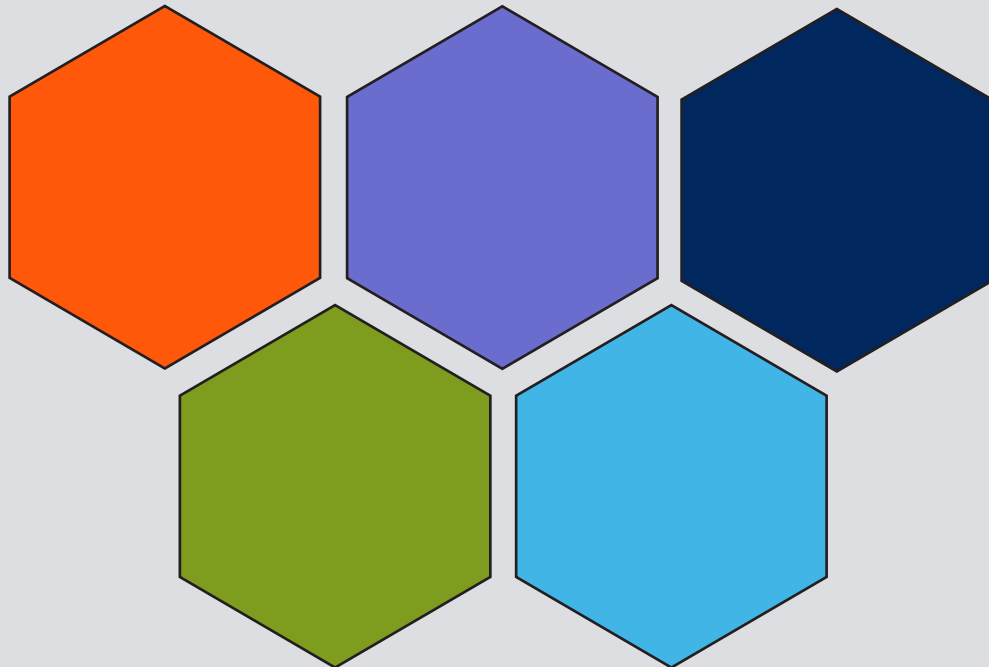


Gainesville Community Reinvestment Area

2025

Annual Report



City of
Gainesville



Gainesville
Community
Reinvestment
Area



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About the GCRA

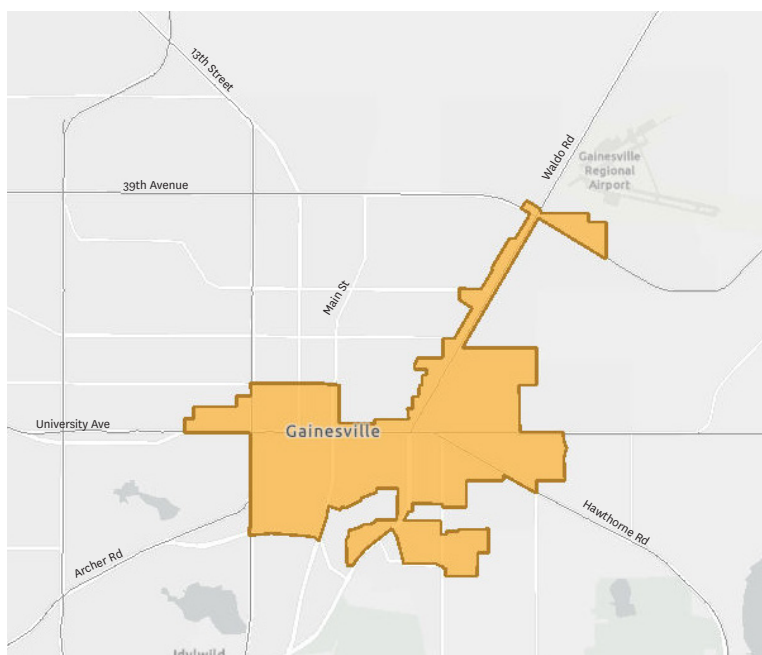
The Gainesville Community Reinvestment Area (GCRA), formerly known as the Gainesville Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), was created by the City of Gainesville under the authority of the Community Redevelopment Act of 1969 (see Section 163.330 et seq. of Florida Statutes). Between 1979 and 2001, the city created four community redevelopment areas – Pleasant Street/Fifth Avenue (1979), Downtown (1981), College Park and University Heights (1995), and Eastside (2001) – each with a redevelopment trust fund holding tax increment financing (TIF) revenue. The CRA, which managed the four redevelopment areas, was an independent special district authorized by the Florida Community Redevelopment Act that operated separately from Gainesville General Government, with a separate revenue source to fund operations and a separate board that approved programs and the budget. This revenue would fund major public improvement projects, including Depot Park, the A. Quinn Jones Museum and Cultural Center, South Main Street, Innovation District infrastructure, and NW First Avenue in College Park. It also incentivized 15 private development projects, including The Standard, Union Street Station, the Chamber of Commerce Building, Hampton Inn & Suites Gainesville-Downtown, and several other downtown and College Park and University Heights apartment complexes.

In April 2019, the City of Gainesville and Alachua County approved an interlocal agreement that would

- 1) dissolve the four existing CRAs and eliminate future TIF contributions by the city and county;
- 2) create the GCRA, the boundaries of which covers the same boundaries as the four previous CRA areas;
- 3) create a new funding mechanism whereby the city and county would contribute a total of \$70.7 million over a 10-year period between FY 2019 and FY 2029 to fund redevelopment within the GCRA.

This agreement was ratified on October 1, 2019, through Ordinance 181001. The ordinance also created the GCRA department, which reports to the Office of the City Manager, is governed by the City Commission, and is guided by two citizen advisory boards.

GCRA Boundary

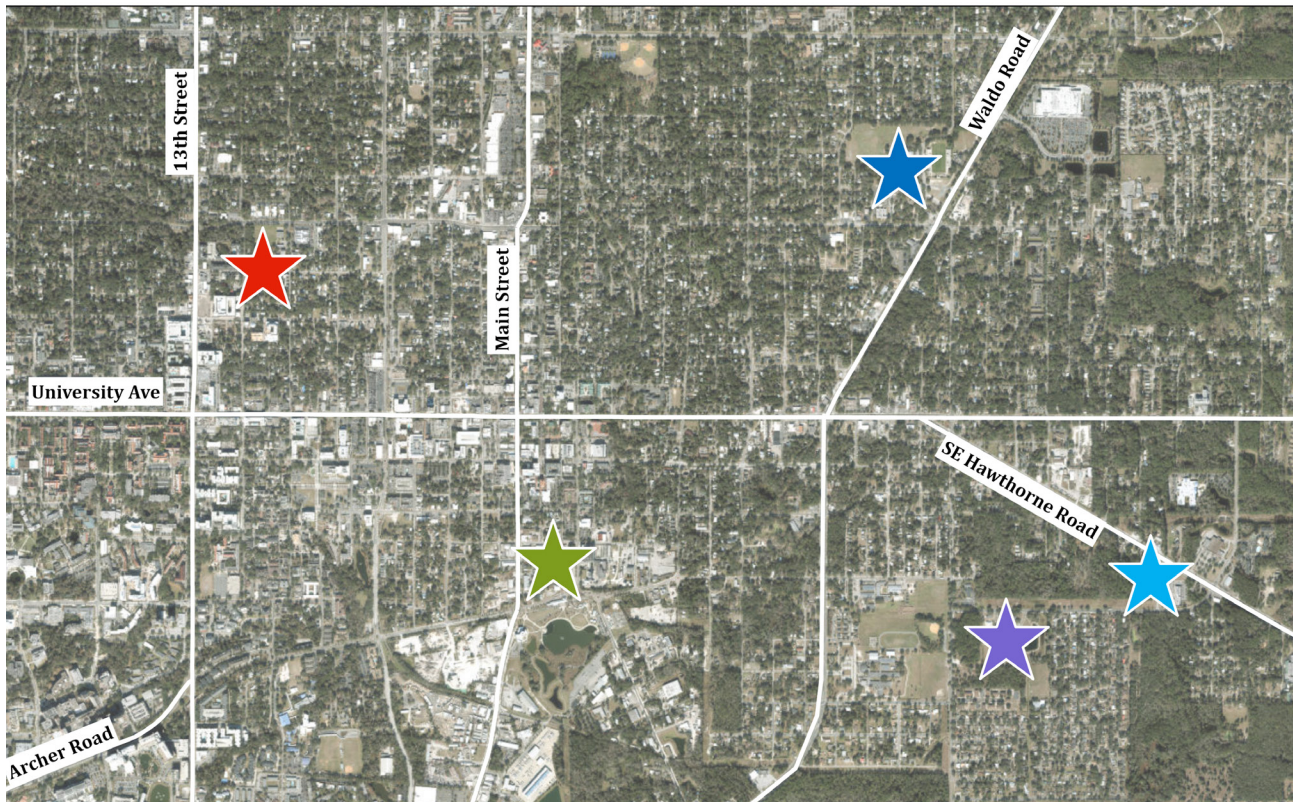


GCRA Funding

	City	County	Metropolitan Area
Due Date	Contribution	Contribution	Funds (County)
January 1, 2020	\$3,325,657.89	\$4,191,460.39	\$100,000.00
January 1, 2021	\$3,325,657.89	\$4,091,460.39	\$200,000.00
January 1, 2022	\$3,325,657.89	\$3,991,460.39	\$300,000.00
January 1, 2023	\$3,325,657.89	\$3,891,460.39	\$400,000.00
January 1, 2024	\$3,325,657.89	\$3,791,460.39	\$500,000.00
January 1, 2025	\$3,325,657.89	\$3,691,460.39	\$600,000.00
January 1, 2026	\$3,325,657.89	\$3,591,460.39	\$700,000.00
January 1, 2027	\$3,325,657.89	\$3,491,460.39	\$800,000.00
January 1, 2028	\$3,325,657.89	\$3,391,460.39	\$900,000.00
January 1, 2029	\$3,325,657.89	\$3,325,657.89	\$1,000,000.00
10-Year Total	\$70,705,380.30		\$5,500,000.00

