



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
City Commission Agenda Memo
CRA BOARD MEETING

#25-0081

TO: CRA Chairman & Board of Commissioners
Fort Lauderdale Community Redevelopment Agency

FROM: Susan Grant, Acting CRA Executive Director

DATE: March 18, 2025

TITLE: Motion Approving a \$225,000 Property and Business Improvement Program Forgivable Loan, a \$125,000 Non-Residential Façade Improvement Program Forgivable Loan, and a \$54,562 Streetscape Enhancement Program Forgivable Loan to Call of Africa Realty, Inc. for the Renovation Project Located at 920 NE 13 Street - **(Commission District 2)**

Recommendation

Staff recommends the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) Board of Commissioners approve by Motion a \$225,000 Property and Business Improvement Program (PBIP) Forgivable Loan, a \$125,000 Non-Residential Façade Improvement Program (NRFIP) Forgivable Loan, and a \$54,562 Streetscape Enhancement Program (SEP) Forgivable Loan to Call of Africa Realty, Inc. for the Renovation Project located in the Central City (CC) CRA at 920 NE 13 Street. The Agreements are substantially in the form attached to this CAM.

Background

Call of Africa Realty, Inc. has submitted a CRA funding application to renovate an existing property located at 920 NE 13th Street to create new spaces for retail service-related businesses, as well as streetscape improvements to the adjacent public right of way. A location map, Broward County Property Appraiser information, current images, and concept renderings of the property are attached as Exhibit 1. The funding application is attached as Exhibit 2.

The plan is to modernize the existing structure to include a total of six bays for retail-related services, office and storage uses. The ground floor will consist of four retail bays between 1,300 - 1,600 square feet fronting NE 13 Street, and the second floor will contain two rental bays of 2,407 and 2,963 square feet to be used for offices and storage. The complete renovation will entail demolition work, impact windows and door installation, electrical rewiring, plumbing relocation, mechanical installation, supply and construction of the foundation, dry wall and other improvements. The plan also includes landscape improvement and sidewalk replacement to enhance its frontage on the business corridor.

The improvement cost, funding breakdown, plans and illustrations of the project are attached as Exhibit 3.

NE 13 Street is a CRA focus area and the CRA non-residential incentive programs can provide funding of up to 90% of the improvement cost, secured by a forgivable mortgage on the property. The maximum funding allowed under the PBIP is \$225,000, the maximum under NRFIP is \$125,000, and the maximum under the SEP is \$500,000.

The total project cost is approximately \$1,456,901, consisting of hard construction and overhead costs totaling \$1,404,511 and architectural design fees totaling \$52,390. The Developer is asking the CRA to fund \$404,562 to pay for 27.8% of the hard construction and improvement costs. The developer will cover the remaining 72.2% of the overall project costs, a total of \$1,052,339.

PROJECT COST OVERVIEW		%
	AMOUNT	
TOTAL PROJECT COST	\$1,456,901	
DEVELOPER SELF-FUNDING	\$1,052,339	72.2%
CRA FUNDING REQUEST	\$404,562	27.8%

TYPE	FUNDING MAXIMUM	PROJECT COSTS	CRA FUNDING REQUEST	DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTION
PBIP	UP TO 90% OR MAX \$225,000	\$878,938	\$225,000	\$653,938
NRFIP	UP TO 90% OR MAX \$125,000	\$230,864	\$ 125,000	\$105,864
SEP	UP TO 90% OR MAX \$500,000	\$60,624	\$ 54,562	\$6,062
	Developer Expense (<i>Design</i>)	\$52,390	-	\$52,390
	Developer Expense (<i>Overhead</i>)	\$234,085	-	\$234,085
		\$1,456,901	\$ 404,562	\$1,052,339

There is no mortgage on the property, and except for the requested CRA contribution, the applicant is funding the project with the company current cash assets and personal funds. The CRA will have a first mortgage position and CRA funding will be provided on a reimbursement basis.

