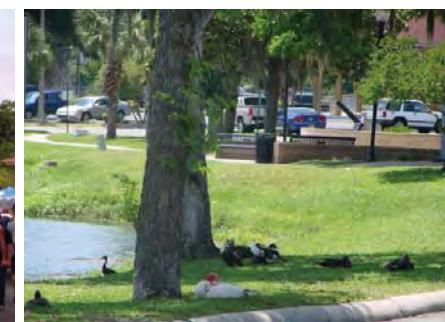




LAKE CITY COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AREA MASTER PLAN

(inclusive of the Downtown)



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(inclusive of the Downtown)

Prepared for:
City of Lake City CRA, City of Lake City, Florida

Prepared by:



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Executive Summary

BACKGROUND

The City of Lake City is located in Columbia County, in the north central portion of Florida. Since the 1980s, the City has invested significant resources to address deteriorating conditions in its Downtown Central Business District. The City Council, in 1981, created a Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) inclusive of the historic Downtown to create a more dynamic core serving the needs of its residents. The original CRA plan was revised in 1989 and again in 1993. Since then several successful projects have been implemented. However, there has been a lack in development of a consolidated strategy to address the deteriorating aesthetic character and the economic vitality of the Lake City Community Redevelopment Area and its surrounding neighborhoods. While the downtown has been successful in preserving its small town character and position as the County seat, market influences and the nation’s economic downturn has resulted in uncertainty among stakeholders and investors. Now, 20 years after the establishment of the Lake City CRA district, the community leaders have had the foresight to undertake an initiative to create a new vision to balance its short-term economic objectives with longer-term community development goals.

As the seat for Columbia County, the Lake City CRA has been dominated by institutional and office uses. Institutional uses expanded around the downtown gradually pushing for sprawl oriented along typical suburban style corridors along Duval Street, Main Boulevard and Baya Drive. As this occurred, Lake City residents slowly took to engaging in retail activity outside of the historic downtown business district. In some ways, this issue is no different from the issue facing many older cities in the nation- how to prosper when economic development trends continue to favor sprawl.

With this goal in mind, the primary objective of the Lake City CRA Plan is to encourage renewed interest in living, working, and shopping in Lake City through the creation of a high-quality, easy-to use physical environment; one that enhances the everyday urban experience. To help guide the vision and transformation, the CRA retained the services of IBI Group in May 2010 to prepare a realistic action plan based on sound economic principles that reflects the community’s vision related to the future growth of the CRA.

The Plan acknowledges that in order to attract the investment and quality of life desired by the community, it is important to encourage growth in the Lake City Community Redevelopment Area (inclusive of the Downtown). However, the CRA cannot grow in a sustainable manner if its surrounding areas are not simultaneously stabilized. Transforming the community’s expressed vision into an organized series of implementable action strategies- both short-term and long-term- will help the Agency make informed decisions in creating a vibrant and economically sustainable urban neighborhood. Short-term success can build long-term momentum and requires a concerted effort to measure and monitor the impacts of the implementation actions undertaken by the leadership.

The CRA Master Plan’s objective is to leverage all of the area’s existing assets in preparing for a changing economy and embarking on a transformative process. In addressing this situation, the Lake City CRA has a few advantages, including: the recent merger of the Shands Lakeshore Hospital and Hospital Management Associates and a subsequent increase in tax base as a result of the acquisition. Downtown Lake City has also witnessed growth of local cultural activities including an emerging arts community and a weekend Farmer’s Market on the lakefront.

Building upon the ideas and comments gathered during the public workshops, this Plan serves as a guide to implement the community’s vision through refocusing of the roles, priorities, and connections of the Agency with other organizations. Strategies identified in the document are intended to serve as guidelines for pursuing actions designed to overcome deterrents affecting the desired future growth and development.



Marion Avenue through Downtown Lake City
NOVEMBER, 2011



Lake Desoto lakefront



Historic Residential District



Old Ice Storage Facility: Redevelopment Opportunity

REDEVELOPMENT VISION

In the future, it is envisioned that the Lake City CRA will emerge as a quaint but vibrant center that provides a “college campus” environment, where residents are offered strong local education opportunities and supporting training infrastructure as a means to balance urban amenities, employment opportunities, and small-town charm. Serving as the foundation for future economic growth, this vision will build an urban core that is a center of learning, cultural activities, entrepreneurship and as a hub for innovation.

For the Lake City CRA, the college town vision is derived from the strengths of its key institutions- Shands Lake Shore Hospital and Columbia County- and its linkages to prominent regional institutions- University of Florida, Gainesville and Florida Gateway College. As a gateway to the state of Florida, Lake City will be a premier destination for a diverse population that includes students, academia, singles, families, professionals, entrepreneurs and retirees seeking a creative setting with a strong civic and social infrastructure framework.

The Lake City CRA is an area with quality historical residential neighborhoods and a walkable downtown central business district. People who choose to live downtown in historic lofts or new townhouses will be able to walk to learn, work, shops, or the theater. Activities including the Farmers Market and outdoor concerts on the Lake Desoto will draw people downtown to experience the natural environment and the upgraded recreational amenities on the lakefront.

As such, this Master Plan proposes a vision that aims to:

- Promote education, culture and the arts as key economic drivers.
- Strengthen and expand on the existing open space network including providing priority to pedestrians and diverse mix of activities on Lake Desoto and introducing urban agriculture activities.
- Develop innovative projects (such as the Public Farmer’s Market, Nursing Program, Downtown Arts College, urban agriculture and community gardening concepts, Business Incubator, adult and GED programs) and destination oriented uses (such as Lake Desoto, Civic Center) as an integral part of catalytic public and private redevelopment projects.
- Encourage adaptive reuse of underutilized and vacant structures while assuring the preservation and rehabilitation of historically significant buildings such as the Blanche Hotel.
- Support infill, renovation and enhancement of residential areas and the prevention of commercial encroachment into neighborhoods.
- Strengthen connections to surrounding neighborhoods in order to protect the livability of residential areas adjacent to downtown that are critical in providing the population base needed to support downtown activities.

MASTER PLAN GUIDING PRINCIPLES



1 INTERCONNECTED STREETS
An interconnected street pattern is a traditional urban design technique that reduces congestion, encourages travel choice, and supports mixed use development.



2 COMPACT DEVELOPMENT
The scale of downtown redevelopment approximates the scale of the pedestrian. The extent of these neighborhoods is based on a comfortable walking distance from edge to center.



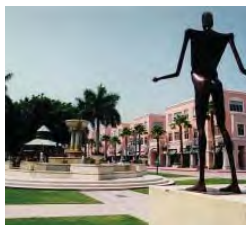
3 MIXED LAND USES
A mix of diverse and complimentary land uses in a compact pattern allows residents and workers to walk to work or to shop rather than driving for all daily needs.



4 WALKABILITY
Pedestrian-friendly environments allow walking to be a pleasant, safe, and efficient alternative to (or extension of) the automobile.



5 OPEN SPACE
A variety of public open spaces contribute to a sense of place, healthy communities, and reduces the need for private open space for each household or workplace.



6 PUBLIC REALM
Public and semi-public spaces enable the neighborhood infrastructure to build community bonds, social interaction, and community participation.

PLANNING PROCESS

The phased planning approach used to develop the Lake City Community Redevelopment Area Master Plan was embedded in a well orchestrated public involvement effort at the beginning of the process which then continued to provide a public forum throughout the life of the project. The purpose of the community driven planning process was to provide a forum for continued dialogue between the Agency, area residents, business owners, stakeholders, and the consultants concerning program development and direction.



KEY COMMUNITY ASSETS AND CATALYST PROJECTS

During the public involvement process, the residents discussed key assets that were perceived as elements crucial to the successful revitalization of the Lake City CRA. The CRA Master Plan’s objective is to leverage all of the area’s existing assets in preparing for a changing economy and embarking on a transformative process. The following matrix highlights “Catalyst Projects” for improvement that connects the identified assets with the overall vision along with the next steps needed to materialize these projects..

| CHARACTER DISTRICTS | KEY COMMUNITY ASSETS | CATALYST PROJECTS | NEXT STEPS |
|----------------------------|---|--|--|
| Historic Downtown District | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Blanche Hotel• Columbia County Library• Existing Retail• Vacant Lands• Parking Lots• City Hall | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Blanche Hotel Adaptive Reuse: Educational Institutions/ Training Institute/ Boutique Hotel• Cultural Corridor• Civic Center• Theater• Art Institute and Arts Incubator• Student Housing• Urban Agriculture and Community Gardening | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Update the Land Development Regulations to include provisions for a Mixed-Use Overlay District with appropriate urban design standards.• Prepare a grant stacking strategy to secure finances for preservation and redevelopment of the Blanche Hotel.• Continue to facilitate discussions between key property owners and the CRA and sign MOU agreements between the parties to move forward with developer solicitation.• Solicit national and local educational institution developers and boutique hotel operators.• Prepare a marketing and promotion brochure showcasing available sites for redevelopment.• Work with Florida Gateway College and UF Gainesville to open satellite campuses with specialized programs such as nursing, arts and vocational training in downtown.• Approach Columbia County to communicate the resident’s need to upgrade existing library facilities.• Work with local artists and entrepreneurs to organize special events and to initiate discussions about the long-term goal to create a Cultural/ Arts corridor. |
| Institutional Campus | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shands Lakeshore Hospital• Columbia County Offices• Columbia County Courthouse | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shands Lakeshore Expansion• Nursing School• Business Incubator• Franklin Street Improvements | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prohibit vehicular access to the hospital from Lake Desoto Circle in order to create a pedestrian-only zone along the lakefront.• Work with the hospital to pursue streetscape improvements along Franklin Street as part of the ongoing traffic improvements.• Partner with the Chamber of Commerce to develop an active recruitment plan targeting health care related businesses and facilities.• Continue discussions with the Shands Lake Shore Hospital and Florida Gateway College to create a Medical Campus which includes a nursing school, professional offices, and student/employee housing. |

KEY COMMUNITY ASSETS AND CATALYST PROJECTS

| CHARACTER DISTRICTS | KEY COMMUNITY ASSETS | CATALYST PROJECTS | NEXT STEPS |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|---|
| Waterfront Entertainment District | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lake Desoto• Wetlands• Wilson Park | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lake Desoto Waterfront Improvements• Waterfront Pedestrian Boulevard• Lake Desoto Trail• Farmer’s Market | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a dedicated pedestrian zone along the lakefront with limited access provided to the residential properties from Vickers Terrace, Park Lane and Laguna Drive.• Seek additional funding and grants for the proposed waterfront parks and trail system.• Undertake a detailed design master plan for the waterfront improvements.• Create an organized public programs campaign for the waterfront district such as weekly community events, attracting an annual major boat show, and other cultural events. |
| Neighborhood Reinvestment Areas | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Historic Housing• Annie Mattox Park• Lake City/ Columbia County Historical Museum• Lake Isabella• Vacant Lands | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Residential Facade Improvement Program• Washington Street Pedestrian Corridor Improvements• Urban Agriculture and Community Gardening• Multipurpose Center- Convention Center/ Performing Arts Center• Public Market/ Greenhouse- Old Ice Box Storage | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish a Residential Facade Improvement Program.• Consider creating a neighborhood association to solicit comment on a regular basis from area residents.• Collaborate with Hospital Authority, Florida Gateway College and non-profit organizations such as Habitat for Humanity to assemble land and introduce housing projects, vocational technology training center/ business resource center/ job training center.• Strengthen code enforcement.• Develop a neighborhood walking tour of historic buildings.• Instiute a neighborhood street improvement program along Washington Street. |
| Commercial Corridors | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chamber of Commerce• VA Hospital• Duval Street Businesses• Old City Hall site | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gateway Improvements• Traffic Calming• Streetscape Beautification | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Construct gateways at primary entryways into the CRA- Main Boulevard and CR 100A• Introduce traffic calming measures to provide safer access for pedestrians.• Engage a market study to determine the highest and best use of the old City Hall site as a public-private venture. |

Next Steps

Successful program implementation hinges upon close cooperation and coordination between private and public groups and agencies requiring strong and determined leadership. While leadership is a highly intangible quality, it is the single most important factor for successful implementation of the redevelopment program. While redevelopment plans are by definition designed as long-range strategic planning document, identifying and celebrating short-term successes is vital to sustain support for long-term economic development.

In addition to the action strategies listed for key catalyst projects on the previous page, the following list of next steps are pivotal in ensuring that a comprehensive set of strategies are pursued rather than a piecemeal approach in implementing the plan.

- Adopt the Redevelopment Plan Update
- Extend the Lake City CRA redevelopment program for an additional 30 years in order to successfully implement the capital improvement program recommended in the Redevelopment Plan.
- Continue to promote the Lake City CRA (Inclusive of the downtown) through the support of festivals, exhibits, performances and other special events designed to attract residents and visitors to the downtown.
- Strengthen relationships with the Shands at Lake Shore, Florida Gateway College, Columbia County and other government jurisdictions that are key players in implementing and maintaining identified projects and programs.
- Prepare a grant feasibility study for public projects including: roads, utilities, streetscapes, parks, and law enforcement, particularly targeting potential projects eligible to receive funding through federal government funding programs.
- Establish and strengthen relationships with local, state and federal representatives to develop coordinated strategies for obtaining funding and support to implement key projects and programs in the redevelopment area.
- Develop one, three, and five-year work programs for budgetary and administrative purposes.
- Contact affected property owners to determine their level of interest in participating in proposed redevelopment activities.
- Prepare a downtown parking location map and install clear signage to designated parking areas.

Using the Plan- Plan Organization

The Lake City Community Redevelopment Area Master Plan intends to serve as a comprehensive resource for community leaders and stakeholders that are engaged in shaping the social, economic, and physical form of the area. Future actions targeted in this area are anticipated to follow the recommendations of the Redevelopment Plan through continued discussions with the residents, community stakeholders, and City agencies.

It should be noted that the plan is intended to be a guiding document for local government actions designed to overcome deterrents to desired future growth and development in order to stimulate private investment. The plan is not intended to be static. Over time, the objectives and strategies of the plan should be updated and revised based upon changes in the economy, relevant public concerns and opportunities associated with private development proposals.

While the Redevelopment Plan is comprehensive in its assessment of the issues impacting the future of the downtown district, the program will not be responsible for implementation of plans, projects and programs that are being proposed by other agencies and organizations. The Community Redevelopment Agency cannot possibly assume the roles of other organizations responsible for projects within the area. Rather, the Agency’s role is to maintain close relationships with other organizations and support their efforts through supplemental funding and other program initiatives. The redevelopment program will be pursued at multiple levels by numerous jurisdictions at the same time. The Agency may take the lead in certain efforts, while other departments and organizations will lead their efforts where appropriate.

The Master Plan is conceived as a three-part document. Part 1 sets forth the Redevelopment Master Plan concepts intended to guide future planning and development in the Lake City CRA as well as more detailed action strategies for each of the five districts identified in the Concept Plan illustration. In order to provide opportunities that will stimulate overall development and illustrate how the principles of the plan are applied, several catalyst projects are identified throughout the document. Finally, a phased Capital improvements Program is identified with specific action strategies and prioritized projects to help the Agency move forward with enhancements to infrastructure and public realm improvements that will support future private sector investment.

Part II (Technical Report) provides the background information and technical analyses that was carried out to support the recommendations outlined in the Redevelopment Master Plan. Starting with a discussion of the overall context for the CRA, the section provides a detailed summary of the community participation process and the feedback received during the various public and stakeholder forums. This is followed by a discussion of the five overall themes encompassing the full spectrum of the planning systems that constitute the CRA’s urban structure- Land Use and Development Characteristics; Urban Design and Historic Preservation; Circulation and Connectivity; Public Facilities and Amenities; and Economic Development.

Part III includes Appendices and provides background information compiled during the preparation of this plan. These include:Appendix A: Inventory and Analysis; Appendix B: Finding of Necessity Study; Appendix C: TIF Projections; Appendix D: Statutory Requirements; Appendix E: Funding Sources.

Chapter 1: Plan Elements



PLAN FRAMEWORK

The descriptive narrative of the Lake City Community Redevelopment Area Master Plan (inclusive of the Downtown) defines a clear vision and policy direction for the City’s downtown revitalization program. The Plan is intended to serve as a guideline for promoting the sound development and redevelopment of properties within the boundaries of the designated Community Redevelopment Area. Opportunities for public improvements, new private redevelopment investment, and future land use composition are identified and graphically illustrated in the following chapters. These identified opportunities reflect the community’s expressed desires placed within the context of market realities and the current economic crisis faced by communities across the nation.

The plan has been developed following a thorough investigation of the redevelopment area’s existing urban fabric and through extensive community input solicited during the master planning process. Through the leadership of the City and the CRA several urban infrastructure and physical improvement projects have been initiated before and during the course of the preparation of this CRA Redevelopment Plan Update. These improvements such as the Marion Avenue Streetscape Improvements, Franklin Street roadway enhancements, and Farmer’s Market have provided the impetus to support strategic reinvestment and accelerate positive change in downtown.

The Lake City Community Redevelopment Area Master Plan (inclusive of the Downtown) is intended to be a guiding document for local government actions designed to overcome deterrents to desired future growth and development in order to stimulate private investment. The plan is not intended to be static. Over time, the objectives and strategies of the plan should be updated and revised based upon changes in the economy, relevant public concerns and opportunities associated with private development proposals. While the Redevelopment Plan is comprehensive in its assessment of the issues impacting the future of the downtown district, the program will not be responsible for implementation of plans, projects and programs that are being proposed by other agencies and organizations. The Community Redevelopment Agency cannot possibly assume the roles of other organizations responsible for projects within the area. Rather, the Agency’s role is to maintain close relationships with other organizations and support their efforts through supplemental funding and other program initiatives. The redevelopment program will be pursued at multiple levels by numerous jurisdictions at the same time. The Agency may take the lead in certain efforts, while other departments and organizations will lead their efforts where appropriate.

The Plan is sensitive to the fact that the 2010 economic crisis faced by the nation- characterized by economic deceleration and increasing uncertainty- has resulted in a significant reduction of potential investors and construction project start-ups. While the impact of these constrained market conditions on the Lake City CRA does imply a slower than usual growth rate and shortage in private sector investment in the near-term, it does not reduce the redevelopment potential and the untapped opportunities offered by downtown once the economy stabilizes. It must also be understood that the plan will not happen all at once, and it is likely that the elements of the Plan will not necessarily occur within the time sequence described herein.

Finally, the Plan anticipates government actions to be undertaken by the Agency for a variety of purposes. Regulatory actions may include revisions to the City’s Comprehensive plan, land development regulations, and building codes. Land acquisition programs, such as land banking and property swapping, are expected to be incorporated in the redevelopment process to control prime development sites; thereby ensuring future development in a manner consistent with redevelopment objectives.

The following are basic tenets on which the strategies and projects identified in this Plan are based:

- Identifying in general, where primary land uses and activity centers will be located in order to best attract prospective businesses and residents, while at the same time being well integrated into desired future transportation and land use patterns.
- Providing a tool for the Redevelopment Agency and the City to promote economic development by showing prospective investors locations that have been designated for this purpose; thereby reducing the developer’s risk and permitting hurdles when coming to the community.
- Assisting the Redevelopment Agency and the City to make capital improvements projections based upon known future, public project needs, demands and proposed locations.
- Establishing a framework for policy decisions that anticipate the need for densification of future development patterns.
- Facilitating the preparation of new land development regulations that will provide a higher standard of public realm improvements and private realm design standards.
- Identifying catalytic projects- both capital improvement projects and private sector redevelopment projects- that will complement each other and create synergies to implement a successful redevelopment program in a vibrant downtown core.
- Providing a holistic means for the Redevelopment Agency and the City to provide the approvals of new developments based upon an agreed-upon strategy.

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN DISTRICT

As the central spine of Downtown Lake City, the Historic Downtown district centered along Marion Avenue has continued to serve as the historic commercial and civic activity center for the City. The district connects the City’s most significant institutions: City Hall and the Columbia County Government/ Judicial Complex.

The Historic Downtown district is generally defined by the area bounded by Alachua Avenue to the west, Hernando Avenue to the east, Railroad Street to the north; and Duval Street to the south. Currently, the district contains a diverse range of land uses from older commercial buildings to institutional uses and scattered offices uses. Majority of the land within this district currently consists of vacant and underutilized surface parking lots. Future development patterns in this district are envisioned to allow the concept of introducing both vertical and horizontal mixed-use development.

The presence of historic structures such as the Blanche Hotel and recent streetscape improvements along Marion Avenue have been instrumental in reinforcing the charm and character of the downtown; therefore the style and placement of future buildings should be consistent with this established form. The City recently completed construction of streetscape improvements for a section of Marion Avenue between Duval Street and Railroad Street. While these improvements have contributed significantly in enhancing the pedestrian environment in downtown, the City has not experienced the anticipated private sector investment.

Future growth within the Historic Downtown District should increase economic vitality and residential density while simultaneously improving the overall quality of the area with strategic public realm improvements. Extending the Historic Downtown character to the area north of Railroad Street will be pivotal in creating a sense of arrival into the downtown from the neighborhoods located to the north. The Plan envisions building upon these synergies to create a mixed-use district, containing moderate density residential uses, entertainment, hotels, restaurant, shopping, and destination uses. The Historic Downtown District will also be the primary location in the Downtown accommodating retail storefronts on the ground floor of all new developments with residential and office uses on upper floors.

The building and land use patterns proposed in the Historic Downtown District will encourage higher intensities and densities than existing conditions. In order to maintain the historic character of the district, the Plan recommends employing a combination of generous setbacks on the ground floor to accommodate wider sidewalks and step backs at upper floors to create pedestrian scaled built form.

In addition to urban form and architectural style, a strong combination of uses and activities established in an attractive pedestrian setting provide a foundation for economic success. Artwork, festivals and cultural activities in the downtown strengthen commerce by providing exposure to local businesses and opportunities for increased patronage. The redevelopment plan endorses the continued support of local festivals and the location of key cultural amenities, such as museums and artist lofts, within the Historic Downtown District.

CATALYST PROJECT: BLANCHE HOTEL ADAPTIVE REUSE

Redevelopment of the Blanche Hotel has been identified as one of the key private sector driven projects in the Downtown and presents an opportunity to create an extremely desirable destination use that will support historic preservation, education and local economic development efforts. It is recommended that the Agency continue to work with the existing property owners to devise an appropriate development program for the adaptive reuse of site and a phasing plan for implementation. In order to facilitate the redevelopment, the Agency should consider assembling adjacent properties, using conventional financing and amortized payments, as an incentive for the developer to pursue the project.

Potential future uses of the Blanche Hotel could include the following anchors in a mixed-use residential configuration:

- Boutique hotel
- Arts Institute
- Arts Incubator Space
- Vocational Training Center



CATALYST PROJECT: CULTURAL CORRIDOR

Roughly defined by Railroad Street on the north, Veterans Street on the south, Columbia Avenue on the west, and Hernando Avenue on the east, the proposed district provides a transition between the Waterfront Entertainment District and the Historic Downtown Retail district.

The Plan calls for capitalizing on the historic uses (now defunct) such as the old theatre, existing antique stores to create a destination mixed-use district with an emphasis on cultural uses. The intent is to promote moderate-density mix of uses that contribute to the overall economy including performance spaces, downtown movie theatre, meeting facilities, museums, arts education, artist live-work lofts, neighborhood bakeries, cafes and restaurants, bed and breakfasts, boutique hotels, art galleries, antique stores, arts-related retail establishments, open spaces in the form of urban plazas, and cultural facilities.

It is expected that economic spin-off benefits will result from construction of the catalytic private- sector projects within this district, including: increased residential development in the form of artist live-work lofts and affordable housing for students and artists; new retail including food, lodging, entertainment, and arts related establishments; increased development potential for attracting creative start-up businesses such as architects, advertising firms, graphic designers, and software firms. Creating a destination oriented retail recruitment program that builds upon Lake City’s small-town charm and niches such as the emerging arts community will create the synergies needed to support the desired vision for the CRA’s future development. Some potential uses include:

- Restaurants/ Street cafes/ Grocery Store/ Bakery
- Art Galleries
- Artist work/live units
- Performing Arts venue/ movie theater

Significant public realm improvements in this district will include:

- Extension of streetscape improvements to MLK Street on the north;
- Pursue improvements along Columbia Avenue, Madison Street and Franklin Street
- Renovation of the Columbia County Library (in collaboration with the County)

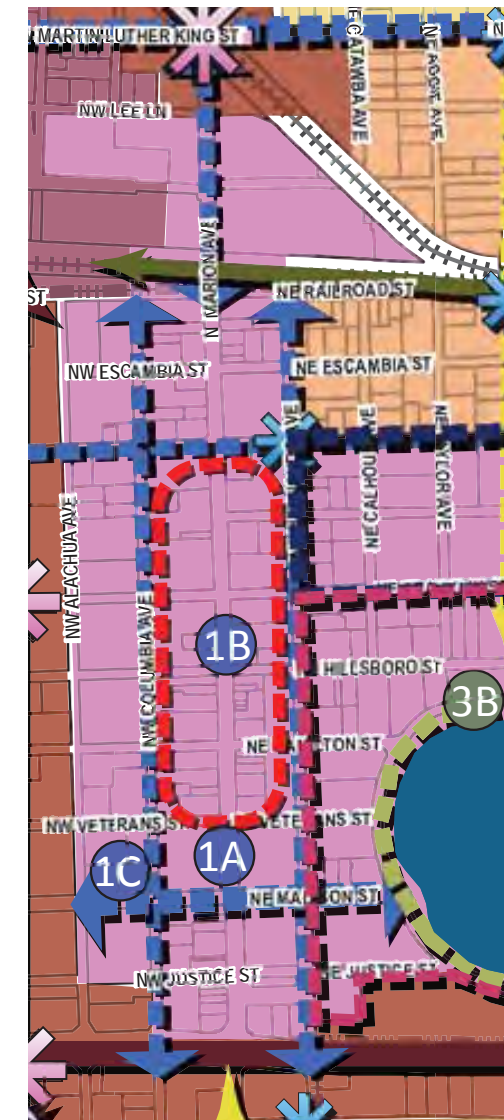
Objective: Create a compact, mixed-use, and diverse district that celebrates the historic and cultural heritage of Lake City, while enhancing the economic vitality of downtown businesses through a well-defined land use and regulatory framework.

Action Strategies:

- Develop policies that allow and encourage mixed-use developments in the district with an emphasis on providing retail storefronts on the ground level with residential uses on the upper floors.
- Continue to work with owners of the Blanche Hotel to attract developers that are interested in the adaptive reuse of the historic property.
- Work with area institutions (Shands Lake Shore Hospital, School Board, UF, Florida Gateway College) to provide specialized programs such as a Culinary Arts Institute and a Nursing Program in new downtown facilities.
- Develop a plan to introduce entrepreneurial urban agriculture opportunities to better utilize the vacant lands in the district and to promote greening of downtown.
- Extend streetscape character along Marion Avenue to the block north of Railroad Street
- Collaborate with County to upgrade the existing facilities at the Columbia County Library on Columbia Avenue.
- Institute a phased downtown marketing, advertising and branding program that promotes downtown's current and future events and festivals throughout the region.
- Work with area merchants to extend business hours during special events and over the weekends.
- Develop an overall parking management strategy to address perception issues related to shortage of parking, especially in the vicinity of the County facilities.
- Evaluate the feasibility of reverting Hernando Street back from one-way to two-way.

Urban Design Elements

- Retain small town charm through establishment of appropriate design guidelines and historic preservation efforts.
- Maximize retail frontage along Marion Avenue through consolidation of parking lots and redevelopment of vacant structures and lands.
- Pursue streetscape improvements similar in character to Marion Avenue along Columbia Avenue and Madison Street.
- Allow 2 to 3 storied mixed-use development within the district.
- Utilize alleyways as extensions of the sidewalk system providing access to shared parking lots and accommodating well-screened service areas.



INSTITUTIONAL CAMPUS

The Shands Lakeshore Regional Medical Center plays a significant role in the redevelopment area, not only as an important medical facility, but also as a regional employer and a large contributor of ad valorem taxes. The hospital recently witnessed a change in management that will allow the hospital facilities to further expand its operations. The Lake City CRA revenues will continue to increase as the Medical Center grows in the future, providing resources for proposed capital improvements that will stimulate further private sector investment. Therefore, the redevelopment program should be committed to working with the Hospital to enable future on-site expansion. The Hospital Authority also owns a significant amount of land within the Lake City Community Redevelopment Area. These lands, although currently underutilized, will play a pivotal role in downtown future redevelopment efforts including construction of needed residential uses to support the professionals and support staff related to the hospital facilities. Potential development products in this district may include senior assisted living facilities and a nursing program in collaboration with area institutions.

Courthouse and government related operations continue to remain a significant and vital economic driver for Downtown Lake City. Columbia County administrative complex and the Courthouse, located along Hernando Avenue between Duval Street and Madison Street are the key traffic generators for the downtown. It is vital for the City and the Community Redevelopment Agency to strengthen its relationship with the County to retain the government uses in the Downtown redevelopment area to ensure the long-term economic sustainability of Downtown. If these uses are relocated from the Downtown, it could also result in displacement of important employment generating uses such as the government-related professional offices from the area. There is enough vacant land available in close proximity to the existing government facilities to accommodate the County’s future expansion needs. The Agency should encourage the County to maintain their downtown presence and provide support to the City to develop Lake City as the County’s urban core.

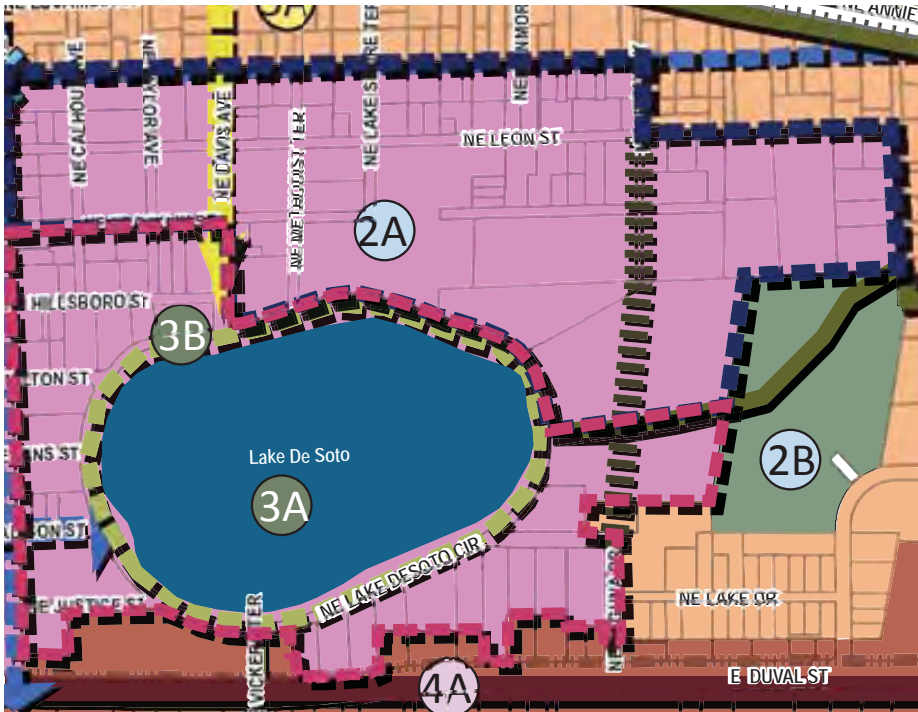


Existing Institutions in Downtown: Shands at Lake Shore Hospital (Above); Columbia County Courthouse (Below)

CATALYST PROJECT: DOWNTOWN MEDICAL CAMPUS

The vision for the Medical Campus depends on creating a cohesive identity for the district through physical planning of a sustainable mixed-use live work environment, facilitating collaborations, integrating neighborhoods, and promoting local community-supported economic development. Expansion of the existing Shand Lake Shore facilities, future investments by the hospital and other institutions will have positive economic impacts on the redevelopment potential of the surrounding neighborhoods. These may include creation of construction related short-term jobs and direct and indirect employment opportunities related to the health care industry and associated services. Development of new housing opportunities, educational institutions, convenient retail, and recreation facilities will further help improve the quality of life and improve the property values and tax base of the larger CRA district.

By attracting a new mix of education and health related uses such as a Nursing Program, additional clinical and research facilities, professional offices, and future expansion of the existing hospital- Shands Lake Shore and VA facilities, the campus could also serve as a catalyst in building the social and economic capital for Lake City CRA. The CRA should consider creating an independent task force dedicated to the creation of a campus environment focused on the medical and health care sectors to develop a consensus on the vision and agree on determining priority projects for the district.



Objective: Capitalize on the area’s institutional assets- County facilities and medical facilities- as an economic engine for the CRA stimulating development of medical offices and educational opportunities in the area, thereby creating jobs and market support for commercial activities as well as increasing the area’s residential base.

Action Strategies:

- Continue to support the expansion of the Shands Lakeshore Hospital facilities.
- Work with the hospital authority to pursue improvements to downtown’s overall infrastructure network.
- Traffic improvements:
 - Remove stop signs along Franklin Street to provide faster access for emergency vehicles to the hospital facility.
 - Prohibit vehicular access to the hospital from Lake Desoto Circle in order to create a pedestrian-only zone along the lakefront.
 - Work with the hospital to pursue streetscape improvements along Franklin Street as part of the ongoing traffic improvements.
- Conduct a detailed study to assess the existing and future utility capacity in downtown and hospital expansion plans.
- Work with the hospital to create an inventory of hospital authority owned properties, acquire underutilized and/or vacant properties to develop a redevelopment plan for introducing professional offices and housing opportunities in the vicinity of the hospital.
- Partner with the Chamber of Commerce to develop an active recruitment plan targeting health care related businesses and facilities. These may include start-up companies coming out of UF or Florida Gateway College, mature technology companies or assisted living development companies looking to expand within the region, or national companies interested in entering the regional market.
- Improve the aesthetic character of the public realm in the proposed Medical District through strategic investments such as prioritized streetscape improvements, better bus transit service, and neighborhood rehabilitation efforts.

Urban Design Elements

- Promote development patterns that respect the traditional grid system and appropriately scaled buildings found in the City.
- Develop design guidelines to ensure high quality development and architectural treatment in new developments.
- Allow for 2-3 storied development with 4-5 storied buildings permissible at appropriate locations in a mixed-use context.

WATERFRONT ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT

The CRA’s waterfront district along Lake Desoto is probably one of the City’s most distinctive yet underutilized cultural, recreational and economic assets. Throughout the country, several small towns and cities are transforming their waterfronts from underutilized sites to destinations that accommodate a balanced mix of water-related public and private uses. Efforts to transform the public realm environment on the waterfront have been piecemeal to date and focused on minor beautification projects. While several revitalization concepts for the waterfront have been discussed in the previous planning efforts, the Agency has not undertaken a cohesive and organized development program to implement the recommended physical and programmatic improvements for the entire lakefront. The Waterfront Entertainment District, as identified in this Plan, is generally defined by right-of- ways and properties fronting Lake Desoto Drive. Existing land uses in this district include a diverse mix of governmental and civic buildings, vacant and underutilized properties, scattered residential uses and professional offices.

Although the current configuration of the lakefront is not designed to maximize the unique character of this asset, there is immense potential to create a setting that celebrates the area’s heritage as well as serve as an interactive gathering space for the community. The Plan recommends redeveloping the district as a “public-oriented recreational waterfront” that accommodates a multitude of functions- cultural, commercial, civic, and residential- with an over-arching goal to strengthen the economic base of Downtown through new investment and tourist related activities. A key element of this Redevelopment Plan is that through a coordinated program of public improvements, revised regulatory framework, the unappealing physical and visual conditions of the lakefront are transformed into an attractive pedestrian-oriented setting.

The Plan recommends implementing some of the elements presented in the master plan as key projects, including: outdoor performance venues and seating areas, enhanced landscaping through the formally designed greenway concept, pedestrian-only walkway, and trail connections from surrounding residential areas. Other uses that should be further examined include introducing uses such as wedding lawns, urban plazas, waterfront restaurants, and waterfront residential in strategic locations. Although the Plan provides the basic framework for the programming of the waterfront, it is imperative that a refined master development plan be developed that includes detailed landscaping specifications for the entire area.

The community expressed the desire during the public workshops to provide increased visual access to the waterfront. Maintaining existing and creating new viewing corridors will be essential in shaping the desired human scale and small-town character. Several downtown streets provide visual axis to the waterfront and careful consideration should be given to not placing buildings and landscape elements along this axis that blocks the view of the waterfront in future developments. The Plan recommends that in evaluating future Downtown zoning revisions, consideration should be given to establishing a low-rise building profile along the waterfront and a terraced development profile with building heights stepping up from two stories to four stories in the middle of the block in order to maximize waterfront views for each development and then stepping down to three- four stories on the street.

Objective: Redevelop the waterfront as a pedestrian oriented district that supports greater public access to the natural environment, promotes a diverse mix of uses and activities, and creates a venue for festivals, the arts and waterfront-related activities that emphasize the lake’s unique setting.

Action Strategies:

- Initiate discussions with key public and private landowners of undeveloped waterfront properties to determine their level of interest in supporting the redevelopment program and their future plans for development on these properties.
- Develop a contiguous waterfront trail and parks system that enhances the aesthetic and environmental character of the water’s edge while at the same time providing increased public access and waterfront experiences to the community.
- Undertake a detailed design master plan of the district to adequately reflect the lakefront’s prominence as the primary public open space destination in Downtown.
- Create an organized public programs campaign for the waterfront district such as weekly community events, attracting an annual major boat show, and other cultural events.
- Develop a dedicated pedestrian zone along the lakefront with limited access provided to the residential properties from Vickers Terrace, Park Lane and Laguna Drive.
- Encourage new developments on the waterfront to accommodate pedestrian activity generating uses at street level such as restaurants and storefronts.
- Incorporate public art installations where possible
- Pursue streetscape improvements to the highest aesthetic standards.
- Encourage volunteer help and stewardship to maintain lakefront environment

Recommended Development: Waterfront District



Fig. 5.5 Examples of Waterfront Activities

CATALYST PROJECT: LAKE DESOTO WATERFRONT IMPROVEMENTS

The Plan envisions creating the entire waterfront edge as a diverse landscape offering a range of open space, recreation, cultural and urban living experiences that ultimately connect the Downtown with the surrounding neighborhoods in a seamless manner. In order to achieve this goal, the Agency should commence discussions with waterfront property owners to obtain a pedestrian trail easement, where feasible, and also work with the City to ensure that public access to the waterfront is included as a performance incentive in the drafting of the revised Land Development Regulations. The Land Development Regulations should also include standards for pedestrian trails and open spaces for new development on the waterfront near the Downtown and the City in order to reach its full potential. The concept of a continuous walkway needs further study and should be incorporated as part of the proposed waterfront design master plan. The Agency should seek additional funding and grants for the proposed waterfront parks and trail system through multiple public and private sources.

The management and treatment of stormwater is one of the primary concerns regarding water quality in the district. The stormwater collection system in the redevelopment area consists of the street system upon which the stormwater flows to catch basins and then into a water body or wetland. As the development program matures and the Downtown area witnesses more urban growth, the percentage of impervious surface within the area is expected to increase, which in turn will lead to storm water runoff issues. The Plan recommends continuing discussions with the Suwannee River Valley Water Management District and Florida Department of Environmental Protection to create an area-wide stormwater permit for the entire Downtown and use it as an incentive to attract private investment Downtown, while at the same time addressing environmental concerns with excess runoff. Within the creation of the stormwater utility in 2008, the city has approved user fees established and a funding agreement in place that can provide annual dollars from the water management district for stormwater enhancement. Reducing the proportion of hard surfacing in any given area reduces the area that may contribute to stormwater runoff, thereby lessening the need for runoff treatment and limiting direct flows into receiving bodies of water, and can reduce the amount of solar energy trapped in hard materials like stone, concrete, and brick.



Lake Desoto Waterfront Design Concept

CATALYST PROJECT: LAKE DESOTO WATERFRONT IMPROVEMENTS

Existing Conditions



Proposed Improvements



Conceptual Rendering of Proposed Waterfront Improvements

COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS

There are two primary commercial corridors traversing through Downtown Lake City - Duval Street (SR 90) and Main Boulevard (US 41). These corridors are presently characterized by older suburban-style strip commercial development and light industrial uses and also serve as significant gateways to Downtown Lake City. Both corridors exhibit similar characteristics including high volumes of traffic serving the region, and conditions along these roadways have a direct impact on the investment image of the redevelopment area.

Existing land uses in the area include strip commercial uses, automotive uses, general retail, office uses, and light industrial uses. Recent roadway improvement projects along Duval Street and Main Boulevard have resulted in high traffic volumes; however, poor circulation patterns caused by multiple driveway access points, narrow driveways creating difficult turning movements and traffic conflicts have severely impacted pedestrian connectivity between the traditional downtown core and residential areas bisected by these corridors.

As new development and redevelopment occurs, opportunities to improve traffic circulation, parking, aesthetic character, and the pedestrian environment should be pursued. Streetscape improvements can be used to soften the physical appearance while incorporating joint access and cross parking improvements into the infrastructure upgrades. Based on the community feedback received during the public workshops, the Plan recommends that enhancing connectivity to residential and commercial areas located north of the redevelopment area be accomplished by introducing traffic calming mechanisms such as designated crosswalks with reduced speeds within the Downtown CRA section along Duval Street.

The redevelopment plan anticipates that both these corridors will continue to support commercial uses driven by favorable market conditions associated with high traffic volumes and regional growth. As new development occurs, more pedestrian-oriented buildings with features such as shared access, reduced curb cuts, rear parking lots and buildings located closer to the street should be encouraged. New developments will support uses catering to local serving auto-oriented uses such as auto repair shops, gas stations, hotels, chain restaurants, and Class- A offices. The intent of the redevelopment program is to sustain the long-term viability of the businesses while buffering views of the harsh physical conditions of the properties. This can be accomplished through CRA sponsored clean-up of properties, landscaping improvements, code enforcement and appropriate development regulations for future commercial uses.

Martin Luther King Street and County Road 100A are the other two roadways serving the area that are anticipated to have a significant impact on the future circulation patterns within the expanded Downtown Lake City CRA boundaries. MLK Street is expected to develop as a key neighborhood connector linking the residential neighborhoods to Marion Avenue- downtown's traditional retail spine. County Road 100A has a rural character with the swamp located to the north of the roadway and with low-density residential development to the south. It is envisioned that future development along this roadway should respect the existing rural character and moderate-density residential with commercial development located at key intersections should be encouraged.

Duval Street Revitalization: Action Strategies

- Work with MPO and FDOT to reconfigure section of Duval Street within the downtown CRA district to function as a multimodal facility designed to accommodate transit, bicycles, pedestrians, and vehicles.
- Streetscape Improvements
 - Marked crosswalks with pedestrian signals and/or traffic calming techniques (countdown and automated pedestrian signalization, lower traffic speeds) at key intersections (Main Boulevard, Marion Avenue, Vickers Terrace).
 - Mid-block crossings: reduce walking distance, safety can be reinforced with forced 'z' crossings, raised crossings to increase visibility, signal protection Appropriately spaced and well designed bus stops.
 - Shared bicycle lanes.
 - Wider sidewalks, shade trees, and street lighting.
- Gateway Opportunities at the intersection of Duval Street with Hernando and Ermine Avenue.
- Encourage businesses to provide shared access and common parking areas, where possible, to minimize pedestrian and vehicular conflicts.
- Promote pedestrian-friendly development patterns with buildings oriented to the front or side of the street with rear/side access to on-site parking and adequate landscaping.

Existing Conditions



Proposed Improvements



Fig. 5.7 Duval Street and Main Boulevard Proposed Improvements

SW Main Boulevard/ US 41: Action Strategies

- Work with MPO and FDOT to reconfigure section of Duval Street within the downtown CRA district to function as a multimodal facility designed to accommodate transit, bicycles, pedestrians, and vehicles.
- Streetscape Improvements
 - Marked crosswalks with pedestrian signals and/or traffic calming techniques (countdown and automated pedestrian signalization, lower traffic speeds) at key intersections (Franklin Street, Hamilton Street, Madison Street).
 - Mid-block crossings: reduce walking distance, safety can be reinforced with forced 'z' crossings, raised crossings to increase visibility, signal protection Appropriately spaced and well designed bus stops.
 - Shared bicycle lanes.
 - Wider sidewalks, shade trees, and street lighting.
- Gateway Opportunities at the intersection of Main Boulevard with Duval Street and CR 100.
- Redevelop the old City Hall site as a public-private venture to create a vibrant development with community facilities such as a business assistance centre, government offices, retail facilities and other ancillary uses.
- Promote pedestrian-friendly development patterns with buildings oriented to the front or side of the street with rear/side access to on-site parking and adequate landscaping.

Martin Luther King Jr. Street: Action Strategies

- Establish MLK Street as the major east-west pedestrian spine linking northern neighborhoods to area institutions.
- Assemble vacant and underutilized properties located at the southeast corner of MLK Street and Marion Avenue.
- Pursue traffic improvements at the intersection of MLK Street, SR 25A (Marion Avenue) and railroad.
- Provide adequate landscape buffers between low-intensity residential development and large tracts of industrial and utility sites.

County Road 100A (Basscom Norris Drive): Action Strategies

- Incorporate appropriate streetscape improvements to preserve the rural character of the roadway including: traffic signalization and rural street lighting at key intersections, gateway treatment, directional signage, preserving existing tree canopies.
- Encourage moderate-density residential uses with nodal commercial development at key intersections (Marion Avenue) as a future land use development strategy for the area.

Existing Conditions



Proposed Improvements



Fig. 5.8 Railroad Street Proposed Improvements

Recommended Development: Commercial Corridor



Fig. 5.9 Examples of Commercial Corridor development

NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION

The presence of dilapidated, vacant or boarded-up housing units in a neighborhood exerts a negative influence on attracting potential future residents. The condition of these units is a deterrent to continuing investment and maintenance of other units. In addition, lack of oversight of these properties creates places that encourage undesirable activities. Although, a number of units are presently occupied, they have been allowed to slide into disrepair. In a number of cases, the homeowner does not have the financial means to make repairs and improvements to the structure. Consideration should be given to the establishment of a public/ private partnership to provide low interest home rehabilitation loans to supplement existing City rehabilitation programs.

The stable residential areas that surround Downtown, particularly the historic residential district around Lake Isabella and peripheral residential areas south of SW Baya Drive, are assets that could be used as a tool to strengthen the marketing efforts while promoting Downtown residential investment. The potential growth of the region with the new Lake City Catalyst Site (located outside the CRA) combined with identified activities and destinations proposed in this Plan, will enable Downtown Lake City to create synergies that offer essential urban amenities to its residents while at the same time retaining its small-town character.

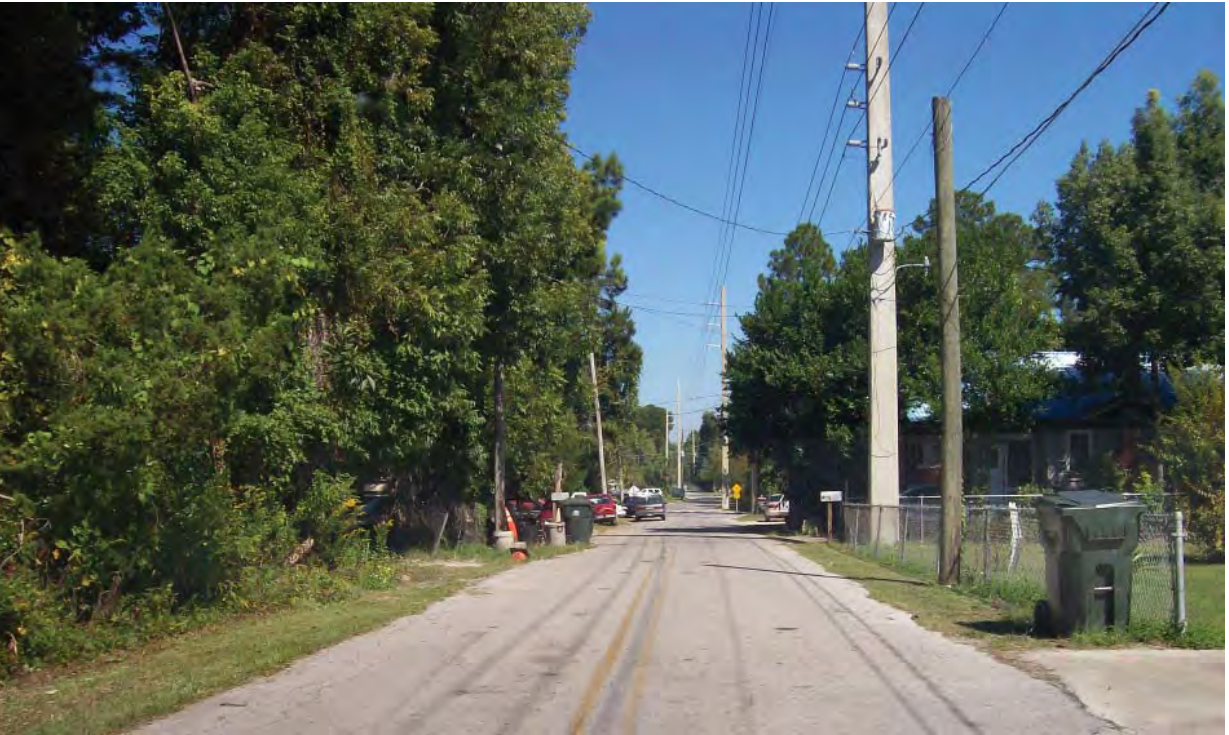
Consistent with the community’s desire to attract more residential development Downtown, the Plan identifies strategies and key projects to provide for more housing choices. While the Plan advocates encouraging development of residential uses as part of mixed-use developments in all identified character districts, it is important to ensure that a diversity of housing products are constructed in a manner that takes full advantage of the revived interest to live in mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly environments. Mixed-use developments are typically viewed as costly and high-risk projects by developers and lenders. However, recent trends in revitalization efforts of small and medium-sized communities in the nation have indicated a growing segment of the population- young professionals, empty nesters, and retirees- are choosing to live in compact communities that offer easy access to cultural destinations, natural resources, and essential communities. This has resulted in a subsequent change in the attitudes of banks and lenders in financing mixed-use development products. The key in attracting developers that are willing to invest in mixed-use projects is to provide leverage through quality public realm improvements combined with an adequate incentive package such as streamlined approval process, appropriate densities, tax breaks, reduced parking requirements, and assembling land to prepare sites for redevelopment.

The Redevelopment Agency will coordinate with the City of Lake City Planning and Development Department and Columbia County to seek opportunities for the development of affordable housing. There is also a need to increase access to affordable housing programs such as down payment and closing cost assistance, home ownership counseling, and home rehabilitation programs. The purpose of the Redevelopment Plan is to encourage market rate housing in the Downtown Lake City CRA district as one component of mixed–use development patterns designed to attract private investment.

The Plan identifies three distinct neighborhoods within the Lake City CRA district based on their existing character, function, and development potential- Downtown Core, Downtown North Neighborhoods, and Historic Residential Core. There is a high degree of diversity in the existing housing stock and property conditions. While each neighborhood has unique assets and issues, there are some general issues observed in the residential areas as a whole. These include low-density development, lack of housing diversity, increasing commercial encroachment, lack of identity, high renter-occupancy, high vacancy rate and lack of pedestrian connectivity between the different neighborhoods. Deteriorating housing stock as well as poor infrastructure conditions such as broken and missing sidewalks, drainage problems, and unpaved road surfaces, were identified during the site inventory. These conditions deter private investment and become more costly to correct over time.

The efforts to develop the waterfront and improving the quality of life in the Downtown Core should be supported by a harmonizing effort to revitalize and preserve existing neighborhoods. Some areas within these neighborhoods have significant assets such as mature tree canopies, historic buildings and well-maintained sidewalks. It is important to ensure that the benefits of the waterfront are extended and shared by existing neighborhoods and residents. By promoting improvements to the waterfront and the existing neighborhoods, the area’s overall investment image is expected to improve and serve as a foundation for new investment and development of single-family owner occupied housing. The neighborhoods should be well connected to the waterfront parks and trail system through well-defined access points and pedestrian linkages.

Existing Conditions



Proposed Improvements



Fig. 5.10 Downtown Residential Improvements: Photo-Simulation

Downtown Core

One of the key challenges faced by Downtown Lake City is the lack of sufficient resident population and a lack of visibility that has in turn impacted the area’s capacity to sustain a healthy retail environment in the core. As the center of governmental activity, small businesses and professional organizations related to the government services employ workers who commute into the Downtown area daily but have chosen not to live in downtown primarily because of a shortage in a diverse housing stock and perception issues related to crime proliferation in the area. The Downtown Core neighborhoods are concentrated in the areas surrounding the Historic Downtown District boundaries. Future land use in these areas would consist of live/ work buildings, medium-density housing, and residential facilities for hospital employees. The Plan does not advocate tearing down all existing buildings in the neighborhood nor anticipates that the redevelopment program will result in displacement of the existing low-income population residing in this neighborhood. It is recommended that the future of this area be marked by an increase in housing options (town homes, bungalows, duplexes, and garden apartments), while at the same time introducing incremental low-impact changes that introduce combined mixed-use buildings that contain neighborhood retail, grocery stores, and small scale retail stores within the existing fabric.

Downtown North

Concentrated on the northern side of the Lake City Community Redevelopment Area, the Downtown North neighborhoods are generally defined by CR 100A (Basscom Drive) on the north, NE Gurley Avenue on the east, NE Railroad Street on the south, and the railroad on the west. The neighborhood is predominantly residential - characterized primarily by single-family residential units, and includes the Niblack Elementary School and the Annie Mattox Park. Near the railroad, on the western extent of these neighborhoods, there are several active as well as abandoned industrial uses that are in direct conflict with the residential uses and are a threat to the safety and overall quality of life.

Some areas in these neighborhoods are being impacted by a combination of vacant properties, deteriorating housing conditions, and lack of public facilities and amenities such as missing sidewalks, unpaved roads, and neighborhood parks. The basic street grid currently defining the neighborhood’s structure should remain intact, and proposed improvements to the circulation network, such as streetscape improvements along MLK Street, Davis Avenue and Fronie Street, will further promote walkability and help forge connections between existing and proposed recreation facilities. Neighborhood serving commercial facilities such as grocery stores, restaurants, and other regional serving large commercial stores and multi-family apartments could be supported along N Marion Avenue, in a more pedestrian oriented configuration. Suburban- style strip commercial development should be prohibited in all new developments and standards to promote compact growth patterns should be incorporated into future updates to the land development regulations. Development patterns in this district should be oriented towards a more urban form with buildings placed closer to the sidewalks, with additional setbacks if the property is located on a street corner. In addition, the Plan recommends creating a continuous frontage along the primary streets with rear parking and mid-block pedestrian access points, where possible. In general, building intensity will be in the low to middle range, but significantly higher than present development patterns.

Historic Residential Core

The historic residential core includes the neighborhoods located south of Duval Street, specifically properties located between Main Boulevard and Hernando Street. In this area, strategies to strengthen existing neighborhood character are recommended. Several residences in this area have been well maintained and exhibit quality architectural features that should be referenced as examples for guidelines for future infill housing throughout the Downtown CRA. While this area contains several historic structures, the Plan recommends that the City conduct a detailed assessment of its contributing historic structures for National, State and local register listings, prior to permitting rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of existing structures. Several community members expressed their concern for an increase in crime generating activities in these neighborhoods and shared their desire to include the entire neighborhood into the CRA district. However, in the finding of necessity study conducted as part of this master planning process it was observed that the conditions in this area did not satisfy the minimum criteria required by the Florida Statutes for establishing “slum” or “blight” conditions. It is recommended that the City work with area residents to conduct regular neighborhood planning exercises to address the concerns of the residents and develop a series of seamlessness throughout the City, and not just the CRA district.

CATALYST PROJECT: URBAN AGRICULTURE/ COMMUNITY GARDENING

Urban agriculture is the practice of cultivating, processing and distributing food in, or around a city. The neighborhoods within the Lake City CRA consist of large tracts of undeveloped land that could be utilized to develop a community garden and a year-round public farmers market to sell the produce grown in these community gardens to local and regional population. The community garden could also include an educational component for environmental preservation and urban agriculture studies. The public market could offer many community benefits including: enhancing prospects for economic development; providing opportunity for local retailers including minority entrepreneurs; and creating a public space for interaction and community gatherings. As a regional destination, the public market would have to provide adequate parking facilities for residents and visitors. Since there are several property owners in this area, the CRA should initiate discussions with property owners to determine their interest in pursuing the public market concept as a public-private partnership. The public-private market concept involves complex development, implementation and management tasks that should be addressed in a separate market feasibility study.



