

LOCATION

The **Osceola Park** Neighborhood Area is located immediately south of the Central Business District. It is bordered by SE 5th Avenue (Federal Highway southbound) on the east; Swinton Avenue on the west; SE 2nd Street on the north; and SE 10th Street on the south. The FEC Railway bisects the area, running diagonally from northeast to southwest. Three-quarters of the area is located east of the railway and is represented by the Osceola Park Neighborhood Association.

HISTORY

As the central part of Delray was developing in the 1900s, an early subdivision known as Osceola Park was established south of town between the Florida East Coast Railroad tracks and the Florida East Coast Canal. George G. Currie and F. J. Lewis, of the Currie Investment and Title Guaranty Company, recorded the plat for Osceola Park in January of 1913. Designed in a grid pattern, the lots were primarily 50.5 feet wide and 132.5 feet deep. The streets in Osceola Park were originally named after local pioneers such as Sundy, Ingraham, and Blackmer (today the streets and avenues are numbered). The subdivision was very progressive with cement sidewalks, paved roads, a central sewerage system, and electrical access. In addition, two parks, Currie Common and a ball field, were set aside in the development, and shade and palm trees were planted on the neighborhood's main streets.

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The Future Land Use Element of the City's Comprehensive Plan identifies several older areas of the City that, due to substandard infrastructure, obsolete or inappropriate uses of land, vacant and dilapidated structures, and other similarly blighting conditions, are in need of special attention. Goal Area "C" of the Future Land Use Element represents the starting block upon which its implementation strategy has been built. It is stated as follows:

BLIGHTED AREAS OF THE CITY SHALL BE REDEVELOPED AND RENEWED AND SHALL BE THE MAJOR CONTRIBUTING AREAS TO THE RENAISSANCE OF DELRAY BEACH.

A major part of the implementation strategy is for the City to prepare and adopt "Redevelopment Plans" for declining areas. These areas are depicted on the Future Land Use Map as Redevelopment Areas #1 through #6. Redevelopment Area #5 is located in the Osceola Park Area. This designation effectively acts as a holding zone on each area, where Future Land Uses designations will not be assigned until a Redevelopment Plan has been completed and adopted.

The scope of this Redevelopment Plan has been expanded beyond the limits of Redevelopment Area #5 to include the surrounding residential neighborhood. The purpose of the Plan is to identify the specific deficiencies and assets of the area, evaluate

the existing and potential uses, and identify specific measures for arresting decline, facilitating new development, and enhancing the quality of life for neighborhood. The Plan is divided into three sections:

The "Introduction" gives a brief background and history of the area. The specific Comprehensive Plan policies, which provide the starting point for the plan are identified and a brief summary of the planning process that helped shaped the contents of the Plan is provided.

The "Existing Conditions" section describes the neighborhood in terms of the factors that affect the quality of life in the area. It contains a description of the existing land uses, zoning, and Future Land Use Map designations that apply. Analyses of development patterns, occupancy status, property values, infrastructure, code enforcement calls and crime problems are also included.

The "Plan Implementation" section outlines the strategy for the revitalization of the neighborhood, including the actions that the City will take to facilitate it.

OVERVIEW OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

Development Pattern

The neighborhood area contains a mix of residential, commercial, light industrial and community facility land uses. There are also several undeveloped parcels. Residential development accounts for 71% of the total 107 acre land area of the neighborhood. Single-family residences are the principal land use with 59% of the land area. Major non-residential land uses include commercial development with 9.9% of the land area and light industrial with 6%. Undeveloped property accounts for only 3.3% of the land area.

There are several platted residential subdivisions within the neighborhood area, containing a mix of single-family, duplex and multi-family structures. Overall, the neighborhood contains 294 single-family residential units, 21 apartments/guest houses associated with single family, 82 duplex units and 107 multi-family units for a total of 515 residential units. Compared to the overall City, the percentage of owner-occupied units is much lower in the Osceola Park neighborhood (51.5%) than the City as a whole (69.7%). Although rentals are scattered throughout the area, the highest concentrations are in the multi-family districts in the northern and western portions of the neighborhood. This is to be expected, since multi-family structures are much more likely to contain rental units.

There is an inappropriate mix of nonconforming duplex and multiple family development with single family residences in the single family district. The combination of apathetic landlords and unmotivated tenants has resulted in many deteriorating duplex and multi-family properties. Lack of building maintenance (painting,

window and door repair, etc.), inadequate and overgrown landscaping, crowding and overparking are the major problems. Combined, these problems have a blighting influence on adjacent single family homes.

