

## Palm Beach County Office of Community Revitalization

# EDUCATE. ENGAGE. CONNECT.

*Building Our Communities One Neighborhood At A Time*



**D**esigned to provide neighborhoods with a link to County government, the OCR assists neighborhood groups and residents in effectively accessing and using County services and other community resources to enhance the quality of life in Palm Beach County's neighborhoods.

The mission of the OCR is to strengthen and improve Palm Beach County (PBC) neighborhoods by engaging citizens' participation, enhancing governmental response to community needs and providing education, technical and financial assistance to help residents plan and implement sustainable neighborhood improvements.

The OCR facilitates and coordinates community revitalization initiatives within designated residential neighborhoods in unincorporated Palm Beach County. The OCR recommends allocation of general funds which are utilized in partnership with funding from other County departments to initiate and complete community revitalization projects such as paving, drainage, water, streetlights, neighborhood parks, land acquisition, and feasibility studies. In addition, the OCR works with other departments to review annexations and development proposals for consistency with community revitalization goals.

The OCR offers a wide variety of programs and services to assist residents in effectively accessing and utilizing County services and resources and enabling them to manage community related issues to reverse community decline.

The OCR offers the following programs over the year:

- **Abundant Community Initiative (ACI)** – ACI is a neighborhood engagement and community organizing framework that provides tools for neighbors to get to know and connect with each other at the block level, shape community life according to residents' vision for their neighborhood, build community identity and pride through shared ownership and responsibility, increase safety and neighborhood wellbeing, and foster an environment of care for one another. The overall goal of the initiative is to help communities to be places where people know their neighbors, watch out for each other, and enjoy many opportunities for social, educational and recreational interaction.

## EDUCATE



## ENGAGE



## CONNECT



## Palm Beach County Office of Community Revitalization

- **Back to School PBC!** – Back to School PBC! is an annual event planned, funded and implemented by the Office of Community Revitalization in partnership with County departments, the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office, the Spirit of Giving Network, the Children Services Council of Palm Beach County, and a collaboration of several community based organizations and volunteers. The event provides free backpacks, school supplies, food, a health fair and access to community resources for Palm Beach County students in need from Pre-K through 12th grade from low or no income families enrolled in the public or charter school system. In addition to the backpacks and school supplies, and depending on the location and resource availability, participating students may also receive haircuts, school uniforms, sneakers, socks, blood tests, biometric health screenings, vision screening, hearing tests and other health-related services to ensure they are ready for the first day of school. The event also provides families with exposure to other community resources to help them on their road to self-sufficiency and improve their children's success in school.
- **Neighborhood Engagement and Transformation (NEAT) Grants Program** – This program provides funding to neighborhood based groups and/or organizations for projects that improve the quality of life in their communities. The NEAT Grants Program enables residents to develop small collaborative community projects and see their ideas through to completion. Grants may be used for a wide variety of activities and projects, and resident groups are encouraged to think in new ways about what will work in their communities and with whom they might partner. NEAT grants are intended to build the skills and capacity of project leaders to transform their neighborhoods.
- **Neighborhood Street Lighting Program (NSL)** – This program was created to provide funding for the installation and maintenance of citizen petitioned streetlights at approved locations along County owned and maintained roadways in designated CCRT areas that experience above-average nighttime criminal activity, as well as unsafe pedestrian and vehicular mobility conditions.
- **Neighborhood Speed Hump Program** – This program provides funding for the installation and maintenance of citizen petitioned speed humps at approved locations along County owned and maintained roadways within CCRT areas to improve both vehicular and pedestrian safety.

The OCR also provides or supports the following services to Palm Beach County residents:

- **Link to Local Government** – The OCR serves as the liaison office on behalf of Palm Beach County and OCR staff is often called upon to help schedule meetings with neighborhood groups and organizations, county staff and other governmental entities to seek input on community concerns and determine what assistance can be provided by the County.
- **CCRT and GTAC Coordination** – The OCR facilitates, and collaborates with other County Departments on, the Countywide Community Revitalization Team (CCRT) and Glades Technical Advisory Committee. The CCRT was created to coordinate stabilization/revitalization activities in designated Palm Beach County neighborhoods. The CCRT meets the 3rd Tuesday of every month at the Vista Center, in West Palm Beach, and focuses on eastern Palm Beach County.



GTAC, which focuses on the Glades communities, meets the third Thursday of every month rotating locations in Belle Glade, South Bay, Pahokee, and Canal Point.

Regularly scheduled meetings allow County departments and residents to exchange information about what departments are doing, receive input from the residents, prevent duplication, concentrate efforts at the same time, and determine what is working and what is not.

- **Individual and Community Meetings** – Individual meetings are typically held to address specific community concerns and provide training or guidance to neighborhood leaders on specific subjects. Community meetings are held throughout the County to seek input on specific issues or projects, provide information on County programs, and bring together a cross-section of viewpoints to exchange ideas and information, identify resources and volunteers, and establish goals and action plans when necessary. These meetings are a great opportunity to undertake a community dialogue on citizen engagement to identify how citizens wish to be involved in shaping community life and how the local government can contribute to meeting citizen aspirations.
- **Community Connection Workshops** – These workshops are designed to engage, inform, and educate citizens on a variety of topics of interest to residents and community groups (e.g., grant writing, how to create a neighborhood watch, etc.) The workshops are a great opportunity for neighborhood leaders to interact and learn from one another. Workshops are typically held on a quarterly basis.
- **Speaking Engagements** – The OCR makes presentations to neighborhood groups and civic organizations, schools, and homeowners' associations on a variety of topics, and coordinates with other organizations as needed. These speaking engagements are a great way for residents to learn about the many programs and services offered by the OCR and Palm Beach County.
- **Referral Program** – The OCR provides referrals to government programs and services, receives citizen complaints about neighborhood issues, and coordinates with other County departments and outside organizations to better serve the public. The OCR provides resource referral and facilitates problem-solving for neighborhood-identified issues. The OCR responds to various concerns by gathering information, examining the issues, and either making referrals or developing options and implementing solutions.
- **Brochures and Handouts** – Brochures and handouts are designed and used to inform residents about OCR's programs, important events, meeting announcements, and volunteer opportunities. Templates are also designed and made available to community groups to use in their outreach initiatives.
- **Website** – The OCR's website is intended to better educate and communicate with citizens. It provides information on OCR programs and services, and a wealth of information and tools to help residents stabilize and revitalize their communities. Through the website, citizens can provide feedback on OCR programs and services, request assistance, register for workshops and sign up for OCR's *Community Connect* publication.

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- **Community Toolbox** – OCR staff, through a partnership with the Work Group for Community Health and Development at the University of Kansas and other local and global partners, offers through the OCR's website a community toolbox. The toolbox includes English and Spanish step-by-step guidelines, real-life examples, checklists and training materials for those who want to create community change and improvement.



The community toolbox provides tools to learn a community-building skill, help residents to get a quick start in doing key activities in community work, solve problems that are common when doing community work, access different sources of information about what works in addressing specific problems or goals related to community health and development and learn from others. The community toolbox is free.

For more information on OCR programs and initiatives, please visit our website at <http://www.pbcgov.com/ocr> or email us at [ocrnews@pbcgov.org](mailto:ocrnews@pbcgov.org)

January 2023

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Office of Community Revitalization**  
County Administration

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Palm Beach County  
Board of County Commissioners

