

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The City of Coleman is located in the north-central section of Sumter County. It is approximately 60 miles northeast of Tampa, 70 miles northwest of Orlando, and 30 miles south of Ocala. It is one of the five incorporated municipalities within the county, and comprises approximately 994 acres or 1.54 square miles of land area. Coleman is situated along U. S. Highway 301. The CSX Railroad operates railway lines which pass through the city. However, the city does not receive services present in prior years.

The citizens, property owners, business owners and city officials of the City of Coleman determined that a plan was needed to solve problems associated with blight, the lack of growth in population and the local economy, and the general decline of the downtown. Henceforth the Coleman Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) was created, and the Redevelopment Plan (henceforth plan) was prepared. Data and information used in this Plan were obtained from City staff and traditional sources. **This Plan is to be used as a guideline for coordinating diverse interest groups and financial investment leading to revitalization of the Redevelopment Area. Strict adherence to this Plan is not required, however, where feasible, redevelopment implementation should be in accord with the Plan.**

This Plan includes projects and initiatives necessary for achieving redevelopment, some of which are simple and inexpensive, and those which are complex, expensive, and require significant coordination to implement. Many of the proposed projects and improvements involve downtown beautification and include landscaping, lighting, building façade upgrades, the creation of additional parking areas, and public facilities improvements. Considered collectively, the projects and initiatives identified in this Plan are ambitious, but realistic. The most fundamental and essential initiative that is necessary for achieving redevelopment is the desire and ability for both the public sector and private sector to work together. There are a variety of mechanisms available to communities to encourage redevelopment. Part of the object of this Plan is to identify those mechanisms which are most pertinent to and likely to stimulate reinvestment in the City of Coleman’s Redevelopment Area. Each chapter offers suggested strategies, projects, and policies for each given subject matter that would stimulate redevelopment if enacted.

**Chapter I: Community Redevelopment Act and Agency**

Within the counties and cities of Florida are areas that have deteriorated over time and cannot be revitalized or redeveloped solely by private interests or through public sector investments. The Florida State Legislature by enacting Part III, Chapter 163, Florida Statutes (F.S.) enabled local governments to establish Community Redevelopment Areas; areas that have stagnated or have declined economically due to slum and blight, and Community Redevelopment Areas; a public body established by the local government to prepare a redevelopment plan used to guide redevelopment, to detail the future use of tax increment finance revenues, and to oversee plan implementations over a thirty (30) year period. The Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) is responsible for coordinating both private and public sector redevelopment activities and efforts. There are many programs and mechanisms available to local governments to encourage redevelopment that are not available to private sector interests. However, local governments cannot revitalize the community alone; it is the private sector through private investment and local involvement that will ultimately lead to plan implementation and redevelopment. This chapter includes a discussion on the required redevelopment plan content, enabling ordinances and resolutions of the Community Redevelopment Agency and Area.

**At the point of Plan adoption, the Community Redevelopment Area includes approximately nine-hundred ninety- four (994) acres and includes the entire city limits. (see figure 2.0)**

## **Chapter II: Land Use Element**

The planned concentration of businesses and residential living opportunities in the same geographic area can function as the critical mass of people and opportunities needed to create a socially and economically vibrant area. In Coleman, one of the ways to create this type of environment and encourage redevelopment is by promoting mixed-use infill development and greater pedestrian activity within the downtown. This chapter suggests modifications to the land development regulations and zoning requirements to encourage redevelopment. The chapter also includes a recommendation to create a Residential Business (RB) zoning classification to allow for mixed-use development.

However there are several requirements of this classification which could be modified to encourage further densification and creation of additional business and residential opportunities in the downtown. The major modification would be to allow principal structures and detached accessory structures within the downtown to be used for either residential or commercial purposes. These modifications would discourage urban sprawl and encourage the use of existing utilities and infrastructure. Further this modification would likely create additional jobs, increase property values, increase property ownership, create housing opportunities for the elderly, attract additional customers, and increase pedestrian activity, while maintaining the architectural character of the downtown.