Of the 44 duplex parcels within the neighborhood, 19 (43%) are located in the R-1-A district which does not permit duplexes. Of the remaining parcels, 9 (20%) are non-conforming with respect to lot size (i.e. less than 8,000 sq. ft.).

Of the 22 multifamily developments within the neighborhood, 4 are located in the R-1-A district, which does not permit multifamily, and are therefore nonconforming with respect to use. Of the remaining projects, 13 were found to be non-conforming with respect to density. Four of these projects had densities in excess of 20 units per acre and 1 exceeded 30 units per acre.

Historic Structures

There are 183 buildings in the neighborhood over 50 years old. With a median age of 48 years old, one-half of all buildings within the neighborhood were constructed before 1956. Although new buildings are still being constructed, only 21% are less than 20 years old. Given their age, it is unlikely that many buildings meet current life safety regulations with respect to smoke detectors, emergency egress escape windows, hurricane anchorage, electrical wiring, etc.

Crime Report

The location of each property within the neighborhood was examined with respect to the number of incident calls generated. Compared to Citywide figures, overall criminal activity in the Osceola Neighborhood decreased from 3.29% of the citywide total in 1999 to 2.76% in 2003. However, since the neighborhood represents only 1.4% of the total land area of the city, the 2003 figure is still nearly twice the citywide average based on land area. Additional measures will need to be taken to bring this figure closer to the citywide average.

Code Enforcement

The location of each property within the neighborhood was examined with respect to the number of incident calls generated. Compared to Citywide figures, overall code violations in the Osceola Neighborhood increased from 5.2% of the citywide total in 1999 to 8.3% in 2003. Since the neighborhood represents only 1.4% of the total land area of the city, the 2003 figure is nearly 6 times the citywide average based on land area. Drastic measures will need to be taken to bring this figure closer to the citywide average.

Adjacent Nuisances

The Osceola Park neighborhood is adjacent to a number of properties and transportation facilities that affect the stability of residential properties in the neighborhood. Residential properties backing up to the Federal Highway and Railroad commercial cor-

ridors contend with increased noise levels, overflow parking and unsightly service areas. Landscape buffers between these commercial/industrial uses and residential properties within the neighborhood are often deteriorating or nonexistent. Dealing with these deficiencies would have a major impact on the neighborhood as a whole.

Pedestrian Circulation - Sidewalks

Sidewalks are provided on only about half of the residential streets in the neighborhood. On streets where sidewalks do exist, there are many missing or broken segments.

Traffic Issues

Traffic problems within the neighborhood include speeding on some local residential streets, and commercial truck traffic through the neighborhood. Consideration must be given to eliminating excessive through-traffic on residential streets in the neighborhood which are headed for the railroad commercial corridor. The integration of nonresidential development within the neighborhood presents a problem when dealing with the commercial truck traffic it generates. This traffic should be directed away from residential roadways.

Parking

There are two parking issues within the neighborhood. The first issue is the excessive number of cars parked in the swales and in some cases, front yards, throughout the neighborhood. The lack of adequate parking is a major blighting influence in the neighborhood. The second is the lack of adequate parking for the nonresidential properties in the rail corridor. The large amount of auto repair businesses, is the primary cause of this problem.

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The overall purpose of the Plan is to capitalize on the strengths of the area and provide methods to deal with the weaknesses. The Plan provides the framework for the revitalization of the entire neighborhood. This equates to the three main proposals of this Plan:

- Elimination of the problems associated with small lot duplex and multi-family development intermixed with single-family development;
- Reduction of the negative impacts associated with through and non-residential vehicular on local residential streets; and
- Improvement of the physical appearance of the neighborhood through enhanced police activity, code enforcement and beautification.

Adoption of the Redevelopment Plan will require amendments to the City's Future Land Use and Zoning Maps as well as a number of text amendments to the Comprehensive Plan. These amendments will be adopted as a portion of Comprehensive Plan Amendment 2005-1.