Fig. 5.11 Examples of Urban Agriculture and Public Farmers Markets

Objective: Preserve and enhance the residential character of the neighborhoods to maintain the affordable housing stock through investment in public infrastructure and by establishing programs that support investment in residential renovations and redevelopment of existing housing stock.

Action Strategies

- Create a web database of available properties within the CRA and Columbia County in cooperation with the IDA. Include CRA incentives in this inventory to aid promoting properties.
- Create a database of substandard properties for use in planning creative action.

Downtown Core

- Improve visual and physical linkages to the lakefront from residential areas
- Develop an eco-friendly home rehabilitation program working in cooperation with local and national green building agencies.
- Collaborate with Hospital Authority, Florida Gateway College and non-profit organizations such as Habitat for Humanity to assemble and introduce housing projects at varying price points.
- Provide adequate buffering from railroad tracks and ensure safer connections to the residential areas from downtown destinations.
- Transform vacant lands into green infrastructure such as neighborhood gardens, pocket parks and storm water retention projects.
- Develop detailed design guidelines for all residential developments and renovations.
- Develop and promote CRA incentives for residential improvements such as Matching Rehabilitation Grant, and Owner Occupancy Incentives and enhance the facade grant program with matching dollars.
- Continue the enhancement of the area's infrastructure and amenities- upgrade existing sidewalks, street lighting program, stormwater management, and neighborhood signage program.
- Establish residential façade improvement programs, preservation of tree canopy, and code enforcement.
- Work with local realtors and developers to create a property database of available properties and buildings in the CRA.
- Incorporate crime prevention strategies in all public realm projects and develop stronger community-law enforcement relationships to build stronger neighborhoods.
- Work with area churches to provide community facilities- pocket parks, day-care center, after-school program for area residents.

- Work with Code Enforcement to require that code violations and substandard housing be brought into compliance, especially as it relates to abandoned properties or those owned by absentee landlords.

Downtown North

- Encourage adaptive reuse of vacant and underutilized properties to accommodate community facilities and activities (vocational technology training center/ business resource center/ job training center).
- Preserve the existing single-family residential character in the neighborhoods.
- Formulate joint-use agreements with area schools to provide additional recreational facilities for area residents.
- Provide design criteria for new infill development and existing building renovations.
- Consider creating a neighborhood association to solicit comment on a regular basis from area residents.
- Complete the missing sidewalk network to ensure a safe and walkable pedestrian environment.
- Increase code enforcement visits and work with property owners to create property maintenance/ residential façade improvement programs.
- Provide well-defined pedestrian linkages connecting the Niblack Elementary School and Annie Mattox Park to the residential areas.

Historic Residential Core

- Provide improved pedestrian connections between the downtown core area and historic neighborhoods located south of Duval Street.
- Develop a neighborhood walking tour of historic buildings located in the downtown area.
- Develop detailed design guidelines for all residential and commercial developments and renovations.
- Ensure that appropriate standards for design and construction are in place in order to attract development that is consistent with the desired character for Downtown.
- Work with local banks to create a performance-based loan program to facilitate renovation and rehabilitation of existing buildings for residential use.

Recommended Development Character: Neighborhood Reinvestment Areas



Chapter 2 Implementation Program



PROGRAM MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the Downtown Lake City Redevelopment Plan will require the coordinated efforts of the City, the Redevelopment Agency, Columbia County, other government agencies, local business organizations, property owners, and residents. These efforts will be coupled with the employment of various organizational, legal, funding and promotional techniques to successfully implement the program. This section of the Redevelopment Plan sets forth a process to realize the economic development, planning and design objectives that have been devised for the redevelopment area

Leadership

Successful implementation hinges upon close cooperation and coordination between private and public groups and agencies requiring strong and determined leadership. While leadership is a highly intangible quality, it is the single most important factor for successful implementation of the redevelopment plan. This leadership must come from both the public and private sectors. The leadership of the Mayor, City Council, CRA Advisory Board, City Manager and staff in the City of Lake City has been outstanding thus far. Perseverance will be required when deliberating future policy decisions related to the implementation of the Redevelopment Plan.

The Mayor and City Council Members and the CRA Advisory Board are the leaders of the redevelopment program and must assume this role with vitality and enthusiasm. City leaders and staff members must support the program’s activities and provide a well-devised management system to carry out the Redevelopment Plan. They will be responsible for establishing the administrative, financial and programmatic mechanisms necessary to achieve the goals and objectives of the Downtown Redevelopment Plan. They should establish policies that support the principles described in this Plan and concentrate on the following actions throughout the redevelopment process.

CITY COUNCIL/AGENCY BOARD/STAFF

- Provide commitment of public policy and resources for the redevelopment effort.
- Support the redevelopment mission and insure implementation of scheduled projects.
- Commit to making the necessary public improvements identified in the Plan.
- Provide necessary staffing and administrative support to properly implement the Redevelopment Plan.
- Adopt development controls and incentives to promote high-quality private development. This may include streamlining the development review process to minimize the time involved in the approval process, providing zoning incentives, site and architectural design guidelines, providing additional public facilities (library, community center, recreation facilities), and coordinating capital improvement programs.
- Prioritize and develop detailed programs for projects to implement major strategies illustrated in the Redevelopment Plan including- phasing, project financing, land acquisition, land disposition, funding sources and financing.
- Contact affected property owners to determine their level of interest in participating in proposed redevelopment activities.
- Support residential renovation and rehabilitation programs through the use of grant funding such as SHIP, CDBG, HOME, and TIF. (See Appendix E for additional funding sources).
- Increase awareness of funding resources and program initiatives available to residents interested in improving their property as means to increasing home ownership and property values.
- Conduct traffic analysis and market feasibility studies to assess the impact of proposed projects in surrounding areas.
- Initiate discussions with Columbia County to coordinate joint improvement projects planned for the unincorporated County owned areas and proposed corridor improvements within the Redevelopment Area

CRA ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Plan supports the City of Lake City’s decision to form a CRA Advisory Committee. The Committee will act as stewards to monitor the progress and timely development of the projects proposed in the redevelopment area. In addition, the role of this steering committee could be potentially expanded to generate community interest in the projects and formulate redevelopment incentives to attract developers and businesses to the area. The Committee could also help to generate community support for the redevelopment efforts and increase public involvement in the process.

To have a successful redevelopment program, it is important to first establish lines of communication between all sectors and facets of the community. The planning process has established relationships between key players in this effort, but has not fully developed roles and responsibilities. The City and Agency must develop the organizational framework and institutional relationships to facilitate effective redevelopment activities in cooperation with area businesses, residents and community representatives.

ORGANIZATIONAL ROLES AND RELATIONSHIPS

PARTNERSHIPS

Area Institutions

A network of relationships must be established and nurtured to provide focus on the redevelopment efforts to maximize the use of available resources and avoid duplication of responsibilities enabling effective program implementation. Through partnering with institutions including, but not limited to, the Columbia County, Shands Lakeshore Hospital, faith based institutions, non-profit organizations and neighborhood associations, the City and the CRA can leverage more commitment for projects and create a cumulative impact in the area.

Columbia County

The City and CRA should also initiate discussions with the County administration (including School Board) to develop a redevelopment strategy for addressing the future expansion needs of the County administrative and courthouse facilities. Future physical improvement concepts such as constructing a joint parking garage in collaboration with the City, the Hospital and the County should be further explored.

Shands Lakeshore Hospital

The involvement and support of this institution is pivotal to the success of the proposed redevelopment effort due to its location within the redevelopment area, large landholdings, potential to generate medically related commercial spin-off and future goals. The City should work in close cooperation with Hospital authority to explore potential redevelopment opportunities in the vicinity of the hospital and sharing of public facilities. The recent merger of the hospital with Health Management Associates will revert the hospital property back on the tax rolls and will be a vital resource in pursuing the improvements identified in this Plan.

Faith-based Institutions

Downtown churches and other faith-based institutions also have a role in the successful implementation of the Redevelopment Plan. The City should work in close collaboration with these faith-based organizations to develop community development programs that capitalize on the strengths and outreach capacity of the religious institutions. The participation from faith-based organizations can aid in obtaining community-wide support, addressing the social service needs such as instituting day care centers, organizing neighborhood clean-up drives and crime prevention campaigns, and encouraging youth participation in community development programs such as mentorship and job training programs to enhance their sense of responsibility.

Private Sector

Private property owners, developers and tenants are the principle basis for new development and any related financial investment in all redevelopment projects. The private sector ultimately carries the burden of funding the redevelopment program, therefore a positive development environment must be established to capture private investment in an increasingly competitive market.

In attempting to attract investment from private developers, the Agency will target strategic development projects, solicit developers, then negotiate a public/private development agreement. The agreement sets forth terms and conditions involving the disposition of land, the nature of the prospective development, City/Agency contributions and other conditions pertaining to the project. Following are fundamental components in this process:

- Contact affected property owners to determine their level of interest in participating in proposed redevelopment activities.
- Master plan targeted public/private projects, such as the reinforcing positive aspects of existing activity and providing attractive combinations of building masses and open spaces. These plans can then be used to illustrate the Agency's intention for the site, facilitating pro forma analysis when soliciting interest from the private sector.
- Formulate policies and procedures for developer solicitation and form basic public/private development agreements to enable strategic development on selected projects.

One of the functions of the Redevelopment Agency is site assembly, clearance and relocation and policy making relative to implementing the Redevelopment Plan. Through site assembly clearance and relocation activities, land can be provided at a price that is an incentive for private redevelopment. The Redevelopment Agency must also plan and coordinate other revitalization activities such as public improvement projects and public infrastructure improvements.

This is a vital function in creating new development in the downtown area. In the case of downtown Lake City the principal opportunity for dramatic change lies in new development, in coordination with major infrastructure improvements, storefront rehabilitation and streetscape improvements. Site assembly can be used for the future purposes of land trades, creating development partnerships and providing central parking areas. Recent court decisions and legislative actions have eliminated the use of eminent domain for site assembly for the purposes of redevelopment. Therefore all land acquisition must be through cooperative sales. The Redevelopment Agency can facilitate land cost write-down if land acquisition expenses by the private sector become too exorbitant.

REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Anticipated Redevelopment Activities

Activities that encourage development and redevelopment in downtown Lake City are dependent upon an effective organizational framework to maximize available resources and ensure potential private developers that the City is committed to enhancing the viability of downtown Lake City. The key to implementing redevelopment activities rests with the cooperative efforts of property owners, business people, developers and the City of Lake City.

Clear delineation of responsibilities is essential for successful implementation. With assignment of responsibilities, elements such as those outlined in the Lake City Downtown Redevelopment Plan can be applied to affect changes and manage redevelopment. In addition, detailed elements can be modified or refined, as changing conditions dictate, by the responsible group or groups. The key ingredient to this process is coordination among groups to develop a dynamic process that confronts and resolves issues proactively rather than reacting to changing conditions.

Implementation functions consist of both financing and non-financing considerations, with both areas equally as important. Non-financing considerations deal with the sometimes complex organizing efforts and ensuring that use of resources is maximized and that revitalization is conducted in a positive and reinforcing manner. Non-financing functions are briefly discussed below with financing strategies discussed in the following section.

Capital Improvements

These can include major infrastructure items including street improvement and upgrading utilities. Also, capital improvements can include a variety of revitalization items such as facade improvements, landscaping, streetscaping, etc as well as new parking development. In the case of downtown Lake City, the principal requirements appear to be additional parking, general landscape and streetscape treatments throughout the entire downtown, utility upgrading and site assembly.

Standards and Controls

Standards and controls are beneficial to assure developers and tenants that quality development will occur. Lake City has done a good job updating its Standards and Controls through implementation of a unified land development code with an article devoted toward downtown redevelopment. The additional Design Standards and design principles recommended by this plan will continue to enhance the downtown's appearance.

Marketing

Marketing takes two forms. Securing qualified developers and anchor tenants is required for new development. Site disposition is directly related to this activity. Second, general promotion is primarily keyed to the downtown retail community, involving a variety of media and event type activities. The City of Lake City has done a good job promoting the downtown through organized special events and activities such as the weekend Farmer's Market.

Promotion and Communication

The Agency, staff and Advisory Committee should work with area residents, property owners, and businesses to establish channels of communication that foster support for the redevelopment effort and facilitate program implementation. Staff should provide public information concerning all aspects of the redevelopment program throughout the process using venues such as newsletters, radio, television, newspapers and the Internet as well as presentations to neighborhood and civic organization meetings to generate public support.

Physical Development

This is the actual construction of new facilities and rehabilitation of older facilities. Physical development is dependent upon several factors, the most important of which is the ability to effectively rehabilitate existing facilities and to attract and integrate new development in concert with a comprehensive redevelopment plan.

Development Incentives

To further stimulate private investment the City can provide development incentives through various means, including: facade, landscape, signage or property improvement grants; payment of impact fees; provision of site specific infrastructure improvements to address any deficiencies; participation in environmental clean-up of contaminated sites, flexibility in the application of use restrictions and increasing intensity of site use, flexible parking regulations, grants or low interest loans for life safety improvements; joint business support ventures such as district business identification signage or centralized marketing strategies.

FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Tax Increment Funds

Community redevelopment will not be successful without funding through tax increment financing. Therefore the ultimate goal of the redevelopment program is to increase the tax base to generate additional revenue for capital improvements and services through implementation of projects and programs, as described in this Plan. Managed effectively, tax increment resources can be leveraged to enable the undertaking of substantial public and private sector improvements. With this in mind, the following finance and management practices should be employed.

- Coordinate with the City Manager, Finance Director and other department heads to strategically devise annual operating and capital improvements budgets to maximize the use of anticipated tax increment revenues.
- Coordinate with appropriate County, State and other public officials which may be sponsoring capital improvements in the District to maximize the leveraging of Redevelopment Agency resources.
- Through the use of tax increment financing and other funding sources, infrastructure improvements such as water, sanitary sewer, electrical, telephone, cable, internet and stormwater conveyance systems should be designed and constructed with the capacity to meet future demand based on the future land use activities identified in the Downtown Redevelopment Plan.
- The Agency should leverage tax increment revenues through grants, commercial loans, or other financial mechanisms to expedite the completion of projects.
- Based on revenue projections contained in the Redevelopment Plan, the Agency, should consider short-term interim project financing with anticipation of long-term bond financing.
- The Agency should work with area banks and bond counsels to research bond feasibility for financing major public facilities.
- The Agency should work with area financial institutions to develop favorable loan programs for private sector development and property rehabilitation projects.
- The Agency should routinely undertake project pro forma analysis on proposed development and redevelopment projects to determine projected revenues and devise strategies to maximize the use of these resources on a site-specific project or on an area wide programmatic basis.

Debt Financing

This method essentially requires a community to sell bonds or otherwise borrow money to be repaid from an annual automatic lien on the general fund. Or a community can pay for its infrastructure in the same way a person borrows money to purchase a home. In both instances, the capital need is immediate and high, the equity appreciation reasonably assured, and the monthly or annual principal and interest payments generally fixed. Like all forms of infrastructure financing, there are some disadvantages and risks. One major risk is voter aversion to approving bond issues, which means an increase in their property taxes.

Reserves

Reserves are those surplus funds in a local government coffer that are either intentionally built up for a “rainy day” or accrue because the budget requirements were less than the revenues collected. By having sufficient reserves, a municipality does not have to try to sell bonds or borrow capital improvement funds. Reserves are difficult to project.

Challenge Strategy

The challenge strategy involves the guaranteed construction of public improvements, but only after private revitalization actively reaches a certain point. This provides incentive for the developer while ensuring both parties, the City and the developer, that desired private development will take place along with public improvements. A recognizable schedule of funding can be determined with this strategy and can be selectively implemented, usually on a block-by-block or project-by project basis.

Private Investment

Generally, this is the single most important source in revitalization, if successful revitalization is to occur, private investment usually must exceed public funding by three to four fold. Such funding takes the form of equity investment and conventional real estate loans.

Project Equity Position

When the Redevelopment Agency takes an equity position in a project, the Agency contributes cash or land to the project with a return in the form of profit sharing. This Agency participation has the effect of reducing developer costs and can be used for projects such as redevelopment and parking structures.

Leasing

City-owned land, buildings, equipment, etc. can be leased to developers for projects. For the developer, this eliminates the need for capital investment in land, buildings, etc. or debt service on money borrowed to finance the purchase of such things as land, building, and equipment. The city receives lease payments which are deductible from the developer’s income tax. The lease may also constitute a purchase option.

Public Improvements in conjunction with Private Sector Development

The Redevelopment Agency can offer public improvement activities such as street improvements, vacations, streetscaping, parking development, open space development, and utility hook-ups as a way of stimulating or responding to private investment. These improvements are usually funded through the City’s Capital Improvement Plan or program, using sources such as property assessments, general funds and tax increment finances.

Land Write-Downs

Land write-down by the Redevelopment Agency is a method whereby the fair value of land is determined for uses that the City is interested in seeing developed on that land. The land use may not be the most profitable use, but may be the most desirable by the City on an overall basis (e.g., development of retail facilities in the downtown area, and parking structure developments). Land write down reduces development costs, the need for equity and fixed-interest costs, and it improves the developer’s cash flow, net income and risk position. It often requires a considerable city investment with no significant financial return to the city, however, there is a potential for making an otherwise infeasible project attractive when combined with a package of other incentives.

Joint Ventures

In real estate syndication ventures, the Redevelopment Agency can contribute equity capital to a project. This has the effect of reducing equity requirements from the developer and/or reducing the amount which must be debt serviced. Through equity syndication, tax subsidy benefits can be passed on to investors in the form of depreciation, investment tax credits, deferral of taxes and capital gains.

Mortgage Write-Downs

Mortgage write downs by the Redevelopment Agency is a method usually used to encourage residential development and home ownership in the downtown area. Funds from the Agency are offered to qualified potential home buyers (low-moderate income, first time buyers, etc.) to increase their down payment, thereby decreasing mortgage payments. The Agency usually takes an ownership interest in the dwelling for a predetermined period of time to guarantee against misuse of the funds.

Lakefront Development Funding Strategies

Acquiring undeveloped waterfront properties, constructing a continuous trail network, and environmental restoration are critical to the success of the initial phase of investment in the Lake City Waterfront area. While opportunities exist to develop the waterfront through various strategies previously discussed, it is important to devise a long-term financing and revenue generation strategy to develop a dynamic process that confronts and resolves issues proactively rather than reacting to changing conditions. Possible strategies are outlined below including:

- Inter-governmental partnerships and cost-sharing
- Issue revenue bonds, notes, certificates, or other forms of indebtedness
- Combine redevelopment projects with other infrastructure projects
- Exploring trail/ conservation easement opportunities
- Land and/or trail dedications from development
- Secure additional funding from grants and joint projects (Refer Appendix E for a list of funding sources)
- Direct Budget Allocations
- Establish a Lakefront Improvement Trust Fund to accept contributions and grants from corporate entities, non-profit organizations, and individuals

Other Opportunities to raise funds for waterfront improvements are discussed below.

Naming Rights

Many cities have turned to selling the naming rights for new buildings or the renovation of existing buildings and parks for the cost associated with the improvement.

Special Taxing Districts

Taxing districts are established to provide funds for certain types of improvements that benefit a specific group of affected properties. Improvements may include landscaping, park furnishing, public art, supplemental services for improvements and promotions and cultural enhancements.

Facility Rentals

As the new waterfront parks and trail systems are added to the system, a fee plan for rental facilities should be developed. The fees should be set to cover true cost of the facility including utilities, personnel costs and clean up, and produce revenue for the City. Picnic shelters can be used on a first come-first served basis; however, guaranteed use can be made through a reservation program that includes a rental and clean-up fee. Facility rental should be competitive with private facilities.

Equipment Rentals

This revenue source is available through the rental of equipment such as tables, chairs, tents, stages, bicycles, roller blades, canoes, kayaks, sports equipment, etc.

Special Fundraisers

Many park and recreation agencies have special fundraisers on an annual basis to help cover the costs of specific programs and/or capital projects.

Utility Round-up Programs

Some park and recreation agencies have worked with the local utilities on a round-up program whereby a consumer can pay the difference between their bill up to the even dollar amount and they then pay the parks and recreation department the difference.

Corporate Sponsorships

This revenue-funding source allows corporations to invest in the development or enhancement of additional programs in the City. Sponsorships are also used for special events.

Foundations

These dollars are raised from tax-exempt, non-profit organizations established with private donations in promotion of specific causes, activities or issues. They offer a variety of means to fund capital projects, gifts, fundraisers, endowments, etc.

Advertising

This revenue source is for the sale of appropriate advertising on park and recreation related items such as the City’s program guide, scoreboards, dasher boards, fences or other visible products or services that expose the product or service to many people.

Adopt-A-Park Program

The development of a formal Adopt-A-Park program would establish rules and guidelines of responsibilities for the adoptee. Interested stakeholders include neighborhood organizations, homeowners associations, businesses, and non-profit organizations.

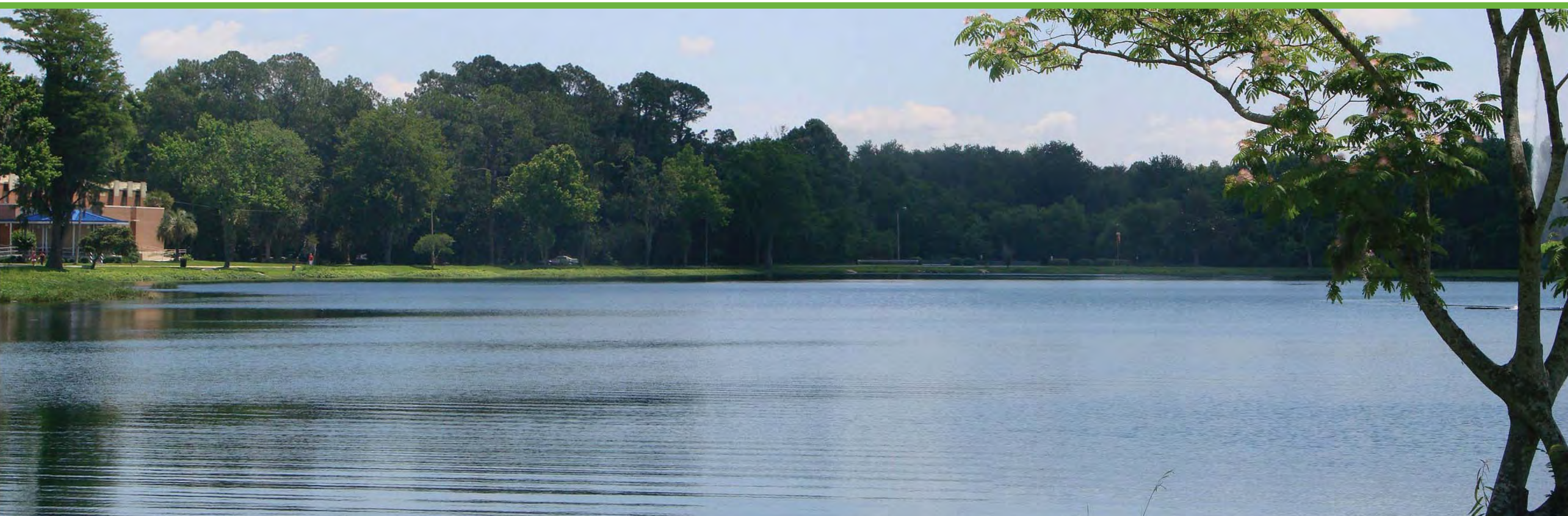
Volunteer Programs

The use of volunteers to do clerical work and programming can be a useful tool in augmenting the staffing levels. Volunteer programs should be formalized and include background checks, regular schedules, job descriptions and evaluations to assure the safety of the clientele and the quality of the volunteers. It should be recognized that the development of a formalized process would require considerable work by the Parks and Recreation and Human Resources staff; however, in the long run, it would be a useful tool in helping augment recreation staff.

Grants and Potential Funding Sources

State and federal grants have long been a source of funds for public improvement and environmental restoration projects. Sources that have been used by other cities to fund waterfront and recreational programs include the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), FCT, FRDAP, and Waterfronts Florida. Appendix E contains a detailed description of funding sources available for waterfront development.

Chapter 3 Capital Improvements Program



CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM

Lake City’s vision to transform its existing underdeveloped downtown urban fabric into a compact mixed-use waterfront community that will serve as a focal point of cultural, heritage, arts, and recreation destination in the region, will require substantial investment of public and private monies and continued support from the City leadership. This chapter illustrates how the Redevelopment Plan translates to a phased series of capital improvement projects and breaks down anticipated costs for design and construction of capital projects as well as further plans and regulatory activities.

The Agency has completed some key urban design projects such as the Marion Avenue Streetscape Improvements, and construction of gateways at the intersections of Marion Avenue with Duval Street and Railroad Street. While these are commendable achievements, there is a need to initiate additional catalytic projects that will set the stage for private investment to follow. Therefore the first two years of the Capital Improvements program target regulatory changes in the Urban Code and Comprehensive Plan. The initial focus also includes the preparation of a detailed Lakefront Design Master Plan. This project provides the planning and design necessary to complete construction of all of the major improvements planned for the Waterfront Entertainment District including the refinement of conceptual designs recommended in the Redevelopment Master Plan, design for Lake Desoto Circle improvements, streetscape treatments on adjoining roads and the phased landscaping of the waterfront. Completion of this Master Plan will ensure the orderly progression of construction activity in support of future private sector market demand.

The community should understand that the Agency, working with other government entities, will be pursuing multiple elements of the Plan at all times. It is important to note that the following capital improvement plan is flexible in nature. It is the best estimate of project costs based on a measure of the order of magnitude for projects in relation to anticipated revenues. As a matter of practice the Agency will continue to prepare annual budgets as well as establishing one, three and five-year work programs for budgetary and administrative purposes. Ultimately project costs will be refined during the design and construction phase of any given project. The following 5 year capital improvements plan and subsequent long-term phasing plan sets forth recommendations concerning project priorities and funding sources.

The Capital Improvement Strategies are used for short-term, and long range planning purposes. The Capital Improvement Strategies are not a guarantee of expenditure of funds on a given project in a given year. Actual funding allocations will be determined annually through the City’s budget process. As priorities change, the capital improvement strategies are amended. Managed correctly, funds from the City and CRA can be leveraged through grants and commercial financing to accomplish a substantial number of capital improvements and planning activities. When successful, the Agency should see a substantial increase in the tax base and realize a healthy return on its investment through increased ad valorem revenues, sales tax receipts and other formulated revenue sharing programs. The Downtown Lake City Redevelopment Plan contains several projects consisting of public, private and joint public/private efforts, as described in previous sections of the Redevelopment Plan that will take at least twenty years for completion. Therefore, it is critical that the Agency incorporates a sound project implementation strategy when identifying priorities.

| CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM (SHORT- TERM: 1-5 YEARS) | | | | |
|---|--|-----------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| | | | | |
| | PROJECTS | Costs | Potential Funding Sources | Key Players |
| | | | | |
| INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS- TRANSPORTATION | | | | |
| | Duval Street Improvements | | General Fund/ FDOT/ KAB/ HBG/ TEP | CRA/ City/ FDOT |
| | Phase I Streetscape Improvements SW Ritch Terrace to SE Vicker Terrace | \$449,500 | | |
| | Gateways | \$25,000 | | |
| | Total | \$474,500 | | |
| | Washington Street Improvements | | General Fund/ FDOT/ KAB/ HBG/ TEP | CRA/ City/ Hospital |
| | Phase I Streetscape Improvements NW Main BLVD to NE Methodist Street | \$191,907 | | |
| | Gateways | \$25,000 | | |
| | Total | \$216,907 | | |
| | North Marion Avenue Improvements | | General Fund/ FDOT/ KAB/ HBG/ TEP | CRA/ City |
| | Phase I Streetscape Improvements NE Bascom Norris DR to NE Martin Luther King Street | \$183,700 | | |
| | Gateways | \$25,000 | | |
| | Total | \$207,700 | | |
| | MLK Street Improvements | | General Fund/ FDOT/ KAB/ HBG/ TEP | CRA/ City |
| | Phase I Street scape Improvements NW Main BLVD to NE Aberdeen AVE | \$236,457 | | |
| | Gateways | \$25,000 | | |
| | Total | \$261,457 | | |
| | Hernando Avenue Improvements | | General Fund/ FDOT/ KAB/ HBG/ TEP | CRA/ City/ County |
| | Streetscape Improvements NW Railroad Street to Duval Street | \$249,718 | | |
| | Gateways | \$50,000 | | |
| | Total | \$299,718 | | |
| | Sub- Total | | \$1,460,281 | |
| INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS- UTILITIES | | | | |
| | Utilities Master Plan (Potable Water, Sanitary and Sewer, Stormwater) | \$200,000 | CDBG/ USDA WWD | CRA/ City |
| | Sub- Total | \$200,000 | | |
| INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS- PUBLIC FACILITIES AND OPEN SPACE | | | | |
| | Upgrade Columbia County Library | TBD | FRDAP/ RTP | CRA/ City/ County |
| | Lake Desoto Lakefront Improvements and Pedestrian Plaza Preliminary Design and Programming | \$150,000 | FRDAP/ FCT | CRA/ City/ County/ Hospital/ Church |
| | Sub- Total | \$150,000 | | |
| | SUB-TOTAL (INFRASTRUCTURE) | | \$1,810,281 | |

CDBG- Community Development Block Grant
CPIF- Career Pathways Innovation Fund Grants Program (DoL)
CFG- Community Facilities Grant (USDA)
FDOT- Florida Department of Transportation
FRDAP- Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program
FCT- Florida Communities Trust
FLP-Federal Lands to Parks
HBG- Highway Beautification Grant
KAB- Keep America Beautiful
LWCF- Land and Water Conservation Fund
NPS- National Parks Service Historic Preservation Grants
NTCIC- National Trust Community Investment Corporation (NTCIC)
NTPF- National Trust Preservation Fund
RBOG- Rural Business Opportunity Grant (USDA)
RBEG- Rural Business Enterprise Grant (USDA)
REAP- Renewable Energy Grant (USDA)
RED- Rural Economic Development Grant/ Loan (USDA)
RTP- Florida Recreational Trails Program
SBIR- Small Business Innovation Research Program (USDA)
SBA- Small Business Administration Tree Planting Grant
SHIP- State Housing Initiatives Partnership
TEP- Transportation Enhancement Program
TIF- Tax Increment Financing
TPL- Trust for Public Land
UFG- Urban Forestry Grant

| CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM (SHORT- TERM: 1-5 YEARS) | | | | |
|---|---|-----------|---|--|
| | | | | |
| | PROJECTS | Costs | Potential Funding Sources | Key Players |
| | | | | |
| PLANNING STUDIES | | | | |
| | Lake City Comprehensive Plan Amendments | NA | General Fund | City Staff |
| | Land Development Code Update | \$100,000 | General Fund | City Staff/ Consultant |
| | CRA Design Guidelines Manual | \$125,000 | TIF | CRA/ Consultant |
| | Blanche Hotel Adaptive Reuse Study | \$100,000 | TIF/ CPIF/ NPS/ NTPF/ NTCIC/ Private Foundation Preservation Grants | CRA/Private Sector/Consultant |
| | Urban Agriculture and Public Farmers Market Feasibility Study | \$50,000 | TIF/ SBIR/ Chamber of Commerce/ CPIF | CRA/ Non-Profits/ City/ County/ Chamber of Commerce |
| | Civic Center/ Convention Center/ Performing Arts Center Feasibility Study | \$50,000 | General Fund/ TIF/CFG/ FCT | City/ CRA |
| | Citywide Open Space and Recreation Master Plan | \$150,000 | General Fund/ FRDAP | City/ Consultant |
| | Neighborhood Plans | NA | General Fund | City Staff |
| | Shared Parking Garage Feasibility Study | \$75,000 | TIF/ Hospital/ County | CRA/ City/ County/ Hospital |
| | Downtown Parking Management Master Plan | \$50,000 | TIF/ City | CRA/ City |
| | SUB-TOTAL (PLANNING STUDIES) | | \$700,000 | |
| ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT | | | | |
| | Business Assistance Center/ Incubator Strategic Plan | \$100,000 | CDBG/ RBEG/ CPIF/ CFG | City/ CRA/ County/ Chamber of Commerce/ Hospital/ Florida Gate-way College |
| | Marketing and Promotion | NA | TIF/ General Fund/ CDBG | City/ CRA/ Chamber of Commerce |
| | Land Assemblage and Acquisition | TBD | TIF/ TPL | City/ CRA |
| | SUB-TOTAL (ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT) | | \$100,000 | |
| | TOTAL ESTIMATED COSTS (PHASE 1) | | \$2,610,281 | |

CDBG- Community Development Block Grant
CPIF- Career Pathways Innovation Fund Grants Program (DoL)
CFG- Community Facilities Grant (USDA)
FDOT- Florida Department of Transportation
FRDAP- Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program
FCT- Florida Communities Trust
FLP-Federal Lands to Parks
HBG- Highway Beautification Grant
KAB- Keep America Beautiful
LWCF- Land and Water Conservation Fund
NPS- National Parks Service Historic Preservation Grants
NTCIC- National Trust Community Investment Corporation (NTCIC)
NTPF- National Trust Preservation Fund
RBOG- Rural Business Opportunity Grant (USDA)
RBEG- Rural Business Enterprise Grant (USDA)
REAP- Renewable Energy Grant (USDA)
RED- Rural Economic Development Grant/ Loan (USDA)
RTP- Florida Recreational Trails Program
SBIR- Small Business Innovation Research Program (USDA)
SBA- Small Business Administration Tree Planting Grant
SHIP- State Housing Initiatives Partnership
TEP- Transportation Enhancement Program
TIF- Tax Increment Financing
TPL- Trust for Public Land
UFG- Urban Forestry Grant

| CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM (MID- TERM: 6-10 YEARS) | | | | |
|---|--|-------------|---|---|
| | PROJECTS | Costs | Potential Funding Sources | Key Players |
| INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS- TRANSPORTATION | | | | |
| | Duval Street Improvements | | General Fund/ FDOT/ KAB/ HBG/ TEP | CRA/ City/ FDOT |
| | Phase II Streetscape Improvements SE Vicker Terrace to SE Ermine Avenue | \$557,332 | | |
| | Gateways | \$25,000 | | |
| | Total | \$582,332 | | |
| | Columbia Avenue Improvements | | General Fund/ FDOT/ KAB/ HBG/ TEP | CRA/ City |
| | Phase I Streetscape Improvements NW Railroad Street to Duval Street | \$245,625 | | |
| | Fronie Street Improvements | | General Fund/ FDOT/ KAB/ HBG/ TEP | CRA/ City |
| | Phase I Streetscape Improvements N Marion AVE to Niblack TER | \$265,300 | | |
| | South Marion Avenue Improvements | | General Fund/ FDOT/ KAB/ HBG/ TEP | CRA/ City/ FDOT |
| | Phase I Streetscape Improvements W Duval Street to SW Baya DR | \$227,800 | | |
| | Gateways | \$25,000 | | |
| | Total | \$252,800 | | |
| | MLK Street Improvements | | General Fund/ FDOT/ KAB/ HBG/ TEP | CRA/ City |
| | Phase II Streetscape Improvements NE Aberdeen AVE to NE Gurley AVE | \$226,932 | | |
| | Gateways | \$25,000 | | |
| | Total | \$251,932 | | |
| | Railroad Street Improvements | | General Fund/ FDOT/ KAB/ HBG/ TEP | CRA/ City |
| | Streetscape Improvements NE Patterson AVE to NW Columbia AVE | \$371,495 | | |
| | Total | \$396,495 | | |
| | SUB TOTAL | \$1,994,484 | | |
| | | | | |
| | Shared Parking Garage Design Development, Construction Documentation and Permitting | TBD | TIF/ TEP/ County/ Hospital | CRA/ City/ County/ Hospital |
| | Lake City Trails Design Development, Construction Documentation and Permitting | TBD | FRDAP/ RTP/ UFG | City/ CRA |
| | SUB- TOTAL | \$1,994,484 | | |
| INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS- UTILITIES | | | | |
| | Utilities Upgrading (including burial of overhead lines) | TBD | CDBG/ USDA WWD | CRA/ City/ FDOT |
| INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS- PUBLIC FACILITIES AND OPEN SPACE | | | | |
| | Public Market/ Urban Agriculture Center Facility Design Development Phase | TBD | General Fund/ TIF/ CFG/ FCT/ CDBG/ SBIR/ CPIF/ REAP | CRA/ Non-Profits/ City/ County/ Chamber of Commerce |
| | Lake Desoto Waterfront Improvements and Pedestrian Plaza Design Development, Construction Documentation and Permitting | TBD | TIF/ CDBG/ FRDAP/ FCT | CRA/ City/ County/ Hospital/ Church |
| | Blanche Hotel/ Culinary Arts Institute Design Development Phase | TBD | TIF/ CPIF/ NPS/ NTPF/ NTCIC/ Private Foundations | City/ CRA/ County/ Chamber of Commerce/ Hospital/ Florida Gateway College/ UF |
| | Civic Center/ Performing Arts Center/ Multipurpose Hall- Design Development Phase | TBD | General Fund/ TIF/CFG/ FCT | City/ CRA/ County/ Chamber of Commerce/ Hospital/ Florida Gateway College |
| | Police Substation Construction (Old Jailhouse building) | TBD | General Fund/ TIF/CDBG/ Weed and Seed Grant | City/ CRA/ Sherriff's Department |
| | Neighborhood Parks | TBD | TIF/ CDBG/ FRDAP/ FCT | FRDAP/ CDBG/ UFG |

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FLP-Federal Lands to Parks
HBG- Highway Beautification Grant
KAB- Keep America Beautiful
LWCF- Land and Water Conservation Fund
NPS- National Parks Service Historic Preservation Grants
NTCIC- National Trust Community Investment Corporation (NTCIC)
NTPF- National Trust Preservation Fund
RBOG- Rural Business Opportunity Grant (USDA)
RBEG- Rural Business Enterprise Grant (USDA)
REAP- Renewable Energy Grant (USDA)
RED- Rural Economic Development Grant/ Loan (USDA)
RTP- Florida Recreational Trails Program
SBIR- Small Business Innovation Research Program (USDA)
SBA- Small Business Administration Tree Planting Grant
SHIP- State Housing Initiatives Partnership
TEP- Transportation Enhancement Program
TIF- Tax Increment Financing
TPL- Trust for Public Land
UFG- Urban Forestry Grant

| CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM (LONG- TERM: 10+ YEARS) | | | | |
|---|---|-------------|--|---|
| | | | | |
| | PROJECTS | Cost | Potential Funding Sources | Key Players |
| INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS- TRANSPORTATION | | | | |
| | Phase III Streetscape Improvements | | | |
| | SW Baya DR SW Hilton Ave to SE Isabella Way | \$268,050 | General Fund/ FDOT/ KAB/ HBG/ TIF | CRA/ City/ FDOT |
| | NW Main Boulevard Improvements W Duval Street to NW Railroad Street | \$519,700 | General Fund/ FDOT/ KAB/ HBG/ TIF | CRA/ City/ County/ FDOT |
| | NE Lake Dosoto CIR Improvements Around the Lake | \$407,640 | General Fund/ FDOT/ KAB/ HBG/ TIF | CRA/ City |
| | NE Patterson AVE Improvements E Duval Street to NE Boscom Norris DR | \$400,195 | General Fund/ FDOT/ KAB/ SBA TIF | CRA/ City |
| | NE Davis AVE Improvements Lake De Soto to NE Montana Street | \$263,435 | General Fund/ FDOT/ KAB/ HBG/ TIF | CRA/ City |
| | NE Madision Street Improvements Le De Soto to NE Alohua AVE | \$105,812 | General Fund/ FDOT/ KAB/ HBG/ TIF | CRA/ City |
| | SUB -TOTAL | \$1,964,832 | | |
| | Neighborhood Streetscape Improvements | TBD | General Fund/ TIF/ SBA | CRA/ City |
| | Public Transit/ Downtown Shuttle | TBD | TIF/ TEP | City/ County/ CRA/ Suwannee Valley Transit Authority |
| | Shared Parking Garage Construction Completion | TBD | TIF/ TEP/ County/ Hospital | CRA/ City/ County/ Hospital |
| | Downtown Trail Construction Completion | TBD | FRDAP/ RTP/ UFG/ TIF | City/ CRA |
| INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS- UTILITIES | | | | |
| | Ongoing Utility Upgrades | TBD | CDBG/ USDA WWD | City/ CRA/ County/ Suwannee Valley Water Management District |
| INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS- PUBLIC FACILITIES AND OPEN SPACE | | | | |
| | Civic Center/ Performance Arts Center/ Multipurpose Hall Construction Phase | TBD | CDBG/ FRDAP | City/ CRA |
| | Lake Desoto Pedestrian Plaza Construction | TBD | USDA CFG/ CDBG/ TIF | City/ CRA/ County/ Hospital |
| | Blanche Hotel/ Culinary Arts Institute Construction | TBD | TIF/ CPIF/ NPS/ NTPF/ NTCIC/ Private Foundations | City/ CRA/ County/ Chamber of Commerce/ Hospital/ Florida Gateway College/ UF |
| | Land Assemblage and Acquisition | TBD | General Fund/ TIF/ FRDAP/ FCT | City/ CRA |
| | | | | |

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NTPF- National Trust Preservation Fund
RBOG- Rural Business Opportunity Grant (USDA)
RBEG- Rural Business Enterprise Grant (USDA)
REAP- Renewable Energy Grant (USDA)
RED- Rural Economic Development Grant/ Loan (USDA)
RTP- Florida Recreational Trails Program
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Chapter 4

Context

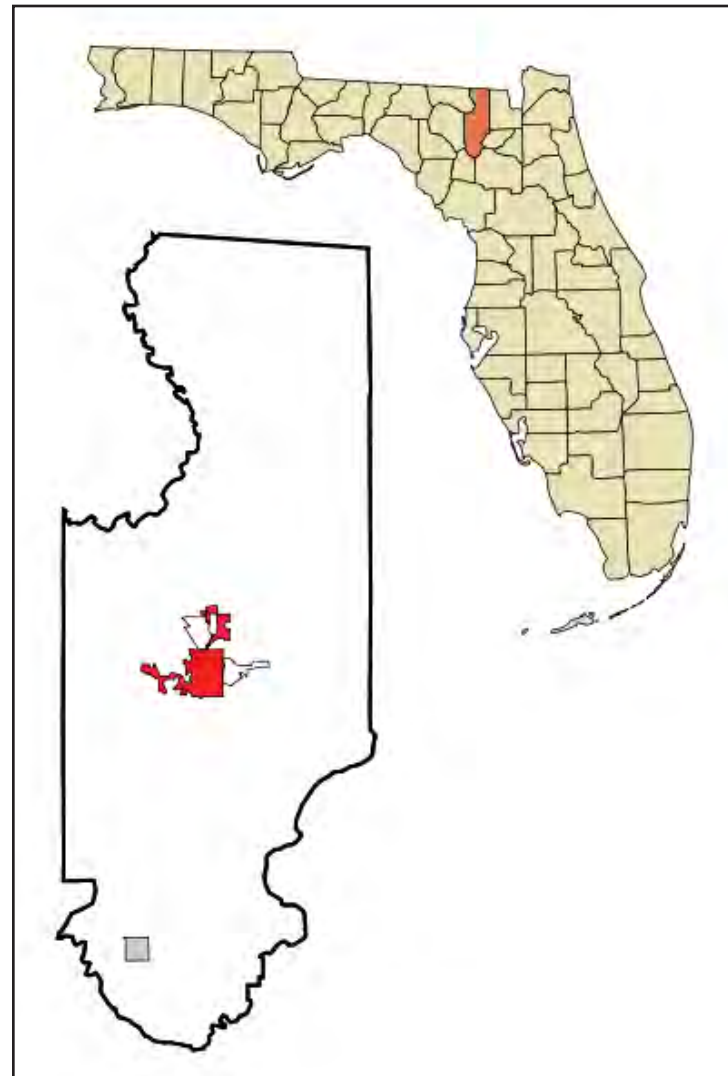
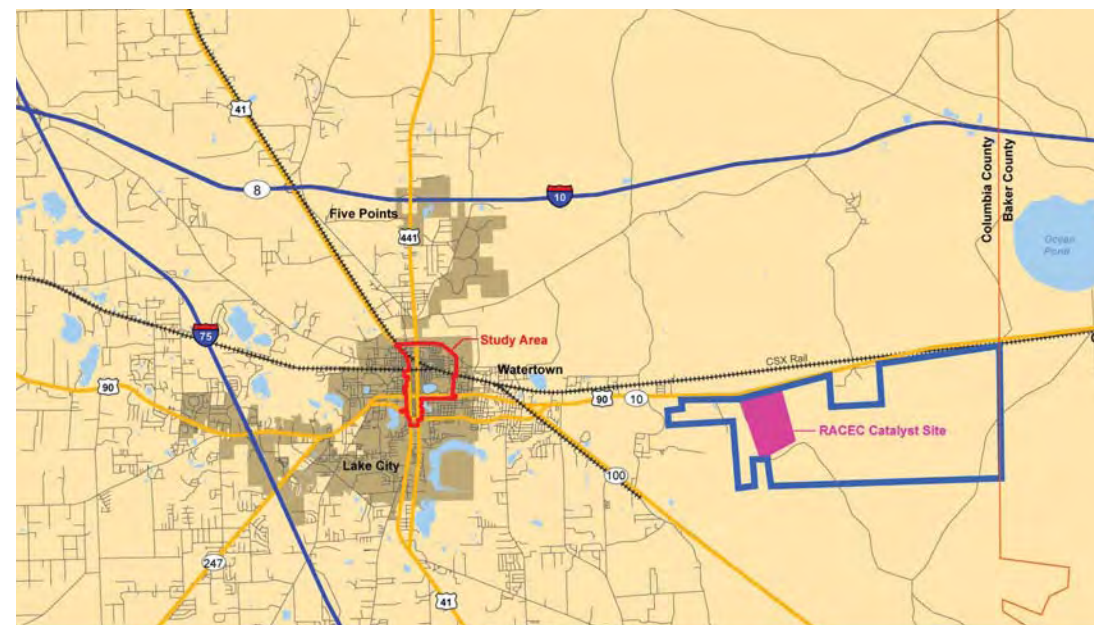


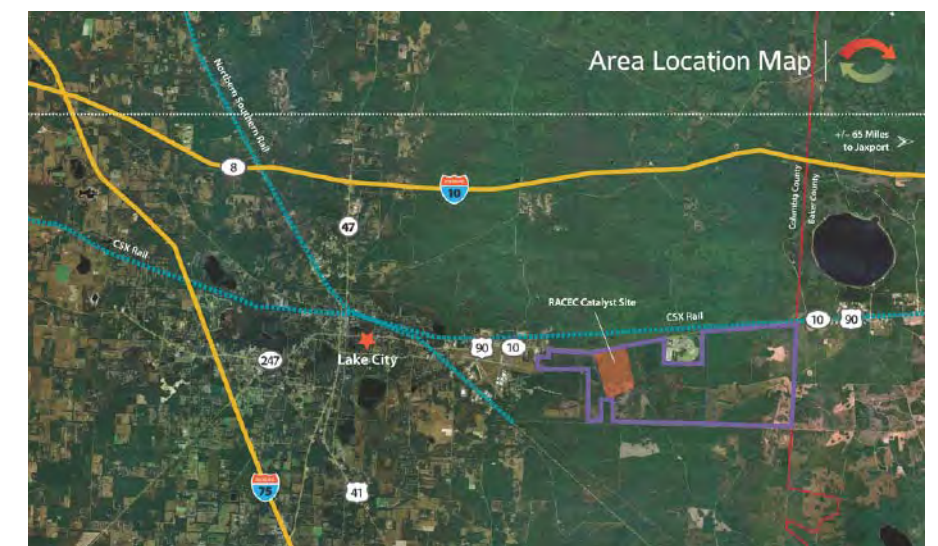
Fig. 2.1 (Above): Regional Context Map- Lake City's location in Florida and Columbia County
 Fig. 2.2 (Above Right): Lake City's location within the Southeast U.S. region
 Fig. 2.3 (Below): Catalyst Site Map, Source: Columbia County Industrial Development Authority
<http://www.ccflida.com/regional/catalyst/index.html>



REGIONAL/ GEOGRAPHIC CONTEXT

Located roughly in the middle of Columbia County near the State of Florida border, the City of Lake City sits between the intersection of Interstate highways I-10 and I-75. Due to its location near the intersection of Interstate highways I-10 and I-75, the City is often referred to as “The Gateway to Florida”. The City’s downtown core is connected to Interstate-75 by US 90 (Duval Street) and to Interstate 10 by US 41 (Main Boulevard) and US 441 (Marion Avenue). The City’s historic downtown core including the County administrative offices is located on Lake Desoto. The downtown is approximately 45 miles from Gainesville, the largest neighboring city, to the south in Alachua County. Fort White, located 25 miles south, is the other incorporated town in Columbia County. Columbia County is located in north-central Florida along the Georgia border.

Columbia County offers direct access to Florida's Strategic Intermodal System. This Intermodal System includes easy access to: Interstates 10 and 75 along with US Highways 90, 41, 441 and State Road 100. The County also has access to two Class 1 railroads owned by CSX and Norfolk Southern, and a local municipal airport with an 8,000 foot runway. Columbia County hosts one of four catalyst sites in the State of Florida which also shares its location with the site of the future Inland Port. These sites were selected by the regional associations representing the Rural Areas of Critical Economic Concern in the State of Florida. The catalyst site is established as a Rural Enterprise Zone, allowing the Columbia County Industrial Development Authority to encourage economic growth and investment by offering tax advantages and facilitate state incentives to businesses interested in locating within the boundaries of the Enterprise Zone. The Inland Port is also known as an Intermodal Logistics Center, or ILC. These ILCs are fast becoming the most efficient method of transporting increasing amounts of freight due to the growing reliance on imports and exports in the global economy. Southern Business & Development magazine has ranked Lake City/ Columbia County as number eight Best Small Market since 2000.



STUDY AREA

Downtown Lake City CRA district is situated less than 7 miles from the future Catalyst Site and the Lake City Municipal Airport, creating a unique opportunity for developing a vibrant urban core in the area, if planned properly. The City is approximately 9.4 square miles or 6,000 acres in area. The expanded Downtown CRA boundaries encompass a total land area of 789 acres including rights-of-way. In terms of developable area statistics, the area consists of 721 parcels covering a total land area of 232 acres. The area, shown in Fig. 2.4, is generally bounded by: CR 100A/ NE Basscom Norris Drive on the north, US 441/ Main Boulevard on the west, Duval Street/ Baya Drive on the south, and Patterson Avenue/ Hernando Avenue on the east.

This district encompasses the traditional downtown core of the city, adjacent historic neighborhoods to the south and new residential areas to the north, and the commercial and industrial corridors along the major regional roadways. Major roadways serving the CRA district include: US 41, locally known as Main Boulevard; US 441, locally known as Marion Avenue; US 90, locally known as Duval Street; CR 100A, locally known as NE Basscom Drive and. These are the principal routes connecting downtown Lake City to the rest of the County and to the adjoining areas via the Interstate network.

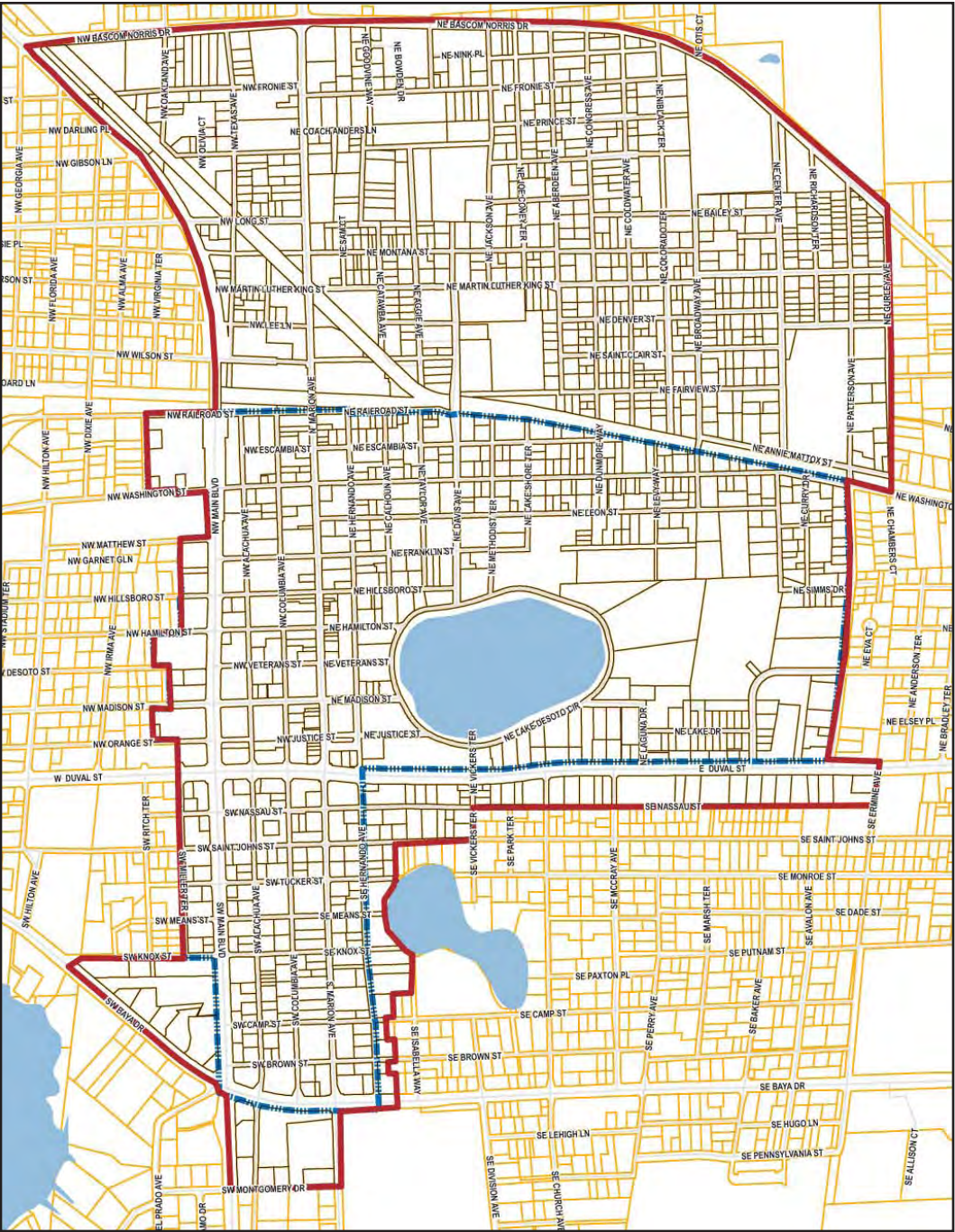


Fig. 2.4 Downtown Lake City CRA Map



Fig. 2.5 Downtown Lake City CRA Aerial Photo

HISTORIC CONTEXT

The site of Lake City was a Seminole village named Alpata Telophka, meaning “Alligator Village”. By 1830, a Euro-American town called Alligator was established, adjacent to the Seminole town. The City was incorporated and changed to its current name in 1859. The name was changed because the mayor’s wife, who had recently moved to the town, refused to hang her lace curtains in a town named Alligator. Local bodies of water include Lake DeSoto, Lake Isabella, Alligator Lake, Lake Hamburg, Gwen Lake, Lake Harper and Watertown Lake.

The American Civil War Battle of Olustee took place near Lake City in February 1864. It was the only major battle in Florida during the war. Union casualties were 1,861 men killed, wounded or missing; Confederate casualties were 946 killed, wounded or missing. Union forces retreated to Jacksonville and held position in Jacksonville and Fernandina and St. Augustine and various small outposts along the St. Johns River. Union troops never ventured westward in significant numbers again. The present site of the Hotel Blanche is host to an event that no doubt shows the commitment to chivalry and gentlemanly conduct by soldiers of the past. It seems that prior to the battle, Union forces rode into town to take up food and drink and some of the amenities that Hotel Blanche offered. Abiding by the rules of the house and in the interest of keeping the peace, Union soldiers pyramided their rifles together outside the hotel.

Local Confederate sympathizers rode to inform rebel troops of the activity: In the truest spirit of revelry, Confederate troops rode into the city, took the pyramided rifles and threw them into Lake DeSoto: It was not until five years ago during the dredging of the lake, that these rifles were recovered and the story verified.

