



2016  
CLEVELAND  
AVENUE  
REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

PREPARED BY

EDAW | AECOM  
DESIGN, PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTS WORLDWIDE

PREPARED FOR

Fort Myers Community Redevelopment Agency

IN ASSOCIATION WITH

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PLAN WAS ADOPTED ON DECEMBER 6, 2010  
UPDATE WAS ADOPTED ON JUNE 6, 2016

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## FOREWORD

The 2010 Cleveland Plan was conceptually adopted April 25, 2007 and formally adopted December 6, 2010, together with an Addendum that comprises the complete 2010 Cleveland Plan. The planning process for this 2010 Cleveland Plan incorporated a high level of public and stakeholder involvement, including public and steering committee workshops, widely distributed post cards and newsletters, and many one-on-one stakeholder interviews. The main goals of the Plan stated on page 5 were to “improve the appearance of the corridor and to encourage private investment and quality redevelopment in the corridor.” Improving the safety and comfort of the pedestrian realm is also a priority for the plan, as stated on page 29. In keeping with these overall goals and priority of the 2010 Cleveland Plan, the 2014 Update seeks to clarify and correct some aspects of the 2010 Cleveland Plan based on current information to further these goals and priority:

- Conditions and analysis incorporated in the Technical Memorandums supporting stormwater infrastructure improvement projects were inadvertently left out of the Plan document, and these should be added to the Plan for continuity with the data, analysis and public involvement that was conducted in support of the Plan.
- The long-term proposal in the 2010 Cleveland Plan to acquire 40 feet of additional right-of-way to accommodate an envisioned ultimate streetscape design is not practical, given the extent to which it would impact private property. The Update introduces an alternative concept for improvements within the existing Cleveland Avenue right-of-way to attain the identified and adopted pedestrian realm improvement goals of the plan.
- The 2010 Cleveland Plan contains a 5-Year Action Plan outlining proposed projects to be completed by 2015. This was reviewed and updated for accuracy, to reflect the CRA funding mechanism per Statute, and to provide for action items looking ahead through the thirty year timespan after the 2010 Plan adoption (through 2040) as provided in Florida Statute 163.362.
- Demographic and property data in the 2010 Cleveland Plan (including Addendum) documented 2004 conditions and the geographic areas for this data were not consistent with the CRA boundaries. The 2014 Update reflects demographic and property data accurate to 2010 or later for area within the CRA boundaries.

# FOREWORD

The changes of the 2014 Update are highlighted in the following table. These changes provide for the corrections and alternatives that enhance the ability of the plan to be implemented consistent with goals of improving the appearance of the corridor and encouraging private investment and quality redevelopment in the corridor, and priority to improve safety and comfort of the pedestrian realm.

Should any statements in this plan conflict with state or local regulations, the state or local regulations in effect shall apply.

Theme	Pages	Explanation
<b><i>Cleveland Plan Updates</i></b>		
Stormwater Infrastructure	Executive Summary: 3 Corridor Analysis: 11, 13, 16 Redevelopment Framework: 22 Implementation: 45, 53	Identify existing facilities and potential for stormwater infrastructure projects to provide benefits to properties within the CRA, including improvements at Fort Myers Country Club. Identify the potential for a stormwater credit system that could be made available to properties within the CRA to help in meeting water management district criteria when seeking to redevelop.
Traffic & Transportation Infrastructure	Corridor Analysis: 16 Redevelopment Framework: 22, 37, 38, 39 Implementation: 54	Update 2004 traffic counts (45,900 to 63,000 vehicles per day) with 2013 traffic counts (48,500 to 55,000 vehicles per day) in the corridor. Update existing LeeTran facilities and routes with current information including reference to multimodal facility at Edison Mall. Designate the Ultimate street section that was recommended as a long term solution requiring 40 feet of right-of-way acquisition as Alternate A. Add an Alternate B cross section to illustrate potential for lane reduction and safety improvements within the existing right-of-way. Remove reference to parking deck at intersection of Cleveland and Edison. Add reference to consideration of alternate routes.
Demographics & Real Estate Market Conditions	Corridor Analysis: 18, 19, 20	Update 2005 demographic data to the 2010 and 2014 data and reflect the data within the CRA boundary, not 1/4- to 1/2- mile outside the boundary. Update real estate conditions data from 1994-2005 provided through Lee County Property Appraiser Tax Roll information with 2013 data.
District 2 Land Uses	Redevelopment Framework: 22	In addition to mixed use, neighborhood oriented commercial uses, add office and medical uses as recommended for District 2 given proximity to the hospital.
Reorganize "Big Moves" in Action Plan	Implementation: 45	Correct the references to "New Design Overlay" and "Revise Mixed Use Zoning Categories" to more accurate description of "Code Revisions." Add reference to "bicyclist".
Funding Strategies	Implementation: 58,59	Identify that the CRA may fund special events. Remove outdated explanations of state and federal grants and programs and consolidate these into a list. Add funding strategies that are typical mechanisms used by CRAs. Insert section titled "Grants" explaining the CRA's use of TIF funds to provide grants to property owners for physical improvements to property. Insert section titled "Public/Private Partnerships" to describe this as a mechanism.
Action Plan Matrix	Implementation: 60	Adjust timeframe of action plan past 5 years to allow for projects 10 years and beyond. Add reference to "bicyclist".
Typographical, Names & Formatting	Corridor Analysis: 11, 13 Redevelopment Framework: 22 Implementation: 53 Action Plan Matrix	Revise general errors such as misspellings. Rename "Red Sox Stadium" as "City of Palms Park." Remove photographs and correct formatting.

# FOREWORD

Theme	Pages	Explanation
<b>Action Plan Updates</b>		
Heading		Remove reference to "Five Year" to allow for longer term projects, consistent with the 30-year span of the Redevelopment Area per Florida Statutes.
Project Responsibility & Funding Sources		Remove the listing of Responsible Party and Recommended Funding Sources. Replace with heading that states TIF dollars may be used on all projects, and "Notes" column to indicate cooperation with other entities.
ROW Required & Concept Plan Required		Remove unnecessary reference to needs for ROW or Concept Plans
Economic Development		Remove outdated tasks of Retail Inventory and Catalyst Project redevelopment of Colonial Crossings. Include rebates and grants as part of Economic Incentive Initiatives.
Policy		Move references to zoning policies and density bonuses to consolidate in one place under Urban Design. Adjust easement acquisition program to be permissive ("may") rather than required ("shall").
Urban Design		Consolidate Land Use, Design Overlay and Design Guidelines tasks into one "Revisions to Zoning Overlay" item. Consolidate Landscape Grants and Façade Renovation Grants into one "Development Assistance / Grants" item. Add reference to "bicyclist".
Transportation		Remove Parking Deck project at intersection of Cleveland and Edison. Add PD&E Study as a project. Add reference to "bicyclist".
Open Space		Correct reference to Red Sox Stadium and Old Town District. Remove reference to Parks & Plaza Program because open space incentives are included in zoning overlay task. Add reference to "bicyclist".
Marketing		Revise reference to programming events around the Red Sox Stadium to refer to facilitating events throughout the CRA.
<b>Plan Addendum</b>		
General	64, 66, 68, 72, 75, 77	Updates including date updates, plan term updates, and minor title and text changes. Correct dates of April 22, 2009 and January 28, 2009 to reflect official adoption date of December 2010. Refer to Plan as adopted "and amended." Remove "Five Year" description of Action Plan
Population & Land Use	69, 70, 74	Update land use and population within the CRA boundary to current figures.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## 2010 CLEVELAND AVENUE REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

### MAYOR

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Councilmember Levon Simms  
Councilmember Michael A. Flanders  
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## 2014 PLAN UPDATE

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Cleveland Avenue Redevelopment Plan creates a comprehensive redevelopment strategy for the Cleveland Avenue corridor in the City of Fort Myers. The redevelopment strategy addresses urban design, transportation, economic development, and real estate market issues in a coordinated fashion. A high level of public and stakeholder involvement was used throughout the process, including public and steering committee workshops, widely distributed post cards and newsletters, and many one-on-one stakeholder interviews.

The study corridor is an approximately 3.5-mile long, predominantly commercial corridor stretching from Boy Scout Drive in the south to downtown Fort Myers in the north. The Cleveland Avenue corridor is a major regional transportation corridor (US 41) carrying traffic north-south and providing connectivity for the Fort Myers-Cape Coral region. From a local perspective, Cleveland Avenue serves as a gateway to the City of Fort Myers and to the downtown in particular.

In the first phase of the project, current conditions along the Cleveland Avenue corridor were studied and documented. The results of this study are captured in the Phase I Technical Memorandum. Physical aspects of the corridor that were studied include land use, transportation, urban design, building condition, and opportunities and constraints. Demographic and economic aspects that were studied include trends in population, household, and income growth.

The land use of the Cleveland Avenue corridor is primarily commercial with neighborhoods surrounding the corridor. This land use arrangement presents one of the main challenges for the redevelopment of the corridor - land use transitions between a high level of activity on the corridor and quiet residential neighborhoods away from the corridor. The corridor is also notable for its land use anchors - Lee Memorial Hospital and the Edison Mall, which provide stability and attract people to the corridor in large numbers. Overall, the physical character of Cleveland Avenue was described as having a public realm, limited pedestrian conditions, and a varying quality of building condition and design.

Demographically, Fort Myers and the study area are expected to see continued population growth that will drive new housing development. Continued employment growth is also expected, especially office-oriented types of employment. With regard to the retail market, Fort Myers is the dominant retail submarket in the region but is seeing increasing competition from new retail development in south Lee County.

Based on public input from a design charrette workshop, a concept plan was developed with four districts, each with different proposals for land use and urban design patterns. The first district is called "Cleveland Cultural District," on the northernmost end of the study area, and borrows its design template from downtown Fort Myers. The second district is a proposed neighborhood mixed-use district, consisting of new multifamily residential over neighborhood-serving retail. The third district is a proposed Cleveland Avenue Town Center, another a mixed-use district but with a more commercial focus and a network of pedestrian connections across the differing land uses. The fourth district is a proposed regional destination shopping district with a more suburban character than the other three districts.



Three public workshops were held to develop plan concepts

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Four major urban design themes also emerged from the workshop:

- Create human-scaled architecture and outdoor spaces
- Provide a comfortable and friendly environment for pedestrians
- Mitigate the effect of large parking lots so they are no longer barren, inhospitable places
- Develop guidelines for the use of landscaping, street furniture, signs, and plant materials

Detailed recommendations for the pedestrian realm, for architectural design guidelines, sign guidelines, and for landscape design are presented in the Phase II Technical Memorandum. However, all of these recommendations are based on the four principles above and on coordinating public and private investments into continually improving the public realm. One of the action items identified for the implementation phase is the development of more specific design guidelines for the corridor, to provide more helpful guidance for future development and renovations.

Economic development projects include creating a business and retail inventory, catalyst redevelopment projects, a possible Business Improvement District, and economic incentives. The purpose of these initiatives is for corridor businesses to work in a more coordinated fashion for marketing and physical improvements, and also to incentivize key investment on the corridor.

Land use and community policy projects include increasing the flexibility of mixed-use regulations, acquiring easements, providing density bonuses, improving community policing, and improved sign code enforcement. The thinking behind these projects is to align regulations and incentives with the goals of the redevelopment plan. Current regulations encourage development patterns that detract from rather than contribute to the public realm.

Urban design projects include gateways, a potential design overlay or design guidelines, landscaping and facade renovation grants, wayfinding signs, and new streetscapes. The centerpiece of the Redevelopment Plan is new pedestrian streetscapes that will encourage walking and shopping along Cleveland Avenue, as well as provide a consistent and improved image. This suite of initiatives works to create a new set of standards for new development, while also working to incrementally improve the appearance of existing development.

Stormwater projects include those improvements needed to allow smaller sites to redevelop. Stormwater improvements include off-site stormwater facilities, lakes, dry detention or water management systems and infrastructure that provides a benefit to properties within the CRA. This includes the potential for a stormwater credit system that could be made available to properties within the CRA to help in meeting water management district permit criteria when seeking to redevelop.

Transportation projects include installing a new median, creating pedestrian-friendly street crossings, possibly adding a parking deck, and long term plans for a Cleveland Avenue Shuttle. The goal of these projects is to improve the transportation operations of a limited-width corridor, while at the same time increasing the viability and desirability of transportation alternatives along Cleveland Avenue.

Open space projects include new greenways and a strategy for identifying new parks and plazas. Increased open space was one of the major desired elements of public participants to the plan.

Marketing projects include creating a regular newsletter and increasing events at venues along the corridor. Marketing is important because it helps to create an awareness of the progress occurring along the corridor and promote private sector participation in Fort Myers Redevelopment Agency initiatives.

THE REDEVELOPMENT STRATEGY ADDRESSES URBAN DESIGN, TRANSPORTATION, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND REAL ESTATE MARKET ISSUES IN A COORDINATED FASHION.

**2014 Update**  
For explanation of changes, see the Foreword on pages i-iii

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



# PROJECT OVERVIEW

CLEVELAND AVENUE REDEVELOPMENT PLAN • ADOPTED DECEMBER 2010

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Cleveland Area Redevelopment Plan provides a vision and development strategy for the length of Cleveland Avenue in the City of Fort Myers, which runs approximately 3.5 miles from downtown Fort Myers to the Page Field Airport.

The goal of the plan is to improve the appearance of the corridor and to encourage private investment and quality redevelopment in the corridor. The study area encompasses the area approximately  $\frac{1}{4}$  -  $\frac{1}{2}$  miles east and west of Cleveland Avenue with predominantly commercial uses along the corridor. The plan will guide the policy and actions of the Fort Myers Redevelopment Agency in the Cleveland Avenue area. Specifically, the Redevelopment Plan provides guidance on how funds from the four existing redevelopment districts along Cleveland Avenue should be spent to collectively improve the corridor. The plan addresses land use, beautification, economic development, transportation improvements, and area character.



Public stakeholders and planning team work on urban design issues

## PLAN PHASES AND PUBLIC MEETINGS

The planning process included a series of phases, with each phase involving a different aspect of research and plan development. Each phase of the plan included public meetings as part of the overall public outreach process. The plan phases worked from broad ideas and concepts to specific proposals over time.

### Phase I: Understanding the Community

- This phase focused on gathering background information and identifying key issues that were addressed in later phases of the plan.
- Public Meeting: January 12, 2006 - Public Visioning Session. During this meeting the broad vision was established and issues facing the corridor were introduced.

### Phase II: Design and Plan Concepts

- This phase allowed various scenarios and concepts to be explored to encourage an open, creative plan development process.
- Public Meeting: March 16, 2006 - Community Work Session and Presentation. This was the community's primary opportunity to shape the plan in a detailed, block-by-block fashion. During this hands-on session, the public was encouraged to participate actively in the design process for the corridor.

### Phase III: Documenting the Vision

- During this phase, details of implementation were determined and discussed.
- Public Meeting: August 24, 2006 - Community Open House. At this meeting, the public was able to view the components of the Redevelopment Plan and to provide comments and suggestions for revisions and strategy improvements.





# CORRIDOR ANALYSIS – KEY FINDINGS

# PHYSICAL

## LAND USE

Land use along the Cleveland Avenue corridor is predominantly commercial and institutional (62% of land use is commercial and 15% is institutional along the corridor). Single-family, multi-family, office, and light industrial land uses are also present. Immediately off the corridor the land use is predominantly single-family neighborhoods. Downtown, immediately to the north of the corridor is mixed-use. Land uses off the corridor south of Winkler Avenue are more often commercial and multi-family than single-family.

The Cleveland Avenue area current land use arrangement provides minimal transition between commercial and office uses immediately on the corridor and single-family land uses beyond. Significant large-scale land uses include Lee Memorial Hospital and Fort Myers High School as institutions, Edison Mall as commercial, and Fort Myers Country Club as open space/recreation.



The redevelopment study area is organized into four redevelopment districts. Each district has somewhat distinct land use characteristics.

### District 1

District 1 has the most institutional land uses as well as the most residential land uses out of the four districts. However it still has a large amount of commercial uses as well. Institutional uses are largely composed of Lee Memorial Hospital and a few churches on the corridor. Residential land uses in District 1 include both single-family and multi-family land uses. The land uses in District 1 reflect the close proximity and occasional land use conflict between commercial and single-family uses along the corridor.

### District 2

District 2 is dominated by commercial land uses, but like District 1 has much single-family and multi-family land use. District 2 also has a significant amount of light industrial land uses. Like District 1, District 2 reflects some of the land use conflicts in the corridor.

### District 3

District 3 is almost exclusively commercial land uses. No residential uses occur in District 3, though there are residential uses immediately adjacent to its boundaries. There is a significant amount of light industrial land use in District 3 as well.

### District 4

District 4 land use is predominantly commercial, with a large amount of medium density residential as well. Most of the medium density residential land is represented in one large trailer park. Most of the institutional land is owned by the airport to prevent development that would obstruct flight patterns. District 4 has a significant percentage of office development as well.



One of the few gathering places on Cleveland Avenue

## BUILDING CONDITION

A visual survey of the corridor was conducted to ascertain physical conditions of buildings. Building condition represents both the level of investment in the corridor and the potential for redevelopment of certain parcels. Building conditions are rated as follows:

- Standard – Building is in good condition
- Substandard – Building is in visible need of repairs or upgrades, but is in adequate condition
- Deteriorated – Building needs serious repair or renovations, but is still usable on a temporary basis
- Dilapidated – Building is likely not habitable and should be demolished

There were a significant number of substandard and deteriorated buildings on the corridor. These buildings occur throughout the corridor, but are more common north of Winkler Avenue. The current variability of building condition reflects the need for new investment and redevelopment in the corridor. Since many of the substandard or worse parcels on the corridor are large or are adjacent to other substandard parcels, there is significant opportunity for property assemblage and redevelopment in the corridor.



Building condition varies greatly along the corridor

“GOOD IDEA FOR A BLUE-PRINT FOR CLEVELAND AVENUE. MAYBE WE CAN GET THE MONEY TO PUT THE PLAN IN PLACE”.  
- WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT

## ISSUES MAP

As the project team toured the corridor, photos were taken to document important conditions. The Existing Conditions Photo Map on the following page presents photos that were taken along the corridor and the approximate location in which they were taken. This series of images gives a living pictorial impression of the physical character of the corridor as well as illustrating some key issues that occur along the corridor.

Some of the issues that are identified by this Existing Conditions Photo Map are listed below:

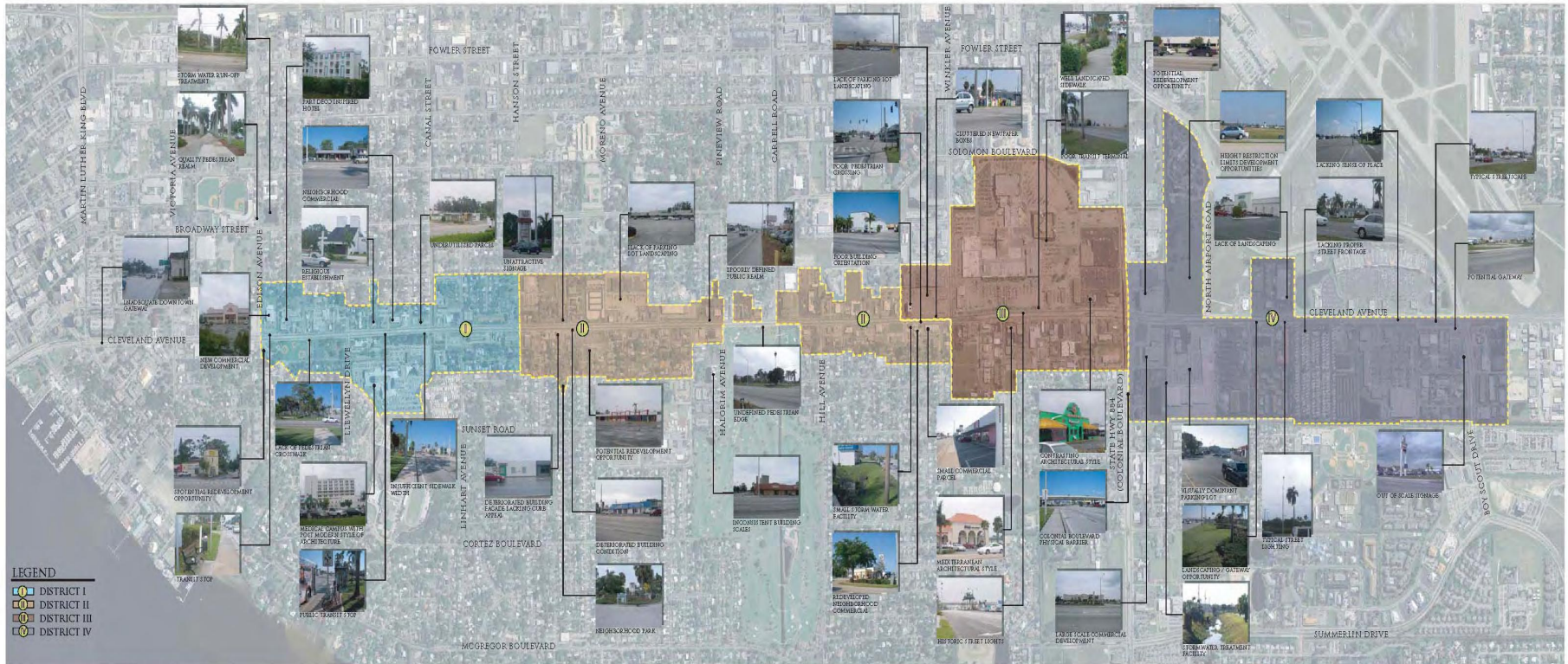
- Gateway opportunities
- Pedestrian conditions
- Property conditions, including potential redevelopment opportunities
- Transit stop conditions
- Aesthetic issues, including landscaping and signs
- Stormwater facilities
- Street furniture

Overall, the photos document notably varied conditions along the corridor. Attractive new properties are near to deteriorated and neglected properties. Architectural style and landscaping varies greatly, and there is no consistent standard. Generally, the corridor lacks a sense of place and the public realm is neglected or overlooked. Pedestrian facilities tend to be marginal. In short, these photos document the current neglected state of the corridor and the public realm.



THE QUALITY OF BUILDING AND PROPERTY CONDITIONS VARIED GREATLY ALONG THE CORRIDOR...