2025 Annual Report

The GCRA continues to make strong progress on its five transformational projects while ensuring that its smaller undertakings continue to offer assistance to local residents and businesses. Collaborative endeavors established in FY 2022 with other departments continued their momentum into the FY 2025 reporting period. These include direction from the City Commission for the Eighth Avenue and Waldo Road project, continued development of Cornerstone (including the revitalization of the GTEC Center and completion of the infrastructure network first started in 2023), final plans for implementing the Historic Heritage Trail, planning for the continued build-out of Heartwood, continued execution of the Downtown Strategic Plan through the establishment of the Downtown Ambassador Program, expansion of event programming and approval of funding and plans for The Streatory. Each transformative project is outlined in this report along with its projected budget through FY 2029. It is important to note that these figures represent the total projected funds and not the available funds as of the 2025 fiscal year.



Cornerstone

\$30.2 million

**Heartwood
Neighborhood**

\$9.5 million

Eighth Avenue & Waldo Road

\$13.98 million*

Historic Heritage Trail

\$0.73 million

Downtown Strategic Plan

\$12 million

Note: The information above is based on estimated project investments through FY 2029 and includes future projected budget allocations and amendments to fund those investments.

*Includes \$2 million allocated to the 8th and Waldo Economic Development Incentive Program.

Major Transformational Projects

Cornerstone, Eastside Health and Economic Development Initiative (EHEDI) & GTEC Center

Initiated in FY 2022, Cornerstone Phase 2 continues to be a collaborative effort involving Alachua County, the City of Gainesville, the US Department of the Treasury, the Federal Transit Administration, and UF Health. In 2023, the GCRA facilitated the purchase of additional property to integrate the EHEDI site with the existing Cornerstone property, expanding the project site to approximately 31.5 acres.

Mérieux NutriSciences and the city-owned Gainesville, Training, Entrepreneurship, and Community (GTEC) Center currently anchor Cornerstone in east Gainesville on SE Hawthorne Road. Significant progress was made with the completion and opening of the UF Health Urgent Care Center in August 2024, providing much-needed healthcare services to the community. The clinic's construction was funded by a combined \$4.5 million in city and county American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds.

The Cornerstone westward expansion was celebrated with the July 18, 2025, ribbon-cutting of the new roadway connecting SE Hawthorne Road to SE Eighth Avenue, via SE 20th Street and SE Sixth Avenue, and stormwater retention facilities. With the completion of the infrastructure improvements, the GCRA is preparing a Request for Proposal (RFP) for real estate services to market the available pads at Cornerstone in FY 2026.



Infrastructure improvements ribbon-cutting

“Projects like EHEDI at Cornerstone represent the kind of collaborative community focus and investment we need—bringing health care, transit, jobs, and food access directly to the neighborhoods that need it the most. Together, we can ensure the east side has a future that reflects the full potential of this community.”

*Alachua County Board of
County Commissioners, Chair,
Charles “Chuck” Chestnut, IV*



UF Health Urgent Care Center - Eastside

The proposed Regional Transit System (RTS) transfer station, funded by a \$4.1 million grant from the US Department of Transportation, remains a key component of the project. Once completed, this hub will strengthen transportation options for east Gainesville, supporting both economic growth and improved mobility for residents and workers, who currently travel to the Rosa Parks Transfer Station downtown to connect with most RTS routes. Construction design and permitting are underway, with construction anticipated to begin in early 2026. The city expects to release a solicitation in April, select a vendor in May, receive approval from the City Commission in June, and start construction in October.

Forward looking in FY 2026

The GCRA remains steadfast in its commitment to fostering sustainable economic growth through the Cornerstone initiative. With the infrastructure project complete, the GCRA has begun the RFP process to hire a real estate broker to market the five Cornerstone pads. An Invitation to Negotiate for a grocer was put out by the GCRA in May 2025 to work towards that goal, but it did not receive any responses. The GCRA continues efforts to bring a grocer or food hub to Cornerstone and will work with Alachua County on coordinating food availability initiatives. These strategic investments continue to create opportunities for businesses, enhance community resources, and contribute to the economic development of east Gainesville.



Cornerstone

The GCRA also launched the “Food Trucks at Cornerstone” initiative in FY 2025 and, after a fall pause, will reactivate it in February 2026. The GCRA will also explore plans for establishing a food truck commissary at Cornerstone, potentially on a small parcel the city purchased immediately adjacent to GTEC Center along SE Hawthorne Road.



Gainesville Training, Entrepreneurship, and Community Center (GTEC Center)

The GCRA is proposing a major refurbishment of the GTEC Center. The project will increase the number of offices from 29 to 63, transitioning them into the following configurations:

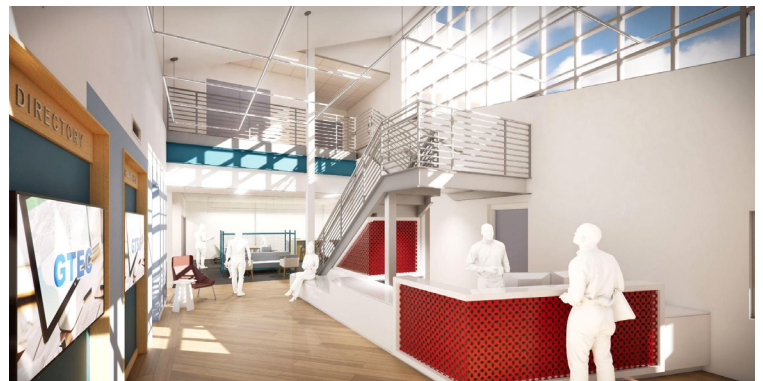
- 27 Small Offices (95 sf to 147 sf)
- 18 Medium Offices (151 sf to 191 sf)
- 14 Large Offices (202 sf to 297 sf)
- 4 Extra Large (295 sf to 301 sf)

GTEC Center will continue to support growing local entrepreneurs during the nearly two-year renovation, with 17 of them actively using the space.

The GCRA has also continued investing in the building, including providing funding for a new roof and weatherization remediation.

Forward looking in FY 2026

- Coordinating and partnering on trainings including AI “Vibe Coding” with StartGNV.
- Developing and promoting entrepreneurial training for new organizations to support the additional tenants that will be occupying the new office space.
- Planning for GTEC Center refurbishment to begin with the City Commission taking action on February 19, 2026, on a guaranteed maximum price for Scorpio Construction to complete the more than \$5.2 million renovation. With commission approval, construction is expected to start in May 2026 and be completed in January 2028.





GTEC Center proposed exterior renovations

NE Eighth Avenue and NE Waldo Road



Existing Site Plan Eighth Avenue and Waldo Road

Revitalizing the NE Eighth Avenue and NE Waldo Road corridors to spur private investment has been a GCRA focus since the original Eastside Community Redevelopment Area was created. The reformation of the GCRA has enabled significantly more funding for this transformational project through FY 2029. The GCRA boundary was amended in 2022 by the City and County Commissions to include the entire 41-acre NE Eighth Avenue and NE Waldo Road.

The city's goal for this project is to redevelop city-owned facilities on the northwest corner of NE Eighth Avenue and NE Waldo Road and promote activity to support economic growth along the corridors. These facilities include the Martin Luther King Jr. Multipurpose Center and playing fields, the Dwight H. Hunter Pool, Citizens Field, and Gainesville Fire Rescue facilities.