By the early 20th century, Lake City had become an important railroad junction, served by the Seaboard Air Line, Atlantic Coast Line, Georgia Southern Line, and the Florida Railroad Line. One of the four schools that formed the University of Florida was originally located in Lake City before consolidation to Gainesville in 1905. By 1950 the population of Lake City was 7,467 people and forestry (turpentine, lumber, and pulpwood) had become a mainstay of the local economy.

SOURCE: Columbia County Historical Society



Fig. 2.6 Lake City Historical Photos, Source: Lake City Centennial Celebration Brochure and <http://www.lakecity-online.com/oldpostcards.html>

PLANNING CONTEXT

The City of Lake City established the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) in 1981 to create an area in which the Central Business District would evolve into a more dynamic office, service, financial, entertainment, residential and governmental area. The authority to establish the CRA is enabled by Sections 163, Part III Florida Statutes. The CRA was revised in 1989 and again in 1993.

The following section summarizes the series of Community Redevelopment Plans for the Central Business District of Lake City. The information contained in this section is critical in establishing the foundation for the recommendations contained in this Plan and to ensure that the Plan provides continuity in function, future land use, and programmatic strategies.

Lake City Downtown Action Plan

The Lake City Downtown Action Plan was a joint effort by University of Florida planning students and the Lake City-Columbia County Chamber of Commerce. The Plan is a set of recommended actions aimed to revitalize downtown. The study provides steps for public and private sectors to become involved in the revitalization effort.

Phase I of the recommended improvements begins with a housing project proposed near downtown for the Hernando Neighborhood (encompassed by Leon Street on the south, Railroad Street on the north, Davis Street on the east and Hernando Street on the west). Phase I also included making architectural design standards, improving pedestrian circulation and provide parking for North Marion Avenue between Hillsboro and Madison Streets.

Phase II included general recommendations selected to improve vehicular access to downtown parking and improve pedestrian access to shopping from proposed parking areas.

Lake City Community Redevelopment Plan

The Community Redevelopment Plan for the Lake City Community Redevelopment Area was prepared by the Community Redevelopment Advisory Board for the Community Redevelopment Agency. The plan provides a framework for coordinating and facilitating public and private development of the Central Business District.

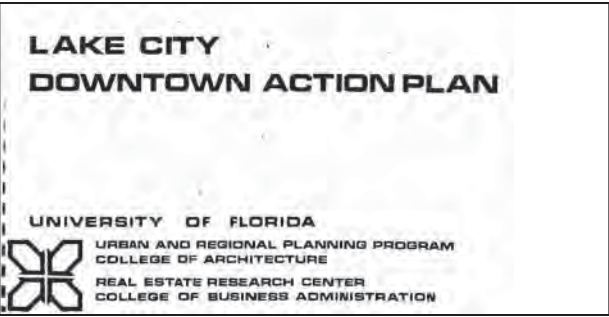
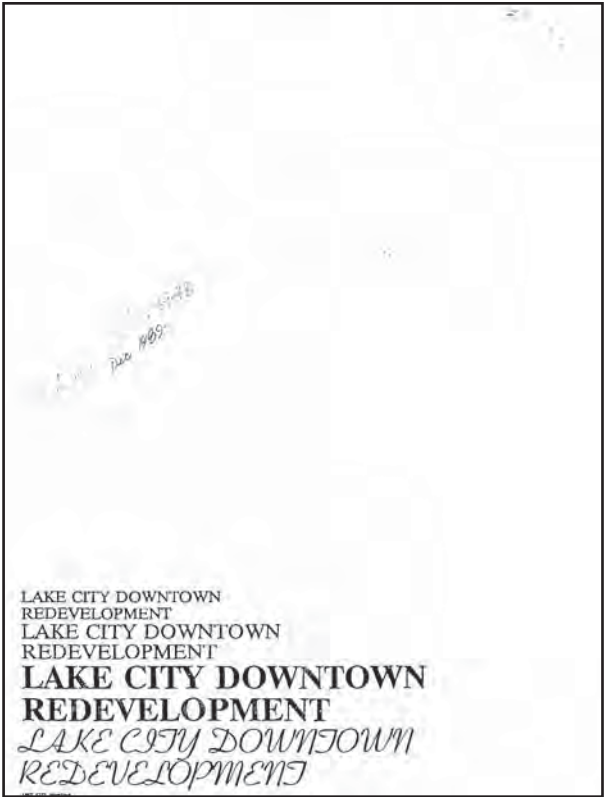
Below is a summary of proposed actions and redevelopment techniques to achieve plan objectives:

- Adoption and implementation of suitable plans for financing and the redevelopment of the area and each phase of the redevelopment process
- Acquisition of the necessary real property in the area
- Management of all real property acquired by the agency and their improvements
- Relocation of residents and business owners within the area in accordance with this plan
- The demolition and removal of existing improvements, as necessary, and the preparation of the Area for its intended uses in accordance with this plan
- The disposition by sale of lease of real property within the area for private or public uses in accordance with this plan, and with such conditions and covenants running with this plan and prevent the recurrence of blight
- The provision of reasonable preference to persons who are in business within the area to re-enter in business within the area in accordance with this plan
- The implementation of the development, or redevelopment of the area consistent with an in accordance with the terms of this plan by developers selected by the agency
- Community Redevelopment Plan for Lake City’s Historic Downtown (November 1992)

This Community Redevelopment Plan was prepared with assistance from the North Central Regional Planning Council. It sets forth specific projects and programs to continue improvements of the City’s original commercial district, which began in 1981 with the origination of the Lake City Community Redevelopment Agency and Community Redevelopment Advisory Committee.

The major objectives of the Community Redevelopment Plan are:

- To protect and enhance public and private investment previously made in the Community Redevelopment area
- To improve the business climate for property owners and merchants in the area
- To provide programs to facilitate public-private partnership actions in carrying out the plan, with emphasis on assuring that private enterprise will be able to participate to the fullest possible extent in implementing the total Community Redevelopment Project
- To enhance the tax base of the city
- To increase the employment base of the city
- To improve the functional capacity and competitive ability of the Community Redevelopment Area by improving the capacity of individual businesses, strengthening relationships among functions within the area and between the adjacent areas, more clearly defining the area’s location and character, and by making the entire area more accessible, convenient and attractive to its users and occupants.



ECONOMIC CONTEXT

The City of Lake City has many natural and physical assets. The City benefits from being the seat of county government, in addition to being home to many local and federal government offices and activities. As well, the area has an emerging health care, industrial and institutional economic base.

As discussed later in this report, downtown Lake City contains a wide variety of businesses, which cater to the local and to a lesser degree, regional population. Marion Avenue, the main thoroughfare downtown, contains sporadic retail stores and services that range from specialty services such as antiques and home furnishings to restaurants. Unfortunately, most of the commercial establishments found downtown close before 5 p.m.; thereby rendering the downtown isolated and devoid of activity during the evenings.

The Downtown Lake City Redevelopment Plan update has been initiated at an opportune time with local and regional grow into a city that has a balance of cultural, natural, economic and social amenities for today and well into the future. The challenge is to grow the downtown, given that the County and City have remained relatively slow in terms of population growth over the past few decades. Additionally, the weak economic trends across United States and Florida have prolonged the uncertainty and extra caution in the markets.

In July 2008, the Florida Economic Estimating Conference met to revise the economic forecast for the state. The latest forecast revealed an economy burdened in the short run by national and state fiscal shocks, but still showing underlying resilience in the longer term. Of note, the GDP for Florida had dropped sharply post 2005, exceeding the rate of decline experienced across the country. Key aspects of the economy were identified as follows:

- Personal income growth and employment growth had not been as robust as originally expected.
- Sectors hardest hit included: manufacturing, natural resources and mining, financial activities and information services. Overall, job losses totaled 74,700 jobs – 54% of which are directly linked to the construction downturn.
- The growing inventory of unsold houses together with the credit crisis dampened residential construction – focusing on the single family home.
- The slowing in the housing sector had a spillover effect in durable goods consumption (i.e., appliances, carpeting etc.). Further, consumers curtailed discretionary spending.
- Adding to the burden was oil prices hovering at \$140/barrel – resulting in increased prices for a range of goods and services.
- The fastest growing sectors in Florida focus on Education and Health Services – mainly in the area of Health Services. As well there is an expectation that the Professional and Business Services Sector will also grow .
- Southern Business & Development magazine has ranked Lake City- Columbia County number eight Best Small Market over the last ten years. In addition to this ranking, Lake City- Columbia County was also featured in the Rural Counties section of Florida Trend’s Business Florida Magazine for the excellent teamwork that is attributed with landing Service Zone in the area.

This section utilizes information from the ESRI Data base, to discuss the current demographics, housing and economic conditions in the Study Area. Developing strategies for the CRA requires a comprehensive vision that transpires from citywide trends and in turn develops the potential to shape its surroundings. The report utilizes U.S. Census 2000 and 2010 datasets to compare the demographic and economic characteristics for the City of Lake City. The trends and estimates presented are based on interpretation of available information to address area-wide issues and opportunities and should not be construed as definitive statistics to represent the study area.

Population Characteristics

The CRA’s total 2010 population estimate represented nearly 23.14% of the City’s total population of 11,124. The chart on the right illustrates the growth trends in the CRA and the City of Lake City between 2000 and 2010. The CRA’s population increased by approximately 2.7% between 2000 and 2010, from 2,507 to 2,574 residents, while the City’s population increased by 11.46% between the same time periods.

Households

Household characteristics are important indicators of housing demand, household characteristics, and market potential for any community. Similar to the population trends discussed earlier, the CRA witnessed a very slight increase in the number of households from 1,158 to 1,262 between 2000 and 2010. Between 2000 and 2010, the number of households in the planning area increased by 8.9%, is half of the City’s household growth rate of 14.5%. In 2000, the average household size in the planning area consisted of 2.57 persons, significantly higher than the City and County’s average of 2.47 persons. The householder characteristics also provide valuable information about the social composition for a community.

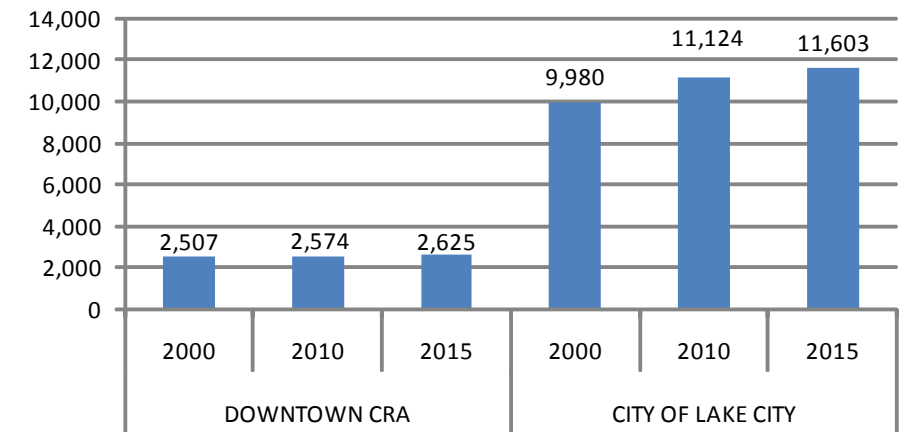
According to the Census 2010 data, the planning area had approximately 1,262 housing units accounting for approximately 24.3% of the City’s total housing units (5,193). The percentage of owner occupied housing units in the study area (45.0%) was lower than the home ownership rates in the City (50.5%).

Income

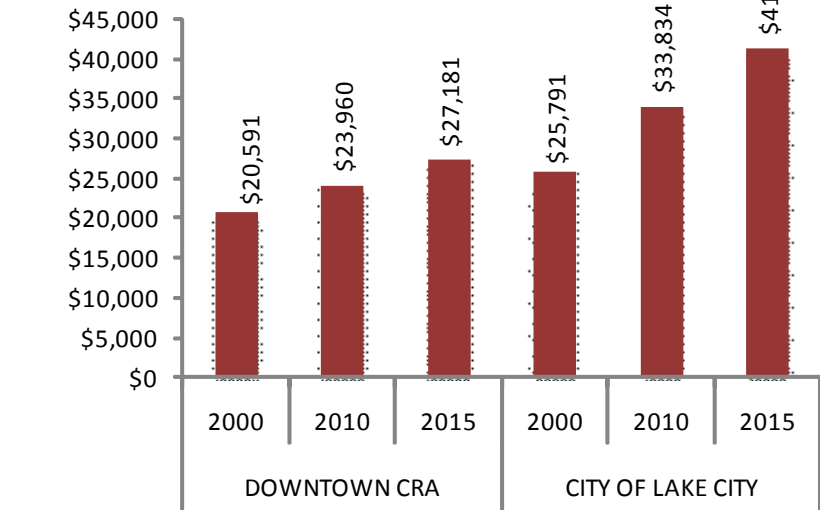
Per capita income is an indicator for the distribution of wealth in the community’s perceived ability to sustain new investment in the area. The per capita income in the CRA district increased from \$12,756 to \$14,200 between 2000 and 2010 representing an 11.32% increase. In comparison, the City’s per capita increased by nearly 27%, between 2000 and 2010, from \$14,697 to \$18,665. While average household incomes can provide a general indicator for analyzing the housing affordability and purchasing power within the area of concentrations, they present inaccurate results because of extreme values and therefore are susceptible to statistical variability. Median household income is better indicator of overall purchasing power and determining the consumer base for future development.

Household income analysis provides valuable insight into the purchasing power, total sales potential and the market conditions for the target market area. According to the 2010 ESRI estimates, the largest segment of the CRA’s population falls within the less than \$30,000 household income bracket, representing nearly 58% of the total households in the planning area. The average household income reported for the planning area in 2000 was \$30,950, nearly \$4,667 less than the City’s average household income of \$35,617. In comparison, Columbia County’s median household income was \$36,923 while the State of Florida had a median income of \$ \$44,755- nearly \$15,000 more than the CRA’s 2010 estimated household income. The 2010 estimated average household income for the CRA district was \$36,275. According to the 2010 ESRI estimates, there were 304 households out of a total of 977 households in the CRA had a household income less than \$15,000, representing nearly 31.1% of the total households.

POPULATION TRENDS



MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME



Chapter 5 Community Participation



COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Public involvement has been an important component of the planning process for the preparation of this master planning process. The Downtown Lake City Redevelopment Plan Update is the result of an extensive community visioning process conducted over a period of 12 months. The recommendations and projects identified in the Plan were a product of the public participation process, led by the Mayor, City’s Community Redevelopment Agency, and IBI Group. The purpose of this citizen-led planning effort was to initiate an open dialogue between stakeholders, staff, and the city leadership for sharing concerns and priorities related to downtown development and for building a consensus between the various players that have a role in the successful implementation of the redevelopment program.

From July 2010 to July 2011, IBI Group worked with a diverse group of participants including residents, business owners, elected officials, and government representatives to create a realistic plan reflective of the community and stakeholder interests and aspirations. More than two hundred residents and stakeholders in total came together to participate in the visioning process to explore new concepts and opportunities for the future growth of the downtown redevelopment area. The project was initiated with a series of focus group meetings with key stakeholders in the community- downtown merchants, area institutions, elected officials, City staff, and other key stakeholders. These meetings provided the consultant team with an understanding of the prevailing concerns and perceptions about the downtown’s future development. Meetings were scheduled to obtain input from the staff relating to the community’s assets, critical issues associated with the project, existing planning efforts and proposed projects that would help define a clear scope for the initiative.

The consultant team gave project update presentations to the participants, which included sharing information about the existing downtown conditions from a land use, urban design, and economic development perspective. This chapter of the Master Plan synthesizes the community’s feedback solicited during the visioning process, stakeholder meetings, and community workshops conducted by the consultant team under the leadership of the City and the CRA. The information gathered during these community and stakeholder driven meetings form the basis for the recommendations and action strategies presented in this Plan.

FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS

The City of Lake City CRA and IBI Group held the first series of its focus group meetings related to the 2010 Lake City Master Plan Update on June 23rd and June 24th. There were three separate meetings involving over 45 participants that shared information and ideas about Downtown Lake City’s existing assets, major concerns and possible future opportunities. The purpose of these meetings was also to obtain current information concerning projects, plans and proposals from key stakeholders including regional, county and local government representatives.

After a brief presentation by IBI Group describing the study area boundaries and the anticipated planning process, the participants were asked to discuss their observations about the redevelopment area’s prominent attributes and the challenges facing the successful revitalization of the downtown. The following page presents a summary of the feedback received during these meetings.



Fig. 3.1 Focus Group Meetings

Downtown Development Committee
June 23, 2010

Comments

- Consider expansion of CRA boundaries especially in the industrial area located north of the railroad fronting Marion Avenue
- Industrial area
 - Marion is the primary commercial corridor through Downtown. Key Issues for Marion Avenue are a result of the north-end properties that were created as industrial several years ago and have now deteriorated.
 - Salvage yard/Old Ice House – Relocation of the use/buffering has been discussed with the owner.
 - Industrial Areas (Near Railroad)
 - Aesthetics
 - Railroad track has an impact
 - Explore adaptive reuse potential for the Old Ice House property as:
 - Community Gardening/Local Entrepreneurs/ Vocational Training. Artists Guild Downtown
 - Theater Group (Productions)
 - Meeting space for downtown – (Ice Box)
 - House for the Farmers Market. Restructure the Farmers Market. Combine it with the crafts/arts. Sell back to local restaurants
 - Old Ice House –Theater/Museum/Meeting Space
 - Swamp Theater Group, Georgia (Case Study)
 - Winter Parks Farmers Market (Case Study)
- Lack of Meeting Space/ gathering space for conventions
 - Library has rooms – but after 5:00 pm it is closed.
 - Good opportunities that have been missed due to lack of space. Old School Board Auditorium has been used in the past for filling that void of a consolidated meeting space
 - Hospital had discussed at one time about finding meeting space
 - Explore multipurpose use for Brown Building. However, there might be some environment concerns related to the property
- Brownfield money could be tapped for environmental issues
- CRA monies could be used to offset the cost of remediation
- Corridor should be extended to SR 100 and South of Baya
- Is the Ice House structurally sound?
- Green Jobs – Training & Manufacturing of Solar Panels
- Certificate Programs in the Lake City Community College (now known as the Florida Gateway College) offers the Six Sigma Green-Belt Program to train students in high-tech jobs
- Downtown needs to be a destination for neighboring communities such as Live Oak and Butler City
- Underutilized Waterfront
 - The lake needs an ambience. What are the restrictions on using the lake right now?
 - Other ideas for the lakefront- Dock & Gazebo; weddings
 - Waterfront and Economic Diversification are two key concepts that will be pivotal in the redevelopment efforts for downtown Lake City
- Economic downtown has had an impact on the revenues
- Storm water/Infrastructure is an issue
- City just generated \$2 million revenue and is available for infrastructure improvements
- Stormwater has other resources for funding and should be tapped
- Lake Desoto – can it be a master stormwater facility?
- The City should have separate stormwater utility. Need a Stormwater Master Plan.
- Retention & Filtration of Storm water; Eliminate Flooding & Treatment.
- Suwannee River Water Management District – Severely restricts water use in Columbia County. Aquifers have run dry. Water table has dropped in Jacksonville.
- Training and Jobs missing– Columbia County Industrial Development Authority (IDA) is working with Jacksonville for inland port/ catalyst site.
- Are the colleges/campuses part of this initiative?
- There is a need to attract a mix of jobs. It’s a link in the chain.
- There are a lot of good opportunities for distribution related to the inland port. How do you locate these distribution warehouses and control the aesthetics of these uses?
- Urban Agriculture – what is the impact on water table?
- County doesn’t have the money for expansion- moving the county facilities out of downtown is out of the question and needs to be within the downtown
- Downtown property owners need to be incorporated in this process as well as renters to ensure maintenance of properties
- Issue of Safety in the area near the Liquor Store- one of the primary reasons why the new mixed-use building near the store is vacant
- Downtown Development Committee- should give some thought to restructuring as the CRA Advisory Committee
- City demolished the Old City Hall. County needs 25,000 sq. ft. for expansion. The option of selling the City Hall property to the County and moving the City Hall to a new location should be evaluated.
- Blanche – Razing the building should be out of the question. Come up with a plan of reuse of that building. Look at grants. Who’s the end-user? Where is the money coming from? How sustainable is it? What is the structural condition of The Blanche?
- Examine presence of railroads in downtowns as an economic development tool
- Old plan was not realistic. This plan needs to be realistic and implementable.
- Police Sub-Station in the neighborhood north of Franklin could be a welcoming presence
- Pull the college back into downtown: Training, New start-up Programs
- Neighborhoods – Setting is beautiful
- Housing for the Lake City Community College students
- Trolley – City should buy from Tallahassee

Business Leaders – June 23, 2010

Comments

- Parking Issues
 - Perception of parking shortage is more of a problem than actual shortage. As of the last count, there were 485 parking spaces in downtown.
 - Lack of directional signage to parking areas may be the real problem
- Tornado (2008); City brought in funds for rehabilitation and housing that needed to be torn down
- Shands Hospital
 - Circle drive needs to be pedestrian
 - Access – Laguna Drive – Extend to Washington Street
 - Franklin Street needs to be more attractive and less stop signs
 - Code Enforcement
 - Hospital recently approved a contract for HMA (Health Management Association) and ownership will be transferred to HMA. They have plans to expand in the near future.
 - Hospital will become Lakeshore Regional Medical Center
 - Currently in process of negotiating for Medical Office (July 1, 2010)
 - Pavement needs to be resurfaced. Increase Lighting. (Waterfront)
 - July 1st – will be on the tax roles
- Olustee Festival and other events should be planned to activate the waterfront
- City Council/Hospital Authority building – a joint parking garage/explore the idea of a trolley system
- Infrastructure Capacity Issues:
 - Water, Sewer & Storm water
 - Size of the Infrastructure is very old
 - Outfalls into the lake
 - Infrastructure – City/County – Need to work together. Historical meeting where all govt. entities come together.
- Lake City Community College – potential for nursing program. Do not have direct funding for facility. Open to partnerships.
 - Interested in location north of railroad
 - Baccalurate in Early Child Education
 - Partnership with St. Leo
 - There are a lot of entities within the CRA looking for public transit system. Opportunities to partner with organizations to look for transit.
 - Richardson Center with St. Leo – Expand to include that area
 - Ocala Case Study – Community College
- Chamber of Commerce
 - Inland port
 - Wastewater issue, wastewater & energy program
 - Green council can start a chapter
 - How could we connect the college’s program to the city?
- Arts could be a driver economic engine
- Washington Street – What is the ownership? Opened Up the thoroughfare. Work with federal housing to improve the condition?
- Some standards need to be set and code enforcement
- Rents have been reducing constantly.
- Housing Assistance – Affordable Housing – Assistance Programs, Rehab

Programs should be a component of the CRA Plan.

- Image needs to be changed. Perception needs to be changed.
- Economic Opportunity with Inland Port
 - Catalyst site designated for industrial development
 - Owned by Plumb Creek Company
 - Land around the catalyst site is ripe for development
 - Taking leverage of the expansion of the Jacksonville port
 - Port of Jacksonville is constrained from the point of traffic
 - JPA & FPL – Trade & Tourism
 - Railroad spur of CSX will be brought along Hwy 90 and dead end in the catalyst site
 - 28 sites were selected in Suwannee & Columbia
 - Enterprise Florida (Port John’s)
 - One Voice/Florida Chamber of Commerce
 - College has a logistics program (20 minutes from the site)
 - Multiplier effect will be the potential
 - Jobs component to that – Economic Development
- Lake Jeffrey area is home to upscale housing
- Expansion of boundaries north along Marion Avenue to pick-up Richardson site.
- Primary access to downtown- Hwy 90 (Duval) and Hwy 441 (Main)
- Traffic Flow -Hernando (One-way streets)
- Blanche Hotel -Water & Sewer needs to be provided
- Updating the condition of the water & sewer
- Check the White property
- Builders cannot build because they can’t make profit.
- Annie Mattox Park
- Crime Issues near the liquor store and new development.
- Safety and Crime Issues need to be addressed
- Construction/Housing will be the economic engine
- Lot Prices/Development Costs/Land Cheap enough
- A lot of houses don’t qualify for the conventional produced loans
- First time homeowners’ buyer programs. If they don’t qualify then the bank has to create a program; home buyer assistance; A lot of these houses can’t be repaired.
- CDBG grant was to tear down the dilapidated housing.
- Housing Authority spent over \$2.5 million demolishing houses
- Improving Access
- City could come up with a cost to improve infrastructure / access.
- Case Study: Polencia/St. Augustine-Mixed-Use.

Government Representatives

June 24, 2010, 10:00 am- 12:00 pm

Comments

What is the time frame for the decisions & the prioritizing?

- Find out more about the CRA Sunset & TIF revenue projections through the hospital privatization.
- Crime Issues
 - Statistics on arrests made are available
 - “Broken Window” theory – Dilapidated homes/vacancies
 - Enforcement Parking
 - Case Study: South Carolina, (Greensfield)
 - Neighborhood Pride
 - Presence of a Police Sub-station – staffing issues
 - Historic preservation grants/CRA for Monies for staffing
 - Recreation projects/EDA Grants/Training
- Transportation – Public Transit
- Shuttle Service- In the past there was a study about the service. Trolley as a pilot project to connect employment centers
- Active recruitment of business – What kind of programs should be initiated?
- Weed & Seed meetings – CRA should have a presence
- Issue of the hospital environment as it relates to the availability of utilities:
 - The City has constructed a new water plant
 - Storm water Master Plan – Storm water problems exist that have issues in the CRA
 - \$2 million for sales tax and a share will be focused on the CRA infrastructure improvements
 - The City does not have a deficient utilities system
- Hospital is the economic engine. Housing stock is an issue to support their growth.
- Trend changing for suburban to live/work
- Absentee landlords in downtown businesses & residential is an issue
- Institute Property and Grant Programs
 - \$50k for façade grant program
 - Live/work in the CRA
 - What are the actual policies that determine the threshold?
 - How do you measure that level of a grant or new improvements in terms of investment?
- Need to create a collective pool of revenues that can be applied to the CRA district
- Envision the County occupying the property/city hall property
- Development Permitting process is not a problem

Workshop 1: Community Information Meeting July 27, 2010- 6:00pm to 8:00 pm

Fig. 3.2 Downtown Lake City CRA Master Plan Update Public Workshop 1 Images



Workshop 2: Hands-on Planning Workshop and Concept Plan Validation
May 23, 2011- 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm

The second series of workshops for the Master Plan was organized as a hands-on planning workshop led by the consultant team. The process was designed as a highly interactive process that allowed the workshop facilitators to engage the audience in meaningful participation and obtain feedback on the draft Concept Plan presented during this meeting.



Fig. 3.3 Fig. 3.2 Downtown Lake City CRA Master Plan Update Public Workshop 2 Images

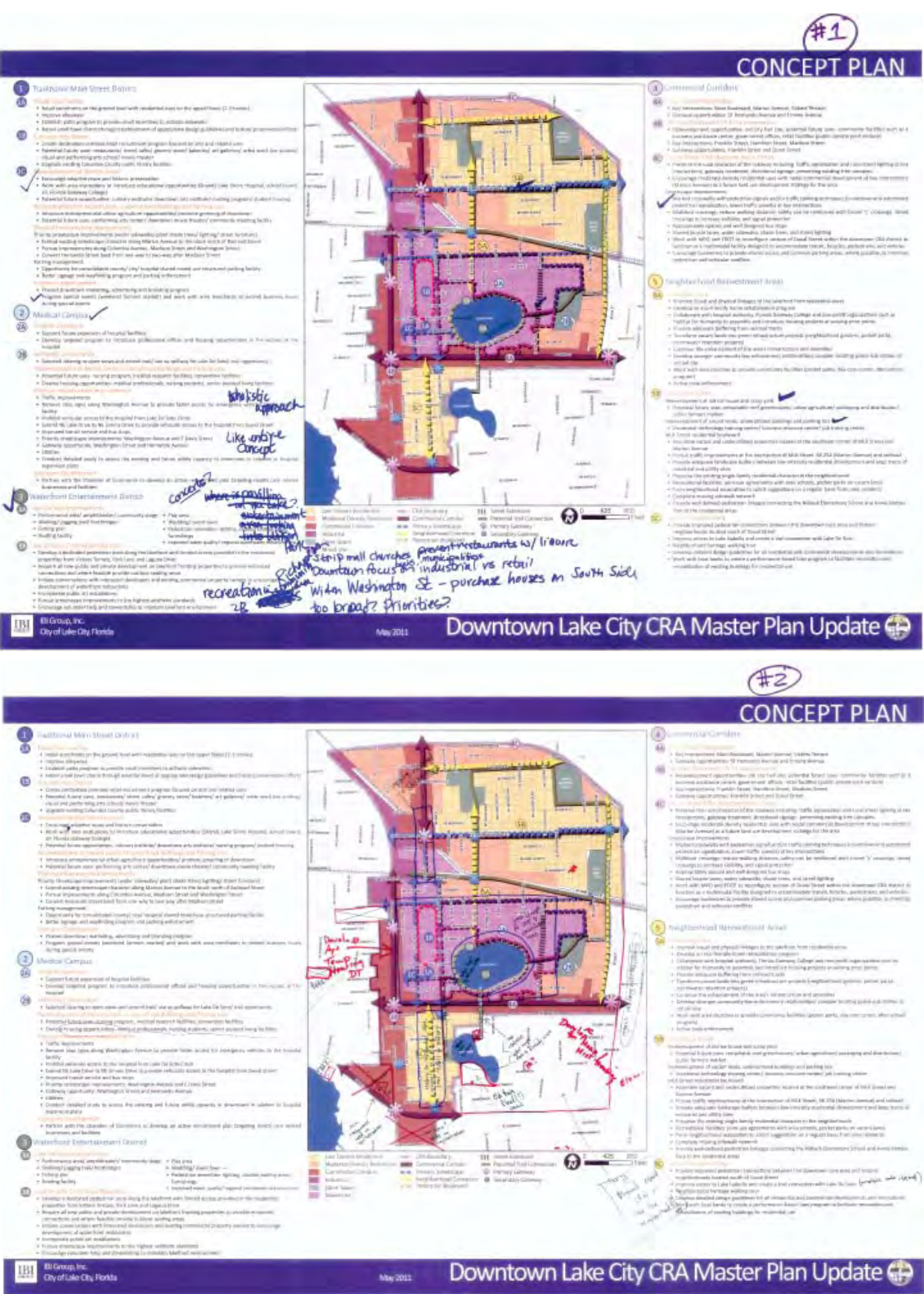


Fig. 3.4



Fig. 3.5

Chapter 6 Plan Framework



OVERRIDING THEMATIC CONCEPTS

The Redevelopment Plan presents an integrated approach for growth and change in Downtown Lake City through a discussion of overriding themes that will result in a more efficient model for future development. These themes illustrate how future land use designations, circulation patterns, environmental preservation efforts, economic development strategies, and urban design directives can be translated into a workable redevelopment program that accents the area’s redevelopment potential while respecting its natural and cultural amenities. The conceptual themes are presented in this chapter through a brief narrative description of the issue, followed by an objective statement that defines the intent of the Plan, and finally a series of action strategies that interweave the thematic concepts to address the related issues and concerns.

Future Land Use and Development

Achieving the community’s desired vision for downtown as a vibrant, mixed-use compact urban core will require continued investment and redevelopment activity that ultimately results in the creation of a vibrant destination for residents and visitors. Historic development trends in Columbia County have been predominantly low-intensity in nature with a proliferation of suburban-style single-family development have contributed significantly in creating a sparsely populated downtown core characterized by a 9 to 5 commuter town that essentially closes down after daytime business hours. Recent trends in downtown redevelopment have seen renewed interest in people deciding to live closer to their work place or in proximity to the diverse activities offered in a vibrant downtown. The Plan calls for retaining the viable commercial uses in the form of existing businesses in the downtown, as well as introducing a complementary mix of uses that focuses on addressing residential development and redevelopment in downtown Lake City.

Downtown Lake City’s present urban fabric is characterized by severely deteriorating building stock and infrastructure conditions. The deterioration is likely a function of a number of factors, including but not limited to:

- Overwhelming number of vacant lands and dilapidated housing structures;
- Numerous underutilized public and private owned surface parking lots;
- Over-abundance of land and buildings under institutional ownership;
- Lack of residential development to support a healthy mix of commercial uses;
- Unaesthetic and lack of pedestrian friendly environment on the lakefront;
- Presence of inactive industrial uses and large vacant commercial buildings along primary access corridors- Main Boulevard and North Marion Avenue;
- Negative perception issues related to the presence of vagrants in the downtown

As older downtown cores, such as Lake City face the problem of a stagnant or receding tax base, municipal government and agencies are looking for innovative ways to encourage investment in the downtown- as a means to attract new construction, residents, and visitors. A key element of attracting new development in the downtown is improving the investment image of the community through the implementation of key public realm improvement project including infrastructure upgrades, streetscape beautification, and enhancements to the open space network. Most of the new residential uses in downtown will likely be in the form of higher density housing, such as artist live/ work lofts, town homes, condominiums, and apartments. The presence of a significant number of City, County and hospital employees who work in and/or around downtown represents an untapped residential population that would probably consider living in the downtown if there were quality housing opportunities available.

The redevelopment program aims to enable an expanded mix of retail, entertainment and residential uses in the downtown redevelopment area. New restaurants, retail and other opportunities for entertainment would extend downtown hours of business into the evening and create a more attractive environment for full time residents. Based on interviews with local retailers and feedback received from community members in planning workshops, there is a growing niche market for the arts and cultural sectors in Downtown Lake City that needs to be capitalized upon by creating a critical mass of uses that could be sustained in the long-term.

The plan acknowledges that the civic and institutional uses are an important part of the downtown, and should be encouraged to remain in downtown. Retaining key civic facilities such as the library from the downtown district will have a significant impact on the quality of life for current and future residents. While the County and Shands Lake Shore Hospital own a significant amount of underdeveloped properties in the downtown, they are also large employers with daytime population who provide the needed activity needed to support the retail and restaurant establishments. Establishing a strong framework of employment centers, public facilities and amenities within a quarter-mile walking distance is pivotal in creating a compact mixed-use downtown core.

During the community workshops conducted as part of the master planning process, the community repeatedly expressed the need for redevelopment of the lakefront as being critical in creating a vibrant downtown. It should serve as a destination that is physically and visually accessible to the surrounding areas and provides an inviting open space for the residents, employers and visitors. Some of the redevelopment concepts that the workshop participants shared for the waterfront included the need for no-vehicle zone along Lake Desoto Circle, new lakefront restaurants, an active urban plaza, and more increased entertainment events.

As the redevelopment program evolves and the real estate market strengthens, the Agency will be in a position to work with property owners and investors to assemble, master plan and redevelop key sites. The sustainable growth of downtown Lake City relies on the manner in which the residential areas, activity centers, transportation networks, buildings, and natural resources are coordinated and designed. These changes are expected to play a pivotal role in attracting a diverse residential base that will need to be complemented by essential public amenities- neighborhood parks, expanded school facilities, cultural facilities, neighborhood retail and upgraded infrastructure facilities.

Objective:

Introduce a more complimentary mix of land uses in the downtown to stimulate activities and provide that will mutually support full time residential occupancy and extend business hours into the evening.

Action Strategies:

- Promote downtown living by attracting a diversity of housing types for a range of age groups and income levels, and by pursuing key infrastructure improvements at appropriate locations in order to accommodate desired future development.
- Modify the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map to incorporate changes to future land use densities and allowing mixed-uses as envisioned in the proposed Lake City CRA Master Plan. (Fig. 4.1)
- Allow increased densities throughout the downtown redevelopment area:
- Encourage moderate-density (2-4 stories) vertical mixed-use development in the Historic Downtown and the Waterfront Entertainment districts.
- Identify and market key redevelopment opportunity areas where private interests can develop infill housing in the form of town homes on the underutilized surface parking lots, vacant and underdeveloped properties.
- Support the development of retail uses that accommodate extended hours of operation- cafes, restaurants, and book stores- to stimulate activity into non-work hours.
- Develop strategies to encourage the development of affordable housing, specifically within the Arts and Cultural District, with an emphasis in developing ways in which affordable housing can be integrated within market rate housing development projects.
- Continue efforts to encourage infill development of vacant residential and commercial properties in the redevelopment area.
- Provide performance based incentives such as tax exemptions, reduced parking requirements, to encourage upper floor residential development along Marion Avenue.
- Utilize the design review process and strengthen code enforcement to ensure adherence and attention to design guidelines and ordinance requirements.
- Contact non-profit developers that are interested in providing specific products such as affordable artist live-work lofts to support downtown’s overall goal to provide a diversity of housing products.
- Develop and adopt an incentive package to encourage new development in downtown. Incentives could include density bonuses, obtaining an area-wide stormwater permit, or expedited development approval process for properties in the redevelopment area.

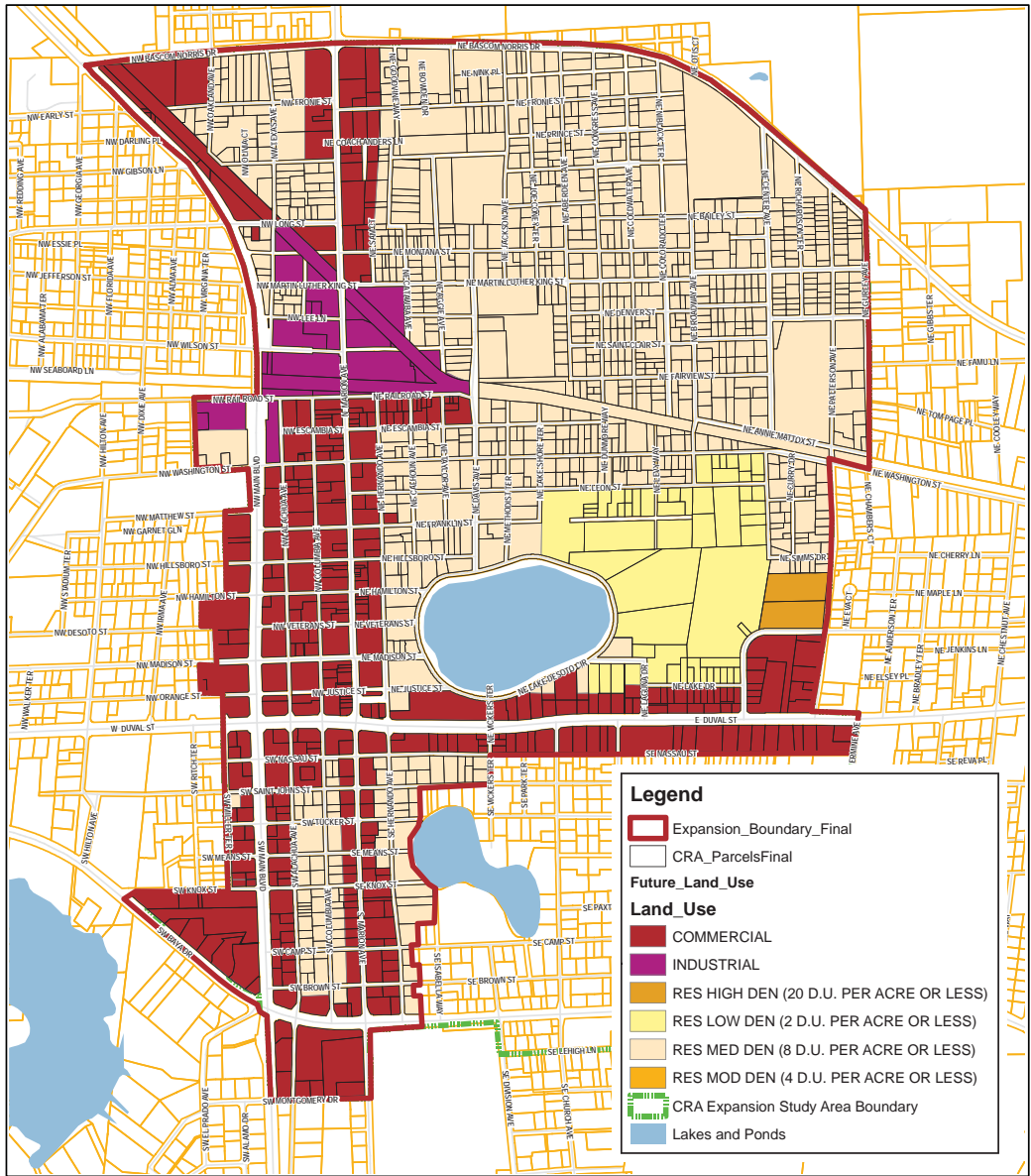


Fig. 4.1 Downtown CRA Future Land Use Designations per the City of Lake City Comprehensive Plan

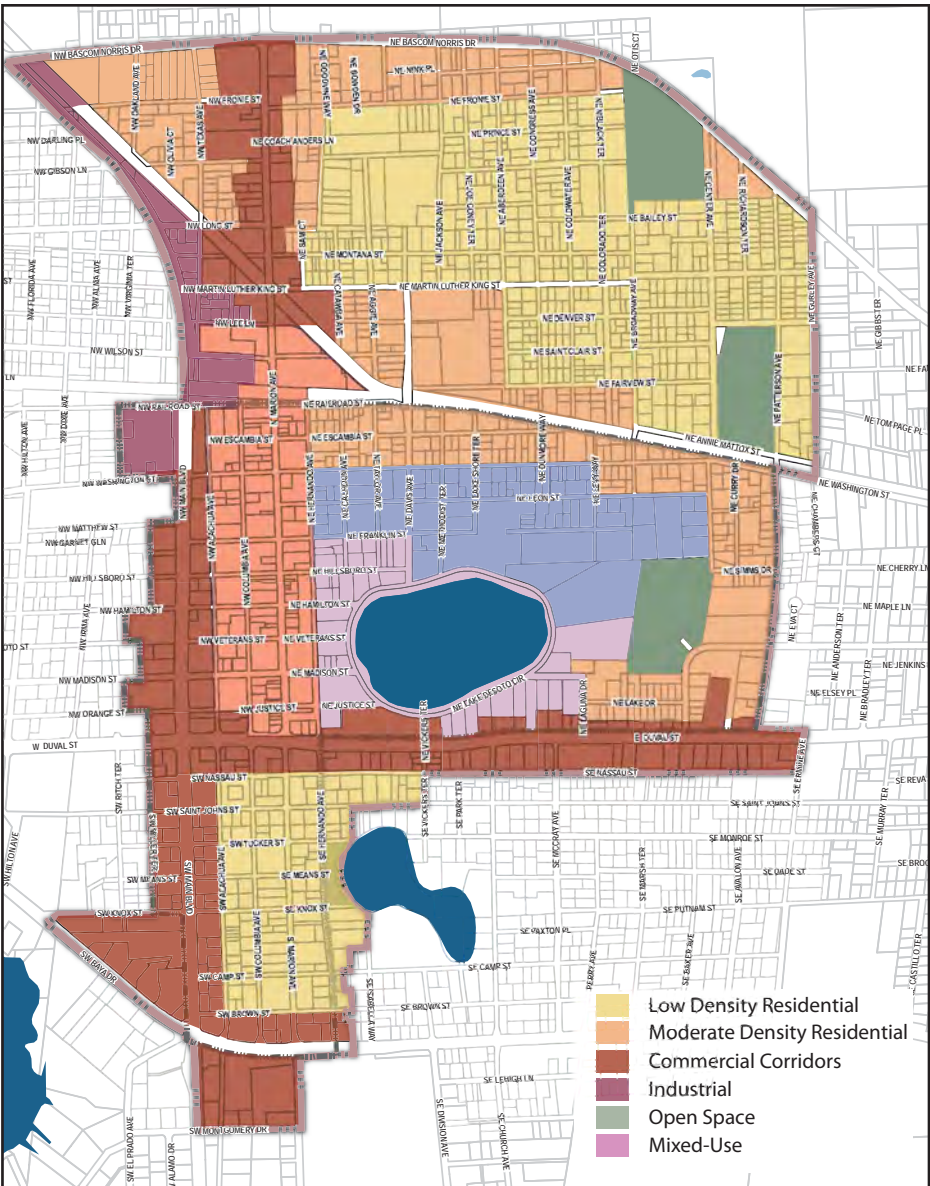


Fig. 4.2 Downtown CRA Proposed Future Land Use Designations per the City of Lake City Comprehensive Plan

ZONING AND DEVELOPMENT CHARACTERISTICS

The City of Lake City Municipal Code currently provides regulations for guiding new development and implementing the land use planning policies contained in the City's Comprehensive Plan. The analysis of the regulatory framework was necessary to identify existing gaps and consider what modifications need to be made to ensure that the recommendations contained in this Plan are implemented to encourage the desired private development and public investment in the Redevelopment Area. There are currently 10 zoning districts within the Downtown Community Redevelopment Area, ranging from C-CBD-Commercial Central Business District to RO- Residential Office to Industrial and Commercial Intensive. Although, there were no issues raised related to the zoning districts, several communities around the country are embracing mixed-use zoning districts that encourage and/allow for mixed-use by right.

Over a period of time, the Lake City Land Development Code has been amended regularly to provide opportunities for new development in the City. Discussions with City staff, community members, developers, businesses and others stakeholders during the focus group meetings conducted as part of this planning process revealed that the existing development review process in the downtown are not a major issue primarily due to a lack of development pressures and investment from the private sector. However, for the type of development and vibrant environment envisioned for the downtown, an update of the Land Development Regulations will be necessary in order to attract quality development.

One issue identified by some of the workshop participants was the presence of an ordinance prohibiting sale of alcohol within 300 feet of a church. Several communities in Florida and around the country have addressed this challenge in their downtown revitalization efforts. Some cities have passed ordinances that allow for alcohol sales during certain downtown events subject to City Council approval. Others have created exemptions for establishments within the CRA district with time restrictions. Ultimately, the community members, churches, and other stakeholders have to collectively decide whether to allow for the sales as a community to attract entertainment-oriented uses in the downtown. The City should initiate a formal process to solicit feedback from the community members and downtown businesses to address the issue and make recommendations to the City Council. San Diego, CA hosts few public events featuring alcohol sales. The events that do allow alcohol designate a special section for of-age participants to purchase alcohol. Asheville, NC hosts one of the southeast's largest free street festivals featuring cultural and fun events. While the Bele Chere festival permits beer sales (to persons with the proper ID wristband), the festival features a designated alcohol-free zone from County Courthouse to Woodfin Street.

Based on our preliminary analysis, the standards in the existing land development regulations for the downtown redevelopment area are not well-suited for the mixed-use development patterns supported by the redevelopment plan, especially in the Central Business District or the downtown core area (Historic Downtown and Waterfront Entertainment districts). It is proposed in this Plan that the City consider establishing a new Downtown Mixed-Use Urban Core District encompassing the Historic Downtown and the Waterfront Entertainment Districts shown in the Concept Plan graphic.

Action Strategies:

- Ensure that the vision defined for downtown is incorporated into Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Regulations updates- The Plan envisions downtown as a vibrant and compact mixed-use district that supports higher than current densities, while at the same time promoting varied heights and building setbacks distributed throughout the district. The City needs to initiate an update of its Zoning Regulations. As part of the update process, the Agency should ensure that provisions are incorporated for a mix of uses that allow for diverse activities, site planning, building placement, and varied massing.
- Develop a comprehensive set of Urban Design and Architectural Standards- The Agency should consider preparing and adopting detailed Urban Design and Architectural Standards through an ordinance as part of its revised Land Development Regulations to further ensure consistent development and redevelopment in downtown.
- Evaluate feasibility of enhancing the current package of zoning incentives in conjunction with the updated code to provide specific community benefits in exchange for development bonuses. Community benefits often include public amenities such as public open space, easements, streetscape improvements, and stormwater management in exchange for additional height and densities.
- Ensure that residents and stakeholders are involved in the discussions related to the sales of alcohol within the downtown area in an effort to attract more restaurants and entertainment venues.

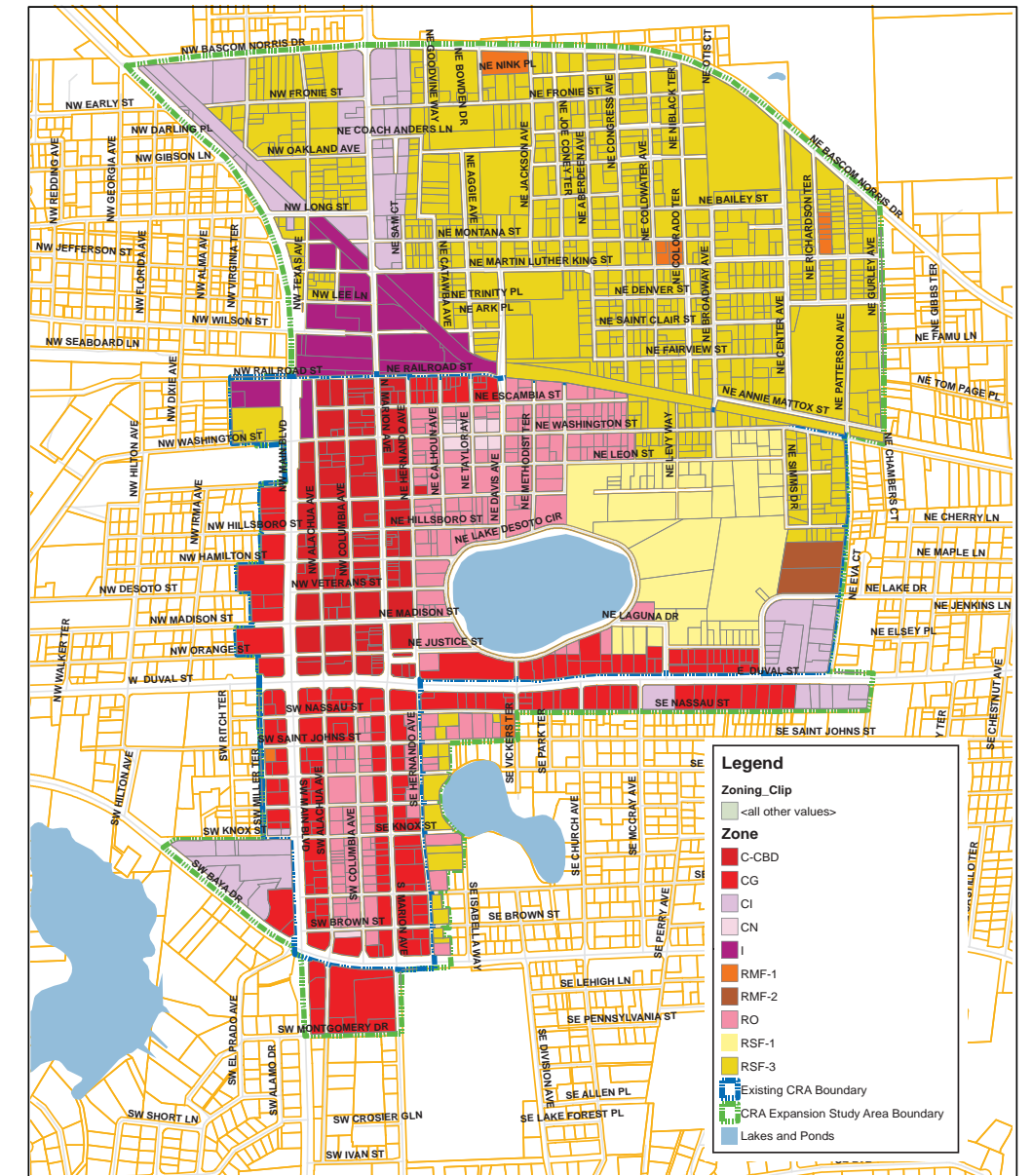


Fig. 4.3 Downtown CRA Zoning Districts

URBAN DESIGN

Downtown Lake City has several desirable urban design elements in place that are suggestive of its historic settlement pattern- the grid street configuration, significant architectural buildings, and appropriate setback of retail buildings on Marion Avenue. However, the majority of these characteristics are concentrated along Marion Avenue that supports most of the retail, entertainment, and commercial uses in the downtown. In contrast to the attractive urban design elements present along Marion Avenue, the remainder of downtown’s urban form is relatively weak characterized by the presence of undesirable elements such as deteriorating buildings, abundant impervious surfaces, lack of adequate housing opportunities, low-density development patterns, vacant lands, and a highly underutilized waterfront. New development at higher densities, diverse mix of uses, and infill development will be critical in accommodating more housing and employment within the existing fabric of the downtown. This section provides a brief analysis of the urban structure of the downtown, focusing on issues of public realm- the pedestrian network and the public spaces- and its relationship with the private realm- the built environment.

It is important that the Agency creates a set of detailed urban design guidelines for evaluating development and redevelopment proposals, and to act as a guide for making decisions about public and private improvements within the boundaries of the downtown redevelopment area. It is anticipated that through the use of this Plan’s recommendations, both private and public projects will endeavor to preserve and enhance the form, scale, and visual character of the downtown. The urban design plan provides a framework for redevelopment to gradually take place based on the community’s expressed desire to attract high- quality development that incorporates a diverse mix of residential, cultural and commercial uses all under the premise of achieving continued economic prosperity.

While the Plan’s recommendations are intended to support the overall development character envisioned for downtown, they are also anticipated to offer developers a flexible tool for quality and innovation. The design recommendations are based on the following eight principles that will not only improve the downtown Lake City’s existing urban structure, but also strengthen the economic development climate by accommodating growth in a predictable and balanced fashion.

The intent of the recommended urban design strategies is to cause future development to occur in a manner that establishes a pedestrian setting with well-defined connections between the downtown, the waterfront area and surrounding residential neighborhoods. The proposed recommendations should not be construed as prescriptive standards and it is through the City’s land development regulations that appropriate standards be established. The guidelines may evolve into different forms. They may act as the foundation for initiating discussions with potential developers, or be included in the Land Development Regulations through the development of form-based codes.

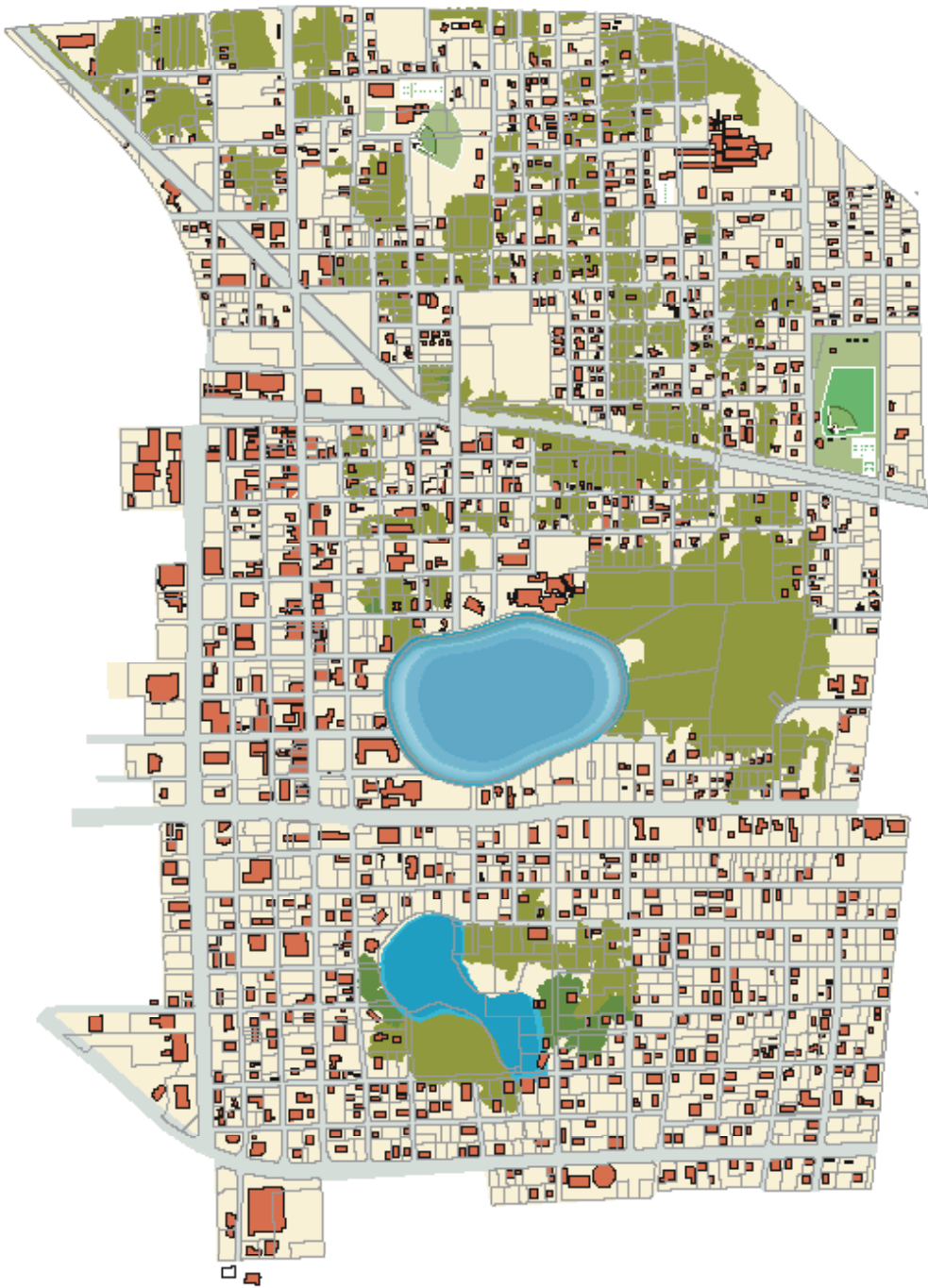


Fig. 4.4(a) Existing Downtown Urban Fabric



Fig. 4.4(b) Proposed Urban Design Plan

Several small and medium-sized older communities across the nation have witnessed disinvestment in their downtown cores, due to competition from easily accessible suburban communities and greenfield development based on New Urbanism principles. Several communities have adopted new urbanism principles in the country and Florida (e.g. Seaside, Celebration, Baldwin Park in Orlando, Kendall downtown) that build upon reviving the walkable and mixed-use character of historic urban cores in new developments. While this has resulted in increased pressure on historic downtown areas, it has also encouraged municipal governments to improve the quality of deteriorating public realm conditions as a means to attract new development in the historic city centers that have the essential components of walkability and compactness still intact in its urban form. The Redevelopment Plan seeks to build on the rich heritage of Lake City’s urban core by identifying a wide array of initiatives that will improve the pedestrian environment in the downtown, as well as position the downtown to provide a higher quality of life for residents and better economic returns for developers.