# CORRIDOR ANALYSIS – KEY FINDINGS



- LEGEND**
- I DISTRICT I
  - II DISTRICT II
  - III DISTRICT III
  - IV DISTRICT IV



**CLEVELAND AVENUE**  
REDEVELOPMENT PLAN



## OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS ANALYSIS MAP

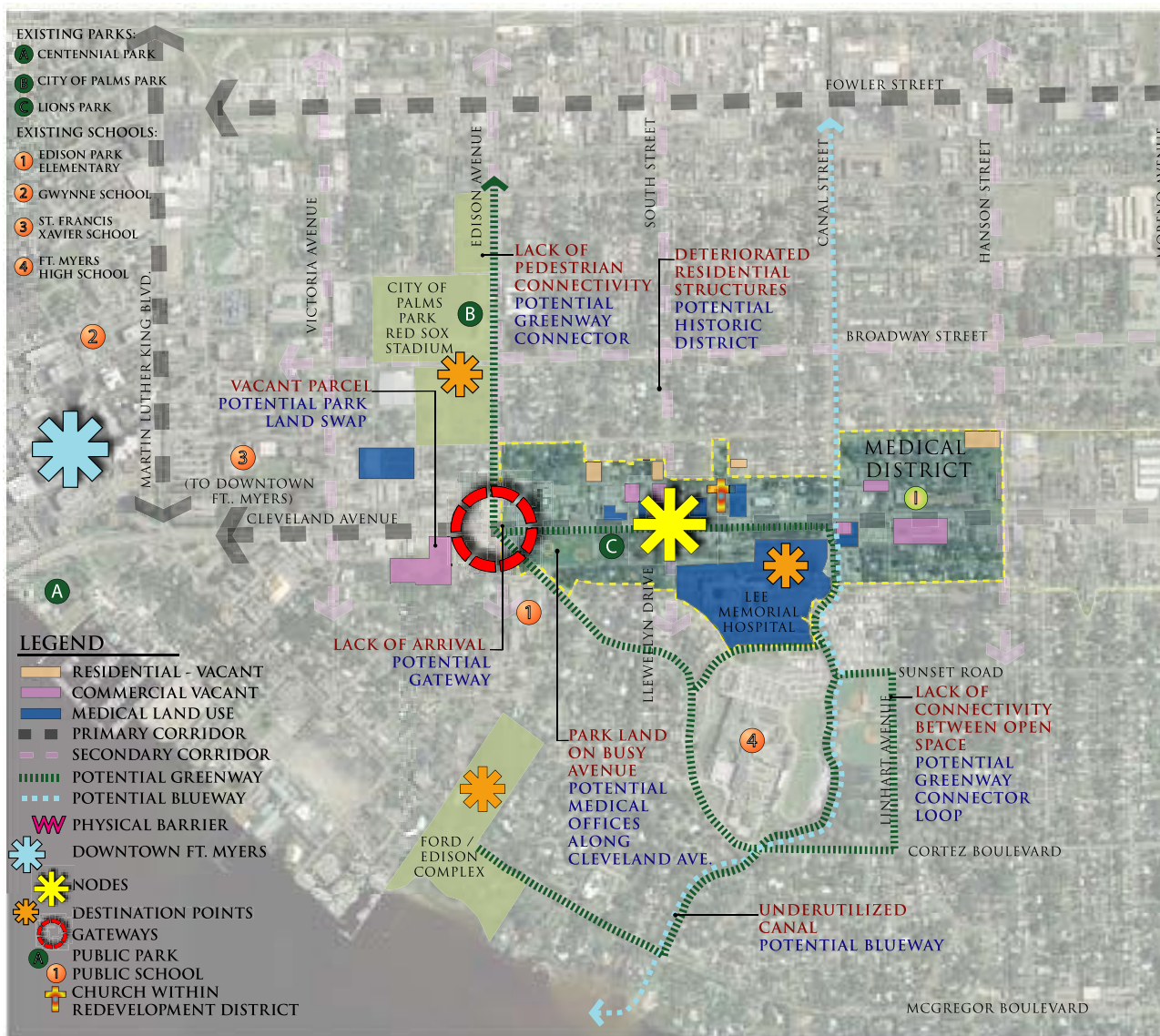
The Opportunities and Constraints Map creates a highly visual representation of identified opportunities and constraints. This map is presented on the following pages and includes potential districts, vacant properties, medical uses, schools, parks, gateways, barriers, and location-specific opportunities and constraints.

The Opportunities & Constraints Map identifies the four districts that formed the basis of the district concepts on the Redevelopment Framework section of this report. Two potential nodes are also identified, one at the intersection of Edison and Cleveland and the other in front of the Mall. Three potential gateways are identified. One gateway would serve as an introduction to downtown Fort Myers, the City of Palms Park, and the Edison/Ford complex. Another gateway would serve as an entrance into the City of Fort Myers from the south. A third gateway would serve to enhance the sense of transition between District 3 and 4, which is currently marked by the bridge of Colonial Boulevard.

Some key conclusions from the Opportunities and Constraints Map are listed below:

- Marginal transitions - clear delineation/transition between commercial and single-family residential uses will help to restore this neighborhood.
- Architectural style varies greatly along the corridor. A greater definition and consistency may be given to the corridor by establishing architectural standards or types for the corridor or for its different districts.
- Small parcels pose an obstacle to redevelopment of the corridor. Parcels are more limited in their possibilities for development and pose more of an issue for meeting water management criteria, access and parking. The Redevelopment Plan identifies a strategy for creating a water quality credit program available to small parcels and land assembly.
- Some properties suffer from unattractive parking lots and/or lack of landscaping. Some of these parcels are identified on this map. Overall landscaping standards may be able to help address these issues, as well as site-specific landscaping plans for problem properties.
- Overall streetscape improvements are recommended for the corridor. Streetscaping will help to define the public realm and create a sense of place. Streetscaping will help to reinforce the definition of whatever districts are identified for the corridor.

2014 Update  
For explanation  
of changes,  
see the Foreword  
on pages i-iii



OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS  
MAP: DISTRICT 1

- ANCHOR DISTRICT
- KEY CULTURAL FACILITIES
- ENTRY TO DOWNTOWN



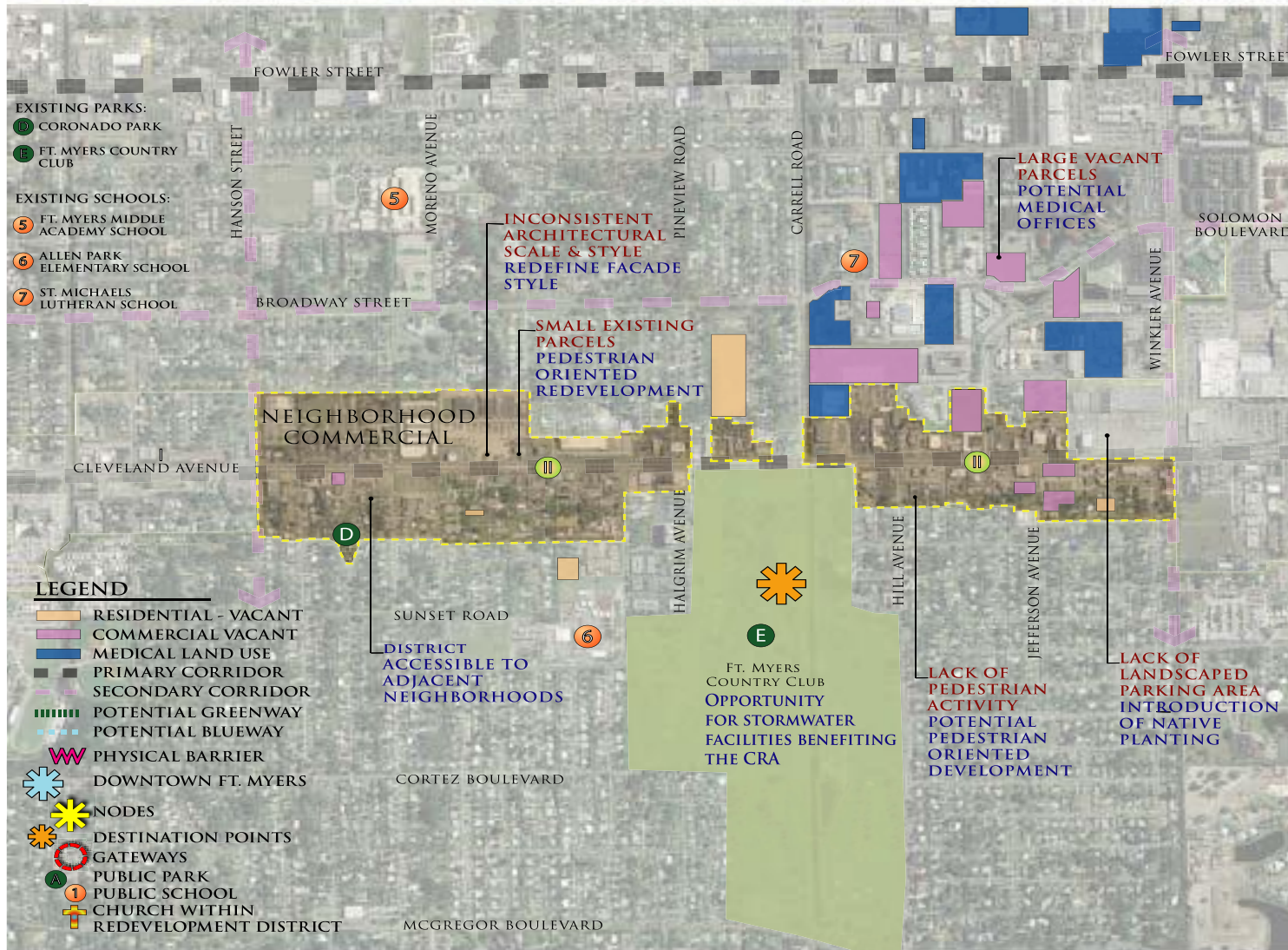
OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

DISTRICT I

CLEVELAND AVENUE REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

JANUARY 2006

CORRIDOR ANALYSIS – KEY FINDINGS



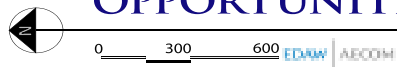
OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS  
 MAP: DISTRICT 2  
 - STRONG RESIDENTIAL LINKS -  
 - NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL

2014 Update  
 For explanation  
 of changes,  
 see the Foreword  
 on pages i-iii

**OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS**

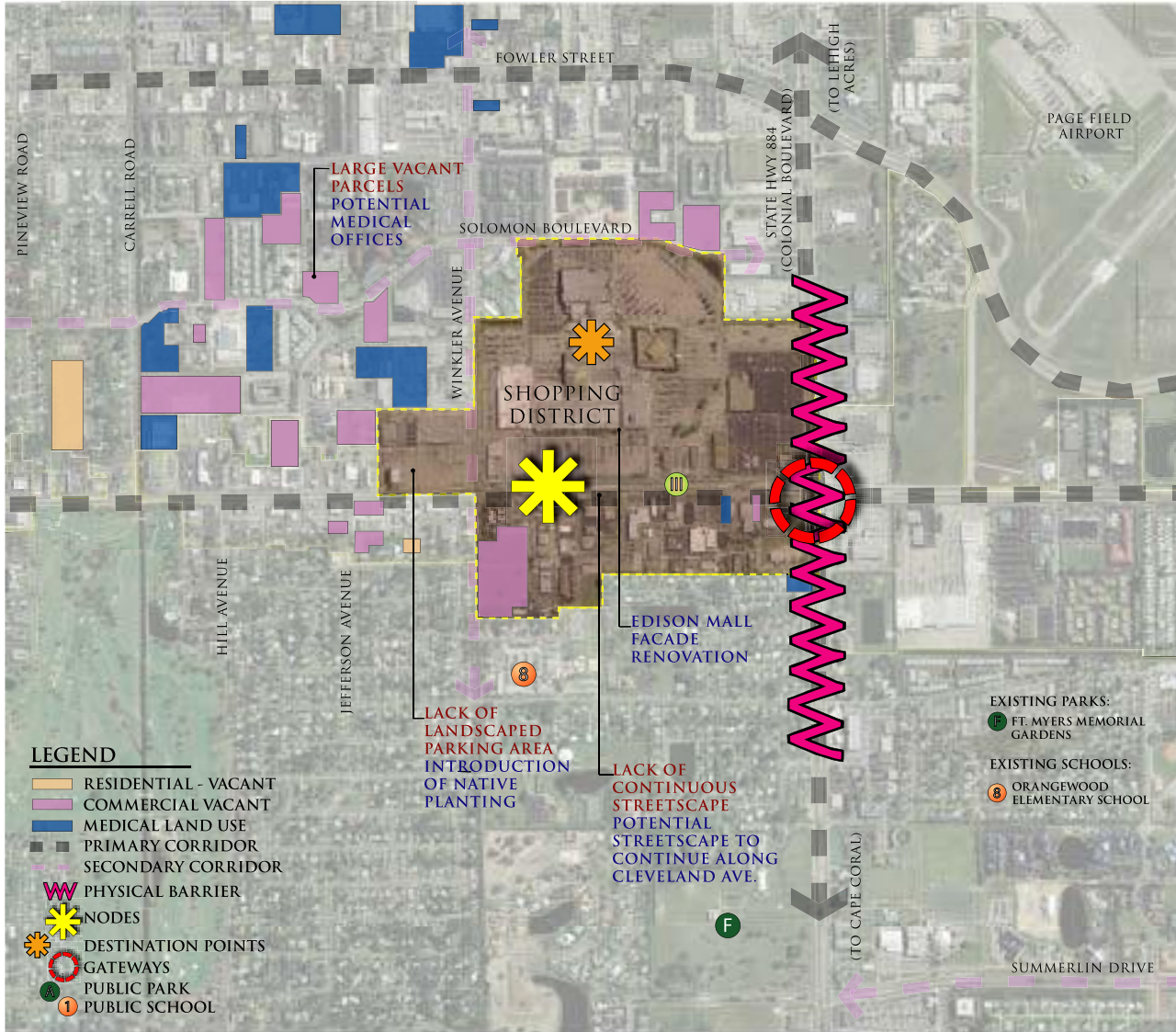
DISTRICT II

**CLEVELAND AVENUE**  
 REDEVELOPMENT PLAN



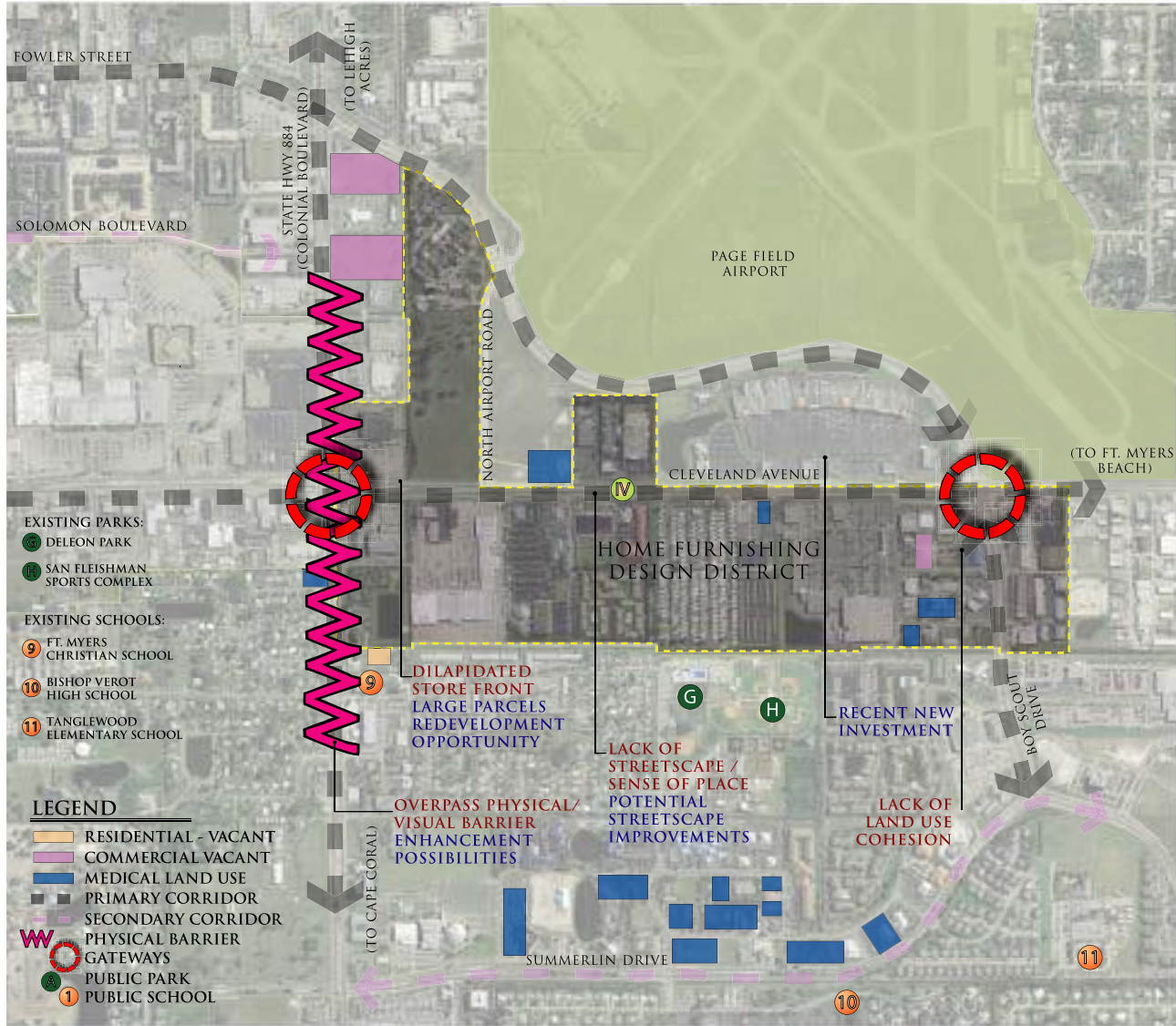
JANUARY 2006

**CORRIDOR ANALYSIS – KEY FINDINGS**



OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS  
 MAP: DISTRICT 3  
 - EDISON MALL ANCHOR  
 - REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

# CORRIDOR ANALYSIS – KEY FINDINGS



OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS  
 MAP: DISTRICT 4  
 - STRONG REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES  
 - SOUTHERN GATEWAY INTO THE CITY OF FORT MYERS

**OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS**

DISTRICT IV

**CLEVELAND AVENUE**  
 REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

**CORRIDOR ANALYSIS – KEY FINDINGS**

## STORMWATER

### Existing Facilities

Canals bisect the CRA running east-west toward the Caloosahatchee River, which is verified impaired by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. Due to the age of the Cleveland Avenue community, with development that dates back to before permitting requirement existed, the existing stormwater facilities on private property are either non-existent or small and substandard according to today's requirements. Currently, stormwater runoff is collected into the US41 right of way drains or from overland runoff into canals and discharges to the River. Few properties exist within the CRA boundary that can accommodate new stormwater facilities for on-site purposes, let alone to serve as centralized facilities for other properties, due to the constrained size of parcels and the currently developed status of most properties.

## TRANSPORTATION

### Roadway Characteristics

The Cleveland Avenue Corridor (US 41) from Boy Scout Road to Edison Avenue is a major arterial generally characterized by two cross-sections. Cleveland Avenue from Boy Scout Drive to Winkler Avenue is a six-lane divided roadway with a raised median. For much of this segment, the section includes a continuous right-turn lane. The cross section between Winkler Avenue and Edison Avenue is a seven-lane section with three through-lanes in each direction and a continuous, two-way left-turn lane in the center. The travel lanes along this section of Cleveland Avenue have been identified as sub-standard. In some instance, the lanes are as narrow as 9.5 feet as compared to a 12-foot standard lane width.

### Vehicular Traffic Characteristics

Year 2013 traffic count data are available from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and Lee County. The data indicates that Cleveland

Avenue carries approximately 48,500 to 55,000 vehicles per day (vpd) in the redevelopment corridor. Cleveland Avenue is a major commuter route for work trips between south Lee County, Fort Myers, and parts of Charlotte

County. The corridor is also a major commercial corridor with highway services such as service stations, fast food restaurants, and hotels/motels; and destination retail/services such as shopping centers and medical facilities. Vehicle trips associated with highway services consist of a high proportion of pass-by trips that use the roadway facility for another primary purpose such as commuting to work. Trips to the destination commercial uses are generally primary trips.



### Existing Transit Service

Public transportation in the redevelopment area is provided by LeeTran operated bus service. The entire length of Cleveland Avenue in the redevelopment area is served by LeeTran bus route 140. An existing transfer station located at the Edison Mall in the southern half of the study area and serves routes 5, 10, 80, 130, and 140. Bus stops with shelters are located in the vicinity of Page Field Commons, Winkler Avenue, Carrell Avenue, and South Street.

### Non-Motorized Transportation Facilities

The typical roadway section for Cleveland Avenue includes sidewalks along most of the redevelopment area. Some sidewalk sections are missing toward the southern limits of the redevelopment area, specifically near North Airport Road. The sidewalks are generally along the back of the curb. The perception of the corridor regarding pedestrian travel is that it is difficult to cross Cleveland Avenue. This perception was noted from comments provided during the Public Workshop held on January 12, 2006. There are currently no bicycle lanes or paths along the corridor.

**2014 Update**  
For explanation  
of changes,  
see the Foreword  
on pages i-iii

# ECONOMIC & MARKET CONDITIONS

## OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives of the market and economic elements of the Cleveland Avenue Redevelopment Plan include the following:

- Provide the City with a realistic assessment of market conditions
- Assist the City in understanding market dynamics associated with commercial and residential development and revitalization
- Assess overall development potentials and translate these potentials into specific uses along the corridor
- Provide the background research which will help the Fort Myers Redevelopment Agency craft effective public policies for the revitalization of Cleveland Avenue



## KEY MARKET FINDINGS

The following summarizes key findings on demographic characteristics and real estate market conditions in Fort Myers and along Cleveland Avenue:

### Demographic Findings

- According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Lee County is among the 100 fastest-growing counties in the nation, as reflected in historic growth patterns and forecasts. The county's 2014 population is estimated at 652,447 in 273,133 households. ESRI Community Analyst forecasts indicate that the county will continue to gain population, increasing by 25,329 households between 2014 and 2019.
- The City of Fort Myers is also forecast to experience growth between 2014 and 2019; ESRI forecasts suggest an increase of 8,381 residents (a growth rate of 12%) and 3,664 households (13%).
- Cleveland Avenue study area was segmented into two sections—North (Districts 1 and 2) and South (Districts 3 & 4). In the North study area the 2014 year-round population was 809 in 346 households. According to ESRI, the North study area is expected to add almost 92 permanent residents and 39 households between 2014 and 2019.
- In the South study area the 2014 year-round population was roughly 451 in 207 households. ESRI forecasts suggest that the South study area will add 48 new residents in 25 new households between 2014 and 2019.
- The median age in the North and South study areas is 40 and 53, respectively; the city's median age is 37, and the county-wide median age is 47.
- Middle to upper middle-income households (\$50,000 to \$99,999) represent the greatest share of forecast growth in both Lee County and Fort Myers. However, household forecasts for Fort Myers indicate that the City will continue to attract a greater share of low to middle-income households (less than \$50,000) than elsewhere in the county.
- Households with incomes over \$100,000—a target market for high-end condominiums—represent 50% (26,200 households) and 30% (1,280

households) of total forecast household growth in Lee County and Fort Myers, respectively.

- Average household incomes in the North study area are forecast to jump by 21%—from \$54,000 today to \$65,130 in 2010. Slightly more modest growth is expected among households in the South study area—from \$50,500 today to \$59,800 in 2010, reflecting an increase of 18%.
- Lee County is projected to add almost 44,263 new jobs between 2013 and 2021. This workforce growth is expected to generate significant demand for commercial and workplace uses such as office and retail space. Employment growth is concentrated in the following sectors: Professional and Business Services; Construction; Education, and Health and Government.

### General Limiting Conditions

Every reasonable effort has been made to ensure that the data contained in this study reflect the most accurate and timely information possible, and they are believed to be reliable. This market analysis is based on estimates, assumptions and other information developed by the planning team from its independent research effort, general knowledge of the industry, and consultations with the client and the City representatives and stakeholders. This report is based on information that was current as of August 2014.



