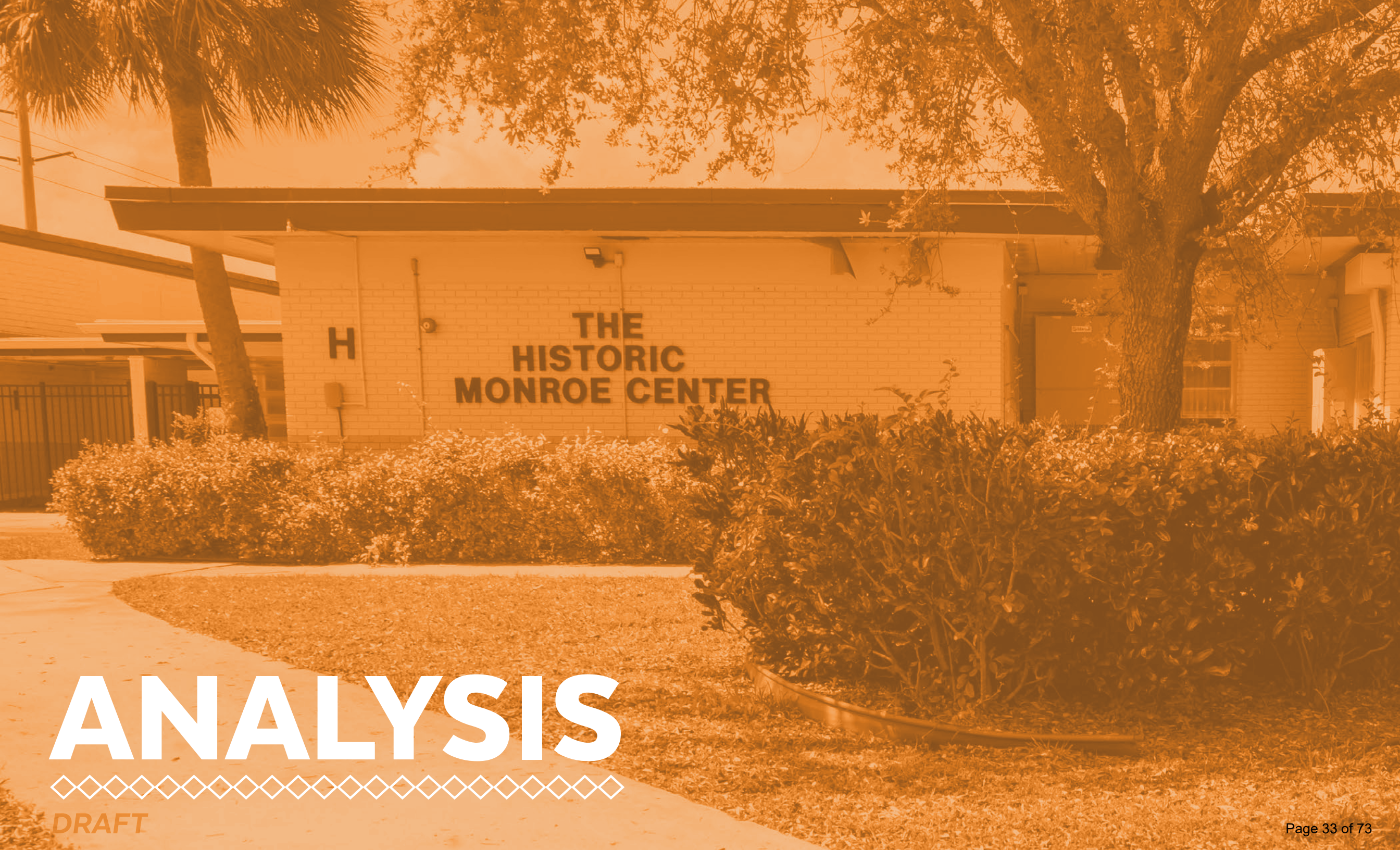
Diamond
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improvements
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y and ensure
transportation

COMMUNITY IDENTITY

Strengthen the community identity of Diamond Square by celebrating its rich history and culture, while fostering a safer, healthier environment for all residents. This includes enhancing security, promoting wellness and healthcare access, and supporting social services that uplift vulnerable populations, ultimately strengthening community cohesion and resilience.

COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITY

Foster economic growth in Diamond Square by revitalizing vacant and underutilized properties, creating a vibrant commercial district that attracts diverse businesses and amenities. This includes supporting property improvements, enhancing the aesthetic appeal of commercial corridors, and providing job training and development opportunities to ensure sustainable economic prosperity for residents.



H

THE
HISTORIC
MONROE CENTER

ANALYSIS



DRAFT



K02

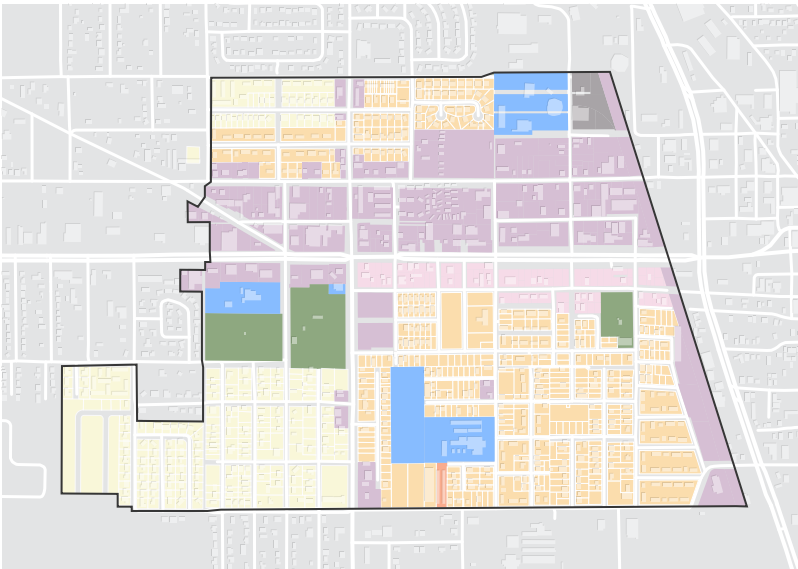




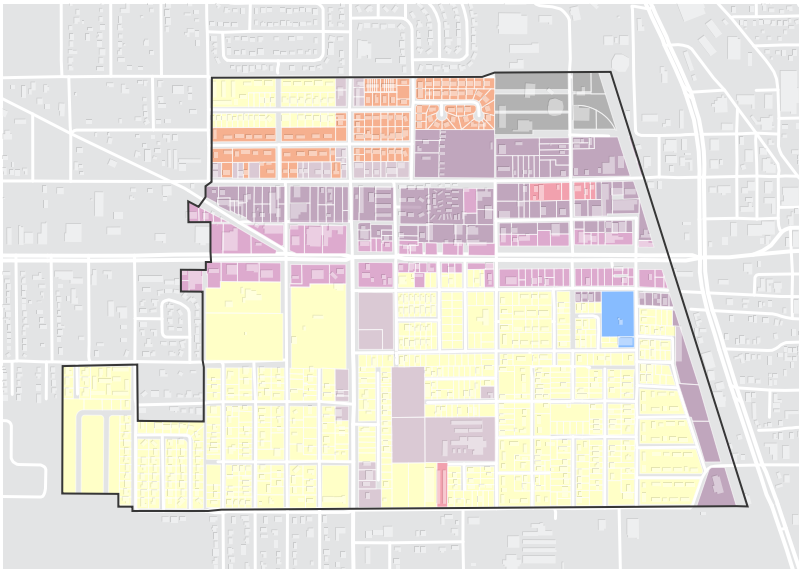
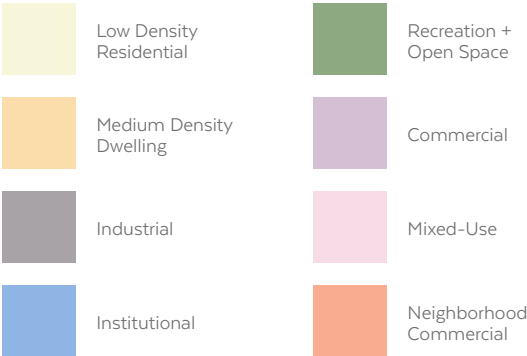
EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) covers 430.9 acres along the southern edge of Cocoa, Florida, and is characterized by a mix of residential (54%), commercial (25%), and ancillary land uses such as institutional and parks. Current zoning allows for an increase in residential (67%) and commercial (34%) development, which can support the area’s potential for revitalization. The CRA is well-connected by major roadways like Cocoa Boulevard, King Street, and Fiske Boulevard, although dead-end streets limit internal connectivity. Public transit is readily accessible, with 19 bus stops throughout the CRA, most within a ¼-mile walking distance. However, the area’s bicycle facilities, located along key streets, lack protection and present safety concerns, which is important to address as the community grows and alternative transportation options increase in popularity.

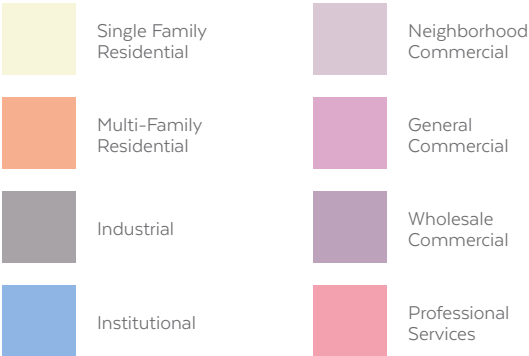
Demographically, the Diamond Square CRA has a population of 2,313 with a median age of 37.3 years. The community is predominantly Black (51.6%), followed by Hispanic residents (27.2%). The median household income of \$48,305 is lower than the county average, and over half of the population works in service industries. Housing in the area is predominantly rental (over 50%), with many single-family homes built between 1940 and 1969. The housing stock is aging, and approximately 14% of the units are vacant, presenting opportunities for redevelopment or rehabilitation of housing.