Factors that influence a pedestrian-friendly environment in a walkable downtown include: streetscape design, comfort level, supportive adjacent land uses, and the open space network that supports pedestrian activity. Sidewalk condition is the dominant factor affecting the comfort level in any pedestrian friendly environment. The sidewalk must be well maintained, have adequate width, and be connected. Considerations such as posted speed, buffer from the travel lane, presence of shade, safety, sidewalk width, sidewalk condition, pedestrian scaled buildings, presence of arcades or awnings, are some of the factors used to measure the level of comfort.

Marion Avenue is the only street that presents an environment generally supportive of pedestrian travel with essential pedestrian amenities in place such as wide brick- paved sidewalks, landscaping, traffic calming measures, directional signage, building awnings, intersection curb radii, and street furnishings. Field investigations conducted by IBI Group during this master planning process revealed that downtown Lake City has an overall below-average level of pedestrian comfort. Constraints to the right-of-way conditions limit the opportunity to construct essential pedestrian amenities and wider sidewalks to facilitate efficient movement of people between destinations. In order to address this issue, the Plan recommends that the Agency should ensure that pedestrian amenities and wider sidewalks are installed as part of new development along primary streets. Where development exists, the Agency should contact property owners to obtain an easement for public access, if feasible. Surface parking lots, devoid of any landscaping, have the potential of being redeveloped as additional open spaces, if the aesthetic character of these spaces is improved through adequate landscaping such as lighting and tree planting.

Future private development patterns in the downtown are envisioned to evolve into a more urban character with buildings placed closer to the sidewalks, with additional setbacks if the property is located on a street corner. In addition, the Plan recommends continuous frontage along the primary streets with rear parking and mid-block pedestrian access points, where possible. In general, building intensity will be in the low to middle range, but significantly higher than present development patterns.

Objectives:

- Create a compact mixed-use urban form that encourages active street life;
- Provide improved visual and physical connectivity between the varied land uses;
- Develop a distinctive and attractive visual character that is unique to
- Establish an attractive, safe and efficient traffic circulation system that encourages pedestrian mobility in a compact urban form;
- Preservation, protection and conservation of natural resources;
- Provide direction for developing more detailed design standards and capital projects while allowing design flexibility in the development and redevelopment of the properties;
- Maximize the advantage of downtown’s waterfront setting by pursuing strategic improvements to the public realm- street network, public open space, heritage, culture and the arts;
- Promote economic opportunity for area residents, property owners, and businesses by encouraging intense development, where appropriate within the downtown.



Fig. 4.4 Streetscape design elements such as wider sidewalks, shade trees, on-street parking, signage, and generous storefronts are pivotal in creating a pedestrian friendly atmosphere.

Action Strategies:

- Develop a comprehensive set of Urban Design and Architectural Standards and adopt it through an ordinance as part of its revised Land Development Regulations Code to further ensure consistent development and redevelopment in downtown.
- Develop and adopt a new mixed-use overlay district for the Central Business District (C-CBD) zoning designation including the Historic Downtown and Waterfront Entertainment districts in order to eliminate barriers for developers seeking to deliver products consistent with Plan's vision.
- Consider adopting a hybrid code that integrates conventional zoning and form-based codes in the Downtown Redevelopment Area as a pilot project. Form-based zoning is a relatively new concept that emphasizes site design and building form over land use patterns and densities. The code typically includes standards for the design and character of public streets and uses a combination of illustrations and text to provide information that is more user-friendly as compared to traditional zoning codes.
- Promote higher densities in the downtown for future development while at the same time ensuring that the scale and character of the buildings respects the community preferences and is consistent with the historic character of downtown.
- Encourage uses that include mixed-use residential, retail and commercial buildings and emphasize pedestrian orientation of buildings, especially in the Waterfront Entertainment District, the Historic Downtown District, and the Arts and Cultural District.

Recommended Development Pattern: Mixed-Use (Vertical+ Horizontal)

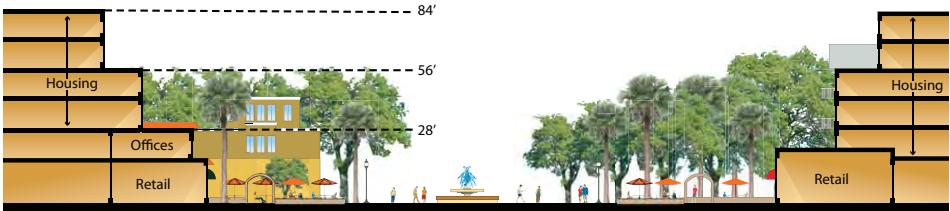
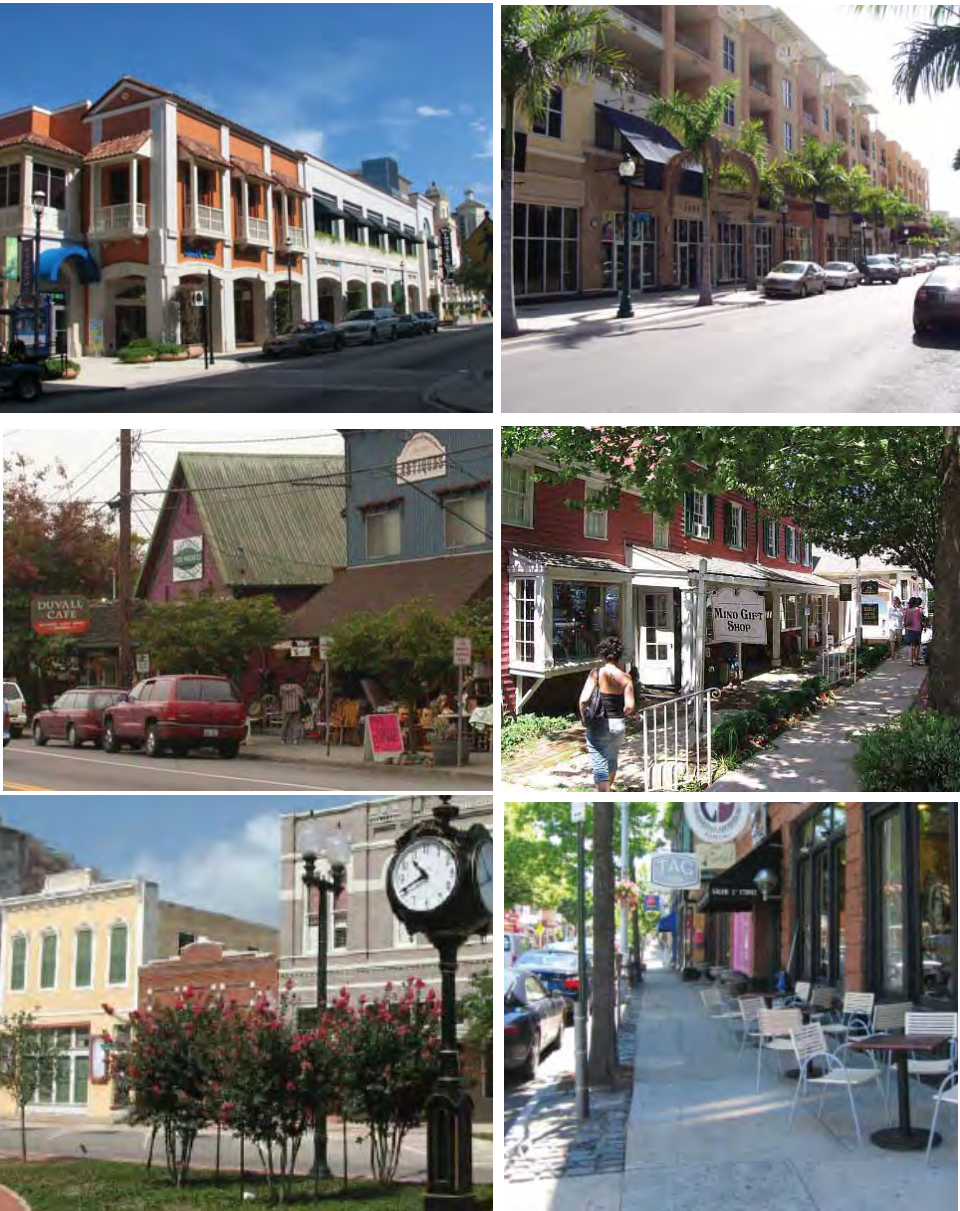


Fig 4.5 Bulk Control and Stepback Recommendations: Conceptual Section showing building setbacks and stepbacks with a plaza as the central design element.

Built Form Guidelines:

- Require buildings to maximize the street frontage and locate new buildings to the front of the property, closer to the sidewalk.
- Place buildings along primary streets with additional setbacks if the property is located on a street corner.
- Require that parking be located to the rear
- All new development, additions and/or renovations should reflect the traditional development patterns and strive to encourage an efficient pedestrian oriented environment.
- In order to break up the perceived mass of structure, the buildings should be divided into modules that are similar in size to buildings seen traditionally.
- New buildings should incorporate a clear division between street level and upper floors through a change of architectural elements, materials, and/or color.
- Where sidewalks are less than 6 feet in width require new development to setback buildings 5 feet or 10 feet to create wider sidewalks that can be used for outdoor seating and provide additional pedestrian amenities.
- Create transitions in building height between the waterfront and the downtown core by creating stepbacks on upper floors.
- Encourage new developments fronting 6th Street to step down to meet the scale of neighborhoods on the north.
- Service, refuse, and delivery areas should be located to the rear of the buildings and accesses through the alleyways, where possible.
- Encourage buildings to articulate appropriate architectural detailing including canopies, arcades, storefront design, and awnings on the first two floors.
- Ensure that blank building facades are not allowed in future civic and cultural buildings.
- Encourage that new parking structures are located in the center of the lot and wrapped with retail, office or other active uses to serve as the primary facade.
- Support and encourage outdoor cafes and balconies, especially in the Waterfront Entertainment District.
- Encourage joint access and shared parking between commercial properties to minimize access points and reduce side friction from travel lanes.
- Identify pedestrian circulation areas and access points from vehicular circulation to reduce potential safety hazards caused by conflicts between pedestrian and automobile traffic.





Fig. 4.6 Gateway Treatment Examples

Character and Identity

Downtown Lake City prides itself on its rich cultural heritage, its position as the County seat. The quality of public realm improvements, specifically enhancing the visual character of downtown, will encourage better connectivity between the various districts proposed in this Plan. The Plan suggests a series of measures aimed at promoting a system of public realm enhancements through gateways, sign control, and beautification projects that will help reinforce the character and identity of downtown’s various activity centers and destinations.

Gateways

In addition to streetscapes and view corridors, the downtown redevelopment area contains several opportunities for the creation of gateways. These opportunities include areas of transition into the downtown as well as entrances into specific neighborhoods. Gateways at these particular locations can be utilized to create a sense of arrival into downtown. Gateways serve not only to mark the arrival or departure from an area, but may also be used to create a node around which a neighborhood or commercial district may be organized. They may be comprised of a grand formal structure or consist of a series of smaller elements that include artwork or sculpture, lighting and landscaping, and signage. Whether used to distinguish differences between or serve as a focus within a district, gateways are an important element in establishing a successful streetscape system. There are two existing gateways located at the intersection of Marion Avenue with Duval Street and Railroad Street.

There are two types of gateways that the Plan recommends introducing at key intersections to improve visibility as new development occurs in downtown Lake City:

- Primary Gateways
- Intersection of Duval Street with Main Boulevard and SE Ermine Avenue
 - Intersection of Main Boulevard with Franklin Street and SW Baya Drive
 - Intersection of Marion Avenue with MLK Street
- Secondary Gateways
- Intersection of MLK Street with Davis Avenue and Patterson Avenue
 - Intersection of Railroad Street and Davis Avenue
 - Intersection of Duval Street and SE Hernando Avenue
 - Intersection of Knox Street and Main Boulevard



Fig. 4.7 Existing Gateway Treatment (Duval and Marion Avenue)



Fig. 4.8 Signage Design Examples

Signage

The aesthetic quality of a streetscape design in downtown is often impacted by the visual harmony of the signs as they relate to the overall architecture and functional character of the built environment. Signage types include storefront signage, public wayfinding and regulatory signage. The recommendations for the signage system are intended to supplement the City’s existing codes relating to the design and placement of signs. Given the downtown’s distance from the interstates and dispersed location of destinations within the downtown, it is easy for visitors to get confused and overlook the area in the absence of improved signage leading drivers into downtown. Downtown Lake City signage system needs to be expanded to encompass a larger area starting from the primary interstate exits along the major regional corridors. It is critical from a private investment and economic development perspective to improve the visibility of the downtown in the entire region and not just in the immediate vicinity of the downtown.

Wayfinding strategies provide a means for visitors to Lake City to easily find their way around the downtown and conveniently locate their respective destinations. There are two major aspects to the wayfinding system; the automobile orientation system and the pedestrian orientation system. Pedestrian directional signage is a crucial element, not only to ensure a well-navigated pedestrian experience, but also to create ‘a sense of place’. A consistent, pedestrian-scaled and easy-to-read signage system is proposed for the downtown area. The Agency should develop a comprehensive directional signage system for the downtown area extending out to the expanded CRA district and regional corridors. A system of directional signage for visitors entering the city should be introduced to ensure easy navigation. This directional signage is proposed at major road intersections on the edge of the downtown. The signage will also help the visitors to find their way to the major public parking facilities in the core area.

- Recommendations:
- Install a comprehensive directional signage system for the downtown redevelopment area and its surrounding areas.
 - Wayfinding signage, directional signage to parking lots, and signage identifying the downtown should be located near intersection entry points and should be designed in a consistent and easily identifiable manner.
 - Develop a unified signage system that emphasizes a coherent theme for the entire downtown.

Public Art

Given the downtown’s relatively strong arts and cultural community, public art as a key urban design element should be integrated into the existing fabric of the city. The Redevelopment Plan recommends strategies to strengthen the role of the arts and culture in establishing a ‘niche’ identity for downtown Lake City in support of its overall economic development efforts. Public art should be encouraged throughout the downtown as part of the planning and design of public spaces. The Agency should form a committee inviting people from various arts organizations in the City whose primary functions may include: providing technical assistance to independent artists and non-profits; promoting the Lake City arts community to corporations, foundations, governmental agencies; and securing grants and funding to encourage public arts projects in downtown. In order to fund public art projects, communities across the nation have devised creative ways to raise funds such as dedicating a certain percentage of all capital improvement projects towards public art and/or enacting a hotel-motel tax for the arts.

Recommendations:

- Create a citywide Public Arts Task Force to oversee the visioning, implementation, and management of the public arts program. The task force should be comprised of local artists, community members, and representatives from key institutions to select and review proposals for public art that enhance the community’s character.
- Work with City staff to formalize policies and procedures for incorporating public art into public realm improvement projects. Incorporate public art projects into the revised Land Development Regulations to allow for placement of public art in downtown.
- Develop a consolidated financing strategy to generate an ongoing funding source for the arts. Strategies could include grant stacking, corporate sponsorships, adopt-a-street programs, and appropriation of tax dollars.
- Encourage property owners to commission public art projects as part of the public realm improvements in new developments.
- Incorporate visual, performing, and interactive arts as part of an overall strategy to attract diverse groups into downtown.
- Collaborate with area-wide institutions to host year-round art related events and exhibitions in downtown public open spaces such as the improved lakefront within the Waterfront Entertainment District.

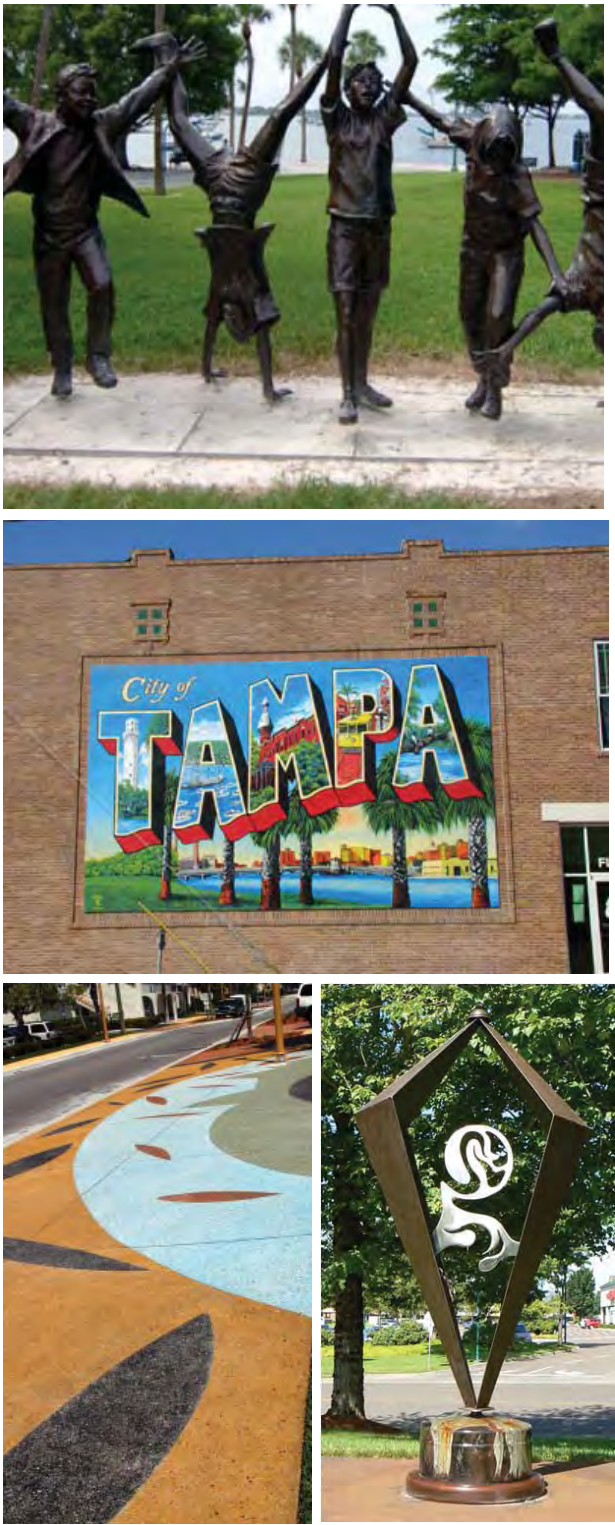


Fig. 4.9 Public Art Examples

Historic Preservation

Lake City’s rich history, its importance as the County seat, and significance as Florida’s gateway community provides a substantial foundation when developing recommendations for future development character in the downtown. The Agency should work with the City to develop a comprehensive preservation plan and include detailed guidelines as part of the Urban Design and Architectural Manual.

Lake City embarked upon its sesquicentennial celebrations in January 2009. A key element of the Lake City Community Redevelopment Area Master Plan (inclusive of the Downtown) is to maintain a connection to the past and provide historic continuity for future development. While social connection to the past can be accommodated through museums and other learning activities, physical connectivity is accomplished through the preservation of historic resources and the continuance of established architectural form. The Plan supports efforts to promote Lake City’s heritage by preserving its historic landmarks and architecturally significant structures such as the Blanche Hotel while ensuring future development maintains historic connection with the established urban form. The Lake Isabella Historic Residential District has submitted an application for designation on the Nation Register of Historic Places, and identifies over hundred 100 contributing structures in the district (a portion of which falls within the expanded Downtown CRA District). The adaptive reuse of the Blanche Hotel is a prime example of a structure that needs to be preserved working in close collaboration with the private owners and various area-wide institutions.

Recommendations:

- Conduct a detailed assessment and develop appropriate criteria to create a list of contributing structures that meet minimum eligibility requirements as determined by the Florida Division of Historical Resources or the National Register of Historic Places.
- Continue working with the owners of Blanche Hotel, area institutions, and local banks to develop a strategy for redeveloping the property while preserving its architectural integrity.
- Provide incentives to encourage future development in the downtown redevelopment area to be consistent with the existing architectural character for development taking place in the designated Historic Preservation District.
- Continue with the implementation of the Lake City Facade Grant Program to provide design assistance and financial incentives to encourage building renovation that provides continuity of historical design and strengthen existing architectural features.



CIRCULATION AND MOBILITY

Downtown Lake City is currently served by a constrained transportation network system consisting of roadways and pedestrian facilities. Because downtown’s street grid is generally uniform with a minimal number of cul-de-sacs or dead ends, an efficient pedestrian and vehicular movement system exists through most of the redevelopment area. The transportation systems link downtown Lake City to the rest of the city and the region, thereby warranting the need to address issues both at area-wide and regional levels. While a detailed traffic analysis was not included as part of the Lake City Community Redevelopment Area Master Plan planning process, the data provided by the City’s GIS staff provided valuable insight into the downtown’s traffic patterns.

The redevelopment area’s street network is configured as a well-defined grid-system, with blocks typically measuring 600’ by 600’ providing linkages into the neighborhoods to the east, west, and north. Hernando Avenue is the area’s primary north-south arterial road connecting the downtown to neighborhoods to the north and the major regional transportation corridors- Duval Street, Marion Avenue, Main Boulevard and SW Baya Drive. Although there are no traffic congestion issues currently in the downtown redevelopment area, the primary challenge is the constrained right-of-way conditions along several downtown streets to construct streetscape improvements that will have a significant impact on the circulation patterns. The Plan recommends that the Agency should contact property owners to obtain an easement for constructing streetscape improvements, where feasible. By improving the pedestrian environment it is anticipated that once residential development is attracted downtown, an increased number of people will choose to walk to their downtown destination rather than drive. It is important that new developments anticipate and incorporate future pedestrian circulation demands of downtown.

Potential multimodal opportunities, new pedestrian mobility patterns, changes in existing traffic circulation patterns, and parking availability will be pivotal elements for the future success of downtown The City is currently pursuing improvements to Franklin Street that will facilitate better access to the hospital and the residential structures fronting the roadway. The Plan does not support this recommendation as the conversion to one-way streets in weaker downtown markets such as Lake City hampers redevelopment potential. One-way streets limit the community’s ability to attract retail investment on both streets as retailers lose potential traffic from one direction and inadvertently result in high speed traffic resulting in an unsafe environment for pedestrians. Therefore, it is recommended that the City consider reverting Hernando Avenue from one-way to two-way, following a detailed traffic impact study.

Bicycle circulation in the downtown redevelopment area is currently undeveloped. Dedicated bicycle facilities are virtually absent in the downtown primarily because of the constrained right-of-way conditions. The Plan recommends creating bicycle lanes as an integral component of future resurfacing and roadway projects, where adequate right-of-way could be obtained.

In order to accommodate envisioned residential and commercial growth in downtown redevelopment area, the Plan recognizes that transit service needs to be improved working in close collaboration with appropriate transit agencies. The Plan proposes pursuing improvements to the frequency and routing of the Suwannee Valley Transit Authority bus transit service as the downtown’s population increases. In addition, the Plan recommends evaluating the feasibility of introducing a shuttle service making connections between major employment, waterfront and residential areas within the downtown as a long-term strategy.

As downtown’s population increases and a balanced mix of uses are created within the redevelopment area, it is anticipated that trip generation will increase within the downtown core. In order to support the community’s overall goal to create compact and complete communities and to promote alternative transportation modes that will ultimately reduce auto-dependence and increase walkability, this Plan recommends strategies that integrate land use and transportation principles to create an efficient circulation pattern. The Plan’s intent is to establish a safe and efficient traffic circulation and pedestrian mobility system that provides sufficient access between activity centers both within the redevelopment area and to the rest of the community.

The Redevelopment Plan establishes a hierarchy of connectors that will support existing and proposed residential, commercial, and recreational uses within the downtown redevelopment area. The Plan establishes the following street typologies for downtown’s major thoroughfares and streets in order to better integrate vehicular and pedestrian traffic in the redevelopment area:

Primary Retail Street: Marion Avenue and Hernando Avenue
These streets are intended to serve as the retail and entertainment spines in the downtown supporting neighborhood commercial and mixed-use areas. The streets should be designed to accommodate a variety of transportation modes- pedestrians, vehicular traffic, and on-street parking. The section of Hernando Avenue south of Railroad Street is currently designed to accommodate these activities. The Plan recommends designing as secondary retail streets supporting the revitalized Waterfront District.

Downtown Pedestrian Connectors: Lake Desoto Circle and Patterson Avenue
The connectors are next in the hierarchy of streets to the primary retail streets because of their potential to accommodate majority of the redevelopment activity in the future. Redevelopment of properties along these corridors will present an opportunity to improve the existing conditions along these streets including: extension of key streets to complete the grid; intersection improvements; improved alleyways as complementary pedestrian connectors.

Downtown Neighborhood Connectors: Franklin Street, Washington Street, Davis Street, Fronie Street and SE Hernando Avenue
These corridors serve as the primary linkages between the neighborhoods and the downtown core, and have a residential orientation. These connectors are designed primarily for low volumes and low speeds of vehicular traffic with residential front yards, landscaped patios, and walkways serving as the transition between the public and private realm. Where possible, on-street parking should be maximized on these streets, especially within the Historic Downtown District.

Regional Commercial Corridors: Duval Street, SW Main Boulevard, County Road 100A, and SW Baya Drive
As the name suggests, these corridors are intended to serve regional commercial uses while minimizing impacts on adjoining residential neighborhoods. The roadways provide a significant degree of vehicular mobility and are typically designed to cater to larger commercial establishments serving a regional population base but also serving the needs of the surrounding neighborhoods.



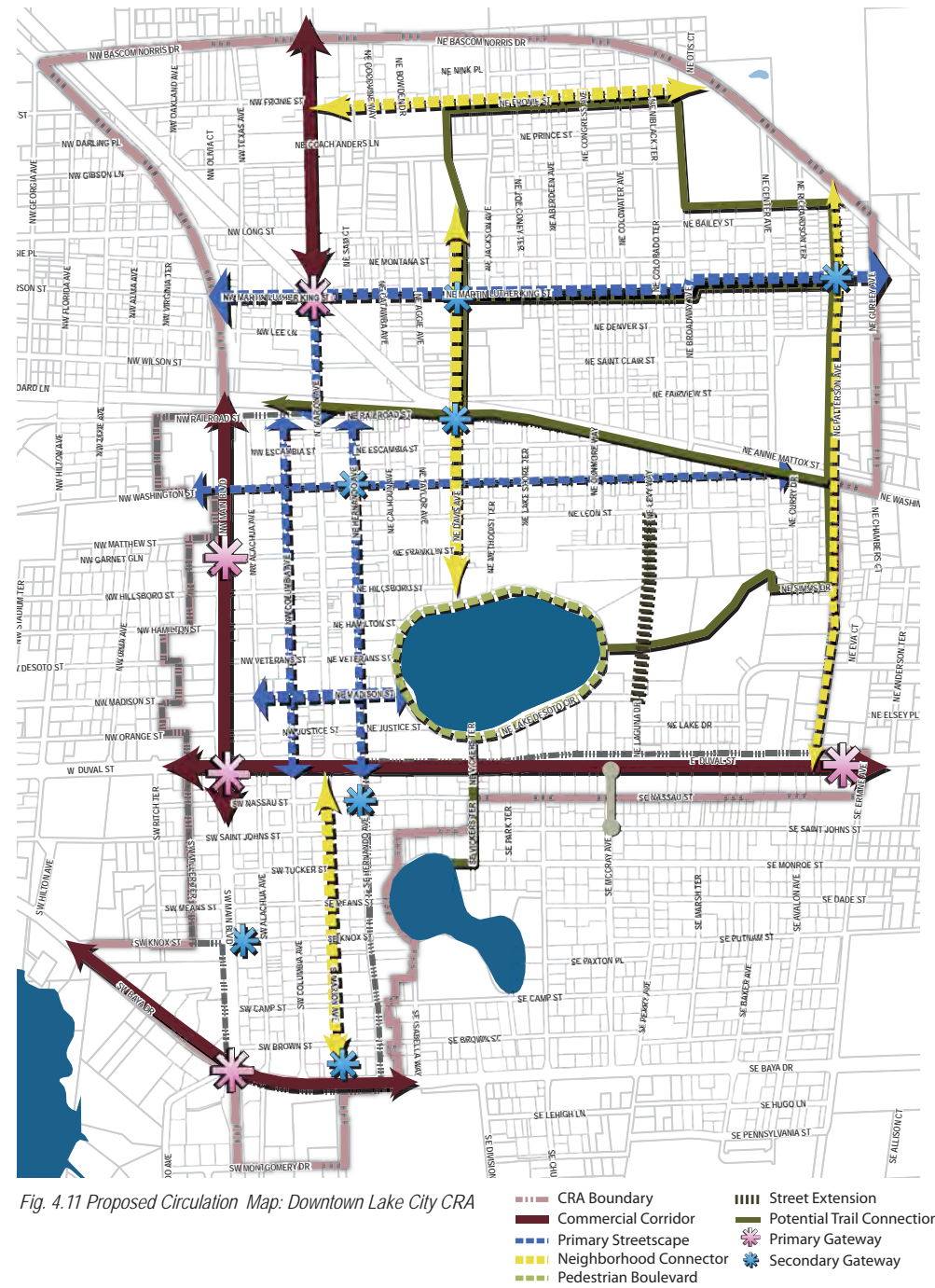
Existing Conditions: Downtown Roadways

Objectives:

Continue to invest in public realm improvements along identified street typologies and strive to integrate land use and transportation planning strategies through the application of sound urban design principles.

Action Strategies:

- Conduct detailed studies to assess existing traffic patterns, and projected development forecasts increase in the downtown core and related capital projects including reconfiguration of Lake Desoto Circle and hospital expansion plans.
- Coordinate funding and maintenance responsibilities among government entities including North Central Florida Regional Planning Council, FDOT, and the railroad for identified roadway improvement projects.
- Work with public and private sector entities to obtain easements and pursue streetscape improvements along the proposed Lake Desoto pedestrian walkway.
- Avoid interruption of street grid system in future developments.
- Continue to prioritize identified streetscape projects in conjunction with other planned public and private sector improvements.
- Develop detailed design specifications for improvements to the pedestrian system. The scope of the design specifications should include sidewalk design, infrastructure improvements, landscape materials and tree selection, street furniture specifications (lighting, bike racks, trash receptacles, and benches).
- Prepare a comprehensive wayfinding and directional signage system that establishes a coherent theme for the downtown area.
- Design and construct gateways at identified primary and secondary intersections.
- Require developers to install sidewalks in accordance with the City's design specifications within the downtown core.
- Complete missing sidewalk network and construct additional sidewalk enhancements for the primary streetscapes as the highest priority.
- Limit curb cuts along the commercial corridors- Duval Street, Main Boulevard and Marion Avenue by consolidating curb cuts with shared driveways, where possible.
- Forge new pedestrian connections when possible, such as providing a trail connection between the Lake Isabella Historic Residential District, Lake Desoto, and neighborhoods located to the north of Railroad Street.
- Evaluate the feasibility of promoting alternative modes of transportation within the downtown core such as golf carts, segways, and neighborhood electric vehicles. Develop long-range plans to identify locations that offer solar powered battery-charging stations and preferred parking for NEVs.
- Work with private sector to improve alleyways as part of redevelopment projects and require access to properties from designated alleys, when feasible.
- Establish an alley hierarchy system based on its intended use either as pedestrian connectors, services areas, and garage access in new residential development.



Parking

Parking is an important component of the downtown's overall transportation network and influences various aspects of the downtown's character including urban design, walkability, traffic circulation, and economic development. County and local government services including the County Courthouse and the City Hall, area restaurants, and the hospital are the primary parking generators in downtown. During the visioning sessions conducted by the consultants, parking was a recurrent issue identified by the participants. However, during field visits conducted in the inventory phase it was observed that parking in downtown Lake City is more a problem of perception and convenience of parking in front of their destination than actual shortage in parking supply. In order to encourage people to use available parking spaces, the pedestrian environment and directional signage needs to be improved, especially along the routes that link the destinations and available parking spaces (on-street and in parking lots).

As the residential and commercial base in the downtown intensifies and new investment occurs, the parking demand is likely to increase. Effective management of on-street parking spaces is critical in providing access to employees, customers, business owners, and residents. Exploring shared parking opportunities with area institutions and commercial establishments could add a significant amount of spaces to the on-street parking spaces. In order to provide centralized parking to address the demands created by the redevelopment of the waterfront, the Agency could develop a strategy to work with the County and Shands Lake Shore Hospital to construct a shared mixed-use parking garage on an institutional owned property. Any new parking structure should be located in the center of the lot and wrapped with retail, office or other active uses to serve as the primary facade.

Action Strategies:

- Initiate discussions with the Hospital and Columbia County to assemble properties within the Waterfront Entertainment District and structure a request for proposal (RFP) to solicit developer interest in redeveloping the property as a mixed-use shared parking structure. The Agency could utilize mechanisms such as land swapping, sale of surplus land, or use TIF funds to repay the land acquisition or construction costs over time.
- Discourage frontage off-street parking along all primary streets within the Historic Downtown district.
- Develop and adopt standards to accommodate reduced parking requirements within the downtown redevelopment area and provide flexible spaces for compact cars and other modes of transportation.
- Encourage shared parking and access between adjacent properties in commercial and mixed-use areas.
- Provide combined residential and commercial parking requirements in new mixed-use developments.
- Identify areas for event related spill-over parking and recreational vehicular parking.
- Prepare a downtown parking location map and install clear signage to designated parking areas.
- Increase enforcement for parking violations.

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND AMENITIES

The Redevelopment Plan sets a vision for the future of downtown and its potential to develop as a vibrant, pedestrian-oriented quaint downtown that retains its old town charm and provides a higher quality of life for its citizens. In order to support the anticipated increase in downtown’s residential and employment related population, it is critical that the development of the public facilities and services is in place for the private sector investment to materialize. The public facilities and amenities element includes several components including transportation infrastructure, utilities (water, sewer, stormwater, and telecommunications), public safety, and community facilities (parks and open space, social services, recreation and cultural centers). This section discusses strategies related to the physical and programmatic aspects of fundamental public infrastructure facilities and services, specifically open space, utilities, public safety, educational facilities, and community facilities.

Access to community facilities and the provision of adequate infrastructure that effectively meets the needs of downtown residents will play a key role in ensuring a high quality of life for the community. The walkability of a community is also enhanced by an efficient and equitable allocation of neighborhood amenities in close proximity to residential uses. The intent of this Plan is to ensure that the infrastructure and community needs are fulfilled in order to attract residents, businesses and visitors in the downtown area.

Open Space and Recreation

Lake City’s downtown core contains several open space redevelopment opportunities in the form of parks, streetscapes and plazas that could offer a strong network of interstitial places between buildings, if carefully designed. The public open space design recommendations are intended to demonstrate how key streets, alleys and plazas in downtown can be designed to address various pedestrian needs. In addition, providing interactive outdoor activities should be incorporated into the downtown pedestrian network in order to enhance the overall experience and appearance of the open space network for the users. Expanding the existing network of downtown open spaces is a difficult challenge to overcome. The high land costs and the maintenance associated with construction of new open spaces in downtown will add pressure on the already constrained municipal budgets. On the other hand, provision of an easily accessible and well-designed open space network, is essential for improving the livability of downtown and attracting quality development. In order to overcome the shortage of open space areas in the downtown, the Agency should adopt a two-pronged approach: first, existing open areas need to be upgraded and well-maintained; second, public parks and open space should be incorporated into the city’s development process and required in all new developments.

Action Strategies:

- Require all large scaled new development, especially the waterfront properties, to include public open space amenities- active and passive parks, boardwalks, walkways, and streetscapes- as part of the overall development program.
- Develop a Waterfront Entertainment District design master plan to create a focal community gathering space along Lake Desoto. The detailed design plan should include refined programming of spaces, reconfigured parking, landscape plan, cost estimates, phasing plan, and construction documentation.
- Construct a contiguous walkway along the lakefront to provide greater public access to the water’s edge. This may require working with existing private property owners to obtain easements and incorporating dedicated public open space provision in all new waterfront developments.
- Provide additional pedestrian area to the major public streetscape adjacent to the property. Sidewalks should be provided abutting the property frontage extending the length of the property whether or not on-street parking is required.
- When properties front on primary streets, they shall be designed to provide a continuity of streetscape elements. The frontage yard between the building and the property line shall be designed to accommodate pedestrian traffic, seating or other use deemed suitable by approval of the City staff.
- Identify locations for introducing public art throughout the downtown.
- Adopt a policy to allocate a share of public building construction costs to public art projects.
- Seek funding to implement the concept of developing a trail system linking the downtown neighborhoods with Lake Desoto, Lake Isabella, Annie Mattox Park and existing recreational facilities provided by area institutions.
- Initiate discussions with School Board to promote shared use of recreation and civic facilities such as playgrounds and community meeting spaces.
- Encourage ancillary uses and activities that support eco-tourism in the vicinity of the waterfront.
- Develop neighborhood parks in residential areas as amenities to stimulate private investment.
- Provide safe connection from the neighborhood’s to primary activity centers including downtown, the waterfront and schools through sidewalks and bikeways.
- Identify potential revenues including tax increment financing, grants, impact fees and other assessments to provide adequate funding for proposed improvements and maintenance of public facilities.



Fig. 4.12 Proposed Open Space and Recreation Map, Downtown Lake City CRA



Utilities

Stormwater: Currently the City’s Land Development Regulations provides stormwater retention and control requirements for new construction projects. The Future Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan identifies stormwater management as “one of the biggest infrastructure challenge facing the City”. Surface water runoff within the downtown makes its way to Lake Desoto or by combinations of overland flow and flows through storm sewer and open ditch systems. The results of this system could include flooding and environmental pollution of the natural resources and the overall ecosystem. The issue is further complicated by addressing the stormwater retention on individual sites that are not part of a coordinated and comprehensive stormwater management strategy for the downtown redevelopment district. This Redevelopment Plan advocates the preparation of a Downtown Stormwater Master Plan that establishes stormwater best management practices. In order to attract private sector investment into downtown, as well as ensuring that the stormwater runoff is addressed at a regional level, the Plan recommends that the Agency should work with the City, County and the Suwannee River Water Management District to evaluate the feasibility of providing a master stormwater permit for the entire downtown redevelopment area. The area-wide master stormwater permit would streamline the process and eliminate the need for individual property owners to obtain permits from the various permitting entities, as well as contributing to an overall stormwater management strategy.

Water, Sewer and Wastewater Systems: The City has already initiated some utility improvement projects necessary to support major growth and redevelopment in the downtown area. Adequate provision of key infrastructure improvements will be necessary to encourage and support private investment. The Plan recommends that the Agency should encourage the City to expedite the inspection, upgrades and repair or installation of these infrastructure system improvement projects including providing financial assistance in some cases.

Action Strategies:

- Develop an updated GIS Inventory for utility infrastructure in the downtown redevelopment area.
- Prepare a Stormwater Master Plan to identify existing demands and future capacity issues related to the anticipated population increase in downtown as envisioned by the redevelopment plan.
- Work with the City to incorporate low-impact development techniques in all new developments as part of the development regulations.
- Identify and install adequately sizes lines at appropriate locations to accommodate the anticipated future growth.
- Pursue continued installation of utilities and drainage system upgrades.
- Complete upgrades to existing water treatment plants.
- Evaluate the feasibility of providing for a master stormwater permit from Suwannee River Water Management District as an incentive for potential developers to invest in the downtown redevelopment area.
- Continue to work with developers to provide regional stormwater retention areas as part of large scaled developments.
- Encourage alley improvements to facilitate deliveries, solid waste and recycling collection, as well as installing pervious paving in order to address stormwater runoff and flooding issues.
- Work with regulatory and private entities to develop a phasing plan for the burial of overhead utility lines in conjunction with planned roadways and streetscape improvement projects.
- Support capital improvements, when feasible, through supplemental budgets for infrastructure located within the redevelopment area.

Civic Facilities

During the community workshops, participants expressed the immediate need for locating civic facilities within the downtown. In particular, the need for constructing a multipurpose facility that could accommodate community meetings, conventions, and local cultural events was emphasized. Civic facilities that are currently within the downtown redevelopment area include the Columbia County Public Library, Annie Mattox Park, and the Niblack Elementary School premises. Development of new civic and cultural resources in the long-term will be vital in supporting a growing population within the downtown, and will also act as a potential catalyst for economic development activities in the downtown.

It is recommended that the Agency focus its efforts to ensure that the location of new services and resources are maximized through coordination among various entities such as Columbia County, City agencies, non-profit organizations, faith-based institutions, educational establishments, and private sector. In light of limited resources and budget constraints facing local governments, a key strategy recommended in this Plan is to explore new avenues to initiate partnerships with existing and prospective service providers both from a programmatic perspective and also encouraging joint use of facilities.

Some of the key projects recommended in this Plan that would require strengthening existing and forging new partnerships to develop additional cultural resources include:

Downtown Culinary Arts College- key partners may include: Blanche Hotel owners, Florida Gateway College, University of North Florida, University of Florida- Gainesville, Lake City/ Columbia County Chamber of Commerce, Florida Division of Cultural Affairs, National Endowment for the Arts, non-profit organizations, and corporations.

Lake City Performing Arts Center/ Theater/ Museum- key partners may include: Columbia County Historical Society, Lake City-Columbia County Chamber of Commerce, Columbia County Tourism Development Council, Florida Division of Cultural Affairs. The CRA has already initiated discussions to move the Historic Museum Downtown to the northwest corner of Marion Avenue and Franklin Street.

Urban Agriculture/ Public Market (redevelopment proposal for Old Ice House building)- key partners may include: Northeast Florida Farmers’ Market, University of Florida/ IFAS, Florida Farm Bureau, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, New North Florida Cooperative, natural food production stores such as Ever’man Natural Foods (Pensacola) , USDA Agricultural Marketing Services, Florida A&M University’s Small Farmer Outreach, Training and Assistance Program.

Fig. 4.13 Examples of Civic Facilities



Schools

Access to educational facilities is intrinsically linked to community redevelopment and downtown living. In addition to the Niblack Elementary School located within the Downtown Lake City CRA, there are several schools located in the surrounding neighborhoods. School districts are not an integral part of the community redevelopment process and community stakeholders are often disconnected from a school’s strategic planning process. The Plan recommends that the City should work proactively with the Columbia County School Board to assess the need for better school facilities and to provide quality educational facilities to attract residential population in the downtown. Schools also serve as large employment generating centers and are key partners in the redevelopment process.

As downtown Lake City strengthens its arts-oriented community, there is immense potential for attracting higher learning establishments in downtown, as satellite campuses for the regional institutions or technical centers related to the arts, courthouse activities, and the hospital (public administration, law, or nursing). Students, faculty, staff, and other employees could also serve as the residential base for downtown and have the opportunity to live within walking distance from their respective work places or the transit station in the future.

Public Safety

Creating a safe environment that strategically builds upon the relationship between crime prevention, built environment design, and well-defined programming is a critical element in attracting people to live downtown and improving the overall quality of life. In addition to providing the fundamental requirements of efficient community policing and other services such as fire and health, it is important to effectively incorporate crime prevention planning strategies in all city building projects and also to effectively communicate the related principles to the community. Some communities such as Tempe, Arizona and Sarasota, Florida have adopted Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles into their zoning code and site review procedures. Other communities have employed a range of techniques from neighborhood watch and community policing programs to traffic calming and streetscape improvements reinforcing the “eyes on the street” concept.

Objective:
Provide for the public health, safety, morals, and welfare of downtown Lake City

Action Strategies:

- Support community policing and other innovative policing efforts undertaken by the Lake City police department to address changing trends in crime within the community.
- Incorporate accredited safe neighborhood design techniques for all public places and for proposed public/private redevelopment projects.
- Initiate a residents awareness campaign to inform the community about the Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.
- Increase the visibility or appearance of visible police presence in the area as a crime deterrent.
- Support crime prevention strategies in collaboration with the Lake City Sherriff Department.
- Organize neighborhood outreach drives to inform and educate the residents about emergency preparedness, reporting of illegal activities in the area, and other housekeeping issues to prevent code violations and fire accidents in the commercial and residential areas.
- Work with the community based organizations and area schools to enhance programs designed to reduce and prevent substance abuse.
- Establish stronger relationships between Lake City police department, area schools and faith-based institutions to increase community involvement, through mentorship programs and safety awareness.
- Initiate community based activities involving the youth and the public safety staff to generate support and participation in local anti-crime programs, and to improve public relations with the City’s Police Department.
- Conduct a joint effort involving the Police Department, the Fire Department, and the Planning staff to prepare a crime generating and fire hazard physical conditions inventory. Involve these agencies while designing public improvements incorporating CPTED principles.
- Work with the City staff and FPL to maintain and provide adequate street lighting.
- Seek funding to implement crime prevention strategies including the Weed and Seed grant administered by the U.S. Department of Justice.

CPTED is the proper design and effective use of the built environment which may lead to a reduction in the fear and incidence of crime, and an improvement of the quality of life.” - National Crime Prevention Institute

The Four Strategies of CPTED

1. Natural Surveillance - A design concept directed primarily at keeping intruders easily observable. Promoted by features that maximize visibility of people, parking areas and building entrances: doors and windows that look out on to streets and parking areas; pedestrian-friendly sidewalks and streets; front porches; adequate nighttime lighting.
2. Territorial Reinforcement - Physical design can create or extend a sphere of influence. Users then develop a sense of territorial control while potential offenders, perceiving this control, are discouraged. Promoted by features that define property lines and distinguish private spaces from public spaces using landscape plantings, pavement designs, gateway treatments, and “CPTED” fences.
3. Natural Access Control - A design concept directed primarily at decreasing crime opportunity by denying access to crime targets and creating in offenders a perception of risk. Gained by designing streets, sidewalks, building entrances and neighborhood gateways to clearly indicate public routes and discouraging access to private areas with structural elements.
4. Target Hardening - Accomplished by features that prohibit entry or access: window locks, dead bolts for doors, interior door hinges.

Economic Development

In order to have a strong impact on the economic health of downtown Lake City, it is essential that a strategy be developed that collectively addresses the following economic development principles for the four redevelopment areas and the entire city on a regional scale. It is recommended that the CRA continue to function as the primary marketing and promotions agency for Downtown Lake City. The City should also consider hiring a full-time Economic Development Director to assure continuity of current efforts in the various districts while also aligning the goals of the City with regional economic growth opportunities such as the development of the IDA-led Catalyst Site and the Inland Port.

The success of any redevelopment program ultimately relies on the coordinated efforts of the leadership and the management staff with the residents, the private sector, governmental entities, and other institutions. Continuing partnerships with key organizations will ensure that the Agency will work collaboratively with the various players to maximize existing resources, as well as avoid duplicating efforts. In addition, the CRA should also become a member in key regional, state and national organizations that can provide valuable information and educational resources related to downtown redevelopment and revitalization. Some of these organizations include: Florida Redevelopment Association, Urban Land Institute, National Main Street Center, Florida Division of Cultural Affairs, International Economic Development Council, and Enterprise Florida.

Marketing and Promotion

In order to attract potential customers from the region and to encourage existing customers to continue shopping in the downtown, the Agency should work with a marketing consulting firm to prepare a Marketing and Promotion plan as a long-term strategy. The Marketing and Promotions plan will help identify a brand identity for the downtown that separates it from regional competitors, capitalizing upon downtown’s niches. The plan should also identify locations throughout the region that experience high volumes of tourists and visitors where marketing efforts should be pursued. These may include tourist information centers, airports, universities, and other regional destinations.

The demand for downtown arts and culture is an integral component of creating a vibrant and dynamic community image. In addition, embracing arts, culture, entertainment and related recreational activities has proven to attract interests of professionals and baby boomers in several successful downtowns such as Orlando, Florida; Sarasota, Florida; St. Petersburg, Florida, Savannah, Georgia; and Austin, Texas. Lake City recently initiated a Downtown Farmers Market initiative and should explore opportunities to similarly promote arts and cultural events in the downtown. Some of the projects identified in this plan directly related to this objective include relocation of a heritage and cultural museum, and promoting public art display and performance venues in the Waterfront Entertainment District.

Design

In order to establish a consistent design theme throughout the downtown, the Agency should also work with local designers and architects to provide design assistance to existing storefronts. The Plan also recommends conducting a detailed set of Urban Design and Architectural Standards Manual to ensure that high quality design standards are maintained in all public and private improvements.

By offering incentives such as parking exemption for new developments, obtaining a master storm water permit, providing tax incentives for products that encourage home ownership and diversifying the housing stock, and continuing to implement proposed public realm improvements, the Agency could attract new private sector investment to downtown Lake City. While incremental progress through public realm improvements will strengthen the overall investment environment, ultimately the private sector is anticipated to take the lead in future economic growth with continued support from the City and the CRA. The Plan recommends developing an incentives matrix which would streamline the redevelopment process for interested developers and reduce their risk with uncertainties associated with plan approvals. As it relates to the arts, the Agency should consider establishing a Public Arts Program which includes a committee to review submitted public art projects with representative from the existing arts community and volunteers.

Economic Restructuring

Maintaining a stable core of employment generating businesses and availability of a skilled workforce will be pivotal in creating a sustainable community that ensures economic opportunity for all residents. This Plan seeks to maximize opportunities by devising strategies and incentives to retain and attract businesses to the area and developing job training and mentorship opportunities. Retaining existing businesses is extremely important for the long-term sustainability of the downtown redevelopment area. High vacancy rates, deteriorating physical conditions and low volumes of pedestrian traffic have a significant impact on the investment image of the community.

Working with the Lake City- Columbia County Chamber of Commerce and the proposed City Economic Development Director, the Agency should take steps to retain and expand existing businesses, and build on these strengths to attract new investment and jobs to downtown. Small enterprises are an integral part of the area’s economic base and developing strategies to increase local entrepreneurship will be pivotal in ensuring the provision of neighborhood amenities and instilling a sense of community pride. The CRA should initiate regular meetings with existing business and property owners to assess their needs, concerns, and assistance that they may need to enhance their business experience in downtown. In order to help businesses assess their expansion goals and respond to market trends in advance, the Agency should make available to all business owners a summary of the Downtown CRA Redevelopment Plan.

Action Strategies:

- Develop a grant stacking strategy to leverage revenues with matching grant programs.
- Seek opportunities to generate revenues through private and corporate advertising and donations during special events.
- Explore opportunities to revert institutional owned properties back on tax rolls to increase the tax base for the downtown redevelopment area improvements.
- Encourage the City to hire an Economic Development Director and additional planning staff to assure continuity of current efforts in the various districts.
- Develop a continuing relationship with local and regional organizations, including: Lake City-Columbia County Chamber of Commerce, Florida Gateway College, University of Florida-Gainesville, University of North Florida, Columbia County Historical Society, Columbia County Board of Commissioners, Shands Lake Shore Hospital, Veterans Hospital, non-profit agencies, and other organizations.
- Assist existing businesses in relocating and expanding in the downtown redevelopment area, based on their specific needs.
- Develop an online inventory of available properties working in cooperation with local realtors and use data to aggressively market key sites in the redevelopment area.
- Create a professionally designed business recruitment package that is updated regularly with a listing of available properties, maps, building profiles, information for current and planned events.
- Continue to promote the downtown area through the support of festivals, exhibits, performances and other special events designed to attract residents and visitors to the downtown.
- Develop measurable tools to analyze economic impact of festivals and special events in order to strengthen and retain potential income.
- Actively market the existing programs and incentives available to assist existing and prospective small and minority owned businesses, while at the same time encouraging the initiation of new entrepreneurial ventures in the identified niches in the downtown and its surrounding areas.
- Create a checklist of incentives or a “development toolkit” for potential developers which would encourage infill development and redevelopment in the Downtown CRA.
- Initiate regular meetings with the downtown merchants to determine their needs and concerns in order to ensure their ongoing existence in downtown.
- Develop strategies to gauge the interest in promoting green buildings in infill development and new development projects to complement the City’s green initiatives.
- Develop wireless technology in downtown to offer free “wi-fi” service to downtown residents and patrons.
- Promote downtown as a tourist destination and provide information at the airport, publications and regional agencies.

Case Study: St. Petersburg Business Assistance Center

The St. Petersburg Business Assistance Center (BAC) is a one-stop facility for starting or growing the existing small business. The BAC provides business counseling, training and access to capital and credit for startups as well as established businesses seeking growth or specialized assistance.

The Business Assistance Center (BAC) provides case management and follow-up services for the creation, retention and expansion of small businesses. Specifically, the BAC offers:

- Business counseling, access to financial assistance, contracting and procurement through the Small Business Enterprise (SBE) Program, technical assistance, mentoring and training workshops.
- The Midtown Corridor Case Management Program – The BAC staff works directly with Midtown businesses for business startup, retention and expansion.
- The Business Resource Center (BRC) – a one-stop resource for providing personal computers with Internet access, interactive videos and an extensive business reference library for business planning and research. The BRC is open Monday – Friday, 8:00 – 5:00 p.m.
- Small Business Enterprise (SBE) Program -- certifies small businesses and provides technical assistance to enhance contracting and procurement opportunities with the City of St. Petersburg.
- Weed and Seed Program – offers community development services.

The Business Assistance Center partners with a diverse group of service providers to provide an array of business retention and development services including:

- SCORE (Counselors to America's Small Business) --offers business counseling, training, assessment and mentoring at no cost to the client.
- The Florida Small Business Development Center at the University of South Florida (USFSBDC) -- provides business counseling and training to start and grow your business.
- Tampa Bay Black Business Investment Corporation (TBBBIC) -- offers technical assistance to small businesses and assists with accessing capital.
- Eckerd College Intern Volunteer Program – provides hands-on assistance to businesses participating in the Midtown Corridor Case Management Program.



Special Topic: Green Collar Jobs

The term “green-collar jobs” generally refers to family-supporting jobs that contribute significantly to preserving or enhancing environmental quality. Defined more by industry than occupation, they reside primarily in the sectors that make up the clean energy economy—efficiency, renewables, alternative transportation, and fuels.

There's already a huge green economy developing. In 2006 renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies generated 8.5 million new jobs, nearly \$970 billion in revenue, and more than \$100 billion in industry profits. According to the National Renewable Energy Lab, the major barriers to a more rapid adoption of renewable energy and energy efficiency in America are insufficient skills and training. In December 2007, former President George W. Bush signed the Green Jobs Act to train workers for green collar jobs. It authorizes \$125 million for workforce training programs targeted to veterans, displaced workers, at-risk youth, and families in extreme poverty. It will train people for jobs like installing solar panels and weatherization. President Obama promises to spend \$150 billion over 10 years to create 5 million new green-collar jobs. Jobs in renewable-energy and energy-efficiency industries could grow to as many as 40 million by 2030, according to a November report commissioned by the American Solar Energy Society. Below is a list of example green collar jobs in specific sectors:

- Energy retrofits to increase energy efficiency and conservation
- Green building
- Green waste composting on a large scale
- Hauling and reuse of construction materials and debris (C&D)
- Hazardous materials clean-up
- Landscaping
- Manufacturing jobs related to large scale production of appropriate technologies (i.e. solar panels, bike cargo systems, green waste bins, etc.)
- Materials reuse
- Non-toxic household cleaning in residential and commercial buildings
- Parks and open space expansion and maintenance
- Printing with non-toxic inks and dyes
- Public transit jobs related to driving, maintenance, and repair
- Small businesses producing products from recycled materials
- Solar installation
- Tree cutting and pruning
- Peri-urban and urban agriculture
- Water retrofits to increase water efficiency and conservation
- Whole home performance, including attic insulation, weatherization, etc.