**2014 Update**  
For explanation  
of changes,  
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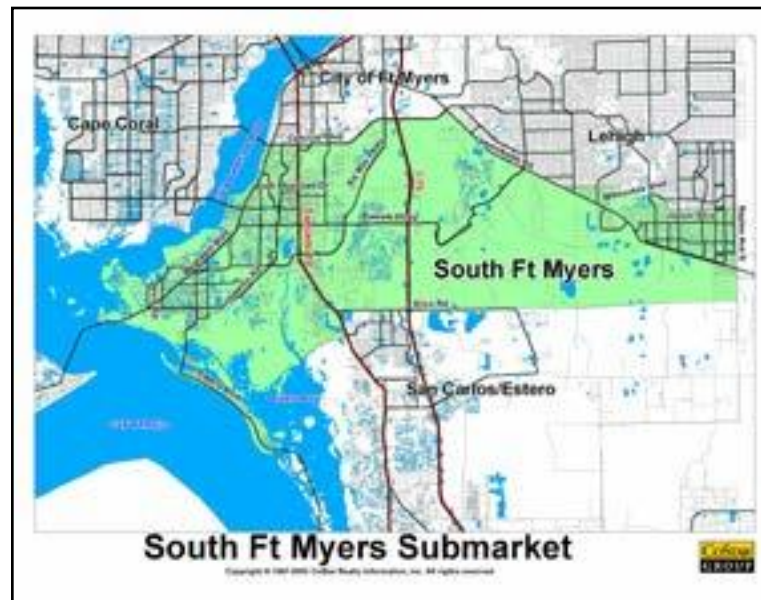
## Real Estate Market Conditions

### Residential

- Due to the economic conditions between 2003 and 2013, the number of building permits in Lee County fluctuated dramatically. During this time, single-family permits accounted for 79% of total permits issued with a total average permits issued of 3,752 per year over 10 years.
- By comparison, the number of permits issued in Fort Myers averaged 528 per year between 2003 and 2013. Single-family permits accounted for 92% of the total permits over 10 years.
- In downtown Fort Myers adjacent to Cleveland Avenue, condominium development gives the appearance of a rapidly evolving marketplace; however, the nascent residential market for downtown condominium units remains highly speculative given the overall newness of the market.
- Based on 2013 property tax data provided by the Lee County Property Appraiser, the four tax sub-districts comprising the study area include the following residential uses:
  - 168 condominium units totaling 215,000 sq. ft. of building area and \$4.9 million in assessed value
  - 102 single-family detached units totaling 175,260 sq. ft. of building area and \$4.8 million in assessed value
  - 47 multi-family properties of 10 or fewer units in 155,451 sq. ft. of building area and \$3.2 million in assessed value
  - 16 multi-family properties of 10 or more units in 223,900 sq. ft. of building area and \$4.3 million in assessed value

### Commercial Retail

- According to CB Richard Ellis, the Fort Myers-Naples retail market (which includes Lee County and Collier County) contains 19.8 million sq. ft. of retail space in multi-tenant buildings larger than 35,000 sq. ft. (2004 data).
- Over 5.9 million sq. ft. (30%) is concentrated in the shopping centers and strip malls in Fort Myers, the region's largest retail submarket, which includes the Cleveland Avenue corridor as well as I-75.
- Vacancy in the South Fort Myers submarket is stable at less than 5% (2004 data). This area absorbed almost 625,000 sq. ft. of retail space in 2004, reflecting its position as the most dominant submarket in the region.



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- Cleveland Avenue/U.S. 41 has historically served as the city's primary retail corridor, with anchor uses such as the Edison Mall and numerous community and neighborhood shopping centers. According to building inventory data provided by the County Property Appraiser, in 2013 the four tax sub-districts comprising the study area include the following retail uses:
  - 82 retail properties containing 3.2 million of building area with an assessed value of \$171.5 million—clearly the most dominant land use in the corridor
  - 19 restaurants containing 77,809 sq. ft. of building area with an assessed value of \$8.1 million
  - 29 properties with service uses (e.g., service stations, banks, etc.) containing 163,776 sq. ft. of building area with an assessed value of \$8.4 million



#### Commercial Office

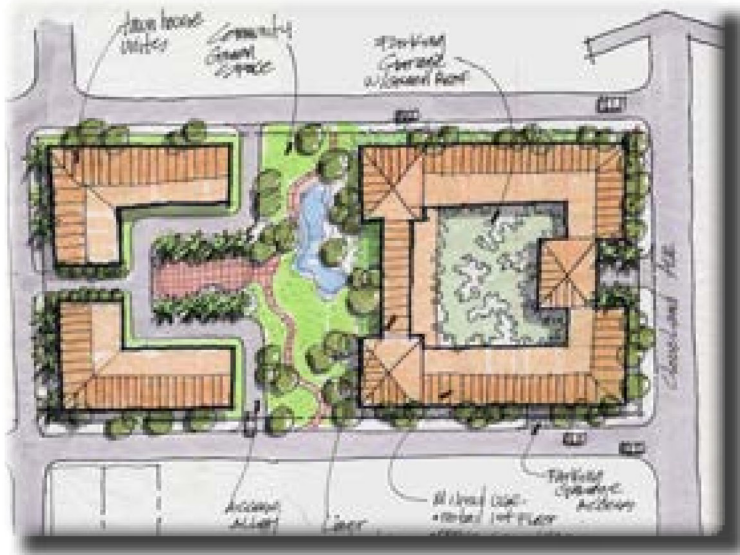
- According to CB Richard Ellis, the Lee County office market includes about 2.7 million sq. ft. of office space across a variety of building classes.
- Net absorption in 2004 in Lee County was strong—in the range of 344,000 sq. ft. of space.
- The Cleveland Avenue corridor is located in the South Fort Myers submarket. South Fort Myers contains the lion's share of the regional office market—1.2 million sq. ft. Vacancies declined substantially between 2003 and 2004—from 13.3% to 6.3%—with positive absorption of 141,000 sq. ft. Average asking rents are \$13.06 per sq. ft.
- 66 office properties containing 466,804 sq. ft. of building area with an assessed value of \$20.4 million

#### Other Land Uses

Other land uses along Cleveland Avenue today include:

- 28 properties with a mix of institutional/government uses (such as Lee Memorial Hospital), containing 1.6 million sq. ft. of building area with an assessed value (not all taxable) of \$53.4 million.
- 33 industrial/warehouse properties containing 354,270 sq. ft. of building area with an assessed value of \$10.3 million.
- 53 vacant parcels (including parking lots) with an assessed value of \$7.1 million.
- 7 hotels/motels containing 280,128 sq. ft. of building area with an assessed value of \$5.7 million.
- 22 mixed-use buildings containing 42,609 sq. ft. of building area with an assessed value of \$1.3 million.
- 1 retirement home containing 145,432 sq. ft. of building area with an assessed value of \$3.2 million.

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# REDEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

# PHYSICAL REALM

## CLEVELAND AVENUE CONCEPT PLAN

The plan is based on four districts running north to south. Each district has different recommendations with regard to primary uses, connections, and design characteristics.

The first, northernmost district along Cleveland Avenue is District 1, which the plan designates as “Cleveland Cultural District.” As the area closest to downtown, Cleveland Cultural District can take its design characteristics from the patterns and variety of historic downtown Fort Myers. Cleveland Cultural District is characterized by Lee Memorial Hospital, and the major tourist destinations of the Edison Home and the City of Palms Park.

The most important feature of District 1 is that it needs to serve as a visual gateway for all of these destinations, and as a gateway between downtown and Cleveland Avenue as well. A highly visible and defining gateway feature at the intersection of Edison and Cleveland could help to achieve these desired effects; accompanying directional signs may also be appropriate. Land uses in the Cleveland Cultural District area would include medical, office, and institutional uses. A restaurant cluster could serve the local office community as well as visitors to the area. Greenways with a wayfinding system would serve to connect the corridor to institutional uses, tourist destinations, and nearby neighborhoods.

The next district moving south is District 2, which spans from Hanson to Winkler. The recommended land uses of District 2 are mixed-use, neighborhood-oriented commercial, and office including medical given proximity to the hospital. The primary form of mixed-use would be retail and/or office on the first floor with residential uses above. The retail on the first floor could serve both residents of multifamily units along the corridor as well as residents of single family neighborhoods adjacent to the corridor.

District 2 would be a focal area for creating east-west pedestrian connection to the Cleveland Avenue corridor as well as for making Cleveland Avenue safe for pedestrians to cross.

Adjacent to District 2 lies the Fort Myers Country Club, which offers adequate land area for the type of stormwater facilities needed to create a credit system to benefit properties within the CRA to help in meeting water management district permit criteria when seeking to redevelop.

The next district is District 3, which spans from Winkler to Colonial and is dominated by Edison Mall. The concept calls for District 3 to become Cleveland Avenue Town Center. The Town Center concept reflects the diverse uses that already exist in District 3, but that are currently poorly connected – including multifamily, office, and retail uses. The Town Center concept points out that with an improved pedestrian realm, interconnected streets, and public spaces, District 3 could function as an integrated town center where mixed uses benefit from their proximity. Also the Town Center concept reflects the long-term possibility that the Edison Mall could be redeveloped as a mixed-use destination fostered by multimodal transportation facilities. The guiding policies for District 3 are to encourage satellite offices around the mall, including a possible major regional office employment center on the western edge of Cleveland Avenue. Improved street connectivity and pedestrian infrastructure will facilitate mutual benefits of accessibility for the office, retail, and residential uses in this district. Some addition to the public realm, such as a park or plaza, would further serve to enhance the character of this potential Town Center.

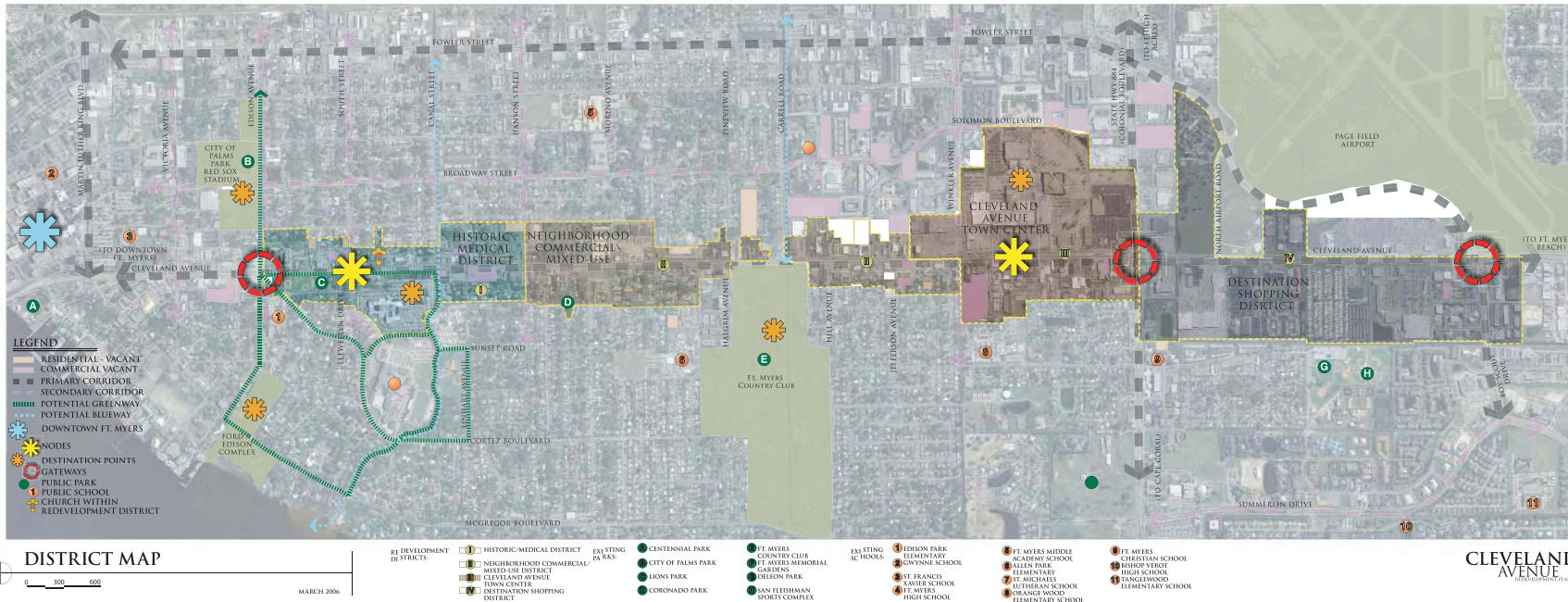
The southernmost district south of Colonial is District 4, and it is envisioned as a destination shopping district. Regional access and large parcels lend this area towards large-scale shopping destinations. Aesthetic improvements and a cohesive marketing strategy can be used to ensure the future success of this regional shopping district.



Human scaled retail with quality streetscape materials

FOUR DISTRICTS WERE IDENTIFIED, EACH WITH DISTINCT DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS AND ACTIVITIES.

2014 Update  
For explanation of changes, see the Foreword on pages i-iii



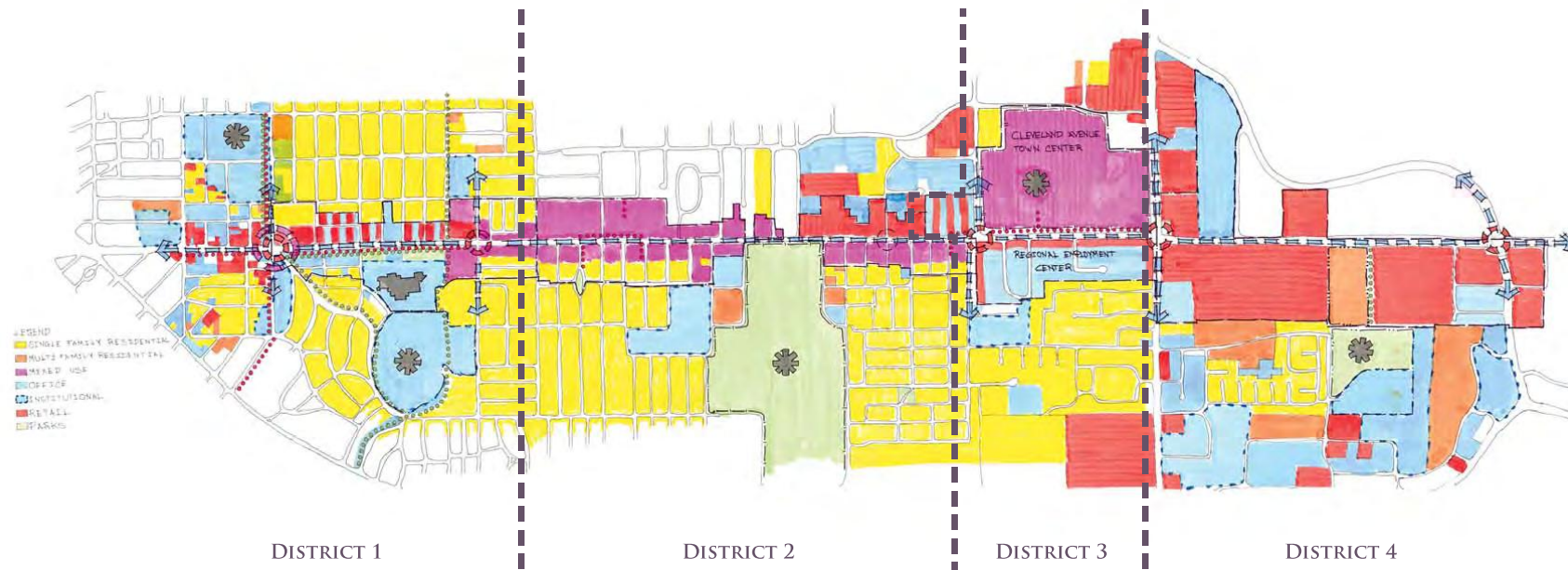
CLEVELAND AVENUE DISTRICT MAP

THE STUDY AREA IS COMPRISED OF FOUR DISTRICTS - EACH WITH A UNIQUE CHARACTER. DISTRICT 1, CLOSEST TO DOWNTOWN, HAS A MORE HISTORIC & PEDESTRIAN ORIENTATION. DISTRICT 2 REFLECTS IS NEIGHBORHOOD RETAIL ORIENTED DISTRICT 3, WITH EDISON MALL, IS CONSIDERED A MAJOR RETAIL AND POTENTIAL OFFICE NODE. DISTRICT 4 CAN BEST BE CHARACTERIZED AS A SHOPPING DESTINATION FOR LARGE INVENTORY BUSINESSES.

DURING THE DESIGN SESSIONS PARTICIPANTS IDENTIFIED ELEMENTS ALONG THE CORRIDOR THEY WANTED TO PRESERVE OR HIGHLIGHT ALONG WITH ELEMENTS THAT NEEDED IMPROVEMENT.

SOME OF THE COMMUNITY'S KEY FINDINGS INCLUDE:

- PROTECT SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENCES AND ADJACENT NEIGHBORHOODS
- DECREASE BUILDING SCALE ALONG THE CORRIDOR AS YOU APPROACH DOWNTOWN
- IDENTIFY ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS WILL ACHIEVE THE DESIRED CHARACTER RATHER THAN STRICT GUIDELINES
- PEDESTRIAN SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS FOR PRIORITY INTERSECTIONS



CLEVELAND AVENUE FUTURE LAND USE

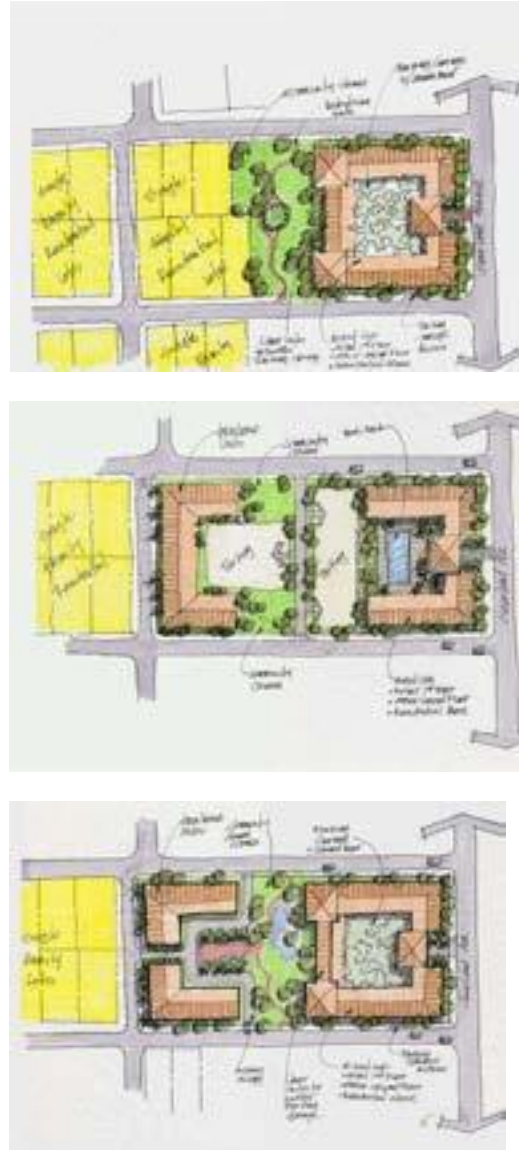
THE PROPOSED LAND USES ALONG THE CORRIDOR REFLECT THE COMMUNITY'S PRIMARY OBJECTIVE TO INCREASE RESIDENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INTRODUCE MIXED USE ALONG THE CORRIDOR.

SECONDLY, THE PLAN REFLECTS THE DESIRE TO INTRODUCE MEDICAL & PROFESSIONAL OFFICES; PARTICULARLY IN DISTRICT 1 WITH LEE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL AND DISTRICT 3 AROUND EDISON MALL.

- LEGEND**
- Single Family Residential
  - Multi Family Residential
  - Mixed Use
  - Office
  - Institutional
  - Retail
  - Parks

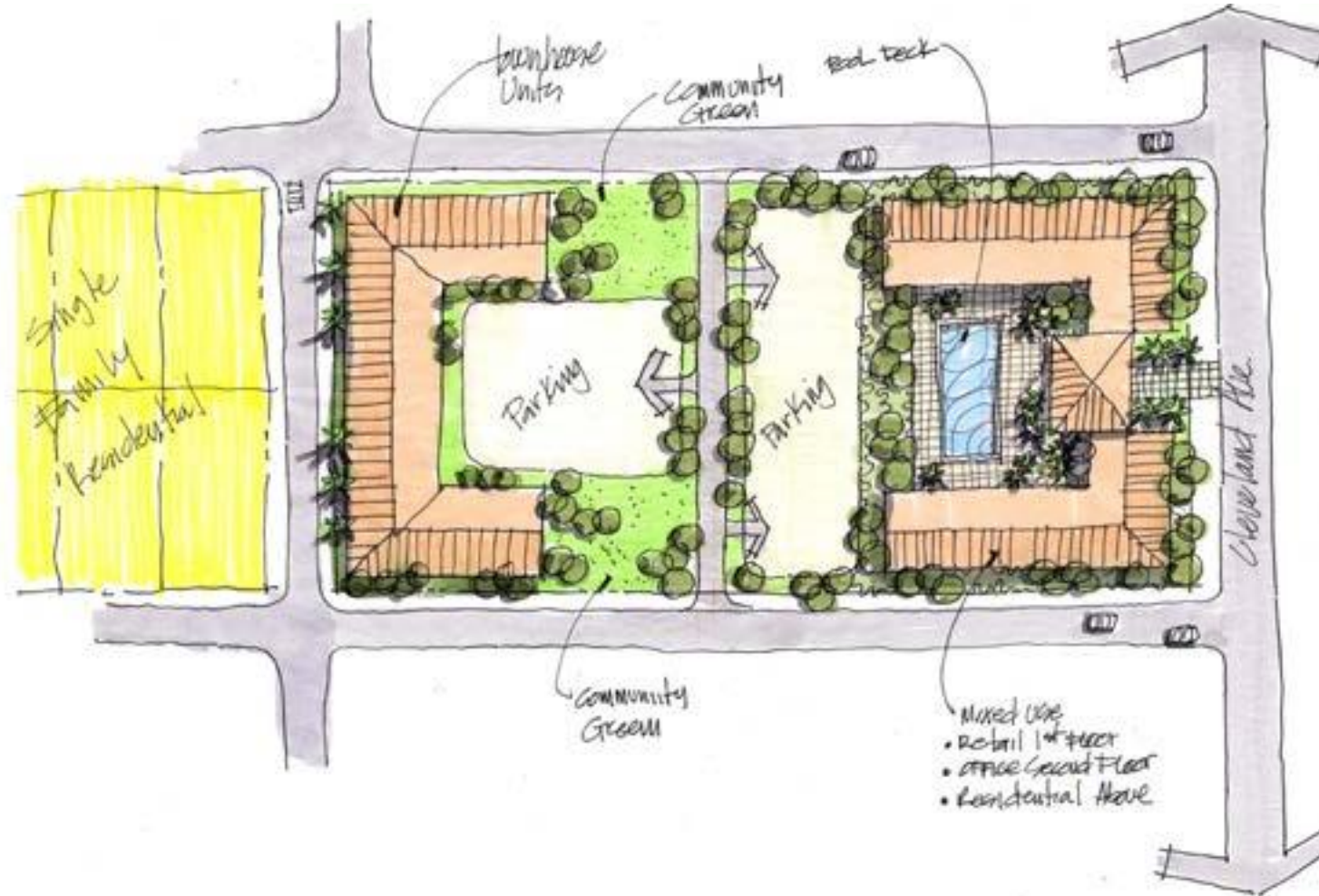
## BLOCK CONCEPTS

In the block design exercises, the public illustrated their preferred ideas for how more intense land uses along Cleveland should transition to less intense land uses in single family neighborhoods behind. Three block concepts were developed. All of the proposed designs emphasized buildings oriented to the street with parking on the inside of the block or in parking decks. Also, all of the designs had multi-story mixed use buildings fronting Cleveland. Generally, land use transitioned mid-block, with mixed use fronting Cleveland, and townhomes or single family homes towards the back of the block. All block concepts promote the use of on-street parking on side streets to enhance retail access.



