

Newtown Community Redevelopment Area Plan



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Appreciations are extended to the Administration and the Planning and Redevelopment Department of the City of Sarasota, Florida that assisted with the preparation of this document. Additional appreciation is extended to the City Attorney's Office staff for the review of governmental regulations that were required to expand the current CRA and the CRAAB for their input and assistance. The appendix list documents such as the Sarasota City Plan, and the Evaluation and Appraisal Report, used and referenced for this CRA Plan. The Appendix documents should be reviewed for guidance and assistance in the implementation of this Plan.

City of Sarasota Newtown Community Redevelopment Area Plan

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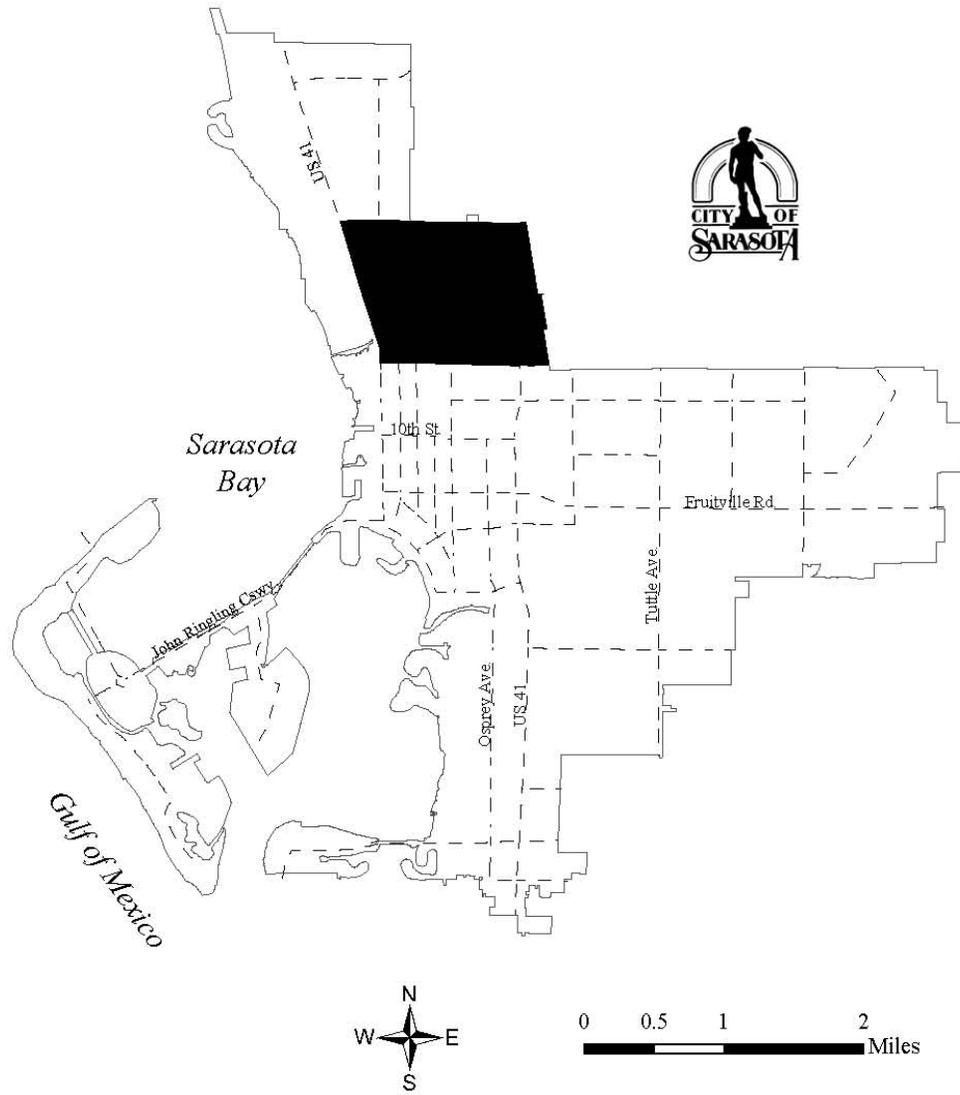
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Proposed Community Redevelopment Area



■ Proposed Community Redevelopment Area

--- Thoroughfare Plan Roads

Source: City of Sarasota
Department of Planning and Redevelopment
September 2, 2005

State of Florida CRA Program Criteria

In 1969 the Florida State Legislature enacted Part II, Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, enabling local units of government to set up a Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA). The overall goal of the legislature was to encourage local initiatives to stimulate and incentivize downtown and neighborhood/community revitalization by maximizing opportunities for private enterprises/investors to participate in the redevelopment of the designated area(s). The primary objectives of the redevelopment legislation are:

1. To address the physical, social and economic problems associated with slum and blighted areas;
2. To encourage local units of government to improve the physical environment (i.e. buildings, streets, utilities, parks, etc.) by means of rehabilitation, conservation, or clearance/redevelopment;
3. To convey to local community redevelopment agencies the powers of eminent domain, expenditure of public funds, and all other general police powers as a means by which slums and blighted areas can be improved;
4. To enhance the tax base in the redevelopment areas by encouraging private reinvestment channeling of tax increment revenues into public improvements within the designated areas; and
5. To eliminate substandard housing conditions and to provide adequate amounts of housing in good condition to residents of low- and moderate-income, particularly to the elderly.

As defined by Section 163.340, Florida Statutes, a Community Redevelopment Area means a slum area, a blighted area, or an area in which there is a shortage of housing that is affordable to residents of low- or moderate-income, including the elderly, or a coastal and tourist area that is deteriorating and economically distressed due to outdated building density patterns, inadequate transportation and parking facilities, faulty lot layout or inadequate street layout, or a combination thereof which the governing body designates as appropriate for community redevelopment.

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 findings 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.***

****The factors to justify the designation are highlighted above (j, l & n).***

On _____, 2006 the Board of City Commissioners made a finding of necessity and of blighted conditions and adopted Resolution _____. Three of the criteria factors for blight were met –

- ❖ Incidence of crime in the area higher than in the remainder of the county or municipality;

- ❖ 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;

- ❖ Governmentally owned property with adverse environmental conditions caused by a public or private entity.
(include language from resolution)

On _____, 2006 the Board of County Commissioners approved the expansion of the current CRA to include the area above and adopted Resolution _____. (include language from County resolution)

COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AREA (EXPANDED)

Section 163.340, Florida Statutes lists the eligibility standards by which a Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) application will be judged. This section of the staff report lists those characteristics of the Newtown community that support its designation as a Community Redevelopment Area.

The area that is proposed for designation as a Community Redevelopment Area is approximately 1.5 square miles. It is bordered to the north by Myrtle Street; to the east by the Seminole Gulf Railroad right-of-way; to the west by N. Tamiami Trail (US 41); and to the south by 17th Street.

The area, or one or more neighborhoods within the area, suffers from pervasive poverty, unemployment, high incidences of crime, Florida Building Code violations, adverse environmental conditions on government owned property, and general distress.

CRA JUSTIFICATION

The following factors were used to justify the creation/expansion of the CRA to include the Newtown Community:

163.340 (j) Incidence of crime in the area higher than in the remainder of the City of Sarasota and Sarasota County

For residents to desire to live in an area or consumers to spend dollars in an area, a safe environment must exist, as well as a perception the area is safe. The goal is to have consumers park their cars and freely walk in a shopping district, or for residents to freely walk at anytime of day or night to a park or throughout the neighborhood. A secure environment to live, work, shop and play is essential. The Newtown community has suffered from higher crime rates as compared to the rest of the City, thus fueling the perception that it is an unsafe community.

The analysis of the incidences of crime is based on the following Major Crime Categories:

1. Murder
2. Rape
3. Robbery
4. Aggravated Assault
5. Aggravated Battery
6. Burglary (Home & Auto)
7. Motor Vehicle Theft
8. Narcotic incidents

The Sarasota Police Department compiled the following statistics in those categories for Calendar-Year 2004 and Calendar year-to-date January 2005 through August 2005 comparing the Newtown area to the City as a whole:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| 1. 2004 Citywide Crime: | 3,233 |
| 2004 Newtown Crime: | 854 |

Conclusion: **26%** of the Crime in the City of Sarasota for the year of 2004 occurred in Newtown.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------|
| 2. 2005 YTD Citywide Crime: | 2,346 |
| 2005 YTD Newtown Crime | 653 |

Conclusion: **28%** of the Crime in the City of Sarasota year to date, has occurred in the Newtown Area.

3. According to the 2000 Census, the Newtown community population was **7,272** versus **52,715** for the City of Sarasota or **13.8%** of the total population.

Conclusion: **28%** of the reported crimes in the City of Sarasota are committed in an area that comprises **13.8%** of the population.

(Source: Police Chief's Report & 2000 US Census)

Section 163. 340(1) - The area exhibits a proportion of properties that are substandard, overcrowded, dilapidated, vacant or abandoned, or functionally obsolete which is higher than the average for the local government.

According to the 2000 Census, the Newtown community population was **7,272** versus **52,715** for the City of Sarasota or **13.8%** of the total population.

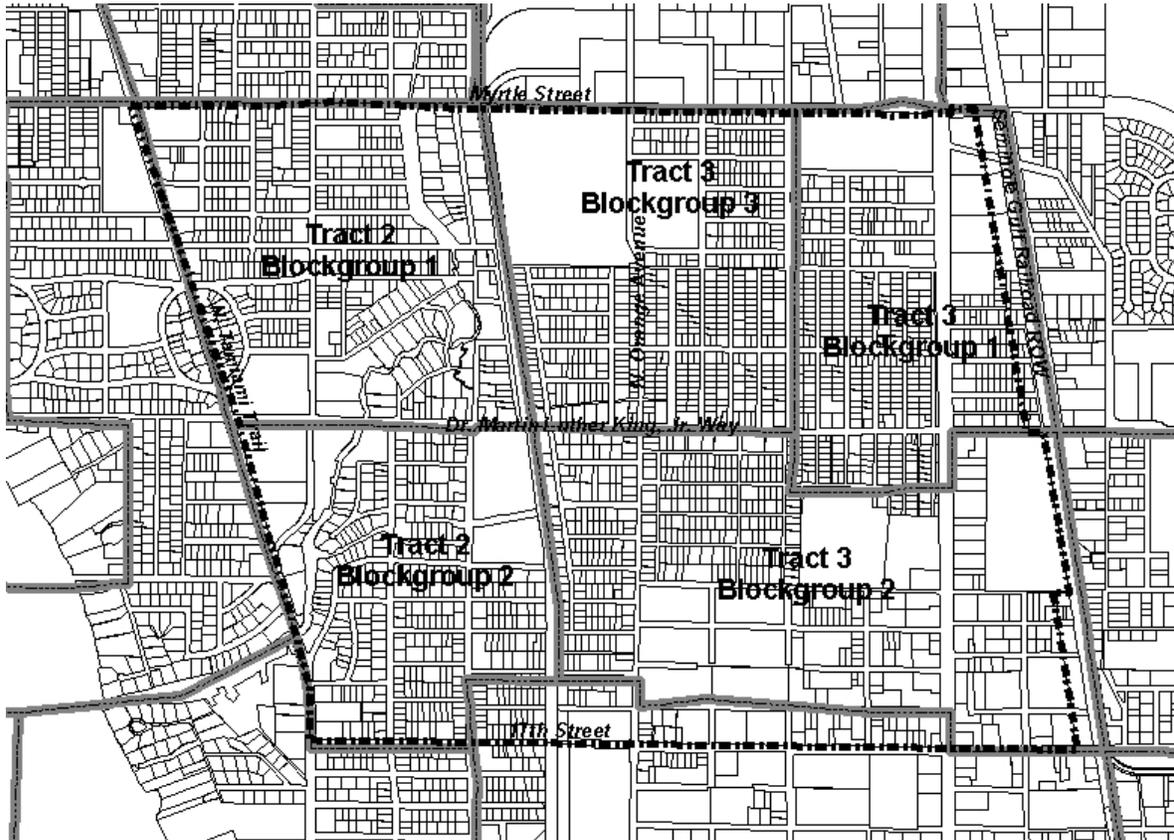
Housing data from the 2000 Census indicates Newtown had **2,563** of the City's **26,935** total housing units. This represents **9.5%** of the total housing units.

For the period 10/01/03 through 8/31/05, there were **3,811** Code Compliance cases initiated for the entire City. **860** cases were in the Newtown community and **2,951** for the rest of City. This represents **22.6%** of total building code violations in the City for the period.

Conclusion: Analysis based on per capita, indicates Newtown had a disproportionate share of the violations with **22.6%** of the city's building code violations as compared to **13.8%** of the city's population.

Conclusion: Analysis based on ratio of housing units indicates **22.6%** of the building code violations occur in only **9.5%** of the total housing units.

(Source: Building and Code Compliance Spreadsheet & 2000 US Census - Housing Data)



Section 163. 340 (n) - Governmentally owned property with adverse environmental conditions caused by a public or private entity.

The proposed area includes two (2) city-designated brownfields.

Brownfields. The City designated two properties in Newtown as brownfields in 2004. One of the sites is privately owned property located on Lemon Avenue (150 feet north of Dr. MLK, Jr. Way) (**RESOLUTION NO. 04R-1699**).

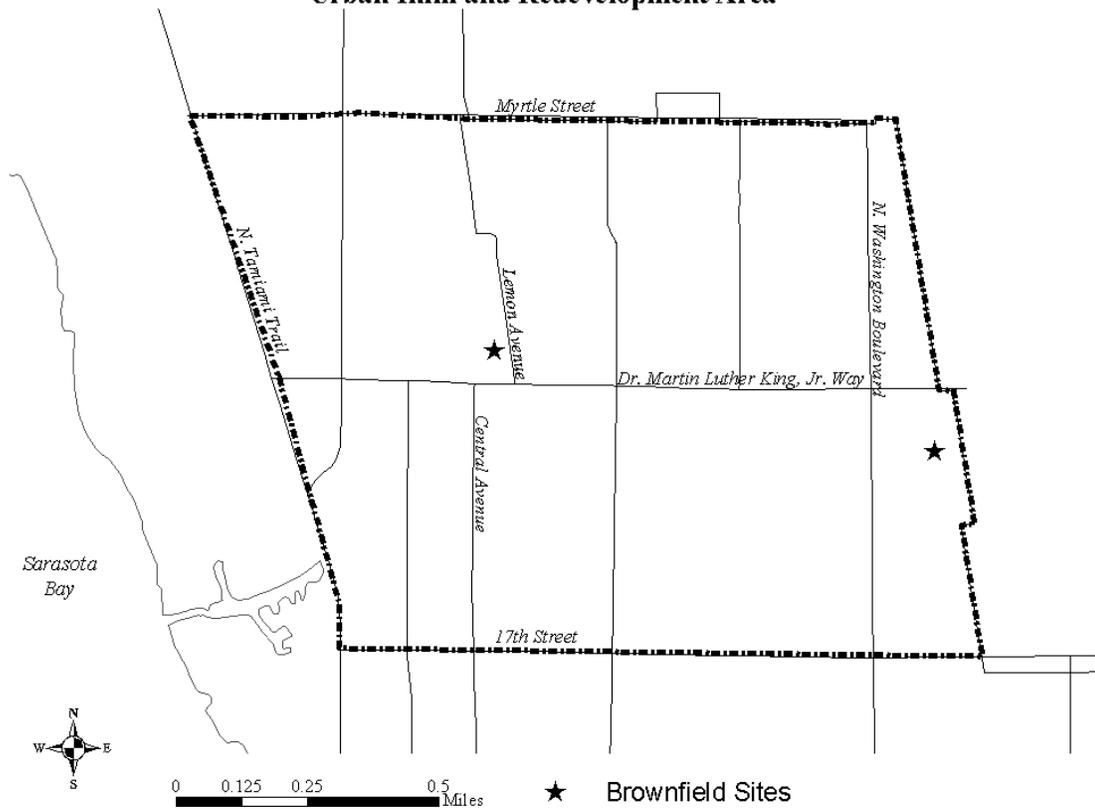
The other site, located at 2046 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Way (**RESOLUTION NO. 04R-1739**), is a former community dumping ground that is owned by the City. The site was used as a dump-site by the community for unwanted appliances, equipment, trash, and debris, in lieu of taking it to an authorized landfill. The result was the deposit of various harmful chemicals and metals from the debris.

During attempts to develop the site, preliminary environmental testing indicated the presence of potentially harmful contaminants. To determine the extent of the contamination, the city received several assessment and pilot grants from the State of Florida and Federal Departments of Environmental Protection to collect and test soil and water samples from the site.

Analysis of the samples indicated contaminants were present at the site at concentrations exceeding the Florida Administrative Code, Chapter 62-777, Contaminant Cleanup Target Levels. The determination was made that adverse environmental conditions existed within the site based on the documented level of contamination in the site and would require monitoring and remediation in accordance with Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) guidelines.