Future Land Use map for Diamond Square CRA



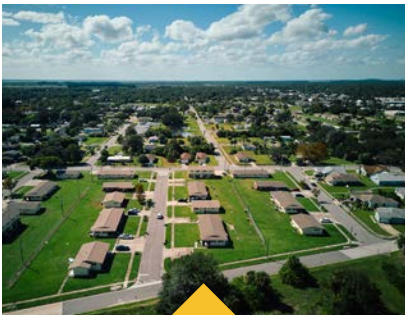
Zoning map for Diamond Square CRA



ANALYSIS APPROACH

The vision for the Diamond Square CRA is to create a vibrant, safe, and resilient community that reflects the aspirations of its residents. This vision can only be accomplished through steadfast efforts towards goals and priorities identified by the community. The previous Plan update identified five framework themes to support the vision: **Community Living, Community Places, Community Connections, Community Identity**, and **Community Opportunity**.

This Plan update evaluates the current conditions of the CRA based on the **five strategic framework categories**, while also reviewing previous plans and approaches to revitalizing the area. These strategic focus areas guided the development of qualitative and quantitative criteria to better understand the area’s strengths and opportunities for the CRA in the coming years.



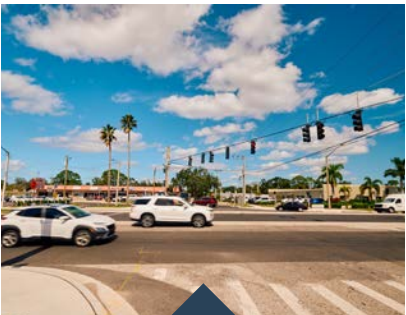
COMMUNITY LIVING

- Housing variety
- Owner vs renter diversity
- Building form and Approachability
- Proximity to destinations
- Vacant vs occupied homes
- Living density
- Unique character/identity
- Homes with porch spaces



COMMUNITY PLACES

- Proximity to Parks
- Variety of active recreation
- Access to healthcare centers
- Access to civic spaces
- Availability of services
- Lifelong learning centers
- Inclusive public spaces
- Spaces to gather



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

- Grid street layout
- Street connections
- Connection to surroundings
- Engaging and visible blocks
- Residential connectivity through sidewalks
- Pedestrian network
- Bike network
- Public transit – access and quality
- Micromobility Infrastructure
- Lighting
- Prevent accidents



COMMUNITY IDENTITY

- Art visibility from the street and publicly accessible
- Streets have an identifiable character
- Low impact infrastructure



COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITY

- Retail and commercial diversity
- Supporting programs for economic growth
- Local employment opportunities
- Professional businesses

02

COMMUNITY LIVING

The Diamond Square CRA is primarily low-density residential. The area is predominantly zoned for single-family homes (52%) and medium-density residential (45%). There is approximately 63 acres of vacant land within the CRA, equating to 19% of the land area. However, there is a need for greater housing diversity to meet the demand of various income levels.

The area's future land use plan envisions a more diverse housing mix, including medium density and some mixed-use, alongside significant commercial space (29%) to foster economic development and job opportunities. This shift could encourage higher-density, walkable, and connected neighborhoods, with potential for live-work units, duplexes, triplexes, and townhomes to reflect the needs of a modern urban population.

In terms of housing affordability, the median household income in the Diamond Square area is \$48,305, which is significantly lower than the countywide average of \$75,817, underscoring the need for affordable housing options. The CRA area has a high renter-occupancy rate of 56%, also starkly contrasting with that of the countywide average of 24.5%. Approximately 14% of existing homes within the CRA are vacant, which may indicate a possible opportunity for increasing homeownership efforts.



Some mobile homes lack accessible connections



Shared spaces such as this multifamily complex are opportunities for enhanced green spaces



There are a high number of vacant parcels within the residential areas



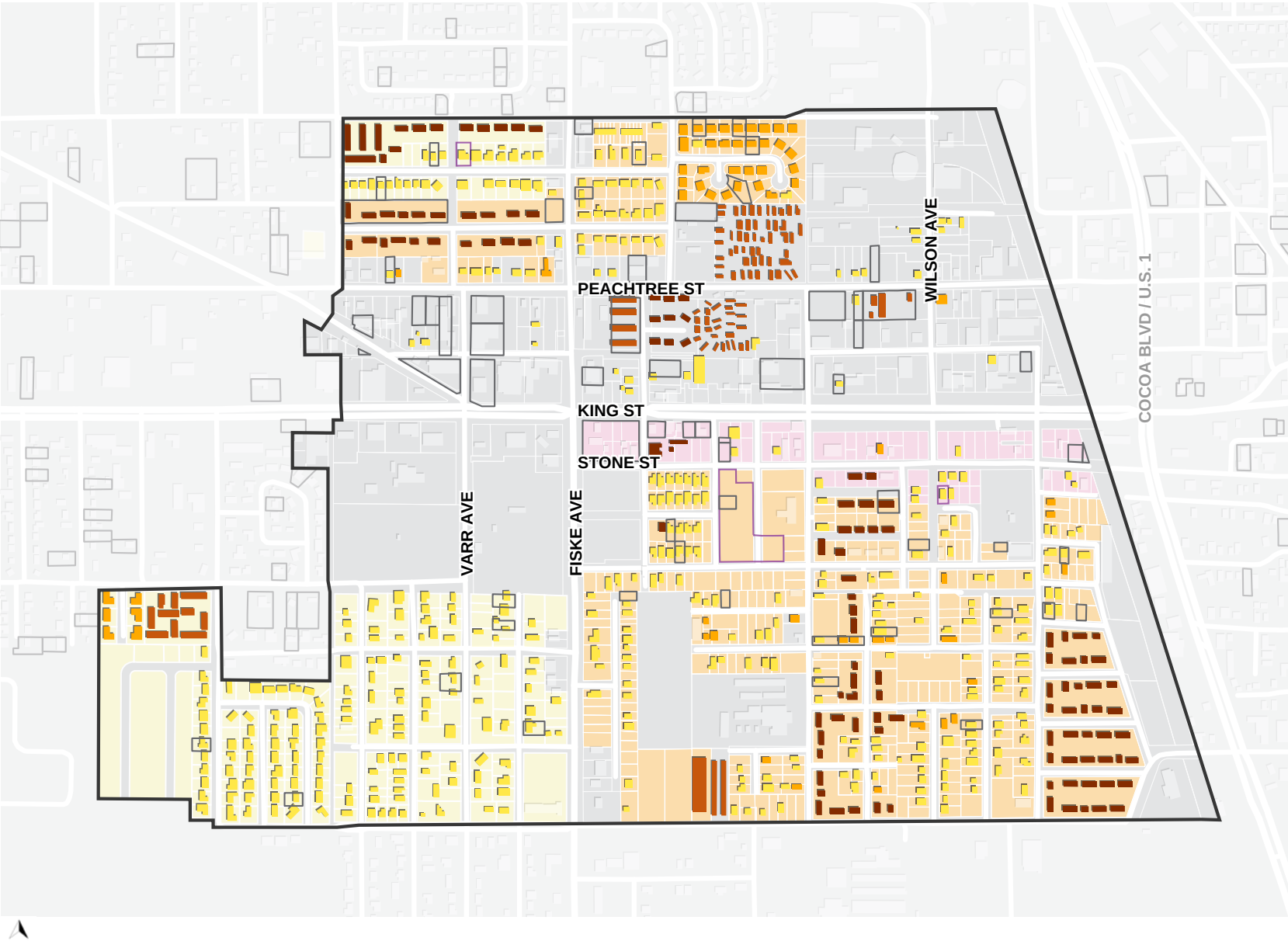
Some preserved homes reveal the eclectic residential character of this area

As redevelopment in the CRA occurs, it is important to encourage more varied, dense, and affordable housing types while still preserving the character and history of the neighborhood. In the near term, targeted projects to improve residential facades, landscaping on both private and public properties, along with housing assistance and initiatives for enhanced connectivity and economic development, will support the neighborhood’s revitalization.

COMMUNITY LIVING

LEGEND Scale 1: 8,000

	Subsidized Housing		Planning Petition
	High Density Dwelling		FLU - Low Density Residential
	Multiple Family Dwelling		FLU - Medium Density Residential
	Single Family Dwelling		FLU - Mixed-Use
	Vacant Parcel		



CRA PLAN

COMMUNITY PLACES

Public spaces and resources that support residents are key to creating a livable community. Mostly residential, everyday destinations play a critical role in shaping the daily lives of residents. While the neighborhood does have access to essential services like a grocery store, daycares, and green space they are limited in quality and options. Access to healthcare facilities is limited, with the nearest medical center being located well outside the CRA boundaries .

Community facilities, including the Emma Jewel Charter Academy, the Leon and Jewel Collins Museum of African American History and Culture benefit residents, however more is needed to meet the diversity and demand of the residents.

Additionally, although there are parks within walking distance for some residents, recreational spaces are largely absent from the northwest and southern parts of the CRA, highlighting a need for additional green spaces.

Opportunities to expand access to quality community resources—such as food access and essential services—will strengthen the overall quality of life in the CRA and foster a sense of pride and belonging among residents.



Gilmore Community park can benefit from updated play and increased program on site (example: address the user-experience of exposure to direct sunlight within the park).



Provost Park provides opportunities to gather for outdoor activities and sports.