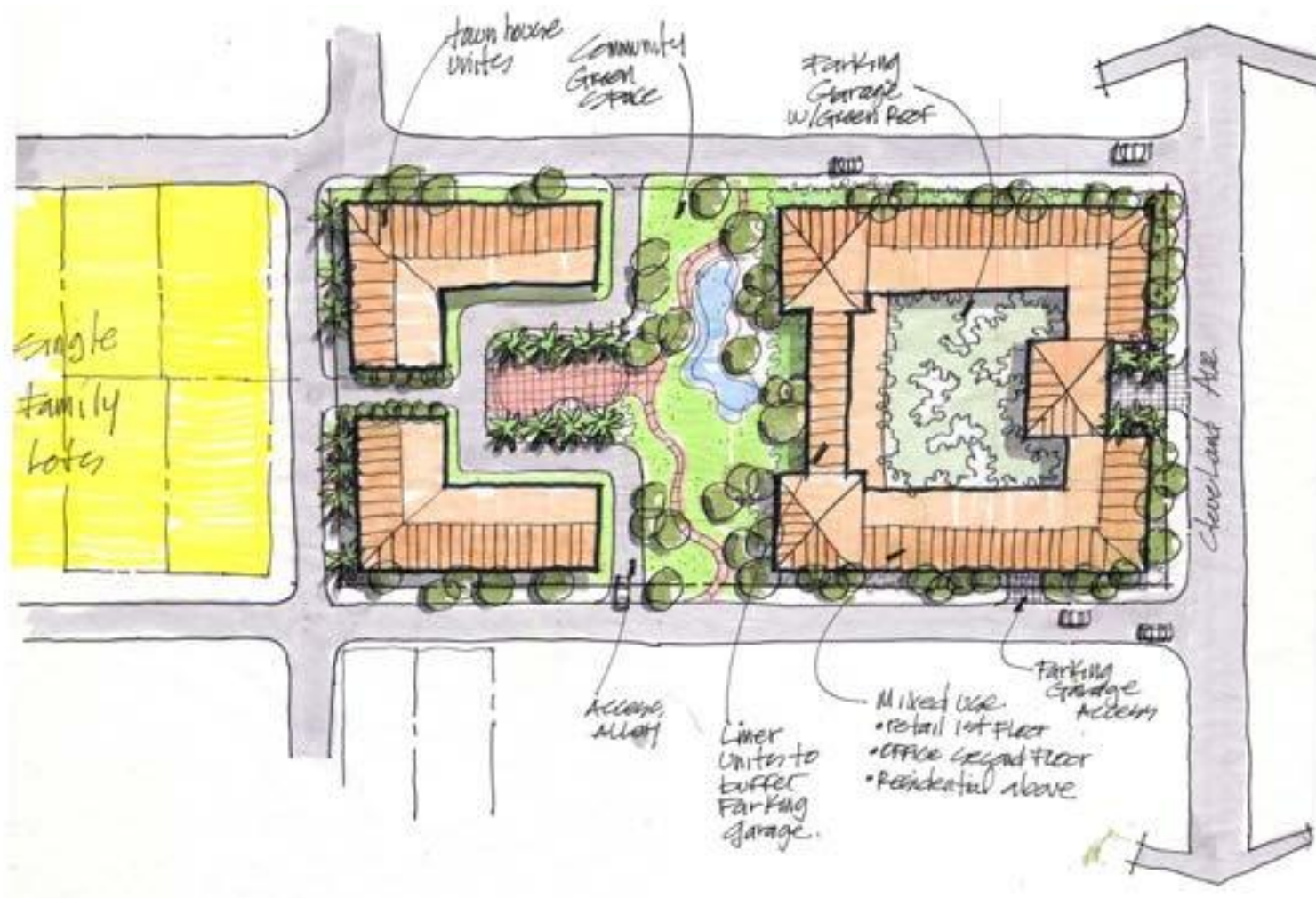
Three alternative block redevelopment concepts

BLOCK CONCEPT #1 IS DISTINGUISHED BECAUSE IT PROPOSED SURFACE PARKING AS OPPOSED TO DECK PARKING. MULTI-STORY, MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT WOULD FRONT CLEVELAND AVENUE AND WRAP AROUND TO THE SIDE STREETS. AN INTERNAL AREA COULD BE USED AS A COURTYARD OR POOL. A SURFACE PARKING LOT WOULD BE LOCATED BEHIND THE UNITS, ACCESSIBLE FROM AN ALLEY OFF OF ONE OF THE SIDE STREETS FROM CLEVELAND. ALLEY ACCESS PROMOTES THE PLACEMENT OF PARKING BEHIND THE BUILDING AND ALSO HELPS TO REDUCE CURB CUTS ALONG CLEVELAND. THE OTHER SIDE OF THE BLOCK COULD BE DEVELOPED AS TOWNHOMES. THIS ALLOWS FOR A GRADUAL TRANSITION OF DENSITY FROM CLEVELAND AVENUE TO NEIGHBORHOODS BEYOND. ALSO THE BACK OF THE TOWNHOME WOULD FACE THE BACK OF THE MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT. THIS MAKES BACK YARD USES SUCH AS UTILITIES AND PARKING LESS VISIBLE FROM THE PUBLIC REALM.



# REDEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK





BLOCK CONCEPT #2 IS DISTINGUISHED FROM OTHER CONCEPTS BECAUSE OF ITS MID-BLOCK GREENSPACE, WITH A PEDESTRIAN PATH WINDING THROUGH IT. THIS CONCEPT WOULD HELP SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL, NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS AND PROMOTE PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIVITY BY ALLOWING A MID-BLOCK PATHWAY. THE PLAN IS SIMILAR TO BLOCK CONCEPT #1 IN THAT LAND USES TRANSITION IN A SIMILAR WAY. A MIXED-USE MULTISTORY BUILDING FRONTS CLEVELAND AVENUE, FOLLOWED BY A MID-BLOCK TRANSITION, AND THEN TOWNHOMES ON THE BACK SIDE OF THE BLOCK FACING SINGLE FAMILY BEYOND. AGAIN THERE IS A TRANSITION OF SCALES AND USES. IN CONTRAST TO THE BLOCK CONCEPT #1, IN THIS CONCEPT THERE ARE NO TRUE "BACKS" – RESIDENTIAL UNITS FACE BOTH CLEVELAND AVENUE AND THE MID-BLOCK COMMUNITY GREEN SPACE. PARKING IS INCORPORATED THROUGH A DECK THAT IS ACCESSED FROM A SIDE STREET. TOWNHOUSE PARKING IS ACCOMMODATED THROUGH GARAGES ACCESSED BY A REAR ALLEY, BUT THE TOWNHOMES ALSO HAVE WINDOWS FACING TOWARDS THE COMMUNITY GREEN SPACE.

# REDEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

BLOCK CONCEPT #3 IS A VARIATION OF BLOCK CONCEPT #2, BUT WITH SINGLE FAMILY UNITS TOWARDS THE BACK OF THE BLOCK RATHER THAN TOWNHOMES. THE BLOCK CONCEPT SHOWS HOW A MID-BLOCK COMMUNITY GREEN SPACE CAN SERVE AS A TRANSITION BETWEEN DENSER USES ALONG CLEVELAND AVENUE AND SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL. THE MIXED-USE BUILDING IN FRONT STILL HAS A PARKING DECK WHICH IS ACCESSED OFF OF THE SIDE STREET. THE ALLEY IS NO LONGER NECESSARY AS THE SINGLE FAMILY HOMES MAY HAVE TRADITIONAL DRIVEWAYS INSTEAD.



# REDEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

## PRELIMINARY URBAN DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

The goals of the urban design recommendations are to:

- Create human-scaled architecture and outdoor spaces
- Provide a comfortable and friendly environment for the pedestrian
- Mitigate the effects of large parking lots, so they are no longer barren, inhospitable spaces
- Develop guidelines for the use of landscaping, street furniture, signs, and plant materials

## PEDESTRIAN REALM ELEMENTS

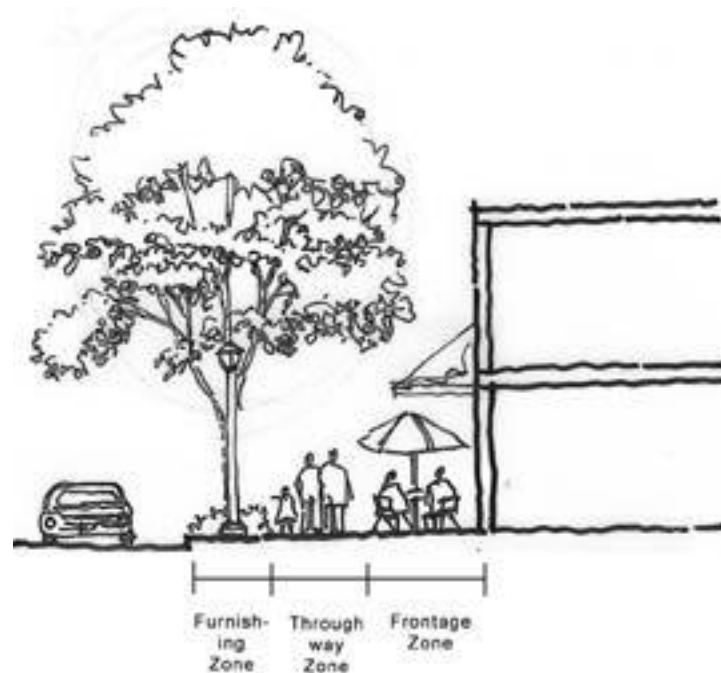
In accordance with the feedback from stakeholders, improving the safety and comfort of the pedestrian realm is a priority for the plan. In order to achieve this goal, the planning team recommends a streetscape design with a Furnishings Zone to separate pedestrians from traffic lanes. An 8' wide Furnishing Zone with regular trees and landscaping is recommended. Beyond that, a wide sidewalk is recommended, between 8-10 feet in width, in the Throughway Zone. The purpose of the Throughway Zone is to accommodate shoppers and walkers and create a comfortable space for pedestrians. Between the building and the sidewalk, another 5-15' Frontage Zone is recommended, but is considered optional. Regular street trees are recommended in the Furnishings Zone. These trees help to protect pedestrians, provide shade, and visually define the Cleveland Avenue corridor. Trees should be sited so as not to obscure sight triangles at intersections.

As many buildings are currently too close to the street to create this pedestrian realm, it will have to be phased in gradually over time. All new development should accord to this design standard for the pedestrian realm. When the opportunity becomes available to complete a significant segment of the pedestrian realm, it should be seized.

The building façade should have pedestrian friendly design, especially features such as arcades and awnings to provide shade. Ample windows and doors on the ground level and visible activity also help to create a pedestrian friendly environment.

Other design issues of importance to the corridor are some basic architectural guidelines on building location and features, though no specific style should be required. The location, height, and design of signs should also be addressed.

PEDESTRIAN REALM CONCEPT DIAGRAM



TYPICAL PEDESTRIAN SIDEWALKS





BULB-OUT CROSSING

### PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

- All major pedestrian crossings should be called out with a distinct paving pattern and material
- Safety islands should be placed within the median at key and heavily used intersections

In-Roadway Lights are special types of highway traffic signals installed in the roadway surface to warn road users that they are approaching a condition on or adjacent to the roadway that might not be readily apparent and might require the road users to slow down and/or come to a stop. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, situations warning of marked school crosswalks, marked midblock crosswalks, marked crosswalks on uncontrolled approaches, marked crosswalks in advance of roundabout intersections, and other roadway situations involving pedestrian crossings.

#### CURB EXTENSIONS: BULB-OUTS AND CHOKERS

Marked crosswalks are the portion of the roadway designated for pedestrians to use in crossing the street. Various crosswalk marking patterns are given in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. In some cases, they can be raised and should often be installed in conjunction with other enhancements that physically reinforce crosswalks



COUNTDOWN SIGNAL



RAISED CROSSWALK

and reduce vehicle speeds. The sidewalk extends across the parking lanes to the edge of the travel lanes to narrow the distance of the road that a pedestrian has to cross.

#### COUNTDOWN SIGNALS

The device consists of a standard pedestrian signal with standard shapes and color, with an added display that shows the countdown of the remaining crossing time. The countdown timer starts either at the beginning of the pedestrian phase or at the onset of the flashing DON'T WALK. The timer continues counting down through the pedestrian clearance interval. At the end of the pedestrian clearance interval, the countdown device displays a zero and the DON'T WALK indication or solid red hand appears. Countdown signals are still experimental. Agencies wishing to experiment with them must submit an experimentation request to the Federal Highway Administration.

#### RAISED CROSSWALKS

Crosswalks are raised 150 mm above the roadway pavement, similar to speed humps, to an elevation that matches the adjacent sidewalk. This treatment includes a flat area on the top that constitutes the crosswalk. This flat area may be made of asphalt, patterned concrete, or brick pavers. Tactile treatments are needed at the sidewalk/street boundary so that visually impaired pedestrians can identify the edge of the street.

### PEDESTRIAN REFUGE ISLAND

Basic Pedestrian Refuge Islands are raised islands placed in the center of the roadway separating opposing lanes of traffic and slotted along the pedestrian path.

Pork Chop Islands are triangular islands placed adjacent to free-right turn lanes. They separate right-turning vehicles from through lanes and they provide a refuge for pedestrians to cross the free-right lane before crossing the through lanes.

Split Pedestrian Cross-Overs are long pedestrian refuge islands that force pedestrians to cross one half of the street and proceed down the middle of the island in the direction of on-coming traffic before crossing the second half of the street.

The objective of a pedestrian refuge island is to provide a shelter where pedestrians may wait outside the traveled way until vehicular traffic clears. This allows them to cross the street in two stages. Pedestrians also are able to get a better view of oncoming traffic. Pork Chop Islands provide a shorter distance for pedestrians to cross when in the path of right-turning vehicles and so provide another refuge for pedestrians.



BASIC PEDESTRIAN REFUGE ISLAND



PORK CHOP ISLAND



SPLIT PEDESTRIAN CROSS-OVER



PEDESTRIAN REFUGE ISLAND

# REDEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

## ARCHITECTURAL GUIDELINES

The purpose of architectural design guidelines is to promote the design of human-scale and pedestrian friendly buildings along the Cleveland Avenue corridor. A variety of architectural designs is encouraged, but an emphasis on vernacular styles is encouraged in the northern parts of the corridor, such as the Cleveland Cultural District. The long term goal is to have a corridor defined by its architecture, where the buildings themselves serve as the center of visual attraction rather than signs or parking areas. Every building is encouraged to put its best face forward towards the public realm.

- Use a scale between 3-6 stories, placed near the pedestrian realm. A smaller scale would fail to define the edge of the corridor; a large scale would tend to overwhelm. Greater heights could be permitted in a stepped-back setback.
- Invite interaction with the pedestrian. Doors, windows, and arcades on the ground floor enhance the interaction between inside and outside space.
- Provide shade for pedestrians through awnings, canopies, overhangs, porticos, or arcades.
- Break down the scale of large buildings by varying height and massing. No large unornamented masses should be used.
- Avoid flat facades. The building façade should have depth, provided by overhangs, awnings, balconies, recessed windows and/or doors.
- Look to the repetition of architectural details to make a building visually interesting. Patterns of windows, balconies, awnings, cornice lines, lintels and other window details, and brick work help to define the difference between floors and distinguish the ground floor and top of the building.
- If possible, include a signature architectural feature, such as a tower or unique roof form.

## ELEMENTS OF FLORIDA VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE

- Wide porches, large roof overhangs
- Narrow structures to allow cross ventilation
- Three different styles



SOUTHERN NATIONAL  
– SIMPLE IN FORM AND  
DETAIL, LOWER PITCH  
ROOFS, “CRACKER  
STYLE”



KEY WEST VICTORIAN  
– SYMMETRICAL FRONT  
FAÇADE, MAIN BODY  
ROOF



FOLK VICTORIAN  
– DEEP PORCHES,  
MORE DETAILS, LOWER  
PITCHED ROOFS

# REDEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

## SIGN GUIDELINES

- Signs should coordinate with architectural features in terms of scale, materials, and placement. Sign size should be proportionate to the size and/or height of the corresponding building.
- Signs should be generally subordinate to architecture in visual appearance
- Submission of a unified sign plan at the start of a development should promote better and more integrated sign design quality (existing regulation)
- Innovative and creative sign types should be encouraged, such as projecting signs and window-painted signs
- Existing sign ordinances, such as those forbidding the use of logos on signs, should be enforced
- Signs should not be permitted on benches or garbage cans as this contributes to visual clutter



STREETSCAPE PLANTINGS EXAMPLES

consistent streetscape treatment is likely the most important landscaping improvement that could occur on Cleveland Avenue:

- 8'-12' of planting will separate right-of-way from pedestrian sidewalk, including palms, some low-flowering shrubs and groundcover or turf
- Palms will be used along the length at an interval of 20' on center to produce a regular linear quality as one drives along, while providing views through to commercial properties. Palms should be located at least 20' from all street intersection to provide sight lines.
- Another row of palms and low groundcover is suggested on the other side of the sidewalk to create another layer of landscaping. However this second layer of landscaping should be considered optional.

## LANDSCAPE DESIGN

Landscaping is one of the elements that best defines Florida and its unique environment. Improved and additional landscaping was one of the most requested items by stakeholders throughout the planning process. Large areas of landscaping are not necessary to improve a development's visual appearance. The most important element is usually a consistent treatment of landscaping along the pedestrian realm. Trees in particular are important, but the richest feel comes from landscaping that is layered – with trees, shrubs, groundcover, planters, and hanging or boxed flowers.

## STREETSCAPE PLANTINGS

The streetscapes that exist now show 6 to 8 lanes of traffic spread out, and then a small sidewalk squeezed precariously up against the roadway, with no visual or physical buffer between pedestrians and cars, and little to break the visual appearance of a sea of asphalt. A



BUFFER BETWEEN PARKING AND ROAD



MEISNER PARKING GARAGE



SHADED PARKING



MIAMI PARKING GARAGE

- Medians should be planted with small flowering trees and shrubs, and hardy groundcover that requires little maintenance and is hardy enough to withstand this placement.

#### PARKING LOTS AND STRUCTURES

After streetscape landscaping, the most important aesthetic improvement for Cleveland Avenue would be parking lot landscaping. Ideally parking lots would be placed in the rear and so would not be visible from the public realm. Existing parking lots that are in front of buildings can be improved with the addition of landscaping and trees.

- Provide regular islands of landscaping in parking lots, of a minimum size and frequency
- Palms, shrubs and groundcover or turf should be placed within islands either at a regular interval, or in masses, to provide some shade and to break up the monotony of paving
- Large, front-located parking areas should have at least one pedestrian path from the public realm to the entrances of the buildings.

When a parking structure is planned it should follow the given criteria:

- Not exceed the height of the building it is associated with
- Bays screened as much as possible with plantings on all exposed sides, including trees, large shrubs and creeping vines

#### PARKING LOT PERIMETER PLANTINGS

- 8-12' of planting will separate right-of-way from pedestrian sidewalks
- Palms will be used along the length at an interval of 20' on center to produce a regular linear quality as one drives along, while providing views through to commercial properties
- Regular shrubs and groundcover should be used in the perimeter parking area

#### LIGHTING

As the area has a rich history as the winter residence of Thomas Edison, it is critical to reflect this history through the use of Edison-inspired lighting design. Continued use of the Edison-inspired light poles that exist in the corridor is recommended. While using these fixtures several other factors must be considered, including:

- Cables supplying power to light fixtures should be buried where possible, especially done in conjunction with any sidewalk improvements, to prevent visual eyesores
- Streets should be lit with tall lampposts placed 40 feet on center
- Sidewalks should be lit with either pedestrian lighting or bollards where needed every 20 feet on center





BUS SHELTER EXAMPLES

- Parking lots should be lit with tall lampposts placed within planted islands at every 50 feet on center
- Any and all transit stops should be further illuminated either with pedestrian lighting or with additional lights placed in shelter overhangs

#### BUS SHELTERS

- Include a bicycle rack at all bus shelters
- Design bus shelters to provide protection from rain and direct sun.
- Place bus shelters in areas of good visibility and away from areas that may be used as hiding places
- Adequate seating for a typical daily passenger load should be provided
- Include trash receptacles and bus schedules at each shelter

#### STREET FURNITURE

Consistent street furniture should be used throughout the corridor to create a unifying identity. Street furniture should be considered for the following locations:

- Benches should be provided at major gathering/waiting locations
- Where possible planters and benches can be combined for dual duty



STREET FURNITURE EXAMPLES

- Replace individual news boxes with city-provided modular news-racks
- Provide trash receptacles regularly along the corridor
- Street Banners can be used to promote civic events and enhance the identity of the corridor

#### PUBLIC SPACES

- Public spaces are needed at all scales along the corridor. Even a small public space can make a big difference if it is well placed and well designed
- Public spaces should be placed near areas with high amounts of pedestrian traffic, and pedestrian paths should run through or adjacent to public spaces
- Public spaces should be visible from a public street and nearby building windows to promote safety. Active retail uses, such as outdoor dining, can particularly benefit from adjacency to public space
- Public spaces are brought to life by a variety of nearby activities and programming of events.
- It is critical to make public spaces comfortable by providing seating and shade. Other amenities to consider are water features, information kiosks, lighting, and public art.



COURTYARD PASSAGEWAY



LINEAR PARK



PLAZA WITH WATER FEATURE



POCKET PARK

# REDEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

## TRANSPORTATION FRAMEWORK

Transportation recommendations for the Fort Myers Redevelopment Agency have been developed as a basis to establish final design principles. In this context, Cleveland Avenue will remain as a six-lane corridor. This plan recommends installation of a median for the segment located between Winkler Avenue and Edison Avenue, increasing safety and capacity for this roadway facility.

Safety will be increased because the median separates opposing directions of travel, minimizing the risk of frontal and/or left turn collisions while allowing accommodation of left turning movements, and providing refuge islands for pedestrians. At the same time, bus bays have been recommended to contribute to increases in capacity. It allows traffic to proceed around the bus, reducing delay for general traffic. They also provide a clear definition of the bus stops, and eliminate potential rear-end accidents.

Two design stages are recommended. An interim section has been recommended to maintain the current edge of pavement to edge of pavement width, modifying only the median treatment. Right-of-way acquisitions are necessary for the ultimate section (Alternate A).