Green collar jobs can provide a career ladder for the population without high education attainment. For example, some workers might start at \$10 an hour inspecting homes for energy-efficient light bulbs. Then they might become \$18-an-hour workers installing solar panels and eventually \$25-an-hour solar-team managers. Eventually they might become \$40-an-hour electricians or carpenters who do energy-minded renovations. New funding opportunities for green jobs training are abundant. For example, a grant from the Living Cities initiative will award up to \$300,000 to collaborative efforts in green jobs training programs. Funds will be given to private/public partnerships that prepare workers for employment in energy efficiency, retrofitting, renewable energy, and/or green building.

Case Study: Crescent City Farmers Market, New Orleans

The Crescent City Farmers Market (CCFM), like Farmers Markets in other areas, is a proven effective stimulus for economic development for the Downtown area, for the agricultural enterprises that participate in the Market, and for the rural parishes from which the vendors come. A study by Tulane's A.B. Freeman School of Business found the following accomplishments related to the market's performance:

- The CCFM generates over \$1 million annually in direct and indirect benefits to vendors, Downtown businesses and rural communities;
- The average vendor takes home \$391/week, for an income of over \$20,000 a year from the Market;
- The additional income is spread far beyond Orleans and Jefferson Parishes, to more than seven parishes in Louisiana and at least four counties in Mississippi;
- The CCFM has resulted in 15 new businesses and 22 new jobs in its first three years;
- A January 1998 survey showed that the 55 businesses then operating in the market employed 98 people;
- Downtown businesses gain additional income of \$450,000 a year as a result of the Market.

The Crescent City Farmers Market is the public face of marketumbrella.org, a nonprofit, nongovernmental organization. Founded in 1995 as a part of the Twomey Center for Peace Through Justice at Loyola University New Orleans, the Market is an outgrowth and reflection of marketumbrella.org's core mission to cultivate the field of public markets for public good. Since 1995, the Crescent City Farmers Market has served as an incubator for developing best practices in market management.

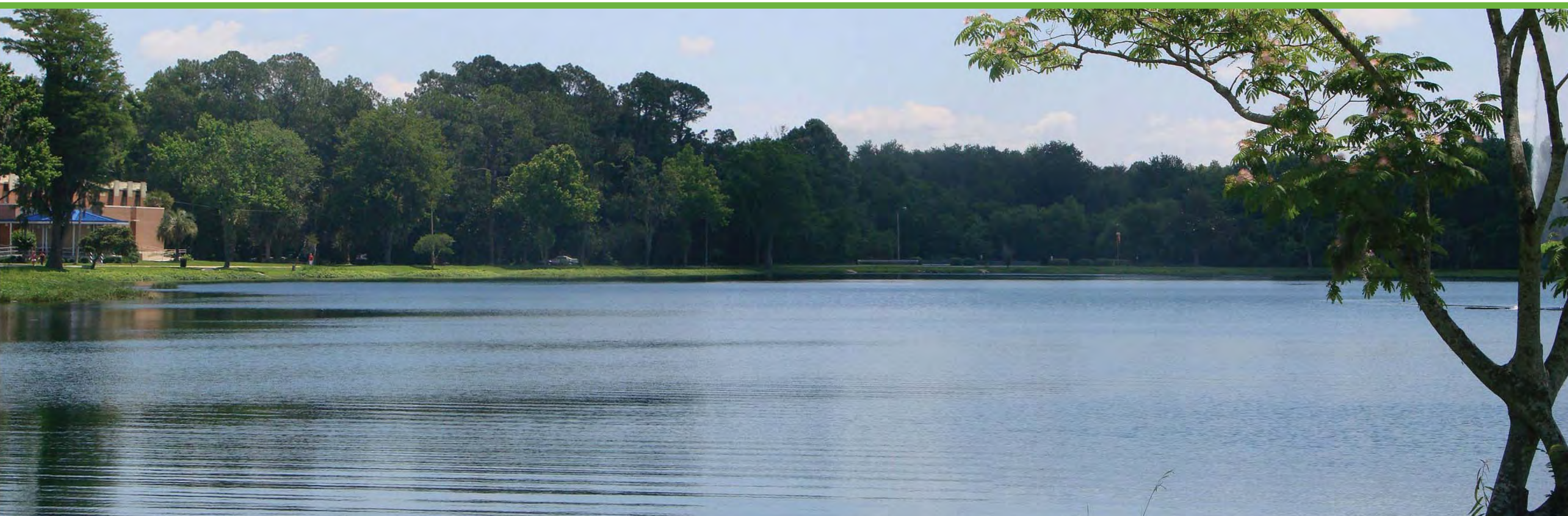
Source: <http://www.marketumbrella.org/>



Granville Island Public Market, Vancouver, BC



Appendix A Inventory and Analysis



EXISTING LAND USE

Columbia County Property Appraiser records indicate that the expanded Downtown CRA Expansion Area contains 721 parcels encompassing an area of 232 acres excluding right-of-ways. In comparison, there are 6,070 parcels in the City of Lake City encompassing an unofficial area of 6,942 acres excluding right-of-ways. The Downtown CRA district represents approximately 5.6% of the City's total land area and nearly 20% of the total parcel count. The description of the existing land use is mentioned below:

- 1. Residential Uses (47.23%)
- 2. Vacant Lands (21.10%)
- 3. Public and Semi-Public Uses (4.14%)
- 4. Commercial Uses (5.47%)
- 5. Recreation and Open Space (0.25%)
- 6. Industrial (1.16%)
- 7. Other (4.06)

Fig. A.2 illustrates the distribution of existing land uses in the planning area and Fig. A.1 provides a tabulation of land uses divided according to parcel count, total acreage covered, and percent of the total CRA acreage. As shown in Fig. A.1, in terms of total land area, residential uses account for the highest percentage totaling nearly forty-five percent (44.4%) of the CRA developable land. This is followed by vacant lands (21%), commercial uses (9.3%) and industrial uses (8.2%). The remainder of the land uses includes recreational uses, preservation and conservation lands, and other miscellaneous uses such as utilities and right-of-way easements. In terms of parcel count, residential uses account for over 60 percent of the total number of parcels, followed by vacant lands that include 255 parcels.

Residential
Residential uses constitute the largest component of the current land use categories in the planning area accounting for 173 acres or 44.40% of the planning area's total land area excluding right-of-ways. Columbia County Property Appraiser records indicate that the proposed Downtown CRA Expansion Area contains 771 properties classified as residential uses..

The CRA's population, according to the 2010 ESRI estimates, was 2,574. There were 511 single-family housing units in the planning area accounting for nearly seventy-six percent (75.71%) of the total parcels under residential uses. The remainder consists of eleven (11) parcels under multi-family residential uses (including apartments, duplexes, and triplexes), accounting for 2.2% of the total acreage. The percentage of multifamily units is extremely low and suggests a need for examining potential opportunities to provide for a mix of housing types in the planning area.

Additionally, according to the 2010 ESRI estimates, nearly thirty-two percent (32%) of the housing stock is renter occupied. The high percentage of renter occupied housing units combined with the predominantly single family residential character of the planning area suggests the presence of a relatively high percentage of absentee owners that could result in the lack of maintenance, deterioration of housing conditions, and a decline in housing values.

There are more than 200 vacant residential units in the planning area representing nearly thirty per cent (28.5%) of the total number of residential properties (771). Map A.3 shows that the vacant residential units are scattered throughout the planning area, with a high degree of concentration in the areas located to the neighborhoods located north of Railroad Street. According to the 2010 Census, nearly seventy percent (70%) of the total housing units in the CRA were built up before 1979 indicating a declining housing stock.

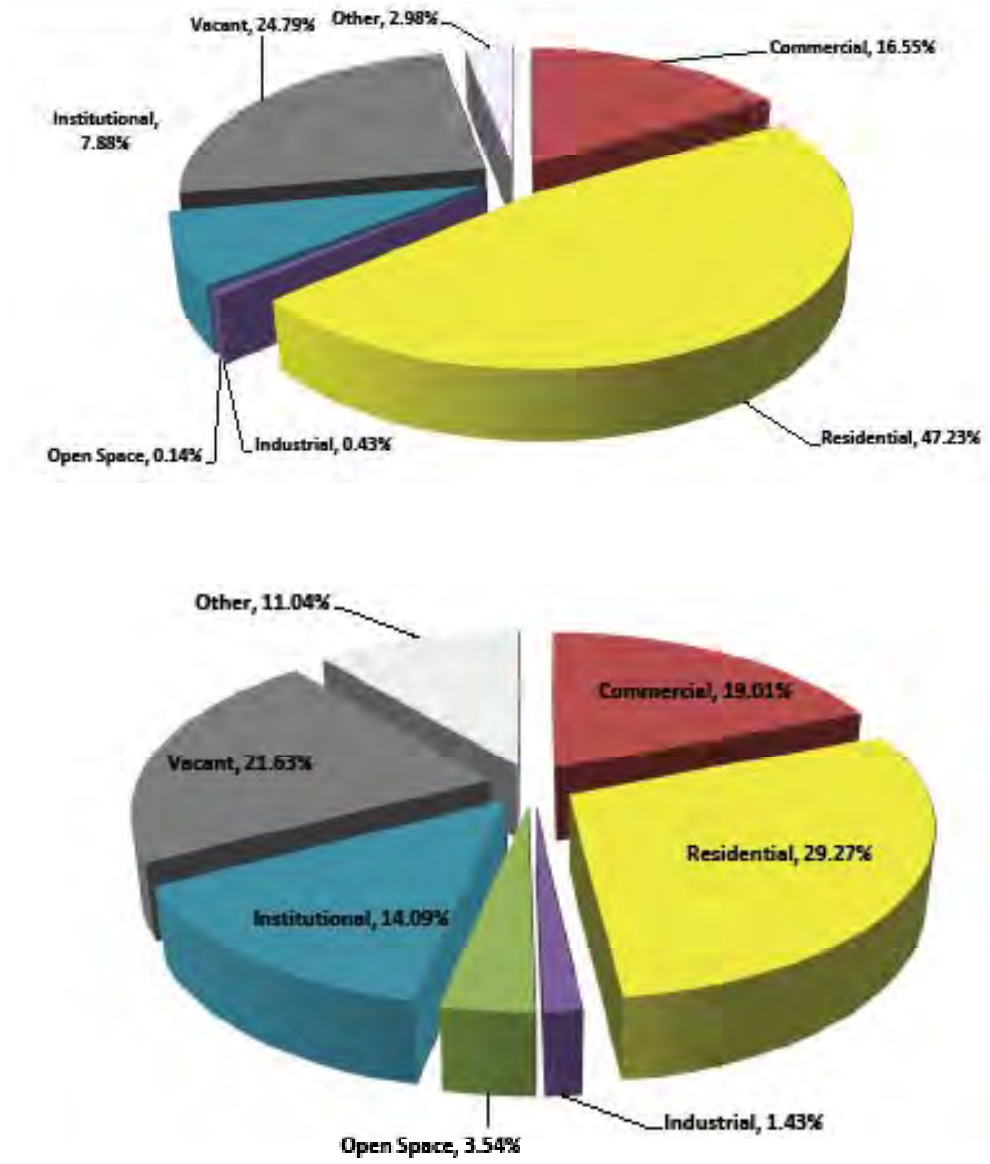
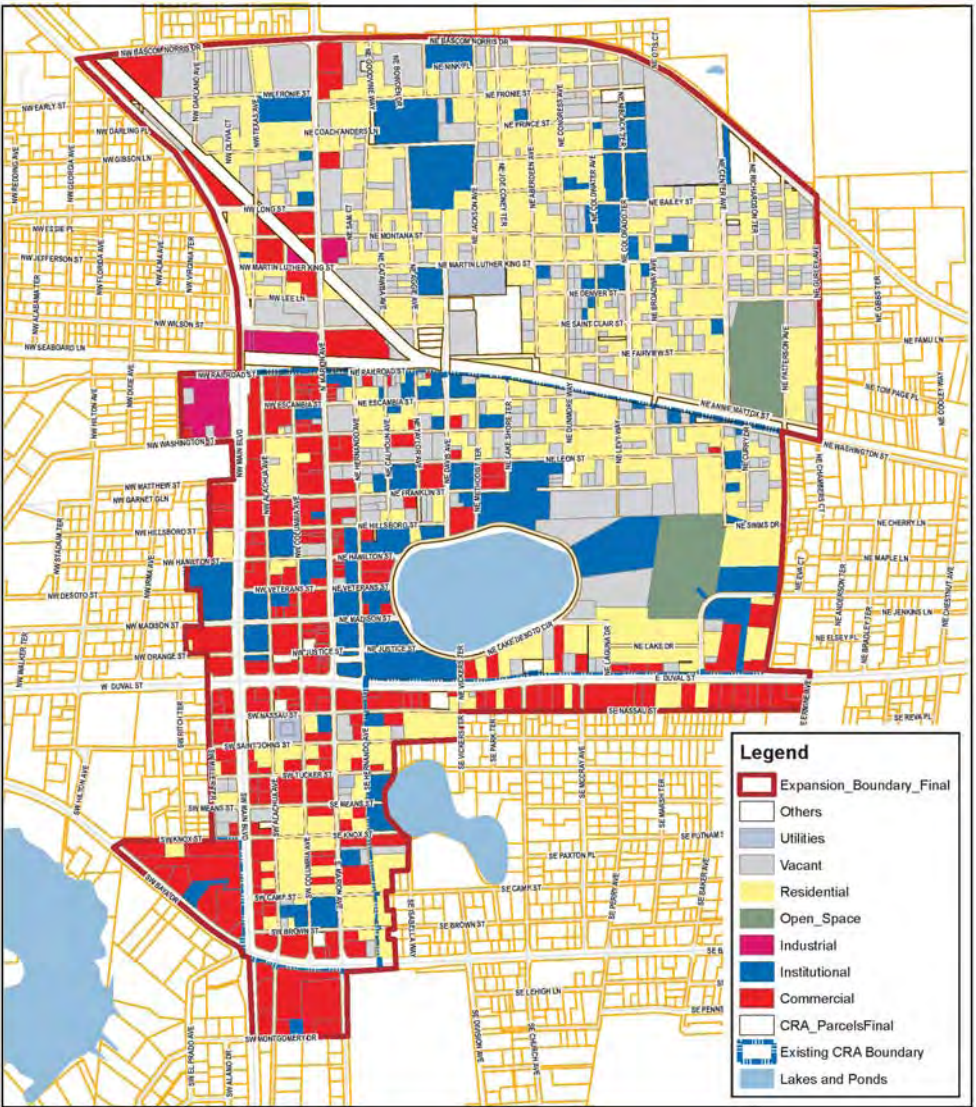


Fig. A.1 Existing Land Use Distribution Charts- by Acreage (Top); by Parcel Count (Bottom)



EXISTING LAND USE

Downtown Lake City
CRA Master Plan
Lake City, Florida | May 2011



Fig. A.2 Existing Land Use Distribution Map

Vacant Lands

Nearly twenty-five (24.4%) of the CRA's total land area is considered vacant, encompassing an area of over 100 acres, scattered throughout the neighborhoods. Map 2.5 shows the distribution of vacant lands within the study Area boundaries. Vacant structures and abandoned lots are strong indicators of economic distress and lead to deterioration of the physical environment and are detrimental to the investment image of the community. The presence of vacant and underutilized buildings contributes both as an opportunity and a liability for redevelopment. Vacant parcels of considerable size can be assembled to support significant adaptive reuse of underutilized and deteriorating buildings. Vacancy rates also depress property values of neighboring commercial and residential properties resulting in reduced tax revenues for the local government.

Institutional Uses

Institutional uses within the study area comprise nearly ten percent (9.30%) of the CRA's total acreage. The public and semi-public uses include: government owned properties; faith-based institutions, community based organizations, day care centers, and educational institutions. The total number of parcels in the CRA, under the public and semi-public land use category, comprises a total of fifty parcels.

According to the Columbia County Property Appraiser records, there are a total of thirty-two properties owned by institutions including government agencies, churches, and non-profit agencies. The faith based organizations represent a diverse population and are pivotal in ensuring increased community participation and implementing a successful program.

Commercial

Commercial uses account for just over fifteen percent (16.5%) of the CRA encompassing over 100 acres. Most of the commercial development within the planning area is concentrated along Marion Street, SW Main Blvd., Duval Street, and SW Baya Drive. Commercial development along the primary corridors within the CRA boundaries include a range of uses, including: suburban style strip malls, retail stores, drive through restaurants, office buildings, few restaurants, gas stations and auto repair garages. During the community workshops, the community observed that the existing inventory of commercial uses along the corridors is insufficient to meet the neighborhood needs, such as grocery stores and restaurants, thus motivating residents to search outside the neighborhood for their daily needs.

Recreation and Open Space

Existing recreation and open space facilities in the CRA include the Annie Mattox Park, the highly underutilized lakefront park near Lake Desoto, and the Niblack Elementary School properties. Adjacent to the Shands at Lakeshore hospital property is a vast tract of inaccessible wetlands area that serves as an important open space for the CRA.

Industrial

There are only six parcels (6) under the industrial land use category within the planning area boundaries, covering approximately 7.2 acres or 1.2% of the CRA's total land area. The majority of industrial uses are located along Railroad Street and are in deteriorating conditions. The industrial uses are adjacent to commercial units and lack adequate buffering, resulting in incompatible land use development patterns. These industrial uses are a health and safety hazard to the neighborhood leading to a deterioration of visual character and a significant decline in property values.

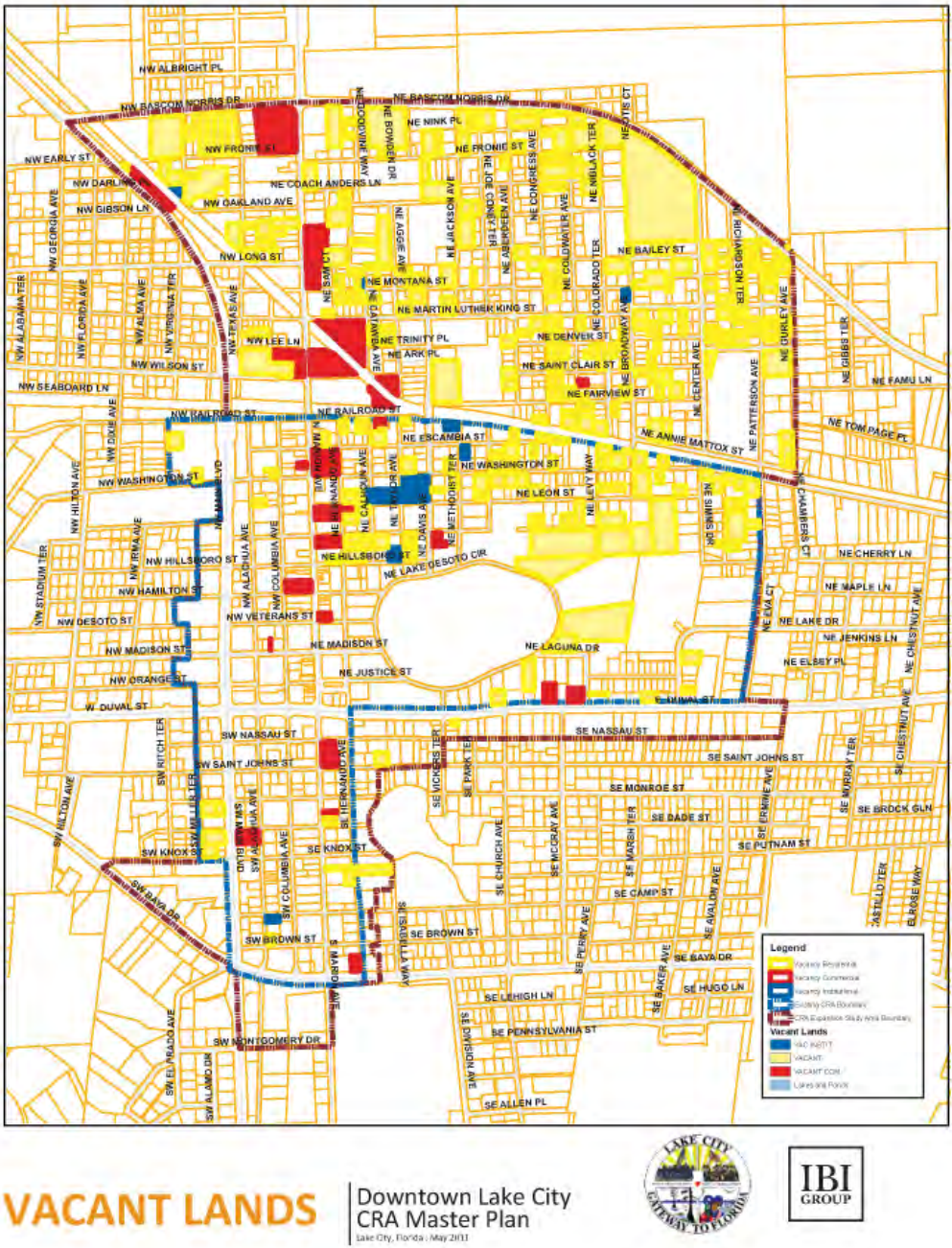


Fig. A.3 Vacant Lands Map

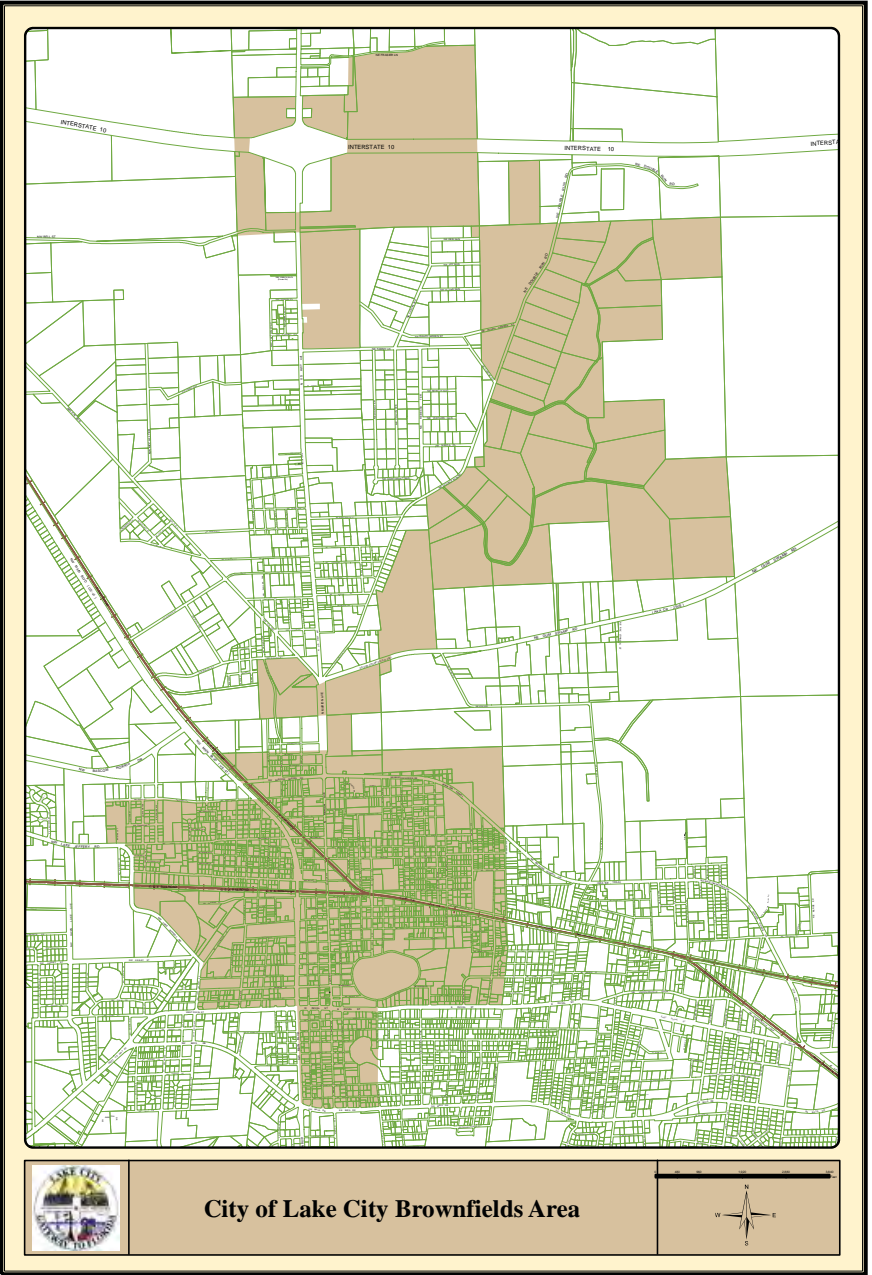


Fig. A.4 Brownfields Area Map

Property Values

The Columbia County Property Appraiser GIS database was utilized to analyze assessed values for all assessed properties within the CRA boundaries. The assessed value is the dollar value assigned to a property by the Columbia County Property Appraiser’s Office for taxation purposes, and is primarily based on the land use, building square footage, property improvements, building materials, and location. The total taxable value of all properties in the CRA is \$67,846,445, out of which there were 269 parcels with zero taxable value. Taxable value is the assessed value less any applicable exemptions. The properties with zero taxable value include properties that could include lands under public ownership, faith-based organization, institutional uses, and homesteaded properties.

Ownership

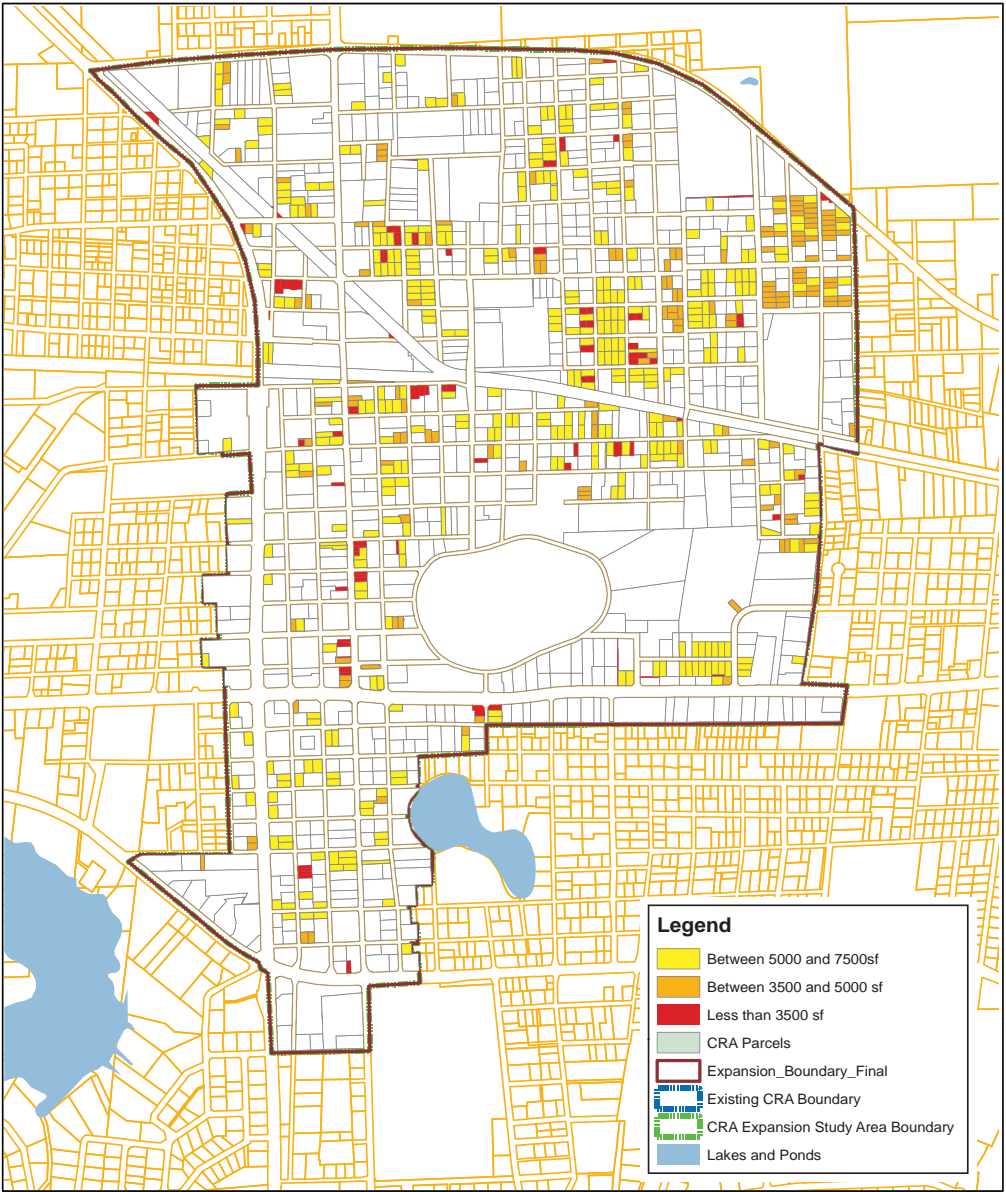
The redevelopment potential of a project is often dependent on the property ownership patterns. Multiple ownership patterns can be a hindrance for assembling individual properties to support redevelopment projects. For example, if one owner is interested in redeveloping a property, but needs additional area to meet existing land development regulations, and the adjacent owners are not interested in joining forces or selling the property, then the first owner is powerless to make the necessary property improvements. Large shares of public owned vacant land also reduces the tax base for the City and creates some challenges for redevelopment. However, often the public entities are more supportive of the community’s vision and could be an asset in developing “demonstration” projects to facilitate investment and revitalization of deteriorating areas.

There are 111 parcels identified under public ownership within the planning area. The public owners include the City of Lake City, Columbia County, State of Florida, School Board, and the Lakeshore Hospital Authority. However, with the hospital’s merger with a private company, the hospital will revert back to the tax rolls in the next fiscal year.

Parcel Size

The size of parcels has a significant impact on the redevelopment potential for any proposed property. Typically, older platted subdivisions and commercial properties are too small for development and exhibit non-conformance with current zoning regulations. Contemporary development trends favor larger sites for redevelopment as they offer the flexibility to provide a variety of uses and a mix of activities. Larger sites also reduce the complexities involved with assembly of smaller parcels to support large scale redevelopment projects.

Map A.5 identifies the deficient parcels in relation to lot sizes found in the Study Area. Inconsistencies between lot sizes and lot size requirements can be identified by comparing the minimum lot area requirements contained in the zoning code to the existing lot parcel sizes. Nearly 15 percent of the properties in the Study Area do not meet the minimum lot area requirements (6,000 sq.ft. min. lot size) listed in the City of Lake City Land Development Regulations.



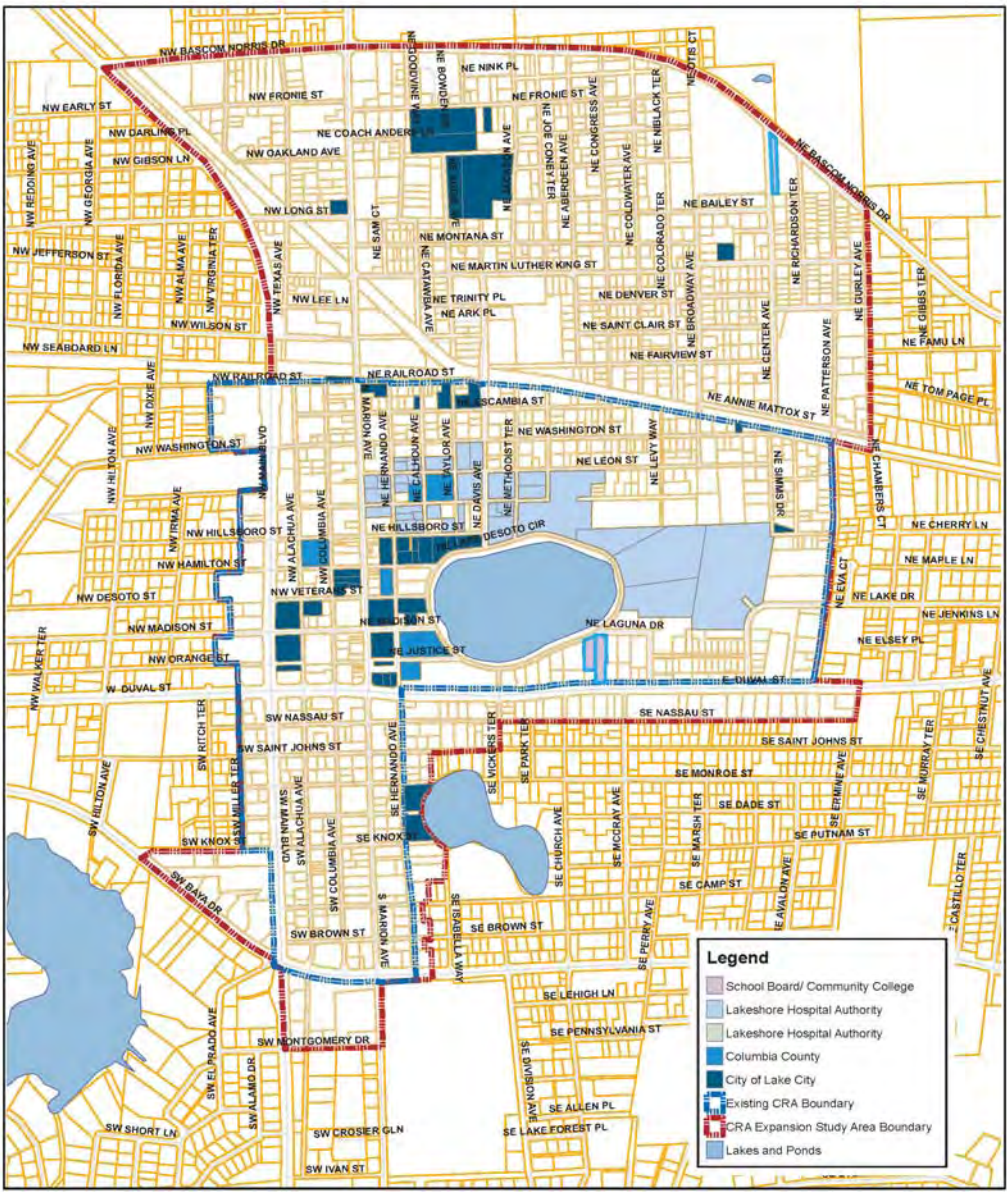
PARCEL SIZES

Downtown Lake City
CRA Master Plan
Lake City, Florida - May 2011



Fig. A.5 Map showing size of sub-standard parcels in the Downtown CRA

The development of commercial uses on substandard lots also has a deleterious impact on neighboring residential uses, due to traffic hazards caused by business parking located in the front of the property, encroachments into residential areas, inadequate buffering, and spill-over parking. These properties are further limited by their size in relation to parking and setback requirements, stormwater treatment standards and landscaping requirements. The lot depths of several properties located in the study area is considered too small for development according to contemporary standards.



OWNERSHIP

Downtown Lake City
CRA Master Plan
Lake City, Florida - May 2011



Fig. A.5 Map showing major public owners in the Downtown CRA

CIRCULATION

Downtown Lake City is currently served by a diverse, but constrained transportation network system consisting of roadways, public transportation and bicycle/ pedestrian facilities.

Roadways and Street Network

Downtown Lake City’s street grid is observed to be generally uniform with a minimal number of cul-de-sacs or dead ends. Therefore an efficient pedestrian and vehicular movement across the Downtown CRA can be achieved by traveling along most of the north-south or east-west streets. The only exception is the wetlands zone adjacent to Lake Desoto that creates a north-south disconnect with Duval Street along the eastern edge of the Lake and an east –west disconnect between NE Drury Drive and Hernando Avenue.

As illustrated in Fig. A.7, Marion Avenue, Main Boulevard and Hernando Avenue are the three streets that are the major transportation corridors of the downtown in the north –south direction. Duval Street, SW Baya Drive, CR 100A (Basscom Norris Drive), Franklin Street, Railroad Street, and MLK Street form the major east west corridors of the downtown.

The intersection of Duval Street with Hernando Avenue experiences circulation issues, primarily because of the multiple ingress and egress points from the parking areas, and the County facilities. Downtown’s street network consists of two-way streets with the exception of one-way streets along Hernando Avenue between Madison and Franklin Streets, and Lake Desoto Circle.

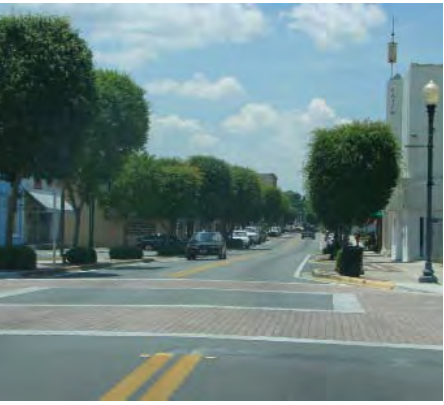
Parking

Parking is an important component of the Downtown’s overall transportation network and influences various aspects of the Downtown’s character including urban design, walkability, traffic circulation and economic development.

County and local government services, including the Columbia County Office, Columbia County Court Administration, and Lake City City Hall are the primary parking generators in Downtown Lake City.

During the visioning sessions conducted as part of this master planning process, parking was a recurrent issue identified by the participants. While the County facilities were found to be the prime traffic generator contributing to circulation and access problems at key intersections along Marion Avenue, the remainder of the Downtown area occasionally experienced parking congestion, particularly during meetings at City Hall and special events on Lake Desoto.

Effective management of on-street parking spaces is critical in providing access to government employees, customers, business owners, and residents. As the residential and commercial base for the Downtown intensifies, the parking demand is likely to increase.



Duval Street

Main Boulevard

SW Baya Drive

Marion Avenue

Pedestrian Circulation

Downtown Lake City's overall physical structure, with blocks typically measuring 300 feet by 300 feet, is ideal for creating a safe pedestrian environment, allowing frequent intersections and interconnected areas.

The majority of County offices and retail areas in the Downtown are within a quarter-mile walking radius from Lake Desoto. Currently, pedestrian activity is high in the vicinity of the Columbia County Office, Columbia County Court Administration, and the City Hall with employees and visitors walking between the various facilities and parking areas. Pedestrian activity is also concentrated in the precinct of Lake Desoto and Shands Lake Shore Hospital.

However, lack of clustered destinations other than offices in the area has resulted in an underutilized pedestrian environment. The planned improvements along Marion Avenue and the proposed lakefront improvements are expected to generate more foot fall in the area, thereby warranting the need for developing strategies and design guidelines that ensure adequate sidewalk widths and appropriate placement of streetscape elements such as shade trees, seating, traffic calming, and lighting in relation to destinations.

PEDESTRIAN DESTINATIONS

Planned development efforts in Downtown Lake City, such as waterfront entertainment district, SW Main Boulevard/US 441 improvements, Duval Street revitalization are expected to transform the existing pedestrian orientation of the Downtown. Currently, most of the pedestrian traffic generated in the Downtown is related to the County facilities and the Lake. The Downtown area also has a few heritage and recreation resources, which are currently underutilized and need better connectivity through appropriate physical interventions and marketing strategies.

EXISTING DESTINATIONS

- Columbia County office
- Columbia County court administration
- City Hall
- Area restaurants
- Richardson High School and Niblack Elementary School
- Churches
- Lake Desoto Circle
- City Park

PEDESTRIAN PROFILES

The pedestrian users in Downtown Lake City can be classified into seven basic categories:

- Government Employees
- Downtown Business Owners and customers
- Professional Offices and clients
- Downtown and City residents
- Government Business Visitors
- Special Events Visitors
- Church parishioners



Fig. A.6 Pedestrian Destinations Map



Demand Routes

In order to prioritize the improvements to the system, it is necessary to identify the major pedestrian demand routes. The demand routes can be determined by the users and their respective destinations. In addition, the plan must address the future land uses and future pedestrian demand routes. The following is a summary of the major user groups and their respective demand routes:

Weekday Commuters

The weekday commuters are those individuals who work in the Downtown every day. These individuals are either employed at one of the many government buildings or in the private sector office buildings. They commute into the city on the major roadways. At lunch hour, many of the commuters walk to the parking lot and drive to the many restaurants along US 441/Marion Avenue. However, due to a lack of restaurants in the Downtown CBD along Main Boulevard and Hernando Avenue, there is minimal pedestrian activity in the Downtown core. As a result of these existing demand patterns, the dominant pedestrian demand routes are limited to the sidewalk areas from public parking lots to the main employment centers.

Weekday and Weekend Visitors

Visitors to the Downtown come for a variety of reasons. The predominant reasons are:

- Visits to the several churches located in the Downtown
- Visits to the lakefront
- Visits to the Shands Lake Shore Hospital
- Special events visitors

As a result of these demand patterns, the major demand routes are as follows:

Marion Avenue, Hernando Avenue, Justice Street, Madison Street, Veteran’s Street, Hamilton Street, Hillsboro Street and Franklin Street, Duval Street, Columbia Avenue, Alachua Avenue, NW Broadway Avenue, NE Lakeshore Terrace, NE Davis Avenue, SE Vickers Terrace. In the future, a new demand pattern is expected to evolve as a result of the proposed projects including:

- Shands Lake Shore Hospital Expansion, Professional Offices Center, Senior/Assisted Living Facilities, Housing for Medical Professionals, Nursing School and Student Housing;
- Lake Desoto Planned Improvements
- Duval Street Revitalization
- Main Boulevard and Hernando Avenue Planned Destinations
- Various special events

Pedestrian Comfort Level

Sidewalk condition is the dominant factor affecting a pedestrian friendly environment. The sidewalk must be well maintained, have adequate width, and be contiguous. Considerations such as posted speed, buffer from the travel lane, presence of shade, safety topography, sidewalk width, sidewalk condition, pedestrian scaled buildings, presence of arcade or awnings, access to public restrooms are some of the factors used to measure the level of comfort.

In general, the central business district along Marion Avenue (US 441), Hernando Avenue, and the perpendicular streets -Justice Street, Madison Street, Veteran’s Street, Hamilton Street and Hillsboro Street have good pedestrian comfort parameters. Lake Desoto Circle has also been assessed to have good pedestrian friendly conditions. NE Franklin Street, NE Taylor Avenue, NE Davis Avenue, SW Main Boulevard, SW Columbia Avenue and Duval Street have a fair pedestrian environment: adequate sidewalk width, pedestrian scaled buildings, street amenities, lack of shade trees, traffic calming devices.

Shade is another important factor for the pedestrian to feel comfortable to walk in Lake City, as the weather here is hot and humid in the long summer time. Street trees and storefront awnings and arcades can provide the necessary shade for the pedestrians.

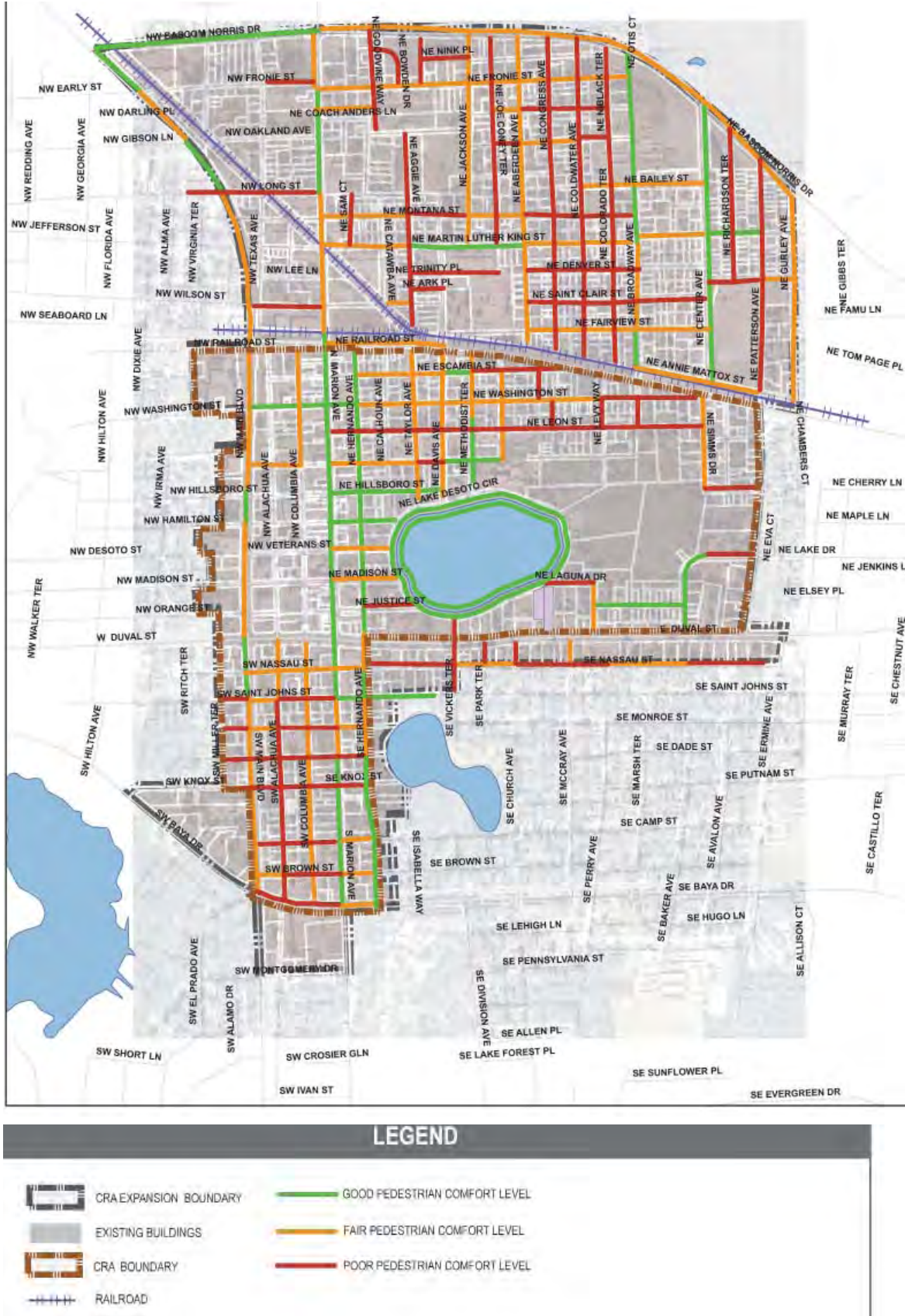


Fig. A.7 Pedestrian Comfort Map

PARKS, OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

Annie Mattox Recreation Center is a city-owned facility, located in the north-east part of Downtown, bound by NE Center Avenue and NE Patterson Avenue and Railroad Street. The facility contains a large children’s playground, baseball court, tennis courts and is also the venue for several of the City’s events.

However the downtown lacks in park facilities for city level events and congregation spaces. To provide for these needs, the large playfields of the Richardson High School and Niblack School have the potential to be better utilized by the City residents and also generate revenue for the Schools.

Lake Desoto
Lake Desoto is uniquely located in the center of the downtown which makes it the natural ‘heart’ of the city. In that sense it is the most prime public space and easily accessible within a quarter mile radius from the major pedestrian destinations of the city.

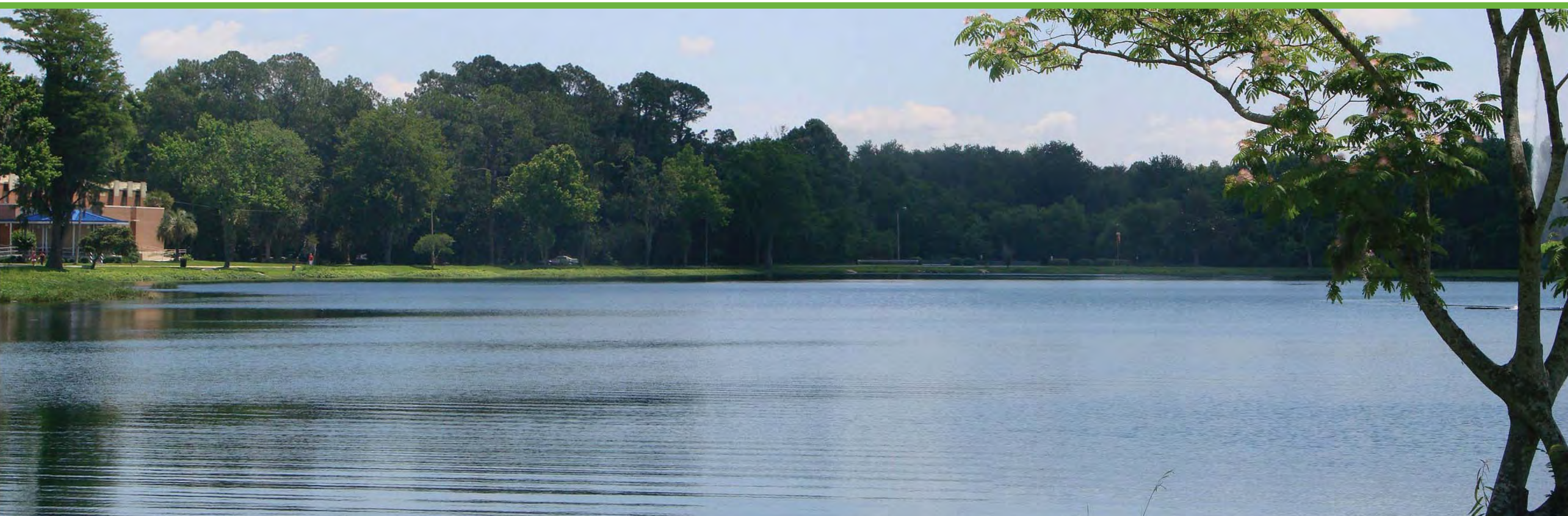
Another distinct advantage is the proximity of the Lake to Marion Avenue (US 441) and the CBD which are linked by perpendicular streets – NE Justice Street, NE Madison Street, NE Veterans Street, NE Hamilton Street, all of which are about 160 m in length. Such a short distance facilitates an easy movement for the city residents after shopping on Marion Avenue and therefore the Lakefront is proposed to be enriched by introduction of performance area/ Amphitheatre/Community Stage, Walking/Jogging Trail/Footbridges, Fishing Pier, boating facility, play area, Wedding event lawn, food courts, and landscaped green terraces, plazas/ with comfortable pedestrian amenities such as shaded seating areas with adequate lighting, furnishings and paving. In other words, the intent is to make the lakefront a vibrant public space with diverse activities for all age groups to relax and enjoy.



| LEGEND | | |
|--------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| | WETLANDS | OTHER VACANT LAND |
| | NEIGHBORHOOD PARK | SCHOOL PLAYFIELD |
| | VACANT RESIDENTIAL LAND | CIVIC PARK |
| | PARKING LOT | LAKE |
| | | QUARTER MILE RADIUS |

Fig. A.8 Open Space and Recreation Map

Appendix B Finding of Necessity Study





FINDING OF NECESSITY STUDY

FOR THE EXPANSION OF THE BOUNDARIES OF THE
Lake City Community Redevelopment Area

CITY OF LAKE CITY, FLORIDA
March 2011

FINDING OF NECESSITY
FOR THE EXPANSION OF THE
BOUNDARIES OF THE LAKE CITY
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT
AREA

Prepared For
CITY OF LAKE CITY, FL



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Overview

The City of Lake City is located in Columbia County, in the north central portion of Florida. Since the 1980s, the City has invested significant resources to address deteriorating conditions in its Downtown Central Business District. The City Council, in 1981, created a Community Redevelopment Agency for the Downtown CBD area to create a more dynamic office, service, financial, entertainment, residential and governmental area. The original CRA was revised in 1989 and 1993. Since that time, several successful projects have been implemented contributing to the overall improvement of the area’s aesthetic character and the economic vitality of the Downtown area. Now, nearly 30 years later, community leaders have had the foresight to undertake an initiative to address the needs of areas in economic decline outside the boundaries of the original Lake City Community Redevelopment Area (Map 1).

The Finding of Necessity Study initially focused on the two expansion areas including a northern area (Map 1), which is generally defined by NW Main Boulevard on the west, NW Bascom Norris Drive on the north, NE Gurley Avenue on the east, and the original Downtown CRA boundary (NE Railroad Street) as the southern extent. A southern section of the proposed CRA expansion area was also analyzed, generally defined by SW Baya Drive to the west, portions of SE Hugo Lane, SE Lehigh Lane, SE Baya Drive and SW Montgomery Drive to the south, and SE Ermine Avenue to the east. The southern portion of the proposed Expansion Area is also contiguous to the existing Downtown CRA. Portions of the northern and western boundaries of the southern expansion area are adjacent to a portions of the existing CRA which run along E Duval Street and SE Hernando Avenue. After a detailed analysis of the existing conditions of the larger Study Area, parcels to be included in the recommended CRA Expansion Area were determined and the boundary lines revised. The identified parcels are intended to define the boundaries shown in Map 2. The properties should not be construed as the official boundary for the Community Redevelopment Area.



Location Map- Lake City

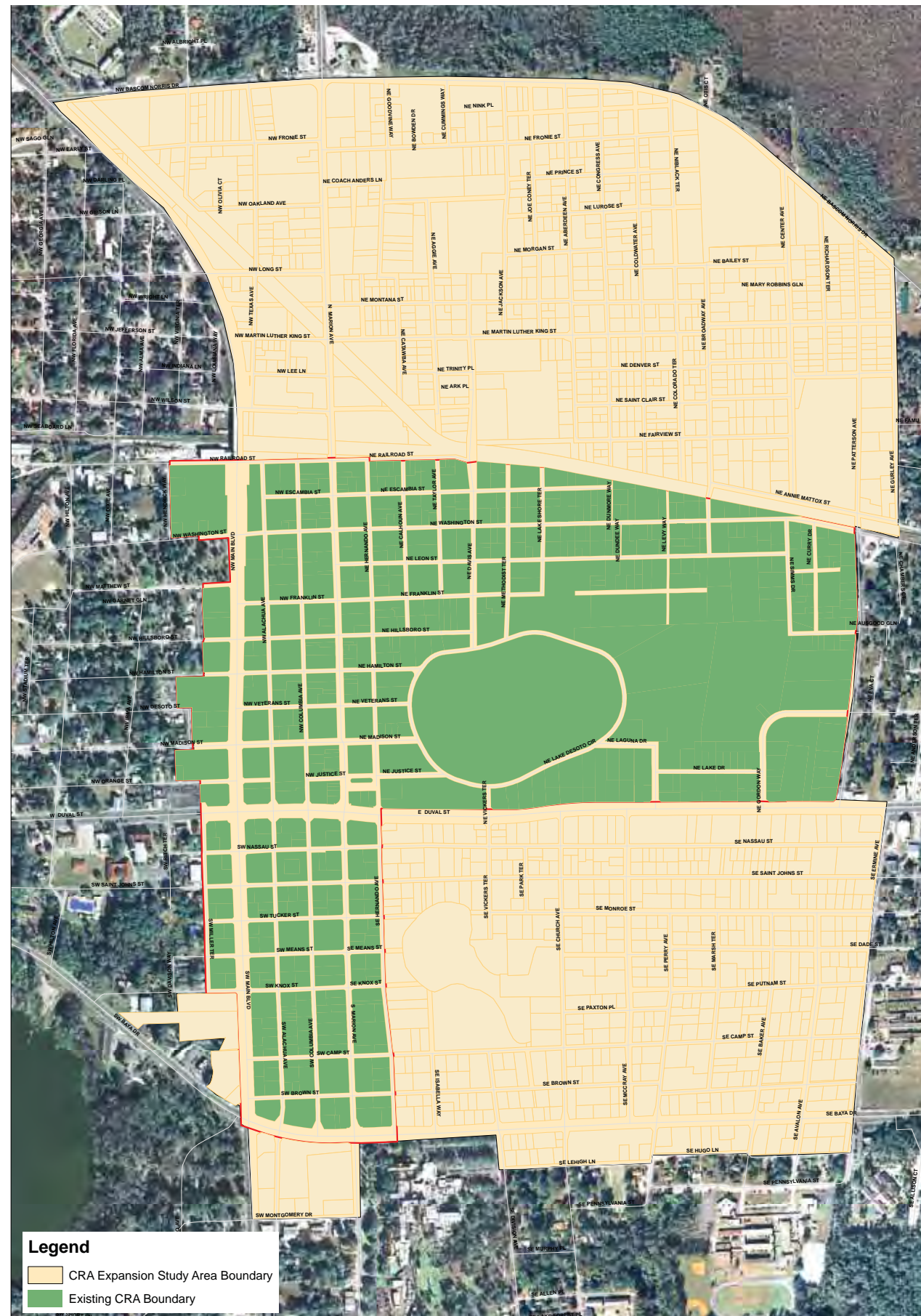
Building upon past success within the original CRA boundaries, the City is considering a course of action to similarly transform the condition of surrounding areas using tools provided to local governments through Chapter 163 Part II of the Florida Statutes. The City staff Councilled the IBI Group in October of 2010 to conduct a “Finding of Necessity Study” and determine the existence of “slum” or “blight” conditions in the proposed Downtown CRA Expansion Area of the City of Lake City, as defined by Section 163 of the Florida Statutes.