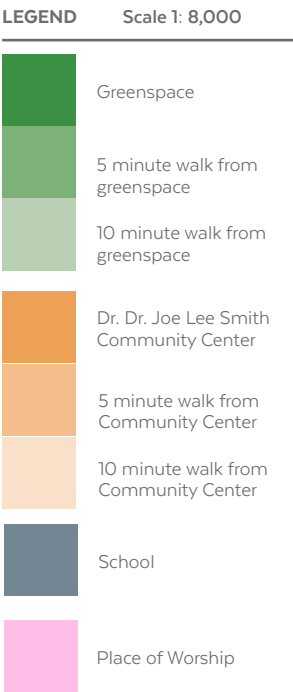


Dr. Joe Lee Smith Community Center provides the local resources and information for the neighborhood area.



The Thomas Cole green space adjacent to St. John Church of God in Christ could benefit the community by making it more legible as public open space with site furnishings.

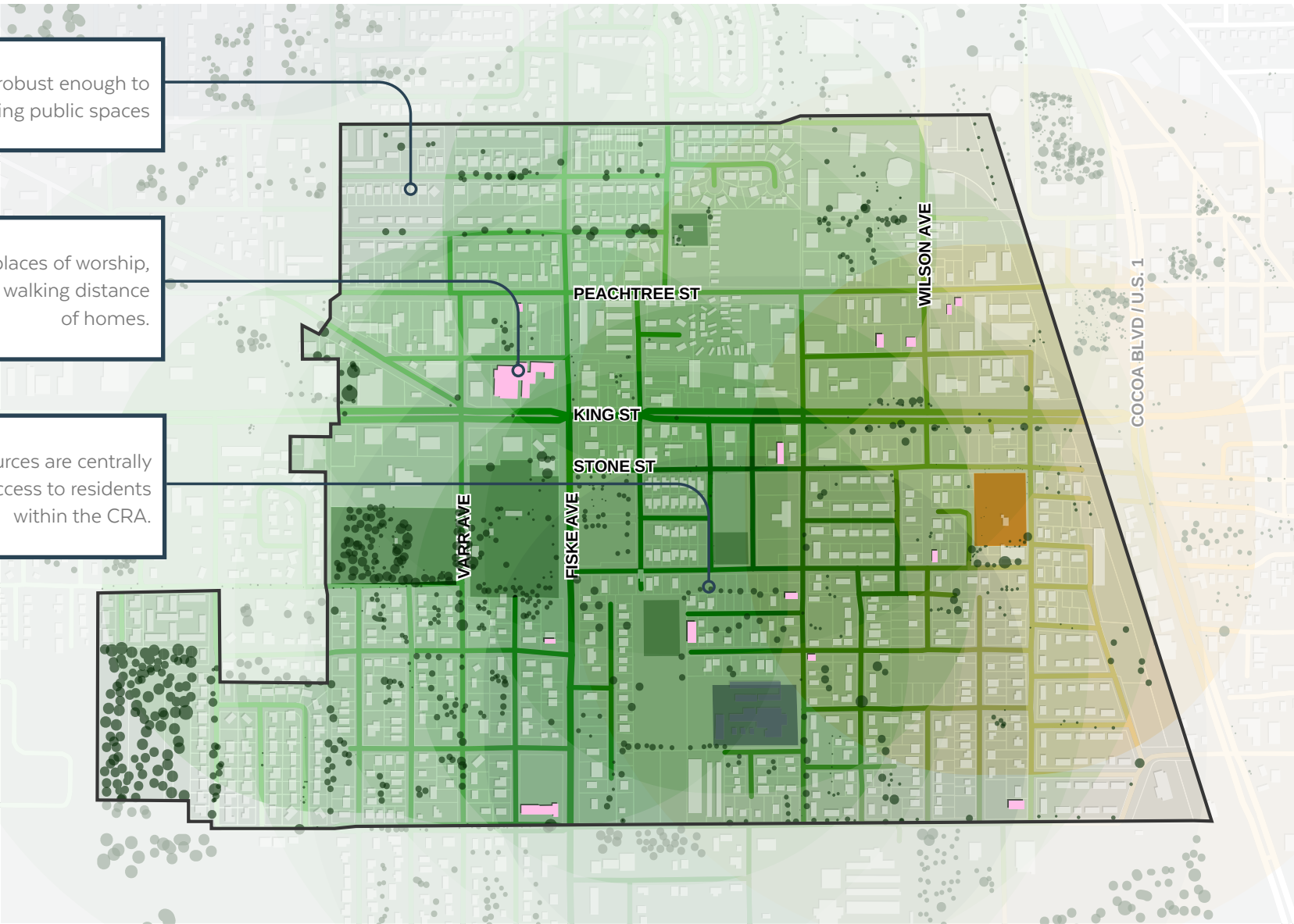
COMMUNITY PLACES



Tree canopy is not constant and robust enough to provide more shaded gathering public spaces

The CRA benefits from places of worship, especially within walking distance of homes.

Many of the community resources are centrally located, providing walkable access to residents within the CRA.



CRA PLAN

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Transportation is foundational in shaping the livability of an area. While the neighborhood benefits from access to major roadways like Cocoa Boulevard, King Street, and Fiske Boulevard, the overall transportation infrastructure presents both opportunities and challenges. Most of the streets within the CRA are two-lane neighborhood roads, and many have poorly maintained sidewalks or no sidewalks at all. These gaps in pedestrian infrastructure make it difficult for residents, especially those without access to a car – particularly the elderly – to navigate the area safely and efficiently. While there are noticeable gaps in sidewalk infrastructure, the CRA does contain 19 bus stops served by the Space Coast Area Transit. Most of these are within a ¼-mile walking distance of residents.

The area is generally absent of bike lanes, including on major roadways like King Street, Peachtree Street, and Fiske Boulevard. This is a particular safety concern for cyclists with posted traffic speeds of up to 40 miles per hour. Given the economic characteristics of the community, cycling is more likely used for transportation rather than recreation. Presumably, many cyclists are also using these roadways during the dark of early morning and evening hours, further increasing safety risk.

As the neighborhood looks toward future redevelopment, improving transportation infrastructure for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit riders, should be a priority. Additionally, expanding public transportation options and improving the overall road network will ensure residents have reliable access to key destinations within the neighborhood and beyond.



Cycling is a commonly observed mode of transportation in the neighborhood, and streets need to be adaptable to provide safe bicycle connections



FDOT is planning pedestrian crossing improvements for Fiske Blvd to safely connect pedestrians to public open spaces



FDOT shared bike lanes on Peachtree Street enhance multi-modal accessibility across U.S. 1 to the Historic Cocoa Village



Bus stops are providing seating needs, with an opportunity to enhance stops with shelters

The grid street layout helps pedestrians and cyclists to navigate the neighborhood easier

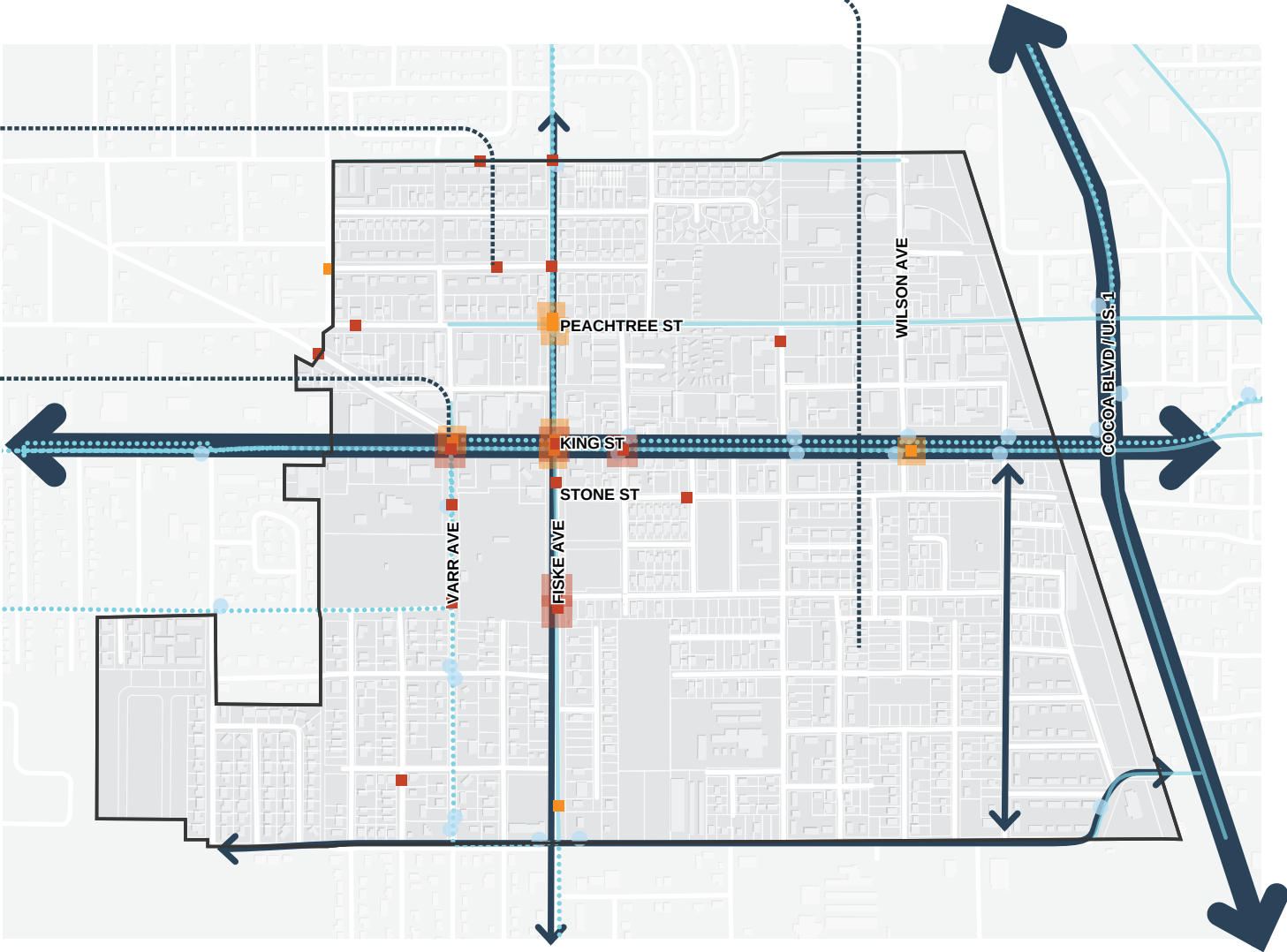
Pedestrian crashes still occur within smaller streets signifying a need to assess the safety and needs of pedestrians along these areas