### Interim Improvements

The interim concept includes two major elements that are being recommended to improve this corridor. A center median is proposed that will enhance vehicle and pedestrian safety by assisting in developing an access management program to reduce the accident risk along the corridor and providing pedestrian refuge for street crossing. New texturized pedestrian crossings are also proposed as part of this improvement. See Interim Cross Section Figures on this page.

Interim Cross Section #1



This interim design has two typical roadway sections, one for mid-block locations and one to be used at intersections. The interim design uses the existing travel lanes and a median with left turn lanes that will replace the existing two way, left-turn lane. Design concepts to accommodate U-turn areas and construction details for the median/left turn lane features should be developed in the next phase of this project. The addition of the median is expected to concentrate left turn maneuvers at the available openings. A traffic circulation plan will need to be developed to promote alternative travel routes as stated in the Cleveland Avenue Redevelopment Plan.

Interim Cross Section #2



2014 Update  
For explanation  
of changes,  
see the Foreword  
on pages i-iii

### Long Term Solution

FDOT is the agency responsible for maintaining Cleveland Avenue and ensuring that it fulfills its primary purpose as a regional transportation facility and US highway. A long term solution for the Cleveland Corridor requires significant coordination with the City of Fort Myers, Florida Department of Transportation, property owners and business owners. The long term solution would ideally fit within existing right-of-way and accommodate all users, including bus service and potential shuttle service, bicycles, pedestrians, and motor vehicles in a safe and attractive context.

To accommodate all users, the existing 7 lane roadway within an 84-foot right-of-way must significantly change. One concept for an ultimate cross section would be to increase the width of the right-of-way through acquisition of right-of-way along the corridor (**Alternate A** to the right), which is difficult to accomplish with the fragmentation of ownership and narrow depths of existing parcels. An incentive for dedication of an easement along frontage lines at time of redevelopment allows for instances of increased planting and pathway areas where feasible and compatible with private development intentions, but incremental dedications will not result in a comprehensive re-design of the Cleveland Avenue Corridor.

Another concept for an ultimate cross section is envisioned within the existing right-of-way, depicted as **Alternate B** to the right. This ultimate cross section concept constitutes a reduction in vehicle travel lanes from a seven lane undivided roadway to a four lane divided roadway to accommodate streetscape plantings, wider sidewalks, bus or shuttle pull-offs, and a median. If feasible, 10-foot wide multiuse paths are ideal for bicycle and pedestrian mobility and would be eligible for funding under some federal programs. To achieve this concept of a more complete street will require additional large scale analyses, including but not limited to: access management, socio-economic impact and system wide traffic networking, alternate routes, and possible mitigation analyses.

### Corridor Traffic Safety

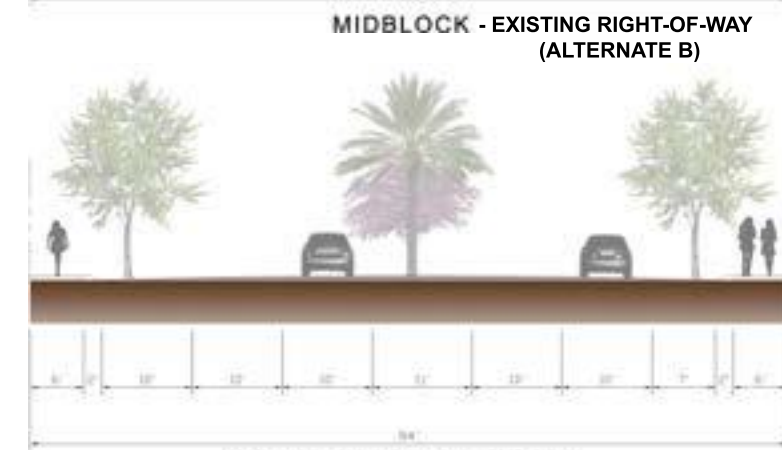
The proposed modifications of the Cleveland Avenue typical section are projected not only to improve the automobile and pedestrian traffic operations, but also to reduce the number of traffic accidents in the corridor. It accomplishes the goals stated in the Cleveland Avenue Redevelopment Plan.



ALTERNATE A



ALTERNATE B



INTERSECTION APPROACH - EXISTING RIGHT-OF-WAY (ALTERNATE B)

ALTERNATE B

2014 Update  
For explanation  
of changes,  
see the Foreword  
on pages i-iii

# REDEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

For Alternate A option, the number of crashes per million vehicle miles (MVM) was projected to be reduced from 3.41 to 1.68, with respect to 2008 conditions. This would represent a global crash rate reduction of 55%. This reduction estimate is based on the results of studies conducted examining the effects of median installations in other areas. Table No 1 summarizes the projected crash reductions for the Cleveland Avenue corridor.

**Pedestrians Traffic Safety**

The nature of the existing corridor makes pedestrian crossing a risky task. This could be enhanced by improving the existing crossings at signalized intersections. Texturized pedestrian crossings are recommended at the following locations: Edison Avenue, Linhart Avenue, Winkler Avenue, Llewellyn Drive, and Grace Avenue/Publix.

**Transit Service**

Projections for the future transit ridership volumes were not included as part of this study. However, it is likely that the volumes will remain similar to existing volumes or increase. It was also assumed that the transit service infrastructure needs will be similar to the current conditions. Therefore, bus stop passing lanes (bus bays) are being recommended where feasible to improve the ability of LeeTrans to service this corridor. The bus bays will assist in avoiding conflicts with the vehicular traffic flow during the embarking and disembarking of passengers. Bus facilities, including the LeeTran transfer station at the Edison Mall and other stops, should be provided with shelters to shield riders from the rain and sun. The bus stops should also provide bicycle racks where space permits. A new transit route should also be considered. This route would be a direct shuttle line, which connects the Edison Mall and the River District in downtown.

Table No. 1- Projected Reduction in the Number of Accidents for Cleveland Avenue

TYPES OF ACCIDENTS	NUMBER OF ACCIDENTS	PERCENT BY TYPE	ANTICIPATED REDUCTION W/ MEDIAN (55%)	REDUCED NUMBER OF ACCIDENTS
<b>TOTAL ACCIDENT DATA</b>				
Total Accidents (Left Turns):	88	27.41%	48	40
Total Accidents (Right Turns):	9	2.80%	5	4
Total Accidents (Rear end):	219	68.22%	120	99
Total Accidents (Head On):	5	1.56%	3	2
<b>Total Accidents:</b>	<b>321</b>		<b>177</b>	<b>144</b>

2014 Update  
For explanation of changes, see the Foreword on pages i-iii

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Taken as a whole, these projects provide an array of options for spurring new investment and development in the Cleveland Avenue corridor. These economic development initiatives include both physical (i.e., bricks and mortar) catalyst projects that are intended to leverage additional private investment to enhance the City's tax base, and centralized management and coordination to create and sustain solutions, involve public and private interests, and to foster an enhanced image for the corridor in concert with the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA). Importantly, centralized management provides the mechanism necessary for more effective coordination and communications between existing businesses and institutional uses along the corridor and with City and CRA staff and various departments, resulting in better collection and dissemination of market and other critical public information.

The use of specific incentives, which can vary in depth and scope of activity, should ultimately be geared towards three key areas—1) public funding for physical improvements intended to leverage subsequent private investment; 2) marketing strategies to strengthen existing, viable businesses and retailers along Cleveland Avenue; and 3) business recruitment initiatives that identify target industries to help build specialized “clusters” such as medical office space. Both physical development projects and business retention and recruitment initiatives are emphasized in this plan, as these goals are mutually supportive. Nurturing and supporting the growth of viable, existing businesses and retailers along the corridor can be expected to lead to additional private investment and redevelopment, while an improved physical image and “identity” for the corridor as a whole will assist with business retention and recruitment efforts. Above all, these initiatives are intended to enhance the City's tax base and reinforce Cleveland Avenue's competitive position in the region.

Recommended economic development initiatives and priorities, both short- and long-term, are presented here.

### INITIATE CENTRALIZED MANAGEMENT & COORDINATION

According to the Lee County Property Appraiser, Cleveland Avenue provides the City of Fort Myers with a significant portion of the city's total tax base—with more than \$238 million in (2005) annual assessed values generated by the 4.3 million square feet of various uses along the corridor. However, as the City's largest community redevelopment area, Cleveland Avenue has no central management or coordination organization that can undertake the tasks required to address issues related to its physical image and identity; pedestrian and traffic safety; perceptions of crime and public safety; retail mix, business retention and recruitment; and marketing, promotions and special events that, in combination, are key to revitalizing the corridor.

In Economic Research Associates' (ERA) experience in other commercial districts around the United States, the lack of a centralized management organization makes it more difficult to create and sustain solutions, involve public and private interests, and foster an enhanced image for a specific area. While a retail merchants association existed at one time along Cleveland Avenue, it is inactive and no organization currently represents the interests of retailers, property owners, community activists and investors. Moreover, the CRA does not have sufficient staffing to comprehensively address these issues and establish and sustain a management program.

Establishing a central management function for Cleveland Avenue will require full-time staff and a stabilized source of operating income for at least five years to focus on providing incentive funding, technical assistance, and community organization through the management entity. We recommend that the CRA, in concert with other City departments, lead efforts to secure commitments from both the City of Fort Myers as well as Lee County (as appropriate) to fund a management entity; link the entity/program to established CRA (and other) funding and assistance sources; and incorporate funding into the City's budget for at least five years as a demonstration effort. (We note that the management entity can be organized within the CRA, but its sole function will be focused on Cleveland Avenue).

This will require the following general action steps toward implementation:

- Seek legal assistance to create a new 501(c)(3) organization to provide centralized management for Cleveland Avenue (if outside of CRA auspices).
- Hire full-time and part-time support staff to direct the management program, preferably with multi-lingual capabilities and possibly representing one or more of the corridor's ethnic groups.
- Work with property owners, investors, retailers/restaurateurs and service business owners to set priorities for needed improvements (e.g., storefront and sign enhancements, pedestrian walkways and streetscape improvements, corridor identity programs, retail recruitment, etc.).
- Lobby Lee County and state officials to understand the impact of unresolved development/safety/social issues on the corridor's overall marketability (i.e., property values, sales tax revenues and local businesses).
- Use the Redevelopment Plan and other public efforts to create a baseline against which future investment and improvements can be documented and measured by the entity's management staff.
- Seek public seed money (from CRA and other City funds, the State, and/or Lee County) to establish and operate a management staff (at least two full-time and one part-time staff members) for a minimum of three years (preferably five years). We estimate that annual staff costs and benefits will range from approximately \$200,000 to \$250,000 per year (depending on number of staff and full-time versus part-time employment).
- Use the CRA designation to channel other county, state and Federal funds into the corridor for specific projects and programs as outlined in the Redevelopment Plan.
- Undertake a comprehensive retail/business inventory (including clarification of current building area measurements as provided by the Lee County Property Appraiser) as the basis for outreach to local businesses for contacts, support and participation in the management program; management staff should also assume responsibility for coordinating updates to the inventory as businesses change and new tenants are recruited to Cleveland Avenue.

- Work with CRA, City of Fort Myers Planning Department, Lee County Property Appraiser staff and property owners to compile a database of property maps, building inventory (by retail/merchandise type), roadway maps, and other resources as a basis for future planning, corridor analysis and evaluations (beyond the Redevelopment Plan) and as tools for surveys, updates and leasing strategies.
- The inventory should also track retailer performance and sales productivity (to the extent possible) as a means of understanding weaknesses and strengths across merchandise categories. This information will display which retail segments are performing well and which are performing poorly; this information can then be used to develop retail retention and recruitment strategies.
- Over time, the management program should conduct new or updated consumer surveys on retail mix, safety, new projects and directions, etc., as the basis for future policy and funding decisions.

With time, the management entity may evolve into a more formal special district, whether it is a Business Improvement District (BID), or Specialized Services District (SSD), particularly as redevelopment opportunities add new commercial development to the corridor, thus increasing the amount of taxable properties and potential funding mechanisms through Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and/or special assessments through a BID. The evolution of a centralized management entity into a BID should be evaluated in the following key areas:

- Financial—To determine whether a special assessment mechanism is required in order to create revenues that may be needed beyond the tax increment generated as part of the CRA that are used for the initiatives and recommendations identified herein.
- Regulatory—To identify and understand regulatory issues, including whether a separate authorizing entity like a BID is allowed, under Chapter 163 of the Florida Statute that authorizes creation of a CRA.



A BUSINESS ORGANIZATION CAN PRIORITIZE IMPROVEMENTS

## INITIATE CATALYST PROJECTS

Perhaps the most visible signal to the community at-large will be one or more catalyst projects in high visibility locations that can be undertaken to build early momentum and illustrate that private-sector investment is occurring along Cleveland Avenue. To some degree, the addition/expansion of Edison Mall with a number of new national retail tenants reflects this; however, this was primarily designed as a pre-emptive strike to benefit the Mall itself and strengthen its competitive position in the regional retail marketplace as significant new retail projects such as Coconut Point Town Center (1.2 million sq. ft. in a village/Main Street format) are delivered elsewhere in Lee County.

As such, the Redevelopment Plan recommends that a priority site(s) be identified (either as one parcel or a series of parcels that can be assembled) to accommodate new mixed-use development that could illustrate an appropriate model for new development. In order to test the economic viability of this key recommendation (and to inform appropriate implementation strategies), the CRA identified two candidate sites in which financial feasibility models were created. These include:

- Colonial Crossings, an aging, 169,200 sq. ft. community retail center built in 1976, and located on a 12.4 acre site at 4429 Cleveland Avenue, as a candidate site for redevelopment.
- “Tower 41”/Innovative Development, which encompasses the redevelopment of the aging “Bingo 41 Plaza” with a new 243,000 sq. ft. mixed-use project containing 120 market-rate condominium units, 37,000 sq. ft. of retail and restaurants, and 74,000 sq. ft. of medical and speculative office space, as proposed by Innovative Development, Inc.

For both candidate sites, the economic model tested the financial feasibility of a mix of for-sale housing (both townhouses and condominium flats), destination retail (including specialty retail and restaurants), and a small component of workplace/office uses. The model's primary objectives included estimating potential returns on private investment, by use, and quantifying the degree of financial “gap” and incremental TIF revenues

generated by the project at build-out. In addition, for the Colonial Crossings site, the model also solved for the supportable value of land. The model produces the following preliminary results:

### Colonial Crossings

- \$74.5 million investment in new development
- \$58.2 million in new assessed values at build-out across a range of uses
- \$744,000 in annual property taxes for the City of Fort Myers and Lee County
- 8.6% return-on-cost (IRR)
- Negative residual value of (\$3.1 million)
- \$8.1 million in potential bonding capacity generated by the incremental TIF revenues (at 75 percent of available TIF) or \$5.4 million in potential bonding capacity (at 50 percent of available TIF), to fund land acquisition and/or specific initiatives such as infrastructure, community amenities or parking (i.e., to offset negative residual values)

### “Tower 41”/Innovative Development

- \$31.2 million investment in new development
- \$23.7 million in net new assessed values at buildout across a range of uses
- \$319,000 in annual property taxes for the City of Ft. Myers and Lee County
- 8.5% return-on-cost (IRR)
- Negative residual value of (\$835,000)
- \$3.5 million in potential bonding capacity generated by the incremental TIF revenues (at 75 percent of available TIF) or \$2.3 million in potential bonding capacity (at 50 percent of available TIF), to fund specific initiatives such as infrastructure, community amenities or parking





PROPOSED COLONIAL CROSSING SITE



PROPOSED TOWER 41 SITE

Based on this analysis, residual values (i.e., investment returns) appear to be strongest for for-sale housing—even with the recent market downturns that have limited absorption/sales pace and reduced unit prices in Ft. Myers. Commercial retail uses appear to achieve minimum investment standards (IRR)—in the range of seven to nine percent for retail and office uses. This is below the investment threshold for urban mixed-use projects, which are typically in the range of 12% or more. Notably, residual values are negative for all commercial uses because market rents are insufficient to justify construction cost premiums and the cost burdens generated by structured parking (necessitated by higher densities). In fact, residual values generated by the project’s commercial uses are negative. This suggests that potential bonding capacity from TIF revenues could be used to offset some portion of the costs of infrastructure improvements, such as structured parking (estimated at \$10.7 million in current dollars for 745 spaces in structured parking at Colonial Crossings and \$3.7 million for 550 spaces at Tower 41) or the provision of other identified infrastructure. While reducing the amount of ad valorem taxes available for the TIF (i.e., at 50 or 75 percent) for projects like Colonial Crossings and Tower 41 would reduce potential bonding capacity, the use of TIF is necessary to strengthen investment returns and overall economic viability. If a bond were used to finance some portion of the cost of structured parking, residual values improve—, producing positive residual values that could be used to support land acquisition and/or finance improvements to the public realm and other benefits or amenities.

# REDEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK



# IMPLEMENTATION – ACTION PLAN

## ACTION PLAN - BIG MOVES

The “Big Moves” are items from the Action Plan that will have the most transformative impact on the Cleveland Avenue Corridor. It is recommended that these action items be given the sustained effort necessary to see large projects through. The proposed phasing, estimated cost, and other detail for each project is provided in the Action Plan at the end of this section.

1. **STREETSCAPE SCHEMATIC DESIGN** - This design will help establish the unique identity and character for the corridor.
2. **CRA DISTRICT BUSINESS & RETAIL INVENTORY** - Crucial information which will help to recruit new businesses and support marketing efforts.
3. **CODE REVISIONS** - Update design standards to encourage building design and scale oriented to the corridor, and revise mixed use standards to activate the corridor by permitting and incentivizing mixed use development with ground floor retail.
4. **COMMUNITY POLICING** - To improve public safety on the corridor and increase public/private cooperation.
5. **EDISON AVENUE GREENWAY** - A key pedestrian connection between two major destinations.
6. **LAND ASSEMBLY ASSISTANCE** - The CRA can take the long term view and assemble small parcels for future redevelopment.
7. **STORMWATER FACILITIES** - To assist with water quality measures that help treat stormwater runoff before it discharges through the canal systems to the River, on-site mechanical treatment systems should be encouraged through incentives, and centralized off-site stormwater facilities that benefit the CRA should be built.

## ACTION PLAN - QUICK WINS

The “Quick Wins” are items from the Action Plan that can be implemented quickly, yet create a tangible sense of progress. Quick Wins will help the Action Plan get off to a visible start and motivate stakeholders to stick with the plan for the long haul.

1. **PEDESTRIAN STREET CROSSINGS** - The first step in developing a pedestrian/ bicyclist character for Cleveland Avenue.
2. **INSTALL MEDIAN TREATMENTS** - Median treatments will help beautify the corridor and increase pedestrian/ bicyclist and vehicular safety.
3. **LANDSCAPE RENOVATION GRANTS** - Landscaping is a short term way to improve unattractive parking areas.
4. **FACADE RENOVATION GRANTS** - A new facade can rejuvenate the appearance of an old building.
5. **MAJOR CORRIDOR GATEWAYS** - Gateways will help reinforce a sense of identity and destination in the corridor.
6. **SIGN CODE ENFORCEMENT** - An excess of poorly design signs is an obstacle to the corridor’s appearance.
7. **WEBSITE & E-NEWSLETTER** - Important for getting the word out on successes and strategies.

2014 Update  
For explanation  
of changes,  
see the Foreword  
on pages i-iii

# IMPLEMENTATION – ACTION PLAN

# CORRIDOR PROJECTS

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Taken as a whole, these projects provide an array of options for spurring new investment and development in the Cleveland Avenue corridor. These economic development projects include catalyst developments, better collection and dissemination of information, and better coordination between existing businesses. Incentives can be geared towards target industries to help build specialized clusters in areas such as medical offices. Both physical development and business development projects are emphasized, as these goals are mutually supportive. Success and growth of existing businesses on the corridor will lead to investment and redevelopment, while improving image for the corridor will assist with business retention.

### Economic Development & Marketing

Enhancing and expanding the retail and business mix along Cleveland Avenue should be a primary goal as revitalization efforts are implemented.

To increase the number and diversity of businesses and provide for the retention of viable existing businesses along Cleveland Avenue, the following initiatives are recommended:

### COMMENCE BUSINESS/RETAIL RETENTION & RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES

- Based on available commercial space and characteristics of the resident and visitor populations, create a recruitment program to seek and attract businesses/products with specific themes to the avenue.
- Incorporate international cuisine, products and owners into a retail recruitment strategy to bring new ethnic products and businesses to identified nodes or clusters along Cleveland Avenue.

- Include established business owners into targeted recruitment teams that will work together to attract new businesses.
- Create clusters of internationally themed businesses in these nodes to reinforce the mix and provide location/relocation opportunities for ethnic and international products and business owners.
- Structure recruitment programs to include both internationally themed and conventional retailers and businesses.
- Help to organize retail recruitment teams described earlier once space and rental data is organized, team participants are committed and marketing materials are complete.
- Maintain communication with existing businesses to track potential relocation and/or retention issues, prospects, and opportunities.
- Match the viability [sales performance] of a particular business and its potential to cover costs [rents] with the real estate economics and the availability of financial incentives for specific locations.

The management program/entity should establish a retail recruitment team comprised of representatives from property owners/brokers (to indicate space availability); banks/financial institutions (to indicate availability of financing); a CRA or other designated public official (to indicate a streamlined approvals process and offer public programs and support); a retailer (to represent that there is a customer base and business potential); and management program staff (to indicate a comprehensive approach with centralized services in place).

In addition, materials for a business recruitment package should be prepared for distribution to potential business prospects. The package should include the logo or symbol of the corridor created under the identity and image tasks and should include a limited number of pages of text and table summaries of factors relevant to retailers interested in Cleveland Avenue, such as average and median household incomes, population and



The plan promotes new investment and an improved appearance along the corridor

demographic trends, average market rents for space, a copy of the map and business directory, a description of the purpose, goals and services offered by the management program, a description of any available incentives (whether financial or policy/zoning-oriented tools) and contact names for further information. A summary of incentives should be prepared and distributed to property owners and businesses (in English, Spanish, and other languages) since some business owners and property owners may not be aware of the financial tools and offers that may be available. Finally, the property inventory listing should be maintained on an ongoing basis as a tool for anticipating lease roll-overs and available spaces; new retail or business prospects will need to know what spaces will be available when they are ready to consider locations along Cleveland Avenue.

## CREATE CORRIDOR IDENTITY PROGRAMS

To understand Cleveland Avenue's physical image and lack of a coherent/marketable identity, it is only necessary to drive the length of the corridor—particularly in those aging blocks that contain the oldest commercial properties closest to downtown. The suburban, auto-oriented character of the corridor is similar to many other suburban commercial corridors in Florida and, indeed, throughout the country.

The 3- to 4-mile length of the corridor is not clearly marked at the beginning or end and, while there are well-known institutional uses and shopping centers along its length, it is too long to be easily comprehended as a “place” or destination. There are multiple commercial nodes along Cleveland Avenue but they are not connected visually with any consistency, nor do they reinforce any perceived identity. Cleveland Avenue is also far too wide to foster comfortable pedestrian activity along its edges, whether pedestrians are trying to cross the street or moving from one sub-area or retail cluster to another. Moreover, the physical character is hostile to pedestrians and is undifferentiated from other commercial areas and, other than signs for specific businesses, it is difficult to perceive any “theme” in the corridor.