Determining the existence of “slum” or “blight” conditions within an area is the initial step in evaluating the appropriateness of an area for inclusion in an existing Community Redevelopment Agency. This study describes the physical and economic conditions and the regulatory requirements within the Study Area that are associated with blight, as defined by the Florida Statutes.

FINDING OF NECESSITY STUDY

The report begins with an overview of the Community Redevelopment Act of 1969, Section 163 of the Florida Statutes that provides a definition for the terms “slum” and “blight”. Following the overview, Section II discusses the research methodology adopted and establishes the recommended boundaries for the Downtown CRA Expansion Area based on the factors that are found to be indicative of slum or blighted conditions in the Study Area. Section III presents a existing conditions of blight and a detailed analysis of the demographic data found in the Study Area. Section IV presents conclusions and recommendations relating to the expansion of the original Downtown CRA boundaries.

Appendix A contains the demographic data prepared by IBI Group. Appendix B contains a photo inventory of the blighted conditions in the Study Area compiled during the fieldwork conducted by IBI Group in October, 2010. Appendix C contains the original Downtown Redevelopment Plan, prepared in 1989.



I. Community Redevelopment Act of 1969

The Community Redevelopment Act of 1969, Chapter 163 Part III, Florida Statutes, authorizes local governments to establish community redevelopment agencies to improve slum and blighted areas within their jurisdiction. The Act sets forth the legal process by which local governments may establish community redevelopment agencies and provides financing and regulatory tools to undertake the complex task of overcoming the conditions that contribute to the causes of slum and blight in declining areas of the City.

Section 163.355 F.S. requires local governments desiring to establish a community redevelopment agency to adopt, by resolution, a finding that one or more “slum” or “blighted” areas exist within its jurisdiction and that the rehabilitation, conservation, or redevelopment of such areas is necessary in the interest of the public health, safety, morals, or welfare of the residents of the area. Upon adoption of a redevelopment plan, the City’s redevelopment agency can begin implementing the plan, including creation of a tax increment trust fund for the redevelopment area. The following paragraphs discuss “slum” and “blight” as defined in the Florida State Statute:

Section 163.335(1), F.S....Slum and blighted areas constitute a serious and growing menace, injurious to the public health, safety, morals, and welfare of the residents of the state; that the existence of such areas contributes substantially and increasingly to the spread of disease and crime, constitutes an economic and social liability imposing onerous burdens which decrease the tax base and reduce tax revenues, substantially impairs or arrests sound growth, retards the provision of housing accommodations, aggravates traffic problems, and substantially hampers the elimination of traffic hazards and the improvement of traffic facilities; and that the prevention and elimination of slums and blight is a matter of state policy and state concern in order

that the state and its counties and municipalities shall not continue to be endangered by areas which are focal centers of disease, promote juvenile delinquency, and consume an excessive proportion of its revenues because of the extra services required for police, fire, accident, hospitalization, and other forms of public protection, services, and facilities.

Section 163.335(2), F.S. ...certain slum or blighted areas, or portions thereof, may require acquisition, clearance, and disposition subject to use restrictions, as provided in this part, since the prevailing condition of decay may make impracticable the reclamation of the area by conservation or rehabilitation; that other areas or portions thereof may, through the means provided in this part, be susceptible of conservation or rehabilitation in such a manner that the conditions and evils enumerated may be eliminated, remedied, or prevented; and that salvageable slum and blighted areas can be conserved and rehabilitated through appropriate public action as herein authorized and the cooperation and voluntary action of the owners and tenants of property in such areas.

Section 163.335(3), F.S. ... powers conferred by this part are for public uses and purposes for which public money may be expended and police power exercised, and the necessity in the public interest for the provisions herein enacted is declared as a matter of legislative determination.

Section 163.335(5), F.S. ...the preservation or enhancement of the tax base from which a taxing authority realizes tax revenues is essential to its existence and financial health; that the preservation and enhancement of such tax base is implicit in the purposes for which a taxing authority is established; that tax increment financing is an effective method of achieving such preservation and enhancement in areas in which such tax base is declining; that community redevelopment in such areas, when complete, will enhance such tax base and provide increased tax revenues to all affected taxing authorities, increasing their ability to

accomplish their other respective purposes; and that the preservation and enhancement of the tax base in such areas through tax increment financing and the levying of taxes by such taxing authorities therefore and the appropriation of funds to a redevelopment trust fund bears a substantial relation to the purposes of such taxing authorities and is for their respective purposes and concerns.

Section 163.335(6), F.S. ...there exists in counties and municipalities of the state a severe shortage of housing affordable to residents of low or moderate income, including the elderly; that the existence of such condition affects the health, safety, and welfare of the residents of such counties and municipalities and retards their growth and economic and social development; and that the elimination or improvement of such conditions is a proper matter of state policy and state concern is for a valid and desirable purpose.

Section 163.335(7), F.S. ...prevention or elimination of a slum area or blighted area as defined in this part and the preservation or enhancement of the tax base are not public uses or purposes for which private property may be taken by eminent domain and do not satisfy the public purpose requirement of s. 6(a), Art. X of the State Constitution.

The Florida State Statute

The following paragraph provides the definition of “blighted areas” as defined in Section 163.340 (8) of the Florida State Statute:

Section 163.340(8), "Blighted area" means an area in which there are a substantial number of deteriorated, or deteriorating structures, in which conditions, as indicated by government-maintained statistics or other studies, are leading to economic distress or endanger life or property, and in which two or more of the following factors are present:

- (a) Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout, parking facilities, roadways, bridges, or public transportation facilities;
- (b) Aggregate assessed values of real property in the area for ad valorem tax purposes have failed to show any appreciable increase over the 5 years prior to the finding of such conditions;
- (c) Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness;
- (d) Unsanitary or unsafe conditions;
- (e) Deterioration of site or other improvements;
- (f) Inadequate and outdated building density patterns;
- (g) Falling lease rates per square foot of office, commercial, or industrial space compared to the remainder of the county or municipality;
- (h) Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land;
- (i) Residential and commercial vacancy rates higher in the area than in the remainder of the county or municipality;
- (j) Incidence of crime in the area higher than in the remainder of the county or municipality;
- (k) Fire and emergency medical service calls to the area proportionately higher than in the remainder of the county or municipality;
- (l) A greater number of violations of the Florida Building Code in the area than the number of violations recorded in the remainder of the county or municipality;
- (m) Diversity of ownership or defective or unusual conditions of title which prevent the free alienability of land within the deteriorated or hazardous area; or
- (n) Governmentally owned property with adverse environmental conditions caused by a public or private entity.

EXPANSION OF THE DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT AREA BOUNDARIES

II. Study Area Description

The initial study area for the blight analysis was split into two sections, north and south. The northern area was generally defined by the following boundaries- NW Main Boulevard on the west, NW Bascom Norris Drive on the north, NE Gurley Avenue on the east, and the original Downtown CRA boundary (NE Railroad Street) as the southern extent. The southern area was generally defined by the following boundaries- SW Baya Drive to the west, portions of SE Hugo Lane, SE Lehigh Lane, SE Baya Drive and SW Montgomery Drive to the south, SE Ermine Avenue to the east and the original Downtown CRA to the north.

The proposed expansion area was determined based on the following criteria:

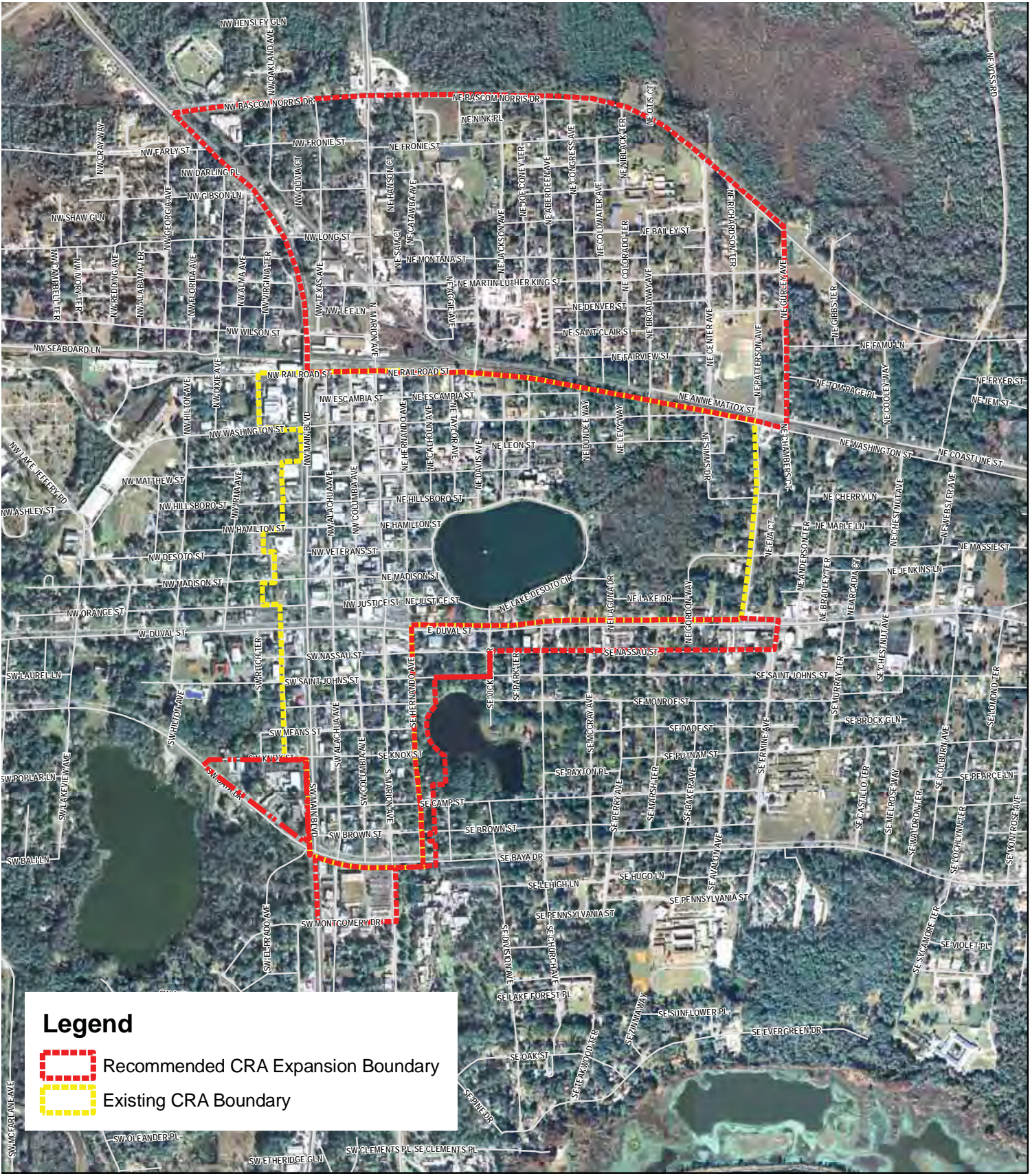
- Statutory criteria pertaining to site and economic conditions that warrant the use of redevelopment powers provided by Statute.
- Consideration of future development or redevelopment potential based on factors including ownership patterns, parcel sizes, ease of assemblage, and housing values.
- Consideration of sound planning principles for continuity of future land use based on adjacent land uses or land attributes, transportation systems, and the efficient provision of government utilities and services.
- Deteriorating commercial corridors and areas with commercial, industrial and residential land use conflicts.
- Areas providing a logical terminus for the boundaries such as SR 100 and existing CRA boundaries

This area was selected because it conforms to applicable provisions of Section 163.340, Florida Statutes, relating to areas considered for Community Redevelopment Plans. Based on the definitions in the Statute and analysis of “blight” conditions discussed in this Study, the legal description for current and proposed Downtown CRA boundaries are as follows (Map 2):

Current CRA Boundaries

The following is a legal description of the boundaries of the Downtown Community Redevelopment Area:

Commence at the intersection of the East right-of-way line of NE Hernando Avenue and the North right-of-way line of NE Railroad Street in the northern division of Lake City, Florida for a Point Of Beginning; thence run Easterly along said North right-of-way line of NE Railroad Street to the East right-of-way line of NE Davis Avenue and the Southerly right-of-way line of CSX Railroad; thence continue along the said Southerly right-of-way line of CSX Railroad to its’ intersection with the Westerly right-of-way line of NE Patterson Avenue and the Northerly right-of-way line of NE Washington Street; thence run Southerly along the said Westerly right-of-way line of NE Patterson Avenue to the intersection of the Northerly right-of-way line of E Duval Street (AKA US HWY 90); thence run Westerly along the said Northerly right-of-way line of E Duval Street to the intersection of the Easterly right-of-way line of NE Hernando Avenue and then Northerly right-of-way line of E Duval Street (US HWY 90); thence run Southerly along the East right-of-way line of SE Hernando Avenue to the Southerly right-of-way line of SE Baya Drive; thence run Westerly along the said right-of-way line of SE Baya Drive to it’s intersection with the Westerly right-of-way line of SW Main Boulevard (AKA US HWY 41); thence run Northerly along the said Westerly right-of-way line of SW Knox Street; thence run Westerly along said South right-of-way line to extended West right-of-way line of SW Miller Terrace; thence run Northerly along the said West right-of-way line of SW Miller Terrace to the South right-of-way line of NW Orange Street; thence run Westerly along the said South right-of-way line of NW Orange Street to the extended Westerly Property line of Block 312, Western Division of the City Of Lake City, Florida; thence run Northerly along said Westerly property line to the South right-of-way line of NW Madison Street; thence run Easterly along the said South right-of-way line to the extended Easterly right-of-way line of NW DeSoto Street; thence run Northerly along the said Easterly right-of-way line of NW DeSoto Street to the Northeast corner of the



City of Lake City
Map 2: Recommended CRA Expansion Boundary

right-of-way line of said NW DeSoto Street; thence run Westerly along the North right-of-way line of said NW DeSoto Street to the West property line of Parcel Number12244-000; thence run Northerly along the said West property line to the South right-of-way line of NW Hamilton Street; thence run Easterly along the said South right-of-way line of NW Hamilton Street to the extended Westerly property line of Parcel Number 12233-000; thence run Northerly along said Westerly property line to the South right-of-way line of NW Hillsboro Street; thence continue Northerly across NW Hillsboro Street along the extended West property lines of Parcel Numbers 12230-000, 12229-000, and 12228-000 to the South right-of-way line of NW Matthew Street; thence run across said NW Matthew Street to the Southerly property line of Oak Lawn Cemetery; thence run Easterly along said Southerly property line to the Easterly property line of said Oak Lawn Cemetery, also being the West right-of-way line of US HWY 41 (AKA NW Main Boulevard); thence run Northerly along said Easterly property line of Oak Lawn Cemetery to the Northeast property corner of said Oak Lawn Cemetery; thence run Westerly along the North property line of said Oak Lawn Cemetery (AKA the Southerly right-of-way line of NW Washington Street) to the extended Easterly right-of-way line of NW Hendrick Way; thence run Northerly along the said Easterly right-of-way line of NW Hendrick Way, extended to the Northerly right-of-way line of NW Railroad Street; thence run Easterly along the said Northerly right-of-way line of NW Railroad Street, across NW Main Boulevard (AKA US HWY 41) to the intersection of the extended East right-of-way line of NE Hernando Avenue and the North right-of-way line of NE Railroad Street, also being the Point Of Beginning.

Proposed Expansion Area

An area north of the existing Downtown CRA being described as:

Beginning at a point on the existing CRA boundary where NE Railroad Street intersects NW Main Boulevard, proceed north along extended centerline of NW Main Boulevard through the paved right-of-way to its intersection with NW Bascom Norris Drive; continue east, following the centerline of NW Bascom Norris Drive as it runs east generally to a point where it intersects NE Gurley Avenue; then proceeding south along the centerline of NE Gurley Avenue to the point of intersection with NE Annie Mattox Street; then proceeding slightly northwest along the centerline of NE Annie Mattox Street to the intersection of NE Railroad Street; then proceeding west to the point of beginning.

Additionally, an area south of the existing Downtown CRA being described as:
Commence at the intersection of the North right-of-way line of E Duval Street (AKA US HWY 90) and the East right-of-way line of SE Hernando Avenue for a Point Of Beginning; thence run Easterly along E Duval Street to its intersection with the extended Northerly right-of-way line of SE Ermine Avenue; thence run Southerly along said North right-of-way line of E Duval Street to the West right-of-way line of SE Ermine Avenue and the Southerly right-of-way line of SE Nassau Street; thence continue along the said Southerly right-of-way line of SE Nassau Street to its intersection with the Westerly right-of-way line of SE Vickers Terrace; thence continue Southerly along SE Vickers Terrace to its south right-of-way line of SW Saint John Street; thence Westernly along SW Saint John Street to the extended property lines of parcels fronting the south right-of-way line of Hernando Street; thence continue Southerly along the extended East property lines of parcels to the Southerly right-of-way line of SE Baya Drive; thence run Southerly along the east right-of-way line of S Marion Avenue to its intersection with the Southern right-of-way line of SW Montgomery Drive; thence Northerly along the west right-of-way line of SW Main Boulevard to its intersection with SW Baya Drive; thence run north-westerly along SW Baya Drive to its intersection with SW Knox Street and continue to the intersection with the western extent of the current CRA boundaries.

Columbia County Property Appraiser records indicate that the proposed Downtown CRA Expansion Area contains 721 parcels encompassing an area of 232 acres excluding right-of-ways. In comparison, there are 6,070 parcels in the City of Lake City encompassing an unofficial area of 6,942 acres excluding right-of-ways. The proposed Downtown CRA expansion area represents approximately 5.6% of the City’s total land area and nearly 20% of the total parcel count.

According to the definition provided by the Florida Statute, in addition to the substantial number of deteriorating structures and conditions leading to economic distress, two or more of the fourteen (14) factors must be present to determine that blighted conditions exist in an area. This study documents, the existence of at least five of these factors, establishing that blighted conditions exist in the recommended Downtown CRA Expansion Area Study Area, The conditions are summarized in Table 1 :

Table 1. Blight Conditions and Indicators, Proposed Downtown Expansion Area

| Condition/ Factor Required by Statute | Indicator |
|---|--|
| 163.340 (8) Conditions leading to economic distress | Unemployment Rate Data (2010 estimates) |
| | Household Income (2010 estimates) |
| | Poverty Rate Data (2010 estimates) |
| 163.340 (8)(a) Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout, parking facilities, roadways, bridges, or public transportation facilities; | Field Observations/ Photo Inventory (IBI Group, 2010) |
| 1634.340 (8)(b) Aggregate assessed values of real property in the area for ad valorem tax purposes have failed to show any appreciable increase over the 5 years prior to the finding of such conditions; | Property Values (Columbia County Property Appraiser Data)- 3 year data was utilized to analyze this indicator due to data unavailability |
| 163.340 (8) (c) Faulty Lot Layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness | Parcel Sizes (Columbia County Property Appraiser Data) |
| 163.340 (8) (d) Unsanitary or unsafe conditions; | Windshield Survey/ Photo Inventory (IBI Group) |
| | Age of structures (Columbia County Property Appraiser Data) |
| | |
| 163.340 (8) (e) Deterioration of site or other improvements | Age of Structures (Columbia County Property Appraiser Data) |
| | Windshield Survey/ Photo Inventory (IBI Group) |
| 163.340 (8) (i) Residential and commercial vacancy rates higher in the area than in the remainder of the County or municipality | Vacancy Rates (Columbia County Property Appraiser Data) |
| 163.340 (8) (j) Incidence of crime in the area higher than in the remainder of the community | City of Lake City Police Department Crime Statistics (2010) |

Project Methodology

Meetings and discussions with the City and CRA staff contributed significantly to the analysis of the Downtown CRA Expansion Study Area. Additionally, IBI Group conducted a field survey to characterize, at a block and parcel level, the types and extent of physical and economic blight existing within the Study Area.

Following the field survey, each parcel in the Study Area was individually evaluated through GIS based analysis with respect to physical conditions, as appropriate, and conditions noted. The GIS database was provided by the City of Lake City GIS Department and the Columbia County Property Appraiser records. Other sources that were instrumental in determining the blight conditions included the socio-economic indicators (2000 Census data and 2010 estimates) provided through the ESRI Business Analyst software.

The slum and blight analysis also included an evaluation of the planning documents and reports relating to relevant conditions in the Study Area. Each relevant condition was then mapped separately to illustrate the blighted conditions in the Study Area. A composite map was constructed that showed the Study Area blocks that were affected by one or more condition and any unaffected blocks. The composite map was examined for patterns of areas needing or not needing redevelopment. The emerging patterns were used in formulating a recommendation for the Downtown CRA Expansion Area boundaries and determining blight conditions according to the Statute.

The inventory of blighting conditions was conducted using an approach consistent with the requirements of the Florida Statute. The findings are presented as a series of site photos, maps, statistical tables and text descriptions of the blight conditions established in the proposed Downtown CRA Expansion Area.



Existing Conditions: Inadequate or defective street layout; deterioration of roadways



Existing Conditions: Dilapidated structure, lack of sidewalks and inferior lot layout



Existing Conditions: Vacant and dilapidated structure



Existing Conditions: Unsafe or unsanitary conditions



Existing Conditions: Faulty lot layout and lack of sidewalks



Existing Conditions: Inadequate sidewalk conditions

III. Findings

Section 163. 340 (8) (a) PREDOMINANCE OF DEFECTIVE OR INADEQUATE STREET LAYOUT, PARKING FACILITIES, ROADWAYS, OR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES

The major thoroughfares serving the study area- NW Main Boulevard, N Marion Avenue (north-south); NE/NW Bascom Norris Drive, E/W Duval Street and SE/SW Baya Drive (east-west), appear to have adequate capacity to accommodate the existing development in the Study Area. While the existing roadway capacities appear adequate, the physical conditions of the roadways may warrant additional studies to be conducted for any future redevelopment projects with increased densities in the study area.

Unlike the grid street network found in the Downtown core area, the proposed expansion area is characterized by an inadequate street layout that hinders interconnectivity between adjacent neighborhoods and the City as a whole. The GS & F Railroad bisects the northwest quadrant of the study area, resulting in dead ends on several minor local streets and traffic issues that impact both residential and nonresidential uses along the corridor. In the southeast quadrant of the Study Area, several superblocks are present between SE McCray Avenue and SE Ermine Avenue. These conditions

In addition, the study area also consists of large tracts of industrial lands, located on the northern and north-western sections of the area, again displacing the grid pattern and creating dead ends leading to an increase in problems associated with inefficient pedestrian and vehicular movement within the proposed redevelopment expansion area.

The existing sidewalk network in the study area is also characterized by deteriorating conditions such as missing connections and frequent instances of disrepair (cracks, uneven, broken pavement etc.). While sidewalks are installed at frequent intervals on both sides of the primary corridors (NW Main Boulevard, N Marion Avenue, NE/NW Bascom Norris Drive, E/W Duval Street and SE/SW Baya Drive), there is an evident lack of traffic calming measures, such as pedestrian islands and speed tables at cross streets, leading to a hazard for pedestrians and bicyclists. In some portions of the Study Area there are no sidewalks installed resulting in an unsafe pedestrian environment.



Existing Conditions: Inadequate sidewalk network



Existing Conditions: Unsafe pedestrian conditions



Existing Conditions: Missing sidewalks

In terms of parking and vehicular circulation, most commercial properties in the study area have setbacks that have typical suburban configuration characterized by parking located in the front of properties with insufficient separation or buffering between rights-of-way and parking areas. Numerous driveways and curb cuts are found at frequent intervals along the primary corridors. These multiple points of entry cause significant vehicular and pedestrian conflicts leading to unsafe conditions.

Several commercial and institutional uses are sited on residential sized lots leading to spillover parking and backing into the street resulting in inefficient circulation and safety issues for both pedestrians and motorists.

Parking conditions in the residential neighborhoods of the study area exhibit signs of defective lot configurations. Narrow lot layouts are found on several residential properties forcing the residents to park along the public rights-of-way. Congestion from these vehicles parked along the public rights-of-way reduces the travel lane widths and impairs traffic and pedestrian circulation on the affected streets.



Commercial Areas: Inadequate Street Layout (Missing Sidewalks, Inadequate parking, Deteriorating pavement conditions)



Residential Areas: Inadequate Street Layout (Missing Sidewalks, Inadequate parking, heavy cut-through traffic in residential areas)

Section 163. 340 (8) (b) AGGREGATE ASSESSED VALUES HAVE FAILED TO SHOW ANY APPRECIABLE INCREASE OVER THE FIVE YEARS PRIOR TO THE FINDING OF SUCH CONDITIONS

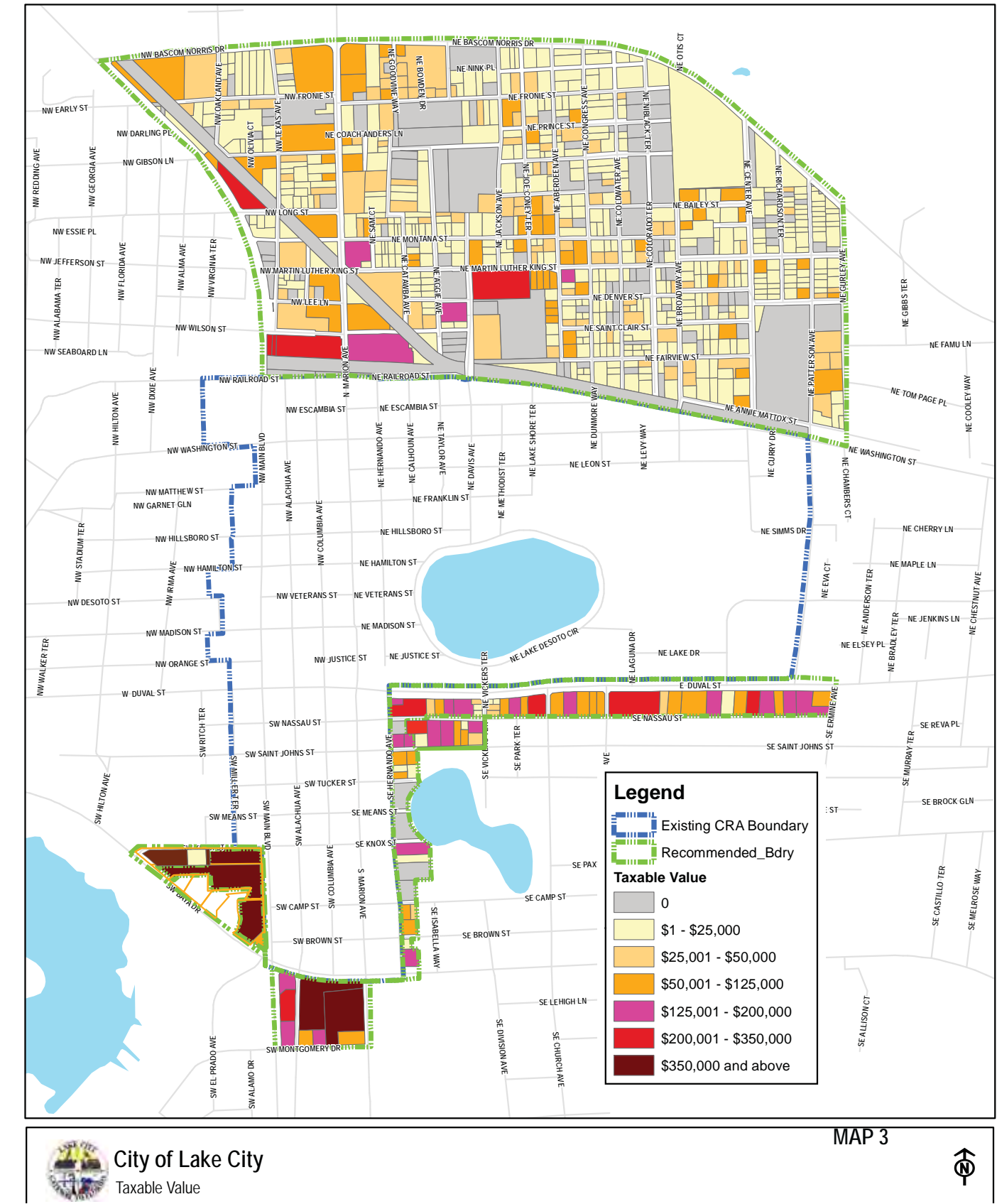
Ideally, the value of property should increase over time and show signs of growth somewhat consistent with trends in growth of the overall economy. This is usually an indication of the health of the local real estate market revealing the level of interest in private sector investment. Property values that are relatively static or declining may indicate a weakening market or reflect a change in the investment image of an area for several reasons. As previously stated, it is the intent of the Community Redevelopment Act to preserve the tax base and therefore the revenues for taxing authorities to support public services.

According to data available from the City of Lake City and Columbia County for taxable values over the past three years, the proposed redevelopment area contains 721 parcels of property with an average taxable value of \$18,151. The Study Area showed a 9.5% decline in taxable value from the year 2008 to 2010. The City's taxable value grew from \$113,927 to \$115,986 during the same period, accounting for an increase of 1.8%. (Map 3)

Table 2. Taxable Value Growth Rate (2008 - 2010)

| | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | % change 2008-2010 |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Just Value | \$37,442 | \$34,908 | \$33,047 | -11.74% |
| Assessed School | \$33,345 | \$31,685 | \$30,516 | -8.48% |
| Assessed Non School | \$33,345 | \$31,626 | \$30,488 | -8.57% |
| Taxable School | \$20,056 | \$18,757 | \$18,151 | -9.50% |
| Taxable Non School | \$19,122 | \$17,728 | \$17,089 | -10.63% |

Source: Columbia County Property Appraiser GIS Database (2010)
All values in '000s



SECTION 163. 340 (8) (c) FAULTY LOT LAYOUT IN RELATION TO SIZE, ADEQUACY, ACCESSIBILITY, OR USEFULNESS

The size of parcels has a significant impact on the redevelopment potential for any proposed property. Typically, older platted subdivisions and commercial properties are too small for development and exhibit non-conformance with current zoning regulations. Contemporary development trends favor larger sites for redevelopment as they offer the flexibility to provide a variety of uses and a mix of activities. Larger sites also reduce the complexities involved with assembly of smaller parcels to support large scale redevelopment projects.

Map 4 identifies the deficient parcels in relation to lot sizes found in the Study Area. Inconsistencies between lot sizes and lot size requirements can be identified by comparing the minimum lot area requirements contained in the zoning code to the existing lot parcel sizes. As illustrated in Table 3, nearly 15 percent of the properties in the Study Area do not meet the minimum lot area requirements (6,000 sq.ft. min. lot size) listed in the City of Lake City Land Development Regulations.

The development of commercial uses on substandard lots also has a deleterious impact on neighboring residential uses, due to traffic hazards caused by business parking located in the front of the property, encroachments into residential areas, inadequate buffering, and spill-over parking. These properties are further limited by their size in relation to parking and setback requirements, stormwater treatment standards and landscaping requirements. The lot depths of several properties located in the study area is considered too small for development according to contemporary standards.

Table 3. Faulty Lot Layout

| City | Size | # of Parcels | % | Acreage | % |
|------|---------------------------------------|--------------|---------|----------|---------|
| | Less than 3,000 square feet | 465 | 7.66% | 8.86 | 0.13% |
| | Between 3,000 sq.ft. and 3,500 sq.ft. | 62 | 1.02% | 4.64 | 0.07% |
| | Between 3,500 sq.ft. and 5,000 sq.ft. | 340 | 5.60% | 33.22 | 0.48% |
| | Greater than 5,000 sq. ft. | 5203 | 85.72% | 6,895.49 | 99.33% |
| | Total | 6070 | 100.00% | 6,942.21 | 100.00% |

Recommended Expansion Area

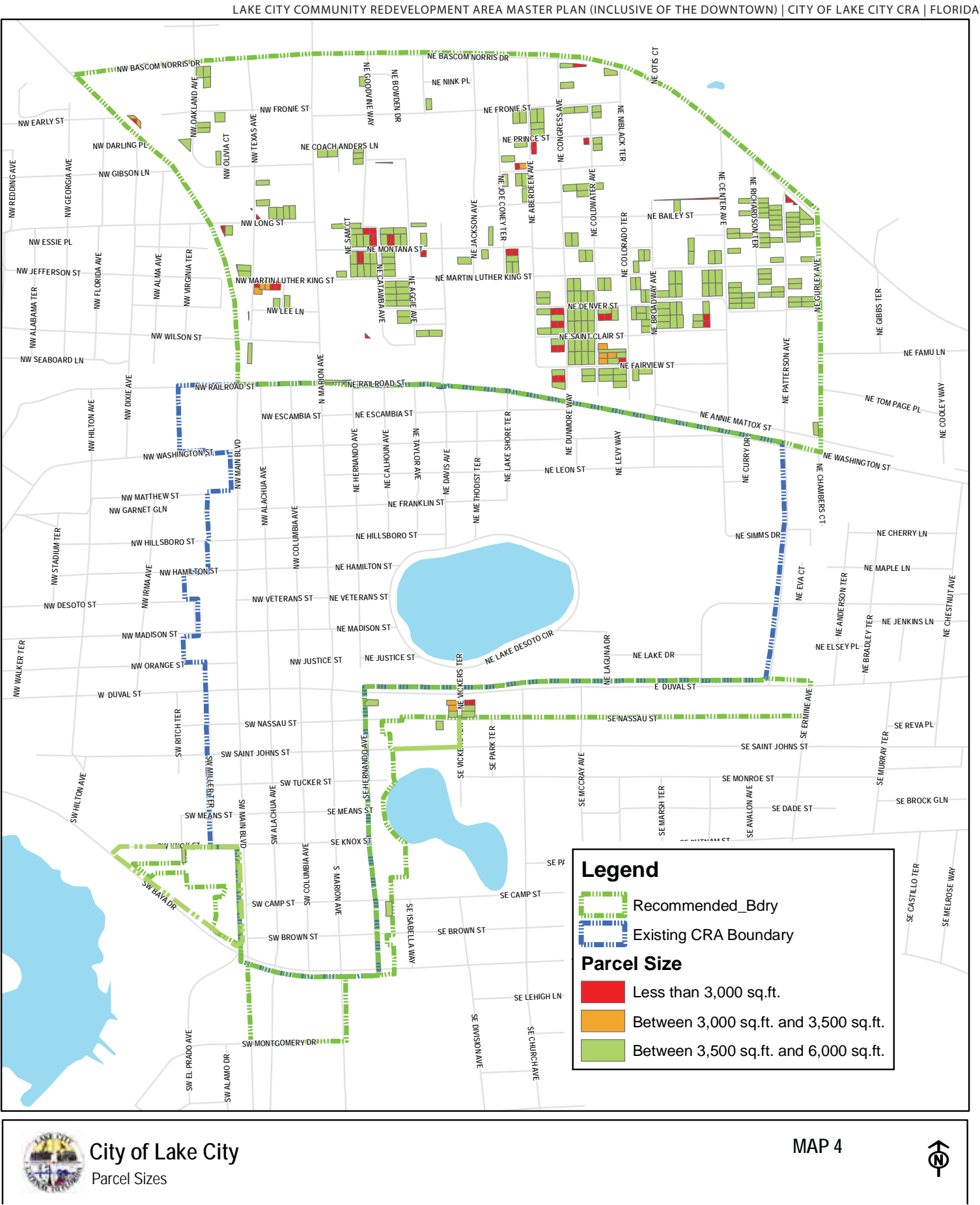
| Recommended Expansion Area | Size | # of Parcels | % | Acreage | % |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------|---------|---------|---------|
| | Less than 3,000 square feet | 43 | 5.96% | 2.15 | 0.92% |
| | Between 3,000 sq.ft. and 3,500 sq.ft. | 9 | 1.25% | 0.66 | 0.28% |
| | Between 3,500 sq.ft. and 5,000 sq.ft. | 102 | 14.15% | 9.86 | 4.24% |
| | Greater than 5,000 sq. ft. | 567 | 78.64% | 219.89 | 94.56% |
| | Total | 721 | 100.00% | 232.55 | 100.00% |

Source: City of Lake City Property Appraiser GIS Database (2010)

EXPANSION OF THE DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT AREA BOUNDARIES

Additionally, the proposed Downtown CRA Expansion Area is characterized by conflicting land uses on adjacent properties. The proximity of industrial uses, located near the railroad, to residential uses has a negative impact on the investment climate of the corridor for both residential and commercial properties. Several of the existing industrial properties within the study area lack adequate area for parking and loading. Often when this occurs, the only recourse is to assemble surrounding property in order to attain a parcel large enough to meet regulated design standards, as well as make the site functional for intended uses. This results in encroachment into vacant parcels in adjacent residential areas leading to further deterioration in the quality of life for area residents due to a related increase in levels of traffic, noise, and pollution produced by the incompatible uses.

FAULTY LOT LAYOUT CONDITIONS (PHOTO INVENTORY)



SECTION 163. 340 (8) (D) UNSANITARY OR UNSAFE CONDITIONS

Unsafe conditions in the expansion area are evident through the following four factors: crime and accident incidents; inadequate pedestrian infrastructure; and deteriorating site attributes. The study area contains many structures that are currently in unsafe or dilapidated condition. These properties include residential and non-residential structures, as illustrated by the photographs shown below. Furthermore, many properties in the area exhibit poor yard/lot conditions which can be characterized by overgrown grass and/or large amounts of trash, outdoor storage, junk and inoperable vehicles that would require considerable effort to remove from the site.

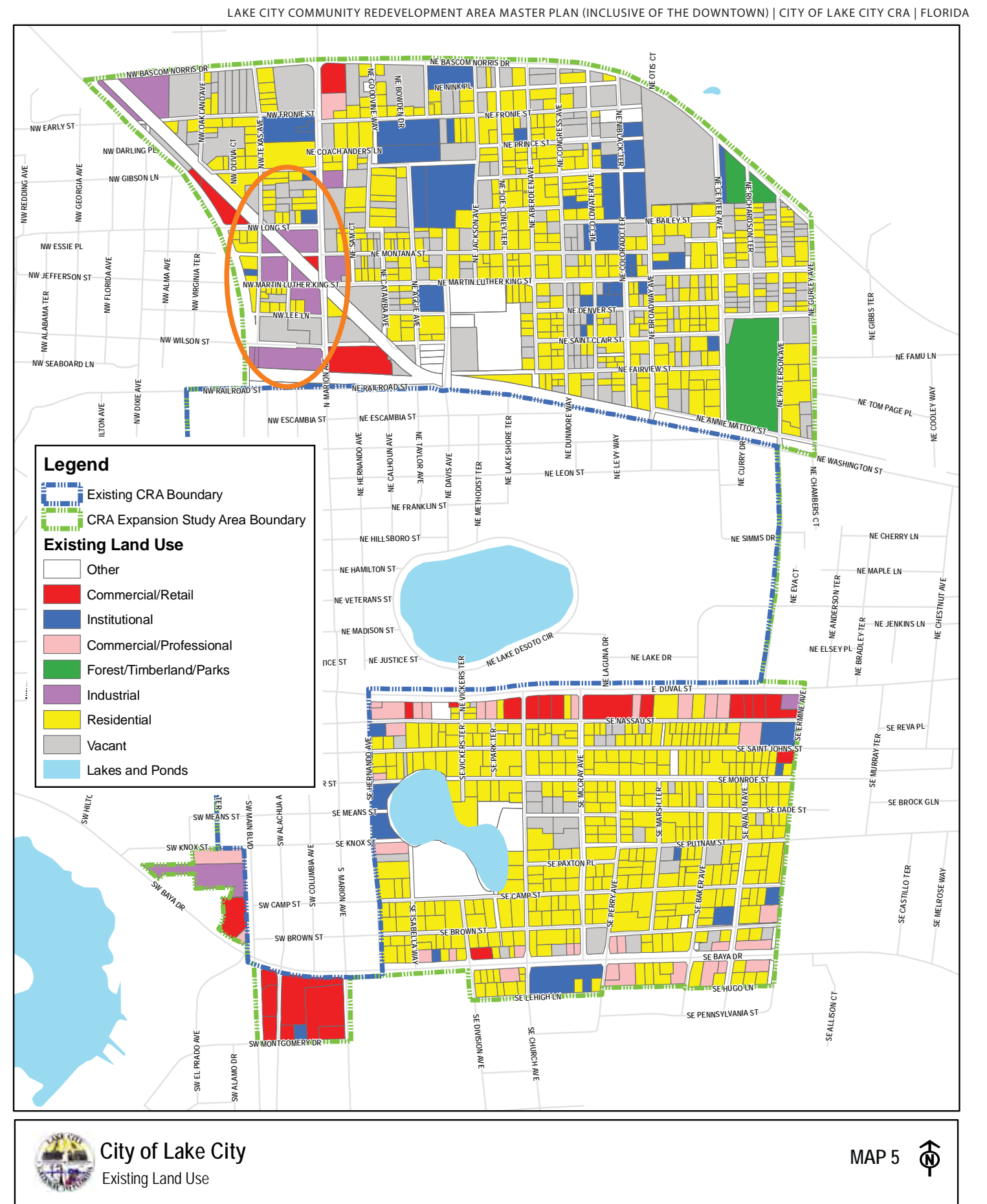
The existing roadway conditions in the study area do not support pedestrian infrastructure fostering an unsafe environment for both pedestrians and motorists. Pedestrian islands and clear crossings are missing along the majority of the area's high traffic roadways.

Excessive curb cuts in the study area, primarily along the major commercial corridors, also contribute in exacerbating the existing unsafe conditions witnessed in the study area. While curb cuts are necessary features for vehicular access to parcels and are not a safety issue when viewed in isolation, however, a large number of curb cuts within a short distance can produce an unsafe environment for both motorists and pedestrians. Combined these physical conditions demonstrate significant occurrence of unsanitary and unsafe conditions within the study area.

As discussed previously, the entire Study Area is characterized by location of incompatible land uses in close proximity to each other. While the industrial areas are critical in maintaining the economic vitality of the area, the lack of adequate buffering and unsafe conditions associated with industrial uses result in deterioration of the area's overall quality of life.



Unsafe or Unsanitary conditions: Residential Areas



SECTION 163. 340 (8) (E) DETERIORATION OF SITE OR OTHER IMPROVEMENTS

The presence of a substantial number of deteriorated or deteriorating structures in an area is an indication of blight as defined by the Florida Statute. These conditions impair economic growth including the lack of private investment to maintain the integrity and value of existing development, depreciation in housing values, high risk factor for new development, and a reduced tax base for the City. Additionally, deteriorated buildings create additional expense for the community in the need for increased code enforcement personnel, fire hazards, community policing, and inspections.

Fieldwork and windshield survey conducted by IBI Group confirmed the existence of deteriorating conditions and sites in the study area. The windshield survey used a visual analysis technique to broadly evaluate building conditions in the areas of exterior walls and structure, doors and windows, and yard/lot conditions. Photographs and physical observations of the expansion area show a variety of housing conditions. While some housing units are well kept and well maintained, others are in varying stages of disrepair. There are two general types of substandard housing found in the Study Area:

Deteriorated Housing Units are units that are considered to be suitable for rehabilitation through either minor or major repairs to correct one or more of the following defects:

- Broken or missing materials in small areas of exterior wall or roof;
- Badly weathered appearance;
- Indications of rotting;
- Shirting of roof line or foundation;
- Open pockets in exterior walls.

Dilapidated Housing Units are units that do not provide safe and adequate shelter and have one or more of the critical structural defects listed below. Such units are generally considered to be beyond rehabilitation.

- Inadequate or missing original construction;
- Severe damage due to fire or weather;
- Holes in large areas of the roof;
- Sagging roof lines and bulging walls;
- Doors or windows incapable of being closed or secured;
- Large areas of rot or termite damage;



Age of structures

The age of housing is a potential contributor to the declining conditions and high vacancy rates witnessed in the Downtown CRA Expansion Area. Aging buildings typically require increased maintenance and repair. Additionally, the interior space, exterior appearance, and functional aspects of older buildings may be considered obsolete for modern market demands. The age of a building in and of itself is not a blighting condition. If adequate investment and maintenance is made, older buildings can remain viable and desirable in the real estate market. In fact, the historic building stock lends to the attractive neighborhood setting in Downtown Lake City, and has contributed in the resurgence of private housing renovations, occurring primarily in the already existing CRA.

Conversely, a concentration of older, poorly maintained and dilapidated buildings creates many negative influences in an area including a loss of economic status, a lack of interest in new development, an increased occurrence of crime, and decreased revenues for businesses.

These conditions are evident in the Study Area. City of Lake City GIS data indicates that approximately fifty-five percent (55.1%) of the housing units within the CRA Expansion Area are nearly forty years old (built 1969 or earlier). In comparison, fifty-four percent (54.2%) of the City’s housing units are over forty years old.

The presence of dilapidated, vacant or boarded-up housing units in a neighborhood is a negative influence on surrounding residents. The condition of these units is a deterrent to continuing investment and maintenance of other units. A number of units are presently occupied; however, they have been allowed to slide into disrepair. Deferred maintenance occurs for three primary reasons- first, owner-occupants may not be able to afford needed improvements and regular maintenance; second, owner-occupants may not be inclined to continue investing in maintenance of the unit, anticipating a move or feeling that housing conditions in the area do not warrant continued upkeep; third, owners of rented units may defer maintenance in order to maximize return on the unit. Poorly maintained and overgrown vacant lots and other open spaces such as easements and canal banks are blighting influences on residential neighborhoods. Periodic maintenance of these areas, with costs billed to the landowner, can prevent the accumulation of debris and overgrowth.

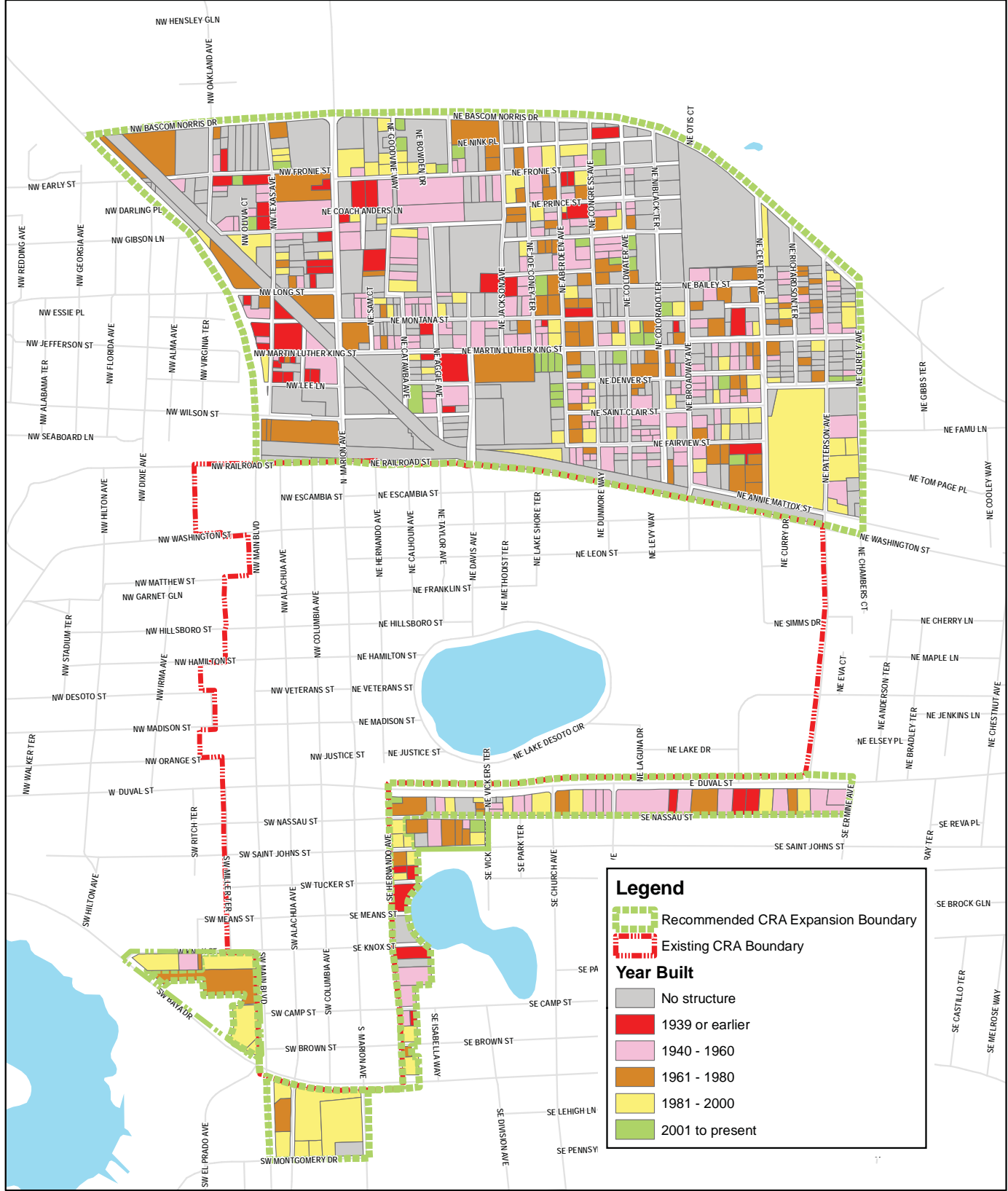
Tornado Damage

The damage caused by tornadoes in the City have contributed to the inventory of deteriorating structural and yard conditions found in the recommended Downtown CRA Expansion Area. According to the damage assessment data provided by the City of Lake City GIS Department, over 90 properties in the proposed expansion area were damaged during the 2005 tornadoes. High force winds could cause severe damage to the structure of buildings and render critical equipment, such as electrical systems inoperable leading to further deterioration of existing structures and high vacancy rates. Map 5 illustrates the tornado damage found in the recommended Expansion Area.

Table 4. Housing Units by Year Built

| Structures by Year Built | City of Lake City | % | Proposed Expansion Area | % | Occurance in Proposed Expansion Area |
|--------------------------|-------------------|--------|-------------------------|---------|--------------------------------------|
| Total Structures | 4,513 | | 423 | 100.00% | 9.37% |
| Built 1999 to 2000 | 68 | 1.50% | 0 | 0.00% | 0.00% |
| Built 1995-1998 | 212 | 4.70% | 28 | 6.60% | 13.16% |
| Built 1990-1994 | 460 | 10.20% | 36 | 8.50% | 7.81% |
| Built 1980-1989 | 681 | 15.10% | 50 | 11.80% | 7.32% |
| Built 1970-1979 | 641 | 14.20% | 76 | 18.00% | 11.88% |
| Built 1969 or earlier | 2,446 | 54.20% | 233 | 55.10% | 9.53% |

EXPANSION OF THE DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT AREA BOUNDARIES

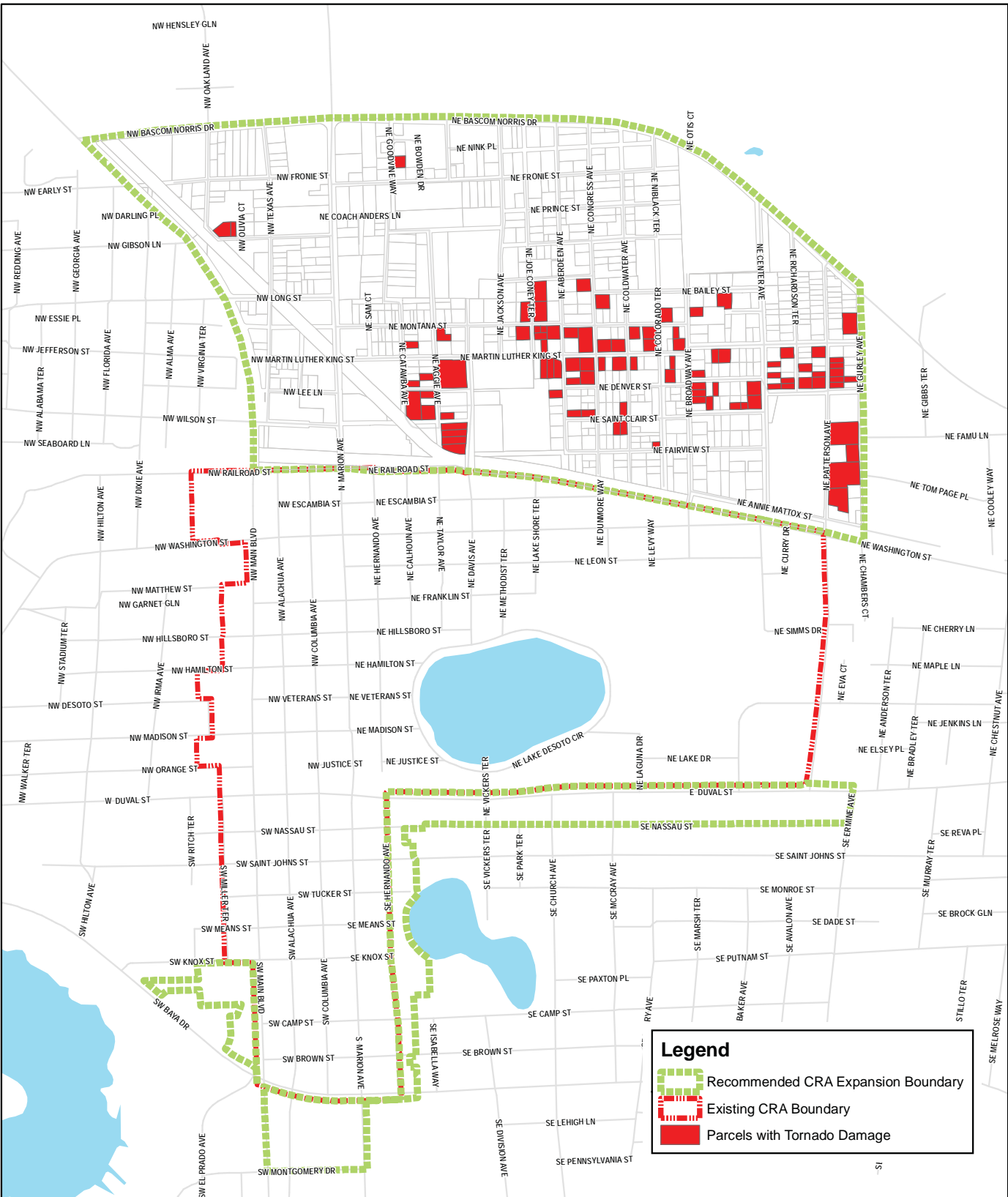


City of Lake City
Age of Structures



MAP 6

EXPANSION OF THE DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT AREA BOUNDARIES



City of Lake City
Tornado Damage



MAP 7

Section 163.340 (8) (I) RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL VACANCY RATES

Vacant structures and abandoned lots lead to a deterioration of the physical environment. Such deterioration is detrimental to the investment image of the community. The vacancy rate is also a significant factor considered by the County Property Appraiser when assessing property values for tax purposes.

High vacancy rates in the housing market indicate a lack of community interest in maintaining the neighborhood’s quality of life and integrity resulting in a decline of investment. Vacant properties depress the values of adjacent properties causing devaluation over time negatively affecting the City’s ad valorem tax revenues. Vacant housing units are also more likely to become delinquent because the cost of paying taxes on the property may exceed the value of the property. The Columbia County Property Appraiser records show nearly thirty one percent (30.9%) of all parcels within the CRA Expansion Study Area as vacant compared to seventeen percent (17.3%) of all citywide parcels.

Approximately twenty nine percent (29.0%) of the Study Area’s total parcel count is vacant residential compared to approximately fourteen percent (14.2%) of vacant residential properties found citywide. In terms of acreage, twenty six percent (26.6%)of the Study Area’s residential area is considered vacant, as compared to seven percent (7.3%) of the total City residential area.

Over thirty percent (30.7%) of the Study Area’s total acreage is comprised of vacant parcels, compared to fourteen percent (13.84%) of the City’s total acreage that are classified as vacant lands. High building vacancy levels located on primary commercial corridors and residential housing vacancy rates indicate weak market conditions to the private investor.

