



## C. REDEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

In partnership with private enterprise and the County, the redevelopment initiative embodied in this Plan will reverse and remove the observed blighted conditions within the Redevelopment Area by leveraging public assets to improve the overall economic condition and the physical condition of the Redevelopment Area. Creating safe, vibrant and pedestrian friendly corridors along US 17 and downtown roadways / featuring more attractive mixed use and commercial opportunity will greatly enhance the quality of life not only for the residents but the population of the City and County at large.

Strategic initiatives are to be identified and placed into action to address, reverse, and remove the blighted area conditions, which have substantially impaired reinvestment activity within the Redevelopment Area; and ultimately will be substantially redeveloped and revitalized as a community focal point to the benefit of City and County residents, businesses, property owners, and visitors through the implementation of this Redevelopment Plan.

Objectives have been identified and placed into action to address, reverse, and remove the blighted area conditions, which have substantially impaired reinvestment activity within the Redevelopment Area; and ultimately will be redeveloped and revitalized as a community focal point for the benefit of City and County residents, businesses, property owners and visitors through the implementation of the plan.

### 1. Objectives and Strategies

**Objective 1:** Improve transportation facilities within the Redevelopment Area including sidewalks, crosswalks, bike paths, and other multi-modal options to enhance regional connection. These strategies will correct the blighted conditions of defective or inadequate public transportation facilities (Figures 1-12 and Map 3 & 4 of the Finding of Necessity Report).

1. Sidewalk Repair and obstruction relocation as set forth along Magnolia Avenue, Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd, Orange, Palmer and Center Streets as shown in figures 1-4 , and 7-8,
2. Repair the deterioration of Walnut Street between Green Street and Pine Avenue as shown in figures 5-6 of the Finding of Necessity Report. This will improve safety, traffic flow and access.
3. Provide for updated surveys of downtown roadways to determine right of way widths and obstructions to determine where additional multimodal improvements are viable such as:
  - a. roadway, sidewalk, and lighting improvements on appropriate streets, and provide safe pedestrian routes.
  - b. roadway and streetscape improvements based on a phasing plan which emphasizes visual impact in addition to improved access and circulation.



c. Provide the ability for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists to access an enhanced internal transportation network which connects, if applicable, the neighborhoods to services and commercial corridors.

d. Develop and incorporate landscape and lighting design standards to create a safe and inviting environment.

e. Integrate traffic calming techniques throughout the internal roadway system to enhance safety and facilitate a pedestrian/bicycle friendly environment. Traffic calming techniques may include the use of pavers or decorative concrete, raised pavement, roundabouts, change of landscape treatment, and the creation of pedestrian nodes at major intersection, mid-block crossings and other locations where potential conflicts exist between vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists.

f. Traffic lights, crosswalks, and regulatory/wayfinding signage will be used to enhance the safety of vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists in key locations throughout the Redevelopment Area

4. Add curb extensions, and narrow travel lanes and add decorative pedestrian crossings to reduce the pedestrian crossing distance across Orange Avenue at the intersection with Walnut Street. This will improve pedestrian safety and provide a clear sense of arrival into the Downtown and serve to effectively bridge the eastern and western portions of the downtown.

5. Coordinate with the Florida Department of Transportation to reduce travel lane widths, provide and expand landscape buffers, install street trees, and widen sidewalks along the US 17 Corridor to enhance pedestrian comfort, safety and a greater sense of arrival to Green Cove Springs as set forth as implementation phase 1, #11 in the GCS Downtown Master Plan.

6. Promote the Redevelopment Area through designing and implementing a signage and wayfinding system directing traffic to and from the major connectors, and destinations in the region, as set forth in implementation phase 1, #3 of the GCS Downtown Master Plan.

**Objective 2:** Create a vibrant Downtown area with a mixed-use, multimodal development pattern. These strategies will correct the blighted conditions of faulty lot layout (Figures of the Finding of Necessity Report); unsafe conditions (Pgs. 19 and 21 - 25 of the Finding of Necessity Report); and deterioration of site or other improvements (Pgs. 16, 17, 20 and 24 of the Finding of Necessity Report). In addition, this objective addresses the implementation strategies set forth in the Downtown Master Plan.

1. Implement a Form Based Code with mixed use urban design/development standards for the Downtown Core as set forth in implementation step phase 1, # 4 in the GCS Downtown Master Plan.



The standards will address the incorporation of parking lot layout, building design, landscaping, signage, pedestrian connections, and linkages between land uses through a functional cross access system.