The consumer experience is too auto-oriented and vehicular and pedestrian connections between key destinations—such as Edison Mall or Lee Memorial Hospital—are confusing and difficult to navigate, particularly for potential patrons who may not be familiar with the area. Finally, many commercial buildings along the corridor need reinvestment and design assistance for storefronts and signs.

Thus, key objectives in attending to Cleveland Avenue's physical issues include:

- **Creating a coherent identity and making improvements to the corridor's physical image.**
- **Ensuring that property owners understand the need for improvements.**
- **Leveraging investment or reinvestment in the corridor.**

There are several strategies intended to achieve this outcome. These include developing a simple but flexible package of various identity elements (e.g., signs, logos, maps and brochures, shopping directories, symbols, banners, etc.) to create a graphic identity for Cleveland Avenue, and using them consistently throughout the corridor; focusing local and state concerns on the safety and appearance problems in the corridor as a means to seek flexible-use transportation funds for lighting, landscaping, pedestrian improvements, etc.; and using FDOT and Federal transportation funds (normally sought through state transportation agencies) to undertake improvements and beautification efforts along the corridor.

“EXCELLENT PRESENTATION.  
MEETING - VERY INFORMATIVE!  
LET'S GO!”  
-WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT

## ACTION PLAN - DEVELOPING AN IDENTITY

- **Designing, funding and constructing ‘Welcome’ signs** at the entries to the corridor. This brands Cleveland Avenue for residents, employees, visitors and other consumers. Because of the length of the corridor, it is recommended that branding efforts distinguish between specific locations or sub-districts (nodes) along the avenue.
- **Developing a banners program** (to be organized and managed through the management entity) to identify the length of the corridor from end-to-end. The banners could be designed to reflect the diversity of Cleveland Avenue’s resident population and businesses, flags from countries represented by businesses along the corridor, or to serve as announcements of pending holidays/special events. The banners program should be broad enough in its application to incorporate the entire corridor.
- **Beginning a marketing campaign to celebrate specific “themes”** among Cleveland Avenue’s current business mix—such as the Latin eateries, apparel, crafts items, specialty goods, music and videos, anchor retail centers, etc., and to seek publicity to reinforce a potential branding image/identity.
- **Creating a Cleveland Avenue Corridor marketing brochure** or business directory/map that lists key businesses and locates them throughout the corridor. Sufficient funding should be budgeted to print an adequate number of maps for distribution through the management organization and sponsoring businesses; the map should be updated every one to two years to accommodate changes in the business mix,



This streetscape serves as an example of what is possible along Cleveland Avenue

and it should include identifying graphics that are consistent with the identity of Cleveland Avenue.

- **Printing the marketing brochure/business directory in multiple languages** (at a minimum, English and Spanish) in cooperative sponsorships/advertising from businesses marketed toward various ethnic populations.
- **Preparing a visual presentation** (PowerPoint, video or other format) about Cleveland Avenue, its business mix and efforts to establish an identity, presenting it to civic and business groups for their support. The presentation should be used to provide information on both near- and long-term goals and objectives and planned projects.

## PROVIDE LAND ASSEMBLY ASSISTANCE

Though recent changes in Florida law limit the ability of the Redevelopment Agency to acquire land, the Redevelopment Agency can still play a major role in land assembly by serving as an intermediary in negotiations in areas along Cleveland Avenue where multiple/fragmented ownership exacerbates the ability of developers to assemble sites. The Redevelopment Agency can acquire underutilized or parcels that are not considered marketable with a long-term eye towards creating parcels of sufficient size and become substantially more marketable for redevelopment. Independent appraisals of candidate properties will establish fair market value. While some opportunities may not materialize because of a lack of willing sellers, the Redevelopment Agency should consider this strategy a long-term perspective to consider acquisition of key parcels as momentum builds for redevelopment in specific locations along Cleveland Avenue.

## LAND USE & COMMUNITY POLICY

Fort Myers policies need to be aligned so that regulatory, incentive, and management efforts are coordinated toward promoting common goals. Incentives should promote the types of new development and redevelopment that are desired along the corridor, while also encouraging private sector cooperation with vital public sector efforts such as a new streetscape design for the corridor. Public-private cooperation on issues such as Community Policing can result in more effective and coordinated revitalization efforts.

### Revise Mixed-Use Zoning Categories

Mixed-use development is a defining feature of nearly all vital urban corridors. First story retail activates the ground floor and creates interest for pedestrians. Cleveland Avenue is already a major shopping street, and encouraging mixed-use development will help to capitalize the corridor's

existing strengths. Some Fort Myers zoning codes already permit mixed use, but the professional land use category should be modified to allow retail development on the first floor.

### Easement Acquisition Program

As significant new easements are required to fully redesign Cleveland Avenue, the Redevelopment Agency should seek to acquire these easements as the opportunity occurs. In most cases, this opportunity will come when the property is being redeveloped. In some cases, current property owners may be willing to sell areas of their property currently dedicated to parking. Easement acquisition terms will need to be worked out on a case-by-case basis, but incentives for donating streetscape easement can include construction of the new streetscape by the Fort Myers Redevelopment Agency and/or density bonuses. The new streetscape design should help improve the image of the subject property and should promote pedestrian access to the property.



Easement are needed to create a first-class pedestrian realm

"I LIKE THE IDEA OF BIKE LANES. KEEP THE PED/BIKE FOCUS... IT'LL PAY OFF"  
-WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT

# IMPLEMENTATION – ACTION PLAN

## Density Bonuses

Density bonuses are a policy to allow additional development density when a proposed development meets established criteria. There are a variety of models for density bonuses, and a number of cities across the country use density bonuses to promote affordable housing. Generally the density bonus allowed is in the range of 10-20%. Two specific policies that Fort Myers may wish to promote with density bonuses include:

- **Construction of affordable housing**
- **Donation of frontage easements**

Density bonuses create a positive incentive for developers to create amenities that fit in with the redevelopment plan vision.

## Community Policing

Community policing is a strategy for coordinating police efforts with local communities, resulting in a better understanding of their issues and more effective police operations. The foundation for a community policing strategy is regular communications between private entities and/or residents and the police department and participation by private entities in creating and maintaining a safe environment in their surroundings. Many institutions along the Cleveland Avenue corridor already have private security services. Regular meetings along the corridor with City of Fort Myers Police could result in better intelligence and communications about the ongoing safety issues of the corridor. Also, the police can communicate with private entities about crime prevention and standard police procedures, resulting in a better informed and safer community. Assigning a regular 'beat' along the Cleveland Avenue corridor could result in greater familiarity with the area and better relations with private entities on the corridor, furthering the Community Policing initiative. TIF funds from the FMRA can be used to help pay for enhanced police protection on the corridor.

## Sign Enforcement

Signs that violate existing ordinances were apparent along the corridor. It is important to educate existing property owners about the existing ordinance and to give them an opportunity to come into compliance. Sign regulations create a minimum standard for the appearance of the corridor that can help elevate the level of aesthetics overall. Unattractive and inappropriate signs are one of the major detriments to the corridor's appearance.

## URBAN DESIGN

Urban design improvements are important to the Cleveland Avenue corridor for a number of reasons. Consistency and quality of urban design is one of the key features that creates a sense of identity and destination in a district such as Cleveland Avenue. Orientation is also very important, as Cleveland Avenue is near a number of major destinations for residents, workers, patients, and tourists. Finally, improving the pedestrian environment is a key public goal for the Cleveland Avenue Redevelopment Plan, with the long-term goal of making Cleveland Avenue a safe and pleasant place to walk and use transportation alternatives.

## Cultural District Gateway

Gateways are visible landmarks that create a sense of entry and orientation. They can be quite varied in design, from a high-quality sign to a water fountain to a sculpture. The intersection of Cleveland Avenue with Edison Avenue is a key location on the corridor, and is designated in the plan as the proper location for a Cultural District Gateway. This Gateway should create a sense of entrance/destination from multiple directions, as it will lead to the Downtown Fort Myers, the Edison-Ford Winter Home, and to the City of Palms Park, spring training grounds for the Boston Red Sox.

CLEVELAND AVENUE  
CAN HELP TO ADDRESS  
THE REGION'S NEED FOR  
INCREASED AFFORDABLE  
HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES





Incompatible uses hinder redevelopment

### Cleveland Avenue Gateway

Gateways as an entrance to Cleveland Avenue can occur both at intersections with Boy Scout and Colonial Boulevard. The intersection of Cleveland with Boy Scout is technically the City of Fort Myers boundary, a location that is currently hard to discern. The character of the Cleveland Avenue corridor changes significantly north of Colonial Boulevard, and the creation of a Gateway feature would be a signal that a traveler is now entering an urban district. In fact, Colonial Boulevard itself serves as a *de facto* gateway, though an unattractive one. If Colonial Boulevard is expanded or renovated with transportation funding, more attractive and decorative identifying features could be worked into the redesign. A gateway at this location would certainly help to create a sense of destination for the Cleveland Avenue corridor. A fountain has been suggested as a possible Gateway feature in discussions with community members.

### Prevent Incompatible Land Uses

Cleveland Avenue can incorporate a wide range of residential, commercial, and office uses. And every use that is currently on the corridor certainly maintains its right to remain in place. However zoning can be used to discourage the development of incompatible uses and the expansion of



Design guidelines can promote pedestrian-friendly design

existing incompatible uses. Most industrial uses and adult-oriented uses create land use incompatibilities or detract from the image of the corridor. Rezoning B-2 parcels to B-1 zoning category should exclude the expansion of these uses along the corridor. This should promote the corridor's image and improve its attractiveness as a place of business or residence.

### New Design Overlay

Cleveland Avenue has unique design issues relating to its features as a major transportation corridor and its location in the city. A design overlay would allow the City of Fort Myers to encourage development that is appropriate for the corridor's functions. First, the design overlay should encourage buildings to be built adjacent to or close to the planned pedestrian realm. It should be easy to enter buildings or look into shops from the pedestrian area. This increases the pedestrian-friendliness of the corridor and creates a more continuous building wall, defining the public realm. The second key feature is a height limit. The public issued a preference that development on the corridor should be in the medium scale – between three and six stories. This scale is large enough to define the urban corridor but small enough not to overwhelm. It is notable that this scale is commonly found in Fort Myers historic downtown, where it functions quite successfully. At the

same time, some flexibility is warranted in the granting of density bonuses so long as the scale along the Cleveland Avenue frontage is maintained.

### Design Guidelines

Design issues were a major part of the Cleveland Avenue Redevelopment plan discussion. Many stakeholders were interested in seeing more stringent and more uniform design regulations implemented throughout the corridor. Other stakeholders wanted to permit design diversity, and did not want to discourage development through over-management of design.

The consultant team recommends the development of design guidelines for new development in the corridor. The process of developing design guidelines will serve as a community forum where people can voice their concerns about design issues. Also, design guidelines create a blueprint for developers telling them what they “should” do when so many other regulations tell them what they “should not” do. In short, design guidelines create a positive model for how a community wants to develop, and therefore create a path for community-minded land owners and developers to fit in with a larger community vision. The process of creating design guidelines itself can be educational and purposeful even if the guidelines themselves are not mandatory.

### Landscape Grants

Landscape grants are a standard beautification practice in many redeveloping areas. The concept behind landscape grants is to provide competitive matching funds for private land owners, who proposed landscape projects to beautify their properties. The Redevelopment Agency sets up competition criteria to ensure that landscape projects address aesthetic issues of concern to the community. For example, some of the major concerns of the Cleveland Avenue stakeholder community were parking areas that completely lack landscaping. Also, landscaping along



Pedestrian improvements associated with new streetscapes & crossings

the perimeter of parking areas and pedestrian areas is a location where a small amount of planting could create a large difference in the look and feel of an area.

### Streetscape Schematic Design

A schematic design for the Cleveland Avenue streetscape would select the standard materials and typical cross section for the corridor. Specific locations would not be designed for, but standard materials that define place such as benches, trash receptacles, bus stops, trees, and lighting would be selected. Also, a typical cross-section and a typical street crossing would be designed, creating a template for how the corridor as a whole should appear when fully complete. Streetscape design is certainly one of the most powerful techniques for creating a unified identity along the corridor.

### Façade Renovation Grants

Façade renovation grants are also a standard beautification practice in many redeveloping areas. The concept behind façade renovation grants is to provide competitive matching funds for private land owners, who propose façade renovation projects to beautify their properties. The Redevelopment Agency sets up competition criteria to ensure that façade renovation projects address aesthetic issues of concern to the community. For example, the grants should be focused on properties that are unlikely to redevelop soon and properties that contain land uses that are compatible with the corridor vision. Grants may also be scaled to the size of the façade to be addressed. It may also be appropriate for City staff to review a proposed renovation project and comment on relevant urban design characteristics as part of the project review criteria.

### Wayfinding System

The Fort Myers Redevelopment Agency has developed an attractive and distinctive wayfinding system for use in downtown Fort Myers. This same system can be extended southwards along the Cleveland Avenue corridor to key locations to help orient visitors to the corridor. The Cleveland Avenue district north of Edison Avenue is conceivably an extension of downtown, and major destinations are located on or along the corridor. Obviously, guiding visitors to major destinations and creating a sense of orientation are good for tourism and other visitors to the Cleveland Avenue corridor.

### Corridor Streetscape

A new streetscape and pedestrian realm is the centerpiece of the Cleveland Avenue Redevelopment Plan: wider, safer, more comfortable sidewalks; regular and attractive street trees and street furniture; a consistent design that creates a sense of continuity. All of these features depend upon a carefully planned streetscape design that makes best possible use of limited

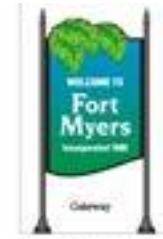


Design cues should be taken from Florida's vernacular traditions

real estate along the Cleveland Avenue corridor. This new streetscape must be paid for predominantly by the Fort Myers Redevelopment Agency, but private-sector contributions and especially donations of land are essential to full implementation. The streetscape will require provision of easements by private property owners to the Redevelopment Agency, but private property owners should benefit from an improved appearance and public sector infrastructure investment.

### STORMWATER

To assist with water quality measures that help treat stormwater runoff before it discharges through the canal systems to the River, the CRA should encourage concepts of on-site mechanical treatment systems through incentives, and the CRA may encourage or build centralized off-site stormwater facilities that benefit the CRA. Adjacent to District II lies the Fort Myers Country Club. Even though it is adjacent to the District, the CRA should use this facility to build water management facilities and create a credit system to benefit properties within the CRA to help in meeting water management district permit criteria when seeking to redevelop. Other locations for such facilities may also be identified.



Examples from Fort Myers' new Wayfinding sign system

**2014 Update**  
For explanation of changes, see the Foreword on pages i-iii

## TRANSPORTATION

### Critical Street Crossings

One of the major goals of the plan is to change Cleveland Avenue from an 'edge' which divides the Fort Myers community into two halves into a 'seam' which connects the residential communities on either side. Residential communities should have a reason to travel to and along the corridor for everyday shopping and for other major destinations like schools and parks. To make Cleveland Avenue a "seam" which re-connects the Fort Myers community, it must be safely crossable by a variety of pedestrians, young and old alike. Through a public charrette process, critical street crossings that are most important to the community have been identified. These crossings include the intersections of Cleveland Avenue with Edison, Linhart, Winkler, Llewellyn, and Grace streets. Creating safe and convenient crossings at these locations is the first step in reconnecting the city across the Cleveland Avenue corridor.

### Pedestrian/ Bicyclist Connectivity Plan

District 3 along the Cleveland Avenue corridor already displays the mix of uses that might be found in a typical urban environment. Residential, office, and retail uses are found in close proximity. The only element that is missing from a pedestrian-friendly environment are the network of well-defined and well-maintained pedestrian and bicycle paths. A detailed look should be given at the existing and planned uses in this District and how they can be knitted together with pedestrian and bicycle paths. Pedestrian paths can include on-street sidewalks, crosswalks, greenways, and even mid-block crossings in certain areas. Pedestrian and bicycle paths may also include sidewalks or designated pedestrian connections through parking lots or apartment complexes. Pathways on private developments and public rights-of-way should connect to form a convenient and interconnected network that minimizes the distance for pedestrians and encourages walking from site to site.

### Parking Deck

Parking decks are especially effective when they can be used for multiple purposes. A single parking deck could potentially be used to accommodate parking for nearby office uses as well as users of City of Palms Park. Incorporating a first-floor restaurant would help to create a visible destination on the Cleveland Avenue corridor and prevent the space from becoming unused during off-peak hours.

### Cleveland Avenue Shuttle

Cleveland Avenue is currently well served for transit and a shuttle is not likely justified by current development intensities. However as mixed-use, denser development occurs along the corridor and in downtown Fort Myers a shuttle may become more feasible. Major destinations along the corridor, such as Lee Memorial Hospital, Edison Mall, and downtown Fort Myers could be knitted together with a frequently circulating shuttle. This long range recommendation would promote alternatives to automobile use and be especially convenient for transit-dependent members of the community.

### Bus Shelters

Quality bus shelters are key for making the use of transit more attractive. Since southwest Florida has intense sunlight and heavy rains shelter from the elements is an essential feature. Well designed and well placed bus shelters will be a key amenity for promoting transit along the corridor. A preferred bus shelter design should be selected that is consistent with the image of the Cleveland Avenue corridor and LeeTran requirements. LeeTran and major employers should be consulted on the best locations for bus shelters along the corridor.



A new facade can improve the appearance of an old building

**2014 Update**  
For explanation  
of changes,  
see the Foreword  
on pages i-iii

### Increased Roadway Connectivity

Redevelopment opportunities along Cleveland Avenue in District 4 south of Colonial Boulevard could provide an opportunity for additional east-west connectivity between Cleveland Avenue and Summerlin Road. The impacts of such a new roadway on existing development would need to be further explored.

### OPEN SPACE

Throughout the planning process, there was strong community interest in additional parks and greenways. Parks can be enhanced in the Cleveland Avenue corridor several ways. First of all, the addition of new, well-placed parks can create new gathering places for the community. Often in urban areas, small plazas can serve an important community function if they are well located at the crossroads of various activities and benefit from surrounding amenities. Secondly, better connections to existing parks and between parks and neighborhoods help to enhance the benefit from existing parks. An interconnected parks system presents greater benefit in terms of accessibility and recreational opportunity.

### Edison Avenue Greenway

This east-west greenway would connect two of the major destinations in the corridor area: the Edison-Ford Winter Estates and the City of Palms Park. Parts of this greenway effectively already exist along Edison, with wide, palm-lined sidewalks creating an elegant entrance to the City of Palms Park. Extending this east and west along Edison Avenue would create a grand entry into the Cleveland Avenue corridor and beyond to the Edison-Ford Winter Estates.

### Canal Street Pathway

A greenway developed along Canal Street bordering the canal would serve as another vital east-west connection better connecting adjoining neighborhoods with the Cleveland Avenue corridor. If cleaned, maintained, and landscaped, the canal could serve as a visual amenity that adds to the greenway. Major destinations would also be served by the greenway, including Lee Memorial Hospital and Fort Myers High School. The greenway could end at McGregor Boulevard, one of the signature corridors for the city.

### DeLeon Park Connection

Currently DeLeon Park situated, just west of District 4 along the corridor, lacks convenient and direct access. This makes it more difficult for city residents to use the park and increases the likelihood of cut-through traffic in neighborhoods. As a major transportation corridor, direct vehicular access from Cleveland Avenue through the creation of a new street (with adequate sidewalks) is the most logical way to improve access to DeLeon Park. Alternatively, a publicly accessible pedestrian path would also serve to promote access and connectivity to DeLeon Park.

### Parks & Plazas Program

The Redevelopment Agency can work with private property owners to identify potential sites for new parks and plazas along the Cleveland Avenue corridor. More neighborhood-oriented parks could be created just off of the corridor, ½ to 1 block away. Small parks of 3-5 acres can be of tremendous benefit to local neighborhoods if well programmed and well maintained. Immediately on the corridor, small, heavily landscaped plazas may be appropriate, especially in areas of high foot traffic. Integrating these public spaces with nearby activity will be crucial for their success. These types of small urban parks could also be created at the intersections of the corridor with various greenways.



Quality bus shelters make transit use more desirable

## MARKETING

A continuous marketing presence for the Cleveland Avenue redevelopment efforts can help build a sense of identity and involvement for stakeholders along the corridor. By letting stakeholders know about all of the small positive changes that are occurring on the corridor, the Redevelopment Agency encourages them to invest their time, energy, and money in the corridor. Also, marketing efforts can help promote existing businesses and shopping opportunities, therefore supporting local entrepreneurs. In addition to promoting positive changes and existing businesses, occasional events can build community identity and cohesion. For all of these reasons, coordinated marketing efforts can be very beneficial to a redeveloping area such as Cleveland Avenue.

### Website & Newsletter

Regular communication channels create a mechanism for keeping the Cleveland Avenue area's business owners, property owners, and residents plugged into the corridor's redevelopment progress. Regular communication can occur via newsletters, an area website, or both. Many redevelopment agencies and areas now use electronic newsletters to save the cost of printing and mailing, but to maintain the sense of connection with area stakeholders. Stories in the newsletters can include comments from elected officials, development projects, Redevelopment Agency initiatives, events, and so on. Regular communication serves both as a mechanism for educating stakeholders about opportunities provided by the Redevelopment Agency and for generating a sense of progress around the redevelopment area.

## ACTION ITEM: PROMOTIONS & SPECIAL EVENTS

Special events on Cleveland Avenue can provide valuable visibility and opportunities to bring new consumers from Lee County and possibly beyond. These types of events can introduce new consumer markets to Cleveland Avenue and can provide exposure for established businesses. Promotions and events can be undertaken at relatively low cost, and provide publicity, visibility and traffic.

- Because events and marketing campaigns are complicated to organize, schedule no more than three to four major events per year.
- Focus on food, music, sports, costume, cultural expression, language, arts and specialized crafts, which reflect differences in cultures.
- Provide a neutral venue (preferably a public place) that is safe, secure and has adequate infrastructure to support the planned activities.
- Establish an Events and Marketing Committee and involve local organizations and community groups.

## CONDUCT ONGOING MARKETING, PROMOTIONS & SPECIAL EVENTS

While not a bricks and mortar or investment leverage issue, the need to address marketing, promotions and a (limited but well-developed) series of special events on Cleveland Avenue can provide valuable visibility and opportunities to bring different groups from Lee County and Southwest Florida together to celebrate a range of activities and cultures. These types of events, if properly organized and marketed can introduce new consumer markets to Cleveland Avenue and can provide exposure for established businesses. Promotions and events can be undertaken at relatively low cost, and provide publicity, visibility and traffic.

There are numerous examples across the state of such events held in public venues, ranging from the Crafts Festival in Sarasota, seafood festivals in Pompano Beach and Ft. Lauderdale, the Street Painting Festival in Lake Worth, the Africana Film Festival in Tallahassee, and the Rhythm and Ribs Festival in St. Augustine, among many others.

Notably, stakeholders suggested that the City of Palms Park could be used more frequently during the off-season as a venue for entertainment and community events, and the City is already promoting events in its historic downtown through mechanisms such as its monthly calendar of events or the Currents newsletter.

The overarching goal is to provide a management structure and schedule for marketing, promotions and special events in the corridor that will celebrate various events or activities, offer a common ground for different groups to share a positive experience along Cleveland Avenue, and draw outside consumers to the corridor who might not otherwise have visited.