(Source: Florida Administrative Code (Ch 62-777), PSI, Inc. Site Assessment Report, and Florida Brownfields Redevelopment Act (Sections 376.77 – 376.84, Florida Statutes, Brownfield Designation Staff Report)

**Brownfield Sites within the Proposed Newtown
Urban Infill and Redevelopment Area**



Source: City of Sarasota, Department of Planning and Redevelopment, 2003

(Source: Brownfield Designation Staff Report)

RECOMMENDATION:

The State Statutes requires an area to satisfy a minimum of two (2) of the criteria factors outlined in Section 163.340 (1985) Florida Statutes. The Newtown Redevelopment Plan boundary area satisfies three (3) of the factors. Therefore, the Planning and Redevelopment staff recommends the City Commission authorize staff to prepare an application to the State to establish the Newtown Community Redevelopment Area with the boundary area the same as the Newtown Redevelopment Plan and the Newtown Urban Infill & Redevelopment Areas.

BACKGROUND

The Newtown Redevelopment Plan (NRP), (the basic document for the development of the Newtown CRA Plan), was prepared by A.A. Baker and Associates based on community input preferences and desires, and adopted by the City Commission in October 2002. Efforts are underway to incorporate the NRP into the Sarasota City Plan. To that end, the City has commissioned a Transportation Concurrency Management Area study to address the primary obstacle to processing the comprehensive plan amendment. The City recently, by resolution, adopted the NRP boundary area as an Urban Infill and Redevelopment Area (UIRA), and in so doing accepted the relevant portions of the NRP as the UIRA Plan. It is staff's intent to process an amendment that incorporates all of the relevant components from the NRP into the Sarasota City Plan. The balance of the changes associated with the NRP will be brought forward upon resolution of the transportation issues.

The Newtown community has received several state and federal designations based on the distressed conditions that exist within the community. These designations provide incentives and programs that encourage government and private sector agencies and developers to participate in the revitalization and redevelopment of the Newtown community. These designations include Florida Front Porch Community, Enterprise Zone (EZ), Historically Underutilized Business Zone (HUBZone), Urban Infill and Redevelopment Area (UIRA), and one of the program areas for HUD's CDBG Entitlement Program. A Transportation Concurrency Management Area (TCMA) designation will be received, upon completion of the TCMA Study.

Newtown Enterprise Zone. In January 2002, the State of Florida designated an area that included the Newtown Redevelopment Plan area as an Enterprise Zone. The Enterprise Zone was granted in order to revitalize the economy and to reduce unemployment and poverty. The NRP boundaries encompass 1.0 square mile and makes up 69.44% of the Enterprise Zone's 1.44 square mile area. (Map enclosed)

ORDINANCE NO. 2001-082 (Sarasota Board of County Commissioners) adopted **RESOLUTION NO. 2001-279** (Sarasota Board of County Commissioners) declaring that ***Census Tract 3 and a portion of Census Tract 2, Block Groups 0002001, 0002002, 0003003, 0003001, 0003002, and a portion 0002003*** chronically exhibit extreme and unacceptable levels of poverty, unemployment, physical deterioration and economic disinvestments, and thus declared the area as Enterprise Zone.

RESOLUTION NO. 01R-1407 of the City Commission of the City of Sarasota, Florida was adopted approving the joint application with Sarasota County, Florida for creation of an Enterprise Zone; providing for the establishment of an area for consideration as an Enterprise Zone; defining the area that exhibits extreme and unacceptable levels of poverty, unemployment, physical deterioration and economic disinvestment.

The criteria for these designations are the same as the criteria factors for a Community Redevelopment Area - unsafe conditions, blight, high crime, economic disenfranchisement, etc.

Section 163. 2514 (2)(a) - Public services such as water and wastewater, transportation, schools, and recreation are already available or are scheduled to be provided in an adopted 5-year schedule of capital improvements.

As is the case with the entire jurisdictional boundary of the City, the Newtown community is located within the City of Sarasota's Urban Service Area boundary (see Illustration LU-8, page LU-72 of the Future Land Use Plan). The City and Sarasota County provide the full range of urban public infrastructure and services throughout the Newtown community.

Potable Water Service. The major potable water transmission line that serves the northern portion of the City runs along Coconut Avenue from 17th Street to Myrtle Street within the Newtown area. Distribution lines that serve local residential and non-residential customers receive water from this transmission line.

Reuse Water Service. The City's urban reuse water system is used within the Newtown area for irrigation at the Ringling School of Art and Design and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Park. Reuse transmission lines are located along Central Avenue and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Way. There are four sites where the City proposes to expand the reuse system within Newtown in the future: the Sarasota Housing Authority's Janie Poe and Orange Avenue/Courts facilities, Booker High School, and the Cohen Park/Newtown Community Center.

Sanitary Sewer Service. Central sanitary sewer service is provided throughout the City, including Newtown. The City's central treatment plant, located on 12th Street, treats wastewater to advanced wastewater treatment levels. A major lift station is located in Newtown near the intersection of N. Tamiami Trail and Bradenton Road.

Transportation. Transportation needs in Newtown are satisfied in a number of ways. First, public streets were constructed and paved as development was approved and built (see the map below for the existing road network). The City maintains the public streets with a schedule that provides for periodic resurfacing and improvements. Additionally, the following roadway improvement projects that will improve traffic flow in the Newtown area are adopted in the City's Capital Improvements Program:

- US 301 from Wood Street to University Parkway, Project EN-74.0 (2004 to 2007)
- Myrtle Street, Project EN-93.0 (2005 to 2007)
- 17th Street from US 41 to Orange Avenue, Project EN-71.0 (2004 to 2008)
- 17th Street at US 301, Project EN-71.1 (2004/2005)
- Bradenton Road, Project EN-94.0 (2003 to 2007)

The City also addresses neighborhood transportation concerns through a traffic-calming program. In the late 1980's and early 1990's, the Newtown community was negatively impacted by a high volume of cars that were speeding along Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Way. As a result of neighborhood concerns, the City reduced the number of lanes on the roadway from 4 to 2 and implemented traffic calming measures to reduce the travel speeds.

Mass transit service to the Newtown community is provided by the Sarasota County Area Transit (SCAT) service. Five SCAT routes serve the 1.5 square mile Newtown area. Because of the prevalence of bus routes, more than 50% of the area is located within ¼ mile of a bus stop.

Schools. Public education is provided to school age residents in Newtown by the Sarasota County School Board Booker High School. Middle school and elementary school students attend school in the unincorporated County section of Newtown – Emma E. Booker Middle and Emma E. Booker Elementary Schools. Additionally, a private institution of higher learning, Ringling School of Art and Design, is also located in Newtown.

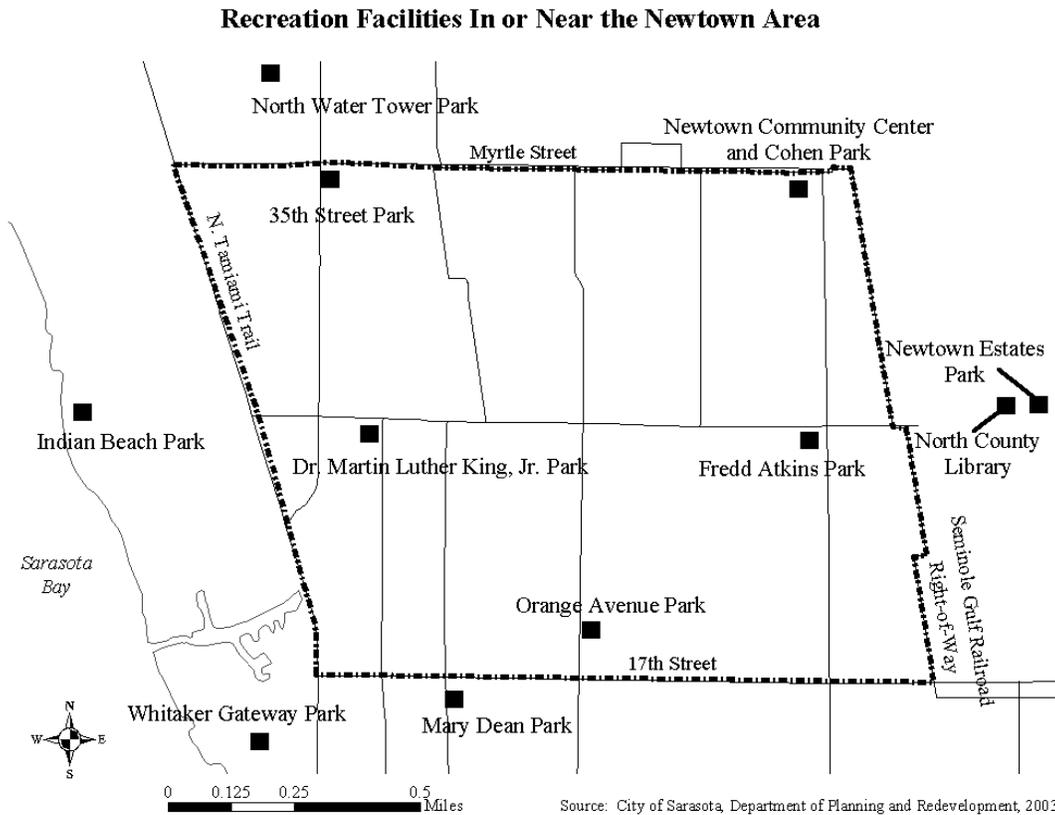
- Booker High School is located at 3201 N. Orange Avenue. Academic programs at Booker High School include an Environmental Science Academy, Visual and Performing Arts program, and a Law/Public Service Academy. Attending students are in the 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grades.
- The School Board also operates a number of nearby elementary schools and a middle school that serve students from the Newtown community. These schools include Bay Haven Elementary, Gocio Elementary, Emma E. Booker Elementary, and Booker Middle School. The School Board also transports Newtown area students via bus to other elementary schools in northern Sarasota County.
- The Ringling School of Art and Design is a private college that is considered to be one of the premier colleges of art and design in the United States. More than 1,000 students are enrolled at the school.

Recreation. The Newtown community has numerous recreation facilities that are available for citizens' use. The facilities that are located within the proposed Community Redevelopment Area are:

- 35th Street Park
- Cohen Park
- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Park
- Fredd Atkins Park
- Newtown Community Center
- Orange Avenue Park

Nearby facilities that are located outside of the proposed Community Redevelopment Area are:

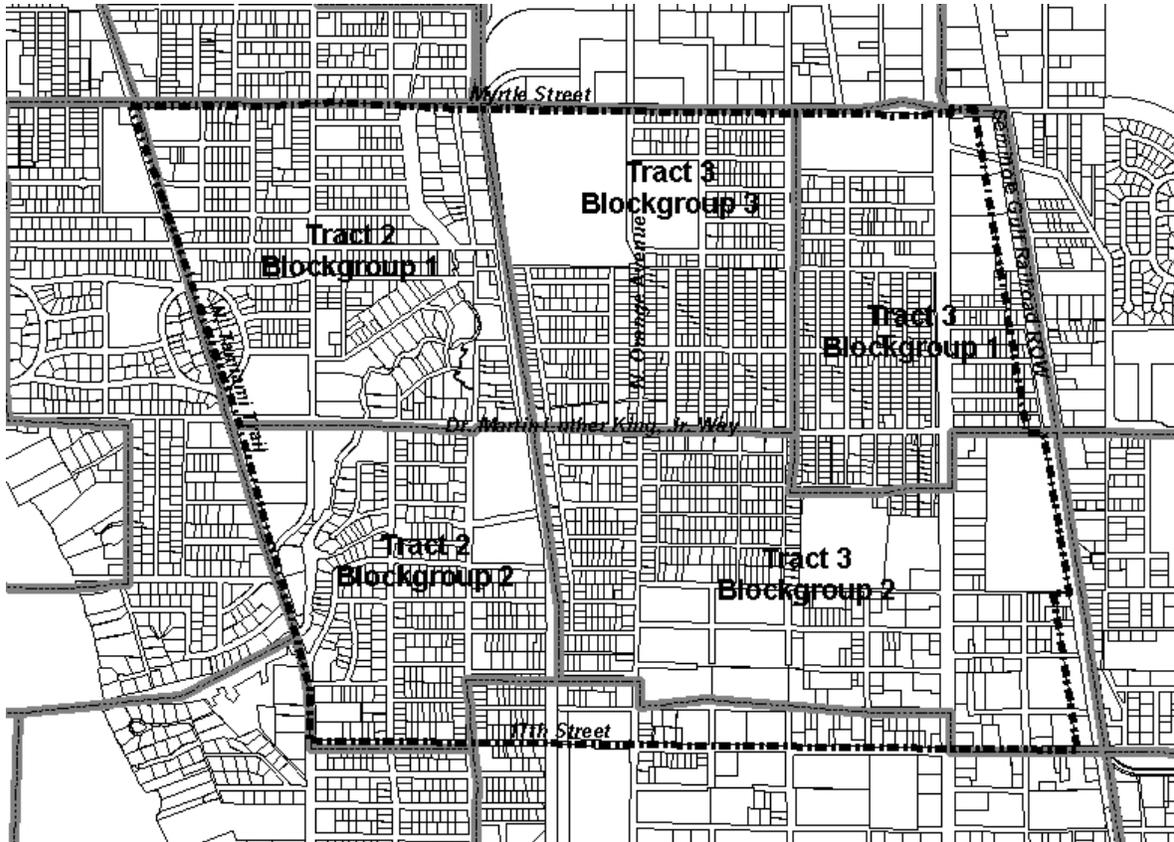
- North Water Tower Park
- Mary Dean Park
- Whitaker Gateway Park
- Indian Beach Park
- Newtown Estates Park
- North County Library (under construction)



Recognizing the importance of recreational facilities, the City adopted a Parks + Connectivity Master Plan that inventories existing recreational amenities and prescribes needed improvements. The Master Plan indicates that the Newtown Community Center will be renovated in the future and that rails-to-trails, parkways, and a kayak route are also to be developed within the Newtown area. The Parks + Connectivity Master Plan has been incorporated into the Recreation and Open Space Chapter of the Sarasota City Plan.

Section 163. 2514 (2)(b) - The area, or one or more neighborhoods within the area, suffers from pervasive poverty, unemployment, and general distress.

The Florida Statutes requires local governments to supply certain information from the most recent US Census and government maintained statistics or other studies to support the designation of a Community Redevelopment Area. The information below is from the 2000 US Census and statistics of crime, building code violations. The proposed Newtown Community Redevelopment Area is split between two census tracts – Tracts 2 and 3 – and five block groups – Block Groups 1 and 2 within Tract 2 and Block Groups 1, 2, and 3 within Tract 3 (map attached).



Poverty Rates. The table below displays the percentage of the population within each block group that is considered to live in poverty. The overall poverty rate for the proposed Community Redevelopment Area is 39%.

Census Tract/ Block Group	Total Population for Whom Poverty Status is Determined	Population with Income in 1999 Below Poverty Level	Percent of Poverty
2/1	997	475	48%
2/2	1124	368	33%
3/1	815	298	37%
3/2	1,793	955	53%
3/3	1,162	171	15%
Total	5,891	2,267	39%

Source: Census 2000, Summary File 3, Tables P87.

Household Income. Median household income in 1999 for the City was \$34,077. The majority of households in the proposed Community Redevelopment Area had household incomes below the City median level. The table below identifies the number and percentage of households within Newtown that are below the City median household income.

Census Tract/ Block Group	Total Households	Households Below the City Median Household Income Level	Percent of Households Below City Median Household Income Level
2/1	411	292	71%
2/2	408	249	61%
3/1	314	233	74%
3/2	718	599	83%
3/3	410	234	57%

Source: Census 2000, Summary File 3, Tables P52.

Per Capita Income. In 1999, the City's per capita income was \$23,197. However, in the proposed Community Redevelopment Area, the per capita income level was generally less than half the total City level.

Census Tract/ Block Group	Per Capita Income, 1999
2/1	\$8,043
2/2	\$12,974
3/1	\$9,799
3/2	\$8,021
3/3	\$11,475

Source: Census 2000, Summary File 3, Tables P82.

Unemployment. In 1999, the percentage of unemployed persons in the City was 3.3%. In the proposed Community Redevelopment Area, the unemployment rate for two of the block groups was equal to the City's 3.3%, while persons in the other three block groups experienced a higher percentage of unemployment. A further indicator of economic distress is the number of work-aged persons in the area that were not in the labor force – roughly half of this population was not in the labor force.

Census Tract/Block Group	Total Workforce Population	Persons Unemployed	Percent Unemployed	Persons Not In Labor Force	Percent of Persons Not In Labor Force
2/1	1,126	37	3.3%	572	51%
2/2	840	28	3.3%	399	48%
3/1	573	31	5.4%	261	46%
3/2	1,268	55	4.3%	673	50%
3/3	908	63	6.9%	433	48%
Total City	43,834	1,449	3.3%		

Source: Census 2000, Summary File 3, Tables P43.

Section 163. 2514 (2)(c) - The area exhibits a proportion of properties that are substandard, overcrowded, dilapidated, vacant or abandoned, or functionally obsolete which is higher than the average for the local government.

Occupancy Status. The housing occupancy status within the proposed Community Redevelopment Area is similar to the occupancy status within the City as a whole. Eighty-nine percent of the Newtown dwellings are occupied and eleven percent are vacant.