2. Implement the branding and wayfinding plan set forth in the GCS Downtown Master Plan Implementation Phase 1, Step #3. The wayfinding plan will help to establish the unique place the downtown area has within the City and region.
3. Reposition the Green Cove Springs downtown through marketing initiatives to attract targeted uses/industries retain existing businesses and improve the quality of life within the CRA.
4. Provide public art along Walnut Street and Spring Park in coordination with the Clay County Tourism Strategic Plan.
5. Provide the following incentive programs to encourage and support private sector investment and encourage targeted retail development:

- a. Anchor Tenant Incentive Program

The Anchor Tenant Incentive Program provides loan-to-grant funding to commercial property owners and/or commercial tenants to assist with interior building improvements and business start-up costs. The goal of the program is primarily to incentivize anchor restaurants and breweries (food and drink establishments), and hotels to establish in Downtown, which in turn will help stimulate the local economy and improve the quality of life for Green Cove Springs residents and visitors. Eligible participants may receive loan-to-grant funding for 35% of the total interior building improvement and business start-up costs, up to a maximum of \$75,000. Loan-to-grant funding may exceed \$75,000 and be made available to businesses outside the food and drink category if the City is presented with a unique 'catalyst' project. A catalyst project is generally defined as a business that is first-to-market and anticipated to have a catalytic impact that will promote the City of Green Cove Springs Downtown Master Plan vision for a thriving Downtown where people can live, work and play. The term of the loan will be five years from the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy. For each year the business is open and operating, 20% of the loan will be forgiven. If after five years the business is open and operating, the loan will be forgiven entirely and converted into a grant. Properties that pay no Ad-valorem taxes or are otherwise tax exempt are not eligible. In cases where a portion of a property is tax-exempt, funding may be made only to the taxable portion/percentage of the property. Loan-to-grant funds may be disbursed to a program participant on a reimbursement basis. The City and program



participant would create a payment schedule based on project milestones. The Incentive Program can also be used for payment of mobility and impact fees.

#### b. Rental Subsidy Program

The proposed Rental Subsidy Program would provide an 18-month partial rental subsidy (up to \$25,000) to qualifying targeted businesses. The funding award would be administered over an 18 consecutive month period. The award recipient would be paid the rent subsidy as agreed upon in an executed performance agreement between the applicant and the City. The applicant must have an executed multi-year lease (two-year minimum) with the owner. A copy of the lease, or binding or proposed multi-year commercial lease agreement must be provided to the city.

#### c. Business Façade Grant

The Business Façade Grant Program provides a matching grant to commercial property owners and/or commercial tenants, located in the targeted area, to assist with eligible exterior building and site improvements. Eligible applicants include both commercial property owners and business lessees with written authorization of the property owner. Eligible businesses must be from a small business industry sector targeted by the City and may be an individually owned franchise as long as it meets all other criteria. The façade grant award would be a 50% reimbursement of total projects costs with a maximum award of \$15,000. Up to \$4,000 of the total available may be spent on outdoor furniture and dining fixtures. The grant award amount will decline over time rewarding projects completed in a timely manner. If an awarded project is not started within one year of award, the award will be withdrawn.

#### d. Tax Increment Fund Rebate

Refunding a portion of City tax revenue generated by on-site/building improvements or new construction (increment) could be another potential incentive to encourage targeted retail development in Downtown Green Cove Springs. The refunded amount would be paid out over a five (5) year period with a declining scale of refunds to be determined by the City. The applicant would enter into a Performance Agreement with the City detailing the proposed capital investment and improvements to be made and the proposed increment rebate amounts and periods. The grant is a reimbursement of a portion of City Ad-Valorem taxes paid by the applicant. The CRA shall utilize the Tax Increment Fund of the Community Redevelopment Agency to provide the tax increment rebate proposed in addition to other



incentives and CRA programming and redevelopment powers as authorized by F.S. 163.360, Part III.

6. When feasible, the City should encourage acquisition and subsequent redevelopment by the private market. Other related activities that may be undertaken by the City include:

- a. Map and index all commercial properties in the Redevelopment Area to provide detailed information on parcel boundaries, sizes, and ownership.
- b. Identify and inventory all relevant substandard properties.
- c. Document and analyze parking demands and infrastructure constraints throughout the Redevelopment Area.
- d. Document site criteria for modern mixed-use developments by business type to facilitate the understanding of contemporary developer site and parking requirements.
- e. The City may facilitate aggregation and redevelopment of "problem" or constrained parcels or groups of parcels.
- f. The City may assist in the purchase, sale, negotiation, and coordination of land assembly. However, the City shall not use eminent domain to acquire land that will be ultimately used or transferred for private development.
- g. Identify catalyst sites such as the City property at Walnut and St Johns Avenue to serve as important strategic assets to cause an early and precedent-setting change in the community redevelopment area and to spur other growth.

**Objective 3:** Increase the Downtown Parking Supply

1. Provide additional parking spaces within City owned property at the Palmetto Avenue and Spring Street intersection, GCS Downtown Master Plan Implementation Phase 1, #7C.
2. Provide Festival Street Parking along Magnolia Avenue between Walnut and Spring Street, GCS Downtown Master Plan Implementation Phase 1, #7D.
3. Provide on-street parking on Magnolia Avenue between Spring and Ferris Street, GCS Downtown Master Plan Implementation Phase 1, #7E.
4. Provide on-street parking along Magnolia Avenue between Oak Street and Ferris Street. (GCS Parking Study Recommendation).



**Objective 4:** Incorporate housing revitalization through housing maintenance programs and rehabilitation services. These strategies funded through the SHIP and CDBG programs will help correct the blighted conditions of unsanitary or unsafe conditions Unsanitary or unsafe conditions (Figures 13-29 of the Finding of Necessity Report), associated with residential uses; and deterioration of site or other improvements (Figures 30-33 of the Finding of Necessity Report).