According to FDOT collision data, pedestrian and bicyclist crashes are more common at the major intersections

CONNECTIVITY

LEGEND Scale 1: 8,000

	Primary
	Secondary
	Bus Routes
	Bus Stop
	Pedestrian Crashes
	Bicyclist Crashes



CRA PLAN



COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITIES

Economic development is essential to the long-term revitalization of the CRA. While the neighborhood is home to a mix of residential, limited commercial, and institutional uses, there is significant potential to enhance the local economy by expanding opportunities for residents and businesses. The CRA’s proximity to key roadways including Cocoa Boulevard, King Street, and Fiske Boulevard create an opportunity for increasing commercial activity if aging commercial properties were revitalized or new commercial uses were built.

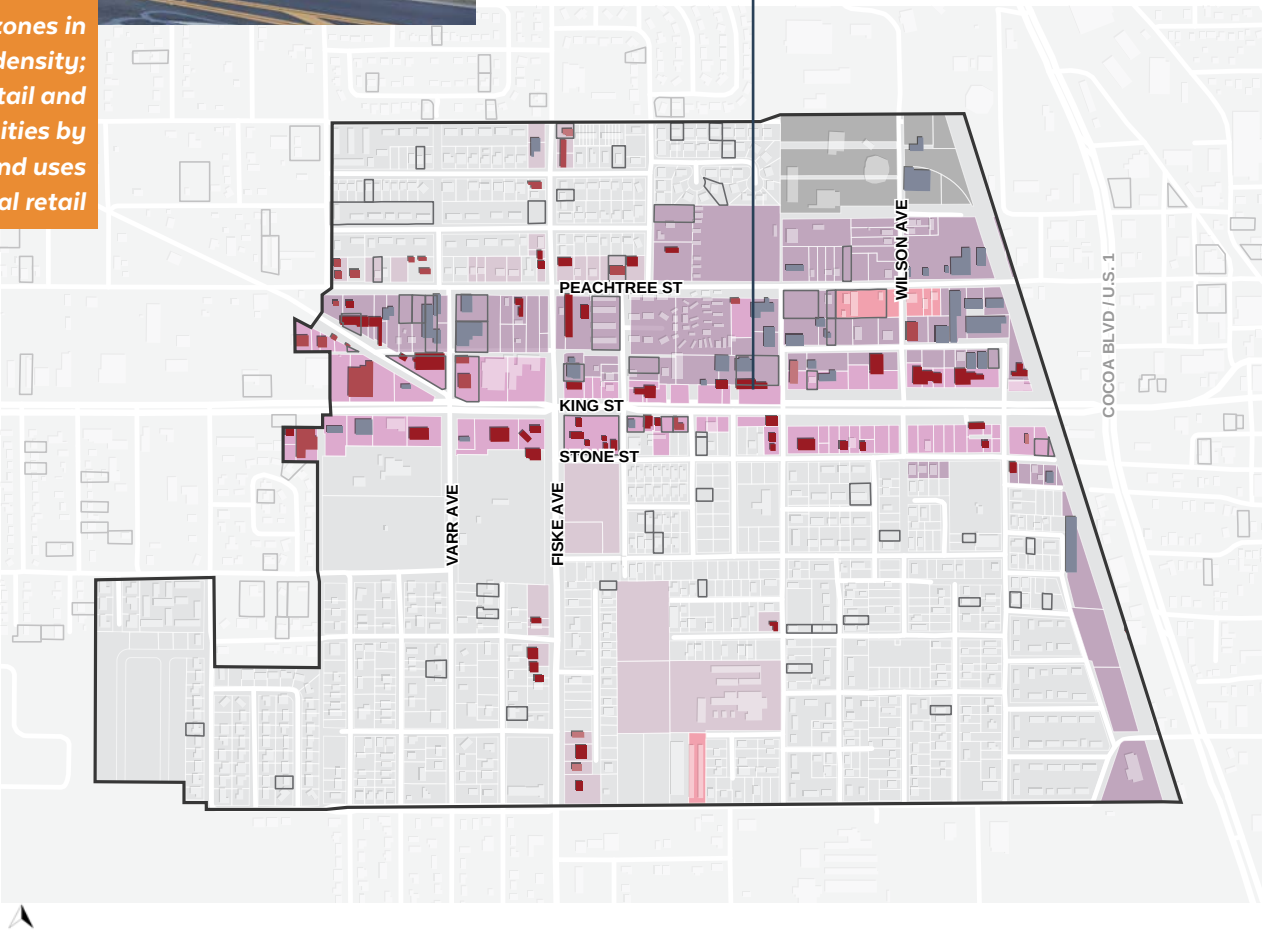
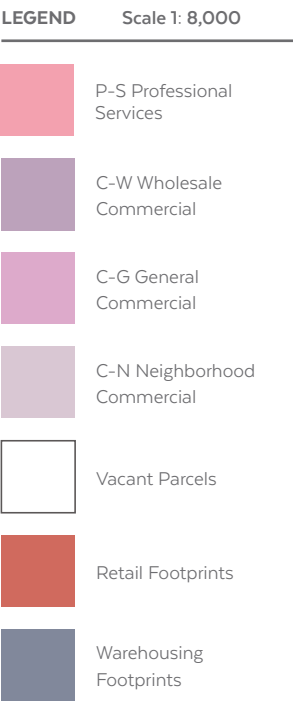
Accompanying this would include a range of commercial spaces and sizes, particularly along King Street (SR 520) which could support a variety of business types, including smaller spaces for local entrepreneurs to better serve the community. Expanding retail, service, and professional businesses could also provide local employment opportunities for residents, particularly in sectors like retail, healthcare, and services, where the area shows potential for growth.

Furthermore, integrating mixed-use development could stimulate greater economic activity by pairing both business and resident growth. This would promote greater business vibrancy, expand the tax base and provide for stable and vital additional job opportunities

Encouraging commercial and mixed-use development within CRA will require a holistic approach, balancing the needs of existing residents with opportunities for new businesses and residents. By doing this and strengthening local businesses, improving commercial infrastructure, and supporting workforce development, Diamond Square can become a more dynamic and economically sustainable neighborhood.



Current commercial zones in Diamond Square are low density; opportunity to expand retail and employment opportunities by increasing the density and uses with commercial retail



DIAMOND SQUARE

COMMUNITY IDENTITY

The CRA is a neighborhood steeped in cultural richness and historical significance, forming the heart of Cocoa’s African American heritage. The men and women that shaped the civil rights and activist culture in Cocoa’s history are honored and remembered in the Leon and Jewel Collins Museum of African American History and Culture at the Harry T. Moore Center.

Residents take great pride in their neighborhood, with a strong sense of belonging and connection to the area’s cultural heritage. This pride is reflected in the community’s ongoing preservation of its history and traditions, as well as in its resilience in the face of challenges. The area is home to numerous community resources, such as local parks, small businesses, and institutions that serve the diverse needs of the population. These resources, though valuable, would benefit from further investment and enhancement to better serve its residents.

Opportunities for improving community identity and pride could be enhanced with cohesive wayfinding, signage, and gateway features. The addition of these features, and things like historical markers or public art, particularly along prominent gateways to the CRA, would help reinforce the neighborhood’s identity.



The Leon and Jewel Collins Museum of African American History & Culture and the Harry T. Moore Center stand within what was the historic African-American Rosenwald Community School that provided education for children in the Diamond Square neighborhood. Housed within its walls are the lives and stories of Cocoa legends; Artists and educators of the community who stood tirelessly for the equal rights of black men, women and children.

Rosa Lee Jones, a lifelong educator and respected activist and journalist, helped to open Brevard County’s first NAACP chapter in 1934 and helped register Black Floridians to vote.

