



## St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners

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Housing & Community Development

### **2011 St. Johns County Community Redevelopment Agency Annual Financial Audit Report**

The CRA 2011 Annual Financial Audit Report is included in the overall St. Johns County Audit Report and can be made available upon request from the Clerk of Courts Finance Department by contacting them at:

St. Johns County:            Phone (904)819-3658            Fax (904) 819-3667

Email BCC Finance: [fincoc@sjccoc.us](mailto:fincoc@sjccoc.us)

Email COC Finance: [jtillis@sjccoc.us](mailto:jtillis@sjccoc.us)

2011

Fiscal  
Year  
2010-11

# West Augustine

## History and Achievements

Over the past nine years the CRA has assisted the community to achieve their goals of cleaning up and demolishing dilapidated structures, restoring and building new affordable homes, improving infrastructure so that those homes could be built, increasing police presence and installing street lights to help reduce crime.

The realization of the new Community Center at the West Augustine District park, with a pool and an after school tutorial program, along with many other activities and services, is a major accomplishment.

The extensive infrastructure improvements which include streets, drainage, street lights, and other incentives that made vacant land developable has created a thriving community with new homes being built and a demand for more.

The combination of successful redevelopment initiatives and citizen involvement has transformed this community, and is now bringing private investment where public investment has set the stage for growth of a clean, safe neighborhood for families.

## St. Johns County Community Redevelopment Agency 2011 Annual Report



### WHAT IS A CRA?

The Community Redevelopment Agency is a public entity established under the guidelines of the Community Redevelopment Act (Chapter 163, Part III, Florida Statutes) to implement community redevelopment activities.

A powerful redevelopment tool, the CRA uses the growth in assessed property values (tax-increment financing) funds to reinvest within their boundaries. The Community Redevelopment Act outlines the complete process for creating a CRA. The major phases are:

The first step is to adopt the Finding of Necessity, a field study that formally identifies the conditions of economic distress within the established boundaries of the designated area.

Next, a Community Redevelopment Plan must be developed and then adopted by the County Commission. The plan should address the unique needs of the targeted area and include overall goals as well as identify programs and projects to address those goals.

The primary funding source for a community redevelopment agency comes from tax-increment financing. The Community Redevelopment Act allows for the creation of a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district within a CRA boundaries.

## Community Activities

Volunteers from St. Catherine's Catholic Church in Orange Park work on the Bing home in West Augustine as part of the church's Urban Plunge project. Volunteers with Urban Plunge have been coming to St. Augustine to perform a variety of tasks for the elderly and disabled for the past 27 years. SHIP funds were utilized as well as many other private donations.

Work on the home was made possible by contractors and suppliers throughout the county who donated time, labor and materials. This homeowner is the last person in the county to receive home repairs under SHIP, which is no longer providing state funds.



## Juneteenth Celebration

The Annual Juneteenth Celebration was held at the Collier-Blocker-Puryear Park

The West Augustine Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) Cultural Committee, with the full support of the St. Johns County Recreation Department, West Augustine Improvement Association and the Friends of West St. Augustine sponsored the "Take Pride in the West Side" and "Juneteenth" Celebration. Juneteenth is the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the ending of slavery in the United States. From its Galveston, Texas origin in 1865, the observance of June 19 as the African American Emancipation Day has spread across the United States and beyond.