Census Tract/ Block Group	Number of Housing Units	Occupied Housing Units	Percent Occupied	Vacant Housing Units	Percent Vacant
2/1	447	393	0.88%	54	0.12%
2/2	495	446	0.90%	49	0.10%
3/1	357	315	0.88%	42	0.12%
3/2	772	696	0.90%	76	0.10%
3/3	492	443	0.90%	49	0.10%
Proposed CRA Total	2,563	2,293	0.89%	270	0.11%
City of Sarasota Total	26,935	23,419	0.87%	3,516	0.13%

Source: Census 2000, Summary File 3, Tables H1 and H6.

Occupancy Status by Tenure. For those occupied housing units, Newtown displays a greater proportion of units that are renter occupied than the remainder of the City. This characteristic indicates that resident's within the proposed Community Redevelopment Area are more transient and may have lower incomes making it difficult to achieve home ownership.

Census Tract/ Block Group	Occupied Housing Units	Owner Occupied	Percent Owner Occupied	Renter Occupied	Percent Renter Occupied
2/1	393	156	0.40%	237	0.60%
2/2	446	220	0.49%	226	0.51%
3/1	315	144	0.46%	171	0.54%
3/2	696	158	0.23%	538	0.77%
3/3	443	299	0.67%	144	0.33%
Proposed CRA Total	2,293	977	0.43%	1,316	0.57%
City of Sarasota Total	23,419	13,728	0.59%	9,691	0.41%

Source: Census 2000, Summary File 3, Table H7.

Median Year Structure Built. The overall age of housing units within the proposed Community Redevelopment Area is older than the age of housing units within other parts of the City. The average housing unit in the CRA is approximately 42 years old and the remainder of housing units in the City are about 32 years old. The Housing Plan of the *Sarasota City Plan* indicates that at the age of forty years, housing units generally begin to experience major structural problems.

Census Tract/ Block Group	Median Year Structure Built
2/1	1957
2/2	1964
3/1	1965
3/2	1962
3/3	1963
City of Sarasota	1970

Source: Census 2000, Summary File 3, Table H35.

Housing Structures Built by Decade. The data in the table below indicates that most of the existing dwelling units in the proposed CRA (75%) were constructed in the decades prior to 1970 while about half of the dwellings units in the remainder of the City (49.5%) were constructed in subsequent decades. The older homes found within the proposed CRA are generally smaller and have less amenities than newer, more modern homes.

The older homes located within the proposed CRA are more susceptible to major structural problems due to their age.

Census Tract/Block Group	Decade Structures were Built						
	Prior to 1939	1940 to 1949	1950 to 1959	1960 to 1969	1970 to 1979	1980 to 1989	1990 to 2000
2/1	37	122	94	131	43	6	14
2/2	59	47	99	112	51	102	25
3/1	18	17	86	113	77	5	41
3/2	73	92	184	243	38	50	93
3/3	25	17	135	211	84	5	15
Proposed CRA Total	212 (8.3%)	295 (11.5%)	598 (23.3%)	810 (31.6%)	293 (11.4%)	168 (6.6%)	188 (7.3%)
City of Sarasota Total	1,835 (6.8%)	1,648 (6.1%)	4,985 (18.5%)	5,154 (19.1%)	6,800 (25.3%)	4,313 (16.0%)	2,200 (8.2%)

Source: Census 2000, Summary File 3, Table H34.

Plumbing Facilities. An indicator of substandard dwellings is the lack of plumbing facilities. The percentage of homes within the proposed CRA that lack complete plumbing facilities is four times greater than the remainder of the City. Further, thirty-nine percent of the City's homes that are without complete plumbing facilities are located within the proposed Newtown CRA.

Census Tract/Block Group	Number of Houses with Complete Plumbing Facilities	Percent with Complete Plumbing Facilities	Number of Houses Lacking Complete Plumbing Facilities	Percent Without Complete Plumbing Facilities
2/1	447	100%	0	0%
2/2	486	98.18%	9	1.82%
3/1	340	95.24%	17	4.76%
3/2	764	98.96%	8	1.04%
3/3	487	98.98%	5	1.02%
Proposed CRA Total	2,524	98.48%	39	1.52%
City of Sarasota Total	26,832	99.63%	100	.37%

Source: Census 2000, Summary File 3, Table H47.

Section 163. 2514 (2)(d) - More than 50 percent of the area is within 1/4 mile of a transit stop, or a sufficient number of such transit stops will be made available concurrent with the designation.

Sarasota County Area Transit has five bus routes that provide service to the Newtown area. There are 172 bus stops located within the boundary and within 1/4 mile outside the boundary of the proposed Community Redevelopment Area. More than 50 percent of the area is within 1/4 mile of a bus stop.

CONSISTENCY WITH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Florida Statute 163.360(2)(a): - “The CRA Plan shall conform to the comprehensive plan for the county or municipality as prepared by the local planning agency under the Local Government Comprehensive Planning and Land Development regulation Act.”

Every effort has been made to ensure that the Newtown Community Redevelopment Plan conforms to the Sarasota City Plan. The City of Sarasota Planning and Redevelopment Department, through the City of Sarasota Planning Board, pursuant to Chapter 163.360(4), Florida statutes, shall submit its written recommendations with respect to the conformity of the proposed Community Redevelopment Plan to the Community Redevelopment Agency.

Executive Summary

As in many African-American communities, what is necessary for revitalization goes well beyond streetscape and beautification. These physical solutions must be combined with social and economic ones in order for the community to reach its full potential. Like no other community, the redevelopment of the African-American community requires a strong partnership between public, private, and non-profit sectors. The plan must draw private investment by initiating public investment. Incentives such as appropriate land use designations, necessary infrastructure, and the latest market data information showing demands for goods and services should be provided by the public sector to attract the private sector projects needed to stimulate the market.

The purpose of this Plan is to:

- Provide the opportunities for private sector investment
- Provide the market data to support the needed services and identify business opportunities
- Provide the design framework for new construction
- Identify the business clusters for development
- Provide linkages between the various activities
- Make Newtown a destination in Sarasota County

In order to better organize and address the community issues identified during the public involvement phase of the project, they were sorted into eight major categories. These categories are carried throughout the Plan in the Goals and Objectives, Concept Plan, and Implementation Strategy sections. The eight categories are: Administration; Economic Development; Housing; Land Use; Transportation; Community Health, Safety, and Welfare; Infrastructure; and Urban Design and Parks.

The basic concept of the Plan is to create a commercial core along Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way. This concept includes three business clusters: (1) A community commercial anchor at U.S. 301 and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way, (2) A smaller neighborhood business cluster in the “Heart of Newtown”-- the area around Orange Avenue and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way-- and (3) An entertainment cluster at U.S. 41 and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way. Mixed-use development that allows for supportive business/service uses and residential uses link all three activity clusters. The mixed-use development will allow for retail uses on the ground level with residential uses above. The proposed concept includes the live/work type units desired for communities in transition.

The Plan shows primarily single-family areas and a limited amount of multiple-family areas immediately adjacent to the mixed-use corridors. These areas support the non-residential uses fronting Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way. Further to the north and south of the corridor are stabilized single-family conventional areas. These areas are complemented with rehabilitation programs for the homeowners, support of non-profits to construct infill housing compatible with the existing neighborhood fabric, and the construction of new homes. During the analysis portion of the study, a huge demand for first class affordable housing was identified. It is important that the new homes provide opportunities for not

only existing residents, but potential new residents wishing to move into the community or individuals with higher incomes looking for larger home opportunities within Newtown. The concept includes the redevelopment of the public housing sites with a mixed income community. The concentration of so many public housing units in one area has affected the economic strength and stabilization of the neighborhood.

Special events are a major component of the redevelopment strategy for Newtown. An effective strategy for making Newtown a destination includes drawing people from outside the community in for a special event or purpose, then providing opportunities for them to remain in the community for shopping, dining, or entertainment purposes. One proposed approach is to develop a small music festival with the potential to grow over the years and relocate to other venues within the community. The residents also expressed a desire for a community market, like the one on Saturday mornings in downtown Sarasota.

Although the City of Sarasota has made investments in the Newtown Community, many of the residents feel that the progress has been slow. The efforts and the dollars spent in the community have not been well coordinated and have done little to jump-start the redevelopment activities of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way. Many of the problems in Newtown seem insurmountable: There is declining home ownership, loss of population, increasing crime, concentration of public housing, and decreasing incomes. Many have given up on the redevelopment of Newtown.

However, a concept voiced at the NUSA Conference in May 2002 should be kept in mind when considering the future of Newtown. It is the VCR Principle, consisting of Vision, Change, and Resources (Right People). “Without vision, the people will perish. If you don’t know where you are going, any road will get you there.” The purpose of this plan is to provide the Vision as developed by the residents of Newtown, and guide developers, investors, and the City of Sarasota to a better tomorrow. The second component, Change, is all-important but no one likes it. The residents of Newtown, the members of City Hall, non-profit agencies, and the City staff should embrace change, the success of effort depends upon it. It is hoped that this Plan helps all those involved to think outside the box. The third component of the VCR Principle is Resources (Right People). For the Newtown vision to become reality, the dollars and the right people with the right attitude must be involved.

This is a long-term process for change. The members of the City and the community must be dedicated to the vision to ensure overall success. Within the document are short-term, mid-term, and long-term strategies. (Volume II - Implementation, Part II - Phasing Plan) Many action steps are needed the first two years, including the establishment of a lead agency within the community or designated staff person to oversee the redevelopment effort. Comprehensive Plan amendments and land development code updates are needed for redevelopment to begin, partnerships between public and private entities should be cultivated, and lines of communication between all involved activated.

Before a community launches redevelopment program, it must realize there are no quick fixes. It takes hard work over a long period of time. Success is not accomplished in the first year or two. Rather, success is measured over decades. However, the City must take the lead and start implementing identified projects within the first year of adoption of the plan. Following is a list of priorities for the first two years. The Phasing Plan in Volume II

contains priorities for the next twenty years.

Year One

- Establish a lead agency (umbrella organization/redevelopment association) within the community or a designated staff person.
- Fredd Atkins Park Redevelopment
- Newtown Community Center Improvements
- Establish Strategic Code Enforcement Program for Newtown
- Hire a full-time staff person for the Newtown Community Center
- Explore feasibility of developing a private jitney/shuttle system
- Support Housing Authority HOPE VI application or other future alternatives that redevelop public housing sites
- Analyze and adjust SCAT bus system stops, schedules, hours of operation
- Reinforce living/learning linkage with School Board by securing Family Literacy and Adult High School programs within Newtown
- Expand “Walk the Beat” police in the community.

Year Two

- Adopt CRA Ordinance/Resolution
- Blight study and redevelopment plan as per F.S. 163.
- Produce economic base study (industry and employment study)
- Prepare Comprehensive Plan amendments
- Begin catalyst economic development project
- Complete the first of four neighborhood plans (Newtown, Bayou Oaks, Central Coconut, or Amaryllis)
- Develop the Whitaker Greenway Plan
- Prepare a Rails to Trails application for a greenway
- Prepare an urban design plan and design guidelines for the Dr. MLK Jr. Way Corridor
- Ongoing neighborhood traffic calming, sidewalks, signage, lighting
- Ongoing street tree additions
- Design and build first phase of gateway treatments
- Assist with initial planning for two catalyst projects on Dr. MLK Jr. Way
- Create microloan program
- Create business incubator program
- Support Sarasota Memorial Hospital’s plans to build a walk-in family health clinic in Newtown
- Establish annual youth summit
- Establish “spring-cleaning” event with the neighborhood

Purpose of the Plan

This Newtown Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan (also known as the Newtown Community Redevelopment Area Plan) has been prepared by the citizens of Newtown as a blueprint for the revitalization of their community. Over the past several decades, the Newtown community has experienced a gradual decline in economic vitality, housing conditions, and quality of life. Concern over these issues prompted several community leaders, represented by the Coalition for African American Leadership, to organize an effort to get the City Commission of Sarasota to verify the severity of these issues, identify the causes and, where appropriate, assist them in turning these trends around. There have been numerous isolated organizational efforts and specific public improvements made in this neighborhood in the past. However, the Commissioners agreed that it was time to make a more comprehensive examination of the factors contributing to the area's economic decline and to devise a series of strategies for the redevelopment of the community.

To show their support, the Commissioners allocated funding for this Plan as part of the City's fiscal year 2000-2001 budget. In the spring of 2001, City staff released RFP #01-35M to select a consultant to work with the Newtown community to create a long-range vision for the area and a planned sequence of actions to achieve this vision. The City's goal is to revitalize the entire community through the stimulation of commercial and housing development and redevelopment within Newtown. This Comprehensive Newtown Redevelopment Plan is the summary of this planning effort and shall act as the blueprint for the Newtown community renaissance. The plan outlines detailed strategies for achieving this goal, and identifies specific projects to be included as part of the City's Ten-Year Capital Improvement Program. The plan also identifies other financial resources and partners to assist with the implementation of plan strategies.

Background and Citywide Context

The genesis of this plan was in the desire of the African-American Coalition for a comprehensive redevelopment plan that addresses particular Newtown community issues. As a result, the Sarasota City Commission selected A. A. Baker & Associates and team members Benjamin Withers and the RMPK Group to complete the plan. Additionally, the original contract agreement was amended to include Mr. Lonnie Ward, a local housing consultant, to assist with the housing component. Several smaller studies of particular sub-areas contained within the boundaries of this project area have been completed in the past.

Recent examples of these include, but are not limited to, work for the Greater Newtown Redevelopment Corporation by a Main Street program consultant, a design charrette by the Florida Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, a survey by the Community Action Research Initiative (CARI) of New College, elements of a HOPE VI application by the Sarasota Housing Authority, and ongoing capital improvements by the City of Sarasota to elements of the City's infrastructure, such as streets, sidewalks, and parks and recreation facilities. This is the first attempt at analyzing all of these existing plans and initiatives, combining existing recommendations with new investigations, and incorporating it all into one comprehensive plan for this area of the City.

Newtown is the second historic core of Sarasota's African-American community. As downtown Sarasota grew at the turn of the century and through the booming 20s, development pressure on the Black Bottom area, which was later called Overtown and now known as the Rosemary District, created a demand for growth farther north. The area of this study includes the Newtown, Bayou Oaks, Central Cocanut, and Amaryllis neighborhoods.

From the early years through the 1940s, the street now known as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Way was the thriving heart of the then segregated enclave of Newtown. Decades of disinvestment and capital flight, along with a concentration of government subsidized housing and social services, have caused blighted conditions in areas next to a thriving area of single family homes. Much of the neighborhood's multifamily housing has had deferred maintenance, which has resulted in substantial deterioration.

Transportation improvements to U.S. 301 and U.S. 41 to the east and west of the area have enabled them to evolve into major auto-oriented corridors, making travel around the neighborhood easier. Businesses have moved to where the traffic is, as has happened all over the U.S. in the past 50 years. Over time, a substantial concentration of industrial and social service uses have been located between the neighborhood and downtown to the south. Half of the north boundary is bound by industrial uses. These adjacent land uses surround the neighborhood, further isolating it from the larger community.

History of the Community

The following is a summary of the history of the area. This summary is based on several books about Sarasota and Sarasota's African American Community. The most significant source is Annie McElroy's *But Your World and My World*. In addition, information was drawn from the files of the Sarasota County Division of Historical Resources Archives.

The Early Days

The original town of Sarasota was platted in 1883 and ended on the side at 10th Street. The Town of Sarasota was incorporated in 1902. The Florida West Shore Railway came through the area that is now Newtown, bringing rail service to Sarasota in 1904.

Some of the early notable families include that of the Reverend Lewis Colson, a fisherman, surveyor, and landowner. In 1899 he sold the land to, and was the first minister of, the City's first Black church, the Bethlehem Baptist Church. Frank Williams was the town's first blacksmith. Other early families included the Mays, Washington, Bush, Carmichael, Roberts, Joyner, Wilcox, Albright, Herring, Jackson, O'Neil, Wilson, McKenzie, and Conley families.

The second oldest church in Newtown was Payne Chapel A.M.E. Methodist. Payne Chapel was established in 1907 when Methodists withdrew from Bethlehem Baptist to create the first African Methodist Episcopal Church. Other early churches were the Mt. Moriah Christian Church founded in 1913, the Truvine Missionary Baptist Church organized in 1918, the House of God Church begun in 1922, the New Bethel Missionary Baptist Church started in 1924, the Bethel Christian Methodist Episcopal Church in 1924, the Church of God in Christ began in 1935, the Hurst Chapel African Episcopal Church Inc. started in

1928, the Shiloh P.B. Church started in 1930, and the Church of Christ Sarasota Florida formed in 1932.

Near the turn of the century, only about ten families lived in the vicinity. The Black population swelled as laborers and skilled workmen were hired by special agents who combed rural areas of Georgia and the Carolinas recruiting workers to fill the demand in Florida's boom cities. Men and women came to be dockworkers, fishermen, chauffeurs, maids, laundresses, and cooks. They came to work the rails, the citrus farms, and the circus.

Willie McKenzie arrived in 1885 with a Savannah construction firm and worked on Charles Ringling's ten-story hotel as well as John Ringling's Causeway. As families like the McKenzies followed the work to Sarasota, the City became home for generations of Blacks. In addition to skilled labor jobs, Newtown residents came to be landowners, preachers, real estate developers, and teachers. Out of necessity, due to the fact that Blacks could not get their hair cut, eat dinner, or buy clothing in White establishments, many small business entrepreneurs flourished.