The following marketing action steps are recommended:

- Bring together specific organizations, social service networks and business and resident groups to participate in a series of special events on an annual basis.
- Because events and marketing campaigns are complicated to organize, no more than three to four extraordinary events per year should be scheduled. It has proven better to do fewer things well than to expand to the point that the event is not considered special enough to attract much participation or anticipation in the marketplace.
- Focus on food, music, sports, costume, cultural expression, language, arts and specialized crafts, and other experience elements that reflect differences in cultures (e.g., this could include the relocation of the city's Latin Jazz Fest from Centennial Park to Cleveland Avenue).



Events can build community identity and increase business

- Provide a neutral venue (preferably a public place) that is safe, secure and has adequate infrastructure to support the planned activities. If a public space or park is not available, private property may be used, but this will generate additional legal and liability issues that may make this alternative more complex to implement.
- Establish an Events and Marketing Committee through the management program/entity, and involve local organizations and community groups. Publicize events through the news media.
- Establish budgets through contributions, sponsorships and other underwriting resources and plan for management staff to spend a concentrated amount of time before and after special events as the central focus of organization, information and guidance. The CRA may fund events that are organized by the CRA or may fund events that benefit the CRA that are sponsored by third parties.

## FUNDING STRATEGIES

New development and substantial rehabilitation of existing buildings is extremely difficult. Often time a gap exists between the cost of developing a project and the income the project can generate to cover debt service and operating expenses. As a result the following incentives may be required to attract new development:

- Tax increment rebates
- Rent subsidies
- Loan or grant programs
- Tenant improvement subsidies
- Land assembly assistance and acquisition of easements
- Impact fee waivers or credits

### GRANTS

The CRA may use tax increment funds to incentivize and subsidize improvements to building facades, landscaping, signage, parking and pedestrian improvements or other code required infrastructure. Through an application process, properties within the CRA may seek matching grant dollars to enhance the appearance of their facades or to incorporate additional or improved landscaping, parking areas, pedestrian paths or other code required infrastructure along the Cleveland corridor. This investment of the tax increment funds will not only improve the appearance of the property owner receiving the funds, but will prompt surrounding neighbors to improve their own properties, which will in turn improve the aesthetic of the corridor and have a positive impact on the tax base.

2014 Update  
For explanation  
of changes,  
see the Foreword  
on pages i-iii



## **PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS**

The involvement of the public sector in private development results in what is commonly known as a public/private partnership. Such partnerships demand that the private developer understand the desires and goals of the public agency to encourage a particular redevelopment opportunity, to increase the local tax base or to enhance public services. Likewise the public sector must recognize the private sectors return on investment requirements. The partnership only works when both parties understand and accept each others goals.

## **OTHER FUNDING MECHANISIMS**

The following potential funding mechanisms and other incentives may be available for projects within the Cleveland Avenue corridor. Redevelopment funding mechanisms may be available from Federal and state programs that are typically related to predevelopment financing options. The following are examples of such programs available through the state of Florida:

- Enterprise Zone Program
- Enterprise Zone Jobs Tax Credit (Sales & Use Tax)
- Sales Tax Refund for Business Machinery & Equipment Used in an Enterprise Zone
- Sales Tax Relief for Building Materials Used in an Enterprise Zone
- Sales Tax Exemption for Electrical Energy Used in an Enterprise Zone
- Enterprise Zone Jobs Tax Credit (Corporate Income Tax)
- Enterprise Zone Property Tax Credit (Corporate Income Tax)
- Community Contribution Tax Credit Program (Corporate Income Tax or Sales Tax Refund)
- Qualified Target Industry Tax Refund Program (QTI)
- Quick Repsonse Training Program (QRT)
- Economic Development Transportation Fund (Road Fund)
- Capital Investment Tax Credit
- Voluntary Cleanup Tax Credit (VCTC)
- Loan Guarantees for Contaminated Sites
- Brownfields Redevelopment Bonus

**2014 Update**  
For explanation  
of changes,  
see the Foreword  
on pages i-iii

# IMPLEMENTATION – ACTION PLAN

# ACTION PLAN MATRIX

The Action Plan matrix presented on the following pages outlines recommended key initiatives for the Fort Myers Community Redevelopment Agency. Each project is described along with the estimated cost, the entity responsible for the effort, and potential funding sources for the project.

The projects are identified by phases – Phase 1: near-term effort that can begin immediately, Phase 2: mid-term projects for the 5-10 years out, and Phase 3: long term projects to be initiated 5 -10 years and beyond.

The projects are organized into six categories:

1. Economic Development – efforts that address the economic vitality along the corridor;
2. Policy – includes regulatory actions the FMRA along with the City can address that will support the overall goals of the Cleveland Avenue Redevelopment Plan;
3. Urban Design – programs and projects that support the preferred character and enhanced pedestrian realm expressed by the community;
4. Transportation – projects that improve the functionality of Cleveland Avenue for vehicular traffic as well as pedestrian/ bicyclist movement;
5. Open Space – addresses measures to ensure greenspace and linkages along the Cleveland Avenue corridor; and
6. Marketing – includes efforts to promote Cleveland Avenue as a destination in the City of Fort Myers.



Improved street crossings increase pedestrian safety and comfort



New development along Cleveland should be pedestrian-oriented and human scale

**2014 Update**  
For explanation  
of changes,  
see the Foreword  
on pages i-iii

## Cleveland Avenue Action Plan

The CRA may use TIF funds for these projects. These projects may be CRA initiated or may be in association with other entities, agencies, or property owners.

Project ID	Phase	Project Name	Project Type	Project Description	Est. Total Project Costs	Notes
<b>Economic Development</b>						
ED -1	Ongoing	Stormwater Solutions	Economic Development	Develop stormwater facilities where adequate land area exists to create a stormwater credit system to benefit properties within the CRA. Begin with facilities adjacent to District 2 on Fort Myers Country Club property. Continue to identify other locations for similar improvements.	\$1.3 million +	
ED-2	Ongoing	Parking Solutions	Economic Development	Facilitate, develop, and fund new parking structures and facilities (public or private, on street or off street) for shared use.	10 Staff Hours Monthly	
ED -3	2	Consider Creation of Business Improvement District (BID)	Economic Development	Consider creation of a corridor-wide Business Improvement District (BID) pending approval of 51% of property owners/tenants in designated geography. Focus activities on ambassador programs [see P-3 below], "clean & green", joint marketing of retailers.	N/A	may involve coordination with property owners
ED-4	Ongoing	Land Assembly Assistance	Economic Development	Facilitate land assembly between relevant partners/property owners for specific projects where public-private partnership is the most appropriate implementation strategy.	10 Staff Hours Monthly	
ED-5	Ongoing	Economic Incentive Initiatives	Economic Development	Identify, evaluate & implement specific incentives programs to encourage retail/business revitalization along Cleveland Avenue. Potential incentives include property tax abatements, land value write-downs, tax credits and rebates, and grants.	10 Staff Hours Monthly	may involve coordination with other economic development entities
ED-6	2	Create/Expand Retail Merchants Association	Economic Development	Create retail merchants association as an organizational mechanism to promote/market the Cleveland Avenue corridor. Focus activities on inventory, tenant recruitment, marketing, and special events.	10 Staff Hours Monthly	may involve coordination with merchants, property owners
<b>Policy</b>						
P-1	1	Easement Acquisition Program	Transportation	FMRA may allow for easements to be dedicated along the frontage of all newly developed properties north of Colonial Boulevard. In exchange for the easement, the FMRA should pay for the construction of the streetscape fronting each new property as it develops.	See Corridor Streetscape Project UD-8	
P-2	1	Community Policing	Public Safety	Engage the City of Fort Myers Police in a community policing strategy with beats dedicated to the Cleveland Avenue corridor and with a focus on commercial properties along the corridor. TIF dollars can be used to fund enhanced police efforts. The designated part of the police force should have regular monthly meetings with area businesses and residents.	\$350,000 annual	
P-3	2	Sign Enforcement	Code Enforcement	Coordinate with City code enforcement staff on an education campaign and focused code enforcement effort to address non-compliant signs along the corridor.	10 Staff Hours Monthly	

## Cleveland Avenue Action Plan

The CRA may use TIF funds for these projects. These projects may be CRA initiated or may be in association with other entities, agencies, or property owners.

Project ID	Phase	Project Name	Project Type	Project Description	Est. Total Project Costs	Notes
<b>Urban Design</b>						
UD-1	2	Cultural District Gateway	Urban Design	Establish a landmark-type gateway, oriented both to pedestrians and vehicular travel, orienting people to Downtown Fort Myers, the Ford-Edison Winter Home, and the City of Palms Park.	\$30,000	
UD-2	2	Cleveland Avenue Gateway	Urban Design	Establish entryways at the Colonial Avenue Bridge at Cleveland Avenue and Boy Scout Drive/Cleveland Avenue. If a new Colonial Avenue Bridge is constructed, integrate unique gateway design features into the new bridge.	\$30,000	involves coordination with FDOT
UD-3	1	Revisions to Zoning Overlay	Urban Design, Land Use	Redefine allowable uses along corridor to match B-1 zoning in order to exclude incompatible uses for the corridor. New design overlay standards should encourage a build-to line for new development and regulate density, and incentivize mixed use through bonus density. Establish architectural and landscaping design guidelines. Design guidelines can be an expression of the aspirations of the community and do not need to be compulsory. A Design Guideline Booklet is recommended.	\$75,000	
UD-4	Ongoing	Development Assistance / Grants	Urban Design	Provide competitive, matching grants to properties within the Cleveland Avenue CRA to renovate facades or signage or add landscaping, parking or pedestrian areas or other improvements. Require applicants to meet the recommendations of the Redevelopment Plan and standards of the City.	\$150,000 annual	
UD-5	1	Streetscape Schematic Design	Urban Design	Establish typical cross-section and blocks for Cleveland Avenue's streetscape design. Schematic design should include preferred materials such as hardscape materials, street crossings, benches, street lighting, pedestrian lighting, garbage cans, bus stops.	\$25,000	involves coordination with LeeTran
UD-6	3	Wayfinding System	Transportation	Provide Wayfinding Sign System. Extend the wayfinding system planned for Downtown Fort Myers to key locations on the Cleveland Avenue corridor. Uniform and attractive signs will help unify the corridor. Consider using a different color to distinguish Cleveland Avenue.	\$700,000	involves coordination with FDOT
UD-7	Ongoing	Corridor Streetscape	Pedestrian/Urban Design	Incrementally construct proposed streetscape/pedestrian/bicyclist realm in easements or in the right-of-way.	\$27,100,000	involves coordination with FDOT

## Cleveland Avenue Action Plan

The CRA may use TIF funds for these projects. These projects may be CRA initiated or may be in association with other entities, agencies, or property owners.

Project ID	Phase	Project Name	Project Type	Project Description	Est. Total Project Costs	Notes
<b>Transportation</b>						
T-1	2	Interim Median Treatments	Transportation	Installation of interim median, approximately 11' wide, with small flowering trees and shrubs, between Winkler and Edison. Median is expected to increase vehicular and pedestrian safety and can be coordinated with pedestrian street crossings. Ultimate streetscape design will include wider medians and a coordinated traffic circulation plan.	\$2,200,000	involves coordination with FDOT
T-2	1	Critical Street Crossings	Pedestrian	Improve key street crossings to include ADA accessibility, crosswalks, striping, improved pedestrian crossing signals, and pedestrian refuge islands. Winkler Avenue and Solomon Boulevard serve as good examples of these recommended improvements.	\$320,000	involves coordination with FDOT, LeeTran
T-3	2	Pedestrian/Bicyclist Connectivity Plan	Pedestrian	Develop a pedestrian/bicyclist connectivity plan for the Cleveland Avenue Town Center district, including existing pedestrian/bicycle connections and proposed future pedestrian/bicycle	\$25,000	involves coordination with LeeTran
T-4	2	Project Development & Environment Study	Corridor	Prepare a PD&E to determine feasible design solutions to better utilize the Cleveland ROW for vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle and transit circulation and safety.	\$500,000 (for study)	involves coordination with FDOT
T-5	3	Cleveland Avenue Shuttle	Transportation	Establish a regularly running shuttle connecting destinations along Cleveland Avenue and Downtown Fort Myers. A feasibility study should be completed first to assess cost and likely ridership of the shuttle.	\$100,000 (for feasibility study)	involves coordination with LeeTran
<b>Open Space</b>						
OS-1	3	Edison Avenue Greenway	Open Space	Support creation of a pedestrian/bicyclist greenway that will link the City of Palms Park, the Edison-Ford Winter and District 1.	\$4,350,000	
OS-2	3	Canal Street Pathway	Open Space	Support creation of a greenway/blueway along Canal Street to Cleveland Avenue, Lee Memorial, Fort Myers High School, and then connecting on to McGregor Boulevard.	\$9,860,000	
OS-3	2	DeLeon Park (Green Space Connection)	Open Space	Support establishment of a connection (preferably a new road with sidewalks/bicycle paths) to DeLeon Park/Sam Fleishman Complex from Cleveland Avenue.	TBD	involves coordination with property owners
<b>Marketing</b>						
M -1	1	Website	Marketing	Maintain a website about the corridor include ongoing FMRA initiatives and events. Maintain a sense of incremental progress about the corridor by reporting on renovations, landscaping, new developments, and new businesses along the corridor.	10 Monthly Staff Hours	
M -2	1	Newsletter	Marketing	Publish a monthly/bi-monthly newsletter promoting the corridor, including businesses, activities, and destinations on Cleveland Avenue. Give participants the option of electronic or paper delivery.	\$3,000 annual	
M -3	Ongoing	Events Programming	Marketing	Facilitate events in the CRA to draw people to the area and increase business activity.	Staff hours as needed	



# ADDENDUM

# CITY OF FORT MYERS

## Cleveland Avenue Redevelopment Plan Addendum



Adoption Date: December 2010

2014 Update:  
Updates to this Plan Addendum have been made to reflect data accurate to 2014, consistent with the Cleveland Avenue Redevelopment Plan 2014 Update. Any 2014 updates are indicated with a blue oval containing a description of the update within the Addendum.

**PRATHER ASSOCIATES, INC.**

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## For the preparation of the “Cleveland Avenue Redevelopment Plan”

Adopted in concept on April 25, 2007

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## CLEVELAND AVENUE REDEVELOPMENT PLAN ADDENDUM

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## CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION/PURPOSE OF THE ADDENDUM

On November 17, 1997, the Fort Myers City Council adopted four resolutions (97-72,97-73,97-74, and 97-75) finding that the Cleveland Avenue corridor was blighted, thus paving the way for the adoption of a redevelopment plan for the area. Due to the size and length of the corridor and the number of separate parcels involved, Cleveland Avenue was divided into four separate study areas. The east-west thoroughfares of Edison Avenue, Hanson Street and Colonial Boulevard, which bisect the road at regular intervals, provided natural dividing lines between the four districts (referred to in the City Code as “sub-areas[?]”). Legal descriptions of the sub-areas can be found in Appendix 1.

In 1998, an overall redevelopment plan was prepared for the entirety of the four Cleveland Avenue districts, entitled the *Cleveland Avenue Improvement Program*. The Plan was prepared in accordance with Chapter 163, Part III, Florida Statutes - the Community Redevelopment Act of 1969. The *Cleveland Avenue Improvement Program* was adopted by the City Council, and in April 1998, ordinances were adopted that established community redevelopment trust funds for each of the four sub-areas.

The 1998 *Cleveland Avenue Improvement Program* was quite general in nature. The plan included recommendations for increased levels of code and law enforcement; appearance enhancements including entry features, landscaped medians at selected intervals, sidewalks and trash receptacles, bus benches and shelters, upgraded street lighting, and general paint up/fix up along the corridor. The plan also recommended the adoption of design guidelines and the establishment of financial incentives for owners to upgrade their properties. Finally, the plan envisioned specific marketing efforts for Cleveland Avenue and targeted site assembly, disposition, and redevelopment at some later date when market conditions were right.

Since the plan's initial adoption, there have been limited modifications to it. In 1999, an amendment to Cleveland Avenue Sub-Area 1 was adopted, modifying the boundaries, basically to correct scrivener's errors. On March 17, 2008, a more significant change was adopted – Ordinance 3453 combined the redevelopment trust funds of the four separate areas into one Cleveland Avenue Combined Trust Fund.

The preparation of the 2007 *Cleveland Avenue Redevelopment Plan* by the EDAAW team has been a major step forward in developing a more comprehensive strategy for the redevelopment of the corridor. The draft document was adopted in concept by the City Council in December 2007. However, the new Plan encompasses an area that is larger than the boundaries of the current four Cleveland Avenue districts. Additionally, the Plan document does not contain several of the items required by Chapter 163.362, F.S., nor was the State-

mandated redevelopment plan adoption process followed during the conceptual adoption.

This addendum will address some of the issues in Chapter 163, F.S. that are not specifically set forth in the *Cleveland Avenue Redevelopment Plan*, including a legal description of the four community redevelopment sub-areas and other items.

**It is intended that the *Cleveland Avenue Redevelopment Plan* document, in concert with this addendum, together will comprise the complete *2010 Cleveland Avenue Redevelopment Plan*, as adopted and amended in accordance with Chapter 163, Part III, Florida Statutes.**

## CHAPTER II CLEVELAND AVENUE REDEVELOPMENT SUB-AREAS

The Cleveland Avenue study area of U.S. 41 is approximately 3.5 miles long. It is predominantly commercial and a major regional north/south transportation corridor in Lee County. Because it is a commercial corridor and commercially viable lots must be large enough to accommodate commercial uses, all east and west boundaries of the sub-areas were extended to minimum depths of 300 feet on either side of Cleveland Avenue. In cases where the parcels extended to greater depths, the whole properties were included in the sub-areas.

Sub-area One is generally bound by Edison Avenue at the north and Hanson Street at the south. It is anchored by Lee Memorial Hospital.

Sub-area Two is bound by Hanson Street at the north but gerrymanders at the south. On the east side of Cleveland the south boundary is the north property line of the K-Mart Plaza, while on the west side, the drainage canal near Winkler Avenue is the boundary.

Sub-area Three is the commercial center of Lee County with the highest concentration of commercial uses in the Cleveland Avenue corridor and the Edison Mall. The study area is gerrymandered at the north, as was the southern boundary of Sub-Area 2. It terminates at Colonial Boulevard at the south.

The northern boundary of the Sub-area Four is Colonial Boulevard, while the southern boundary runs along the south side of Page Field on the east and the City of Fort Myers corporate limits (Boy Scout Drive) on the west.

### Population within the Redevelopment Area

EDAW divided the Cleveland Avenue study area into two sections – North and South. In the north study area (comprised of Sub-areas 1 and 2), the 2014 year-round population was 809 in 346 households. According to ESRI, the North study area is expected to add 92 permanent residents and 39 households between 2014 and 2019. In the South study area (comprised of Sub-Areas 3 and 4), the 2014 year-round population was approximately 451 in 207 households. According to ESRI, the South study area is expected to add 48 permanent residents and more than 25 households between 2014 and 2019.

### Land Use within the Redevelopment Area

The Cleveland Avenue corridor is predominantly commercial, with numerous community and neighborhood shopping centers as well as the Edison Mall anchoring the center of the corridor (Cleveland District 3). Additionally, the Lee Memorial Hospital and related medical facilities are located in the northern

2014 Update:  
The 2005-2010  
population  
figures are  
updated to  
reflect the  
population  
within the CRA  
boundary for  
2014-2019.

portion of the corridor, close to downtown. A number of condominiums and multifamily uses are included in the area, primarily to the south, and the corridor is flanked by single family uses to the east and west. **Table 1** below shows a tabulation of existing land uses.

**Table 1 Existing Land Use Cleveland Avenue Corridor (2013)**

No. of Properties	Land Use	Square Feet	Assessed Valuation in \$millions
82	retail	3,219,884	\$171.50
19	restaurants	77,809	\$8.19
29	service	163,776	\$8.43
66	office bldgs.	466,804	\$20.50
28	institutional/government <sup>1</sup>	1,620,520	\$53.50
33	industrial/warehouse	354,270	\$10.40
53	vacant/parking lots		\$7.10
7	hotels/motels	280,128	\$5.75
22	mixed use	42,609	\$1.32
1	retirement home	45,432	\$3.28
168	condominium	134,568	\$4.96
102	single family	175,260	\$4.83
16	multifamily (over 10 units)	232,596	\$4.36
47	multifamily (under 10 units)	155,451	\$3.25
<b>Total</b>		<b>6,999,107</b>	<b>\$307.38</b>

<sup>1</sup> Includes Lee Memorial Hospital; not all assessed val. is taxable.

2014 Update:  
The 2008 Land Use Table is updated to reflect the properties, land uses, areas and values within the CRA boundary per 2013 Property Appraiser data.

### CHAPTER III CLEVELAND AVENUE REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

The *Cleveland Avenue Redevelopment Plan* approved in concept on April 25, 2007 should be adopted in its entirety along with this Addendum to comprise the *2010 Cleveland Avenue Redevelopment Plan*.

Considerable public input was provided during a design charrette workshop, and a concept plan was developed for each of the four districts. District 1 is called the “Cleveland Cultural District”, with many design similarities to downtown. District 2 is a proposed neighborhood mixed-use district, with new multifamily residential uses over neighborhood serving retail. District 3, which contains the Edison Mall, is a proposed Cleveland Avenue Town Center, also a mixed-use district, but with a more commercial focus. District 4 is a proposed regional destination shopping district with a more suburban character.

Included in the Plan are the following major urban design concepts:

- Create human-scaled architecture and outdoor spaces;
- Provide a comfortable and friendly environment for pedestrians;
- Mitigate the effect of large parking lots so they are no longer barren, inhospitable places.
- Develop guidelines for the use of landscaping, street furniture, signs, and plant materials.

The implementation actions contained in the Plan include a series of recommendations for economic development, transportation, land use, urban design, and marketing improvement efforts.

Economic development efforts include conducting a business inventory; catalyst redevelopment projects; a potential Business Improvement District (BID), and incentives for marketing and physical improvements such as façade improvements, landscaping, and others.

Land use recommendations include flexibility of mixed-use regulations, easements, density bonuses, community policing, and sign code enforcement.

Urban design recommendations include gateways, design guidelines, wayfinding signs, and new streetscaping.

Transportation improvements include medians, long-term parking, and a possible shuttle service.

Open space projects include greenways and parks.

Marketing projects include a newsletter, special events, and a management structure, among others.

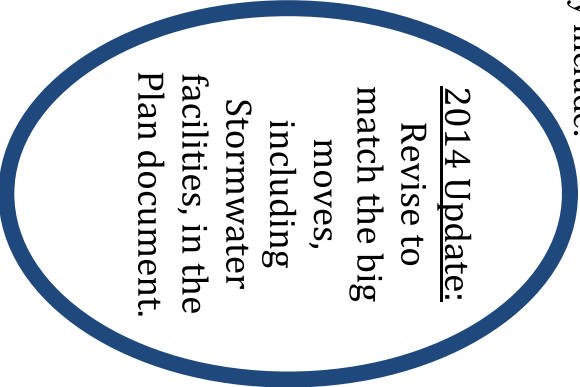
The recommended redevelopment strategies are tied together in an action plan which identifies “big moves” and “quick wins” for the corridor. Big moves are those that will have the most transformative effect on the corridor. They include:

- Streetscape schematic design
- CRA district business inventory
- Code revisions
- Community policing
- Edison Avenue greenway
- Land assembly assistance
- Stormwater facilities

Quick wins are those that can be implemented in the short-term. They include:

- Pedestrian street crossings
- Install median treatments
- Landscape renovation grants
- Façade renovation grants
- Major corridor gateways
- Sign code enforcement
- Website and E-Newsletter

An Action Plan is included at the end of the Cleveland Avenue Redevelopment Plan document. It identifies projects by name and category (e.g. economic development, open space, etc.). The Action Plan also estimates total project costs and recommended funding sources for each item.