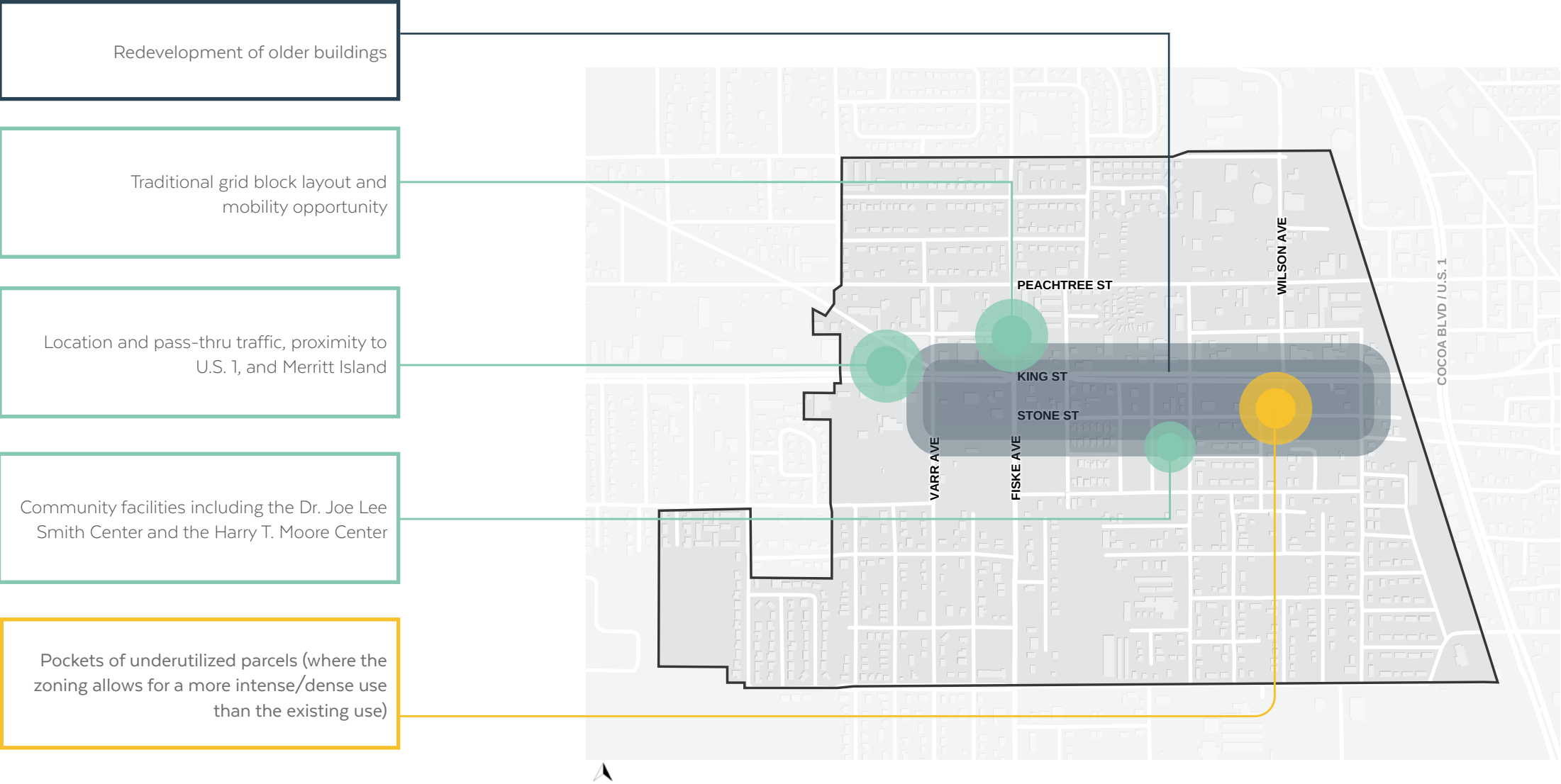
02

The Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT)

synthesize the key findings from each strategic category. We are able to understand what areas need attention, what's working well and brings visitors and residents. This is also where some of the larger opportunities for improvement start to stand out, and the threats that endanger future improvements and existing strengths for Diamond Square are identified.



SWOT ANALYSIS MAP





DR. JOE LEE SMITH
COMMUNITY CENTER

STRATEGIES



DRAFT



03



DRAFT



The strategy for redevelopment incorporates goals for Diamond Square that align with city-wide initiatives, focusing on enhancing community **living, places, connections, identity,** and **opportunity.** This comprehensive approach aims to improve the quality and diversity of housing, ensuring that residents have access to a variety of living options that meet their needs. By creating vibrant public spaces, the plan seeks to foster a sense of community and belonging, encouraging social interactions and community events. Additionally, ensuring safe transportation is a priority, as it facilitates better connectivity within the area and beyond, making it easier for residents to access essential services and amenities.

Celebrating cultural identity is another crucial aspect of the strategy, as it aims to honor the unique heritage and traditions of the community, promoting inclusivity and pride among residents. By fostering economic growth, the redevelopment plan supports the development of local businesses and job opportunities, contributing to a thriving and sustainable economy. Overall, these efforts are designed to support a thriving, inclusive community, where everyone has the opportunity to prosper and feel connected to their surroundings.

CRA GOALS

COMMUNITY LIVING

Improve the quality, aesthetics, and availability of housing in Diamond Square. Support homeownership and diversity in housing types.

COMMUNITY PLACES

Enhance parks and public spaces to create safe, inclusive, vibrant gathering and recreational areas.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Enhance mobility through consistent and incremental improvements to non-vehicular transportation options to foster a culture of active mobility and ensure access to safe, efficient transportation for all residents.

COMMUNITY IDENTITY

Strengthen community identity and pride by celebrating the neighborhood’s history and culture, investing to create a safer, healthier environment, and integrating support services benefitting community members.

COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITY

Foster economic growth by developing vacant and underutilized properties, attracting diverse businesses and amenities, enhancing major corridors to become vibrant, mixed-use commercial districts, and providing job training and development opportunities for residents.

COMMUNITY LIVING

Improve the quality, aesthetics, and availability of housing in Diamond Square. Support homeownership and diversity in housing types.

- Expand and promote the Residential Paint and Beautification grants and programs using targeted marketing efforts for residential properties programs, particularly those located on major corridors such as King Street, Barbara Jenkins Dr, and Rosa L. Jones Drive.
- Increase awareness of housing assistance programs through community outreach and local partnerships (e.g., leveraging churches and community organizations).
- Expand homeownership assistance programs to provide pathways to homeownership for low- and moderate-income residents.
- Incentivize infill development and the redevelopment of vacant or underutilized parcels for multifamily housing throughout the CRA.
- Expand partnerships with affordable housing developers to increase the stock of affordable rental and owner-occupied housing.
- Facilitate where possible the development of missing middle housing (townhomes, duplexes, live-work units) to accommodate a range of household sizes and income levels.
- Increase the enforcement of Code Compliance for all properties, including residential.

COMMUNITY PLACES

Enhance parks and public spaces to create safe, inclusive, vibrant gathering and recreational areas

- Further enhance Provost Park and Gilmore Community Park with additional amenities, such as playgrounds, picnic areas, and sports facilities.
- Partner with local organizations and businesses to create regular community programming (e.g., farmers markets, outdoor movie nights, and music events).
- Apply CPTED principles to public spaces, focusing on improving lighting, visibility, and property maintenance.
- Plant more street trees and expand urban greenery to reduce the urban heat island effect and improve air quality.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Enhance mobility through consistent and incremental improvements to non-vehicular transportation options to foster a culture of active mobility and ensure access to safe, efficient transportation for all residents.

- Implement “Complete Streets” design features to improve walkability and safety by mending gaps in the sidewalk network, refreshing the landscaping and crosswalks, and installing decorative lighting and gateway features along major corridors including King Street, Barbara Jenkins Drive, Rosa L. Jones Drive, Fiske Boulevard, and Peachtree Street.
- Upgrade bus stop facilities with new shelters, benches, bike racks, and signage to improve comfort and access to public transportation.
- Work with the Space Coast Area Transit (SCAT) to improve bus service frequency and coverage within the CRA, especially for underserved areas.



COMMUNITY IDENTITY

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- Apply CPTED principles to public spaces, focusing on improving lighting, visibility, and property maintenance.
- Plant more street trees and expand urban greenery to reduce the urban heat island effect and improve air quality.



Enhancing shared living spaces and provide facade rehabilitation programs



Opportunity to highlight Diamond Square's identity through murals and art



Using native landscape to filter and improve stormwater runoff



Strengthening the local economy through mixed use

04

Community Living:

Improve the quality, aesthetics, and availability of housing in Diamond Square. Support homeownership and diversity in housing types.

Community Places:

Enhance parks and public spaces to create safe, inclusive, vibrant gathering and recreational areas

Community Connections:

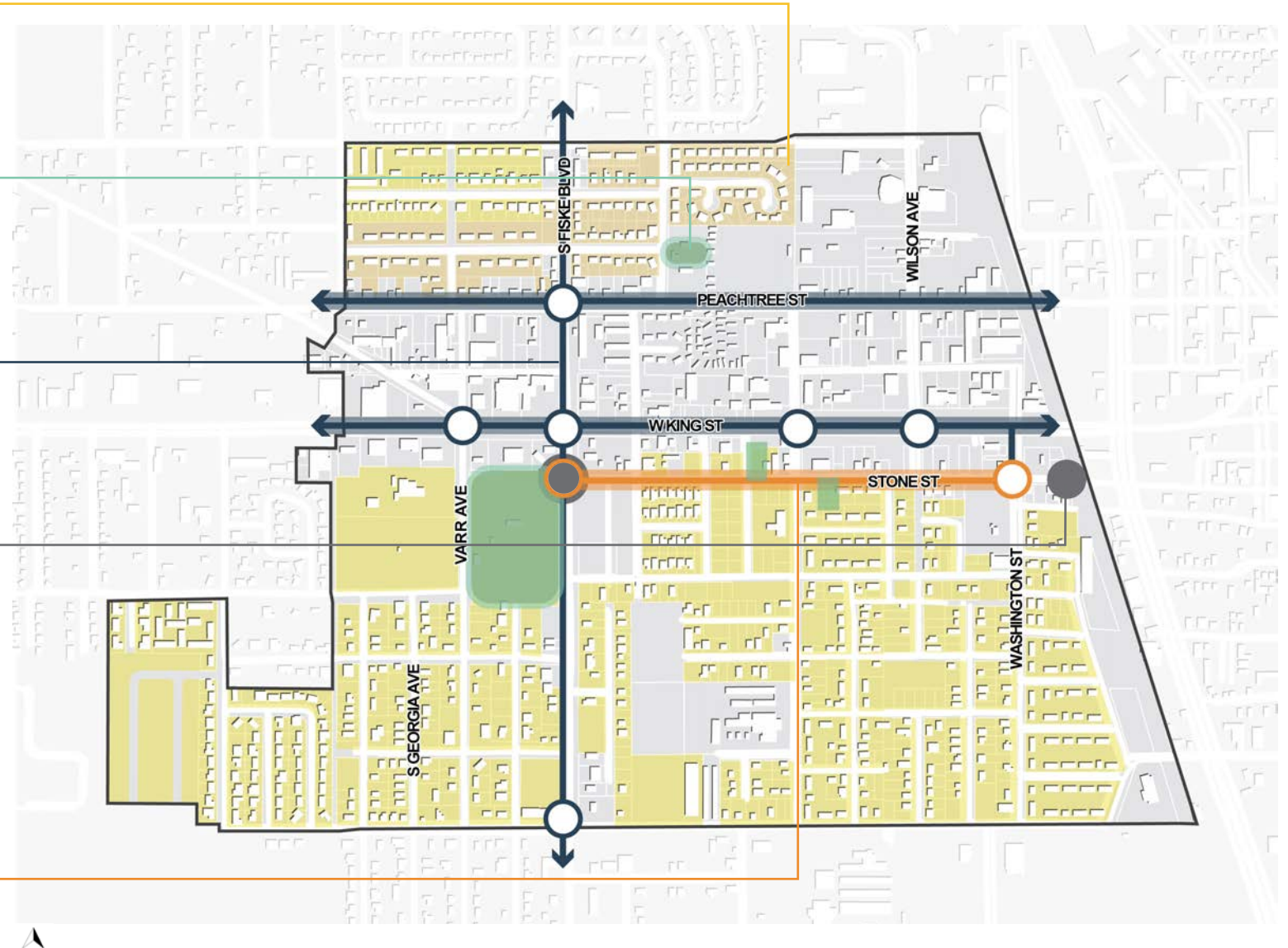
Enhance mobility through consistent and incremental improvements to non-vehicular transportation options to foster a culture of active mobility and ensure access to safe, efficient transportation for all residents.

