

A. Introduction

The Charrette Plan responds to the goals and objectives identified by the community. The specific improvements are organized into five main groups and are discussed below in order of their priority.

1. Infrastructure;
2. Development Opportunities and Proposals;
3. Community Amenities;
4. Code Enforcement; and
5. Design Standards.

While the design team responded to the community’s priorities, as described in Section III, Public Planning Process, the team also explored additional possibilities for the community to consider. These include significant redevelopment sites, potential street improvements to enhance circulation and civic amenities, re-programming existing commercial development, and the creation of a set of land development regulations that suggest certain defined building types.

The overall Charrette Plan is presented diagrammatically in Figure 4.1 and in illustrative form in Figure 4.2. The major emphases of the plan are:

1. A defined set of geographic areas of the community to reflect the varying character of the CRA Redevelopment Area. These include, for example: the regional commercial area on Okeechobee Boulevard and Military Trail, the airport commercial on Belvedere Road, the neighborhood commercial areas, including mixed-use residential, on Westgate Avenue, the office and mixed-use area on Congress Avenue, the commercial/industrial area in the northeast part of the District, the residential areas of Golfview Heights and Westgate within the heart of the community, and the potential commercial/industrial areas in the County owned lands along

Belvedere Road and the area west of the two residential neighborhoods.

2. Significant improvements to stormwater retention capacity to include larger areas for water storage, rendered in a manner that makes the water an attractive community amenity.
3. The existing residential neighborhoods would remain single family with an emphasis on home ownership.
4. The Westgate commercial overlay district would be revised to accommodate a variety of uses and building types, including townhomes.
5. The commercial/industrial zone in the northeast part of the District would be encouraged to intensify and provide more modern facilities.
6. Congress Avenue would be the commercial office area for the District but would contain opportunities for taller buildings including residential uses along the lakes.
7. The recognition of the important role of Westgate Community Center as the community’s “village park.” The park would be expanded and would increase its facilities.
8. The possibility of Westgate Avenue becoming a two-lane thoroughfare with on-street parking and a well-landscaped median was explored.
9. Westgate Avenue would be extended to connect with the commercial/industrial park on Old Okeechobee Road.
10. The Kennel Club would become, if possible, the property of the County for the purpose of constructing a centralized

automobile rental facility that would be connected by a skyway bridge to the airport terminal.

11. Once the automobile rental agencies concentrate at the Kennel Club site, the opportunity will arise to develop the current rental agency sites into airport related commercial uses, such as office and distribution centers.
12. A major greenway linear park would be established along the right of way of the L-2 Canal and would provide an amenity that would improve the quality of life for the residents of Westgate and Golfview Heights.
13. A master storm water drainage system is contemplated for the entire District and would direct all drainage requirements for future development. The drainage district would levy a tax on the properties of the district and would repair the inadequacies of the storm water system currently in place. The drainage district would raise its funds from tax and permit fees.
14. Completion of a wastewater collection system in the Golfview Heights community will improve the homeowners' quality of life.
15. Various parcels, both vacant land and underutilized properties, have been identified for redevelopment.

The major categories of improvements represented in the Concept Plan are discussed below.