Development in Newtown began in earnest in 1914 by Charles Thompson, a well-known circus manager who desired to make the quality of life better for Sarasota's Black community. One of the development's original parcels lay on the east side of Orange Avenue with side streets Washington, Lee, Douglas, Dunbar, and Higel (present day 21st through 25th Streets). During the boom the subdivision expanded a few streets south and then to Washington Boulevard, then eventually north along both sides of present day U.S. 301.

As Sarasota's Downtown grew, the Black community was edged northward and Newtown replaced the original municipal residential area that once included Black Bottom. Later known as Overtown, it was bounded roughly on the north and south by 10th and 5th Streets and on the west and east by U.S. 41 and Orange Avenue. Overtown had constituted a complete community with small shops, social facilities, and religious centers such as the first church, the Bethlehem Baptist Church.

Prior to 1925, when the County built Booker Grammar School, the first public school for black students, African-Americans in Sarasota County were schooled at home or in churches. A high school was later added and in 1935 the first class four seniors graduated. Later, Amaryllis Park was added for first, second, and third-graders and Booker Junior High for seventh and eighth graders.

WW-II, Schools, and the Turbulent 1960s to 1980s

WWII saw an end to tolerance of racism in Newtown and the surfacing of years of quiet anger. The Black community felt as a whole that because African-Americans had fought and died for the Country, they deserved equal treatment. Throughout the 1950s, this emerging anger became the impetus for change across the Country, including Sarasota. In 1954 Chief Justice Earl Warren wrote his landmark Supreme Court decision in the Brown v. Board of Education case, which prohibited racial segregation in U.S. public schools.

By 1960, Newtown was home to about six percent of the County's population, or about

7,000 people. In the 1960s, Newtown flourished with several restaurants, grocery stores, service stations, a drug store, repair shops, beauty parlors, barbershops, and a doctor's and a dentist's office.

Three years after the Brown v. Board of Education decision, the schools were still segregated in Sarasota. The NAACP asked the Sarasota County School Board to voluntarily desegregate. In 1961, after four more years of inactivity, they filed a desegregation lawsuit in federal court. In the 1962-63 school year, the first Black students enrolled in all-White Sarasota Schools, the first school integrated was Bay Haven Elementary.

In 1964 Roland Rogers, who had been Principal of Booker through twenty years of progress and change, was appointed to the administrative staff of the County schools. By 1965, the U.S. Government had tied federal dollars to compliance with the 1964 Civil Rights Act. The federal government ordered all schools to integrate by 1967. The Sarasota County School Board came up with a plan to comply, consistent with most school district approaches, by closing the black schools and busing black students to white schools. In 1967 Booker High School was closed, in 1968 Booker Junior High School followed.

Originally, the community supported busing as a step forward however, eventually, many felt that closing the schools had taken away community pride and identity. On May 4, 1969, a total of 2,353 Black students (85% of the County's Black students) boycotted the Sarasota County public schools in protest over the proposed closing of Amaryllis Elementary School. Instead, students attended freedom schools in local churches taught by New College and high school students.

In spite of the turmoil of the 1960s and the segregation/desegregation conflict, several local youths achieved national recognition during this time. Howard "Slick" Porter, a Newtown resident, was the best high school basketball player in the region for the season of 1966-1967. Porter signed a scholarship to play college ball at Villanova, later playing with the NBA's Chicago Club, New Jersey, and Detroit. Booker High School also won the State basketball championships in 1966-67, repeating this success three more times in 1977-78, 1981-82, and 1984-85. The re-establishment of the schools within the community was an important step in reclaiming community identity.

Recent History

In 1982, through the local chapter of the NAACP, citizens legally challenged a system of representation that had historically prevented the election of blacks to City government. Three years later, in 1985, Fredd Atkins was elected as the first black citizen to serve on the City of Sarasota Board of Commissioners. In 2001, Carolyn Mason became the first female African-American Mayor to serve in Sarasota's history.

Current Challenges

The following major community challenges were brought to the City Commission's attention. As a result, the City appropriated funds for this plan. The challenges are organized into the eight categories used throughout the plan:

1. Administration

- Need for a coordinated communications network between the City of Sarasota and the various community action groups

2. Economic Development

- Loss of local neighborhood businesses on Dr. MLK Jr. Way
- Leakage of local dollars to businesses outside of the community
- Availability of accessible quality jobs for the residents
- Lack of African-American owned businesses in the community

3. Housing

- Degradation of housing conditions throughout the community
- Lack of funds available for single family housing rehabilitation
- Lack of housing infill policies and design guidelines
- Low rates of home ownership
- Concentration and degradation of the public housing facilities
- Need for systematic code enforcement

4. Land use

- Encroachment on residential portions of the neighborhood by Ringling School, commercial zoning and development along U.S. 301 and U.S. 41, industrial and public facilities intrusions on the north and south boundaries of the neighborhood
- Lack of mixed-use developments along Dr. MLK Jr. Way

5. Transportation

- U.S. 301 and U.S. 41 have bypassed the community
- High speeds through the neighborhoods
- Inappropriate bus schedules
- Railroad tracks and conflicts with residential neighborhoods

6. Community health safety and welfare

- Unsafe neighborhoods
- Drug abuse and drug related crime
- Prostitution
- Lack of appropriate activities for youth
- Lack of level of service standards for neighborhood parks
- Lower than average high school graduation rates and Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) scores

7. Infrastructure

- Many of the streets in the community are in poor condition
- Street grid system is incomplete and disconnected

- Gaps in service infrastructure, such as banks

8. Urban Design/Parks

- Loss of historically significant buildings
- No discernable gateways into the community
- Low levels of participation in the City's residential street tree program.
- Poor condition of housing and code violations
- Lack of a town center

Public Participation Process

The goals for the Comprehensive Newtown Redevelopment Plan were established through a series of community meetings held with interested Newtown residents and representatives of organizations involved in the community. Public meetings were held at the Newtown Community Center on October 2 and 16, 2001; and January 24, 2002. Summaries of the input received at these meetings are included in Volume III - Background Data, Appendix C.

At the first meeting, the boundaries of the project area were discussed and those who attended listed what they felt are the assets and problems within the community. During the second meeting, specific topic issues that were drawn from the earlier assets and problems lists were discussed and suggested issues developed. In the third meeting, the inventory and analysis were presented in an open-house format and a draft concept plan and potential recommendations were discussed.

In addition to the public workshops, a series of focus group meetings were held with several of the existing community organizations: African-American Chamber of Commerce, Sarasota Housing Authority, Greater Newtown Community Redevelopment Corporation, Booker High School students, etc.

Further public participation research included stakeholder interviews with individuals that are involved with issues in the community. These included:

- Newtown community and business leaders
- Private sector lenders and developers
- Land use planners
- Architects
- Attorneys
- Non-profit housing developers and providers
- Human service providers
- City officials
- Housing officials/developers

As a result of these meetings, a comprehensive list of goals and objectives was developed for this plan.

Goals and Objectives

This section lists the goals and objectives developed from the list of assets and issues generated at the public meetings. The goals have been grouped into the eight categories used for organization throughout the document.

These goals and objectives provide the guidelines for redevelopment in the Newtown Community. The overall desire is to make Newtown an attractive place and provide for the redevelopment of the entire neighborhood.

1. Administration (Redevelopment Administration and Policy)

Goal I

Establish the administrative and financial mechanisms necessary to achieve the goals and objectives of the Newtown Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan.

Objectives

1. Formation of an agency or staff department for the management of redevelopment activities.
2. Funding should be secured for the agency staff and operational support for redevelopment activities.
3. Enable the agency to oversee the redevelopment planning process and develop and coordinate the appropriate strategies and policies necessary to implement the plan.
4. Promote effective communication and a cohesive, cooperative spirit among the various public and private leaders in the community using the talents of existing civic organizations and committees.
5. Utilize the above civic talents in conjunction with the City staff to plan and implement the strategies in this redevelopment plan.
6. Ensure the provision of suitable public information services concerning all aspects of the redevelopment program, such as radio, TV and newspaper reporting, and neighborhood and civic organization meetings.
7. Ensure the public of an ongoing communication system whereby the community can be involved in the development of policy in a regularly scheduled series of public workshops.

Goal II

Emphasize administrative policy to eliminate slum and blight conditions, which

constitute an economic and social liability in the redevelopment area.

Objectives

1. Eliminate dilapidated and unsafe structures through the continuation of the City's demolition program.
2. Encourage the upgrading of existing substandard structures through enforcement of the City's Housing and Building Codes and the provision of financial incentives for rehabilitation.
3. Eliminate unsanitary and unsightly outside storage conditions through enforcement and revision of the City's Zoning Codes.
4. Eliminate nonconforming uses that distract from the character of the community and hinder investment opportunities. Assuming the cooperation of property owners, available means may include: acquisition, exchange, transfer of development rights, or zoning changes.
5. In cooperation with property owners, encourage the consolidation of small parcels of land into parcels of adequate size to accommodate new construction, thus encouraging stable growth.
6. Through successful implementation of projects and programs as described in the redevelopment plan, and as amended in the future, increase the tax base to generate additional revenues for municipal services.

Goal III

Prevent the future occurrence of slum and blight.

Objectives

1. In the future, to accommodate full buildout in the area, work with the Planning staff, Planning Board, residents of the community, and the City Commissioners to update the zoning classifications (i.e. modify densities and categories). Revise the land development regulations within the redevelopment district to encourage design and development standards for new construction and rehabilitation. Ensure that new development consists of appropriate land uses that will stabilize and enhance the overall quality of life of the area.
2. Eliminate conditions that decrease property values and reduce the tax base.
3. Create programs for development and rehabilitation using financial or other economic incentives to facilitate new investment in the redevelopment district, thereby increasing the tax base.

Goal IV

Encourage the acquisition, demolition, and reuse of those properties which, by virtue of their location, condition, or value, no longer function at their highest potential economic use and are currently depressing the value and viability of the surrounding uses.

Objectives

1. Identify and cooperate with property owners in areas designated for potential redevelopment projects. Encourage their participation in redevelopment projects.
2. Encourage partnerships among the property owners and the private and public sectors in order to implement proposed redevelopment projects.
3. Facilitate redevelopment transitions by developing appropriate relocation plans sensitive to the needs of those properties that will undergo reuse activities.
4. Provide incentives for private sector participation in the redevelopment projects and programs.

2. Economic Development

Goal I

Maintain the unique and positive character of the community while promoting economic vitality.

Objectives

1. Establish a partnership between the public and private sectors for the purpose of understanding the mutual benefits of the proposed redevelopment projects.
2. Identify existing opportunities for all sectors of the economy and work toward successful implementation of projects and programs while considering the needs of those currently located within the redevelopment district.
3. Improve the investment image of the redevelopment area and utilize selected public actions to stimulate private investment.
4. Make Newtown a destination. The redevelopment area should be competitive with other major activity centers in Sarasota County while maintaining its unique character.

5. Expand the economic base of the district by creating new, diverse employment opportunities.
6. Create investment opportunities, which will increase the tax base. Revenues generated will finance actions that support public goals.
7. Encourage the development of regionally competitive businesses in the area to help retain Newtown consumer dollars in the community.

Goal II

Market the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way corridor as a local destination point for arts and entertainment as well as a neighborhood/community center.

Objectives

1. Make the redevelopment area a safe and exciting place to go while encouraging business, family, and young adult oriented patronage.
2. Promote the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way corridor as the center of an arts and entertainment area with a college focus.
3. Promote the redevelopment area as a unique center of activities that includes a full range of commercial, office, institutional, community, residential, and neighborhood service facilities as well as arts and entertainment.

3. Housing

Goal 1

Encourage private homeownership and develop and market housing opportunities within the redevelopment area.

Objectives

1. Identify and market areas where private interests can develop housing and the necessary support facilities in the redevelopment area and adjacent neighborhoods.
2. Encourage private efforts toward achieving new housing in the redevelopment area and adjacent neighborhoods.
3. Achieve additional funding to assist in the housing effort.
4. Promote owner-occupation of housing throughout the area.

Goal II

Re-establish old neighborhoods through redevelopment and revitalization of the housing stock. Establish a safe, functional, and aesthetically pleasing community environment.

Objectives

1. Create incentives for private investment in housing restoration through zoning and development codes.
2. Initiate infill housing development projects on existing and newly vacated properties.
3. Identify and restore historic housing that may be in a state of deterioration but otherwise structurally sound.
4. Work with the City to clean up vacant, unattended properties.

Goal III

Redevelop housing authority properties to integrate them with the surrounding neighborhood.

1. Redevelop housing authority properties as primarily single-family and duplex structures, except for those areas near Dr. MLK Jr. Way that are located within the areas recommended for mixed-use and multifamily housing.
2. Continue the City street grid through the properties making connections with existing street right-of-ways.
3. Create new opportunities for multifamily developments.
4. Create mixed-income development.
5. Promote a proportional distribution of low income housing throughout the County to allow for flexibility of densities on Housing Authority property for single-family and duplex housing.

4. Land Use

Goal I

Establish a land use pattern that reflects the redevelopment area as a community of diversified interests and activities while promoting compatibility and harmonious land-use relationships.

Objectives

1. Promote and locate land use activities of regional importance, such as market and festival sites, within the redevelopment area to attract visitors

and capture additional market opportunities.

2. Develop land uses and patterns that complement and strengthen existing and proposed activity centers such as the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way Corridor.
3. Formulate future land use strategies on sound market analysis and demographic research.
4. Protect and enhance existing residential neighborhoods.

Goal II

Encourage innovation in land planning and site development techniques.

Objectives

1. Work with the City Planning Board to include mixed-use developments within the City's Zoning Ordinance in locations where appropriate.
2. Work with the Planning Board in the development of performance standards to be used within the redevelopment area that will provide incentives and/or bonuses for developer proposals that utilize creative design amenities.
3. Achieve the onsite mixing of residential and commercial uses in appropriate locations as determined by the community.

5. Transportation

Goal I

Create a safe, efficient traffic circulation system, one which provides sufficient access by all modes of transportation between activity centers within the redevelopment area and the balance of the community.

Objectives

1. Evaluate existing traffic patterns and pursue transportation improvements such as vacating of rights of way, redistribution of traffic, roadway realignment, directional changes in traffic flow, and traffic calming, which will increase traffic efficiency and traveling convenience.
2. Create a parking system to support existing activities as well as increased demands as new development occurs in the redevelopment district.
3. Minimize the impacts of increased traffic and activity levels in residential areas.

4. Provide adequate loading and unloading space with minimum disruption of through-traffic.
5. Work with area-wide transit providers, including SCAT, take services and shuttles to encourage the expansion of an efficient mass transportation system.
6. Create a safe, secure, appealing, and efficient pedestrian system linking all major activity centers, parking facilities, interchange points, and residential areas.
7. Encourage alternative mode (bicycle, rollerblade, etc) pathways throughout the district, appropriately designed and separated from auto and pedestrian circulation for safety purposes. These paths should be used as positive tools to improve the area's environment through the use of landscaping and other visual treatments.

6. Community Health, Safety, and Welfare

Goal I

Continue to provide for the public health, safety, and general welfare of the community.

Objectives

1. Work with the Sarasota Police Department and other community organizations to implement neighborhood-based police and safety programs.
2. Incorporate accredited, safe-neighborhood design techniques for all public places and for proposed public/private co-venture redevelopment projects.

7. Infrastructure

Goal I

Provide necessary utilities at acceptable levels of service to accommodate existing needs and new demands as proposed development and redevelopment occur.

Objectives

1. Work with all appropriate government and private utilities to ensure the provision of adequate services including: electricity, telecommunications, cable television, potable water, stormwater drainage, sanitary sewer, gas, and solid waste.
2. Work with the City's solid waste service provider to improve garbage and

recyclable removal from the redevelopment area. Increase the level of service by providing convenient locations for disposal and increased services during special events.

3. Strategically locate well-designed public restrooms throughout the redevelopment area sufficient for daily use and special events.

8. Urban Design/Parks

Goal I

Establish parks, recreation, open space, and beautification efforts to create an identifiable character for the redevelopment area, one which will reflect a pleasant, appealing atmosphere for working, shopping, touring, and residing in the district.

Objectives

1. Pursue parks and recreational opportunities as a means to leverage private sector development.
2. Secure parks and open space grant funding to leverage tax revenues.
3. Prepare landscaping, streetscaping and lighting plans for public spaces to strengthen the historic character of the redevelopment area and encourage the use of these features when negotiating private sector development plans.
4. Enforce sign regulations and develop standard design guidelines for store frontages and signs. Establish programs that provide incentives for voluntary compliance with design guidelines during new construction and retrofitting of existing signs and structures.
5. Use signage as an opportunity to add consistency to the design theme desired for the district. Signs should be considered public art sculptures that enhance the identity of the district as well as the businesses.
6. Sign regulations should address the size, type, location, and amount of signage for the purpose of minimizing visual clutter, enhancing community character, and maximizing the flow of clear information to pedestrian and automotive traffic.
7. When undertaking streetscape improvements, new construction, and building rehabilitation, utility lines should be placed underground, where cost effective, to improve visual quality.
8. Utilize a variety of beautification techniques to provide comfortable, pleasing, and healthful work, leisure, and residential, and shopping environments.