Community Identity:

Strengthen community identity and pride by celebrating the neighborhood's history and culture, investing to create a safer, healthier environment, and integrating support services benefitting the community members.

Community Opportunity:

OPPORTUNITIES MAP



DIAMOND SQUARE

IMAGINE...

Diamond Square’s neighborhoods could be a common ground for residents, safe and comfortable to walk, with amenities such as community gardens or play spaces



Facilitate where possible the development of missing middle housing

Increase programming that engages all age groups in positive activities that foster a sense of belonging and connectedness

Using monuments and gateways as part of the neighborhood’s identity

Improving crosswalk connections

Prioritizing pedestrian-friendly streetscapes



COMMERCIAL SPACES



IMAGINE...

Stone Street could be the commercial corridor with live-work spaces; the “main street” of Diamond Square

IMAGINE...

Neighborhoods could connect residents to safe and active community spaces

Integrating public art, cultural signage, and historical markers, celebrating the neighborhood's rich history and cultural assets.

Planting more street trees and expand urban greenery to reduce the urban heat island effect and improve air quality.

Applying CPTED principles to public spaces, focusing on improving lighting, visibility, and property maintenance

Enhancing neighborhoods with additional amenities like playgrounds and picnic areas





IMPLEMENTATION





04





TAX INCREMENT FINANCING (TIF) PROJECTIONS

The following Tax Increment Financing (TIF) revenue projections show the anticipated TIF revenue for the CRA’s operational timeframe. The projections utilize the 1997 base year value (\$24,617,590), the 2024 taxable valuation (\$80,970,659), and the 2024 City (6.9532), County (3.0486), and County District IV (.64532) millage rates as a base. Taxable values are projected to increase at 3% per year. The TIF collection rate for City and County taxes is 95%. The cumulative TIF revenue projected to be collected through 2032 is \$6,079,289. *Per the Interlocal Agreement dated October 21, 2019, the County’s TIF contribution is capped at \$150,000 per fiscal year.

Diamond Square CRA 3% Growth

		Taxable Valuation	Estimated Increment Value	County Contribution @ 95%	County District IV Rec Contribution @ 95%	City Contribution @ 95%	Total TIF CRA
BASE	1997	\$24,617,590					
	2024	\$80,970,659	\$56,353,069	\$163,208	\$34,547	\$372,242	\$569,998
	2025	\$83,399,779	\$58,782,189	\$170,243	\$36,037	\$388,288	\$594,568
	2026	\$85,901,772	\$61,284,182	\$177,489	\$37,571	\$404,815	\$619,875
	2027	\$88,478,825	\$63,861,235	\$184,953	\$39,150	\$421,838	\$645,941
	2028	\$91,133,190	\$66,515,600	\$192,640	\$40,778	\$439,371	\$672,790
	2029	\$93,867,186	\$69,249,596	\$200,559	\$42,454	\$457,431	\$700,443
	2030	\$96,683,201	\$72,065,611	\$208,714	\$44,180	\$476,032	\$728,927
	2031	\$99,583,697	\$74,966,107	\$217,115	\$45,958	\$495,192	\$758,264
	2032	\$102,571,208	\$77,953,618	\$225,767	\$47,790	\$514,926	\$788,482
							\$6,079,289
County Millage		0.0030486					
County District IV Rec		0.00064532					
City Millage		0.0069532					
Total County Contribution (2024-2032)				\$1,740,689			
Total County District IV Rec Contribution (2024-2032)				\$368,465			
Total City Contribution (2024-2032)				\$3,970,136			
Total TIF Estimated (2024-2032)				\$6,079,289			

CRA BUDGET WORKSHEET

The following proposed CRA Budget worksheet presents an outline of the potential projects and associated costs identified during the Community Redevelopment Plan update, the current and proposed redevelopment programming, and the estimated administrative and operational costs for the CRA. The capital projects and programming address the Strategic Goals and encourage private sector investment. The proposed CRA Budget worksheet provides a snapshot of the CRA’s anticipated expenditures and revenues through the remainder of the the CRA’s operational timeframe. The expenditures component of the Cocoa CRA’s 5-Year Budget is based on the adopted FY 24/25 CRA Operational Budget. Future years of the budget anticipate a 4% annual increase in operational expenses, coupled with proposed capital improvements projects and programming costs. The revenue component of the CRA Budget is based on the actual TIF collected and the TIF cash balance of FY 24/25. The worksheet projects an annual increase of 3% for future years’ TIF revenue. The proposed 5-Year CRA Budget worksheet may be used to prioritize projects, identify alternate sources of revenue, and assist with the CRA’s development of Annual Work Plans and Budgets.

DIAMOND SQUARE BUDGET WORKSHEET	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/2029	2029/2030	2030/2031	2031/2032
CAPITAL PROJECTS	\$ 60,000	\$ -	\$ 25,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 20,000
Bus Stop Concrete Pad	\$ 60,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Placemaking and Activation of Public Spaces	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 20,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 30,000	\$ 20,000
Pedestrian Connectivity and Safety Improvements	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ -	\$ -
Wayfinding/ Signage (Gateway, Wayfinding and Cultural)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 25,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
ADMINISTRATION	\$ 383,977	\$ 399,336	\$ 415,310	\$ 431,922	\$ 449,199	\$ 467,167	\$ 485,853	\$ 505,288
Personnel Services	\$ 31,215	\$ 32,464	\$ 33,762	\$ 35,113	\$ 36,517	\$ 37,978	\$ 39,497	\$ 41,077
Operating	\$ 352,762	\$ 366,872	\$ 381,547	\$ 396,809	\$ 412,682	\$ 429,189	\$ 446,356	\$ 464,211
PROGRAMMING	\$ 126,000	\$ 166,000	\$ 186,000	\$ 196,000	\$ 201,000	\$ 206,000	\$ 211,000	\$ 211,000
Commercial Façade Improvement Program	\$ 10,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000
Residential Paint Grants	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000
Residential Beautification Grants	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
Brevard Co. Parks & Rec Summer Camp Scholarship	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000
Homebuyer Assistance Program	\$ 80,000	\$ 80,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000
Cocoa UpStart Program	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000
Neighborhood Stabilization and Empowerment	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000
EXPENDITURES GRAND TOTAL	\$ 569,977	\$ 565,336	\$ 626,310	\$ 647,922	\$ 675,199	\$ 698,167	\$ 726,853	\$ 736,288
CONTINGENCY	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
REVENUE	\$ 569,977	\$ 594,568	\$ 631,107	\$ 650,738	\$ 675,606	\$ 700,851	\$ 731,611	\$ 763,022
TIF Revenue	\$ 569,977	\$ 594,568	\$ 601,875	\$ 645,941	\$ 672,790	\$ 700,443	\$ 728,927	\$ 758,264
Miscellaneous Revenues	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Prior Year Carry Forward	\$ -		\$ 29,232	\$ 4,797	\$ 2,816	\$ 408	\$ 2,684	\$ 4,758



IMPLEMENTATION

The Diamond Square CRA plan update is a crucial initiative aimed at revitalizing the area, but it faces challenges due to limited time and funding. With these constraints, the CRA must focus on identifying strategic partners to assist with the implementation. By collaborating with local and regional economic development partners, the CRA can offer various programs and resources, such as small business assistance and workforce development, to support the community effectively.

INTERNAL

Internal to the City organization, the CRA should seek staffing partners who can assist with the identified operational timeframe projects and programs. These partners could include the Public Works, Police, Fire, Planning and Utilities Departments for identified capital projects and the Community Services and Communications and Economic Development departments for identified programmatic projects.