While the total study area land area represents only 3.3% of the City’s total land acreage (excluding right-of-way), Columbia County Property Appraiser’s data indicates that over seven percent (7.4%) of the vacant lots found in the City of Lake City are located in the CRA Expansion Study Area.

Table 5. Vacancy Rates

| City Vacant Lands | | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Size | # of Parcels | % | Acreage | % |
| Vacant: Institutional | 13 | 0.21% | 3.87 | 0.06% |
| Vacant: Industrial | 4 | 0.07% | 5.93 | 0.09% |
| Vacant: Commercial | 171 | 2.82% | 445.3 | 6.42% |
| Vacant: Other | 863 | 14.22% | 505.4 | 7.28% |
| Total Vacant | 1051 | 17.31% | 960.6 | 13.84% |
| Non-Vacant | 5019 | 82.69% | 5,981.6 | 86.16% |
| Total | 6070 | 100.00% | 6,942.2 | 100.00% |

| Recommended Expansion Area Vacant Lands | | | | |
|---|--------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Size | # of Parcels | % | Acreage | % |
| Vacant: Institutional | 3 | 0.42% | 0.276 | 0.12% |
| Vacant: Industrial | 0 | 0.00% | 0 | 0.00% |
| Vacant: Commercial | 11 | 1.53% | 9.2 | 3.95% |
| Vacant: Other | 209 | 28.99% | 61.9 | 26.64% |
| Total Vacant | 223 | 30.93% | 71.4 | 30.71% |
| Non-Vacant | 498 | 69.07% | 161.1 | 69.29% |
| Total | 721 | 100.00% | 232.5 | 100.00% |

Source: Columbia County and City of Lake City Property Appraiser GIS Database (2010)

RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL VACANCY (PHOTO INVENTORY)



Section 163.340 (8) (j) INCIDENCE OF CRIME

The incidence of crime in the proposed Downtown CRA Expansion Study Area is significantly higher than in the remainder of the City. The proposed Downtown CRA Expansion Study Area falls under two zones, delineated by the Lake City Police Department for statistical analysis purposes.

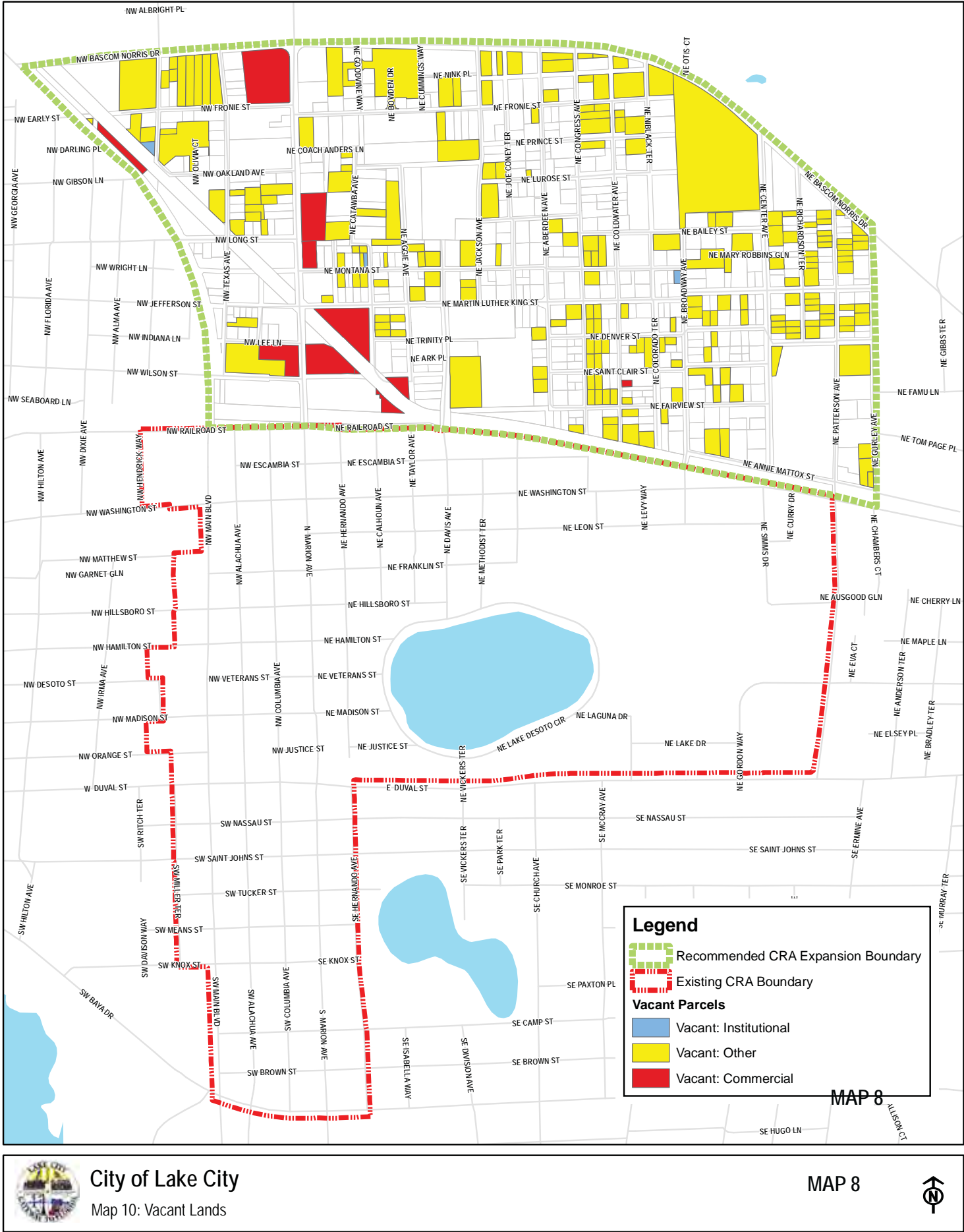
The 2010 crime statistics provided by the City of Lake City Police Department indicates that 437 of the total 2,011 calls for services occurred within the proposed Downtown Expansion Area. This represents approximately twenty two percent (21.73%) of the total calls for service made in the City. (Table 7)

While the Study Area contains fifteen percent (15.57%) of the City’s total population, it is experiencing a disproportionate incidence of crime compared to the total population. The crime per capita in the Downtown CRA Expansion Study Area at twenty five percent (24.84%) is significantly higher than the citywide rate of eighteen percent (18%).

The Downtown CRA Expansion Study Area also has a significant percentage of City’s total crime incidence including robbery (27.27%), aggravated assault (24.55%), burglary (28.57%), simple assault (31.37%) and drug violations (30.3%). The high incidence of crime deters the private sector from investing in redeveloping the area. Crime is closely related to deteriorating neighborhood conditions such as high unemployment rates, significant vacancy rates, and unsafe conditions. Left unaddressed, the crime rates will most likely continue to escalate within the Study Area burdening the City and residents with additional costs.

Table 8. Crime Statistics

| | City of Lake City | | Study Area | | Percent of City Popula- tion |
|----------------------|-------------------|----------------------|----------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Population | 11,298 | | 1,759 | | 15.57% |
| | | | | | |
| | # of Crimes | Crimes Per Capita | # of Crimes | Crimes Per Capita | % Crime Occurrence in Study Area |
| Crime Category | | | | | |
| Murder | 3 | 0.03% | 0 | 0.00% | 0.00% |
| Forcible Sex | 10 | 0.09% | 1 | 0.06% | 10.00% |
| Robbery | 22 | 0.19% | 6 | 0.34% | 27.27% |
| Aggravated Assault | 110 | 0.97% | 27 | 1.53% | 24.55% |
| Burglary | 189 | 1.67% | 54 | 3.07% | 28.57% |
| Larceny | 585 | 5.18% | 93 | 5.29% | 15.90% |
| Motor Vehicle Theft | 26 | 0.23% | 3 | 0.17% | 11.54% |
| Liquor Law Violation | 33 | 0.29% | 5 | 0.28% | 15.15% |
| Kidnapping | 3 | 0.03% | 1 | 0.06% | 33.33% |
| Arson | 2 | 0.02% | 1 | 0.06% | 50.00% |
| Simple Assault | 255 | 2.26% | 80 | 4.55% | 31.37% |
| Drugs | 363 | 3.21% | 110 | 6.25% | 30.30% |
| Vandalism | 134 | 1.19% | 30 | 1.71% | 22.39% |
| DUI | 31 | 0.27% | 6 | 0.34% | 19.35% |
| Fraud | 143 | 1.27% | 20 | 1.14% | 13.99% |
| Total | 2,011 | 17.80% | 437 | 24.84% | 21.73% |



Conditions leading to economic distress

The Downtown CRA Expansion Area exhibits significantly distressed economic characteristics relative to the City of Lake City as a whole. The 2010 Area Profile provided through ESRI Business Analyst Online, estimates that the Downtown CRA Expansion Area is home to 1,073 residents, accounting for approximately 9.6% of the City’s total population.

Household Income

The 2010 estimated per capita income for the City’s households is 18,665, while the estimated per capita income for the Downtown CRA Expansion Area is 12,888, representing approximately 69% of the citywide per capita income. Similarly, median household income (21,049) in the Downtown CRA Expansion Area is 62%

of the City of Lake City’s median household income (\$33,834). Average household income for the Downtown CRA Expansion Area is \$33,764, compared to the City’s average 2010 estimated household income of \$46,217.

Housing Values

Housing values in the Study Area are also significantly lower than those for the City as a whole. According to the 2010 estimates provided by ESRI, the median home value in the Downtown CRA Expansion Area is 44,786, compared to 67,944 for the City, accounting for a difference of nearly 23,158 between the two markets.

Table 9. Income Level and Home Values

| 2010 | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------|-----------------------------|-----------|
| INCOME | Lake City | Proposed CRA Expansion Area | % of City |
| Total Population | 11,124 | 1,073 | 8.8% |
| Total Households | 4,267 | 402 | 9.4% |
| Average Household Income | \$46,217 | \$33,764 | 73.1% |
| Median Household Income | \$33,843 | \$21,049 | 62.2% |
| Per Capita Income | \$18,665 | \$12,888 | 69.1% |
| Median Home Value | \$116,192 | \$81,207 | 69.9% |
| 2000 | | | |
| INCOME | Lake City | Proposed CRA Expansion Area | % of City |
| Total Population | 9,980 | 1,250 | 12.5% |
| Total Households | 4,043 | 377 | 9.3% |
| Average Household Income | \$35,617 | \$30,256 | 84.9% |
| Median Household Income | \$25,791 | \$19,518 | 75.7% |
| Per Capita Income | \$14,697 | \$11,707 | 79.7% |
| Median Home Value | \$57,236 | \$42,317 | 73.9% |

Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online Market Profile

Poverty

The Census Bureau uses income thresholds that vary by family size and composition to detect who is poor. If the total income for a family or group of unrelated individuals falls below the relevant poverty threshold, then the family or unrelated group is classified as being “below the poverty level”. For the purposes of analysis, this report assumes a family income base of \$15,000 and less as the poverty threshold for both the City of Lake City and the Proposed CRA Expansion Area.

There were 159 families below poverty level in the Proposed CRA Expansion Area out of a total of 402 families, indicating that the rate of poverty is over thirty-nine percent (39.6%) for the Study Area. In comparison, the 2010 estimated citywide poverty rate is twenty-one percent (21.4%), with a total of 913 families below poverty level.

Education and Employment

According to the 2010 Area Profile estimates, the unemployment rate for the Downtown CRA Expansion Area is approximated at 25.3%, significantly higher than the citywide rate of 13.2%. The unemployment rate includes all civilians 16 years old and over that are actively looking for work and does not include the residents who have dropped out of the job search effort. The 2000 Census indicated that forty-two percent (42.6%) of the Study Area’s total population 16 years old and over was not in the labor force.

Additionally, the 2010 Census projections by ESRI reported that over ten percent (10.3%) of the Proposed CRA Expansion Area population 25 years old and over has less than a 9th grade education, which is higher than the citywide rate of 7% (6.9%). The low education levels combined with the high unemployment rates contribute to the level of economic distress experienced by the Proposed CRA Expansion area.

Table 10. Poverty Level

| 2010 | | | | |
|----------------------------|-----------|-------|-----------------------------|-------|
| POVERTY LEVEL | Lake City | % | Proposed CRA Expansion Area | % |
| Total Families | 4,267 | | 485 | |
| Income Above Poverty Level | 3,354 | 78.6% | 362 | 60.4% |
| Income Below Poverty Level | 913 | 21.4% | 123 | 39.6% |

Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online Market Profile

Table 11. Employment

| | 2010 | | | |
|----------------------|-----------|-------|-----------------------------|-------|
| | Lake City | | Proposed CRA Expansion Area | |
| Total Population 16+ | 4,737 | | 485 | |
| Civilian Employed | 4,112 | 86.8% | 362 | 74.7% |
| Civilian Unemployed | 625 | 13.2% | 123 | 25.3% |

Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online Market Profile

IV. Conclusion

This study has identified and documented conditions in the recommended Proposed CRA expansion area that are consistent with the definition of blight contained in the Florida Statutes. It is, therefore, reasonable to find that these conditions substantially impair sound growth and have lead to economic distress in the area. The inventory of existing conditions presented in this report provides a basis for the City of Lake City to adopt a resolution acknowledging the existence of blight in the proposed Proposed CRA Expansion Area and finding that rehabilitation, conservation or redevelopment is necessary in the interest of the public health, safety, morals or welfare of the City’s residents. These findings also provide justification for using the tools provided to local governments through Chapter 163 Part III of the Florida Statutes: “The Community Redevelopment Act”.

The proposed Downtown CRA Expansion Area has a substantial number of structures exhibiting some level of deterioration, documented by the field observations conducted by IBI Group staff in October 2010. Government maintained demographic and economic statistics highlight a prevailing level of economic distress.

Low per capita income, high poverty rates, high unemployment rate, low educational attainment levels, lower median home values compared to the City are strong indicators of economic distress in the Downtown CRA Expansion Area. The distressed economic conditions combined with the deteriorated physical environment experienced in the Downtown CRA expansion area confirm the existence of blighted conditions in the Downtown CRA expansion area. The cumulative impact of high vacancy rates in residential and commercial properties, a high percentage of aging structures, substandard lot configurations, high crime rates, and decreasing assessed values over the last five years substantiate the existence of blight in the Study Area.

The existence of blight can have negative impacts on a community including:

- Depressed property values, resulting in lower local tax revenues;
- Strain on city services- police, health, fire, building code;
- Increased fire hazard potential because of poor maintenance, faulty wiring and debris;
- Increased code enforcement demands;
- Concentration of low-income groups and marginal businesses with decreased potential for investment to reverse the blighting conditions;
- Creation of an environment that attracts criminal activity;
- Creation of a poor market environment, where existing businesses relocate to other, more stable areas and new businesses do not replace them;
- Cost to existing home owners- higher insurance premiums, low appraisals for homestead properties.

Presence of Blight

The analysis indicates that the Downtown CRA Expansion Area contains at least seven of the fourteen conditions indicative of a “blighted area” listed in the Florida Statutes. The following is a summary of findings that support a declaration of blight for the proposed Downtown CRA Expansion Area:

Conditions leading to economic distress

High unemployment rate
The Downtown CRA Expansion Area has an unemployment rate of 25.3% compared to the citywide rate of 13.2%.

High poverty rate
Nearly 40% of total families in the Downtown CRA Expansion Area have an income below the poverty level threshold compared to 21% for the City.

Low per capita income
Per capita income for the CRA Expansion Area at \$12,888 is over 69% of the citywide per capita income at \$18,665.

Low household income
Median household income for the Downtown CRA Expansion Area (\$21,049) is nearly half of the City’s median household income (\$33,843).

Low housing values
The Study Area had a decline of 9.5% in property values during the period from 2008 to 2010.

Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout, parking facilities, roadways, or public transportation facilities.

- Industrial properties and the GS&F railroad bisect the Study Area, resulting in dead ends on several minor streets.
- Inadequate pedestrian infrastructure- missing sidewalks, frequent instances of disrepair along roadways and sidewalks, lack of traffic calming measures in the vicinity of neighborhood centers of activity, such as area schools and churches.
- Excessive curb-cuts and driveways causing significant vehicular and pedestrian safety risks.
- Substandard lot sizes leading to parking along unimproved right-of-way in residential areas.

Residential and Commercial vacancy rates higher in the area than in the remainder of the municipality

- Approximately twenty nine percent (29.0%) of the Study Area’s total parcel count is vacant residential compared to approximately fourteen percent (14.2%) of vacant residential properties found citywide.

Annual average growth rate lower than the City’s growth rate over the last three years.

The Study Area showed a 9.5% decline in taxable value from the year 2008 to 2010. The City’s taxable value grew from \$113,927 to \$115,986 during the same period, accounting for an increase of 1.8%.

Faulty Lot Layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility or usefulness

- Inadequate properties in relation to current land development codes.
- Over 30% of the proposed expansion area properties do not meet the minimum lot area requirements of the City of Lake City Land Development Code.

Unsanitary or unsafe conditions

- High percentage of deteriorating structures, including several in the dilapidated category.
- Unsafe conditions created by conflicting land uses between industrial and residential uses.
- Heavy truck traffic through residential neighborhoods accessing industrial areas.

Deterioration of site or other improvements

- High occurrence of dilapidated, vacant and boarded up structures.
- Large percentage of older structures compared to the city as a whole.
- Frequent occurrence of debris along rights-of way and deteriorated yard conditions.

Incidence of crime in significantly higher than in the remainder of the City.

- The crime per capita in the Downtown CRA Expansion Study Area at twenty five percent (24.84%) is significantly higher than the citywide rate of eighteen percent (18%).

Recommendations

The purpose of the Community Redevelopment Act is to provide local governments the ability to combat deteriorating urban conditions which retard development of the area. The intent of the legislation is to reduce or eliminate the conditions found in the Study Area; conditions, which hinder sound future growth and development.

Redevelopment is by nature more costly than the development of vacant land. Improved property is invariably more expensive than vacant property as the cost of demolition and the preparation must be factored in. Additionally, it is often necessary to assemble more than one parcel of land. Redevelopment activity also triggers thresholds for mandatory compliance with more costly, modern development standards. Often environmental clean-up is required which adds expense.

The higher costs associated with property redevelopment will have significant implications for attempts to redevelop the proposed Downtown CRA Expansion Area. The private sector is not likely to absorb the risks and costs of such an undertaking alone. Therefore, the expansion of the existing Community Redevelopment Agency redevelopment area is the most appropriate tool for the City of Lake City to use when planning, designing and participating with the private sector to revitalize the Proposed Downtown CRA Expansion Area.

Expand the boundaries of the existing Downtown CRA

The data presented in this report provides a factual basis upon which the City of Lake City may make a legislative finding that the proposed Downtown CRA Expansion Area is at this time a blighted area; and that rehabilitation, conservation, or redevelopment, or a combination thereof is necessary in the interest of the public health, safety, morals or welfare of the residents of the municipality. It is recommended that the Lake City Council pass a resolution designating the recommended boundary as the Downtown CRA.

Update the Downtown Redevelopment Plan

The formulation of a redevelopment plan, using the tools made available in the Statutes, is the most appropriate means of overcoming the obstacles to economic development cited in this study. In light of the changes that have occurred in the area, the ongoing update of the current redevelopment plan can provide focus and oversight for the land development process while improving the appearance and marketability of the area. The Community Redevelopment Agency is responsible for assisting in the preparation of the Redevelopment Plan. Section 163.362 F.S. contains a detailed description of the required contents of this Plan. The Plan is intended to address the needs identified in this study, define community redevelopment goals and objectives, set forth specific Agency policies and actions, and finally, identify capital improvement projects, their costs and funding sources. It can provide a strategy for funding capital improvements and economic incentives that will attract private sector investment and ensure that infrastructure is in place to support future growth and development. The ongoing Redevelopment Plan Update developed for the Downtown CRA should incorporate the proposed expansion area.




APPENDIX A Demographics





Market Profile
Prepared by ESRI




Polygon_1
Area: 0.79 Square miles
Custom Polygon

| | | |
|--|-------------------------------|-----------|
|  | 2000 Total Population | 1,794 |
| | 2000 Group Quarters | 16 |
| | 2010 Total Population | 1,759 |
| | 2015 Total Population | 1,773 |
| | 2010 - 2015 Annual Rate | 0.16% |
|  | 2000 Households | 733 |
| | 2000 Average Household Size | 2.43 |
| | 2010 Households | 691 |
| | 2010 Average Household Size | 2.51 |
| | 2015 Households | 693 |
| | 2015 Average Household Size | 2.52 |
| | 2010 - 2015 Annual Rate | 0.06% |
| | 2000 Families | 454 |
| | 2000 Average Family Size | 3.06 |
| | 2010 Families | 418 |
| | 2010 Average Family Size | 3.23 |
| | 2015 Families | 413 |
| | 2015 Average Family Size | 3.29 |
| | 2010 - 2015 Annual Rate | -0.24% |
|  | 2000 Housing Units | 850 |
| | Owner Occupied Housing Units | 49.9% |
| | Renter Occupied Housing Units | 36.4% |
| | Vacant Housing Units | 13.8% |
| | 2010 Housing Units | 911 |
| | Owner Occupied Housing Units | 43.8% |
| | Renter Occupied Housing Units | 32.1% |
| | Vacant Housing Units | 24.1% |
| | 2015 Housing Units | 950 |
| | Owner Occupied Housing Units | 41.3% |
| | Renter Occupied Housing Units | 31.7% |
| | Vacant Housing Units | 27.1% |
| | Median Household Income | |
| | 2000 | \$21,053 |
| | 2010 | \$24,190 |
| | 2015 | \$28,123 |
| | Median Home Value | |
| | 2000 | \$46,533 |
| | 2010 | \$86,333 |
| | 2015 | \$115,097 |
| | Per Capita Income | |
| | 2000 | \$13,478 |
| | 2010 | \$15,024 |
| | 2015 | \$16,591 |
| | Median Age | |
| | 2000 | 36.9 |
| | 2010 | 39.1 |
| | 2015 | 39.7 |



Market Profile
Prepared by ESRI

Polygon_1
Area: 0.79 Square miles
Custom Polygon

| | | |
|---|---|----------|
|  | 2000 Households by Income | |
| | Household Income Base | 741 |
| | < \$15,000 | 35.5% |
| | \$15,000 - \$24,999 | 22.4% |
| | \$25,000 - \$34,999 | 8.5% |
| | \$35,000 - \$49,999 | 12.0% |
| | \$50,000 - \$74,999 | 11.7% |
| | \$75,000 - \$99,999 | 4.9% |
| | \$100,000 - \$149,999 | 3.5% |
| | \$150,000 - \$199,999 | 0.8% |
| | \$200,000+ | 0.7% |
| | Average Household Income | \$32,788 |
| | 2010 Households by Income | |
| | Household Income Base | 690 |
| | < \$15,000 | 31.4% |
|  | \$15,000 - \$24,999 | 20.1% |
| | \$25,000 - \$34,999 | 9.4% |
| | \$35,000 - \$49,999 | 11.0% |
| | \$50,000 - \$74,999 | 18.3% |
| | \$75,000 - \$99,999 | 4.1% |
| | \$100,000 - \$149,999 | 2.6% |
| | \$150,000 - \$199,999 | 2.2% |
| | \$200,000+ | 0.9% |
| | Average Household Income | \$38,225 |
| | 2015 Households by Income | |
| | Household Income Base | 692 |
| | < \$15,000 | 29.0% |
| | \$15,000 - \$24,999 | 17.3% |
| | \$25,000 - \$34,999 | 8.8% |
| | \$35,000 - \$49,999 | 9.5% |
| | \$50,000 - \$74,999 | 23.6% |
| | \$75,000 - \$99,999 | 4.5% |
| | \$100,000 - \$149,999 | 3.5% |
| | \$150,000 - \$199,999 | 2.7% |
| | \$200,000+ | 1.0% |
| | Average Household Income | \$42,421 |
|  | 2000 Owner Occupied HUs by Value | |
| | Total | 418 |
| | <\$50,000 | 56.2% |
| | \$50,000 - 99,999 | 38.5% |
| | \$100,000 - 149,999 | 4.1% |
| | \$150,000 - 199,999 | 1.0% |
| | \$200,000 - \$299,999 | 0.2% |
| | \$300,000 - 499,999 | 0.0% |
| | \$500,000 - 999,999 | 0.0% |
| | \$1,000,000+ | 0.0% |
| | Average Home Value | \$51,240 |
| | 2000 Specified Renter Occupied HUs by Contract Rent | |
| | Total | 330 |
| | With Cash Rent | 90.0% |
| | No Cash Rent | 10.0% |
| | Median Rent | \$284 |
| | Average Rent | \$286 |



Market Profile

Prepared by ESRI

Polygon_1
Area: 0.79 Square miles
Custom Polygon



2000 Population by Age

| | |
|-------------|-------|
| Total | 1,792 |
| Age 0 - 4 | 7.9% |
| Age 5 - 9 | 7.2% |
| Age 10 - 14 | 7.8% |
| Age 15 - 19 | 7.7% |
| Age 20 - 24 | 5.7% |
| Age 25 - 34 | 11.0% |
| Age 35 - 44 | 13.8% |
| Age 45 - 54 | 11.8% |
| Age 55 - 64 | 8.8% |
| Age 65 - 74 | 9.2% |
| Age 75 - 84 | 6.6% |
| Age 85+ | 2.5% |
| Age 18+ | 73.1% |

2010 Population by Age

| | |
|-------------|-------|
| Total | 1,760 |
| Age 0 - 4 | 7.8% |
| Age 5 - 9 | 6.8% |
| Age 10 - 14 | 7.3% |
| Age 15 - 19 | 7.6% |
| Age 20 - 24 | 5.5% |
| Age 25 - 34 | 10.6% |
| Age 35 - 44 | 11.3% |
| Age 45 - 54 | 12.7% |
| Age 55 - 64 | 11.5% |
| Age 65 - 74 | 9.1% |
| Age 75 - 84 | 6.4% |
| Age 85+ | 3.5% |
| Age 18+ | 74.2% |

2015 Population by Age

| | |
|-------------|-------|
| Total | 1,772 |
| Age 0 - 4 | 7.7% |
| Age 5 - 9 | 6.7% |
| Age 10 - 14 | 7.4% |
| Age 15 - 19 | 7.3% |
| Age 20 - 24 | 5.5% |
| Age 25 - 34 | 10.4% |
| Age 35 - 44 | 10.8% |
| Age 45 - 54 | 11.4% |
| Age 55 - 64 | 12.1% |
| Age 65 - 74 | 11.1% |
| Age 75 - 84 | 6.1% |
| Age 85+ | 3.5% |
| Age 18+ | 74.3% |

2000 Population by Sex

| | |
|---------|-------|
| Males | 45.4% |
| Females | 54.6% |

2010 Population by Sex

| | |
|---------|-------|
| Males | 45.2% |
| Females | 54.8% |

2015 Population by Sex

| | |
|---------|-------|
| Males | 45.0% |
| Females | 55.0% |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census of Population and Housing. Esri forecasts for 2010 and 2015.



Market Profile

Prepared by ESRI

Polygon_1
Area: 0.79 Square miles
Custom Polygon



2000 Population by Race/Ethnicity

| | |
|---------------------------------|-------|
| Total | 1,794 |
| White Alone | 40.3% |
| Black Alone | 57.2% |
| American Indian Alone | 0.3% |
| Asian or Pacific Islander Alone | 0.3% |
| Some Other Race Alone | 0.6% |
| Two or More Races | 1.3% |
| Hispanic Origin | 2.0% |
| Diversity Index | 52.9 |

2010 Population by Race/Ethnicity

| | |
|---------------------------------|-------|
| Total | 1,759 |
| White Alone | 33.9% |
| Black Alone | 63.2% |
| American Indian Alone | 0.3% |
| Asian or Pacific Islander Alone | 0.3% |
| Some Other Race Alone | 0.7% |
| Two or More Races | 1.6% |
| Hispanic Origin | 2.6% |
| Diversity Index | 51.2 |

2015 Population by Race/Ethnicity

| | |
|---------------------------------|-------|
| Total | 1,774 |
| White Alone | 32.2% |
| Black Alone | 64.7% |
| American Indian Alone | 0.3% |
| Asian or Pacific Islander Alone | 0.3% |
| Some Other Race Alone | 0.7% |
| Two or More Races | 1.8% |
| Hispanic Origin | 2.9% |
| Diversity Index | 50.7 |



2000 Population 3+ by School Enrollment

| | |
|-------------------------------|-------|
| Total | 1,744 |
| Enrolled in Nursery/Preschool | 2.2% |
| Enrolled in Kindergarten | 0.9% |
| Enrolled in Grade 1-8 | 11.4% |
| Enrolled in Grade 9-12 | 9.7% |
| Enrolled in College | 3.3% |
| Enrolled in Grad/Prof School | 0.7% |
| Not Enrolled in School | 71.8% |

2010 Population 25+ by Educational Attainment

| | |
|------------------------------|-------|
| Total | 1,143 |
| Less than 9th Grade | 7.3% |
| 9th - 12th Grade, No Diploma | 11.5% |
| High School Graduate | 38.4% |
| Some College, No Degree | 21.6% |
| Associate Degree | 5.9% |
| Bachelor's Degree | 8.6% |
| Graduate/Professional Degree | 6.8% |



Market Profile

Prepared by ESRI

Polygon_1
Area: 0.79 Square miles
Custom Polygon



2010 Population 15+ by Marital Status

| | |
|---------------|-------|
| Total | 1,375 |
| Never Married | 40.9% |
| Married | 35.6% |
| Widowed | 10.5% |
| Divorced | 12.9% |



2000 Population 16+ by Employment Status

| | |
|---------------------|-------|
| Total | 1,431 |
| In Labor Force | 60.0% |
| Civilian Employed | 53.4% |
| Civilian Unemployed | 6.6% |
| In Armed Forces | 0.0% |
| Not in Labor Force | 40.0% |

2010 Civilian Population 16+ in Labor Force

| | |
|---------------------|-------|
| Civilian Employed | 79.7% |
| Civilian Unemployed | 20.3% |

2015 Civilian Population 16+ in Labor Force

| | |
|---------------------|-------|
| Civilian Employed | 83.5% |
| Civilian Unemployed | 16.5% |

2000 Females 16+ by Employment Status and Age of Children

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------|
| Total | 830 |
| Own Children < 6 Only | 9.2% |
| Employed/in Armed Forces | 3.0% |
| Unemployed | 0.4% |
| Not in Labor Force | 5.8% |
| Own Children < 6 and 6-17 Only | 7.8% |
| Employed/in Armed Forces | 2.9% |
| Unemployed | 1.4% |
| Not in Labor Force | 3.5% |
| Own Children 6-17 Only | 16.4% |
| Employed/in Armed Forces | 11.1% |
| Unemployed | 0.8% |
| Not in Labor Force | 4.5% |
| No Own Children < 18 | 66.6% |
| Employed/in Armed Forces | 29.6% |
| Unemployed | 3.7% |
| Not in Labor Force | 33.3% |



2010 Employed Population 16+ by Industry

| | |
|-------------------------------|-------|
| Total | 675 |
| Agriculture/Mining | 1.0% |
| Construction | 6.8% |
| Manufacturing | 6.8% |
| Wholesale Trade | 2.1% |
| Retail Trade | 15.0% |
| Transportation/Utilities | 2.8% |
| Information | 0.7% |
| Finance/Insurance/Real Estate | 1.8% |
| Services | 48.4% |
| Public Administration | 14.5% |



Market Profile

Prepared by ESRI

Polygon_1
Area: 0.79 Square miles
Custom Polygon

2010 Employed Population 16+ by Occupation

| | |
|---------------------------------|-------|
| Total | 676 |
| White Collar | 41.0% |
| Management/Business/Financial | 7.7% |
| Professional | 12.3% |
| Sales | 7.2% |
| Administrative Support | 13.8% |
| Services | 36.4% |
| Blue Collar | 22.6% |
| Farming/Forestry/Fishing | 0.6% |
| Construction/Extraction | 7.4% |
| Installation/Maintenance/Repair | 3.7% |
| Production | 3.4% |
| Transportation/Material Moving | 7.5% |



2000 Workers 16+ by Means of Transportation to Work

| | |
|----------------------------------|-------|
| Total | 748 |
| Drove Alone - Car, Truck, or Van | 78.3% |
| Carpooled - Car, Truck, or Van | 13.0% |
| Public Transportation | 0.0% |
| Walked | 2.7% |
| Other Means | 5.9% |
| Worked at Home | 0.1% |

2000 Workers 16+ by Travel Time to Work

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-------|
| Total | 746 |
| Did Not Work at Home | 99.9% |
| Less than 5 minutes | 7.9% |
| 5 to 9 minutes | 22.3% |
| 10 to 19 minutes | 39.4% |
| 20 to 24 minutes | 4.3% |
| 25 to 34 minutes | 7.9% |
| 35 to 44 minutes | 5.5% |
| 45 to 59 minutes | 5.1% |
| 60 to 89 minutes | 3.2% |
| 90 or more minutes | 4.3% |
| Worked at Home | 0.1% |
| Average Travel Time to Work (in min) | 23.7 |

2000 Households by Vehicles Available

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-------|
| Total | 749 |
| None | 20.0% |
| 1 | 42.7% |
| 2 | 23.4% |
| 3 | 10.3% |
| 4 | 2.0% |
| 5+ | 1.6% |
| Average Number of Vehicles Available | 1.4 |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census of Population and Housing. Esri forecasts for 2010 and 2015.



Polygon_1
Area: 0.79 Square miles
Custom Polygon

Market Profile
Prepared by ESRI



2000 Households by Type

| | |
|----------------------------------|-------|
| Total | 734 |
| Family Households | 61.9% |
| Married-couple Family | 30.4% |
| With Related Children | 13.4% |
| Other Family (No Spouse) | 31.5% |
| With Related Children | 21.7% |
| Nonfamily Households | 38.1% |
| Householder Living Alone | 32.0% |
| Householder Not Living Alone | 6.1% |
| Households with Related Children | 35.1% |
| Households with Persons 65+ | 34.8% |

2000 Households by Size

| | |
|---------------------|-------|
| Total | 733 |
| 1 Person Household | 32.1% |
| 2 Person Household | 29.1% |
| 3 Person Household | 17.4% |
| 4 Person Household | 12.7% |
| 5 Person Household | 4.9% |
| 6 Person Household | 2.3% |
| 7+ Person Household | 1.4% |

2000 Households by Year Householder Moved In

| | |
|----------------------------------|-------|
| Total | 748 |
| Moved in 1999 to March 2000 | 22.3% |
| Moved in 1995 to 1998 | 25.8% |
| Moved in 1990 to 1994 | 17.5% |
| Moved in 1980 to 1989 | 11.8% |
| Moved in 1970 to 1979 | 6.0% |
| Moved in 1969 or Earlier | 16.6% |
| Median Year Householder Moved In | 1994 |



2000 Housing Units by Units in Structure

| | |
|-------------|-------|
| Total | 791 |
| 1, Detached | 78.0% |
| 1, Attached | 2.0% |
| 2 | 4.6% |
| 3 or 4 | 3.7% |
| 5 to 9 | 0.0% |
| 10 to 19 | 1.4% |
| 20+ | 0.9% |
| Mobile Home | 9.5% |
| Other | 0.0% |

2000 Housing Units by Year Structure Built

| | |
|-----------------------------|-------|
| Total | 790 |
| 1999 to March 2000 | 0.0% |
| 1995 to 1998 | 6.2% |
| 1990 to 1994 | 5.4% |
| 1980 to 1989 | 8.2% |
| 1970 to 1979 | 11.0% |
| 1969 or Earlier | 69.1% |
| Median Year Structure Built | 1957 |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census of Population and Housing.



Polygon_1
Area: 0.79 Square miles
Custom Polygon

Market Profile
Prepared by ESRI

Top 3 Tapestry Segments

| | |
|----|---------------------|
| 1. | Modest Income Homes |
| 2. | Great Expectations |
| 3. | City Commons |



2010 Consumer Spending shows the amount spent on a variety of goods and services by households that reside in the market area. Expenditures are shown by broad budget categories that are not mutually exclusive. Consumer spending does not equal business revenue.

| | |
|---|-------------|
| Apparel & Services: Total \$ | \$656,301 |
| Average Spent | \$949.78 |
| Spending Potential Index | 40 |
| Computers & Accessories: Total \$ | \$82,319 |
| Average Spent | \$119.13 |
| Spending Potential Index | 54 |
| Education: Total \$ | \$473,723 |
| Average Spent | \$685.56 |
| Spending Potential Index | 56 |
| Entertainment/Recreation: Total \$ | \$1,224,584 |
| Average Spent | \$1,772.19 |
| Spending Potential Index | 55 |
| Food at Home: Total \$ | \$1,823,933 |
| Average Spent | \$2,639.56 |
| Spending Potential Index | 59 |
| Food Away from Home: Total \$ | \$1,279,631 |
| Average Spent | \$1,851.85 |
| Spending Potential Index | 58 |
| Health Care: Total \$ | \$1,514,841 |
| Average Spent | \$2,192.24 |
| Spending Potential Index | 59 |
| HH Furnishings & Equipment: Total \$ | \$662,096 |
| Average Spent | \$958.17 |
| Spending Potential Index | 47 |
| Investments: Total \$ | \$510,741 |
| Average Spent | \$739.13 |
| Spending Potential Index | 42 |
| Retail Goods: Total \$ | \$9,241,378 |
| Average Spent | \$13,373.92 |
| Spending Potential Index | 54 |
| Shelter: Total \$ | \$5,800,768 |
| Average Spent | \$8,394.74 |
| Spending Potential Index | 53 |
| TV/Video/Audio: Total \$ | \$509,461 |
| Average Spent | \$737.28 |
| Spending Potential Index | 59 |
| Travel: Total \$ | \$629,620 |
| Average Spent | \$911.17 |
| Spending Potential Index | 48 |
| Vehicle Maintenance & Repairs: Total \$ | \$367,822 |
| Average Spent | \$532.30 |
| Spending Potential Index | 56 |

APPENDIX B

Study Area Analysis

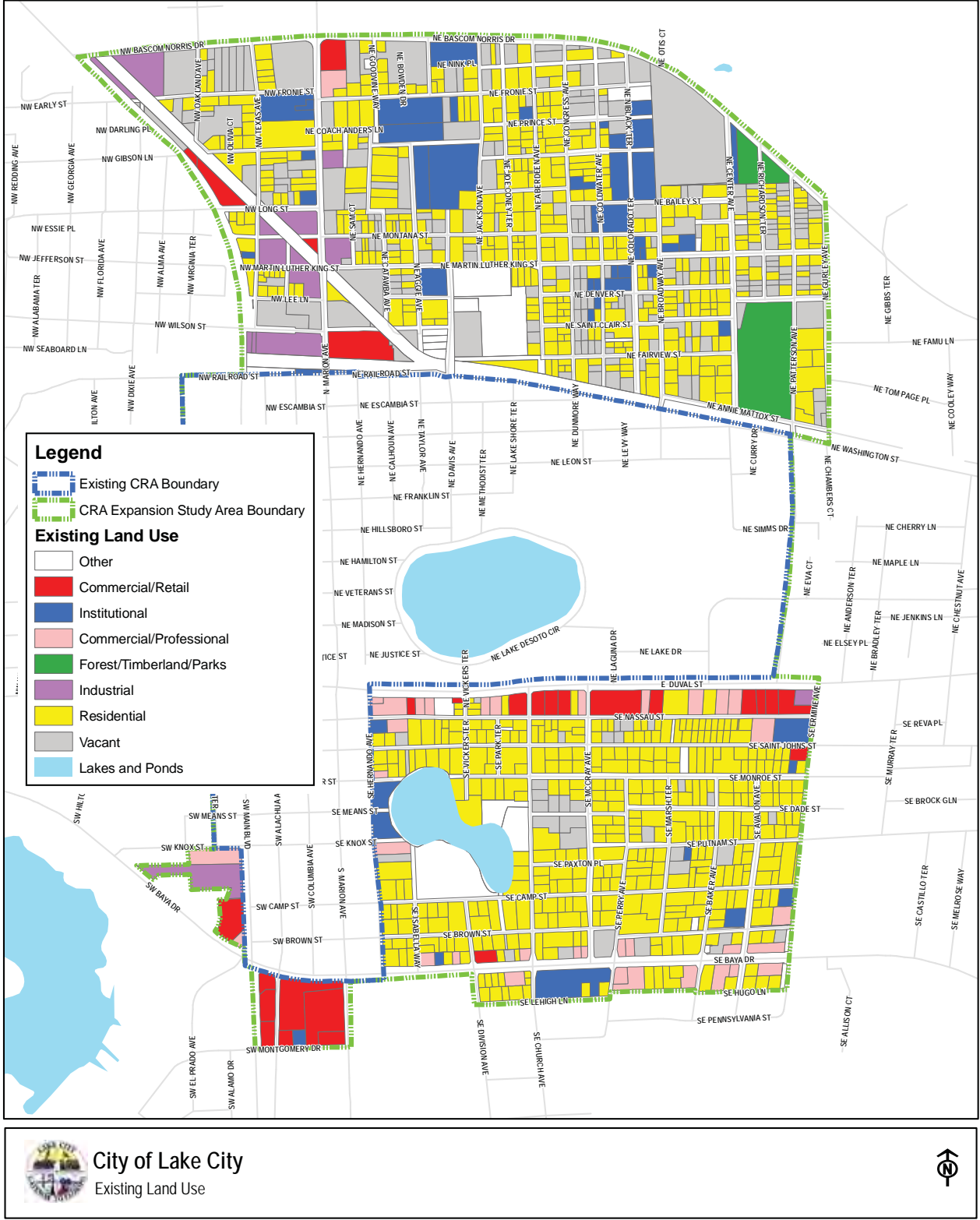


The recommended Downtown CRA Expansion boundary was determined after an evaluation of the existing blight conditions within the initial Study Area boundary. The following section presents statistics and supporting maps that document the segments failing to provide substantial evidence of blight and distress conditions within the larger Downtown CRA Preliminary Study Area. The section includes a comparative analysis between the Initial Study Area, the recommended Downtown CRA Expansion Area, and the area not included within the recommended Study Area boundaries.

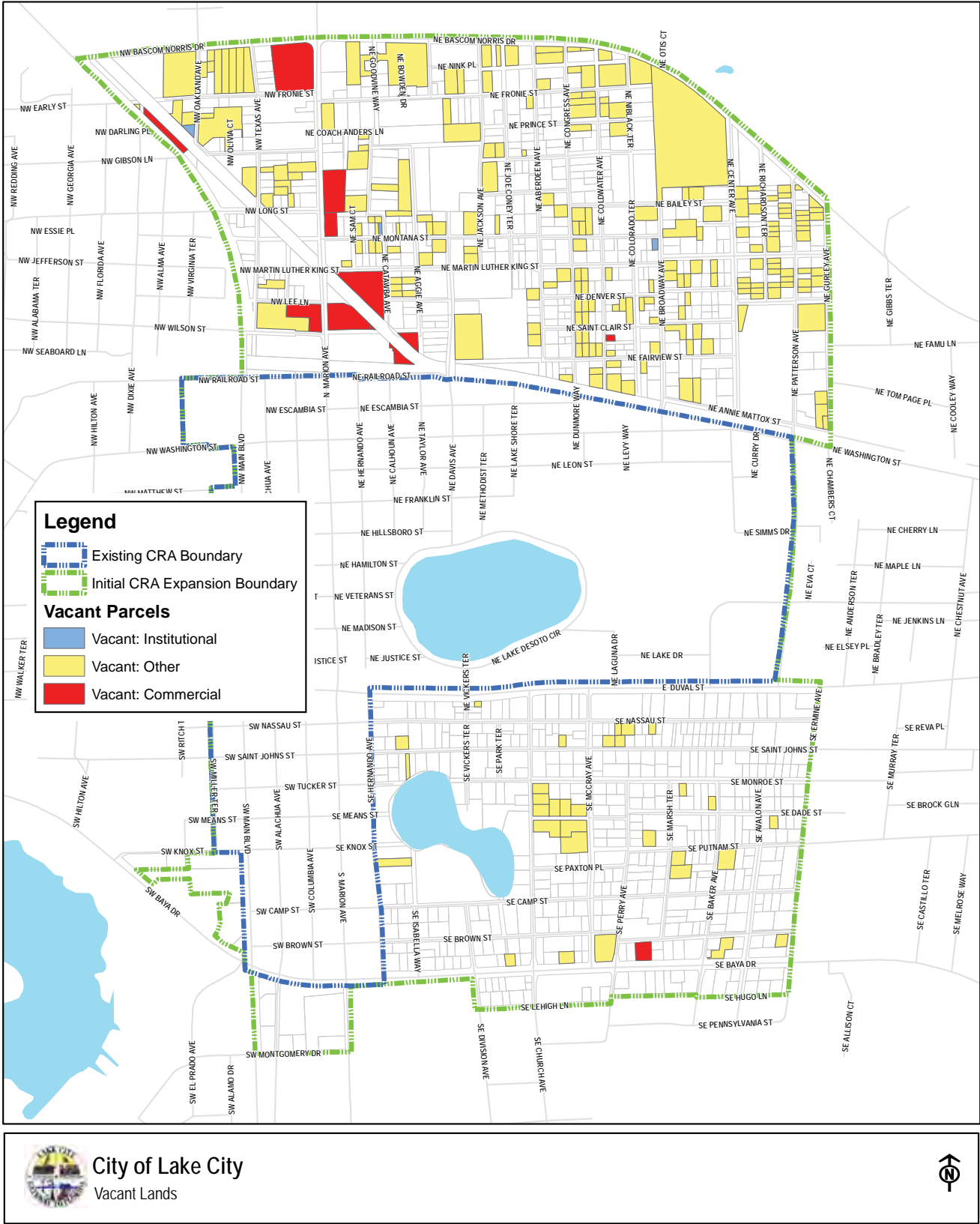
Although there are blight and distress conditions existing in the area not included in the recommended Downtown CRA Expansion boundaries, these conditions do not exhibit strong patterns of concentration.

The following indicators were analyzed to determine the recommended boundaries for the Study Area:

- Existing Land Use Patterns
- Property Conditions
- Parcel Sizes
- Vacant Lands



Date: 11/24/10
Created by: E. Raasch for IBI Group
Source: City of Lake City GIS Data



Date: 11/24/10
Created by: E. Raasch for IBI Group
Source: City of Lake City GIS Data

Initial Study Area Vacant Lands

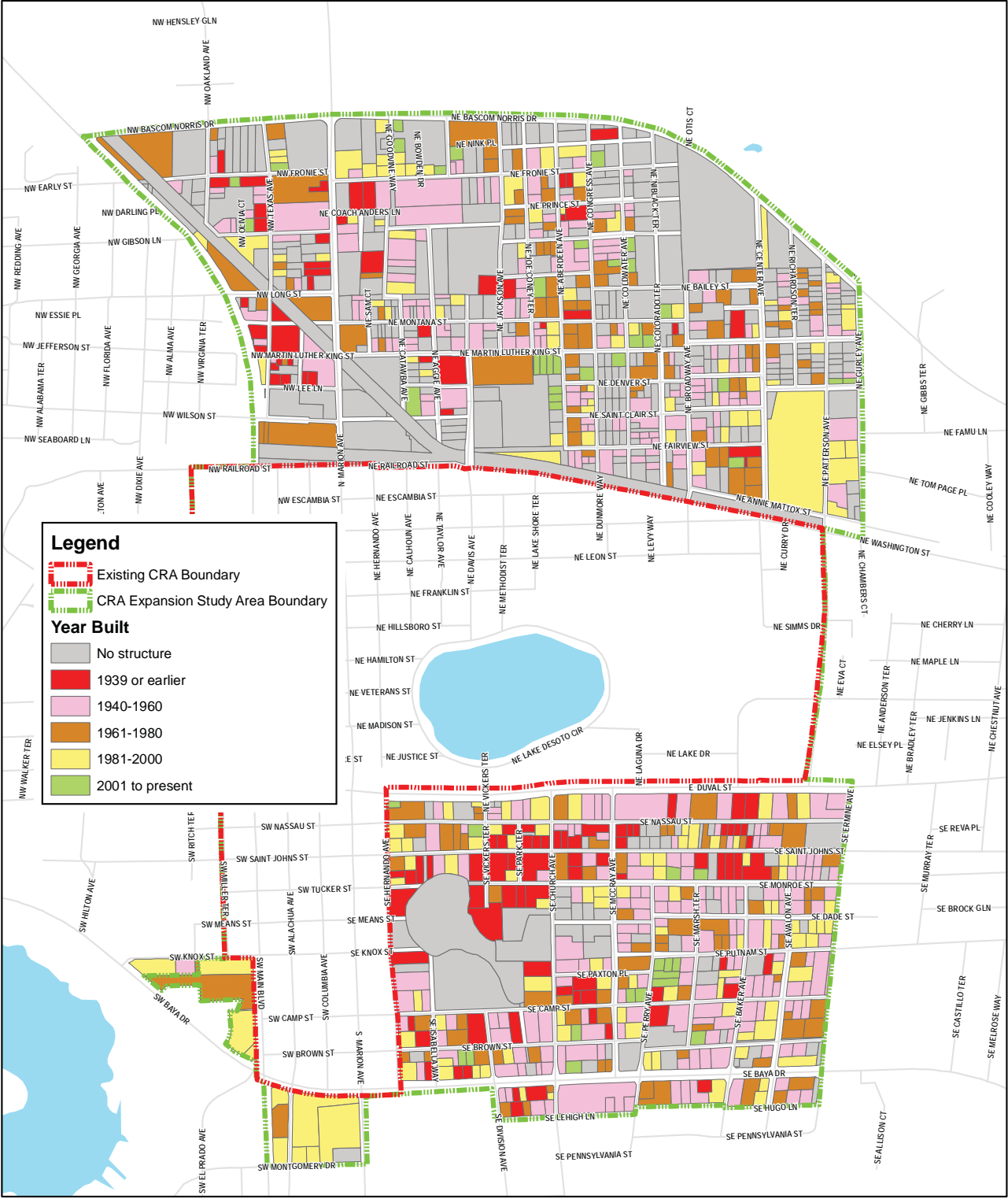
| Size | # of Parcels | % | Acreage | % |
|-----------------------|--------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Vacant: Institutional | 3 | 0.25% | 0.276 | 0.07% |
| Vacant: Industrial | 0 | 0.00% | 0 | 0.00% |
| Vacant: Commercial | 12 | 0.99% | 9.601 | 2.46% |
| Vacant: Other | 240 | 19.87% | 70.580 | 18.10% |
| Total Vacant | 255 | 21.11% | 80.457 | 20.64% |
| Non-Vacant | 953 | 78.89% | 309.389 | 79.36% |
| Total | 1208 | 100.00% | 389.846 | 100.00% |

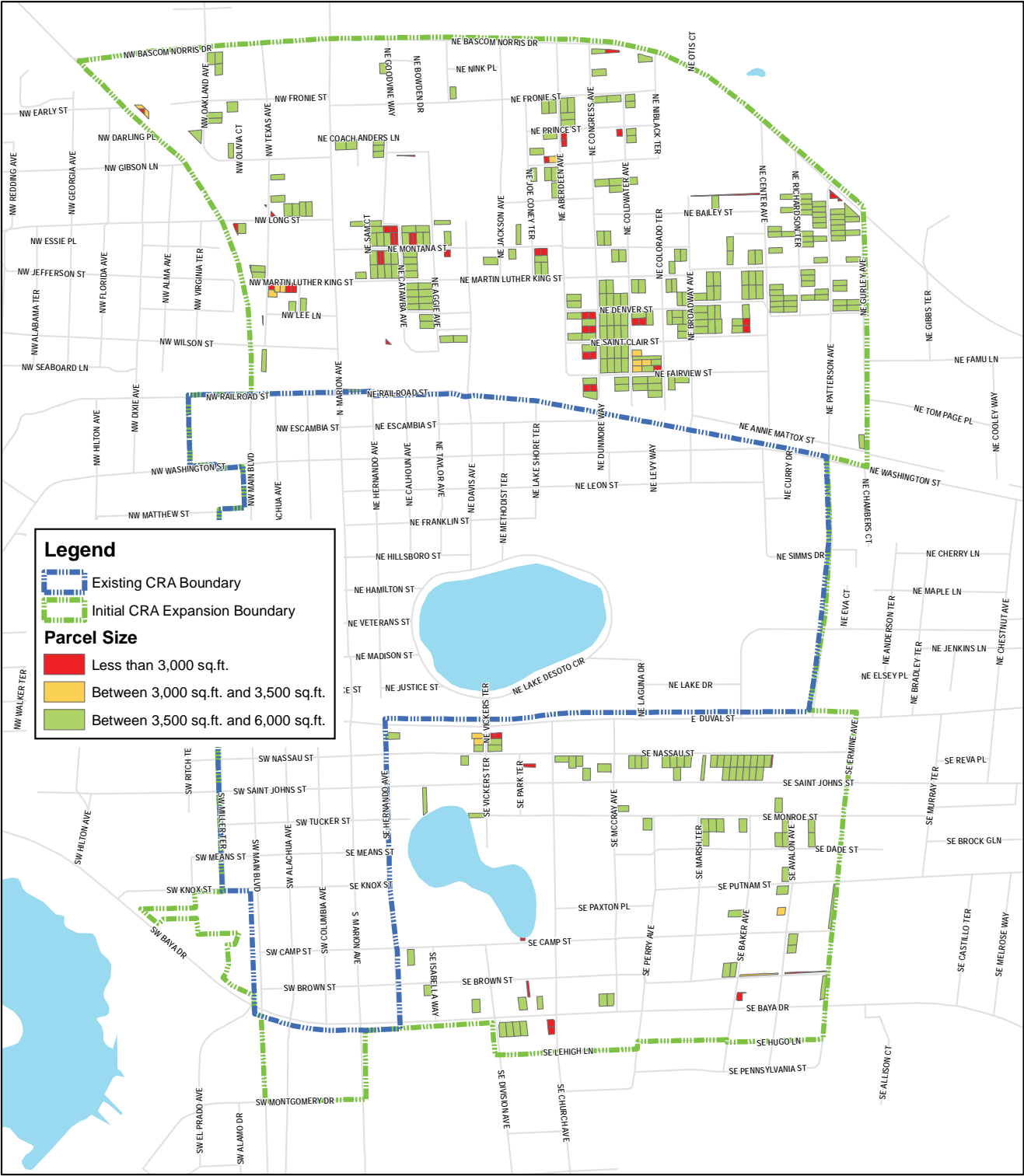
Recommended Expansion Area Vacant Lands


| Size | # of Parcels | % | Acreage | % |
|-----------------------|--------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Vacant: Institutional | 3 | 0.42% | 0.276 | 0.12% |
| Vacant: Industrial | 0 | 0.00% | 0 | 0.00% |
| Vacant: Commercial | 11 | 1.53% | 9.189 | 3.95% |
| Vacant: Other | 209 | 28.99% | 61.955 | 26.64% |
| Total Vacant | 223 | 30.93% | 71.420 | 30.71% |
| Non-Vacant | 498 | 69.07% | 161.130 | 69.29% |
| Total | 721 | 100.00% | 232.55 | 100.00% |

Area Not Included


| Size | # of Parcels | % | Acreage | % |
|-----------------------|--------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Vacant: Institutional | 0 | 0.00% | 0 | 0.00% |
| Vacant: Industrial | 0 | 0.00% | 0 | 0.00% |
| Vacant: Commercial | 1 | 0.21% | 0.412 | 0.26% |
| Vacant: Other | 31 | 6.37% | 8.624 | 5.48% |
| Total Vacant | 32 | 6.57% | 9.036 | 5.74% |
| Non-Vacant | 455 | 93.43% | 148.264 | 94.26% |
| Total | 487 | 100.00% | 157.3 | 100.00% |