## **Chapter III: Public Facilities, Utilities, and Capital Improvements Elements**

Redevelopment is neither the sole responsibility of the local government nor local businesses; however, both have a vested interest in redevelopment. Redevelopment will help to attract additional and more affluent consumers, will likely increase business revenues, will likely increase property values, and therefore likely increase local government revenues. In order for redevelopment to occur, local government representatives and local business and property owners must work together through the Plan. This chapter identifies planned improvements and proposed improvements along with associated estimates of cost. Many of the proposed projects and improvements involve downtown beautification and include landscaping, lighting, building façade upgrades, the creation of additional parking areas, and public facilities improvements. These projects are primarily within the public domain, and/or in large part would be the responsibility of the City of Coleman. Planned projects include approximately \$150,000 of improvements including park improvements and road resurfacing in select areas of the downtown. Proposed projects include approximately \$150,000 - \$250,000 of improvements including, but not limited to the following:

- **Demolition and Disposal of Dilapidated Buildings**
- **Streetscaping and Public Parking Improvements**
- **Construction of Affordable Housing**
- **Installation of Drainage Around Downtown Area**
- **Gateway Improvements**
- **Business Incubator**
- **Establishing Historical Building Registry**

- **Ingress/Egress Improvements over CSX Railway Lines**
- **Neighbor Improvements**

**Chapter IV: Population, Income and Housing Element**

As mentioned previously, redevelopment can be encouraged through densification and the attraction of additional residents and residential housing opportunities. Simply stated, the more people living in the downtown, the more likely it is that businesses in the area will be vibrant and economically healthy. This chapter examines the population and related housing trends over the thirty (30) year planning time frame. The current housing stock is in good condition, 70% of which is expected to be maintained in use during the planning time frame. Unfortunately, it appears the City of Coleman population is expected to slightly decrease during the planning time frame. Assuming the population of Coleman to maintain or slightly decline during the planning time frame, there will be a need for  $(318 * .30) = 95$  additional or refurbished units during the planning time frame.

In addition, Coleman’s population is ageing and the demand for affordable elderly housing is increasing. There is a need for rental housing in the downtown for all age groups and income levels, including units for elderly and low-income, units allocated as young/professional/multi-family, units allocated as single family. There are several options and architectural styles for accommodating these additional units including large multi-story/multi-tenant structures, however, the Coleman CRA is promoting mixed-use infill development and accessory structures as discussed in chapter II to maintain the downtown character.

**Chapter V: Transportation, Circulation, and Parking Element**

Based on WRPC staff survey results, planned initiatives and improvements, and especially in anticipation of increased vehicular traffic along U.S. Highway 301, the Coleman CRA has determined that approximately fifty (50) new parking spaces will be needed in the downtown by 2033. In addition, new parking spaces should include short term, long term, and employee parking areas financed by the City of Coleman and private business and property owners as indicated. This chapter identifies the benefits of improving vehicular circulation and parking in mixed-use areas and proposed Gateway improvements. In addition this chapter identifies the need for significant landscaping, median, and gateway improvements along U.S. Highway 301 as a means to beautify the downtown, to stimulate redevelopment, and attract additional visitors.

**Chapter VI: Marketing and Economic Restructuring Element**

A major challenge to downtown redevelopment is to change business and consumer patterns, to interest new consumers, and to reinvent the way downtown is used. This is especially difficult in that consumers have many more options today than in years past for satisfying their business and entertainment needs. The challenge is to attract additional consumers to frequent and purchase District goods and services. This chapter identifies several strategies and projects that could lead to positive economic restructuring and redevelopment in the downtown as follows:

- Improve Business Diversification (including evening activity)
- Encourage New Mixed-Use Businesses
- Encourage Franchise Businesses (where appropriate)
- Improve downtown Appearance and Functionality
- Develop Community Pride
- Market the Downtown as a Tourism and Events Destination
- Market the Downtown as a Regional Antique Shopping Destination
- Market the Downtown as a Retirement Residential Location
- Creation of a Gateway and Commercial Node at the Turnpike
- Creation of a New Industrial Park

**Chapter VII: Funding Element**

Many of the proposed projects, policies, and initiatives identified in this Plan will require financial support as well as human capital. As required by F.S. Chapter 163, this chapter includes a discussion of projected tax increment finance revenue for the planning time frame. Tax increment financing (TIF) has been used by local governments for over fifty (50) years. As property values increase due to redevelopment, an incremental increase in TIF revenues are created in the Redevelopment Area.

The increment created between the baseline and new assessed value is captured by local government and is used solely for improvements identified in the Plan. TIF revenue is revenue that would not otherwise be available to the local government if the tax increment finance district was not established. The expected TIF revenue over the planning time frame is approximately \$80,000 - \$150,000 or more. This chapter also associates proposed improvements with potential federal and state grant and loan programs, and includes a general implementation schedule and general activity implementation schedule with year, project/activity, priority, and funding source identified as applicable. While projects and activities may not necessarily be implemented according to schedule, effort should be made to follow the schedules and amend or revise the schedules as necessary.

**Appendices:**

**Appendix “A”** includes demographic data taken from the 2000 census to include information related to population, housing, income and educational attainment within the City of Coleman, Florida. Some of the tables involve statistical analysis and manipulations by WRPC staff as noted.

**NO MAPS**