1. By addressing the problems associated with substandard and dilapidated housing, the City/CRA will mitigate contributing blight conditions within the Redevelopment Area.
2. In the same manner, redevelopment efforts shall be complimented with efforts to provide affordable/workforce housing to residents of low to moderate income, including the elderly.
3. Promote programs for homeowners to rehabilitate their homes. Such programs include zero interest loans or information on other funding sources for the repair of single and multi-family homes depending on the applicant's income.
4. Assist low-income households through the SHIP program with down payment and closing costs assistance. The assistance may be for the purchase of an existing structure.
5. Infrastructure improvements such as roadway improvements, stormwater, wastewater, and potable water make properties more conducive for development. The City may undertake infrastructure improvements in partnership with private entities. If determined improving the infrastructure of certain properties is beneficial to the City for housing revitalization and blight mitigation within the Redevelopment Area, the CRA may undertake capital improvements on these individual properties.
6. Work with the private sector and Non-Government Organizations to create programs that improve the availability of affordable workforce housing for low to moderate income residents
7. Work with the City of Green Cove Springs and Clay County to encourage development and renovation of Mixed-Use, Affordable, Workforce, and Mixed-Income Housing.

**Objective 5:** Establish a creative, equitable, efficient and practical funding and financing mechanism to properly implement this Plan. These strategies will correct the blighted conditions of identified in the Finding of Necessity Report and the Implementation steps identified in the Downtown Master Plan.

1. It is important the City/CRA identify and secure all effective sources of funding including, but not necessarily limited to, increment revenues, non-ad valorem assessments, and grant funding revenue.
2. The City/CRA shall be willing to contemplate the issuance of bonds, secure other financial instruments, seek and utilize grants, and seek out other sources and alternatives to aid in implementing this Plan.



**Objective 6:** Ensure the Redevelopment Area is safe and clean over a period of time. These strategies will correct the blighted conditions of unsanitary or unsafe conditions (Figures 13-29 of the Finding of Necessity Report), associated with residential uses; and deterioration of site or other improvements (Figures 30-33 of the Finding of Necessity Report).

1. The City will identify, execute, and coordinate special maintenance standards and programs for public facilities, roadways, open space areas, entries, and commercial uses along the three corridors.
2. The Community Redevelopment Act encourages “community policing innovations.” This concept is defined as policing techniques or strategies designed to decrease crime by reducing opportunities for, and increasing the perceived risks of engaging in, criminal activity through visible presence of law enforcement in the community, including, but not limited to, community mobilization, neighborhood watch programs, citizen patrol, foot patrol, or intensified motorized patrol. The City will review these programs to improve the actual and perceived security, building safety, and appearance of the Redevelopment Area.

**Objective 7:** The City may plan, design, and deliver additional infrastructure improvements or services within the Redevelopment Area, if deemed those improvements enhance the quality or attractiveness of the Redevelopment Area especially with regard to public amenities. These strategies will correct the blighted conditions of unsanitary or unsafe conditions (Pgs. 18, 23 and 24 of the Finding of Necessity Report); and deterioration of site or other improvements (Pgs. 18, 23 and 24 of the Finding of Necessity Report).

1. Such additional infrastructure may include undergrounding utilities in certain areas to achieve a desired visual impact, upgrading technology, and telecommunications availability to attract businesses or the enhancement of landscape areas. Such additional improvements will complement the redevelopment plans for the Redevelopment Area.
2. Additional services may include extraordinary right-of-way or other public area maintenance, planning, and implementing cultural, charitable or place-making activities, events and related services which showcase the Redevelopment Area.
3. The CRA shall acquire land and create / expand regional stormwater retention areas and conveyance systems as needed to accommodate proposed growth

**Objective 8:** Historic Preservation

1. Support programs that contribute to the renovation and preservation of historic structures and the downtown historic district.
2. Restoration of the Rivers House located at Spring Street and Magnolia Avenue. Provide additional funding to upgrade the Rivers House to address site and building code violations and to approve the visual appeal of a vital community landmark.

**Objective 9:** Parks/Public Spaces

1. Provide support, including funding, for construction of facilities for Spring Park that will draw visitors to the CRA commercial district while simultaneously building a sense of, "Place," in the downtown area.
2. Work to improve pedestrian access from in the downtown area to Spring Park.
3. Design and construct City Hall Park between City Hall and US 17 (Implementation step #12, Downtown Master Plan).

**Objective 10:** Redevelopment Administration

As provided for in Florida Statute 163, Part III, the Green Cove Springs Community Redevelopment Agency will utilize Incremental Tax Revenues to fund administration, overhead or any other expenses encumbered to achieve the Redevelopment Goals identified within this CRA Plan, including:

1. Redevelopment planning, surveys, and financial analysis.
2. Acquisition of real property in the CRA District.
3. Clearance and preparation of areas for redevelopment.
4. Repayment of borrowed funds.
5. All expenses related to bonds and other indebtedness.
6. Development of affordable and workforce housing.
7. Provide funding for legal and professional services as needed.