City of Lake City
Parcel Sizes



PARCEL SIZES

Initial Study Area

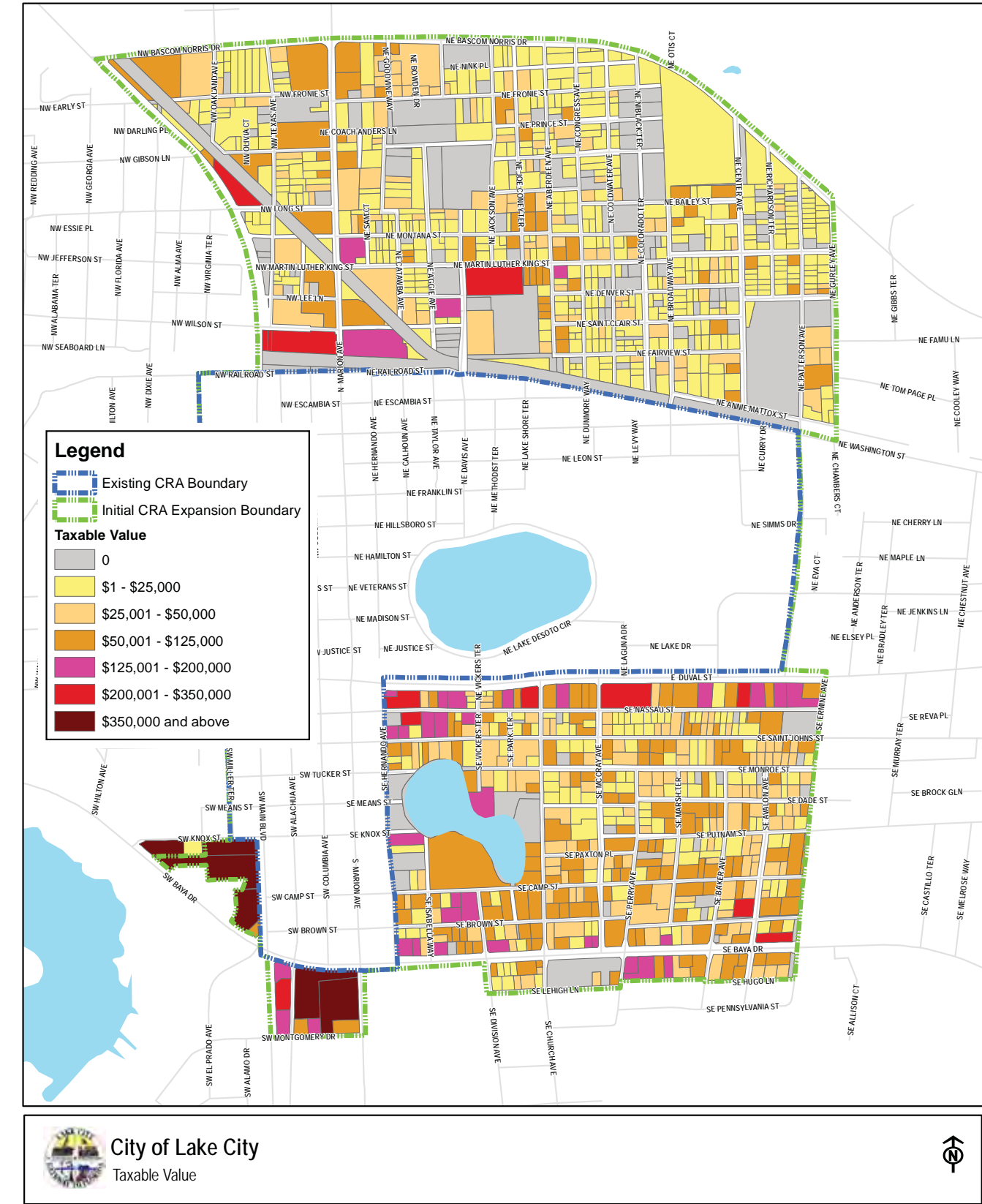
| Size | # of Parcels | % | Acreage | % |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Less than 3,000 square feet | 53 | 4.39% | 2.64 | 0.68% |
| Between 3,000 sq.ft. and 3,500 sq.ft. | 13 | 1.08% | 0.96 | 0.25% |
| Between 3,500 sq.ft. and 5,000 sq.ft. | 135 | 11.18% | 13.27 | 3.40% |
| Greater than 5,000 sq. ft. | 1,007 | 83.36% | 372.98 | 95.67% |
| Total | 1,208 | 100.00% | 389.85 | 100.00% |

Recommended Expansion Area

| Size | # of Parcels | % | Acreage | % |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Less than 3,000 square feet | 43 | 5.96% | 2.15 | 0.92% |
| Between 3,000 sq.ft. and 3,500 sq.ft. | 9 | 1.25% | 0.66 | 0.28% |
| Between 3,500 sq.ft. and 5,000 sq.ft. | 102 | 14.15% | 9.86 | 4.24% |
| Greater than 5,000 sq. ft. | 567 | 78.64% | 219.89 | 94.56% |
| Total | 721 | 100.00% | 232.55 | 100.00% |

Area Not Included

| Size | # of Parcels | % | Acreage | % |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|--------|---------|--------|
| Less than 3,000 square feet | 10 | 2.05% | 0.49 | 0.31% |
| Between 3,000 sq.ft. and 3,500 sq.ft. | 4 | 0.82% | 0.30 | 0.19% |
| Between 3,500 sq.ft. and 5,000 sq.ft. | 34 | 6.98% | 3.50 | 2.22% |
| Greater than 5,000 sq. ft. | 439 | 90.14% | 153.01 | 97.27% |



Date: 11/24/10
Created by: E. Raasch for IBI Group
Source: City of Lake City GIS Data

Initial Study Area Property Values

| | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | % change 2008-2010 |
|---------------------|----------|----------|----------|--------------------|
| Just Value | \$62,390 | \$59,006 | \$55,916 | -10.38% |
| Assessed School | \$56,570 | \$54,393 | \$52,287 | -7.57% |
| Assessed Non School | \$56,570 | \$54,354 | \$52,270 | -7.60% |
| Taxable School | \$43,195 | \$41,563 | \$39,597 | -8.33% |
| Taxable Non School | \$41,470 | \$39,806 | \$37,704 | -9.08% |

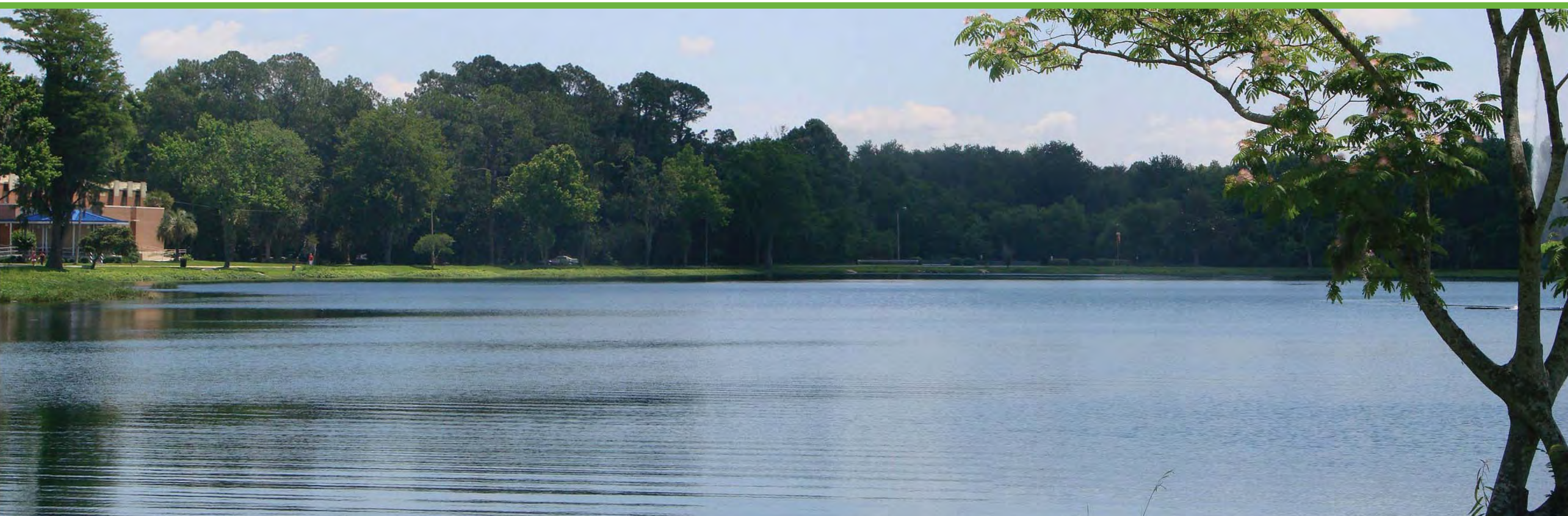
Recommended Expansion Area Property Values

| | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | % change 2008-2010 |
|---------------------|----------|----------|----------|--------------------|
| Just Value | \$37,442 | \$34,908 | \$33,047 | -11.74% |
| Assessed School | \$33,345 | \$31,685 | \$30,516 | -8.48% |
| Assessed Non School | \$33,345 | \$31,626 | \$30,488 | -8.57% |
| Taxable School | \$20,056 | \$18,757 | \$18,151 | -9.50% |
| Taxable Non School | \$19,122 | \$17,728 | \$17,089 | -10.63% |

Area Not Used

| | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | % change 2008-2010 |
|---------------------|----------|----------|----------|--------------------|
| Just Value | \$99,175 | \$94,536 | \$89,633 | -9.62% |
| Assessed School | \$90,815 | \$87,875 | \$84,387 | -7.08% |
| Assessed Non School | \$90,815 | \$87,865 | \$84,387 | -7.08% |
| Taxable School | \$77,312 | \$75,191 | \$71,218 | -7.88% |
| Taxable Non School | \$74,420 | \$72,358 | \$68,100 | -8.49% |

Appendix C TIF Projections



Tax Increment financing is a tool that uses increased revenues generated by taxes gained from growth in property values resulting from successful redevelopment activities. This section presents a brief history of Tax Increment Financing, types of expenses allowed and TIF revenue projections that are likely to be generated within the Lake City CRA in the next thirty years. The Shands Lake Shore Hospital merger has enabled the hospital owned properties to revert back to the tax rolls and future improvements to these properties will be a major contributor in increasing the tax revenue base for the CRA.

History of Tax Increment Financing

Tax increment financing was originally developed over 30 years ago as a method to meet the local match requirements of federal grant programs. With the reduction in federal funds available for local projects, however, tax increment financing is standing on its own as a method to finance local redevelopment. State law controls tax increment financing. Because of this control, tax increment financing takes on a number of different techniques and appearances throughout the country.

In Florida, tax increment financing is derived from the Community Redevelopment Act of 1969, which is codified as Part III, Chapter 163 of the Florida Statutes. This act provided for a combination of public and private redevelopment efforts, but did not authorize the use of tax increment financing. The Act was amended in 1977 to allow tax increment financing. Under the Statutes, municipalities must go through a number of steps to establish a redevelopment area and implement tax increment financing. Tax increment revenue is typically the major source of funding for redevelopment projects under the State of Florida Community Redevelopment Act.

Upon approval of the governing body, a trust fund for each community redevelopment area may be established. The revenues for the trust fund are obtained by capturing any increases in taxable assessed value generated in the redevelopment area. The current assessed value of the district is set as the base and any increases to the base (the tax increment revenues) are available for improvements to the area. The property tax paid on the base assessed value continues to be distributed to the local governments. The tax collector collects the entire property tax and subtracts the tax on the base value, which is available for general government purposes. Of the remaining tax increment revenues, 95 percent are deposited to the trust fund.

Type of Expenses Allowed

Funds from the redevelopment trust fund may be expended from time to time for undertakings of the community redevelopment agency which are directly related to financing or refinancing of redevelopment in the redevelopment area pursuant to an approved community redevelopment plan for the following purposes, including, but not limited to:

Establishment and Operations - they can be used for the implementation and administrative expenses of the Community Redevelopment Agency

Planning and Analysis - they can be used to develop the necessary engineering, architectural, and financial plans

Financing - the revenues may be used to issue and repay debt for proposed capital improvements contained in the Community Redevelopment Plan

Acquisition - the revenues may be used to acquire real property

Preparation -Revenues may also be used for site preparation, including the relocation of existing residents.

According to F.S. 163.370(2), however, the funds may not be used for the following purposes:

- 1. To construct or expand administration buildings for public bodies or police and fire buildings unless each taxing authority involved agrees,
- 2. Any publicly-owned capital improvements which are not an integral part of the redevelopment if the improvements are normally financed by user fees, and if the improvements would have other-wise been made without the Redevelopment Agency within three years, or
- 3. General government operating expenses unrelated to the Redevelopment Agency.

In addition, tax increment funds cannot be spent on capital projects contained in the local government’s Capital Improvement Plan for the preceding three (3) years.

Tax Increment Projections

The following spreadsheet provides tax increment revenue projections for the Downtown Lake City Redevelopment Area. The model contains assumptions that increase the property values in the second year based on the anticipated reverting of the hospital properties to the tax roll. Because of the added value of this merger and future redevelopment of hospital owned properties, the Downtown Lake City redevelopment program is well positioned for successfully completing the projects identified in the redevelopment plan. The Agency is expected to see an increase in tax revenues of \$285,000 per year because of this merger. The Agency has several options for obtaining initial financing and grants to enable immediate planning and design of their projects. The Agency can obtain interim financing through a bond anticipation note, commercial loan or commercial line of credit based on projected revenues. These funds, combined with other funding sources and programs identified in this plan should enable the City and the Agency to embark on an aggressive public improvement program that will serve as a catalyst for private sector investment.

Tax Increment Financing Revenue (TIF) projections for the Downtown Lake City Redevelopment Area were estimated using the 2010 taxable values provided by the Columbia County Property Appraiser’s records. In order to be appropriately conservative, the average growth rate of the taxable values for all parcels in the recommended CRA, between 2007 and 2010 was used. The average taxable values decreased between between 2007 and 2010 for all properties in the recommended CRA District by 9.3%.

The projections were subject to the 2010 City millage rate (3.9816) and the 2010 County millage rate (17.3824). The methodology underestimates the impact that new development and public improvements will have on the total taxable value of the properties in the TIF district because the projected revenue estimates do not capture the growth in assessments that will result from new construction.

Methodology

The base year (2010) taxable value is subtracted from the projected total base value. The increment is then multiplied by the millage rate available to the TIF district over the next forty years. The gross incremental CRA revenue is discounted back for inflation at 95% to calculate the net incremental CRA revenue.

Results

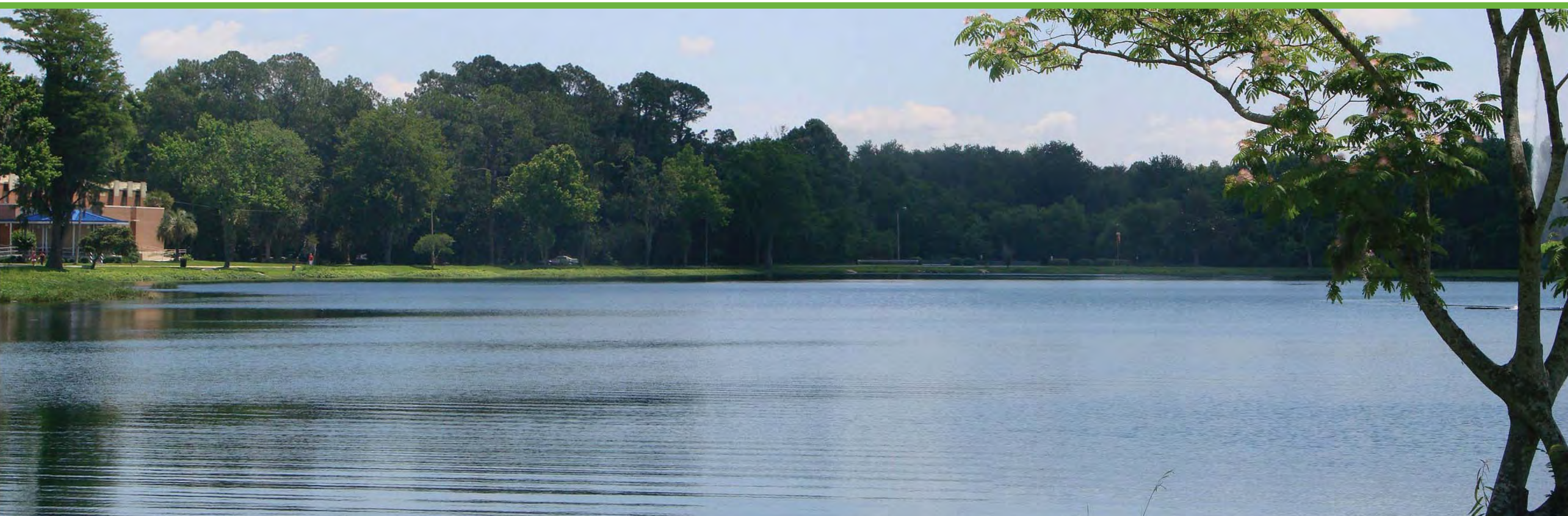
Table A shows estimates of the annual increment increase for all taxable properties in the CRA at growth rate of 1.0%.

The total increment over a 30 year TIF district life for the Downtown Lake City TIF District at 1% growth rate is \$18.5 million, while the net incremental CRA Revenue at 95% is projected to be \$17.2 million.

The estimates are sensitive to several factors including market forces and changes to the assessment system in Columbia County. While the estimates show a moderate growth in the taxable values in the early years of the TIF, they provide a conservative projection for the revenue stream that the recommended Downtown Lake City TIF district is likely to generate.

| Downtown Lake City CRA TIF Projections @ 1% Annual Growth Rate | | | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Years | Annual Increase in Assessed Value | Annual Incremental Increase | Gross Incremental CRA Revenue | Net (95%) Incremental CRA Revenue |
| 2010 (base) | \$52,833,083 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| 2011 | \$53,361,414 | \$528,331 | \$11,287 | \$10,723 |
| 2012 | \$66,704,186 | \$13,871,103 | \$296,342 | \$281,525 |
| 2013 | \$67,371,228 | \$14,538,145 | \$310,593 | \$295,063 |
| 2014 | \$68,044,940 | \$15,211,857 | \$324,986 | \$308,737 |
| 2015 | \$68,725,390 | \$15,892,307 | \$339,523 | \$322,547 |
| 2016 | \$69,412,643 | \$16,579,560 | \$354,206 | \$336,495 |
| 2017 | \$70,106,770 | \$17,273,687 | \$369,035 | \$350,583 |
| 2018 | \$70,807,838 | \$17,974,755 | \$384,013 | \$364,812 |
| 2019 | \$71,515,916 | \$18,682,833 | \$399,140 | \$379,183 |
| 2020 | \$72,231,075 | \$19,397,992 | \$414,419 | \$393,698 |
| 2021 | \$72,953,386 | \$20,120,303 | \$429,850 | \$408,358 |
| 2022 | \$73,682,920 | \$20,849,837 | \$445,436 | \$423,164 |
| 2023 | \$74,419,749 | \$21,586,666 | \$461,178 | \$438,119 |
| 2024 | \$75,163,946 | \$22,330,863 | \$477,077 | \$453,223 |
| 2025 | \$75,915,586 | \$23,082,503 | \$493,135 | \$468,478 |
| 2026 | \$76,674,742 | \$23,841,659 | \$509,353 | \$483,886 |
| 2027 | \$77,441,489 | \$24,608,406 | \$525,734 | \$499,447 |
| 2028 | \$78,215,904 | \$25,382,821 | \$542,279 | \$515,165 |
| 2029 | \$78,998,063 | \$26,164,980 | \$558,989 | \$531,039 |
| 2030 | \$79,788,044 | \$26,954,961 | \$575,866 | \$547,072 |
| 2031 | \$80,585,924 | \$27,752,841 | \$592,912 | \$563,266 |
| 2032 | \$81,391,783 | \$28,558,700 | \$610,128 | \$579,622 |
| 2033 | \$82,205,701 | \$29,372,618 | \$627,517 | \$596,141 |
| 2034 | \$83,027,758 | \$30,194,675 | \$645,079 | \$612,825 |
| 2035 | \$83,858,036 | \$31,024,953 | \$662,817 | \$629,676 |
| 2036 | \$84,696,616 | \$31,863,533 | \$680,733 | \$646,696 |
| 2037 | \$85,543,582 | \$32,710,499 | \$698,827 | \$663,886 |
| 2038 | \$86,399,018 | \$33,565,935 | \$717,103 | \$681,248 |
| 2039 | \$87,263,008 | \$34,429,925 | \$735,561 | \$698,783 |
| 2040 | \$88,135,638 | \$35,302,555 | \$754,204 | \$716,494 |
| 2041 | \$89,016,995 | \$36,183,912 | \$773,033 | \$734,381 |
| 2042 | \$89,907,165 | \$37,074,082 | \$792,051 | \$752,448 |
| 2043 | \$90,806,236 | \$37,973,153 | \$811,258 | \$770,696 |
| 2044 | \$91,714,299 | \$38,881,216 | \$830,658 | \$789,125 |
| | | | | \$17,246,603 |

Appendix D Statutory Requirements



This section addresses the specific requirements of Chapter 163, Part III, Florida Statutes, as they relate to the preparation and adoption of Community Redevelopment Plans in accordance with Sections 163.360 and 163.362. Provided below is a brief synopsis of each Sub-Section requirement from 163.360 and 1653.362, and a brief description of how the redevelopment plan and adoption process meet those requirements.

163.360 – COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT PLANS

Section 163.360 (1), Determination of Slum or Blight By Resolution
This section requires that a local governing body determine by resolution that an area has been determined to be a slum or blighted area before a redevelopment area can be established.

Action:
The City of Lake City Councilled a Downtown Lake City CRA Blight Study in 2011 to expand the existing CRA establishing the conditions of blight in the Downtown Lake City Redevelopment Area and designating the area as appropriate for community redevelopment. On , 2011 City Council approved a resolution finding the Downtown Lake City Expansion Area a blighted area appropriate for rehabilitation, conservation and redevelopment in the public interest and designated the Downtown Lake City Expansion Area a Community Redevelopment Area. Please refer Appendix B for the Blight Study and the supporting resolutions adopted by the City Council.

Section 163.360 (2)(a), Conformance with the Comprehensive Plan
The Local Planning Agency is charged with determining that the Downtown Lake City Redevelopment Plan is in conformance with the adopted Comprehensive Plan.

Action:
The Local Planning Agency determined conformance with the City’s Comprehensive Plan at a meeting held on

Section 163.360 (2)(b), Completeness
This section requires that the redevelopment plan be sufficiently complete to address land acquisition, demolition and removal of structures, redevelopment, improvements and rehabilitation of properties within the redevelopment area as well as zoning or planning changes; land uses, maximum densities and building requirements.

Action:
These issues are addressed in the Chapter 4,5 and 6 of the Redevelopment Plan

Section 163.360 (2)(c), Development of Affordable Housing
This section requires the redevelopment plan to provide for the development of affordable housing, or to state the reasons for not addressing affordable housing.

Action:
The Redevelopment Plan anticipates the need to maintain and provide affordable housing within the community where it currently exists in the Down-town Lake City Redevelopment Area. The Redevelopment Agency will coordinate with the local housing authority and Columbia County to seek opportunities for the development of affordable housing. The Land Use Planning and Development Characteristics section (Chapter 4) identifies strategies to promote affordable housing in the downtown. The purpose of the Redevelopment Plan is to encourage market rate housing in downtown Lake City as one component of mixed-use development patterns designed to attract private investment. Currently, the area lacks sufficient residential development and the Plan recommends provides for opportunities to increase residential development- both affordable and market-rate housing.

Section 163.360 (3), Community Policing Innovations
The redevelopment plan may provide for the development and implementation of community policing procedures.

Action:
The Redevelopment Plan supports the use of community policing as stated in the Public Facilities and Amenities section of the Redevelopment Plan (Chapter 4).

Section 163.360 (4), Plan Preparation and Submittal Requirements
The Community Redevelopment Agency may prepare a Community Redevelopment Plan Update. Prior to considering this plan, the redevelopment agency will submit the plan to the local planning agency for review and recommendation as to its conformity with the comprehensive plan.

Action:
The City Council has authorized the preparation of this Community Redevelop-ment Plan through the contracted services of the IBI Group Inc., Certified Plan-ners and Licensed Landscape Architects. On _____ 2011, the Local Planning Agency determined that the redevelopment plan was in conformance with the City’s Comprehensive Plan.

Section 163.360 (5)(6)(7)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e), Plan Approval 163.360 (5)
The Community Redevelopment Agency will submit the Redevelopment Plan, along with written recommendations, to the governing body and each taxing authority operating within the boundaries of the redevelopment area.

Action:
The Downtown Lake City CRA will submit this Redevelopment Plan to the Columbia County Government Board of Councilers to pass a resolution delegating redevelopment powers to the City prior to final adoption of the Plan as provided by statute. Following this, the City Council will proceed with a public hearing on the redevelopment plan as outlined in subsection (6), below.

163.360 (6)
The governing body shall hold a public hearing on the Community Redevelopment Plan after public notice by publication in a newspaper having a general circulation in the area of operation of the Downtown Lake City Community Redevelopment Area.

Action:
A public hearing on the Downtown Lake City Community Redevelopment Plan will be held on _____ at _____ in.

163.360 (7)
Following the public hearing described above, the City Council may approve the rede-velopment plan if it finds that:
(a) A feasible method exists for the location of families who will be displaced from the Redevelopment area in decent, safe, and sanitary dwelling accommodations within their means and without undue hardship to such families;

Action:
The Downtown Lake City Community Redevelopment Area contains a population of just over 1,000 residents according to the Census 2000 data and ESRI 2010 Estimates. To minimize the relocation impact, if any, the Agency will provide supportive services and equitable financial treatment to any individuals, families and businesses subject to relocation. When feasible, the relocation impact will be mitigated by assisting relocation within the immediate neighborhood and by seeking opportunities to relocate within new/ redeveloped buildings that will contain residential and commercial space.

(b) The Redevelopment Plan conforms to the general or comprehensive plan of the county or municipality as a whole;
Action: The City’s Local Planning Agency made recommendations to ensure that the Downtown Lake City Redevelopment Plan conforms to the City’s Comprehensive Plan on_____, 2011.

(c) The Redevelopment Plan gives due consideration to the utilization of community policing procedures, and to the provision of adequate park and recreational areas and facilities that may be desirable for neighborhood improvement, with special consider-ation for the health, safety, and welfare of children residing in the general vicinity of the site covered by the Plan;

Action: The need to utilize community policing procedures is supported in Section 3 above. The Plan recommends improved recreational opportunities as referenced in the Concept Plan and the Overriding Thematic Concepts chapter (Chapter 4) and the costs for which are contained in the Capital Improvements Budget (Chapter 6).

(d) The Redevelopment Plan will afford maximum opportunity consistent with the sound needs of the county or municipality as a whole, for the rehabilitation or redevelopment of the redevelopment area by private enterprise.

Action: The need for, and role of, private enterprise/investment to ensure the success-ful rehabilitation or redevelopment of the Downtown Lake City Redevelopment Area is described throughout the Plan.

(e) Maintenance of coastal area evacuation time and protection of property against exposure to natural disasters.

Action:
Not applicable. This is for redevelopment areas that are located in a coastal tourist area.

Section 163.360 (8) (a)(b), Land Acquisition
These sections of the statute establish requirements for the acquisition of vacant land for the purpose of developing residential and non-residential uses. The Redevelopment Plan supports future development of both residential and nonresidential uses at various locations in the redevelopment area as defined in the Redevelopment Master Plan (Chapter 4). The Plan identifies strategies that will promote and facilitate public and private sector investment in vacant land acquisition for these purposes. Scattered vacant lots are suitable for infill development. Other sites may become able due to demolition.

Section 163.360 (9), Full Force and Effect
Upon approval by a governing body of a community redevelopment plan or any modification thereof, the plan and/or modification shall be deemed in full force and effect.

Action:
None, this sub-section will apply once the City Council adopts the Downtown Lake City Community Redevelopment Plan Update.

Section 163.360 (10), Need as a Result of Emergency.
Provides guidance for development of a redevelopment plan when an area has been designated as blighted as the result of an emergency under Chapter 252.34(3).

Action:
Not Applicable.

Chapter 163.362 - Contents of Community Redevelopment Plans
Every community redevelopment plan shall:

Chapter 163.362(1) Legal Description
Contain a legal description of the boundaries of the redevelopment area and the reasons for establishing such boundaries shown in the plan.

Action:
A legal description of the boundaries of the redevelopment area and the reasons for establishing the boundaries are contained in the Finding of Necessity Study. The Legal Description has been incorporated into this Redevelopment Plan (Appendix B)

Chapter 163.362(2) Show By Diagram and General Terms:
(a) Approximate amount of open space and the street layout.
Action: This task is accomplished through the Redevelopment Plan in the Concept Plan (Part III, Chapter 4)
(b) Limitations on the type, size, height number and proposed use of buildings.

Action:
This is also described in Part III- Redevelopment Plan, however it is expected that the City’s zoning ordinance and land development regulations will continue to provide the regulatory framework for any building dimension or style limitations.

(c) The approximate number of dwelling units.
Action: Based on the future land use concepts contained in the Plan, and the expressed desire to increase residential opportunities in the Downtown Lake City Redevelopment Area, it can be reasonably expected that new investment in housing will occur over time. Future development of moderate to high density residential projects are encouraged in other areas of the redevelopment area, as well as new investment in single family infill, if successful, residential density is expected to increase.

(d) Such property as is intended for use as public parks, recreation areas, streets, public utilities and public improvements of any nature.
Action: A current summary of these uses and facilities is contained in the Inventory Section of the Redevelopment Plan (Appendix A). Proposed future uses and activities of this nature are described in the Redevelopment Master Plan (Chapter 4- Land Use and Development Characteristics and Public Facilities and Amenities; Urban Design and Historic Preservation).

Chapter 163.362(3) Neighborhood Impact Element
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.

The Downtown Lake City Redevelopment Area contains approximately 500 dwelling units which may be considered low to moderate-income units. The Redevelopment Plan makes provisions for affordable housing through rehabilitation and new construction. Shortages in affordable housing will be addressed through existing and new affordable housing development strategies, with an emphasis on developing ways in which affordable housing can be integrated within market rate housing projects.

The implementation of the Downtown Lake City Plan will contribute significantly in improving the quality of life for the citizens residing in the Downtown Lake City and surrounding areas. While all impacts cannot be determined without site-specific proposals that evaluate impacts, this section provides a summary of potential impacts that may occur in each category required by statute. The specific categories that must be addressed are: 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.

Relocation

The Redevelopment Plan as proposed supports the preservation of existing residential areas and does not require the relocation of any of the low or moderate income residents of the redevelopment area. To minimize the relocation impact, the Agency will provide supportive services and equitable financial treatment to any individuals, families and businesses subject to relocation. When feasible, the relocation impact will be mitigated by assisting relocation within the immediate neighborhood and by seeking opportunities to relocate within new/ redeveloped buildings that will contain residential and commercial space.

Traffic Circulation

The implementation of the Redevelopment Plan recommendations related to streetscape improvements and traffic circulation are anticipated to positively impact the Downtown Lake City Redevelopment Area. The Urban Design and Historic Preservation section and the Circulation and Connectivity section, a component of the Redevelopment Plan, envisions enhancing identified roadways through streetscape improvements that encourage pedestrian mobility and improve vehicular circulation within the area. The Implementation Plan and the Capital Improvements Budget (Chapters 6 and 7) further identifies roadway projects with order of magnitude costs.

Environmental Quality

The City is in the process of addressing stormwater management issues throughout the City. The Plan also recommends that the Agency conduct Downtown Stormwater Master Plan. The Redevelopment Agency will work closely with developers to ensure anticipated new development does not impact the drainage capacity of the area, and when feasible support on-site provision of stormwater retention facilities in new development. The Redevelopment Plan recommends obtaining an area-wide stormwater permit to address issues for the entire district.

The City will closely monitor the capacity of the existing and planned stormwater infrastructure to ensure sufficient capacity exists, and there are no negative impacts from development. In terms of vegetation and air quality, proposed streetscape improvements are anticipated to add vegetation to the Downtown Lake City Redevelopment Area and also preserve the existing mature tree canopies, contributing significantly in improving the area’s air quality. No negative impact on the existing sanitary sewer is expected from implementation of the Redevelopment Plan and the Plan identifies infrastructure upgrades as part of the Implementation Plan (Chapter 7).

Community Facilities and Services

The Redevelopment Plan identifies additional projects related to the public facilities and amenities in Chapter 4 under the Public Facilities and Amenities section. Additionally, the Plan also presents several strategies to pursue improvements to the Lakefront, identified the need for constructing a Civic Center; and a Business Incubator Center. These facilities are envisioned to accommodate a diverse range of cultural facilities that will serve the needs of the area youth, adults, and elderly. The Plan recognizes the importance of the existing facilities and supports planned improvements of these facilities. The proposed lakefront walkway improvements and future downtown trail network are an integral component of the redevelopment area’s recreation and open space network.

Effect on School Population

The Redevelopment Plan does not anticipate significantly impacting the area’s school population other than the recommendation to continue discussions with the Columbia County School Board to consider the expansion of the area schools as the redevelopment program matures. Any increase in school population is expected to be handled by the existing schools in the redevelopment area and its vicinity: Niblack Elementary. The City and the Redevelopment Agency will continue to work closely with Columbia County School Board to ensure the board’s future plans for area schools are consistent with the Redevelopment Plan.

Physical and Social Quality

The Plan’s recommendations to continue with improvements to the existing streetscape environment (street lighting, sidewalks, street trees, gateways and directional signage); redevelopment of vacant land and former industrial sites; establishing urban design and architectural standards for new development; and continued code enforcement will have a positive impact on the area’s physical and visual character. Implementation of the redevelopment plan will improve community access to the social service network currently available to the area residents. Forging partnerships to attract higher education satellite campuses in the downtown will increase employment opportunities and serve as a tool to improve the quality of life for area residents.

Chapter 163.362(4) Publicly Funded Capital Projects
Identify specifically any public funded capital projects to be undertaken within the community redevelopment area.

Action:
A list of publicly funded projects located within the boundaries of the redevelopment area is contained in the Capital Improvements Program section (Chapter 6) of this Plan.

Chapter 163.362(5) (6) Safeguards and Retention of Control
Contain adequate safeguards that the work of redevelopment will be carried out pursuant to the plan. Provide for the retention of controls and establishment of any restrictions or covenants running with land sold or leased for private use.

Action:
The following safeguards and procedures will help ensure redevelopment efforts in the redevelopment area are carried out pursuant to the redevelopment plan: The Community Redevelopment Plan is the guiding document for future development, redevelopment and ancillary programs, projects and activities in and for the Downtown Lake City Redevelopment Area. In order to assure that redevelopment will take place in conformance with the projects, goals and policies expressed in this plan, the Downtown Lake City Community Redevelopment Agency will utilize the regulatory devices, instruments and systems used by the City of Lake City to permit development and redevelopment within its jurisdiction. These include but are not limited to the Comprehensive Plan, the Land Development Code, the Zoning Code, adopted design guidelines, performance standards and City authorized development review, permitting and approval processes. Per Florida Statute, the City of Lake City Council retains the vested authority and responsibility for:

1. The power to grant final approval to Redevelopment Plans and modifications.
2. The power to authorize issuance of revenue bonds as set forth in Section 163.385.
3. The power to approve the acquisition, demolition, removal or disposal of property as provided in Section 163.370(3), and the power to assume the responsibility to bear loss as provided in Section 163.370(3).

In accordance with Section 163.356(3)(c), by March 31 of each year the Redevelopment Agency shall file an Annual Report with the City of Lake City detailing the Agency’s activities for the preceding fiscal year. The report shall include a complete financial statement describing assets, liabilities, income and operating expenses. At the time of filing, the Agency shall publish in a newspaper of general circulation a notice that the report has been filed with the City and is available for inspection during business hours in the office of the City Clerk and the Downtown Lake City Community Redevelopment Agency. The Community Redevelopment Agency shall maintain adequate records to provide for an annual audit, which shall be conducted by an independent auditor and will be included as part of the City of Lake City Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the preceding fiscal year. A copy of the Agency audit, as described in the CAFR will be forwarded to each taxing authority. The Agency shall provide adequate safeguards to ensure that all leases, deeds, contracts, agreements, and declarations of restrictions relative to any real property conveyed shall contain restrictions and/or covenants to run with the land and its uses, or other provisions necessary to carry out the goals and objectives of the redevelopment plan. The redevelopment plan may be modified, changed, or amended at any time by the Downtown Lake City Community Redevelopment Agency and City Council provided that; if modified, changed, or amended after the lease or sale of property by the Agency, the modification must be consented to by the developer or redevelopers of such property or his successors or their successors in interest affected by the proposed modification. Where the proposed modification will substantially change the plan as previously approved by the governing body, the City Council will similarly approve the modification.

This means that if a developer acquired title, lease rights, or other form of development agreement, from the Agency to a piece of property within the redevelopment area with the intention of developing it in conformance with the redevelopment plan, any amendment that which might substantially affect his/her ability to proceed with that development would require his/her consent

When considering modifications, changes, or amendments in the redevelopment plan, the Agency will take into consideration the recommendations of interested area property owners, residents, and business operators. Proposed minor changes in the Plan will be communicated by the agency responsible to the affected property owner(s).

Chapter 163.362(7) Assurance of Replacement Housing for Displaced Persons
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.

Action:
As previously stated, to minimize the relocation impact, the Agency will provide supportive services and equitable financial treatment to any individuals, families and businesses subject to relocation. When feasible, the relocation impact will be mitigated by assisting relocation within the immediate neighborhood and by seeking opportunities to relocate within new/redeveloped buildings that will contain residential and commercial space

Chapter 163.362(8) Element of Residential Use
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 to moderate income, including the elderly.

Action:
There are residential uses- single-family in existence within the redevelopment area at the time of this writing. The efforts undertaken by the Agency, as described in this Redevelopment Plan, are intended to retain and enhance a high quality of residential use, particularly with regard to developing and maintaining sustainable neighborhoods. Redevelopment program activities will strive to cultivate the positive neighborhood characteristics cited by the community during public workshops and reduce or eliminate any negative characteristics.

The establishment of a revitalized and expanded residential base within the Downtown Lake City community is essential to achieve a successful economic redevelopment program. Residents living within the redevelopment area will comprise components of the work force and the market, which will generate economic activity.

Chapter 163.362(9) Statement of Projected Costs

Contain a detailed statement of the projected costs of development, including the amount to be expended on publicly funded capital projects in the community redevelopment area and any indebtedness of the community redevelopment agency or the municipality proposed to be incurred for such redevelopment if such indebtedness is to be repaid with increment funds.

Action:

Project costs and funding sources are described in the Capital Improvements Program section (Chapter 6) of the Redevelopment Plan.

Chapter 163.362(10) Duration of Plan

Provide a time certain for completing all redevelopment financed by increment revenues.

Action:

Currently, the Downtown Lake City Community Redevelopment Plan shall remain in effect and serve as a guide for future redevelopment activities in the redevelopment area through 2041. The Plan proposes extending the current life of the redevelopment program by 30 years.

Chapter 163.362(11) Statutory Predisposition

This section provides relief to some of the subsections of Section 163.360, if the redevelopment plan was adopted before Chapter 84-356, Laws of Florida, became a law.

Action:

Not Applicable.

Appendix E Funding Sources



FUNDING SOURCES

| FUNDING SOURCE | FUNDING PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | ADDITIONAL INFORMATION |
|---|--|---|--|
| | | WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT/ LAND ACQUISITION | |
| | | FEDERAL | |
| US Department of the Interior, National Park Service | Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) | The LWCF program provides matching grants to states and local governments for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. The program is intended to create and maintain a nationwide legacy of high quality recreation areas and facilities and to stimulate non-federal investments in the protection and maintenance of recreation resources across the United States. The funding that is allocated to each state, or "stateside" funding, is administered by that state. Through the LWCF, the Florida Department of Parks and Recreation provides funds for statewide planning, and for acquiring and developing outdoor recreation areas and facilities LWCF grant funds may be used for the acquisition and development of state and local facilities that provide active and/or passive recreation opportunities. | Federal funding of this program varies from year to year depending on appropriations. Florida's allocation for fiscal year 2006 is approximately \$1.2 million. For program information, visit: http:// www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/flp/index.html |
| US Department of the Interior, National Park Service | Federal Lands to Parks (FLP) | The National Park Service's FLP Program conveys surplus federal land to communities, usually at no cost, for public park and recreation purposes. Over 1,400 properties, approximately 150,000 acres, have been transferred to state and local governments for parks and recreation areas since the program's inception in 1949. The Program also helps ensure continued public access and stewardship of resources. | Generally, resources are available on an on-going basis as properties become available. For more information on how to participate in this program, visit: http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/flp/index.html |
| US Department of Agriculture (USDA) - Natural Resource Conservation District (NRCS) | Wetlands Reserve Program | WRP restores wetland, upland and riparian complexes to improve habitat for migratory birds. The objectives of this program are to purchase conservation easements from willing sellers, restore and protect wetlands in agricultural settings, and assist landowners with the restoration of wetland hydrology and wildlife habitat. | http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/wrp/ |
| US Department of Agriculture (USDA) - Natural Resource Conservation District (NRCS) | Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) | WHIP encourages the voluntary establishment of high quality wildlife habitat on private lands. WHIP offers technical and financial help for all private landowners or local units of government who wish to plan and develop upland, wetland, riparian, or aquatic habitat on their property. | http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/whip/ |
| US Department of Agriculture (USDA) - Natural Resource Conservation District (NRCS) | Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention | WPFP provides technical and financial assistance to state agencies and units of local government in planning and carrying out works of improvement and to protect, develop and utilize the land and water resources in small watersheds not exceeding 250,000 acres. This includes total resource management and planning to improve water quality and solve problems caused by flooding, erosion and sediment damage, conservation, development, utilization and disposal of water. The program emphasizes planning through interdisciplinary teams that include the sponsors, other agencies, and environmental groups in all stages of plan development. | http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/watershed/ |
| US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) | Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) | CRP is a voluntary program that offers long-term rental payments and cost-share assistance to establish long-term, resource-conserving cover on environmentally sensitive cropland or, in some cases, marginal pastureland. The protective cover reduces soil erosion, improves water quality, and enhances or establishes wildlife habitat. Increased rental payments are available on certain land areas (e.g., land within a wellhead protection area may receive an additional 10 percent payment). | http://www.epa.gov/owow/funding.html |
| | | STATE | |
| Florida Department of Community Affairs | Florida Community's Trust (FCT) Fund Grant | This grant program was established for environmental land acquisition. Florida Communities Trust (FCT) is a state land acquisition grant program that provides funding to local governments and eligible non-profit environmental organizations for acquisition of community-based parks, open space and greenways that further outdoor recreation and natural resource protection needs identified in local government comprehensive plans. | |

| FUNDING SOURCE | FUNDING PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | ADDITIONAL INFORMATION |
|---|--|--|---|
| | | WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT/ LAND ACQUISITION | |
| | | STATE | |
| Florida Department of Environmental Protection | Florida Greenways and Trails Program | The Florida Department of Environmental Protection administers this grant, which can be used for acquisition of property for linear corridors, open space connectors and trails. There is a cap of \$5,500,000 with no match required. | |
| Florida Department of Environmental Protection | Coastal Partnership Initiative | This initiative is designed to support innovative local-level coastal management projects in four program areas: public access, remarkable coastal places, working waterfronts, and community stewardship. Governmental, educational, and non-profit entities can apply, and the Florida Coastal Management Program offers technical assistance and training along with the more traditional funding support. Financial awards are limited to no more than \$50,000 and no less than \$15,000 and may be used for planning and coordination activities, land acquisition, small construction, or capital improvement projects. If the type of assistance provided through the grant contract is financial assistance, the recipient will be required to provide 100% matching funding, which may be cash or in-kind. | |
| Florida Department of Environmental Protection | Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP) | This annual, state recreation assistance program may be used for recreational land acquisition, park design and construction. Active park amenities are normally afforded a higher priority than passive parks. With a limit of \$150,000, projects may be phased over several years. Grants under \$50,000 require no match. Grants over \$50,000 require a 50% match. The maximum grant amount is \$200,000 | |
| Florida Department of Environmental Protection | Florida Recreational Trails Program (RTP) | RTP is a competitive program which provides grants for projects that provide, renovate or maintain recreational trails, trailhead and trailside facilities. The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991 included the National Recreational Trails Fund Act (NRTFA) and established the National Recreational Trails Funding Program (NRTFP). The National Highway System Designation Act (NHS Act) of 1995 amended and revived the NRTFA. The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) amended the previous legislation and provided for six years of funding. The current maximum grant amount for mixed-use projects and non-motorized projects is \$200,000. The maximum grant award amount for motorized projects is \$437,420 annually. | |
| Florida Department of Environmental Protection | Florida Clean Marina Program | The Florida Clean Marina Program is a voluntary and proactive partnership created to help marine facilities, boatyards, marine retailers, and boaters become environmental stewards and comply with local, state, and federal environmental laws and rules. | |
| Florida Inland Navigation District | Florida Inland Navigation District Waterway Assistance Program (WAP) | The Waterway Assistance Program is a grant program established by the Florida Legislature and the District for the purpose of financially cooperating with local governments to alleviate problems associated with the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway and associated waterways within the District. The maximum grant award amount for eligible projects is \$300,000 annually. | http://www.aicw.org/wap.htm |
| Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services | Florida Urban Forestry Grant | As part of the federal government's Urban and Community Forestry Matching Grant Program, funds will be available to organizations to develop or enhance their urban and community forestry programs. Requests for proposals will be solicited in January, 2007. The maximum grant award available is \$25,000 on an annual basis. | http://www.fl-dof.com/forest_management/cfa_urban_grants.html |
| Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission | Florida Boating Improvement Program (FBIP) | The Florida Boating Improvement Program provides funding through competitive grants for boating access projects and other boating-related activities on coastal and/or inland waters of Florida. Eligible program participants include county governments, municipalities and other governmental entities of the State of Florida | http://myfwc.com/boating/grants/fbip.htm |
| Florida Department of Agriculture | Keep American Beautiful (KAB) Grant | Keep America Beautiful is a national nonprofit public education organization dedicated since 1953 to engaging individuals to take greater responsibility for improving their local community environments. Annual landscaping grant program administered through the State Department of Agriculture. With a \$20,000 limit, projects may be phased. | http://www.kab.org/aboutus.asp?id=32&rid=38 |

| | | LOCAL | |
|--|--|---|--|
| Columbia Tourism Development Tax | | The Tourist Development Council works with local tourism industry members to develop and market the amenities of Columbia County for increased tourism and positive economic impact. Focusing primarily on nature-based and heritage tourism, the County's efforts are directed by the Tourist Development Council. The local 2 % tax charged on transient rental accommodations and various advertising sales programs fund the tourism development program. | |
| | | PRIVATE SECTOR/ NON- PROFITS | |
| River Network | Miscellaneous | River Network, a national non-profit organization, offers consulting, publications, acquisition of riverlands and small grants to help people raise money, build organizations, and monitor and protect rivers and watersheds. This organization offers assistance to: help people organize to protect and restore rivers and watersheds; support river conservationists at grass roots, state and regional levels; help build effective organizations to link them together to build a nationwide movement for rivers and watersheds; and acquire and conserve riverlands critical to wildlife, fisheries, and recreation. | http://www.rivernetwork.org/howcanwehelp/index.cfm?doc_id=130 |
| Trust for Public Land (TPL) | Miscellaneous | TPL is interested in helping purchase one of the gravel pits in Sun Valley to support conversion to recreation, open space and water conservation. TPL finances the purchase and usually sells the land to a public agency for long-term management and operation. | http://www.tpl.org |
| Patagonia | Environmental Grants Program | Focus is on preservation of wild and scenic areas, biodiversity, limited funding for urban restoration. They are mostly interested in projects that identify and work on the root causes of problems and that approach issues with a commitment to long-term change. Grants range from \$ 3,000 to \$ 8,000 per project. | Deadlines are usually April 30 and August 31 each year. www.patagonia.com/enviro/grants_app.shtml |
| | | HABITAT | |
| | | FEDERAL | |
| National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Community-Based Restoration Program | Community-based Resoration Program: Individual Project Grants | Grassroots restoration Projects that will benefit marine resources and endangered and threatened species. \$ 30,000 to 250,000 per project. Match not required, but recommended. | Typically September deadline. For updates: http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/habitat/restoration/projects_programs/programs.html |
| National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Community-Based Restoration Program | Community-based RestorationProject: National and Regional Partnerships | Grassroots, community-based projects for restoring and conserving marine resources and their habitats. Typical grants range from \$ 100,000 to \$ 600,000. | http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/habitat/restoration/projects_programs/progras.html |
| US Forest Service | Cooperative Forestry Assistance Programs | The program help State Foresters or equivalent agencies with forest stewardship programs intended to achieve ecosystem health and sustainability. Assistance is provided through the following programs: Forest Stewardship Program; Stewardship Incentive Program; urban & Community Forestry Program; and, Cooperative Fire Protection Program. | http://www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/ |
| US Department of Agriculture (USDA) - Natural Resource Conservation service (NRCS) | Farm Bill: Wetlands Reserve Program | WRP restores wetland, upland and riparian complexes to improve habitat for migratory birds. The objectives of this program are to purchase conservation easements from willing sellers, restore and project wetlands in agricultural settings, and assist landowners with the restoration of wetland hydrology and wildlife habitat. | http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/grograms/wip |
| US Department of Agriculture (USDA) - Natural Resource Conservation service (NRCS) | Farm Bill: Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program | WHIP encourages the voluntary establishment of high quality wildlife habitat on private lands. WHIP offers technical and financial help for all private landowners or local units of government who wish to plan and develop upland, wetland, riparian, or aquatic habitat on their property. Funding for up to 75% of the cost of the project. Technical assistance also provided. | Contact local NRCS office. http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/whip |
| US Fish & Wildlife Service | North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) - Standard Grants | \$51,000-\$1.0M to fund a 4-year plan of action supported by a NAWCA grant and partner funds to conserve wetlands and wetlands-dependent fish and wildlife through acquisition (including easements and title donations), restoration, and/or enhancement. Match must be non-Federal and at least equal to the grant request. | http://northamerican.fws.gov/NA |

| | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| US Fish & Wildlife Service | North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) - Small Grants | Up to \$50,000 to fund a 4-year plan of action supported by a NAWCA grant and partner funds to conserve wetlands and wetlands-dependent fish and wildlife through acquisition (including easements and title donations), restoration, and/or enhancement. Match must be non-Federal and at least equal to the grant request. | http://northamerican.fws.gov/NAWCA/grants.htm |
| US Fish & Wildlife Service | Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program | Funding provided for work on private lands. Typical projects include (but not limited to) wetland and riparian habitat restoration and improvement for threatened or endangered species, anadromous fish, and exotic species control and removal. Typically in the range of \$ 25,000 to \$ 50,000 per project. | Applications accepted throughout the year. http://partners.fws.gov |
| | | PRIVATE SECTOR/ NON- PROFITS | |
| American Rivers (partner with National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) | River Restoration Grants | \$5,000 to \$25,000 per project. Non-federal match not required. But encouraged. Grants provided to projects that are using dam removal or fish passage to restore and protect the ecological integrity of rivers and improve freshwater habitats for anadromous fish. State, local, and tribal governments, conservation groups, and other non-profits. | http://www.amrivers.org/dam removal/grantguidelines.htm |
| American Sportfishing Association and FishAmerica Foundation (partner with National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration/ NOAA) | Restoration Grants | Projects that result in on-the-ground restoration in marine, estuarine and anadromous fish habitats - especially sportfish. Strong partnerships cooperation from local community groups and citizens are encouraged. Funding typically ranges from \$ 5,000 to \$30,000. Match not required, but encouraged. | Applications typically accepted twice each year (March and August). For updates, visit: http://www.fishamerica.org/content/conservation/fishamerica/faf_grant.cfm |
| The Conservation Fund (TCF) | Miscellaneous | The Conservation Fund is a national non-profit organization dedicated to preserving Americas land legacy by acquiring and protecting open space, wildlife habitat, and historic sites. The Fund also provides technical assistance, information, and small grants to assist with the greenway and trail projects across the nation. | http://www.conservationfund.org |

| FUNDING SOURCE | FUNDING PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | ADDITIONAL INFORMATION |
|---|---|--|---|
| | | REDEVELOPMENT/ ARTS AND CULTURE | |
| Federal Government | President's American Recovery And Reinvestment Plan | | |
| Federal Transit Administration | SAFETEA-LU | Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). With guaranteed funding for highways, highway safety, and public transportation totaling \$244.1 billion, SAFETEA-LU represents the largest surface transportation investment in our Nation's history. The two landmark bills that brought surface transportation into the 21st century—the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) and the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21)—shaped the highway program to meet the Nation's changing transportation needs. SAFETEA-LU builds on this firm foundation, supplying the funds and refining the programmatic framework for investments needed to maintain and grow our vital transportation infrastructure. | http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/safetealu/summary.htm |
| Florida Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs | Cultural Facilities Grant | This grant, through the Florida Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs, is used for construction of cultural facilities including arts, historical and science museum and has a maximum of \$500,000. A 50% cash match is required. The architectural planning must be completed. | |
| Florida Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs | Culture Builds Florida | Culture Builds Florida is a new funding opportunity through the Division of Cultural Affairs. This program will be geared towards projects in one of the four areas of the strategic plan: Learning and Wellness, Strengthening the Economy, Design and Development, and Leadership. | http://www.florida-arts.org/grants/cbf/ |
| Florida Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs | Arts In Education | The Arts in Education (AIE) program supports activities that promote the arts as an integral part of education and lifelong learning for all people in the State of Florida. It aims to support projects which make a difference in the community, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• in-depth residencies at schools, colleges & universities, hospitals, detention centers & prisons, nursing facilities, hospitals & assisted living centers, cultural or community centers;• cultural programs serving elders and the building of intergenerational programs;• professional development for teachers;• arts in education research, evaluation and assessment tools; and• partnerships between cultural organizations and others which promote quality artistic programs and lifelong learning in the arts.• Organizations can receive funding in three categories: Artist Residency, Arts Education Partnerships and Rural Development | http://www.florida-arts.org/grants/aie/index.htm |
| Florida Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs | Historical Museums Grant | The Historical Museums Grants-in-Aid program provides matching support for the development of exhibits on Florida history, as well as for programming costs of Florida history museums, as authorized by Section 265.708, Florida Statutes, and Chapter 1T-1.031 & 1.032, Florida Administrative Code. Funding is provided for two categories: general program support and public educational exhibit projects. General Program Support grants underwrite the costs of technical, curatorial, administrative, and educational programming pertaining to programmatic operations of the museum and is available on a two-year cycle. Public Educational Exhibit grants support the development and presentation of exhibitions on the history of the human occupation of Florida through the use of artifacts, graphics, audio visual elements, text panels and educational components. This grant is on an annual cycle | http://www.florida-arts.org/grants/hm/ |
| Florida Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs | Local Arts Agency | The purpose of the Local Arts Agency Program is to assist in the development of local arts agencies, and to strengthen and stabilize their statewide network to further local and statewide cultural goals and objectives. A local arts agency (LAA) is defined as an umbrella agency that serves its county or counties arts and cultural constituencies. One or more county commissions must officially recognize an entity as the local arts agency, commission, alliance or division of a county or city government. This includes county arts councils established pursuant to section 265.32, Florida Statutes. | http://www.florida-arts.org/grants/laa/index.htm |

| FUNDING SOURCE | FUNDING PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | ADDITIONAL INFORMATION |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | REDEVELOPMENT/ ARTS AND CULTURE | |
| Florida Department of Transportation | Florida Department of Transportation's Local Agency Program | The program is designed to provide funding and technical assistance to local governments interested in implementing federal aid transportation projects. Florida Highway Beautification Council. Based on the results of this annual review process, the Secretary of the Department of Transportation may award up to a total of \$3 million in Grants to eligible applicants. | |
| Florida Division of Housing and Community Development | Community Development Block Grant | Florida's Small Cities Community Development Block Grant Program provides an opportunity for eligible municipalities and counties to compete for funds to improve local housing, streets, utilities, and public facilities. | |
| Florida Division of Housing and Community Development | Community Services Block Grant Program | The Community Services Block Grant Program was created by the federal Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981 to provide a range of services to assist low-income people in attaining the skills, knowledge and motivation necessary to achieve self sufficiency. | |
| Florida Division of Housing and Community Development | Front Porch Florida Initiative | The Front Porch Florida Initiative was created in 1999 as a means to rebuild distressed communities. Front Porch Florida takes up this challenge to revitalize underserved communities that are dedicated to positive cooperation and communication to make their community a better place to live, work, and play. | http://www.floridacommunitydevelopment.org/fpf/index.cfm |
| Florida Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs | Waterfronts Florida | The Department of Community Affairs' Waterfronts Florida Program offers help to all coastal local governments in Florida to revitalize their working waterfronts by providing resources for planning. In addition, the Program designates selected communities to receive technical and limited financial assistance through the Waterfronts Florida Partnership Program. | http://www.dca.state.fl.us/fdcp/DCP/waterfronts/index.cfm |

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