2014 Update:  
Revise to match the big moves, including Stormwater facilities, in the Plan document.

## CHAPTER IV STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Chapter 163.362, Florida Statutes specifies the contents of a redevelopment plan. In this case, since the modification to the 1998 *Cleveland Avenue Improvement Program* involves replacing the 1998 plan with the new *Cleveland Avenue Redevelopment Plan*, the State requirements apply fully to the new plan as if it were being adopted for the first time.

**NOTE:** Ch. 163.361 - Modification of community redevelopment plans states:

For any community redevelopment agency that was not created pursuant to a delegation of authority under s. 163.410 by a county that has adopted a home rule charter and that modifies its adopted community redevelopment plan in a manner that expands the boundaries of the redevelopment area after October 1, 2006, ... additional procedures are required prior to adoption by the governing body of a modified community redevelopment plan...

These procedures include powers of the county to prepare an alternative plan, but only if the boundaries of the redevelopment area are being expanded. It is important to note that each of the four Cleveland Avenue District boundaries remain the same as those that were adopted in 1998 and subsequently modified in 1999. ***There are no boundary expansions included in this redevelopment plan.***

Below are the required elements of a community redevelopment plan as set forth in the statutes. The text of the statute is shown below in *italics*, followed by the location in the redevelopment plan documents (*Cleveland Avenue Redevelopment Plan* and this Addendum) where each of the required elements can be found – Shown in **<BOLD>**.

*163.362 Contents of community redevelopment plan.--Every community redevelopment plan shall:*

- (1) Contain a legal description of the boundaries of the community redevelopment area and the reasons for establishing such boundaries shown in the plan. <In this Addendum, Appendix>*
- (2) Show by diagram and in general terms:
  - (a) The approximate amount of open space to be provided and the street layout. <The Open Space section of the Cleveland Avenue Redevelopment Plan (p.55) describes the proposed parks, greenways, and pathways. District maps on pages 12-15 show opportunities for open space improvements as well as street layout and connectivity improvements.>*
  - (b) Limitations on the type, size, height, number, and proposed use of buildings. <Limitations on type, size, height, number,**



and proposed use of buildings are governed by the City's land development regulations >

(c) *The approximate number of dwelling units. < It is anticipated that the increase in dwelling units in the Cleveland Avenue areas will be approximately 64 units from 2014 to 2019. See page 18, Cleveland Avenue Redevelopment Plan.>*

(d) *Such property as is intended for use as public parks, recreation areas, streets, public utilities, and public improvements of any nature. < See Cleveland Avenue Redevelopment Plan Future Land Use Map, page 24.>*

(3) *If the redevelopment area contains low or moderate income housing, contain a neighborhood impact element which describes in detail the impact of the redevelopment upon the residents of the redevelopment area and the surrounding areas in terms of relocation, traffic circulation, environmental quality, availability of community facilities and services, effect on school population, and other matters affecting the physical and social quality of the neighborhood. < In regard to relocation, the City and FMRA will follow all applicable statutory requirements if relocation of residents is required.>*

(4) *Identify specifically any publicly funded capital projects to be undertaken within the community redevelopment area. < Proposed capital projects are contained in the Cleveland Avenue Action Plan, pp. 61-63 of the Cleveland Avenue Redevelopment Plan.>*

(5) *Contain adequate safeguards that the work of redevelopment will be carried out pursuant to the plan. <The Cleveland Avenue Redevelopment Plan was prepared using an extensive public participation process, including a design charrette workshop and extensive input from the Steering Committee. It was developed using sound planning principles, thus ensuring that the redevelopment will be carried out according to the Plan.>*

(6) *Provide for the retention of controls and the establishment of any restrictions or covenants running with land sold or leased for private use for such periods of time and under such conditions as the governing body deems necessary to effectuate the purposes of this part. <Not applicable. This is a plan for an existing commercial corridor, and it is not anticipated that large segments of public property will be sold or leased for private use. If any are, the City and the FMRA will follow its standard developer agreement process to ensure the retention of controls over public land.>*

2014 Update:  
The increase in dwelling units through 2010 is updated to reflect the increase from 2014 to 2019 within the CRA boundary per ESRI data.

*(7) Provide assurances that there will be replacement housing for the relocation of persons temporarily or permanently displaced from housing facilities within the community redevelopment area. <The City and CRA will follow all applicable statutory requirements if relocation of residents is required.>*

*(8) Provide an element of residential use in the redevelopment area if such use exists in the area prior to the adoption of the plan or if the plan is intended to remedy a shortage of housing affordable to residents of low or moderate income, including the elderly, or if the plan is not intended to remedy such shortage, the reasons therefor.*

*<The block concepts in the Redevelopment Framework chapter of the Cleveland Avenue Redevelopment Plan contain elements of residential use, including both mixed use and adjoining single family uses.*

Chapter 163.362(8), F.S. requires the City of Fort Myers to provide the reasons the Cleveland Avenue Redevelopment Plan is not intended to remedy a shortage of housing affordable to residents of low or moderate income. The City has made considerable strides to provide housing affordable to low/mod residents over many years. The Velasco Village Redevelopment Area is now complete and offers considerable affordable home ownership opportunities. The City's lien foreclosure program is resulting in the construction of new affordable housing in various neighborhoods. In addition, nearly 70% of all assisted housing in Lee County is located in the City of Fort Myers. Thus, the City's commitment to reducing the affordable housing shortage is significant in many other areas throughout Fort Myers, and those goals can be achieved in areas outside of the four Cleveland Avenue Redevelopment Districts.>

*(9) Contain a detailed statement of the projected costs of the redevelopment, including the amount to be expended on publicly funded capital projects in the community redevelopment area and any indebtedness of the community redevelopment agency, the county, or the municipality proposed to be incurred for such redevelopment if such indebtedness is to be repaid with increment revenues. <.Detailed cost projections are contained in the Cleveland Avenue Action Plan, pp. 61-63 of the Cleveland Avenue Redevelopment Plan.>*

*(10) Provide a time certain for completing all redevelopment financed by increment revenues. Such time certain shall occur no later than 30 years after the fiscal year in which the plan is approved, adopted, or amended pursuant to s. 163.361(1).*

*However, for any agency created after July 1, 2002, the time certain for completing all redevelopment financed by increment revenues must occur within 40 years after the fiscal year in which the plan is approved or adopted. <All redevelopment efforts in the four Cleveland Avenue districts that will be financed by increment revenues shall occur no later than thirty years from the adoption date of the plan and addendum.>*

## CHAPTER V CONSISTENCY WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Redevelopment Act requires that redevelopment plans be consistent with the local government's comprehensive plan. The City's Comprehensive Plan, as amended, contains goals, objectives, and policies relating to the following elements: future land use, transportation, housing, municipal services, conservation and coastal management, recreation and open space, public safety, community appearance, historic preservation, capital improvements, and intergovernmental coordination.

The 2010 *Community Redevelopment Plan for Cleveland Avenue* complies with the goals, objectives, and policies of the City of Fort Myers Comprehensive Plan. Below is a selected list of comprehensive plan objectives, policies, actions, and strategies that specifically relate to the Plan.

### Future Land Use:

Action 1.3.2) Encourage the development of infill sites in developed areas where many lots are substandard due to platting prior to zoning, and where adequate infrastructure is in place.

Standard 1.3.2.1) Maintain the Land Development Regulations to incorporate policies and procedures considering the following: analysis of vacant infill parcels; effects on strengthening neighborhoods; available infrastructure; and where variances are required to enable development, procedures should be established as follows: (a) In areas of conflict, study the areas and give approval to specific sites, or (b) Where issues cannot be resolved, review variances through Board of Adjustments.

Objective 5: Revitalize declining areas through rehabilitation, redevelopment, and infill strategies as appropriate.

Policy 5.1) Except for areas located within the Downtown Redevelopment Area, some major City corridors are designated for an improvement strategy, in need of multiple actions to correct serious problems of poor site planning, congestion, intensive activity, and/or an incomplete transportation network.

Action 5.1.1) Corridor studies or redevelopment plans will be prepared and adopted to implement this policy as well as transportation policies. During 2008, the City will set priorities for the studies.

Policy 5.3) Special planning and implementation efforts will be continuously conducted for targeted neighborhoods.

2014 Update:  
The outdated  
2009 Plan title is  
updated to  
reflect the  
adopted title of  
the 2010  
Community  
Redevelopment  
Plan for  
Cleveland  
Avenue.

Action 5.3.1) Detailed neighborhood plans or community redevelopment plans will be prepared and adopted for various neighborhoods within the defined geographic area (Map E).

Action 5.3.2) Upon completion of the specific redevelopment plans, special Neighborhood Redevelopment Districts shall be designated on the Future Land Use Map and implemented through the Land Development Regulations. It is the express intent to promote the redevelopment of areas through special controls, economic incentives, and public as well as private investment.

Policy 6.2) On-site traffic and parking layout shall minimize conflicts with pedestrians and shall minimize disruptive effects on activities and functions within and adjacent to the project.

Policy 6.6) Landscaping and building architecture, rather than signs, shall form the dominant image of the streetscape.

Action 6.6.1: Signage requirements should balance the need for signs as a means to identify businesses within the Community, while improving the general aesthetics of the City.

Standard 6.6.1.1: Standards shall be consistent with the Community Appearance Element.

***Any additional policy changes to the Future Land Use Element and Future Land Use Map that may, in fact, result from recommendations contained in the Cleveland Avenue Redevelopment Plan will be made prior to the adoption of the Plan.***

Housing Element Action 3.2.3: Maintain Land Development Regulations to incorporate incentives for private-sector production of affordable workforce, low or moderate income housing; for example, density increases, allowable housing types, subsidies, public-private partnerships, tax incentives, or other programs.

Policy 2.4: Persons displaced as a result of redevelopment projects or code enforcement shall be provided services which will ensure that they are not unduly inconvenienced by their relocation.

Action 2.4.1: The City shall, in cooperation with the community redevelopment agency, prepare and adopt rules for the relocation of individuals and families.

Community Appearance Action 1.2.2: The City will encourage developers of new subdivisions or projects to establish a distinctive design theme for their project, through the use of privately enforced architectural review, deed restrictions, or other mechanisms at the discretion of the developer. The Plan is consistent with this action, including the use of privately enforced architectural review, deed restrictions and other developer mechanisms.

Capital Improvements Objectives 1 through 5: Capital expenditures are identified in this plan and will be included in future amendments to the CIP.

Intergovernmental Coordination Objective 1: The Plan encourages the joint efforts of Lee County and the City in relation to physical and economic improvements.

## APPENDIX

### CLEVELAND AVENUE REDEVELOPMENT AREA LEGAL DESCRIPTION

**US 41/Cleveland Avenue--Sub-Area 1** sections 23, 24, 25 and 26, township 44 south, range 24 east in the city.

A tract or parcel of land lying in sections 23, 24, 25 and 26, township 44 south, range 24 east in the city, which tract or parcel is described as follows: Beginning at the intersection of the south right-of-way line of Edison Avenue and the west right-of-way line of Grand Avenue, said intersection also being the northeast corner of lot 12, block B of Phillips Fourth Division (plat book 4, page 41, county records), run southerly along the west right-of-way line of Grand Avenue for approximately 600 feet to the northwest corner Franklin Street, also being the southeast corner of lot 1, block B of said subdivision; thence run westerly along the north right-of-way line of Franklin Street for approximately 143 feet, also being the southwest corner of said lot 1; thence run southerly for approximately 50 feet to the northeast corner of lot 13, block A of said subdivision, also being the south right-of-way line of Franklin Street; thence continue to run southerly along the northeast corner of said lot line and the southerly prolongation of such for approximately 300 feet to the northeast corner of lot 19, block A of said subdivision; thence run westerly along the north lot line of said lot for approximately 20 feet; thence run southerly for approximately 50 feet to the south lot line of said lot 19; thence run easterly along said lot line for approximately 20 feet to the southeast corner of said lot 19; thence run southerly for approximately 310 feet, intersecting with the south right-of-way line of South Street; thence run westerly along the said right-of-way line for approximately 166 feet to the northeast corner of lot 7, block 2 of Jeffcott WM. Addition (plat book 4, page 19, county records), also being the west line of a ten-foot wide alley; thence run southerly along the east lot line and the prolongation of such for approximately 321 feet to the south right-of-way line of Jeffcott Street; thence run easterly along said right-of-way line for approximately 300 feet to the southwest corner of Jeffcott Street and Grand Avenue, also being the northeast corner of lot 1, block 3 of said subdivision; thence run southerly along the west right-of-way line of Grand Avenue for approximately 128 feet and the prolongation of such to the southwest corner of lot 1, block 3 of said subdivision, also being the north line of a 15-foot wide alley; thence run westerly along the said lot line for approximately 303 feet, to at point being three feet west of the southeast corner of lot 7, block 3 of said subdivision; thence run southerly for approximately 891.5 feet along the northerly prolongation of the east lot line of lot 18, block 3 of said subdivision and continuing southerly along the east lot lines of lots 7 and 18 of blocks 3, 5 and 6 of said subdivision, also being the west line of a ten-foot wide alley, and the southerly prolongation of the west line of said alley where it intersects with the south right-of-way line of Canal Street; thence run easterly for approximately 317 feet along the south right-of-way line of Canal Street to the southwest corner of Grand Avenue; thence run southerly for

approximately 1,256.20 feet along the west right-of-way line of Grand Avenue intersecting with the northwest corner of Hanson Street; thence run westerly for approximately 607 feet along the north right-of-way line of Hanson Street to the northeast corner of Cleveland Avenue; thence run west southwesterly for approximately 84 feet to the intersection of the west right-of-way line of Cleveland Avenue and the north right-of-way line of Hanson Street; thence run westerly for approximately 460 feet, also being the north right-of-way line of Hanson Street, to the southwest corner of Houghs Elmer Subdivision (plat book 6, page 25, county records); thence run northerly along the west boundary line of said subdivision and the prolongation of such for approximately 890 feet to the north right-of-way line of Linhart Avenue; thence run westerly along said right-of-way line for approximately 20 feet to the southwest corner of lot V of Hansons Drive Subdivision (plat book 1, page 17, county records); thence run northerly along the west lot line of said lot for approximately 415 feet to the northwest corner of said lot; thence follow the northerly prolongation of said lot line to where it intersects with the centerline of Manuals Branch Canal; thence follow said centerline westerly for approximately 167 feet to an intersection with the southerly prolongation of a boundary line of Edison Park Subdivision (plat book 7, page 28, county records); thence follow said subdivision line northerly for approximately 70 feet; thence continue to follow said subdivision line to the west for approximately 379.33 feet; thence run due north for 641.17 feet, intersecting with the southwest right-of-way line of Oak Lane; thence run northwesterly for 103.15 feet to the southeast right-of-way line of Newton Avenue; thence follow the said right-of-way line for 517.45 feet to the south right-of-way line of South Street; thence run easterly along the south right-of-way line of South Street for approximately 78 feet; thence run due north for approximately 180 feet to the north line of lot 10, block 10 of said subdivision; thence run easterly along said lot line for approximately 55 feet to the northeast corner of said lot; thence run northerly along the northerly prolongation of the east lot line of lot 10 for 380.08 feet to the south right-of-way line of Franklin Street, also being the northeast corner of lot 16, block B of said subdivision; thence run northerly for approximately 60 feet to the intersection of the southwest corner of lot 4, block 34 of Edison Park Subdivision (plat book 7, page 28, county records), also being the north right-of-way line of Franklin Street; thence run northeasterly along said lot line and prolongation of such for 164.6 feet to the northeast corner of lot 7, block 34 of said subdivision; thence run northwesterly for 71.98 feet along the northeast lot line of said lot to the southeast right-of-way line of Cortez Boulevard, also being the northeast corner of said lot 7; thence run northeasterly along said right-of-way line for approximately 160 feet; thence run northwesterly for approximately 165 feet to the southwest corner of lot 23, block 24 of said subdivision, also being the north right-of-way line of Euclid Avenue; thence run northwesterly along the west lot line of said lot for 99.97 feet to the northwest corner of said lot; thence run northeasterly along the north lot line of said lot and the prolongation of such for approximately 90 feet to the northeast corner of lot 21, block 24 of said subdivision; thence run southeasterly for approximately 27 feet to the southwest corner of lot 16, block 24 of said subdivision; thence run northeasterly along the west lot line of said lot for approximately 102 feet to the



intersection of the northwest corner of said lot and the south right-of-way line of Edison Avenue; thence run easterly along said right-of-way line for approximately 909 feet to the point of beginning.

### **Cleveland Avenue Redevelopment Sub-Area 2**

The following described area is found lying in lots 1--6 and lot 16 of block D, Coronado, plat book 6, page 75: Lots 10--18 of block A, lot 19, and part of lot 20 of block A (official record book 1761, page 3212) re-subdivision of block C and part of block D of Coronado, plat book 9, page 3, public records of the county; together with block E, Coronado, plat book 6, page 75, public records of the county; together with: block H, Coronado, plat book 6, page 75, public records of the county; together with a parcel of land described in official record book 2798, page 2781, and lots 1--6 of block J, Coronado, plat book 6, page 75, public records of the county; together with blocks 1 and 4, Palmetto Park, plat book 3, page 23, public records of the county; together with blocks A, B, C, and D, Windsor Park, plat book 6, page 18, public records of the county; together with block 1, South Gardens, plat book 4, page 50, public records of the county; together with lots 1--9 and 21--25 of block 1, Grove City Park, plat book 5, page 4, public records of the county; together with lots 1--8, east 30 feet of lot 9, east 33 feet of lots 21, 22--35, Grove City Park, plat book 5, page 4, public records of the county; together with lots 1--9 and 22--25 of block 3, Grove City Park, plat book 5, page 4, public records of the county; together with lots 1--9 and 22--25 of block 4, Grove City Park, plat book 5, page 4, public records of the county; together with block 33, Palmlee Park, plat book 6, page 1, public records of the county; together with block 34, Palmlee Park, plat book 6, page 1, public records of the county; together with block 35, Palmlee Park, plat book 6, page 1, public records of the county; together with block 51, Palmlee Park, plat book 6, page 1, public records of the county; together with a parcel of land described in the official record book 2579, page 1,012, official record book 1364, page 242, official record book 1912, page 3,072, official record book 851, page 295, and official record book 1669, page 519, public records of the county; together with a parcel of land described in the official record book 2422, page 1,962, official record book 2800, page 3,089, official record book 2568, page 2,105, official record book 1836, page 2,823, official record book 2258, page 930, official record book 2783, page 1,252, official record book 1853, page 249, official record book 1609, page 427, and official record book 2481, page 2,114, public records of the county; together with the northerly 120 feet of the westerly 143 feet of lot 7, James Holmes Subdivision, plat book 5, page 11, as described in the official record book 2383, page 171, public records of the county; together with a parcel of land described in the official record book 2517, page 1345, official record book 1696, page 4,049, official record book 2471, page 756, official record book 2136, page 3,169, and lots 19 and 20, Maravilla Circle First Addition, plat book 9, page 68, public records of the county; together with a parcel of land described in the official record book 2077, page 34, lots 3--7, and 30 feet lying between lots 5 and 6, Maravilla Circle, plat book 9, page 39, public records of the county; together with block E, W. Stanley Hanson's Subdivision, plat book 4, page 35, a parcel of land described in the official record book 1333, page 1,100, official record book 2557, page 1499,

official record book 269, page 2, and lots 1 and 2, Maravilla Circle, plat book 9, page 39, public records of the county; together with block D, W. Stanley Hanson's Subdivision, plat book 4, page 35, public records of the county, and subject to easements, restrictions and rights of record.

### **Cleveland Avenue Redevelopment Sub-Area 3**

A parcel of land described in the official record book 2039, pages 2851--2852, official record book 2075, page 4,222, official record book 2546, page 1,222, official record book 2726, page 353, and official record book 2618, page 1,202, public records of the county; together with a parcel of land described in official record book 2125, page 3,586, official record book 2382, page 3,316, official record book 605, page 192, official record book 683, page 244, official record book 2725, page 2,685, official record book 2547, page 3,050, official record book 2311, page 309, official record book 1308, page 631, official record book 2805, page 2,044, official record book 1887, pages 3,104--3,105, official record book 2188, page 2,509, official record book 1999, page 3,215, official record book 1380, page 110, official record book 2361, page 2,101, official record book 107, page 603, lots 5--8, 10--28 and the private drive of Thrifty Center Subdivision, plat book 10, page 117, public records of the county; together with tracts or parcels of land bound by Winkler Avenue, Cleveland Avenue (U.S. 41, S.R. 45), Solomon Boulevard, and Colonial Boulevard, less tracts or parcels of land described in official record book 1122, page 1960, official record book 2664, page 507, official record book 2572, page 2266, and official record book 1180, page 1611, public records of the county; together with a parcel of land described in official record book 1623, page 349, and official record book 428, page 341, public records of the county, and subject to easements, restrictions and rights of record.

### **Cleveland Redevelopment Sub-Area 4**

A parcel of land described in the official record book 2771, page 3312, official record book 2694, page 4006, official record book 2505, page 1441, official record book 2356, page 2894, official record book 1659, page 2940, official record book 2374, page 4013, official record book 2670, page 431, and official record book 1424, page 929, public records of the county; together with a parcel of land described in the official record book 2195, page 4019, official record book 1877, page 3146, official record book 1672, page 4761, official record book 1723, page 1881, public records of the county; together with a parcel of land described in the official record book 2136, page 4592, official record book 2709, page 4095, official record book 1378, page 263, official record book 1769, page 1542 and Page Plaza Replat, plat book 47, page 38, public records of the county; together with a parcel of land described in the official record book 1845, page 2534, official record book 1789, page 1445, official record book 1352, page 1855, official record book 1661, page 2197, official record book 2373, page 2631, official record book 2263, page 4083, official record book 2802, page 381, official record book 1814, page 1956, official record book 2590, page 1274, and official record book 1735, page 1718, lots 7--17, and 19--21, Dellee Park Subdivision, plat book 33, page 78, public records of the county; together with a parcel of land described in the official record book 1751, page 2868, official record book 1737, page 4596, official

record book 2354, page 800, lots 1--4, Katies Park, plat book 39, page 28, Sun View Center Subdivision, plat book 56, page 85, public records of the county; together with a parcel of land described in the official record book 1700, page 1051, official record book 2541, page 3461, official record book 2735, page 1914, public records of the county; together with a parcel of land described in the official record book 2393, page 3487, official record book 2545, page 3123, official record book 1823, page 1033, public records of the county; together with a parcel of land being that property owned by the county lying north of North Airport Road, east of U.S. 41, west of Fowler Street, identified by the county strap number 01-45-24-PI-00060.0080, public records of the county, and subject to easements, restrictions and rights of record.