In 2023, the city's Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs (PRCA) department conducted a feasibility and traffic study examining renovations and potential changes to the site. C.H. Johnson Consulting was contracted by PRCA, with GCRA funding the feasibility study. As part of the study, two community engagement events were held in July 2023, and a draft report was submitted to the city the following September. The City Commission was presented with the report in October 2023 and instructed city staff to prepare a land use plan and a financial feasibility study, and to continue looking for financial resources to construct the updated NE Eighth Avenue and NE Waldo Road site.

In July 2024, the GCRA contracted with local engineering company CHW-NV5 (hereinafter, NV5) to explore the feasibility of the suggestions from C.H. Johnson Consulting. The contract specified several elements that the consultants were to accomplish. The first element is a study of different land use and facility scenarios for the complex, as well as a redesign of NE 14th Street to facilitate more efficient use of the site. The study would take as its starting point the work of C.H. Johnson Consulting or would also incorporate and be informed by the

designs, studies, findings, and recommendations from prior work done on the site.

The other element was to improve the safety, mobility, and aesthetics of NE Eighth Avenue and NE Waldo Road. Both corridors are important for improving the functionality and aesthetics of future development on the project site. But streetscape planning must differentiate between the two corridors, recognizing their distinct challenges and roles. Waldo Road is within the state road system and carries heavy traffic volumes, serving a goods-distribution function for large trucks carrying freight from US 301 to US 441 and I-75. Under state jurisdiction, there are limitations to what the city can require along the corridor. With the limited number of east-west crossings between East University Avenue and NE 39th Avenue, Waldo Road also inhibits commercial development on its east side and has served to isolate neighborhoods east of the corridor. NW Eighth Avenue is under city jurisdiction, providing more latitude to create a pedestrian-oriented, multi-modal corridor.

From fall 2024 to spring 2025, the city and NV5 conducted public engagement efforts, ranging from internal stakeholder meetings in October to three community engagements in November 2024, February 2025, and May 2025. Formal presentations were also made to the GCRA Board, City Commissioners, and the School Board of Alachua County during this period.

On June 12, 2025, the City Commission was updated on the proposed project plans for the 36-acre recreational complex. The commission voted for scenario 1, that includes constructing a new Citizens Field on its current footprint. The plan also includes a new and relocated Martin Luther King Jr. Multipurpose Center with 55,000 square feet of interior space fronting NE Waldo Road. The new center includes two indoor basketball courts with bleachers, concessions, lockers, and showers; a senior center with a banquet hall, multipurpose rooms, and a kitchen; and an expanded wellness center with a gym and activity room. Two full-court outdoor basketball courts are planned for the center's northeast corner.

At the July 17, 2025, City Commission Meeting, staff discussed the Citizens Field lease agreement between

the city and the School Board of Alachua County, as well as funding options for the redevelopment of the site. School board staff expressed interest in purchasing Citizens Field for stadium reconstruction and to share costs for stormwater and parking needs. The City Commission directed staff to schedule a General Policy Committee (GPC) meeting to review and reprioritize current GCRA and Wild Spaces Public Places projects to reallocate funding for the NE Eighth Avenue and NE Waldo Road Project and present options for scaling back the overall project, including various reduced-cost alternatives, preparing a cost estimate for a standalone senior center building, and a revised phasing plan to support the stadium to better inform commission discussion, and prepare for a future solicitation for architecture, engineering, and design services.

At the October 9, 2025 GPC meeting, staff discussed scenario 1, its associated costs, and available funding. The City Commission directed staff to negotiate a purchase and sale agreement with the School Board of Alachua County for the transfer of Citizens Field and deed restrictions that the property must remain a stadium and other conditions. City staff were directed to begin solicitations for architectural and engineering services for remediation, sitework, a new competition pool, and aquatic center with a community pool component, and site preparation for a future senior center.

Based on the October 9, 2025, action, the city and NV5 prepared an updated conceptual site plan. The elements include two multi-purpose fields, a new aquatics complex that includes a competition pool, a community pool and building, renovation of the Martin Luther King Jr. Multipurpose Center, a new senior center, a parking lot to support the stadium, one mile of walking trails, a playground and the required stormwater and environmental remediation; a total of 450 parking spaces would be spread throughout the site (350 paved and 100 unpaved). The aquatics center is proposed south of the Martin Luther King Jr. Multipurpose Center, where the prior Fire Administration building sits, and the senior center is proposed to the north, where the current Hunter Pool sits. The total estimated cost for this scope of work is \$53.5 million.

Negotiations for the Sale of Citizens Field:

City and school board staff met and discussed terms for the sale of Citizens Field to the School Board of Alachua County weekly since the October 9, 2025 meeting. A draft agreement was sent to school board staff on October 31, 2025 and a sale price of \$5.5 million was proposed on November 10, 2025. The draft terms of the agreement included a reverter clause for use as a stadium with athletic fields, to commence construction no later than August 1, 2028, and to provide the city with use for eight events per calendar year. The proposed sales price is based on 50% of the costs of environmental remediation, 50% of the costs for stormwater, 100% of the costs for the utilities connections for the stadium, and 75% of the costs for the stadium parking lot.

Revised Recommended Site Plan



Cost Estimate

	Element Estimate	Running Total
Remediation	\$4,917,000.00	\$4,917,000.00
Multi-Purpose Fields	\$2,003,364.00	\$6,920,364.00
Stormwater & Trails	\$3,186,810.00	\$10,107,174.00
Utilities for Stadium	\$462,000.00	\$10,569,174.00
Stadium Parking Lot	\$1,304,424.00	\$11,873,598.00
Competition Pool & Aquatic Center	\$14,620,650.00	\$26,494,248.00
Demolition of Existing Pool	\$522,852.00	\$27,017,100.00
Community Pool	\$1,339,635.00	\$28,356,735.00
Senior Center Building Pad	\$622,776.00	\$28,979,511.00
MLK Renovations	\$11,987,910.00	\$40,967,421.00
Senior Center	\$9,535,350.00	\$50,502,771.00
Replacement Playground	\$330,000.00	\$50,832,771.00
Lighting of Fields	\$2,640,000.00	\$53,472,771.00

*Stadium costs can vary between basic renovation at \$10M to new stadium at \$20M - \$40M+; Stadium costs, including demolition, are not included in this total.

** Total includes construction, design, permitting, FFE, and CM fees.

Schedule (Single Phase of Construction)



Forward looking in FY 2026

A Request for Proposal for architectural and engineering services and construction manager services was advertised in early December 2025, with responses due February 4, 2026; City Commission award is tentatively scheduled for May 7, 2026.

The city has identified \$36.1 million in funding for the buildout, comprised of the following:

- \$10.9 million GCRA (including a permanent reduction of \$1.4 million to the Fifth & Pleasant Black Heritage Trail project funds)
- \$5 million Wild Spaces Public Places
- \$2.5 million Alachua County Wild Spaces Public Places
- \$5 million Excess Fund Balance
- \$5.5 million Sale Proceeds from Citizens Field
- \$7.2 million HUD Section 108 Loan

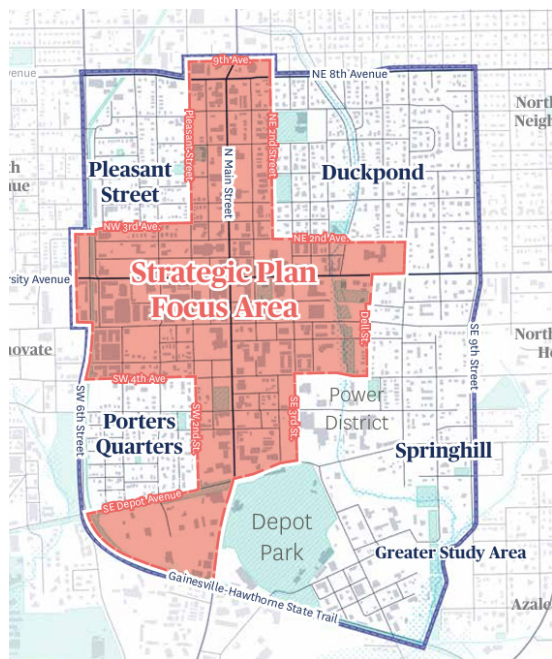
Eighth and Waldo Economic Development Incentive Program

To spur private investment in the area to accompany the public investment, the City Commission approved the Eighth and Waldo Economic Development Incentive Program in October 2025; funding it with \$2 million of GCRA funds that were allocated to the revitalization of the NE Eighth Avenue and NE Waldo and Citizens Field complex. The program will provide financial incentives to enable property owners, small businesses, developers, and mission-aligned organizations to activate the economic potential of the area by developing vacant property, reoccupying underutilized buildings, enhancing existing buildings and houses, bringing new jobs, services, and amenities to the corridors, and improving the project's area aesthetics.

The program was launched in January 2026, with public workshops planned for February 10, 2026 and March 10, 2026. The GCRA will host office hours to ensure that potential applicants are equipped to submit complete, competitive applications.