9. Develop urban site design, landscape design, and architectural design guidelines for new and redevelopment projects.

Goal II

Preserve and maintain historically and architecturally significant structures.

Objectives

1. Promote Newtown's heritage by preserving its landmarks and significant structures.
2. Have Newtown residents serve on the City's Historical Preservation Board, which is responsible for overseeing historic preservation and the creation of design standards to maintain character of new construction.
3. Make property owners and investors aware of the tax credits available as an incentive for restoring historic buildings for practical uses.

Economic Overview

The preceding chapters of this document have explained the series of events that led to the decline of the Newtown community. Many of the once thriving commercial businesses along Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way have left. Empty stores have been demolished, leaving gaps in the streetscape, and projects have not replaced them. The community has lost its civic focus. Local business entrepreneurs have left. Illegal economies have replaced legitimate economies. Local job opportunities have evaporated. The income/investment cycle has been lost in the local neighborhood economy. As businesses and jobs decline, so does the structure of the neighborhoods. As households fall apart, so does the family structure.

This economic spiral has been operating too long in the Newtown community. It is the goal of this plan to understand the factors contributing to the decline, develop a strategy to reverse this, process and initiate revitalization

Historic Trends Affecting the Economy

Four main factors have contributed to the demise of the Newtown business center on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way:

1. Competing Regional Shopping Opportunities.

In the 1950s, 60s, and 70s there was a major shift in the way commercial shopping demands were met in the United States. In Sarasota, as well as the rest of the nation, new suburban shopping centers were being developed. These larger commercial shopping centers were able to sell household goods for less than the traditional neighborhood shopping centers. The local Newtown consumers who were purchasing goods from the Dr. MLK Jr. Way businesses began to buy from the regional shopping centers. This was a very significant. From this point forward, it would always be economically infeasible to service these small local businesses with the local consumer base (10,000 residents). It was this phenomenon that began the decline cycle.

2. U.S. 301 and U.S. 41 Commercial Dominance.

The second major event that contributed to the decline of the Dr. MLK Jr. Way business center was the road widening and subsequent commercial prosperity of the U.S. 41 and U.S. 301 corridors. Over the last several decades, FDOT has slowly widened the roadways of U.S. 301 and U.S. 41. This action has enabled these corridors to become strong commercial areas due to the increased visibility and access. As these corridors became stronger, two things occurred: First, the Newtown residents spent more of their dollars in the U.S. 301 and U.S. 41 stores. Second, fewer citywide residents came to Dr. MLK Jr. Way to shop. These major traffic corridors forced residents and visitors to bypass the Newtown community.

3. Loss of Strong Consumers from the Community.

A third element contributing to the decline was the transitioning of residents out of the Newtown community. Over time, some residents of Newtown became more successful and

their incomes rose. Many of these families left the community and relocated to other areas in Sarasota. As this relocation occurred, the average per capita income of the community fell. As the income fell, so did the collective purchasing power of the community. With less consumer dollars available, the local businesses suffered even more.

4. Perception of Decline in the Community.

The final step in the decline process has been the increase in crime and economic downturn in the community. As the perception of decline kicks in, the consumers leave and perception becomes greater than the reality.

The Challenge

The major result of Newtown's decline has been the near total demise of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Way traditional neighborhood shopping center. The challenges before the City are to reverse this cycle of decline and to initiate the economic revitalization process and to increase the quality of life of the Newtown residents. This can be accomplished by increasing the education, healthcare, and wealth of the residents. A two-pronged approach is necessary: Residents need a means to participate in the community services and wealth creation factors that are operating elsewhere in the County, and the area needs to attract citywide consumer dollars to businesses in the community. The latter will help attract strong businesses to the Dr. MLK Jr. Way corridor, increasing the wealth and quality of life of the residents. In short, Newtown must become fully integrated into the surrounding regional social, political, and economic community, equally sharing in the responsibilities and benefits of participation.

The Revitalization Strategy

The success of this Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan will not be the result of a single strategy. Numerous achievements that build upon each other both geographically and over time are required. This Plan focuses on two major initiatives:

1. Creating commercial/office business activities that attract a new and broader demographic consumer base to the Dr. MLK Jr. Way corridor.
2. Increasing the quality of life and wealth of the average Newtown resident.

The Commercial/Office Strategy

The commercial/office strategy is based upon the philosophy that Newtown can leverage three major assets that it has available to it. The first major asset is the regional market opportunity for neighborhood commercial on the corner of Dr. MLK Jr. Way and U.S. 301. There is an opportunity to create a shopping center at this location that can act as a gateway into the Dr. MLK Jr. Way corridor business district. A development of this nature can draw from the citywide marketplace and bring consumers to the Newtown community. This commercial project could be mixed-use and should extend with shops on both Dr. MLK Jr.

Way and U.S. 301 from the corner, pushing investment eastward, toward the center of Newtown. Any development at this location needs to be sensitive to the historic significance of Fredd Atkins Park, located on the southwest corner.

The second major asset is the Ringling School of Art and Design (RSAD), which has a national reputation for education in the graphic and related arts. The school brings in students and faculty from all over the world. Currently, the school is expanding and is looking for more land. Newtown has an excellent opportunity to leverage this asset. Even with the presence of USF, FSU, New College, and other campuses in Sarasota, the City currently has no university-related commercial center. Dr. MLK Jr. Way provides an excellent opportunity to encourage mixed-use, university-related commercial: studio spaces, loft living, art galleries, book stores, cafes, entertainment, music stores, supply shops, etc. These kinds of college centers can spawn a strong economic investment climate. In addition, this type of development will attract consumer dollars from all parts of the City. This center can begin at the west end of Dr. MLK Jr. Way and push investment toward the center of Newtown.

Newtown's third major asset is the local population base and strong cultural heritage of the community. This asset can be leveraged by creating a civic focus for the community at the intersection of Dr. MLK Jr. Way and Orange Avenue, the "Heart of Newtown." This central location is the best area to recreate a town center with community buildings and neighborhood related commercial/office enterprises.

The Neighborhood-Building Strategy

The neighborhood-building strategy involves a series of actions designed to elevate the quality of life of the residents and to nurture a healthy, wealthy, and educated citizenry who love their community and patronize the local businesses. The key series of actions are:

1. Remove the concentration of public housing developments from the community. Create opportunities for residents in these developments to relocate within the community or in other areas where they can more easily improve their quality of life.
2. Encourage the development of new owner-occupied housing opportunities for new or existing residents. The first units should cater directly to RSAD faculty and businesses in the campus commercial area.
3. Provide the best quality social and community services to increase the standard of living through assistance to new and existing programs.
4. Enhance the educational venues to push community capacity.
5. Invest in community improvements that increase the quality of the physical environment.
6. Focus on the family unit as a core ingredient of a healthy community.

Policies and actions should be aimed at strengthening the family and avoiding anything that inadvertently makes cohesive families more difficult, which primarily means that children are a priority in all actions.

These are the main features of the economic positioning strategy. The following is a more detailed description of how these strategies can be developed.

The Business Cluster Concept

Business Cluster #1 - Arts and Entertainment

Sarasota is known for its arts and its several fine major universities. However, there is no distinct student commercial entertainment district near any of the campuses or in the City area. The west end of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way is an ideal location for a mixed-use student activity and entertainment center. The direct adjacency to RSAD and proximity to New College, USF, and FSU to the north, combined with their lack of pedestrian areas with commercial zoning, pose a high probability for success. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way can become a high-quality pedestrian street environment. The combination of streetscape improvements, the existing Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Park, Whitaker Bayou, and a potential greenway along the railroad right-of-way will provide key elements to build upon. The entertainment theme could be compatible with the local population through potential jazz venues. The RSAD has indicated a need for additional student and faculty housing and there is an ongoing need for studio live/work space for both working artists and entrepreneurs. Townhomes and more compact housing can be in close proximity. This area is envisioned as a mix of offices, studios, galleries, coffee shops, bookstores, restaurants, and housing.

A key to initiating success in this area is a job generator that can kick-start the area and provide a ready market for coffee shops, retail, restaurants, and other small establishments. A commitment from several government agencies to provide jobs created from the growth of Sarasota County to be located in an office building here could provide this initial base. The City, County, State, and School District are all potential providers that should be pursued. Two examples of this are the new Center for Philanthropy and the Arts recently opened on U.S. 41, which was undertaken by a private developer, and the Glasser Schoenbaum Center on 17th Street on City-owned land with free rent, in a building owned by a private non-profit foundation.

Business Cluster #2 - Community Commercial

The Newtown Market Analysis and Commercial Revitalization Strategy states that a new shopping center can be absorbed into the present market right now. A mix of supermarket, drug store, and smaller stores totaling approximately 100,000 sq. ft. is recommended. This will require approximately 12 acres of land with at least 750-800 feet of street frontage along U.S. 301. This should be located at the intersection of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way and U.S. 301. Any of the four corners can work for this project. Each has differing constraints including, but not limited to: land ownership, street configuration, residential area impact, zoning, etc. Further site analysis and development feasibility is recommended.

The basic objectives in this commercial revitalization program are to:

1. Create a stronger retail center for the area
2. Expand the trade area into the area bounded by a 3-mile radius from U.S. 301 and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way
3. Increase the exposure of the neighborhood to the general community market.

These objectives need to be economically driven by the private sector. Accomplishing these objectives will require several necessary actions as well as some additional activities that are highly desirable for their support role. These necessary actions could include but are not limited to:

1. Select a master developer through competitive process that emphasizes design quality and economic performance as equally important partners.
2. Assemble a contiguous parcel of 9-12 acres through the purchase of one corner of the intersection of U.S. 301 and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way to accommodate a planned shopping center of approximately 100,000 square feet. This will require street closures and use of public right-of-way.
3. Grant concessions to the master developer that would be granted for any other catalyst project in a redevelopment area.
4. Clean-up, repaint, and landscape the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way corridor from U.S. 301 to Orange Avenue.

The desirable supporting actions are:

1. Close the frontage road on the western boundary of U.S. 301 when assembling the commercial site. This will add to the taxable value of the existing residential property and increase the commercial development potential along the western edge of U.S. 301.
2. Intensively enforce all appropriate commercial development codes in the area around the new commercial center
3. Prepare streetscape program for U.S. 301 in the vicinity of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way to help accentuate entry into Newtown and spotlight the new commercial center.

The major opportunities to accomplish this program are created by:

1. Exposure to high traffic volumes on U.S. 301
2. A strong existing band of market demand between one and three miles

from the intersection of Dr. MLK Jr. Way and U.S. 301 that is available for capture by a new shopping center

3. The potential for concessions and subsidies from the County for development in a CRA and Enterprise Zone.

The major obstacles that must be overcome are:

1. A generally negative economic image of the area when in fact, there is considerable demand for goods and services.
2. An obviously negative visual image of the area along U.S. 301 and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way.
3. Investor reluctance to finance a project that is perceived as risky in a recessionary economy. This may require greater guarantees from the City if action is to be taken during this recession.

The concept for a revitalization catalyst is based on a modern planned shopping center at the intersection of U.S. 301 and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way. It must be a market-responsive commercial center that can compete with existing shopping centers along University Parkway. This project should contain a total of about 100,000 square feet of gross leasable area and be anchored by a grocery store of at least 35,000 square feet. A drug store of 8,000-10,000 square feet is also desirable, even if developed as a freestanding ownership on an outparcel. Small stores oriented toward apparel, food service, and consumer services will fill the remaining floor area.

Each corner presents differing opportunities and constraints and will require additional zoning and infrastructure changes as part of the development. The scale of the project proposed means that probably no location can accommodate a by-right development based on the present zoning and street configuration. The community input stressed that the market should be left to determine where this occurs. Additional site studies are needed to determine the pros and cons of each site before such a recommendation is made.

Working with the existing demand is an important part of the market because the potential trade area is so intensely built up that future demand growth is likely to be moderate. The most successful marketing strategy is likely to be based on increased capture of existing demand. This means that Newtown must extend its market dominance outward if the neighborhood is to experience a major change in its commercial development pattern.

Business Cluster #3 - Neighborhood Commercial

The area between Cluster #1 and Cluster #2 continues to be the local neighborhood core for Newtown. It should be focused around the intersection of Orange Avenue and Dr. MLK Jr. Way. It should be pedestrian-oriented to cater local service needs. This cluster is listed as the third phase but in reality, has already begun and should continue to improve as the other two are implemented. The land use character should be a continuation of the mixed-use

live/work units listed in Cluster #1. This area will fill in as the market dictates. While a large multi-block development under one ownership is possible here, a series of single lot infill developments owned and leased by local business people will be preferred. This particular area is the ideal location for mom and pop businesses started and operated by the local residents. These businesses may aim to serve the immediate neighborhood but, as traffic begins to turn onto Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way from other parts of town, the number of potential customers will increase. Improvements to the Orange Avenue and Dr. MLK Jr. Way intersection should make it visibly clear that this is the “Heart of Newtown.” This can be accomplished through improvements such as fountains, rotaries or roundabouts, urban design, and public spaces included into the designs for adjacent parcels.

Many of the recommendations for redevelopment contained within this document will take years to complete, including new building construction. In the interim, simple improvements to existing buildings can drastically improve aesthetic quality. An improved pedestrian atmosphere will result from simple upgrades such as new awnings and overhangs, new signage and lighting, painting and repairs, updated doors and windows, and security systems that are less obvious during business hours. The following are pictures of existing buildings located along Dr. MLK Jr. Way and accompanying before and after sketches. The after sketches are what they might look like when simple improvements are added. These are primarily cosmetic changes and require little in the way of structural changes.

The key to success in the long term for the mixed-use and live-work areas in Clusters 1 and 2 is to create a continuity of urban form and design:

- Two or three story buildings with facades having retail character on the first floor and residential character above. This is most easily achieved through a higher amount of glass on the first floor with awnings, overhangs, arcades, signage bands, or other elements that separate the two floors. The buildings should be built up to the sidewalk and front property line. Entrances should be off the sidewalk.
- Parking on the street and in lots behind or beside buildings.
- Sidewalks with specialty pavers, uniform street furniture, street lighting, and street trees.
- Dumpsters, utility meters, and other delivery and service areas should be in back or screened from view by pedestrians.

Throughout the public participation process, the desire for a theme was discussed. It is the recommendation of this plan that the streetscape set the continuity of theme and leave individual creativity open for individual building styles. Design requirements can be created through a set of urban design guidelines.

The recently adopted Downtown Plan addresses this type of desired streetscape and the accompanying streetscape graphic is from the Downtown Plan.

Related Business Development Activities

Music Festival

Currently, there is no annual music festival in place in Newtown. Planning for locations is, therefore, highly theoretical. Constraints to be considered include schedule, length of festival, atmosphere desired, support of surrounding neighborhood, how much impact is the community willing to withstand, budget, expected attendance, parking and transit options, security, volunteer availability, availability of support facilities (restrooms, artists' dressing rooms), type of acts (acoustic vs. electric), etc.

The largest annual community event in Newtown is the Easter Parade. In 2002, this event was cancelled by the organizers due to concerns over parking, noise, and impacts on the residential areas on a Sunday holiday. This is an indication that the event has achieved a level of success and has outgrown its accommodation. In order to maintain this and other community-wide celebrations, concerns should be addressed through changes in timing, route, location, security, etc.

Any festival will grow over time and will initially depend on local support. Many communities across the country have high impact festivals that completely take over the community for a short period of time, such as the Zora Neale Hurston Festival in Eatonville, Florida.

Some festivals are in name only and are mere promotional devices to draw consumers to existing venues that would function the same during any other time. The best festivals are a combination of venues that integrate the festival into the community while generating new customers for existing facilities. As festivals grow, they expand offerings from performances to other events surrounding the theme, using other media. A jazz festival can celebrate the musical style by including movies of great performances, documentaries of artists, master classes, lectures, and art exhibits. Venues can be based on the expected attendance and can vary from paid admission concerts to free events for the community. The following is a list of potential venues and facility type.

Small-Scale Events (Attendance of 1-200 people)

Temporary venues can be set up in smaller parks throughout the neighborhood.

- Mary Dean Park (existing)
- Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Park (existing)
- Fredd Atkins Park (existing)
- Proposed new neighborhood pocket parks.
- Proposed new neighborhood plaza at Orange Ave. and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way.
- Vacant lots along Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way while redevelopment is occurring.
- New indoor venues created within the proposed Arts and Entertainment District, Shopping Center.

- The smallest venue can be as simple as an impromptu concert along a sidewalk near an urban designed streetscape space.

Medium-Scale Events (Attendance of 200-1000 people)

Outdoor events can be set up on a temporary basis on the grounds of:

- The Ringling School of Art and Design
- Newtown Community Center
- The Boys and Girls Club

Indoor events can be accommodated in the Booker High School auditorium.

Large-Scale Events (Attendance of more than 1000 people)

The Booker High School and Newtown Community Center athletic fields are large open areas that can be used for large-scale events. There is space for support facilities and parking and transit can be accommodated easily. Coordination with the School Board and the County Parks Department will be necessary.