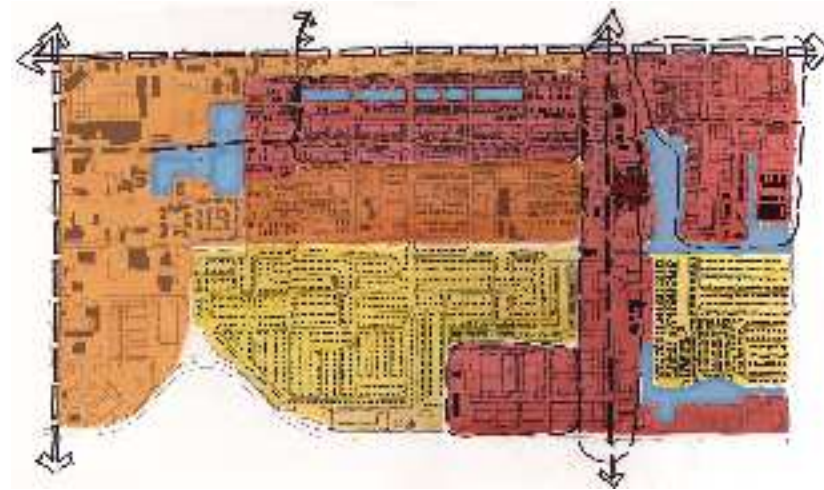


Figure 4.1 –Overall Concept Plan

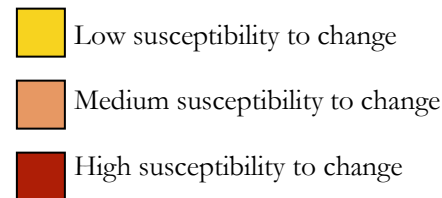




Figure 4.2– Illustrative Site Plan

B. Infrastructure

The first category is the infrastructure improvements necessary to stimulate redevelopment and set a foundation for quality development.

1. Stormwater Drainage. The lack of an adequate stormwater management capability is probably the biggest single constraint to redevelopment in the area. Being a naturally low-lying and flood-prone part of the county, the CRA must put in place a workable and comprehensive plan to address this issue. The current method of requiring each individual development to provide small reservoirs on a piecemeal basis is expensive for the developer and results in an undesirable fragmentation of the land use pattern.

The area currently does not have sufficient storage for the existing development nor for roadway drainage for those local streets that are being currently reconstructed and paved. As discussed in Section II of this Plan, at the present time new development must provide retention areas to handle the runoff from the increase in impervious surfaces as well as compensation storage for the raising of the finished floors of new buildings. This compensatory drainage requirement makes infill intolerably expensive because of the additional land that must be added to a site for retention.

Storage Capacity. The fundamental problem with drainage in the CRA is inadequate storage capacity. Significant rainfall events simply cannot be channeled off-site quickly enough to avoid flooding, and sufficient area must be set aside for the stormwater to collect. The magnitude of this problem is graphically demonstrated in Figure 4.3. The blue square superimposed over an aerial photo of the CRA represents an area of about 200 acres, or 15% of the total 1330 acres contained within CRA. In an ideal situation, this is something close to the area of water retention needed to properly address the current flooding problem.



Figure 4.3 – Storage Area Diagram

The implication of this diagram is that significant amounts of land need to be set aside for water storage. The Illustrative Site Plan, Figure 4.2, indicates the proposed locations of the water. Existing canals and lakes have been widened, new ones have been proposed, all consolidated and linked into an area-wide system. Even this proposal, which involves some significant land use changes such as the relocation of one of the trailer parks and the consolidation of drainage areas in the Westgate area, only allocates about 10% of the total area as storage. While this is somewhat short of the ideal quantity, it should significantly improve the stormwater management in the area. Only the most severe rainfall events would cause any flooding, hopefully limited to temporary nuisances such as shallow street flooding rather than any damaging, area-wide inundations.

The qualitative aspects of this proposal, such as how these bodies of water can be incorporated into an attractive open space network, are discussed elsewhere, in conjunction with the specific redevelopment proposals for various areas. The basic point is that larger bodies of water can serve as focal points for development and as valuable community amenities. Contrasted to the current strategy of setting aside small areas for each new increment of development, a

comprehensive strategy has the ability to effect positive transformation for this area.

Another advantage to the consolidation of storage areas is the efficiency of storage for the amount of land used. This is illustrated in Figure 4.4, which depicts two alternatives to providing storage ponds within a typical neighborhood framework. On the upper part of the drawing, three separate lots are used to accommodate ponds, whereas, on the lower part of the drawing, the three lots are contiguous, and the storage can be combined into one larger pond. The same amount of land is set aside for storage in either case, but, because of the elimination of additional banks and sideslope areas in the lower alternative, almost 50% more water can be stored in the larger pond than in the three smaller ponds.