Downtown Strategic Plan

The GCRA 10-year Reinvestment Plan called for the creation of a Downtown Strategic Plan, which led to GCRA funding being used to hire consultants MKSK, Inc. MKSK developed the plan between June 2021 and August 2022, culminating in its adoption by the City Commission in October 2022. The plan received a “Downtown Achievement Award of Excellence” in summer 2023 from the International Downtown Association in the area of “Planning, Design, and Infrastructure.”



The GCRA and the University of Florida co-funded the development of the Downtown Gainesville Strategic Plan that the City Commission approved on October 20, 2022. The plan identified six main tactics:

- Become a destination
- Connect the dots
- Strengthen relationship with neighborhoods
- Increase housing opportunities
- Create a supportive local biz environment
- Maintain and enhance downtown

To implement these important objectives, the City Commission approved reallocating GCRA funds in February 2024 to infuse more than \$12 million in funding to improve the downtown area. The projects and programs described in this section were guided by the tactics laid out in the Downtown Strategic Plan.

The Streatery

The Streatory is a festival street in Downtown Gainesville, located at 106 SW First Avenue (between SW Second Street and South Main Street). It was created in 2020 to support on-site businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic by allowing for social distancing.

At the GPC meeting on October 24, 2024, which addressed next steps for SW First Avenue, city staff were directed to proceed with a full reconstruction of the street and to keep it closed to through traffic. Throughout FY 2025, the City Commission undertook an extensive public engagement process. This process included a public workshop in December 2024 and input from the GCRA Advisory Board, the Downtown Advisory Board, the City Commission, and the GPC at meetings held on February 20, 2025, and August 28, 2025. These discussions explored several key issues, including:

- Naming the festival street
- A permanent versus a temporary closure
- Installing bricks or pavers
- Installation of an entry feature at South Main Street

At its August 28, 2025, meeting, the GPC resolved these issues by retaining “The Streatery” as the project name, affirming the permanent closure of SW First Avenue to traffic, approving the reconstruction of the street, and selecting brick pavers that align with downtown’s existing aesthetic and support additional infrastructure.

A gateway feature was not included due to cost considerations and the need to maintain emergency access.

City staff were also directed to develop programming guidelines to mitigate potential impacts on nearby residents and businesses, particularly regarding noise and activity. Estimated costs at 60 percent plan development in August 2025 exceed \$4 million. The GCRA has allocated \$2 million towards the project, with the city's Public Works Department leading the street reconstruction.

Forward Looking in FY 2026

The city's construction of The Streatory will aim to coincide with the redevelopment of Lot 10 into a multi-story housing unit. The GCRA will continue to work on programming The Streatory through efforts outlined throughout the rest of the Downtown Gainesville Strategic Plan section.

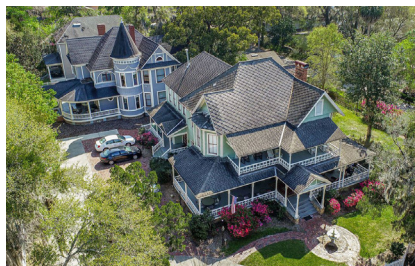
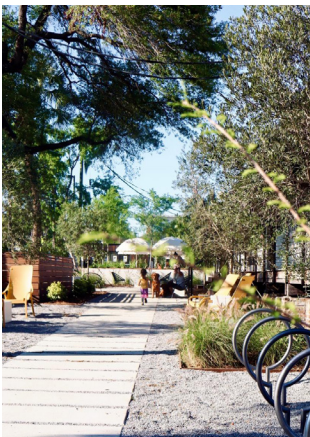


Downtown Activation

In 2025, the GCRA continued exciting activation efforts for downtown Gainesville that included the following programs and initiatives:

- Business Improvement Grant Program (~\$600,000)
- Downtown Ambassadors & Public Works Cleaning Contract (combined \$1.31 million)
- Downtown Events Grant Program (\$61,182)
- Downtown Holiday Lights Contest (\$3,373)
- Downtown Seasonal Decorations (\$34,970)
- Downtown Winter Market Series (\$70,715)
- Grace Marketplace Support (\$350,000)

Combined, the above programs will contribute to a minimum investment in downtown Gainesville of over \$2.4 million.



Business Improvement Grant Program

The Business Improvement Grant Program had a robust year in FY 2025, with 10 grants awarded using the entirety of the \$330,000 in FY 2025 program funds. The program is a 50% matching program, meaning applicants must invest at least the city's grant amount to receive the funds. These grants require applicants to complete all work and have all official documents filed before grant funds are paid out. Of significant note, the grant program had three historic building applications submissions in 2025 for funding. Due to funding limitations and program guidelines, only two of them would have received funding, but the primary funding recipient offered to instead take less grant funds on the condition that the remaining funds be split between the other two qualified historic applicants. The City Commission considered their concession, which allowed all three grant applicants to receive grants. Grant awardees include:

Awardee	GCRA Grant Award	Private Investment	Anticipated Total Investment
Camellia Rose Inn (T1)	\$1,291	\$1,291	\$2,582
Camellia Rose Inn (T2)	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$10,000
City Church (T2)	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$100,000
Florida Theater (T3) - Historic	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$110,000
Florida Theater (T3) - Historic	\$40,377	\$40,377	\$80,754
Laurel Oak Inn (T1)	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$10,000
Matheson House (T3) - Historic	\$40,377	\$40,377	\$80,754
Pleasant Street Civil Rights & Cultural Arts Center (T2)	\$117,700	\$117,700	\$235,400
Porters Bodega	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$100,000
Seagle Building (T3) - Historic	\$95,000	\$95,000	\$190,000
Tekton Architecture (T2)	\$37,955	\$37,955	\$75,910
TOTALS	\$497,700	\$497,700	\$995,400
*Tier 1 (T1), Tier 2 (T2), Tier 3 (T3)			

Downtown grant awardees from FY 2024 that completed their work in FY 2025 are:

- South Main Station: received a \$150,000 grant and performed over \$610,000 worth of work on the property
- 601 Group (The Lynx Books): received a \$50,000 grant and performed over \$119,000 worth of work on the property

Forward Looking in FY 2026

The GCRA has a combined \$338,118 available for Business Improvement Grants in FY 2026. Half of that funding will be for the first cycle, with a deadline of February 2, 2026, and the other half, plus any unused funds from the first cycle, will be available for grant applications due by August 3, 2026.

Downtown Ambassadors

A key finding of the Downtown Gainesville Strategic Plan identified the need for downtown to be perceived as “clean and safe” in order to support activation and economic vitality. In response, the GCRA contracted with Block by Block, a nationally recognized provider of ambassador services, in late FY 2024.

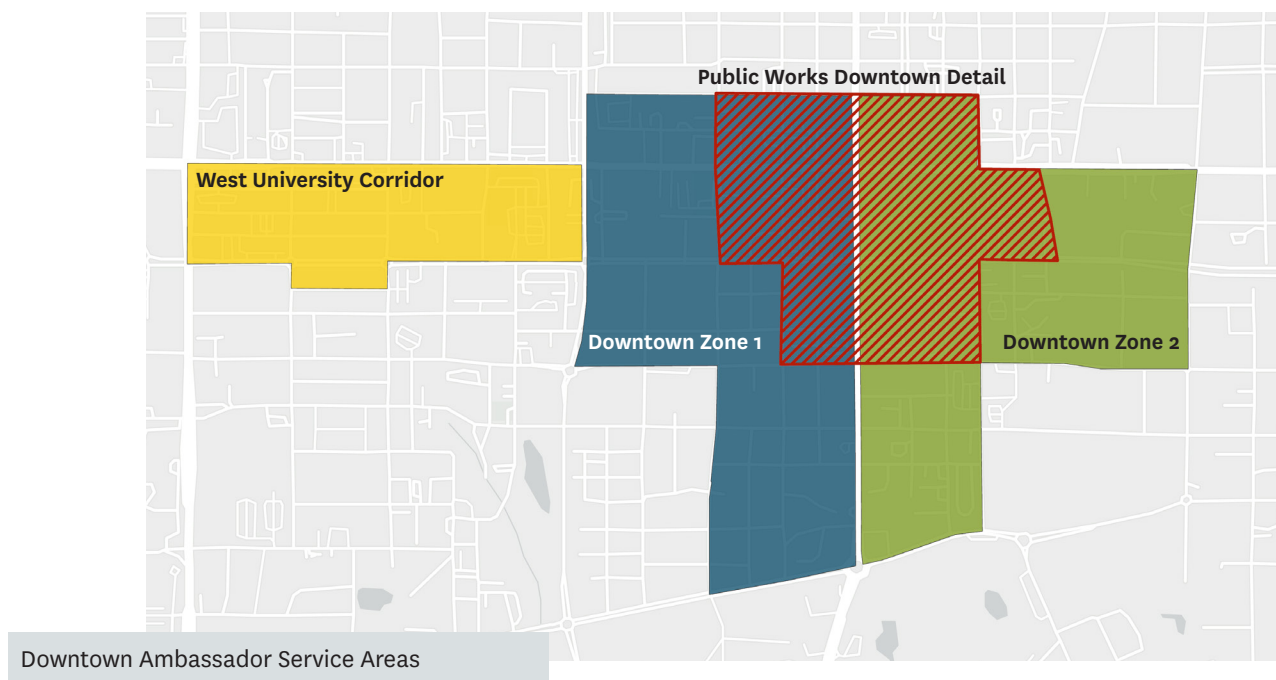
The Downtown Ambassador Program launched on December 2, 2024, with a newly hired team of Safety and Cleaning Ambassadors assigned to two downtown service areas.