Call of Africa Realty, Inc.'s founder and president, Ross Parker, is a long-time property owner in the area and was instrumental in the creation of the former NE 13th Street Business Association, now known as Central City Alliance. Invested in the community, Mr. Parker is committed to the revitalization of the area, and, with over 37 years' experience in the fine-art gallery industry, he plans on opening Native Visions Art Gallery in one of the newly built spaces. Furthermore, he intends to lease to a mix of restaurant or retail service businesses, anticipating the creation of a total of 16 jobs, a combination of 8 full-time and 8 part-time positions. The applicant desires this project to become a model for further growth in the 13 Street business and emerging arts corridor.

With this renovation and new retail businesses moving into the area, this project helps to foster economic growth, create local jobs, and reinvigorate the area as a pedestrian friendly corridor that locals frequent. The project represents a significant investment to the Central City CRA. CRA funds will help to build a thriving business community, remove blight, improve safety, and help activate the area for the community's benefit. Another standout benefit is the developer's commitment to offering 7.5% below-market rent for 20% of the leasable spaces for the first five years, and no increase in rent for the first two years. The affordability of these rents will be available to residents within Central City CRA. This ensures that local businesses have access to space at an affordable rate, helping to retain and support residents and entrepreneurs who are already a part of the community.

This funding request was unanimously recommended for approval by the Central City Redevelopment Advisory Board (CCRAB) at their meeting of July 24, 2024 (Exhibit 4). A copy of the Property and Business Improvement Program Agreement, Non-Residential Façade Program Agreement, and Streetscape Enhancement Program Agreement are attached as Exhibits 5, 6, and 7.

Consistency with the CC CRA Community Redevelopment Plan

The CC CRA Community Redevelopment Plan is designed, in part, to encourage rehabilitation of existing, usable and viable structures, in addition to, construction of new retail and office facilities, as well as attraction of new jobs in office, retail and restaurants of areas planned for commercial and business development. The project is consistent with the CC CRA Community Redevelopment Plan which provides for direct physical improvements that create a lasting impact and establish new businesses to create a diverse and appealing business corridor, add employment opportunities, and draw new users that contribute to the prosperity of the area.

Resource Impact

Funds for this transaction are available in the accounts listed below.

Funds available as of January 7, 2025					
ACCOUNT NUMBER	COST CENTER NAME (Program)	CHARACTER/ ACCOUNT NAME	AMENDED BUDGET (Character)	AVAILABLE BALANCE (Character)	AMOUNT
20-121-1521-40-4203- CRA092509	Property & Business Improvement Program CC FY25	Other Operating Expenses/Redevelopment Projects	\$236,740	\$236,740	\$225,000
20-121-1521-40-4203- CRA092508	Commercial Façade Improvement Program CC FY25	Other Operating Expenses/Redevelopment Projects	\$125,000	\$125,000	\$125,000
20-121-1521-40-4203- CRA092506	Streetscape Improvement CC FY25	Other Operating Expenses/Redevelopment Projects	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$54,562
TOTAL AMOUNT ►					\$404,562

Strategic Connections

This item is a FY 2025 Commission Priority, advancing the Affordable Housing and Economic Development initiative.

This item supports the *Press Play Fort Lauderdale 2029* Strategic Plan, specifically advancing:

- The Business Growth and Support Focus Area, Goal 6: Build a diverse and attractive economy

This item advances the *Fast Forward Fort Lauderdale 2035* Vision Plan: We Are Community and We Are Prosperous

This item supports the Advance Fort Lauderdale 2040 Comprehensive Plan, specifically advancing:

- The Business Development Focus Area
- The Economic Development Element
- Goal 2: Enhance the economic competitiveness of Fort Lauderdale through policies and encourage retention and recruitment of businesses and industry which provide living-wage employment and increased training and competitiveness of the local workforce.

Attachments

Exhibit 1 – Location Map, Broward County Property Appraiser Information, Current Images, and Concept Renderings

Exhibit 2 – Funding Application

Exhibit 3 – Improvement Cost & Funding Breakdown, Plans and Illustrations

Exhibit 4 – July 24, 2024, CCRA Approved Minutes

Exhibit 5 – Property and Business Improvement Program Agreement

Exhibit 6 – Non-Residential Facade Improvement Program Agreement

Exhibit 7 – Streetscape Enhancement Program Agreement

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