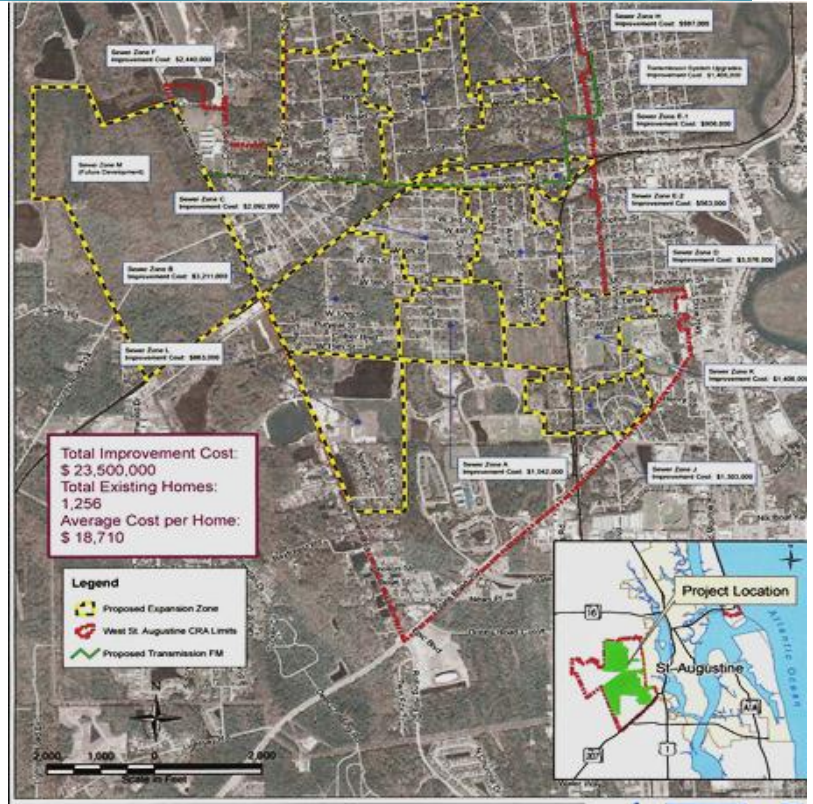
## Florida Memorial University

### A.L. Lewis Arch Plaza Dedication

A special memorial ceremony was held in the West Augustine community on July 14<sup>th</sup> to dedicate the A. L. Lewis Archway Plaza, the last standing reminder of the college, which closed its St. Augustine campus in 1968 and moved to Miami.

The archway served as the entrance to Florida Memorial University for more than 30 years. For many years the archway stood on the opposite side of the street covered with vines and in deteriorating condition. Workers moved the arch across the street to Collier-Blocker-Puryear Park in 2009 and began the process of restoring it.

*Preliminary Funding Approved for West Augustine Sewer Plan in a Joint Meeting of the St. Augustine City Commission and the St. Johns Board of County Commissioners*



In a joint meeting of the St. Augustine Commission and St. Johns County Commission an agreement was reached to fund preconstruction activity for a sewage master plan in West Augustine. The agreement was necessary to satisfy a state requirement to obtain a state revolving fund loan to cover preconstruction planning and design. The cost of installing sewerage and water pipelines through West Augustine to Holmes Boulevard is estimated at \$24 million and would take three to five years to complete. Once the lines are complete, homeowners have 12 months to connect.

The City of St. Augustine provides water and sewer service to areas in and around the City limits. The West Augustine CRA is partially within the City limits and forms the western boundary of the area served by the City’s utility. Currently, a large percentage of West Augustine receives water service from the City, but only a small portion of the area receives sewer service. The addition of sewer infrastructure in West Augustine is necessary to promote economic development in the area and address environmental and health issues. Providing centralized sewer will help to stimulate commercial growth along the West King Street corridor and will replace existing residential septic systems. The City and County are currently working jointly with the Health Department to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the environmental and health impacts from the aged septic systems in West Augustine.



## Career Fair

A Community Career Fair was held in West Augustine on October 12, 2011 at the Solomon Calhoun Center. The Career fair was sponsored by the St. Johns Board of County Commissioners, the West Augustine Improvement Association, West Augustine CRA, Work Source, St. Paul AME Church, St. Johns County NAACP, and the St. Augustine Record.

The free event is designed to assist citizens with many types of career and education services . This is a recurring event for residents of the West Augustine community.

The career fair provided legal aid and counselors to provide training for interviews, restoration of rights, health screenings, how to dress for success, educational opportunities and other workshops.



## St. Johns County Board of Commissioners

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Commissioner, District 1

**Ron Sanchez**  
Commissioner, District 2

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Commissioner, District 3

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Commissioner, District 4

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## West Augustine CRA Steering Committee

Greg White, Chairperson  
Willie Cooper, Sr., Vice Chairperson  
Robert Nimmons  
Antonio Whitty  
Linda Murray  
Dwala Willis  
Erich Terry

For additional information regarding the St. Johns County Community Redevelopment Agency, the availability of copies of this report, and the separate audit report, contact:

**Tom Crawford, Director**  
**St. Johns County Housing and Community Development**  
**500 San Sebastian View**  
**St. Augustine, FL 32084**  
**Phone: 904-827-6891**

### COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The Fiscal Year 2010-2011 Annual Report for St. Johns County Community Redevelopment Agency has been prepared in accordance with Section 356(3)(c), Florida Statutes. This report covers the period from October 2010 through September 30, 2011.