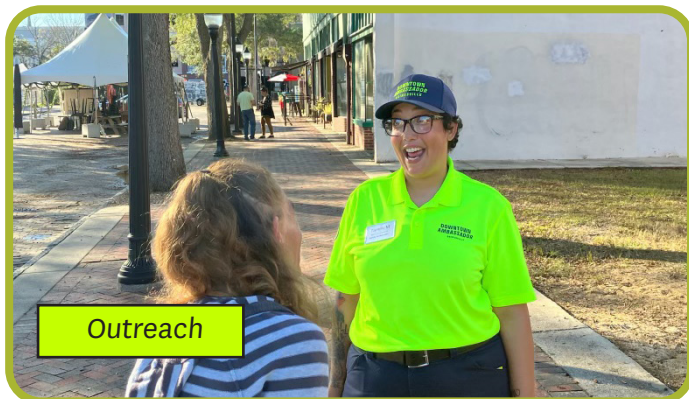
Downtown Ambassadors serve as valuable neighborhood helpers, ensuring that neighborhoods stay clean, attractive, and welcoming. Their services include graffiti and sticker removal, street cleaning, landscaping support, safety escorts, hospitality, community outreach, and visitor assistance - just to name a few! The program is complemented by the city’s Public Works Department, which operates a downtown detail that provides additional cleaning and maintenance services Monday through Thursday, and a contracted cleaning company that provides coverage Friday to Sunday.

The West University Corridor and Downtown Zones 1 and 2 are primarily serviced by Downtown Ambassadors for cleaning, safety, hospitality, and outreach. Areas shown as hatched in red are serviced by Public Works. Within the Public Works service area, Downtown Ambassadors provide supplemental support, including minor cleaning and trash removal.

Funding for the West University Corridor is provided through the remaining College Park–University Heights tax increment financing (TIF). Downtown Zones 1 and 2, as well as the Public Works Downtown Detail, are funded through GCRA interlocal funding allocated in the Downtown Gainesville Strategic Plan budget.

From December 2024 to September 30, 2025, the Downtown Ambassador Program delivered a new level of dedicated service downtown. Many of these services were not available previously. In recognition of the program’s early success, the city administration awarded the Downtown Ambassadors the 2025 Community Innovator Award at its annual ceremony.





Outreach



Safety



Cleaning



Hospitality

During this period, Downtown Ambassadors achieved the following outcomes:

Cleaning

- 2,539 graffiti and stickers removed
- 2,145 city structures cleaned
- 1,202 bags of trash removed (240 cubic yards)
- 780 biohazard cleanups

Outreach

- 596 service calls for unhoused individuals
- 149 referrals for essential documents
- 98 wellness checks for unhoused individuals
- 67 people helped with getting a new ID

Safety

- 16,323 safety-related interactions supporting businesses
- 7,133 visitors welcomed downtown
- 1,307 directions and recommendations to downtown visitors
- 327 safety escorts provided
- 124 car battery jumpstarts provided



Forward Looking in FY 2026

In FY 2026, the Downtown Ambassador Program will enter the second year of its initial three-year contract. The agreement includes two optional one-year extensions, subject to mutual approval by the city and Block by Block.

Downtown Events Grant Program

The Downtown Events Grant Program transitioned from a pilot program into a permanent program. As part of the program's transition to a permanent program, some adjustments were made, including:

- Transitioning to a 50% matching grant instead of the 100% matching
- Incorporating a two-tier structure with Tier 1 being up to \$5,000 of grant funds and Tier 2 for larger-scale events with up to \$30,000 of grant funds
 - Tier 1 events are reviewed and approved internally by the GCRA and City Manager or designee
 - Tier 2 events are for new event support and require the City Commission to approve proposals submitted in accordance with the program
- Program allows for events that are at a minimum 51% in public space and 49% in private space

In FY 2025, the Downtown Events Grant Program supported 15 events downtown with \$61,182 invested in community events. Below is a highlight of the events offered:

- Bazar A La Carte: A Night Market by How Bazar – The Streatery – April 2025
- Big: Culture & Arts Festival - Big Kickoff Party (Day 1) by Dion Dia Records – The Streatery – April 2025
- Gainesville St. Patrick's Day 2025 by The Bull – The Streatery – March 2025
- “Single Black Female in the Navy” A Coming of Age Play by Words Off the Paper – The Hippodrome – March 2025
- BLAAC Community Creative Pop Up by Bailey Learning and Arts Collective – The Streatery – May 2025
- A Kingdom Social Lounge Experience by Red Mantle – The Hippodrome – April 2025
- The 3rd Annual Biggest Heart Giveaway by Carolyn's Heart Inc. – Bo Diddley Plaza – May 2025
- Gainesville Reggae Festival by Maca Reggae Samba – Heartwood Soundstage – August 2025
- Gainesville Reads by The Lynx – Heartwood Soundstage, and other locations – Month of September 2025
- Gainesville Latino Film Festival by Latina Women's League – Heartwood Soundstage, The Lynx Books, Matheson History Museum, and other locations – September 11 - 29, 2025

SAVE THE DATE



Gainesville
Pride Festival
November 1



Gainesville Latino
Film Festival
September 11-29



Gainesville Reads
Now through
September 27



FEST 23
October 24-26



Brazil Fest 2025
September 13

Sample of Visit Gainesville events promotion advertisement of September 4, 2025. Over half of the listed events GCRA grant awardees.

Forward Looking in FY 2026

The Downtown Events Grant Program enters FY 2026 with the strong support of the Downtown Advisory Board and the City Commission. The advisory board recommended increasing the program's total funding to \$194,681 (which was later reduced to \$184,924 to pay for a downtown light signalization study approved by the City Commission). The funding level for FY 2026 is over \$84,000 more than the FY 2025 level. Per the program guidelines, 40% of the funding (\$73,969) is available for Tier 1 grants of no more than \$5,000, and the 60% balance (\$110,954) is available for Tier 2 grants of no more than \$30,000.

The GCRA anticipates releasing the Tier 2 Request for Proposal in February 2026, with finalists from the proposals being presented to the City Commission in April or May 2026.

The GCRA has been charged with programming The Streatery before and after its construction, an expected period of nine to 12 months. In addition, the GCRA has been tasked with preparing programs to mitigate the impacts to businesses along the corridor. City staff and the Downtown Advisory Board will work on the budgets for these programs through spring 2026.

Downtown Holiday Lights Contest

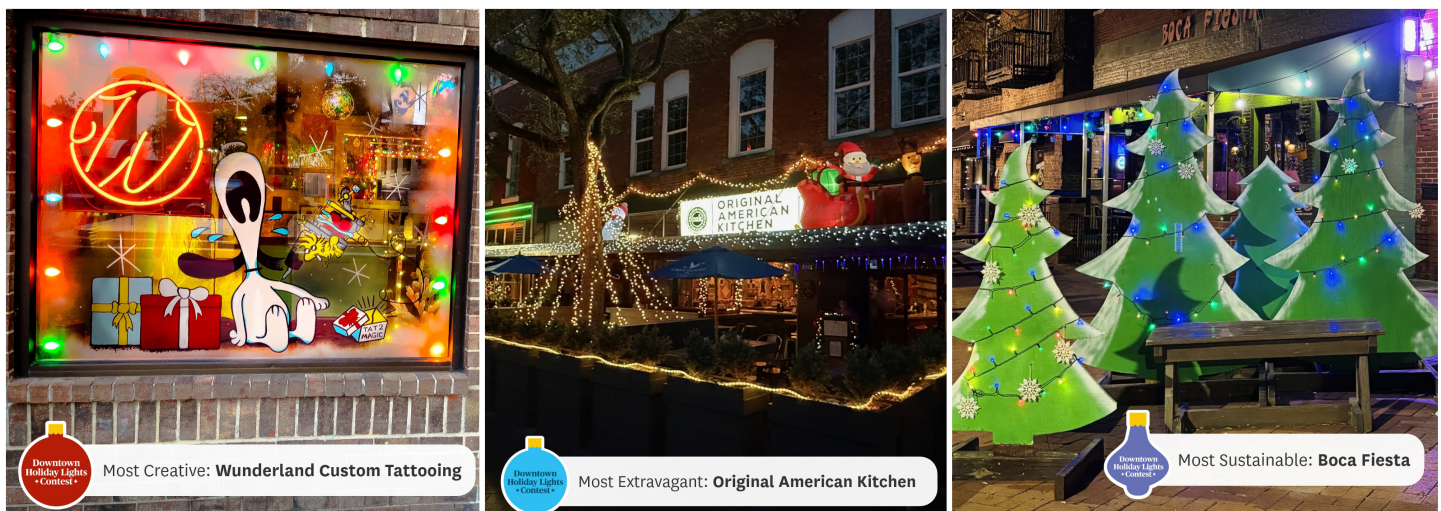
Toward the end of 2025, the GCRA launched the Downtown Holiday Lights Contest, an initiative inspired by the Downtown Advisory Board, designed to encourage creativity, foot traffic, and seasonal activation in downtown Gainesville - and some friendly competition, too.

