



PO Box 296
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LARGO.COM

December 4, 2019

The Honorable Karen Seel
Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners
315 Court Street
Clearwater, FL 33756

RE: West Bay Drive Community Redevelopment District Plan 15 Year Review

Dear Chair Seel:

I am writing on behalf of the Largo City Commission regarding the public hearing on the West Bay Drive Community Redevelopment District Plan 15 Year Review on December 10, 2019. The review documents the many successful public projects contributing to the revitalization of Largo's downtown that have created a catalyst for private investment. Even more exciting are current and planned capital projects such as the West Bay Drive Urban Trail head, the Downtown Plaza, and the West Bay Drive streetscaping. Also, the City Commission has decided to pursue relocation of the City Hall into downtown to demonstrate our commitment to its revitalization.

The City appreciates the review's finding that the City has effectively used the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) funds for projects and programs to revitalize the City's downtown, and that the report meets the criteria for the review. However, the City is not in agreement with the County staff's recommendation contained in the Resolution. The City Commission wishes to ask your consideration of the provision that,

The County shall reduce its future tax increment financing (TIF) contribution rate to 90% and may reduce actual annual payments to the West Bay Drive Redevelopment Trust Fund to ensure that total Pinellas County contributions to the Trust Fund do not exceed total contributions by the City of Largo.

Pinellas County staff has taken the position that the County's contribution should not exceed that of the City's contribution and is seeking to apply that position retroactively to the creation of the Trust Fund in 2000. The County's contribution rate, at 95%, was duly authorized by the Board of County Commissioners and payments to the Trust Fund were made consistent with this authorization and County Ordinance 00-70. The monies were placed in the CRA Trust Fund and were spent to further the redevelopment goals of the Plan.

The City strongly feels that it is not appropriate to seek to change the County's contribution's going forward in order to retroactively recoup funds previously paid to the City in accordance with our longstanding partnership for redevelopment of the City's downtown. We are requesting that the Board of County Commissioners remove this provision in the Resolution and permit the County's contribution to continue at its current funding level, with the provision that the County's contribution should not exceed the City's contribution in any given year in the future.

YOUR COMMUNITY OF CHOICE
Naturally



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We appreciate the Board of County Commissioner's continued support of the City's West Bay Drive Community Redevelopment Plan.

If you would like to discuss the City's concerns, I would welcome that opportunity. Please feel free to contact me by e-mail, office phone or my personal cell phone.

Respectfully,



Woody Brown
Mayor
CITY OF LARGO
wobrown@largo.com | 727.587.6702

cc: Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners
Barry Burton, Pinellas County Administrator
Largo City Commission
Henry Schubert, City Manager

Attachment: Largo 2019 CRA Profile

COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

LARGO.COM/REDEVELOPMENT



Largo's Community Redevelopment Agency oversees the West Bay Drive and the Clearwater-Largo Community Redevelopment Districts. Largo is home to a daytime population in excess of 100,000, in the most densely populated county in Florida, in a region growing due to the tech and manufacturing sectors. With no vast tracts of land available for development and housing, this is a huge hurdle to Largo's growth track and a growing need to accommodate new residents and businesses.

Redevelopment is needed to eliminate blight, modernize infrastructure, unify substandard parcels, accommodate residential and commercial spaces, and correct haphazard development patterns. Redevelopment does not happen overnight and requires hard, long-term work and a multi-faceted approach.

REDEVELOPMENT GOALS



- Walkable downtown
- Mixed-use development
- Neighborhood preservation
- Community revitalization
- A liveable downtown for people all incomes to live, work, shop and play.

FOCUS



Build up infrastructure capacity to better serve the residents, businesses and service providers in the redevelopment districts.

SERVICES



INFRASTRUCTURE

- Stormwater Retention
- Sewers
- Drainage



PUBLIC SAFETY

- Sidewalks
- Crosswalks
- Bus shelters
- Trail connections
- Lighting



NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION

- Landscaping
- Sewer connections
- Repavement & road rehab
- Pocket parks
- Housing infill



REDEVELOPMENT

- Public parking
- Wayfinding signage
- Development Assistance
- Signage assistance
- Land assembly

TRANSPARENCY & PUBLIC STEWARDSHIP



ADVISORY BOARD

- A citizens' advisory board to the Community Redevelopment Agency was formed to provide advice and feedback on redevelopment initiatives.



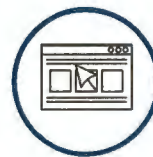
PUBLIC MEETINGS

- CRA meetings are televised and are available on Largo.com/LTV



CODE OF ETHICS FOR PUBLIC OFFICERS

- The Board and Staff are subject to the Code of Ethics for Public Officers and Employees, adopted by the Florida Legislature as Part II of Chapter 112, Florida Statutes.



ONLINE RECORDS

- CRA Documents such as the proposed and adopted budget, the Annual Report and audit, are posted online at Largo.com/redevelopment and the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) is produced and included in the City's CAFR.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS



BAYHEAD REGIONAL STORMWATER PONDS

- A regional stormwater system was integrated into the Bayhead Athletic Complex in Fiscal Year 2012 to provide a recreational use and stormwater retention and treatment to serve properties in a portion of the West Bay Drive District.

WEST FLORIDA DANCE STUDIO

- In Fiscal Year 2018 construction began on a new two-story, 9,016 square foot, two-story, dance center in Downtown Largo. The Dance Studio worked with the CRA to acquire the property so the business could meet their growth needs.



4TH AVENUE PINELLAS TRAIL CONNECTION

- In Fiscal Year 2018, under the Downtown Community Streets Improvement Project, the CRA funded a pedestrian bridge to connect Downtown Largo neighborhoods to the Pinellas Trail and improve access to the bicycle and pedestrian network.

158 RIDGE ROAD APARTMENTS

- In Fiscal Year 2017 construction was completed on a \$3.6 Million-dollar investment featuring 29 units of urban loft-style apartments. This "pioneer" project in the West Bay Drive Redevelopment District also brought alleyway improvements and on-street parking.



BAYSIDE COURT

- In Fiscal Year 2012, a new 144-unit apartment building was built in the Clearwater-Largo Road Community Redevelopment District on 7.44 acres that was previously an abandoned mobile home park. The project is a mixed-income housing project uniquely qualified to serve working families.

WEST BAY DRIVE TRAIL HEAD IMPROVEMENTS

- In Fiscal Year 2019 construction will begin on beautification of the West Bay Drive Trail Head adjacent to the Medical Arts District. Enhancements will include improved pedestrian access, wider sidewalks, benches and landscaping to connect the Trail to Downtown businesses.



COMING SOON!