Community Market

There have been discussions in the past about locating a community market within Newtown. Informal elements of a market already occur, such as produce sales from trucks in various locations throughout the community. Existing examples include the U.S. 301 Frontage Road near Fredd Atkins Park, along Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way on the north side by the railroad tracks east of U.S. 301, on the vacant parcels at the intersection of Orange Ave. and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way, and along U.S. 301 near Myrtle Street across from Cohen Park. These impromptu sales occur in spite of a lack of traffic safety or easy access, indicating a pent-up demand for this type of commerce. This has been a central focus of the planning discussions for the City-owned Urbaculture site by Florida House Institute. Creating a sanctioned location for a market is a common element in many communities throughout the country. Currently, there is a successful outdoor market on Saturday mornings, downtown at Lemon Avenue between Main and First Streets. Due to traffic conflicts with closing the street, it does not occur on other days of the week. This opens up opportunities for an outdoor market in Newtown that will not conflict or compete with the downtown market.

Many communities undertake urban design improvements that transform street closures, parking lots, parks, or vacant lots into public market spaces. This can be simple, such as an open space and sign, to complex, such as providing electrical and water services to vendor stalls. More elaborate improvements include art in the pavers, as part of permanent signage, or as street closure arms etc. Permanent improvements are phased over time as the market becomes more successful.

There are four potential locations for an outdoor market. Each has different constraints depending upon the development scenarios that are proposed by the private sector.

Site One:

One possible location is the “Heart of Newtown” site at the intersection of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way and Orange Avenue. Any of the vacant parcels on the four corners could accommodate this into future development. This can be either a private commercial development or a City Park. The use of the land for this purpose could act as a traditional use until development occurs at this intersection or incorporates to some extent into the new development.

Site Two:

Another possible location is within the proposed catalyst office mixed use complex at the west end of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way. This could be part of the redevelopment of the Janie Poe housing complex.

Site Three:

A third location could be within the frontage road of the west side of U.S. 301, near the intersection of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way. This would involve a simple street closure, as both of these streets are dead-ends. The market can be developed as part of improvements to the frontage median and Fredd Atkins Park, depending upon its future location and improvements. This will depend upon future U.S. 301 road widening plans and may pose a safety concern.

Site Four:

The fourth possible site is at the intersection of U.S. 301 and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way on any of the four corners as part of the proposed community shopping center. The location depends upon how the market dictates which location is developed as the shopping center.

The Neighborhood Reinforcement Concept

Overview

The primary intention of the neighborhood reinforcement concept is to create a safe, secure place for families to live and prosper. This requires two kinds of actions. The first is social in nature and supports the intangible, social infrastructure of the community. The other is the physical environment formed by the infrastructure of streets, parks, and buildings.

Social Actions

Families take many forms and the demographics of today no longer conform to the typical nuclear family. The majority of families and individuals who make up the residents of this area are living productive, happy lives. There are however, many others in need of assistance due to lower income levels and the resulting difficulties. The objective is to get people in the second group to become part of the first. The elements that create great neighborhoods then become available to all. Parks, mature trees, paths and trails, public art in public spaces, and good infrastructure all combine to create livable neighborhoods.

Much has been said in the economic positioning strategy about increasing the opportunities for job training, etc. The neighborhood reinforcement concept is aimed at reinforcing the sense of community that connects all the individual efforts together. All forms of families that function to improve the lives and prospects of its members should be supported. However priority should be given to the needs and concerns of those with children, due to the importance of stability in their growth and development. Schools and churches are a major element in this and many families make specific choices based on the best opportunities for their children. This document focused on youth as a key target of the objectives with the attitude that if it is good for children, it will benefit the entire population. Schools, recreation, and other programs are all discussed.

Citizens continually expressed a desire for a “no or zero tolerance” policy on crime. Efforts to increase the visible police presence through walk and bike patrols, where officers can interact with neighbors, is desired rather than just patrol cars. Targeting the elimination of the drug element through purchase and demolition of drug houses is a high priority.

Numerous dedicated, social service non-profits and departments of local governments are providing services now. Many have expressed an ongoing need for cheap rental space for programs increased awareness of the existence of such programs throughout the community, especially to those in need of the services. As with most charitable ventures, funding is always a need. There are many components of the suggested efforts in place now within the Newtown community. Improvement is an evolutionary process. Those existing programs should be applauded, supported, and encouraged. Where opportunities exist to expand or shift to provide better service, those changes should be made. Volume III Appendix B lists those agencies and programs now providing assistance.

Several crisis intervention programs have described that when there is not space or funding available, the person in crisis cannot come back in several weeks. Their emergency is immediate and if not dealt with, the pending repercussions are also immediate.

For less crisis-oriented programs, there are several agencies located within the neighborhood: Goodwill on Dr. MLK Jr. Drive, Jobs Etc. One Stop Shop on U.S. 301, Dolores G. Dry Building on 17th Street, the Glasser Schoenbaum Center on 17th Street and numerous other smaller facilities associated with churches and local schools. Two successful examples of educational programs utilized elsewhere in Sarasota County that are ideal candidates for extension to the Newtown area include the school district’s “Family Literacy” program, a counseling program that teaches successful life and family management skills, and the “Adult High School,” a program that allows non-graduating high school students to attend after hours to work toward a traditional diploma. This is a step between the options of being held back or dropping out and getting a GED. The first is in place in Venice and, space permitting, could successfully be duplicated and extended to Newtown. The second is a program at Sarasota High School that could also be duplicated and extended to Booker High School. Participation and success for participants is greatly increased by having the program within walking distance.

During discussions about current programs, the staff at both Jobs Etc. One Stop Shop on U.S. 301 and the Glasser Schoenbaum Center on 17th Street have said that a majority of outreach occurs primarily through one of four methods: word of mouth by previous

participants, high school dropouts losing drivers licenses and subsequently receiving letters with referrals from the Department of Motor Vehicles, general information sessions, or cross references with other social agencies. Staff at both centers mentioned the need for making local community leaders aware of the existence of programs so they can disseminate information and make appropriate referrals. Funding for many of these programs has been shifting from the traditional number of students enrolled to a performance-based system. Money is given based on “hits” related to set increments of improvement.

Staff members at non-profit agencies also mention the highly social nature of the individuals served. The greatest concern is that those in need of assistance be treated with dignity and respect, just like anyone else in the community. Local churches are a major element in social cohesion and have been instrumental in getting this plan produced. Several have indicated that they have plans for future programs and facilities for drug and alcohol rehabilitation and a host of other services. These should be encouraged and supported. An example is the Community Bible Outreach Ministries plan for a Transition House. This program will assist people reentering society from the penal system and help them become reintegrated into their community, which is their best chance for success.

Physical Environment

Pursuant to Chapter 163.360(2)(c) the CRA Plan shall “provide for the development of affordable housing in the area, or state the reasons for not addressing in the plan the development of affordable housing in the area. The county, municipality, or community redevelopment agency shall coordinate with each housing authority or other affordable housing entities functioning within the geographical boundaries of the redevelopment area, concerning the development of affordable housing in the area.”

Data obtained from the U.S. and State of Florida Census Bureaus, Sarasota City Plan, and the Housing Chapter of the Evaluation and Appraisal Report reveals that the proposed Newtown Community Redevelopment Area has a shortage of affordable single- and multi-family housing for low- and moderate-income residents of the community, including the elderly. Housing conditions have also been addressed throughout the community, but especially as it relates to housing authority residences.

The overall housing concept for the Newtown Community Redevelopment Plan is to consolidate the housing types and provide a range of costs in each type. Revitalizing housing in the Newtown community will best be achieved by preserving what already works in the neighborhood (single family houses) and eliminating substandard housing (the dysfunctional communities created by the concentration of lower-income minorities in public housing projects). The range of options of available market-rate housing needs to be expanded. In order to meet the needs of all citizens, a variety of housing is needed. These homes should be integrated to provide a true mixed-income community. Efforts should be made to prevent the formation of internal enclaves based on housing prices.

True mixed-income communities are difficult to create. The ability to accommodate an incoming population with more disposable income while maintaining low-income and “workforce” housing for existing residents is a major challenge. Gentrification is the term used to describe how neighborhoods change when those with higher incomes replace low-

to moderate-income residents. Such changes may lead to the dissolution of neighborhoods when long-term residents are forced to move due to rising rents and taxes. This has been a common fear and reality for many communities throughout the Country over the past century. With the direction of planning in Florida moving toward Smart Growth policies that encourage infill development, these pressures will increase. Sarasota County's own 2050 plan is a local example of this type of direction. If both new and existing residents are to be accommodated, additional density will need to be introduced into the neighborhood.

Throughout the Newtown public participation process there have been comments made from both sides of this issue. To both it is important to attract higher income people with more discretionary income into the neighborhood, and provide policies to assist existing residents to stay and thrive. One goal should be to avoid involuntary displacement. This will require appropriate policies to assist existing residents with housing during the transition if residential complexes are targeted for redevelopment.

Two potential solutions to balance these two sides of the coin are mixed-income housing and land assembly. Mixed-income housing is a type of development that provides housing for all levels of income where some of the units may be subsidized and some are market-rate within the same complex or neighborhood. Mixed-income housing is important to assure the presence of economically integrated neighborhoods.

Land assembly, the process of joining together contiguous lots to create a more developable parcel, has generally been associated with the practice of eminent domain. Because early urban renewal projects used eminent domain powers of government to displace residents and purchase land for public projects, the term land assembly has developed a bad connotation. However, land assembly can be beneficial to a community if done in the correct manner. It is especially helpful when undertaken by current property owners so that they can assemble significantly sized parcels for redevelopment and then share in the increased property valuations. This is also known as land banking.

In order to provide buffers to the existing single-family areas, redevelop the existing deteriorated public housing projects, and increase the market for local businesses along Dr. Martin Luther King Way, a shift in the land use pattern in the neighborhood is needed. This is not a drastic change but it does require moving some building types to different locations and introducing new ones. Many of these concepts are not new to Sarasota and have been discussed in the recently adopted Downtown Sarasota Master Plan. This includes the concept of transect, whereby decreasing density radiates out from the core with appropriate building types to achieve this hierarchy.

Assuming that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way is the central spine of the neighborhood, it should contain the highest density and most complex and diverse uses. The mixed-use concept provides the flexibility for this to occur and may include medium density multiple-family dwellings including residential townhomes, apartments, or condominiums.. Outside this mixed-use area is primarily single-family homes, which is the majority of the neighborhood. Standard multifamily projects, where affordability is the primary concern, can be used as buffers between the single-family and industrial and commercial areas. Following are descriptions of these building types.

Mixed-Use

The classic mixed-use building is located in areas with higher pedestrian activity levels. It has retail on the first floor with offices or residences above, all in one structure. This is the primary type of mixed-use proposed along the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way corridor and the arts/entertainment and shopping center clusters.

Multi-Family / Apartments

There are numerous types of multifamily dwellings, each having a different number of units per building. Compatibility with nearby single-family residential is the key criteria when determining the maximum size appropriate for the neighborhood. Generally, six to eight units are the upper limit recommended. Parking, open space, and amenities are usually clustered together within the project property. This type of project is usually designed for economy of scale and affordability. It is for this reason that apartments are recommended as a buffer between the existing single family residential and industrial/commercial uses.

Townhomes

The architectural form of town-homes is similar to that found in the mixed-use section. The exception is that the front facades are residential in character without retail style fronts on the first floor. They can be built up to the sidewalk with internal vestibules, or set back from the sidewalk a small amount to allow for stoops and stairs. There may be a minimal front yard to allow for a small amount of landscaping but not enough room for an active yard or lawn area. There are no side-yards between units. Parking, trash, and services are accessed from the back through alleyways to minimize their negative impacts. Townhomes are two or three stories tall and can be multiple floors in one unit or multiple units over each other in one building. Townhomes work well across the street from single-family as a transition. The increased density translates into higher site coverage, reducing open-space. This missing open space should be provided through smaller, centrally located pocket parks that allow the higher density residents to mix and meet their single family neighbors helping to increase the feeling of community.

Live-Work

The economic section of this document has emphasized the desire for entrepreneurial opportunities. Allowing the combination of living space and working space is a way to decrease business costs. The impacts of many businesses are minimal on residential neighborhoods. In the past, numerous communities have had ordinances that allow home occupations in businesses. This alternative is a structure that is designed specifically to address this use. Constraints are dependent upon the proposed location and concern by the surrounding neighborhood. Buffers between industrial and single-family areas are good locations for live-work uses. They can also be integrated into typical mixed-use areas. Each design solution will be different, depending upon the location, but the use can be described generally enough to allow it in the mixed-use, multi-family and parts of single-family land use zones.

Single-Family

This dwelling unit type is the traditional structure intended to house one family. The number of bedrooms and the corresponding number of inhabitants most often dictates the range in size. It can have a detached or attached garage and driveway accessible from the street, or an alleyway if available. The style of construction prevalent throughout the neighborhood, single story stucco over masonry construction with sloped roofs and driveways off the street, is still appropriate. However two-story homes are also appropriate and can be of concrete block or frame construction.

Duplex

Duplexes include two residential living units of relatively equal size in one building, on one lot. How compatible this building type is with single-family structures depends more on design than on use or density. The location of entries and parking dictate how recognizable the building is as a two-unit structure. Entries can be combined into a single foyer or limited to one on the side and one the front or back. Garage apartments or “mother-in-law” apartments are other techniques used to develop two units on one lot.

Summary

The economic positioning strategy is the foundation for the Newtown Community Redevelopment Plan. True redevelopment cannot occur in Newtown by planting a few trees. The redevelopment of Newtown will only occur by instituting the proposed strategies, in a phased manner, that promote the structural economic changes necessary for success. The next section takes these economic strategies and uses them to form a long-range physical plan for the transformation of the community.

Overview

The Redevelopment Framework Plan has been developed as a guideline for promoting the sound development and redevelopment of the Newtown community. The plan is not intended to be cast in concrete. Over time, this plan should be updated and revised based upon changes in the economy, public concerns, and private development proposals. The plan is used as an example of how the economic development strategies can be translated into a physical land use plan, in a fashion that allows a minimum of natural and cultural impacts, yet promotes quality growth and development. The salient aspects of the plan are as follows:

1. The plan identifies where the major economic land uses (industrial/commercial/office) should be located in order to best attract prospective businesses and be well integrated into the desired future land use and transportation network for the community.
2. The plan identifies a transportation system that can accommodate the future growth patterns without costly retrofit and renovation.

3. The plan allocates areas of residential densities that work with the loading of future roadway networks. These are compatible with the existing community structures of each area, are respectful and compatible with adjacent land uses, minimize commuting distances, reinforce future public transportation options, and offer a diverse range of housing opportunities for all income ranges and lifestyles.
4. The plan locates commercial sites based upon expected market demands and reasonable residential services areas.
5. The plan provides for the location and size of parcels to be set aside for schools, parks, and other community services. This approach eliminates the costly and awkward approach of having to retrofit these essential amenities later.
6. The plan provides a tool for a redevelopment association to promote economic development by showing prospective corporate entities the locations of parcels of land that have been designated for redevelopment, thereby reducing the developer's risk when applying for development permits and financing.
7. The plan provides a holistic means for a redevelopment association and the City to guide the approvals of new developments based on an agreed upon strategy.
8. The plan allows a redevelopment entity and the City to make capital improvement projections based upon known, future public project needs, demands, and proposed locations.

The Newtown Redevelopment Concept

The Redevelopment Framework Plan for Newtown proposes improvements to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way and the establishment of a mixed-use neighborhood live/work corridor with a pedestrian scale. Three activity nodes are recommended, these include: a major destination at the intersection of U.S. 301 and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way, a smaller civic neighborhood designation centered around the intersection of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way and Orange (**Osprey**) Avenue (“Heart of Newtown”), and an arts related destination going east from U.S. 41 and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way.

The concepts focus on buffering the mixed-use corridor from the single-family areas with compatible multifamily uses. Both infill programs and rehabilitation programs are encouraged to provide quality single-family development to help stabilize the community. In order to create a sense of place, neighborhood gateways are envisioned at all four intersections around the community. The following map highlights the general concepts of the redevelopment plan.

Plan Organization

The redevelopment framework plan has been divided into eight sub-areas. These sub-areas define the existing neighborhood areas and commercial centers in the Newtown community. The plan map has numbers and letters that correspond to the specific redevelopment activities that are proposed for each sub-area. The following is a list of the redevelopment activities proposed throughout the plan:

Land use Management Areas

- Residential Infill and Rehabilitation
- Multifamily Residential Infill and Rehabilitation
- Commercial Infill and Rehabilitation
- Mixed Use Infill
- Mixed Use Office Infill

Public Capital Improvements

- Community Access Streetscapes
- Neighborhood Bikeways and Pedestrian Oriented Streetscape
- Neighborhood Greenways and Trail
- Neighborhood Park
- Community Gateways
- Greenways Park
- Neighborhood Rails to Trails
- Newtown Square

Within the Framework Plan each project is listed with suggested development partners and a description of the objectives to be achieved.