The contest ran from December 6, 2025, through January 2, 2026, and received 10 complete applications from downtown businesses. Community members were invited to participate through public voting, which lasted a month and generated strong engagement.

Winners were announced on January 6, 2026, with one business recognized in each category. Each category winner received a \$1,000 prize in recognition of their creativity and contribution to downtown's holiday atmosphere.

The 2025 Downtown Holiday Lights Contest winners were:

- Most Creative: Wunderland Custom Tattooing
- Most Extravagant: Original American Kitchen
- Most Sustainable: Boca Fiesta



Forward looking in FY 2026

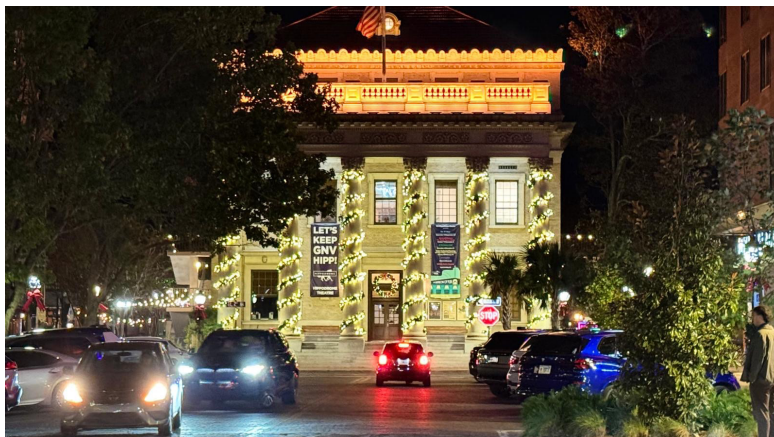
The GCRA anticipates continuing efforts like this in the FY 2026 and FY 2027 timeframe.

Downtown Seasonal Decorations (Festive on First)

In FY 2025, the GCRA began exploring opportunities to introduce seasonal decorations in downtown Gainesville as a way to enhance the public realm and support downtown activation. This effort resulted in the launch of Festive on First, a holiday decorating and lighting initiative led by the GCRA.

Holiday decorations and lighting were installed along SW First Street, from Bo Diddley Plaza to the Hippodrome Theatre (including the historic building facade), and were on display from November 6, 2025, through January 6, 2026. The installation transformed the downtown core, creating a festive atmosphere that encouraged visitation, evening activity, and seasonal enjoyment.

The holiday decorations were well-received by downtown visitors and added warmth and vibrancy to the area. Feedback received by the GCRA highlighted the positive impact of the decorations on the overall downtown experience, with comments noting the enhanced sense of place and welcoming holiday ambiance.



Forward looking in FY 2026

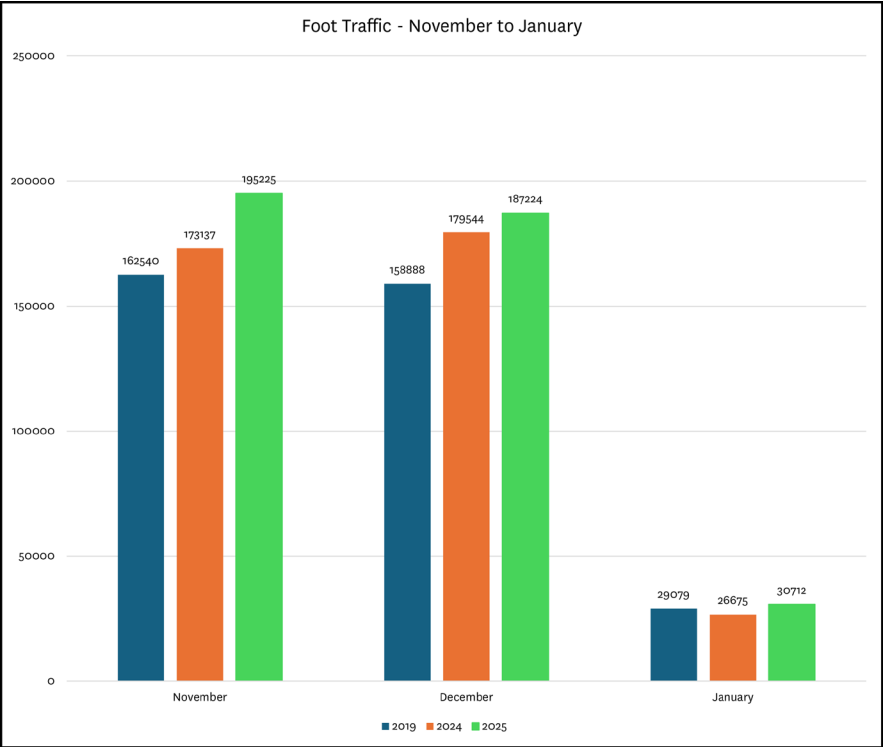
In FY 2026, the GCRA will explore additional funding opportunities and partnerships to expand seasonal lighting and decorations. Potential partners include the city's Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs Department and the Public Works Department, with the goal of building on Festive on First's success and expanding its reach in future years.

The GCRA will explore additional funding and lighting partnerships going into FY 2027, including with the city's Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs and Public Works Departments.

The GCRA is committed to data-driven decision-making and uses tools and technology to analyze real estate trends, demographic and socio-economic statistics, and permitting data. One tool the GCRA acquired in FY 2025 was Placer.AI, which enables the collection and analysis of pedestrian counts within the GCRA-defined boundaries and timeframes. This toolset has produced a preliminary analysis of downtown foot traffic, and while not 100% directly attributable to the GCRA efforts, it likely shows a high correlation with the holiday atmosphere the GCRA enabled through these efforts. Of particular note in the data is the 22,000 increase in pedestrian count comparing November 2024 to November 2025 foot traffic.

Holiday Lights Activation Analysis

	2025	2024	2019
November	195,225	173,137	162,540
December	187,224	179,544	158,888
January	30,712	26,675	29,079
TOTAL	413,161	379,356	350,507



Downtown Winter Market Series

In 2025, the City Commission directed the GCRA to investigate opportunities to activate The Streatery. Through the Downtown Events Grant Program and Community Partnership Grant Program, the GCRA provided several event-funding opportunities. In late FY 2025, the GCRA received a proposal from Creative Cultural Consulting Group to host a new Downtown Winter Market Series at The Streatery on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays from December 12, 2025 through January 25, 2026. The series was planned to run from 4–10 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays and from 12–5 p.m. on Sundays. The proposed series featured weekly themes and free educational skill-share sessions offered at How Bazar on Sundays at 1 p.m. The final series breakdown were:

- December 12-14 – Opening Weekend (Class: Sewing)
- December 19-21 – Car Show (Class: Plant Care)
- December 26-28 – Charity Weekend (Class: Pottery)
- January 2-4 – Circus Theme (Class: Candle Making)
- January 9-11 – Wellness Theme (Class: How to DJ)
- January 16-18 – Music Showcase (Class: Crochet)
- January 23-25 – The Finale (Class: Painting)

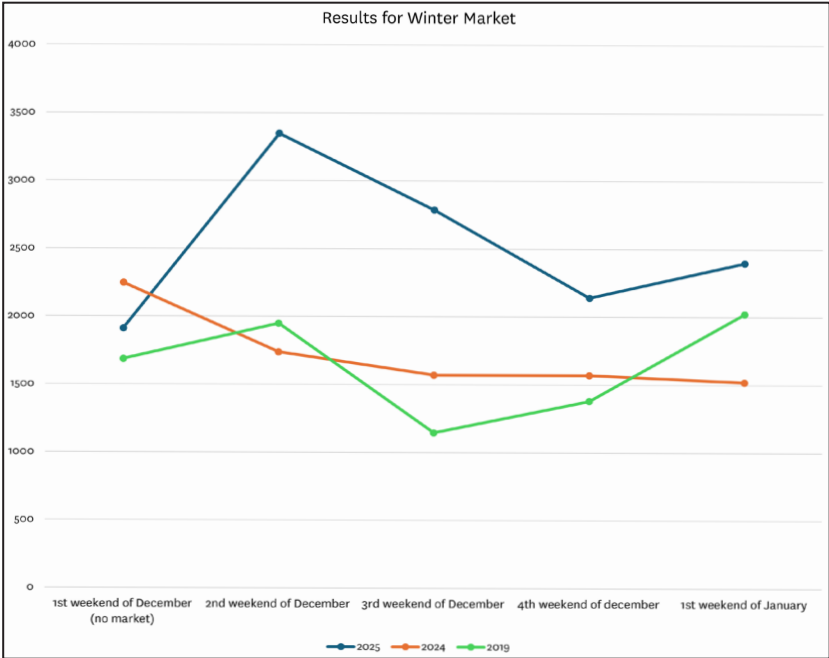
The proposal also featured custom assembled booth spaces for up to 26 vendors each day and space for two food trucks. All told, over the course of the series, 546 spaces would be available for small businesses to rent and show their skills and merchandise to the public for sale.