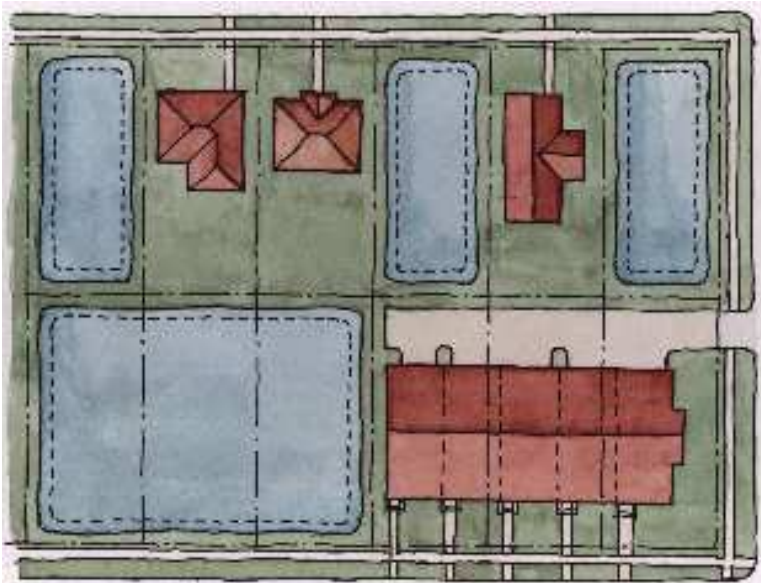


Figure 4.4 – Storage Pond Alternatives

Assembling the land required for effective stormwater management will require a number of techniques, discussed in greater detail in the implementation section of this report. The above example suggests, however, that a mechanism for land swapping could be incorporated into the range of strategies. Particularly for an area like Westgate, where the lots are largely un- or under-developed, the ability to trade for a similar sized property with better community amenities should provide an effective mechanism for consolidating the land needed for drainage.

Master Storm Water Drainage District. The most effective way to realize the drainage improvements is to create a Master Storm Water Drainage District. The County would create the district and its purpose is to provide the funds to develop a master system to collect all current and future storm water into a system of ponds, lakes and canals and discharge the water into the larger canals in the C-51 Basin. Since drainage is the most significant encumbrance to infill development, providing a master system in which new construction is not required to provide on-site retention would be an incentive for new development. In lieu of providing on-site retention, a homeowner or developer would pay a fee. The fee would assist in amortizing any debt the drainage district incurred in developing a master system.

The drainage district would not only provide the funds through the sale of tax exempt revenue bonds for land acquisition and development of retention areas and canals to carry excess water away, but it would also be responsible for the maintenance of the system. Because the district must raise its funds initially from revenue bonds, the property owners in the district will be taxed on the value of their property or assessed a fee based upon the value of their property to raise the annual funds required to amortize the debt. Finally, for the maintenance of the district, the annual assessment will also cover all costs of the maintenance of the facilities.

Swales. The residential communities of Westgate and Golfview Heights are designed to accommodate storm water runoff in front yard swales. There are a few occasions in Golfview Heights where backyard canals once existed. Over time the swales and canals have filled in, sometimes with the assistance of the homeowner, and the result is that drainage is not as efficient as once contemplated. A simple and cost efficient method of providing better drainage is to clean out the swales by reshaping the profile so that the swale provides both on-site retention and a pathway to an outfall. The CRA contemplates this program as it studies the master storm water drainage plan.

2. Roadway Improvements. The existing road network in the CRA Redevelopment Area is in need of several changes that would greatly enhance the circulation and cohesion of the community.