Sub-Area 1 - Southwest Residential Neighborhood

Sub-area 1 is bounded by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way on the north, U.S. 301 on the east, 17th Street on the south and U.S. 41 on the west. Central Avenue and Coconut Avenue are the main collector streets running north and south through this quadrant. This particular sub-area is under the most development pressure of the entire redevelopment study area. There is both an opportunity for positive growth and the potential to create additional problems as the Downtown, the Rosemary District, and U.S. 41 redevelop and housing and office demand are pushed northward. The industrial zone to the south along Central was recently rezoned to office. This will reduce the negative impacts on the surrounding residential areas. While this means more redevelopment potential for existing homes and their accompanying increased property values, there is the danger that existing residents will not be able to afford to stay. The planning goal for this neighborhood is to reinforce the single-family character of this neighborhood by promoting quality housing opportunities and adding quality neighborhood amenities.

1A. Residential infill and Rehabilitation

Partners:

- Sarasota Housing Authority, City of Sarasota, private developers

Objectives:

- Rehabilitate existing housing
- Infill with new single-family housing
- Homeownership programs

1B. Neighborhood Bikeways and Pedestrian Oriented Streetscapes (Central Ave., and 18th, 19th, and 20th. Streets)

Partners:

- Proposed Newtown Redevelopment Association, City of Sarasota, granting agencies

Objectives:

- Provide on-street bikeways where feasible
- Provide lighted, landscaped, pedestrian ways
- Provide connections to commercial areas and neighborhood schools and parks

1C. Neighborhood Greenways and Trails

Partners:

- Proposed Newtown Redevelopment Association, City of Sarasota, National Parks Service, Sarasota County Parks Department, Sarasota County Storm Water Management, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, granting agencies

Objectives:

- Reclaim historic contributing creeks to Whitaker Bayou in coordination with the Whitaker Bayou Basin Master Plan
- Acquire properties as necessary to provide connectivity throughout the community for trails and through-streets
- Landscape with native plant materials
- Re-grade to appropriate ecological landforms
- Construct trails and picnic facilities, as appropriate to neighborhood needs

1D. Neighborhood Park

Partners:

- Proposed Newtown Redevelopment Association, City of Sarasota, Sarasota County Parks, granting agencies

Objectives:

- Acquire property in central location near Central Avenue and 20th Street

- Provide neighborhood-scale park amenities

Sub-Area 2 - Southeast Residential Neighborhood

Sub-area 2 is bounded by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way on the north, U.S. 301 on the east, 17th Street on the south, and Leon Avenue and the railroad on the west. Orange Avenue and Osprey Avenue are the main collector streets running north and south. Industrial uses to the south are encroaching upon this residential neighborhood. The planning goal for this neighborhood is to reinforce the single-family character of this neighborhood by promoting quality housing opportunities and adding quality neighborhood amenities.

2A. Residential Infill and Rehabilitation

Partners:

- Sarasota Housing Authority, City of Sarasota, private developers

Objectives:

- Rehabilitate existing housing
- Infill with new single-family housing
- Homeownership programs

2B. Neighborhood Bikeways and Pedestrian Oriented Streetscapes (Osprey Avenue, 21st. Street, and 20th. Street)

Partners:

- Proposed Newtown Redevelopment Association, City of Sarasota, granting agencies

Objectives:

- Provide on-street bikeways
- Provide lighted, landscaped, pedestrian ways
- Provide connections to commercial areas and neighborhood schools and parks

2C. Neighborhood Greenways and Trails

Partners:

- Proposed Newtown Redevelopment Association, City of Sarasota, National Parks Service, Sarasota County Parks Department, granting agencies

Objectives:

- Reclaim historic contributing creeks to Whitaker Bayou
- Acquire properties as necessary to provide connectivity throughout the community
- Landscape with native plant materials
- Re-grade to appropriate ecological landforms
- Construct trails, picnic facilities, as appropriate to the neighborhood needs

2D. Neighborhood Park

Partners:

- Proposed Newtown Redevelopment Association, City of Sarasota, Sarasota County Parks, granting agencies

Objectives:

- Acquire property in central location near Central Avenue and 20th Street
- Provide neighborhood-scale park amenities

2E. Multi-Family Residential Infill and Rehabilitation

Partners:

- Sarasota Housing Authority, City of Sarasota, private developers

Objectives:

- Create a buffer land use between single-family residential and commercial uses
- Infill with new multi-family housing
- Homeownership programs

2F. Community Access Streetscapes

Partners:

- Proposed Newtown Redevelopment Association, City of Sarasota, granting agencies

Objectives:

- Provide for landscaped medians and ROW areas along Orange Avenue
- Provide on-street bikeways
- Provide lighted, landscaped, pedestrian ways

2G. Community Gateways

Partners:

- Proposed Newtown Redevelopment Association, City of Sarasota, granting agencies

Objectives:

- Provide for landscaped entryways into the community at Orange Avenue and 17th Street

Sub-Area 3 - Northeast Residential Neighborhood

Sub-area 3 is bounded by Leon Avenue on the west, Myrtle Street on the north, Dixie Avenue on the east, and 28th Street on the south. Orange Avenue and Osprey Avenue are the main north/south collector streets running through this sub-area. The planning goal for this neighborhood is to reinforce the single-family character of this neighborhood by

promoting quality housing opportunities and adding quality neighborhood amenities.

3A. Residential Infill and Rehabilitation

Partners:

- Sarasota Housing Authority, City of Sarasota, private developers

Objectives:

- Rehabilitate existing housing
- Infill with new single-family housing
- Homeownership programs

3B. Neighborhood Bikeways and Pedestrian Oriented Streetscapes (Osprey Avenue and 31st Street)

Partners:

- Proposed Newtown Redevelopment Association, City of Sarasota, granting agencies

Objectives:

- Provide on-street bikeways
- Provide lighted, landscaped, pedestrian ways
- Provide connections to commercial areas and neighborhood schools and parks

3D. Neighborhood Park

Partners:

- Proposed Newtown Redevelopment Association, City of Sarasota, Sarasota County Parks, granting agencies

Objectives:

- Acquire property in central location near Osprey Avenue and 31st Street
- Provide neighborhood-scale park amenities

3E. Community Access Streetscapes

Partners:

- Proposed Newtown Redevelopment Association, City of Sarasota, granting agencies

Objectives:

- Provide for landscaped medians and ROW areas along Orange Avenue
- Provide on-street bikeways
- Provide lighted, landscaped, pedestrian ways

3F. Community Gateways

Partners:

- Proposed Newtown Redevelopment Association, City of Sarasota, granting agencies

Objectives:

- Provide for landscaped entryway into Newtown at Orange Avenue and Myrtle Street

3G. Community Access Streetscapes

Partners:

- Proposed Newtown Redevelopment Association, City of Sarasota, granting agencies

Objectives:

- Provide for landscaped medians and ROW areas along Myrtle Street
- Provide on-street bikeways
- Provide lighted, landscaped, pedestrian ways

Sub-Area 4 - Northwest Residential Neighborhood

Sub-area 4 is bounded by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way on the south, Leon Avenue on the east, Myrtle Street on the north, and U.S. 41 on the west. Old Bradenton Road is the main north/south collector street running through this sub-area. The area is predominately residential. The planning goal for this neighborhood is to reinforce the single-family character of this neighborhood by promoting quality housing opportunities and adding quality neighborhood amenities.

4A. Residential Infill and Rehabilitation

Partners:

- Sarasota Housing Authority, City of Sarasota, private developers

Objectives:

- Rehabilitate existing housing
- Infill with new single-family housing
- Homeownership programs

4B. Neighborhood Bikeways and Pedestrian Oriented Streetscapes (Old Bradenton Road and 34th. Street)

Partners:

- Proposed Newtown Redevelopment Association, City of Sarasota, granting agencies

Objectives:

- Provide on-street bikeways
- Provide lighted, landscaped, pedestrian ways

- Provide connections to commercial areas and neighborhood schools and parks

4C. Neighborhood Greenways and Trails

Partners:

- Proposed Newtown Redevelopment Association, City of Sarasota, National Parks Service, Sarasota County Parks Department, granting agencies

Objectives:

- Reclaim historic contributing creeks to Whitaker Bayou
- Acquire properties as necessary to provide connectivity throughout the community
- Landscape with native plant materials
- Re-grade to appropriate ecological landforms
- Construct trails, picnic facilities, as appropriate to the neighborhood needs

4D. Neighborhood Park

Partners:

- Proposed Newtown Redevelopment Association, City of Sarasota, Sarasota County Parks, granting agencies

Objectives:

- Use a portion of the existing park at 34th Street and Old Bradenton Road as a neighborhood park
- Provide neighborhood-scale park amenities

4E. Community Access Streetscapes

Partners:

- Proposed Newtown Redevelopment Association City of Sarasota, granting agencies

Objectives:

- Provide for landscaped medians and ROW areas along Myrtle Street
- Provide on-street bikeways
- Provide lighted, landscaped, pedestrian ways

4F. Greenways Park

Partners:

- Proposed Newtown Redevelopment Association, City of Sarasota, Sarasota County Parks, granting agencies

Objectives:

- Acquire property in central location near the Seaboard Railway and 30th

Street

- Provide neighborhood-scale park amenities

4G. Neighborhood Rails to Trails

Partners:

- Proposed Newtown Redevelopment Association, City of Sarasota, National Parks Service, Sarasota County Parks Department, granting agencies

Objectives:

- Reclaim railroad grade as a trail
- Construct trails, picnic facilities, as appropriate to the neighborhood needs

Sub-Area 5 - U.S. 41 Commercial Corridor

This area forms the western boundary of the neighborhood. The corridor consists primarily of strip commercial uses. In years past, the commercial development had degraded substantially. Recently, the City has done an excellent job to encourage revitalization of the corridor through a series of public improvements and redevelopment and land development incentives.

5A. Community Gateways

Partners:

- Proposed Newtown Redevelopment Association, City of Sarasota, granting agencies

Objectives:

- Provide for landscaped entryway into Newtown at:
 - U.S. 41 and Myrtle Street
 - U.S. 41 and 17th Street
- Provide Newtown logo banners

5B. Community Access Streetscapes

Partners:

- Proposed Newtown Redevelopment Association, City of Sarasota, granting agencies

Objectives:

- Rehabilitate landscaped medians and ROW areas along U.S. 41
- Provide on-street bikeways
- Provide lighted, landscaped, pedestrian ways

5C. Commercial Infill and Rehabilitation

Partners:

- Proposed Newtown Redevelopment Association, City of Sarasota, private

developers

Objectives:

- Rehabilitate existing commercial properties
- Land assembly of small lot parcels
- Infill with new commercial developments
- Enhancement of north corridor redevelopment guidelines
- Provision of redevelopment incentives

Sub-Area 6 - Martin Luther King Mixed-use Corridor

This was the major community retail corridor for Newtown. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way is a two-lane road with on-street parking. It extends from U.S. 301 to U.S. 41. This corridor has not been able to compete with the surrounding commercial corridors. As a result, the businesses have left and numerous buildings are vacant. The major planning objectives for this area are to encourage:

1. The development of the three business clusters along the roadway
2. Mixed-use development consisting of multiple-family residential and non-residential uses throughout the corridor
3. Quality pedestrian-oriented streetscape design along corridor

6A. Multi-Family Residential Infill and Rehabilitation

Partners:

- Sarasota Housing Authority, City of Sarasota, private developers

Objectives:

- Create strong residential presence on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way
- Infill with new multi-family housing
- Homeownership programs

6B. Community Gateways

Partners:

- Proposed Newtown Redevelopment Association, City of Sarasota, granting agencies

Objectives:

- Provide for landscaped entryway into Newtown at Dr. MLK Jr. Way and Whitaker Bayou using the bridge over the water as a design element.
- Provide Newtown logo banners

6C. Community Access Streetscapes

Partners:

- Proposed Newtown Redevelopment Association, City of Sarasota, granting

agencies

Objectives:

- Enhance newly upgraded right-of-way along Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way with urban character as development warrants.
- Utilize the development review process to engage the private sector in participating with the City to create ROW improvements
- Research potential for expanding ROW width
- Provide on-street parking
- Provide lighted, landscaped, pedestrian ways
- Provide urban site furnishings

6D. Greenways Park

Partners:

- Proposed Newtown Redevelopment Association, City of Sarasota, Sarasota County Parks, granting agencies, Ringling School of Art and Design (RSAD).

Objectives:

- Enhance existing park near Indian Beach Road and Whitaker Bayou
- Provide park amenities

6E. Neighborhood Rails to Trails

Partners:

- Proposed Newtown Redevelopment Association, City of Sarasota, National Parks Service, Sarasota County Parks Department, granting agencies

Objectives:

- Reclaim railroad grade as a trail
- Construct trails, picnic facilities, as appropriate to the neighborhood needs

6F. Mixed-use Infill

Partners:

- Proposed Newtown Redevelopment Association, City of Sarasota, private developers, RSAD

Objectives:

- Land assembly of small lot parcels
- Infill with new mixed-use developments
- Overlay district with urban design guidelines
- Provision of redevelopment incentives
- Emphasis on loft type development:
 - Retail on the bottom floors

- Residential/studio above
- Transition to office above over time

6G. Mixed-use Office Infill

Partners:

- Proposed Newtown Redevelopment Association, City of Sarasota, private developers, RSAD

Objectives:

- Land assembly of small lot parcels
- Infill with new mixed-use office oriented development
- Overlay district with urban design guidelines
- Provision of redevelopment incentives

6H. Newtown Square

Partners:

- Proposed Newtown Redevelopment Association, City of Sarasota, Sarasota County Parks, granting agencies

Objectives:

- Create urban park space in the center of town:
 - Market space
 - Central fountain
 - Seating
- Urban park amenities

Sub-Area 7 - U.S. 301 Commercial Corridor

Originally, U.S. 301 was the primary road in the community, prior to construction of the Interstate. As such, U.S. 301 has developed with a full range of motels, auto-related uses, fast food restaurants, etc. This area forms the eastern boundary of Newtown. The major planning objective for this area is to create an interesting gateway into Newtown from 301 at Dr. MLK Jr. Way.

7A. Community Gateways

Partners:

- Proposed Newtown Redevelopment Association, City of Sarasota, granting agencies

Objectives:

- Provide for landscaped entryway into Newtown at:
 - U.S. 301 and Myrtle Street
 - U.S. 301 and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way
 - U.S. 301 and 17th Street
- Provide Newtown logo banners

7H. Community Access Streetscapes

Partners:

- Proposed Newtown Redevelopment Association, City of Sarasota, granting agencies

Objectives:

- Provide landscaped medians and right-of-way areas along U.S. 301
- Provide on-street bikeways
- Provide lighted, landscaped, pedestrian ways

7K. Commercial Infill and Rehabilitation

Partners:

- Proposed Newtown Redevelopment Association, City of Sarasota, private developers

Objectives:

- Rehabilitate existing commercial properties
- Land assembly of small lot parcels
- Infill with new commercial developments
- Create corridor development design guidelines
- Provide redevelopment incentives

Sub-Area 8 - Eastern Enclave

Sub-area 8 forms the eastern edge of the project between U.S. 301 and the railroad tracks. The major planning objective for this area is to assemble properties to encourage quality commercial redevelopment projects.

8A. Neighborhood Rails to Trails

Partners:

- Proposed Newtown Redevelopment Association, City of Sarasota, National Parks Service, Sarasota County Parks Department, granting agencies

Objectives:

- Reclaim railroad grade as a trail
- Construct trails, picnic facilities, as appropriate to the neighborhood needs

8B. Commercial Infill and Rehabilitation

Partners:

- Proposed Newtown Redevelopment Association, City of Sarasota, private developers

Objectives:

- Rehabilitate existing commercial properties
- Land assembly of small lot parcels
- Infill with new commercial developments
- Create corridor development design guidelines
- Provide redevelopment incentives

Land Use Impacts

Housing Revitalization

The North Sarasota **HACS** Revitalization Plan calls for approximately **870** new housing units. The units were to be a mix of rental and for sale units, appealing to different incomes. This included replacement of the 388 public housing units in the Housing Authority properties located within the study area. The primary goal was to use new urbanist principles to connect North Sarasota to the larger community. This Newtown Community Redevelopment Plan concurs and carries the approach a step further with the goal of knitting the community together through the redevelopment of the Housing Authority properties and the eventual redevelopment of sixty-plus acres of vacant and underutilized property.

This Plan attempts to go beyond the limits of these properties and look strategically at the long-term redevelopment of the neighborhood.

Increasing densities along Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Way will help activate the redevelopment of the commercial corridor. This will allow the Housing Authority properties to be redeveloped at a lower density, with single-family and duplex structures, to completely re-integrate them into the surrounding neighborhood. The redevelopment of these properties will require the completion of the street grid, with the accompanying infrastructure: sanitary sewer, solid waste, storm water drainage, potable water, and utilities such as phone, cable, and electric.

The impact of these alterations will be based on what can be reused vs. what are necessary new improvements. This will require additional engineering analysis. The additional density proposed is primarily within the existing street grid and should be adequately accommodated. As existing properties are redeveloped, Housing Authority residents should be given first priority and assistance to move into the new units. Every effort should be made to accommodate their desire to remain in the community.