Forward looking in FY 2026

City leadership executed the contract with Creative Cultural Consulting Group in FY 2026 to activate the Downtown Winter Market per their proposal on November 14, 2025. The GCRA will track participation for future reporting.

Downtown Winter Market Analysis

Friday to Sunday	Visitors	Visitors	Visitors
	2025	2024	2019
1st week of December (no market)	445	858	588
	1,100	878	714
	366	510	384
2nd weekend of December	1,376	688	388
	1,120	624	1,000
	851	426	561
3rd weekend of December	936	705	415
	1,113	555	314
	736	310	416
4th weekend of December	582	705	443
	963	555	477
	595	310	460
1st weekend of January	850	487	839
	835	707	755
	712	326	428
TOTAL	10,669	6,398	6,496



The GCRA continues to explore the means to build upon the success of the Winter Market Series, moving forward with future activations of The Streatery through collaborations with businesses.



GRACE Marketplace Support

The GCRA in FY 2025 provided \$350,000 to GRACE Marketplace. These funds were to ensure bed space and services were available to assist the unhoused population in downtown Gainesville at GRACE Marketplace.

Forward looking in FY 2026

The GCRA allocated another \$350,000 in continued support of GRACE Marketplace, providing support to the unhoused population downtown.

Heartwood

The Heartwood neighborhood is a 34-unit subdivision located on 15 acres at 1717 SE Eighth Avenue on the former Kennedy Homes site. Currently, there are 18 occupied homes, with the first sold in late 2022 and the last in March 2025. The mixed-income neighborhood is comprised of 11 residences that were delivered through the Dreams2Reality program, which was funded by General Fund, SHIP, and ConnectFree resources. These homes were restricted to households earning at or below 80% of the Gainesville area median income (AMI), creating permanently affordable homeownership opportunities within the neighborhood.

Of the remaining homes, seven were designated as showcase homes, consisting of four construction-to-permanent loan homes built by the buyer and three city-constructed homes intended to be sold at market rate using a cost-plus construction model authorized by the GCRA Board and City Commission in 2022. The final three city-built showcase homes were sold in February and March 2025. These were the only homes that were sold during the reporting year, leaving the neighborhood with 16 vacant lots.

In December 2025, the City Commission approved a contract with Oelrich Construction and began constructing an amenities package to improve Heartwood's common area that was developed by NV5 during the reporting year. The package includes new fencing, landscaping, including entryway and common areas, pathway improvement along the pond and through the common area connecting the eastern and western sides of the neighborhood, entry signage, and irrigation for the new entry landscape and the common area landscape.





Heartwood Neighborhood Aerial

Forward looking in FY 2026

The GCRA in FY 2026 will contract with Oelrich Construction to build-out the amenities including:

- A new fence
- Additional and resurfaced paths
- Hardscaping and landscaping
- Low-voltage lighting
- Monument signs

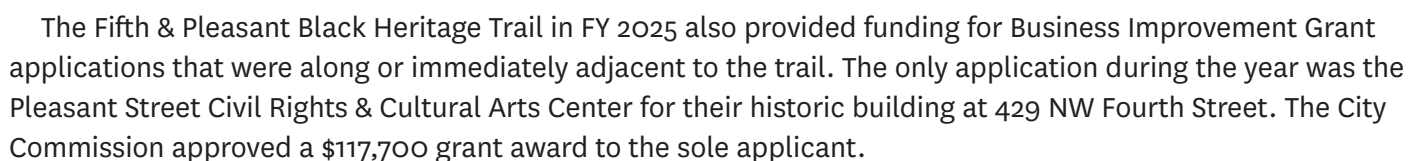


Given the difficulties encountered in building and selling showcase and market rate lots, the city evaluated alternative approaches to completing the development of Heartwood, and decided to utilize a community land trust approach that will help ensure homeownership on the vacant lots.



The Historic Heritage Trail project is a signature component of the GCRA's 10-Year Reinvestment Plan. The trail travels through the Fifth Avenue and Pleasant Street neighborhoods, which are symbolic in Gainesville for their contributions to Reconstruction after the Civil War and struggles for civil rights against Jim Crow laws for over 75 years, typical of Black communities throughout the Southeast. The Historic Heritage Trail is envisioned as a system of physical markers and locations that showcase the achievements, history, and cultural knowledge within these two historic African American neighborhoods. The purpose of the project is to provide trail visitors with information about the area, leading to heightened awareness and appreciation of the history of these communities.

This engagement effort led to the final Fifth and Pleasant Black Heritage Trail Plan being presented to the City Commission. On August 28, 2025, the GPC approved the Fifth Avenue and Pleasant Street Historic Heritage Trail project, including the Rose Theater component in the 400 block of NW Fifth Avenue of Pleasant Street, and authorized procurement of vendor(s) to fabricate and install the historical markers and design and construct the Rose Theater component.



Forward looking in FY 2026

The planned final workshop was held on January 21, 2026, at 6 p.m. at the Santa Fe College Blount Center. In FY 2026, the City of Gainesville will be releasing a Request for Proposal for historical markers. Once the procurement process is completed, the GCRA will contract with the selected contractor for the fabrication and installation of the markers. The GCRA will also be completing upgrades at the Rose Garden, an undeveloped city-owned parcel along the trail. The GCRA expects to complete the Fifth & Pleasant Black Heritage Trail by the end of FY 2026.

Public Space & Streetscape

The GCRA maintains a number of properties for the city throughout the GCRA's boundary. One of the properties shown below is the Eastside Gateway.



Additional properties that the GCRA pays for annual maintenance are detailed below.

Alachua County Parcel Identification	Street Address	Descriptor
13912-000-000	1018 NW 5th Avenue	Vacant Lot
14479-000-000	414 NW 5th Avenue	Vacant Lot
13748-001-000	810 NW 3rd Avenue	Vacant Lot
11740-000-000	1490 SE Hawthorne Road	Eastside Gateway
12907-000-000	Southwest Corner of SW 5th Avenue & SW 4th Street	Streetscape Corner
13369-000-000	Southeast Corner of SW 7th Avenue & SW 5th Terrace	Streetscape Corner
13008-000-000	Northwest Corner of SW 5th Avenue & Main Street	Porters Gateway
11340, 11340-1, 11340-1-2, 11340-1-3, 11340-1-4	2153 SE Hawthorne Road	Cornerstone
16102-010-000	1717 SE 8th Ave	Heartwood Community

Forward looking in FY 2026

The GCRA will begin transitioning property maintenance costs to the appropriate city department.

GCRA Programs

Heirs Property Assistance Program

The GCRA transitioned managing its own heirs property program into a partnership with the University of Florida and the Alachua County Supervisor of Elections Office. The GCRA contributed funding to the University of Florida, which provided free assistance to low-income residents to navigate the probate process through their new Heirs Property Clinic.

Forward looking in FY 2026

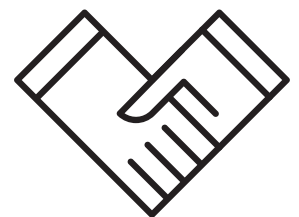
The GCRA will continue financially supporting the free clinic in FY 2026 by providing funds to the University of Florida.

Community Partnership Grant Program

The purpose of the program is to assist local community organizations with grant funds to support arts and cultural initiatives, cultural celebrations, recovery and resiliency, neighborhood improvements, and encourage economic development. The events must be free, open to the public, and held within the boundaries of the GCRA.

