

RRA Quarterly Report, April 2022

The following report will serve as the quarterly status update as stipulated in the Agreement for Services between the City of Rutland and the Rutland Redevelopment Authority. In accordance with the Agreement these status updates will be made to the Mayor and Board of Aldermen following the conclusion of each quarter of the year and will provide an update on the RRA's progress in regards to: A) Grant Administration, B) Grand List and Job Development, C) Housing Initiatives and Blighted Properties.

- A) Grant Administration – Please see the attached spreadsheet for details on completed, current, and future grant administration projects.

- B) Grand List and Job Development – The RRA is participating in several current projects which could lead to improvement to the Grand List and increased jobs within the City.
 - 1. The RRA continues working in collaboration with CEDRR, RRPC, DRP and other regional stakeholders on the ongoing Regional Marketing initiative with the RA ED serving on a steering committee which provides guidance for the overall initiative. During the past quarter CEDRR has officially disengaged from their third-party vendor, LIFT Marketing, and is now utilizing CEDRR staff and two local contractors to continue the marketing campaign. Fundraising from regional municipalities and businesses to support the regional marketing campaign continues.
 - 2. RRA staff have continued to serve on a Zoning By-law Advisory Committee assisting the RPC and Zoning Administrator to develop additional Bylaw language and process for a comprehensive rewrite. The past quarter included meetings held by the planning commission to help them better understand general zoning implications and real-world scenarios of the proposed changes. RPC has a proposed timeline of finalizing a working draft before March 2023.
 - 3. RRA continues working to facilitate the disposition and redevelopment of several underutilized industrial or commercial sites.
 - 4. The RRA and other regional ED partners have continued ongoing discussion and facilitation around the redevelopment of the former CSJ campus site. During the past quarter a small working group of Economic Development and Housing leaders has convened several times to work on appropriate next steps for redevelopment. The need for additional market rate housing in the community, and the assets of the CSJ campus, makes a housing development initiative seem appropriate. Continued planning steps to map out best uses of the site are currently underway.
 - 5. The RRA and other regional ED partners have been involved in ongoing discussions with the VFFC leadership on ways to redevelop and enhance their current campus and abutting properties. In October the BOA approved Zamias funds be used to support a new planning phase utilizing third party consultants. Several criteria were imposed prior to funds being disbursed which are still being completed. This Fall substantial environmental contamination was discovered, as part of a Phase II environmental assessment, which has

impacted the current business operations at the site. On a positive note, the VFFC announced they have been awarded a \$1.6M federal appropriation in March to support future improvements at the 251 West Street campus.

6. The past quarter saw the commencement of planning for the Center Street redeployment of streetscape features in coordination with the Rec and Parks Dept. and DPW. It is anticipated that the parklet decks and associated safety features will be in place for use by the end of May.
7. The initiative to pursue a permanent implementation plan for the Center Street enhancement continues. This past quarter the City/RRA continued the Scoping Study work with Dubois & King. This study is nearing completion and it is anticipated that three conceptual designs will be publicly released for stakeholder and public discussion in late April, 2022 and that a supported design will emerge from the process. Next steps will include determining whether a separate planning initiative will be required to define the site's specific infrastructure requirements and costs, or whether this element can be done in-house, and seeking funding for implementation is now appropriate.
8. The RRA and DRP continue work on the Downtown Pedestrian Wayfinding Sign initiative. Due to delays in required approval and supply chain issues with ordering materials the signs went into production in March. Installation is currently expected to be completed by late Spring.
9. In the past quarter RRA reviewed and recommended, and BOA approved, BIAP grants to Marble Valley Catering, LLC, operating at 22 Killington Ave., and Arson Ltd. Co., operating at 150 West Street.
10. 2022 collection of existing BIAP ELP loans is currently being coordinated by the Treasurer's Office with most loan terms ending in May or June, 2022
11. As part of the City's ARPA funding process the RRA provided a request for funding of a local "Business Plan Competition" initiative which was funded \$125,000, and a Market Rate Housing initiative, which was funded \$300,000. Planning towards the implementation of both of these initiatives, with appropriate community partners, is currently underway.

C) Housing Initiatives and Blighted Properties – The following progress has been made towards the remediation of Rutland City's vacant and blighted properties and focus on improving City housing.

1. RRA continues to help facilitate the city owned property disposition process with ongoing review and recommendations and the RRA ED and Board Chairman serving on the steering committee. There were four properties reviewed and approved for sale in the past quarter.
2. RRA continues to oversee the City's Vacant/Blighted Residential Property Tax Stabilization program. There were no applicants in the past quarter.
3. Discussion about improving market rate rental housing inventory in the City/region continues to be an important topic. The approved ARPA funding should allow the City to now actively support rehab and improvements. Current planning discussion with NWWVT is occurring to create an appropriate loan program to serve this market.

4. RRA continues working with other interested stakeholders to facilitate discussion with Brixmor Property Group around possible improvement to the Rutland Plaza site. Ideas to improve both vitality and traffic/pedestrian flow within the northern section of the Plaza have seen progress. In late March the City was notified of being awarded approximately \$300,000 through VTrans to support this initiative.
5. The initiative for creating a future TIF District in the City saw continued progress in the past quarter. The consultant, White + Burke Real Estate Advisors, has met several times with the stakeholders working group and potential project sites have been identified. Work on defining a potential district's boundaries and more detailed financial analysis of a district's capacity is expected in the coming months.