If the **fifty two acres** of the Housing Authority property are redeveloped as **single- and multi-family** at the moderate density level of eighteen units per acre, then, accounting for approximately five acres to be dedicated as public right-of-way, forty seven acres remain for redevelopment, producing approximately **870 new units, including residences for the elderly.**

The mixed-use portion along Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Way has approximately thirty-five acres of redevelopable land along the corridor. **An economic feasibility study has been completed with recommendations for types and numbers of businesses based on the needs**

of the community residents. Assuming three stories as the limit for height, and half the site open for parking and service, this yields a 1.5 floor area ratio (FAR) or a maximum of 2,250,000 square feet of development. The strategy is to produce only enough new construction to go along with the existing inventory of commercial buildings to meet the expected needs of the community, given the projected growth through increased density for residential development.

Increasing the density along the Martin Luther King Jr. Way corridor within the project area is consistent with the County's 2050 plan to prevent sprawl within the larger region through increased infill opportunities. To create an urban feel and encourage the intangible benefits of an increased sense of community, it is recommended that many of the typical private amenities included within suburban multifamily developments not be required. Amenity needs may be accommodated through alternative public and private provisions. For example, instead of providing a private recreation facility within an apartment complex, residents could use either private businesses that can become entrepreneurial opportunities, such as athletic clubs, or public facilities such as parks, community centers, or nonprofit organizations like the YMCA and Boys & Girls Clubs.

The City's Parks and Connectivity Master Plan references mini-parks as the smallest classification for park in the City. These are commonly referred to as neighborhood pocket parks. The Parks, Open-Space, and Pathways Classification Table (Table 9) in the City's Plan indicates that they are used to address limited, isolated, or unique recreational needs. They serve residents within a one-quarter mile radius (walking distance) and are between 2,500 square feet and one acre in size. These have been designated for each of the four sub-areas of single-family. Pocket parks are key elements of this Plan and should be accommodated outside of the typical public funding for parks. Numerous options exist for their provision, from ownership and operation by neighborhood associations to funding by private developers of nearby new developments through the City's review process as a condition of approval. In the northwest and southwest sub-areas, existing neighborhood park spaces, such as 35th Street and Mary Dean Parks, can be modified to accommodate pocket park functions. Two new parks will be needed in the northeast and southeast sub-areas. A new park is proposed in the northwest sub-area as a connector between the Whitaker Bayou Greenway and the Rails to Trails corridor. This is not based on a level of service demand, but to take advantage of the unique open-space and recreational corridor opportunities afforded by its location between a waterway and a trail corridor.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Way

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Way is listed in the draft of the Parks and Connectivity Master Plan as a parkway: "Parkways include pedestrian ways, bikeways, and 'green' roads that provide safe, pleasant pedestrian experiences and, where feasible, also include designated bicycle lanes. Downtown streets (including parkways) are described in the Downtown Master Plan and in the City's Engineering Design Criteria Manual (EDCM)."

As roadway improvements occur, the goal should be to meet the requirements of a secondary parkway (60' right-of-way). This level of parkway is a local, free-moving thoroughfare suitable for higher-density residential and commercial buildings. The street is urban in character with raised curbs, wide sidewalks, tree-lined planting strips, two parallel

parking lanes and a single designated bike lane. The character of the street should correspond with adjacent commercial or residential uses.

Within the City's Traffic Count/Analysis Program, four segments of Dr. MLK Jr. Way were counted. They are listed in the Transportation section of the Inventory, located in Volume III - Background Data. The sections at either end of the corridor, east of U.S. 301 and west of Bradenton Road, have reserve capacity. The sections in the center that receive traffic from Central Avenue and Orange Avenue have negative reserve capacity and perform at levels of service under the minimum standard adopted by the Comprehensive Plan. These areas should receive further LOS analysis. Improvements to these areas should be coordinated with private development proposals.

Parking

At total build-out of the mixed-use concept, there is the potential for 2,250,000 square feet of development. If one third of this is commercial (the ground floor) with a parking requirement of one space per 300 square feet, 2,500 spaces are needed. The remaining two thirds is 1,500,000 square feet. If an average of 1,500 square feet is used for the living units, the result is 1,000 units, each requiring a parking space. The result is a total of 3,500 parking spaces needed along the Dr. MLK Jr. Way corridor.

Based upon the area of land dedicated for mixed-use along Dr. MLK Jr. Way, if one half of a typical site is utilized for the building, that leaves approximately 750,000 square feet of private land available for parking and service. Using 375 square feet per space for circulation, 2,000 parking spaces are created, leaving a deficit of 1,500 spaces.

To further encourage the urban character desired for the corridor, on-street public parking could meet some of this demand. There is potential for approximately 500 on-street spaces. As redevelopment occurs and access is encouraged from behind structures, curb cuts will be reduced along blocks, potentially allowing more on-street spaces.

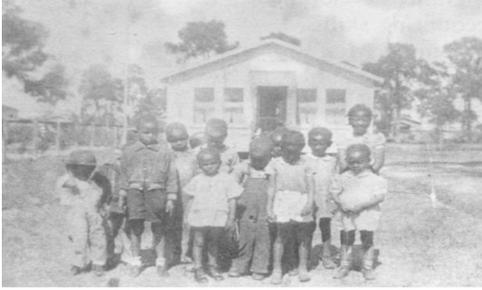
The remaining 1,000 spaces can be accommodated through a combination of public lots or, as build-out approaches, small multistory garages. Lots used for this purpose will also lower the estimated total number of spaces required by reducing the development square footage. If all aspects of this plan are implemented, waivers of some parking requirements may be appropriate due to the increased use of transit, walkable nature of the area, and easy access by bikes, rollerblades, and scooters.

Presently, there is no shortage of parking. Until some of the proposed development begins to occur, there is no need to address parking issues. A parking plan is called for in the future action strategies.

Summary

In summary, there will be minimal increase in the overall number of single-family units. Most of this will come from infill of existing vacant parcels and redevelopment of existing deteriorated structures. An increase in multi-family units of approximately 1,300 more than was proposed in the HOPE VI application is proposed. Parking deficits that are created can

Newtown Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan - 2020



Booker Grammar School - Class of 1945



Payne's Garage, 1962



Roland Rogers



Fredd Atkins

Newtown Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan - 2020



Carolyn Mason



The Bulletin Newspaper Coverage of Public Meeting



Public Meeting, Newtown Community Center

Newtown Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan - 2020



Sarasota City Hall



Boarded Up Residential Property



Appropriate Residential



Housing Authority Properties

Newtown Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan - 2020



Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way/U.S. 301



Habitat for Humanity Project



Renovated House



Janie Poe Housing Development

Newtown Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan - 2020



Aerial View of North Sarasota



Example of Innovative Design



New SCAT Bus



Goodwill

Newtown Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan - 2020



Cocoanut Avenue Resurfacing Project



Cohen Park



New Bethel Church

Newtown Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan - 2020



Example of Community Commercial

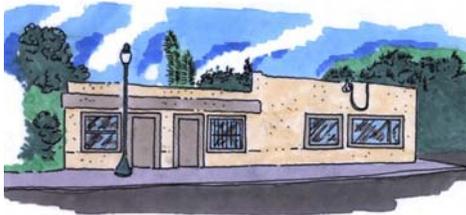
Newtown Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan - 2020



Hilview Street is an example of a successful neighborhood commercial district in Sarasota.



Dr. MLK Jr. Way Existing Commercial Property



Before Sketch

Newtown Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan - 2020



After Sketch



Mixed-Use, Residential Over Retail



Athens, GA - Example of Ideal Streetscape

Newtown Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan - 2020

STREET ELEVATION



STREET ELEVATION



Street Musician

3



Booker High School Auditorium

Festival

Newtown Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan - 2020



Sarasota Farmers Market, Lemon Ave/Main St.

3



Sarasota Farmers Market, Lemon Ave/Main St.

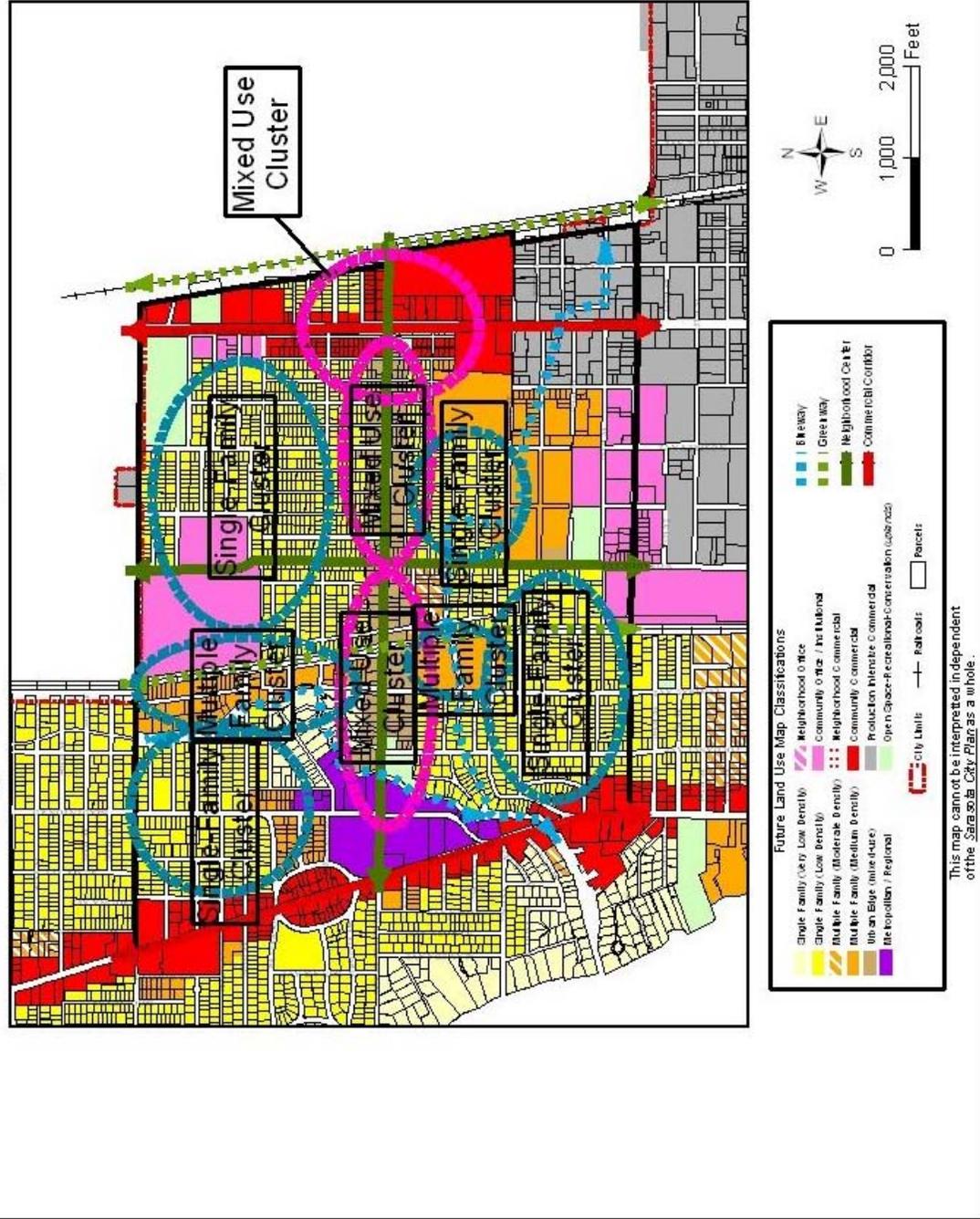


Corner of Dr. MLK Jr Way/Orange Ave.

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3

Figure 2 - Housing Cluster Plan





Mixed Use



Apartments



Townhomes

Newtown Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan - 2020



Towles Court Live-Work



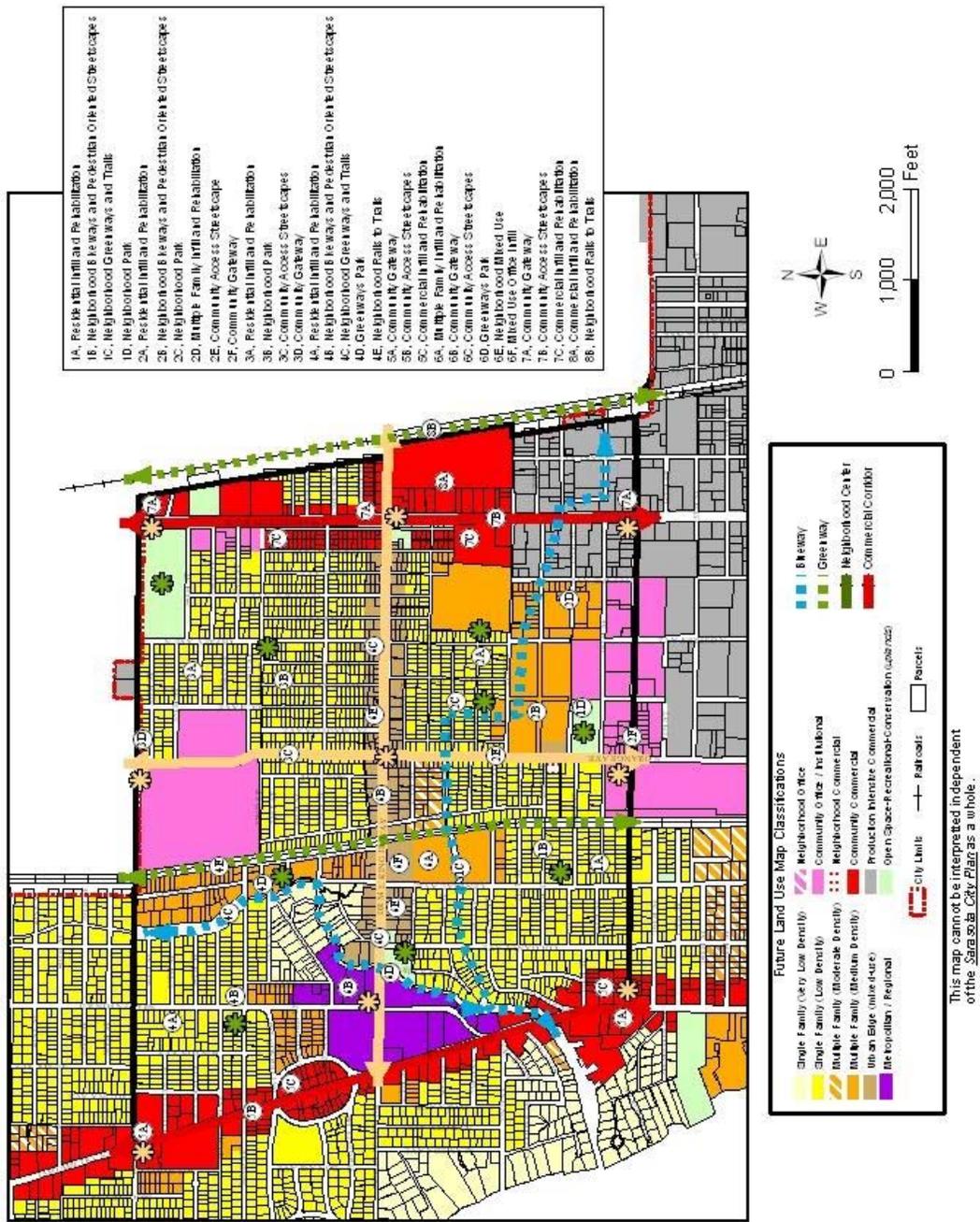
Single-Family Residential

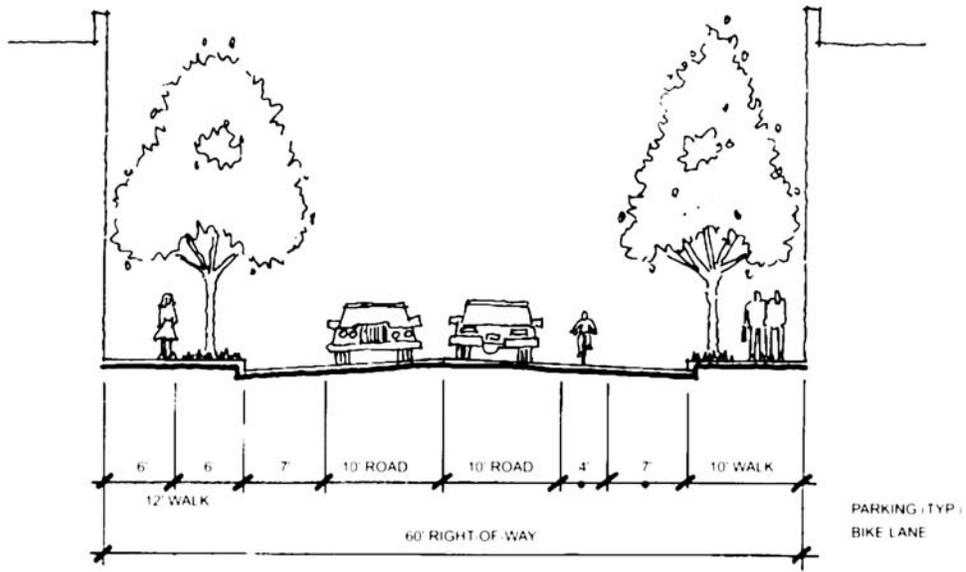


Duplexes

Newtown Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan - 2020

Figure 4 - Projects Concept Plan





Typical "Parkway" Cross-Section from the City of Sarasota Parks and Connectivity Master Plan

Newtown Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan - 2020