Future Land Use Map (FLUM) Amendments

The northern part of the neighborhood is currently designated as RDA-5 (Redevelopment Area #5) on the Future Land Use Map (FLUM). Five Future Land Use Map designations will be required to accommodate existing or proposed development within redevelopment area #5. No FLUM changes are required outside the boundaries of the redevelopment area. The proposed designations for properties within this area are as follows:

- **Sub-area 1:** Properties along the FEC rail corridor, between SE 2nd and SE 6th Streets on the west and between SE 2nd and SE 5th Streets on the east – Change the FLUM designation from RDA-5 to CC (Commercial Core) – approximately 10.26 acres. This change is required to accommodate existing commercial and light industrial development. The properties are currently zoned CBD-RC (Central Business District - Rail Corridor), which is consistent with the designation.
- **Sub-area 2:** Properties along the Federal Highway corridor, between SE 2nd Street and SE 3rd Street – Change the FLUM designation from RDA-5 to CC (Commercial Core) – approximately 1.8 acres. This change is required to accommodate existing commercial development. The properties are currently zoned CBD (Central Business District), which is consistent with the designation.
- **Sub-area 3:** Properties along the Federal Highway corridor, between SE 4th and SE 5th Street – Change the FLUM designation from RDA-5 to GC (General Commercial) – approximately 0.85 acres. This change is required to accommodate existing commercial development. The properties are currently zoned GC (General Commercial), which is consistent with the designation.
- **Sub-area 4:** Lots 6 to 14, Block 79, Town of Delray, located on the east side of SE 1st Avenue, between SE 2nd and SE 3rd Streets – Change the FLUM designation from RDA-5 to MD (Medium Density Residential - 5 to 12 du/acre) – approximately 1.41 acres. The properties are currently zoned RM (Residential - Medium Density), which is consistent with the designation.
- **Sub-area 5:** Properties on the west side of the FEC rail corridor, between SE 6th and SE 7th Street – Change the FLUM designation from RDA-5 to MD (Medium Density Residential - 5 to 12 du/acre) – approximately 1.23 acres. This change is required to accommodate existing and proposed development. This area consists of two parcels. The southern parcel is zoned RM, which is consistent with the designation. It is a part of Swinton Place, a 19-unit townhouse development. The northern parcel, which is undeveloped, is currently zoned CBD-RC (Central Business District - Rail Corridor), which is not consistent with the designation. Therefore, a rezoning of this parcel will be required as well.
- **Sub-area 6:** Properties fronting on SE 2nd Street, between SE 3rd Avenue and the Federal Highway frontage properties – Change the FLUM designation from RDA-5 to MD (Medium Density Residential - 5 to 12 du/acre) – approximately 1.12 acres.

The properties are currently zoned RM (Residential - Medium Density), which is consistent with the designation.

- **Sub-area 7:** The remaining properties between SE 2nd Street and SE 5th Street, between the Federal Highway commercial frontage and the commercial/industrial rail corridor. – Change the FLUM designation from RDA-5 to LD (Low Density Residential - 0 to 5 du/acre) – approximately 19.75 acres. All of the parcels, south of SE 3rd Street, are currently zoned R-1-A (Single Family Residential) which is consistent with this designation. The parcels, located north of SE 3rd Street, are currently zoned RM (Residential - Medium Density), which is not consistent with the designation. These parcels will be rezoned concurrently with the FLUM amendment.

In addition to the above changes, modification of Future Land Use Element Policy C-2.6 is required to reflect adoption of this Plan for the “Osceola Park Redevelopment Area,” and to require that all future development be in compliance with the adopted Plan. Processing of this amendment will be undertaken by the Planning and Zoning Board and City Commission concurrent with consideration of the FLUM amendment.

Zoning Map Amendments

Most parcels within the neighborhood area will retain their current zoning. However, implementation of the neighborhood plan will require rezoning of some parcels in the area. The proposed rezonings, shown on figure x, are as follows:

- **Sub-area 1:** 1 parcel on the west side of the FEC rail corridor, south of SE 6th Street – Change the zoning designation from CBD-RC (Central Business District - Rail Corridor) to RM (Multiple Family Residential - Medium Density) – approximately 0.85 acres.
- **Sub-area 2:** 33 properties, located south of the frontage properties on SE 2nd Street to SE 3rd Street, between the Federal Highway commercial frontage and the commercial/industrial rail corridor. – Change the zoning designation from RM (Multiple Family Residential - Medium Density) to R-1-A (Single Family Residential) – approximately 5.91 acres.

The rezonings will be considered by the Planning and Zoning Board and City Commission concurrent with the FLUM amendment.

Traffic

The following measures are recommended to help alleviate the problems associated with vehicular traffic in the neighborhood:

- Reduce the highway feel on local residential streets by removing additional pavement used for off-street parking on all single family homes and multi-family structures where possible.
- Plant street trees to add visual interest and reduce the feeling

of width of the roadways.