EXTERNAL

By collaborating with external local and regional partners, the CRA can collaborate on capital projects and offer various programs and resources, such as small business assistance and workforce development, to support the community in an effective manner. These external partners could include FDOT, Brevard County Parks and Recreation, Brevard County and Space Coast Area Transit (SCAT) for pedestrian oriented capital and safety projects and for programmatic efforts could seek out opportunities with the Harry T. & Harriette V. Moore Cultural Complex, Inc., CareerSource Brevard, the Space Coast Economic Development Commission of Brevard County,

local Brevard County Chambers of Commerce, the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at Eastern Florida State College, and the Florida Tech Bisk College of Business.

Given the limited funding, the best use of resources is to facilitate these partnerships and establish a robust ecosystem of community resources. This approach will ensure that the CRA can leverage the strengths of different organizations and maximize the impact of its initiatives. By focusing on building these relationships, the CRA can enhance the support network available to residents and businesses in Diamond Square.

Additionally, the CRA can play a pivotal role in shaping the brand and vision for Diamond Square. By doing so, it ensures that new developments align with community desires and contribute positively to the area’s growth. This alignment is crucial for maintaining the community’s character and ensuring that development projects benefit existing residents.

The plan update itself is a prudent measure that helps align developers and investors with community aspirations. By setting clear guidelines and expectations, the CRA can attract investments that are in harmony with the community’s goals. This alignment not only fosters sustainable growth but also builds trust between the community, developers, and investors, ensuring long-term success for Diamond Square.



CRA Capital Projects	Public Works	Police/Fire	Utilities	FDOT/County Transportation	Brevard County Parks and Recreation	Space Coast Area Transit (SCAT)	Planning	Harry T. Moore Cultural Complex
<i>Bus Stop Concrete Pad</i>	X					X		
<i>Placemaking and Activation of Public Spaces</i>	X				X		X	
<i>Pedestrian Connectivity and Safety Improvements</i>	X	X		X			X	
<i>Wayfinding/ Signage (Gateway, Wayfinding and Cultural)</i>	X				X		X	X

CRA Programs	Career Source Brevard	Harry T. Moore Cultural Complex	Space Coast Economic Development Commission of Brevard County	Local Chambers of Commerce	Brevard County Parks and Recreation	Small Business Development Center (SBDC)	City of Cocoa Economic Development and Community Services Departments
<i>Commercial Facade Improvement Grants</i>							X
<i>Residential Paint Grants</i>							X
<i>Residential Beautification Grants</i>							X
<i>Brevard County Parks and Rec Summer Camp Scholarships</i>					X		X
<i>Homebuyer Assistance Program</i>							X
<i>Cocoa UpStart Program</i>	X			X		X	X
<i>Neighborhood Stabilization and Empowerment</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X



APPENDIX

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05



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GOVERNANCE AND COMPLIANCE

COMPLETENESS OF THE PLAN

The Cocoa CRA Plan (Plan) is sufficiently complete and provides necessary elements controls as required by Chapter 163, Part III, of the Florida Statutes.

CONSISTENCY WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Diamond Square CRA Plan conforms to the City of Cocoa Comprehensive Plan 2020-2030.

COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT PLAN APPROVAL PROCESS

In accordance with F.S. 163.360, the Diamond Square CRA shall submit its updated Plan to the City’s Planning and Zoning Board (PZB) for review and recommendations as to its conformity with the Comprehensive Plan. The PZB shall submit its written recommendations with respect to conformity of the proposed Plan to the CRA within 60 days after receipt of the Plan for review. Upon receipt of the recommendations, the CRA may proceed with its consideration of the proposed Plan. The CRA shall submit its Plan with its written recommendations to the governing body (City Council) and to each taxing authority that levies ad valorem taxes on taxable real property contained within the geographic boundaries of the Diamond Square CRA. The City Council shall hold a public hearing on the Plan after public notice thereof by publication in a newspaper having a general circulation in the area of operation of the county or municipality. The notice shall describe the time, date, place, and purpose of the hearing, identify generally the CRA covered by the Plan, and outline the general scope of the Plan update under consideration.

Following such a hearing, the City Council may approve the Plan if it finds that:

- 1. A feasible method exists for the location of families who will be displaced from the CRA in decent, safe, and sanitary dwelling accommodations within their means and without undue hardship to such families;
- 2. The Plan conforms to the general plan of the county or municipality as a whole;
- 3. The Plan gives due consideration to the utilization of community policing innovations, and to the provision of adequate park and recreational areas and facilities that may be desirable for neighborhood improvement, with special consideration for the health, safety, and welfare of children residing in the general vicinity of the site covered by the plans;
- 4. The Plan will afford maximum opportunity, consistent with the sound needs of the county or municipality as a whole, for the rehabilitation or redevelopment of the CRA by private enterprise; and;
- 5. The Plan and resulting revitalization and redevelopment for a coastal tourist area that is deteriorating and economically distressed will reduce or maintain evacuation time, as appropriate, and ensure protection for property against exposure to natural disasters.

Upon the approval by the City Council, the Plan shall be considered in full force and effect for the CRA and the City may then cause the CRA to carry out the implementation of the Plan.

AMENDMENT OF THE PLAN.

The Plan may be modified, changed, or amended in the future consistent with Florida law.

SEVERABILITY

Should any provision, section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase of the Plan be declared by the courts to be invalid or unconstitutional, such declaration shall not affect validity of the remaining portion or portions of the 2024 Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Plan.

COMPLIANCE

The Diamond Square CRA is committed to maintaining cost-effective operations in alignment with the Florida Statutes. The primary goal is to effectively utilize tax increment financing (TIF) revenues and other sources to fund capital improvements and activities as outlined in the Plan.

The CRA will continue to use TIF revenue generated within the district as a primary funding source for both administrative costs and the execution of capital projects and redevelopment programs.

Regular updates on projects and programming within the CRA are provided to the CRA Board during scheduled meetings to ensure transparency and for enabling the board’s informed decision-making.

In adherence to Special District requirements as required by the Florida Statutes, the CRA will maintain an up-to-date digital map of the area, made accessible to the public via the CRA’s webpage.

The CRA’s operations shall undergo an annual review through the Annual Report (see below for report details) and Audit to ensure accountability and provide insights into the CRA’s performance and financial health (to be posted to the CRA website by March 31st each year). The Annual Budget and Report shall also be published on the CRA website.

Information regarding the CRA Board and the Agency’s meeting schedule must be available on the webpage.

The CRA’s operations are structured around a framework of actions and strategies that prioritize cost-effectiveness, transparency, and community engagement.

Projects, improvements or goals not specifically described or amended remain valid as depicted in the Redevelopment Plan.

ANNUAL REPORTING & PERFORMANCE METRICS

CRA’s must file an annual report with the Department of Economic Opportunity and the county or municipality that created the agency and must publish the report on the agency’s website annually by March 31st.

Effective from 2020, annual reports must detail specific data and activities through December 31st of the reporting year.

- Total number of projects started and completed and the estimated cost for each project.
- Total expenditures from the redevelopment trust fund.
- Original assessed real property values within the community redevelopment agency’s are of authority as of the day the agency was created.
- Total assessed real property values of property within the boundaries of the community redevelopment agency as of January 1 or the reporting year.
- Total amount expended for affordable housing for low-income and middle-income residents.
- Summary indicating to what extent, if any, the community redevelopment agency has achieved the goals set out in its community redevelopment plan.

Effective December 1, 2025, annual reports must also include the following performance metrics:

- Increase in taxable value of properties participating in CRA programs.

- The increase in taxable value of those properties that have participated in CRA programs compared to the amount of funds contributed to those properties.
- The number of (and amount provided to) businesses that have received grants and/or loans, and the number of those businesses that were able to open and stay in business for a set period, or to expand their businesses.
- Number (dollar) of projects completed on time or on budget.
- Reduced vacancy rates in commercial and industrial properties.

ANNUAL AUDIT

The most recent complete audit report of the redevelopment trust fund for the prior year shall also be posted to the CRA website by March 31st of each year, or within 45 days after completion of it.



NEIGHBORHOOD IMPACT ELEMENT

Florida statutes require a neighborhood impact element if the redevelopment area contains low moderate-income housing. Considerations to be included in the element, where relevant, may include things such as relocation, traffic circulation, environmental quality, availability of community facilities and services, effect on school population, and other factors affecting the physical and social quality of the neighborhood. The following neighborhood impact element describes the various potential impacts of the redevelopment upon residents of the redevelopment area and the surrounding area. While specific impacts cannot be determined until concrete redevelopment proposals are submitted for review, this section attempts to quantify the range of impacts that could be expected in the areas of housing relocation, traffic circulation, environmental quality, the availability of community facilities, and the effect upon the school population.

HOUSING RELOCATION

The implementation of the Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Plan does not anticipate the displacement or potential relocation of residents living within the Community Redevelopment Area boundaries. However, if as a result of implementation of projects contained in this Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Plan relocation of persons becomes necessary on either a temporary or permanent basis, the Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Agency will be responsible for the timely provision of replacement housing for those affected persons.

TRAFFIC CIRCULATION

The implementation of the Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Plan does not propose to change or modify any of the existing traffic patterns within the Community Redevelopment

Area. The implementation of the Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Plan does propose Complete Street improvements to existing roadways and corridors to improve public safety, accessibility and to safely accommodate additional modes of transportation (bicycle and pedestrian modes).

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

The implementation of the Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Plan proposed infrastructure improvements will seek to improve the environmental quality of the Community Redevelopment Area. Specific infrastructure improvements that will have a positive effect upon the environmental quality of the Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Area include stormwater system improvements (reduce flooding and water-borne diseases) and roadway improvements to encourage non-automobile modes of transportation (reduce traffic levels, reduce automobile emissions, and improve air quality). The implementation of Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Plan also seeks to increase the amount and availability of green spaces and open spaces within the Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Area, effectively improving the quality of the environment by adding green spaces and open spaces.