Westgate Avenue Improvements. Westgate Avenue is the major east-west road for the Westgate area of the CRA. The road was expanded in the 1990's from two lanes to four lanes. It also includes a center, "suicide" turning lane. There is no on-street parking. Westgate Avenue is a 80' right of way and in the Charette Plan, has been redesigned to include a center landscaped median. (Figure 4.5) Turn lanes are included at each intersection to enable left turns and "U" turns. The most important element of the new profile is that each side of the roadway will contain much needed parallel, on-street parking. As infill development occurs under a new set of design guidelines in which curb cuts are discouraged, there will be more on-street parking over time.

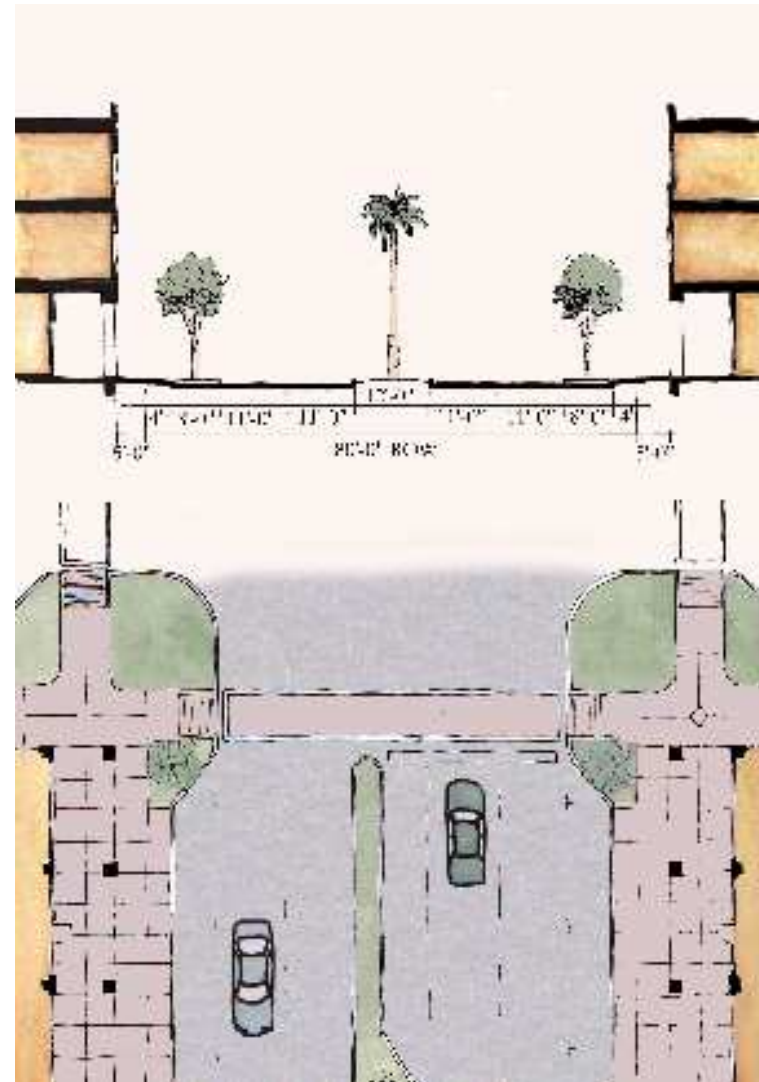


Figure 4.5 – Four Lane Proposed Plan and Profile of Westgate Avenue

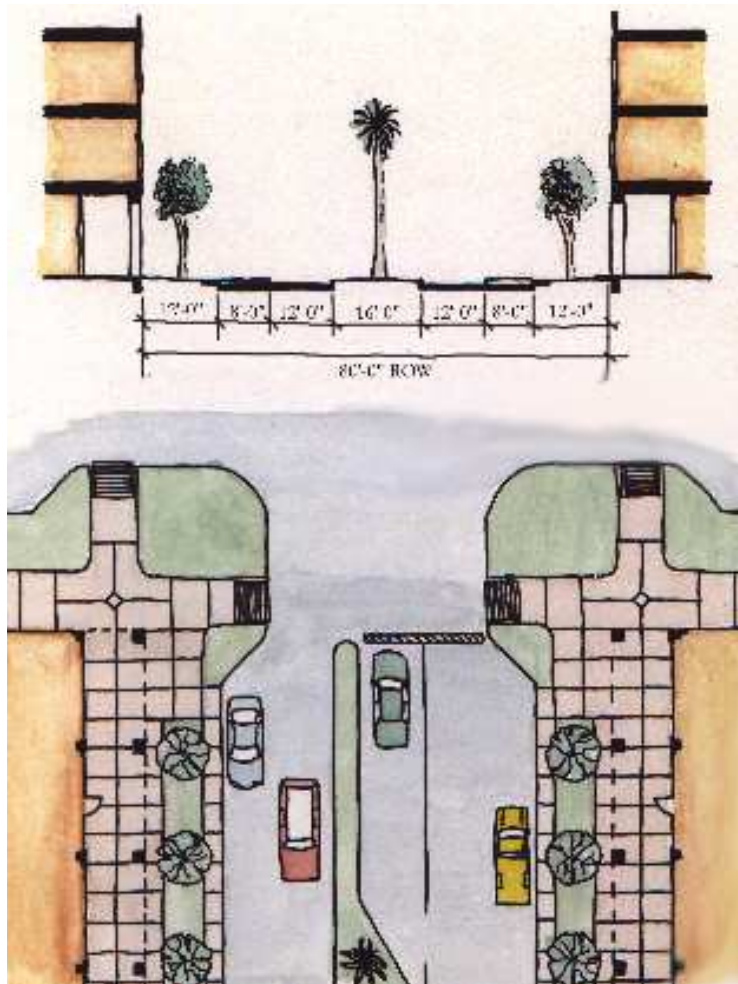


Figure 4.5 – Two Lane Proposed Plan and Profile of Westgate Avenue

The number of Westgate Avenue’s traveling lanes was deliberately reduced in order to provide on-street parking. The roadway does not need to be a four-lane thoroughfare since the traffic volumes do not warrant such a design. Currently the traffic volumes range from 8,000 to 11,000 vehicles per day, and two lanes can adequately handle this volume.