Twenty event grants were awarded in FY 2025, with a total of \$40,000 in grant funds allocated towards the events. A sample of events that were held are:

- August 1, 2024 – October 28, 2024 – Skill Share Sessions
- October 18, 2024 – UF Homecoming
- October 27, 2025 – Wildcat Family Fall Festival
- November 2, 2024 – How Bazar: A Night Market
- November 2, 2024 – Downtown International Festival & Street Party
- November 16, 2024 – Diaper Distribution Bundle of Joy Program
- February 5, 2025 - April 30, 2025 – Porters Quarters Community Farm Farmers Market
- February 22, 2025 –Family Empowerment! The Pathway to Homeownership
- March 8, 2025 – Gentrification Community Dialogue
- April 6, 2024 – Disaster Relief Skill Share
- April 26, 2025 – Greater Duval Community Garden Upgrade Party
- May 31, June 26, & July 26, 2025 – Diaper Distribution Bundle of Joy Program
- May 7 & June 4, 2025 –Live on the Lawn Concerts at Heartwood Soundstage
- May 16-18, 2025 – 45th Annual 5th Avenue Arts Festival





Forward looking in FY 2026

The GCRA plans to build upon the success of the Community Partnership Grant Program throughout FY 2026. This will include planned adjustments to the program to make it easier, for applicants to understand how to fill in the application, as well as reinforce the need to comply with all city rules and regulations in the use of the grant.

Attainable Housing Initiatives

The GCRA continues to build upon efforts to develop attainable housing solutions on city-owned property. Its current effort started in 2021 when GCRA staff developed a possible framework for property in the Porters Quarters neighborhood located at 405 SW Fifth Avenue.

In FY 2025, the GCRA continued its community engagement efforts, including a meeting on May 22, 2025, to discuss a potential land use and zoning change to *RMF-5 Single/Multi-Family Residential*. This zoning designation is the predominant district in the Porters Quarters neighborhood and is consistent with surrounding properties.

The GCRA applied for the land use and zoning changes in August 2025 and was scheduled for review by the Plan Board in December 2025.



Forward looking in FY 2026

The GCRA brought forward the zoning and land use change request to the city's Plan Board on December 18, 2025. The Plan Board extended its decision another 90 days (until March 26, 2026) to provide additional time for community feedback.

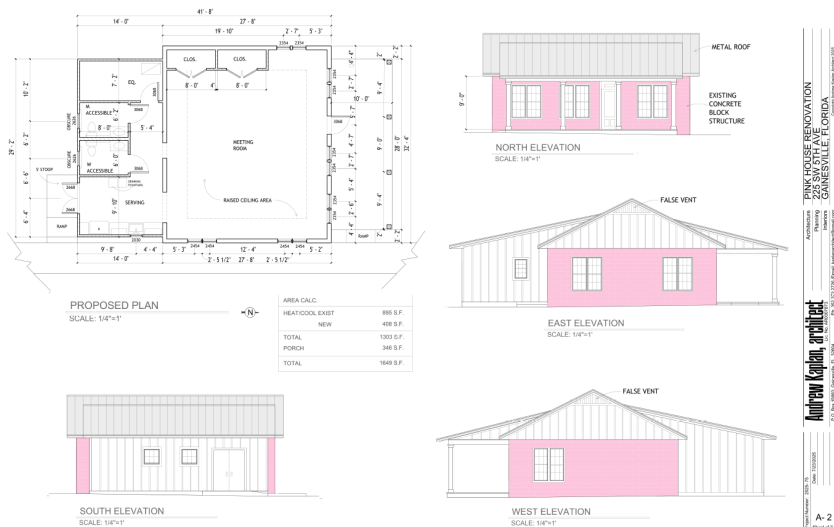
Based on previous community feedback, the proposed concept includes two to three homes, potentially incorporating the city's pre-approved ADU models. Design work would be expected to be completed by September 2026, with construction projected to begin during FY 2027.

Porters Quarters Neighborhood Improvements

The GCRA has remained committed to investing in the Porters Neighborhood since 2016. In March 2025, the GCRA replaced the aging fencing along Depot Avenue, from SW Third Street to SW Second Street, and along a portion of SW Second Street.

This improvement was identified as a top priority by neighborhood residents and supports ongoing efforts to enhance safety and appearance in the area. The project reflects the city's continued commitment to investing in neighborhood beautification and maintaining the infrastructure that helps make our communities welcoming and well cared for.

Renovation plans are in the works for the Pink House. The renovation will allow for additional meeting space in the community.



Forward looking in FY 2026

The GCRA's planned timeline for the Pink House is to:

- Take the guaranteed maximum price to the City Commission – February 2026
- Complete/submit construction documents – April 2026
- Approved building permits – May 2026
- Start site work and construction – June 2026
- Complete construction – November 2026

End of the Fiscal Year Balance Sheet

Balance Sheet	Eastside TIF	Fifth Avenue Pleasant Street TIF	Downtown TIF	College Park University Heights TIF	GCRA Interlocal Funds	Total
Total Assets	\$913	\$219,248	\$1,629,725	\$4,424,633	\$25,690,559	\$31,965,080
Total Liabilities	\$0	\$1,244	\$0	\$21,908	\$343,876	\$367,028
Total Fund Balance	\$913	\$218,004	\$1,629,725	\$4,402,725	\$25,346,682	\$31,598,051
Total Liabilities & Fund Balance	\$913	\$219,248	\$1,629,725	\$4,424,633	\$25,690,559	\$31,965,080

Note: Preliminary numbers, unaudited and provided by the City of Gainesville Department of Financial Services. Any balance in the CRA funds must be expended within the former CRA's geographic boundaries.

Special Thanks

FY 2025 GCRA Advisory Board

Joakim "Jay" Nordqvist, Chair
 Davonda Brown, Vice-Chair
 Richard Allen
 Angelica Arbelaez
 Chelsea Carnes
 Amanda Demaria
 Heather Kates

FY 2025 Downtown Advisory Board

Linda McGurn, Chair
 Richard Allen, Vice-Chair
 Teresa Callen
 Timothy Hutchens
 Jacob Idhe
 Anthony Lyons
 Sara Puyana

FY 2025 Gainesville City Commission

Harvey Ward, Mayor
 Bryan Eastman, Mayor Pro-Tem, District IV
 James Ingle, At-large, Seat A
 Cynthia Chestnut, At-large, Seat B
 Desmon Duncan-Walker, District I
 Ed Book, District II
 Casey Willits, District III

FY 2025 Alachua Board of County Commissioners

Charles Chestnut, IV, Chair, District 5
 Ken Cornell, Vice-Chair, District 4
 Mary Alford, District 1
 Marihelen Wheeler, District 2
 Anna Prizzia, District 3

Final Amended FY 2025 Budget

Gainesville Community Reinvestment Area Fund 1132 (Interlocal) Amended Budget as of September 2025	
Sources:	
Interfund Transfer Revenue (City)	\$3,385,481
Intergovernmental Revenue (County)	\$3,691,460
Other Financing Sources	\$5,521
Use of Fund Balance	\$22,542,195
Total Sources	\$29,624,657
Uses:	
City Attorney	\$94,816
City Manager	\$23,944
Gainesville Community Reinvestment Area	\$1,766,409
Airport Gateway	\$100,000
Business Improvement Grant Program	\$100,000
Community Partnership Grants	\$101,500
Downtown Detail (Public Works)	-
Downtown Gainesville Strategic Plan	\$6,632,883
Eastside Food Mobility Hub	\$3,017,778
Economic Development 8th & Waldo	\$4,464,284
GCRA Cornerstone	\$472,487
GCRA Heartwood	\$1,921,605
GCRA Historic Heritage Trail	\$2,112,736
GCRA Porter Neighborhood Improvements	\$148,445
GTEC Capital Improvements	\$5,178,282
GTEC Management	\$305,019
Heirs Program	\$137,021
Model Block & Attainable Housing Strategies	\$853,292
My Neighborhood Grant Program	\$35,000
Neighborhood Paint Program	\$50,300
The Streatery (SW 1st Ave from SW 2nd St to S Main St)	\$2,000,000
Non-Departmental	\$108,852
Total Uses	\$29,624,657

GCRA in the Community

The GCRA collaborated on, hosted, attended, and sponsored a number of community events throughout the year, including:

- Downtown Advisory Board – first Tuesday of each month
- Gainesville Community Reinvestment Area Advisory Board – third Tuesday of each month
- Fifth and Pleasant Black Heritage Trail
 - Workshop #2 – October 16, 2024
 - Workshop #3 – March 5, 2025
 - Workshop #4 – May 7, 2025
- NE Eighth Avenue and NE Waldo Road
 - Association Engagement – November 6, 2024
 - Workshop #1 – November 18, 2024
 - Workshop #2 – February 18, 2025
 - Workshop #3 – May 29, 2025
- Porters Quarters Neighborhood
 - Porters Community Monthly Meetings
 - Land Use & Zoning Change Neighborhood Workshop – May 22, 2025
 - Porters Quarters Day of Celebration – September 27, 2025
 - Porters Community Engagement – October 16, 2025
 - City Plan Board Meeting – December 18, 2025

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Gainesville Community Reinvestment Area
2153 SE Hawthorne Rd, Suite 223
Gainesville, FL 32641