- Remove conflicting landscaping at the intersections where visibility is a problem.
- Install traffic calming measures on selected streets to control speeding and nonresidential traffic. The use of curb bulb-outs at the entrances to the neighborhood will include landscaping and signage for neighborhood identify. Two roundabouts are planned for southern end of the neighborhood where excessive speeding is a problem.
- Pave the alleyways to provide access to the rear yards for service function and alternative parking.
- Pave SE 6th Street between Swinton Avenue and SE 1st Avenue to provide improve truck access.
- Hire a traffic consultant to study the commercial truck traffic in the neighborhood and recommend ways to direct the traffic away from residential areas.
- Hire a traffic consultant to study the Swinton Avenue / SE 4th Street Intersection to make recommendations regarding traffic calming.

Parking

A primary focus of the plan is to reduce excessive parking along residential roadways, in the swales and in many instances in front yards within the residential neighborhood. To accomplish this, it is recommended that the alleys be paved to provide enhanced access to the rear yards. Although some properties already utilize the unpaved alleys to access parking in the rear, this improvement will make this option much more attractive. With more utilization, the alleys will become a important component of the public space and more eyes in the area will help to deter criminal activity.

Another focus of the plan be to provide additional parking for businesses in the railroad corridor area. One location for additional spaces will be on SE 2nd Avenue, adjacent to the railroad. Another potential location would involve acquisition of the currently vacant lot at 215 SE 2nd Avenue to create an off-street parking lot. The former structure was demolished on the site and its limited size will make redevelopment difficult.

The parking of overflow vehicles from the automotive repair facilities on unimproved surfaces will be targeted for code enforcement and these facilities will have to find other ways to deal with the problem on site. For example, automobiles being stored on-site for parts should be relocated to another location and customers should be scheduled so that an excessive number of cars waiting to be repaired are not on-site at any one time.

Enhanced Code Enforcement

Code enforcement will play a critical role in the redevelopment of the area. The City will begin by implementing a special outreach program to help property owners understand applicable codes and ordinances regarding maintenance, trash disposal, parking, etc. It

is recommended that the homeowners association work with the City to help educate neighborhood residents. Information included in newsletters or flyers as well as a door-to-door canvassing to explain these programs would help the City to reduce violations and improve the area.

The second phase of the program will be for city code enforcement officers to do a complete canvassing of the neighborhood. A resident task force should be appointed by the homeowners association to be included in this initial walk through. The City will then prepare a report and call a meeting to present the findings to the association and then property owners will be cited accordingly.

Following the initial clean-up phase, as the Plan is implemented, the area should be targeted for zero-tolerance code enforcement with frequent inspections for compliance. However, since code enforcement can only do so much, the area should also begin to police itself. The homeowners association will be tasked with providing information on violations as soon as possible to the City. It is hoped that once the area is cleaned up, property owners will begin to develop a sense of pride in the area.

Historic Conservation District

Given the number of older structures within the neighborhood that do not currently have the benefit of protective regulations in place to preserve their historic value, it is recommended that the City begin the process of creating a Conservation District within Osceola Park as soon as possible.

Other Recommendations

The Plan also contains the following recommendations:

- Complete the sidewalk system throughout the neighborhood.
- Study the railroad crossings at SE 4th and SE 10th Streets to determine if pedestrian safety can be improved.
- Evaluate existing chain link fences in front yards to determine if in conformance to existing codes. Consider ordinance to eliminate all nonconforming fencing within 5 years;
- Consider an incentive program for private property improvements, such as sharing the cost of paint, landscape materials, irrigation systems, etc;
- Consider program to upgrade safety devices in older homes (e.g. smoke detectors);
- Develop residential street light program;
- Target area for mailing of information on CRA's loan program;
- Promote the CRA's duplex conversion program to target this neighborhood in order to eliminate non-conforming duplexes scattered throughout the neighborhood; and
- Determine the most appropriate use of the city owned parcel of land at the northeast corner of SE 1st Avenue and SE 4th

Street. Options include, sale for development, landscaped open space or public parking.

Funding

Infrastructure improvements identified in the Plan for the Redevelopment Area should be included in the City's 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan. Engineering, design and detailed cost estimates of individual projects can begin as time and funding becomes available. The cost of the beautification component of the project, estimated at \$2.3 million, will be divided equally between the City, CRA and the Property Owners, through creation of a property assessment district.

The City will commit staff time to accomplish some of the activities outlined in the Plan, including enhanced code enforcement.

Implementation Steps

- Future Land Use Map Amendments and Rezonings
- Modification of CIP as required
- Enhanced code enforcement - clean up
- Creation of Conservation District
- Design and engineering of improvements within the neighborhood
- Set up Special Assessment District
- Construction
- Monitor implementation and make strategy adjustments as required