The vision of Westgate Avenue is that it will become the downtown commercial “village” for the community and its visitors, particularly the commuters who currently use Okeechobee Boulevard as their roadway choice. The Westgate Village is envisioned to be mixed-use, with buildings set back 5’ from the property line on a “build-to” line. The vision calls for ground floor retail, parking on the street for short term consumers, and parking in the rear for long term users. Upper floors would contain either offices or residential apartments or condominiums.

Westgate Avenue Extension. The Charrette Master Plan proposes an extension of Westgate Avenue east from Congress Avenue. The roadway would cross a commercial tract fronting on Congress Avenue and extend over a bridge that crosses the large retention lake adjacent to the Lakeside Mobile Home Park. The roadway would connect to Old Okeechobee Road, which serves the commercial/industrial park in the northeast sector of the CRA District. The purpose of the extension is to provide better access to jobs in the commercial/industrial park for residents of the CRA neighborhoods. In some cases, lower income residents would be able to walk or bike to work from their homes. In addition, it would create a local road that residents could use to drive to downtown West Palm Beach.

Westgate Avenue/Congress Avenue Roundabout.

As a part of the extension of Westgate Avenue to the east, several stakeholders in the Charrette expressed a strong desire for the construction of a roundabout at the intersection of Westgate Avenue and Congress Avenue. The roundabout would integrate the two lane traffic on Westgate with the four lane traffic on Congress. Congress Avenue at the intersection is an 80 foot right of way, as is Westgate Avenue.