AVAILABILITY OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The implementation of the Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Plan seeks to consolidate the provision of public services at community facilities within the Community Redevelopment Area through the revitalization of the Diamond Square neighborhood. The area is mainly single-family residential, with several public community facilities including, but not limited to the Dr. Joe Lee Smith Community Center, Gilmore Community Park, Provost Park, and Harry T. Moore Center. The implementation of the

Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Plan will increase the accessibility and enhance the facilities of public spaces within the Community Redevelopment Area.

EFFECT ON SCHOOL POPULATION

The implementation of the Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Plan proposes the potential increase in residential densities in appropriate areas and the commensurate population increase within the Community Redevelopment Area. Currently the effects on school population within the City of Cocoa and the Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Area associated with development and population growth are accommodated on a case-by-case basis through the Future Land Use Element and Public School Facilities Element in the City’s Comprehensive Plan. Additionally, the City coordinates with the Brevard County School Board and Brevard County Government through joint-planning agreements and public school Interlocal Agreements to ensure adequate provision of public school facilities within the Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Area and throughout the City. Through the use of these administrative mechanisms, future development or redevelopment within the Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Area must demonstrate accommodation of school facility level of service standards before development or redevelopment may occur.

STATUTORY CRITERIA

CONSISTENCY WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

F.S. 163.362 requires certain contents in a Community Redevelopment Plan. The Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Plan update (2024) satisfies the Florida Statute requirements for the contents of a community redevelopment plan. The following pages list the Florida Statute requirements (BOLD) and outline the items within the Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Plan that specifically addresses these requirements.

1. **Contain a legal description of the boundaries of the community redevelopment area and the reasons for establishing such boundaries shown in the plan.**

The boundaries of the Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Area are shown on page 2. A legal description of the Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Area is attached in the Appendix.

2. **Show by diagram and in general terms:**

a. *The approximate amount of open space to be provided and the street layout.*

The approximate amount of open space is 20.13 acres and the street layout are indicated throughout the Plan in narrative and illustrative format where appropriate.

b. *Limitations on the type, size, height, number, and proposed use of buildings.*

The limitations on type, size, height, number, and proposed use of buildings are regulated by the City of Cocoa Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code.

c. *The approximate number of dwelling units.*

There are approximately 1,199 dwelling units within the Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Area. (page. 15)

d. *Such property as is intended for use as public parks, recreation areas, streets, public utilities, and public improvements*

of any nature.

Public parks, recreation areas, streets, public utilities, and other proposed improvements are indicated throughout the Plan in narrative and illustrative format where appropriate.

3. **If the redevelopment area contains low or moderate income housing, contain a neighborhood impact element which describes in detail the impact of the redevelopment upon the residents of the redevelopment area and the surrounding areas in terms of relocation, traffic circulation, environmental quality, availability of community facilities and services, effect on school population, and other matters affecting the physical and social quality of the neighborhood.**

No negative impact on low or moderate income housing is anticipated as a result of this Plan. The Neighborhood Impact Element is included in the Appendix (page. 43)

4. **Identify specifically any publicly funded capital projects to be undertaken within the community redevelopment area.**

Publicly funded capital projects proposed within the Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Area are identified within the Proposed Capital Projects list (page 39).

5. **Contain adequate safeguards that the work of redevelopment will be carried out pursuant to the plan.**

The Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Agency will carry out the work of this Community Redevelopment Plan. The redevelopment process has been established and is consistent with Chapter 163, Part III., Community Redevelopment of the Florida Statutes. It is the intent of the City of Cocoa to continue to operate in accordance with the Florida Statute requirements and to comply with those requirements as established in Chapter 163, Part III., of the Florida Statutes as amended.

6. **Provide for the retention of controls and the establishment of**

any restrictions or covenants running with land sold or leased for private use for such periods of time and under such conditions as the governing body deems necessary to effectuate the purposes of this part.

This provision of the Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Plan will be satisfied on a case-by-case basis as each project is carried out through final documentation and approval by the Governing Board of the Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Agency. Control of land, covenants, and any restrictions on land sold or leased by the Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Agency shall be in accordance with Chapter 163, Part III., Community Redevelopment of the Florida Statutes, and applicable City of Cocoa Code of Ordinance and Land Development Code requirements.

7. **Provide assurances that there will be replacement housing for the relocation of persons temporarily or permanently displaced from housing facilities within the community redevelopment area.**

The implementation of the Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Plan does not anticipate the displacement or potential relocation of residents living within the Community Redevelopment Area boundaries. However, if as a result of implementation of projects contained in this Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Plan, relocation of persons becomes necessary on either a temporary or permanent basis, the Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Agency will be responsible for the timely provision of replacement housing for those affected persons.

8. **Provide an element of residential use in the redevelopment area if such use exists in the area prior to the adoption of the plan or if the plan is intended to remedy a shortage of housing affordable to residents of low or moderate income, including the elderly, or**



if the plan is not intended to remedy such shortage, the reasons therefor.

The Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Plan is not intended to remedy a shortage of housing for residents of low or moderate income. The residential uses will generally exist in their current locations and will be minimally impacted by the proposed improvements. The Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Plan does encourage the development of additional housing stock that may provide additional residential options for residents of low to moderate incomes.

9. **Contain a detailed statement of the projected costs of the redevelopment, including the amount to be expended on publicly funded capital projects in the community redevelopment area and any indebtedness of the community redevelopment agency, the county, or the municipality proposed to be incurred for such redevelopment if such indebtedness is to be repaid with increment revenues.**

A detailed statement of project costs is presented within the Proposed 5-Year Annual Budget (page 37). Detailed project costs for each project, program, and activity will be specified each year in the Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Agency’s annual budget and work program. Funding for projects may include some form of indebtedness by the Community Redevelopment Agency and/or the City of Cocoa.

10. **Provide a time certain for completing all redevelopment financed by increment revenues. Such time certain shall occur no later than 30 years after the fiscal year in which the plan is approved, adopted, or amended pursuant to s. 163.361(1). However, for any agency created after July 1, 2002, the time certain for completing all redevelopment financed by increment revenues must occur within 40 years after the fiscal year in which the plan is approved or adopted.**

The Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Agency was

created in 2002 and its operational time frame expires in 2054. The 2024 Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Plan update will extend the operational timeframe of the Diamond Square Community Redevelopment Agency through 2054 in accordance with current Florida Statue requirements.



DIAMOND SQUARE CRA AGENDA ITEM

Memo Date: 04/14/2025
Agenda Date: 4/21/2025
Prepared By: Ryan Browne, Redevelopment Coordinator
Through: Charlene Neuterman, Community Services Director
Requested Action: Request Agency consider additional compensation for Inspire Placemaking Collective to compensate them for extra time and effort required to complete the Diamond Square CRA Plan Update. Authorize City Manager to complete a BAF to adjust the budget to pay for the Change Order, if approved.

BACKGROUND:

Request Agency consider additional compensation for Inspire Placemaking Collective to compensate them for extra time and effort required to complete the Diamond Square CRA Plan Update, including repeatedly exceeding the agreed upon number of revisions, in order to get the plan to meet agency standards. Authorize City Manager to complete a BAF to adjust the budget to pay for the Change Order, if approved. Staff fully support the additional funds as fair compensation to an outstanding performing consultant who we wish to be able to maintain positive relationship with for possible future projects. Request is for \$9,000 in additional funds, representing a 15% increase in total cost.

PRIORITY AREA CONNECTION:

Organizational Effectiveness

BUDGETARY IMPACT:

Budgeted? No

If not budgeted, is amendment / transfer attached? No.

Source/Use of Funds

<u>Account Number</u>	<u>Amount</u>
TBD	\$9,000

If a P.O. Change Order is involved, please complete the following:

Change Order Amount: \$9,000

Original Purchase Order Amount: \$60,000

For this Agenda Item note Prior Change Order Information:

Total Number of change orders to date: 0

Total amount in change orders to date: \$0

PREVIOUS ACTION:

N/A.

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

Request Agency consider additional compensation for Inspire Placemaking Collective to compensate them for extra time and effort required to complete the Diamond Square CRA Plan Update. Authorize City Manager to complete a BAF to adjust the budget to pay for the Change Order, if approved.

TO: Charlene Neuterman, *Community Services Director*
FROM: George Kramer, *President*
CC: Laura Martinez, Ryan Browne
DATE: February 20, 2025
SUBJECT: Contract Change Order Requests

Inspire initiated the planning processes for both Cocoa and Diamond Square CRAs on June 12, 2024. These projects were planned for a swift 7.5-month schedule that included back-to-back open houses to maximize the efficiencies needed to accommodate a tight budget of \$120,000 (\$60,000 for each plan) to complete two redevelopment plans. As discussed during our call on February 13th, 2025, the schedules for both the Cocoa and Diamond Square CRA projects have since been delayed by 3.5 months, shifting our completion date from late-January 2025 to mid-May 2025. This delay has significantly impacted our project budgets.

The Diamond Square CRA Open House was scheduled for September 25th and the Cocoa CRA Open House for September 26th. While the Diamond Square event proceeded as planned, Hurricane Helene forced us to reschedule the Cocoa CRA Open House to October 30, 2024. This rescheduling eliminated the budgeted efficiencies of holding back-to-back meetings as it required additional time and costs to plan logistics for the project team to travel across the state a second time. Inspire also had to recreate and reprint promotional materials.

City staff's recent request for additional time to review the draft reports resulted in the postponement of publicly noticed meetings for the CRA Board, Planning & Zoning, and City Council from March until at least April of this year.

Given these unforeseen delays and the associated costs, we respectfully request a change order for an additional \$9,000 per project, totaling \$18,000, to cover the extra time and expenses incurred. This adjustment reflects a 15% increase in the original fee, corresponding to a 46% increase in the overall project timeline.