Congress Avenue Improvements. The CRA is currently investing in landscaping in the median of Congress Avenue on the section from Belvedere Road to Cherry Road. The CRA contemplates expanding the beautification of Congress Avenue north to Okeechobee Boulevard. The improvements would consist of median landscaping and landscaping at the edge of the right of way. Congress would remain a four-lane section, although the addition of parallel parking on both sides and a proposed roundabout at Westgate Avenue would have a significant traffic calming effect. While Congress would be a busy commercial street, it would still have a fairly slow design speed fitting for its role as a neighborhood connector.

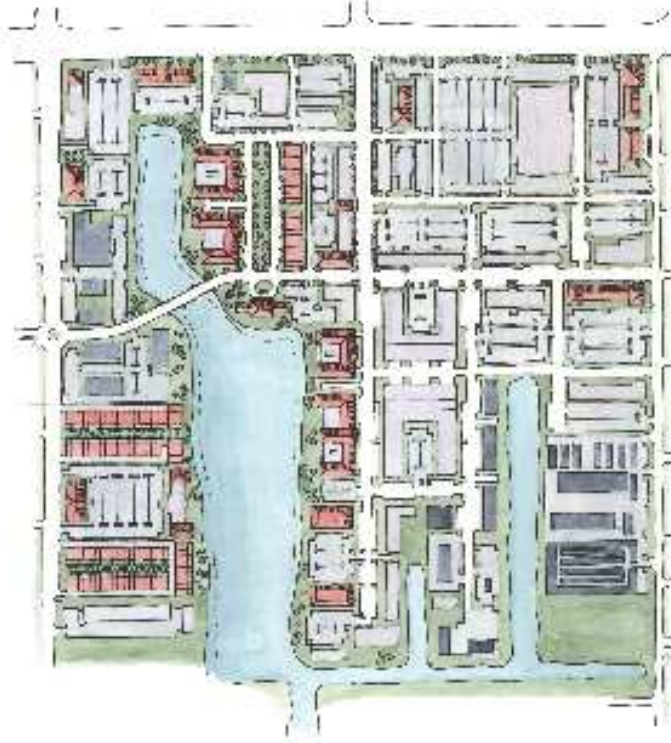


Figure 4.6 - Plan of the Westgate Avenue Extension

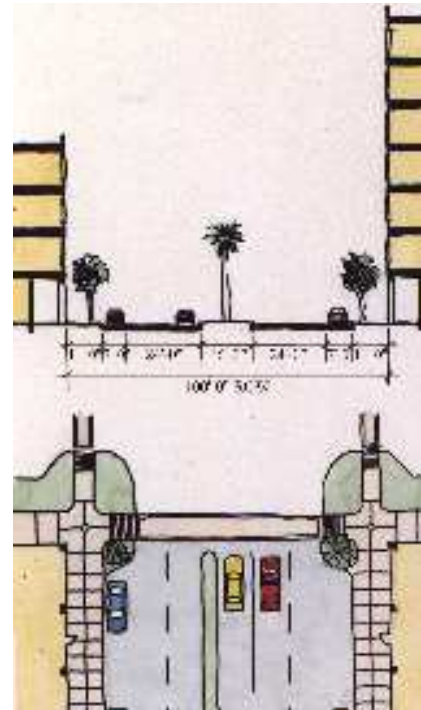


Fig. 4.7 - Plan and Profile of Congress Avenue

Congress Avenue has the potential to become a major attractor of commercial development to the CRA. It is well insulated from adjacent residential areas, so that it could accommodate significant commercial activity without impacting the existing residential. Since it connects Okeechobee Boulevard with one of the entrances to the airport, it should be an attractive location for a number of businesses, ranging from airport support functions, to traveler oriented hotels, to a variety of office tenants.

Seminole Road Extension. The Charrette explored the concept of extending Seminole Road to Belvedere Road. The community lacks southern access and this connection would improve access for the residents of both Golfview Heights and Westgate. Yet this concept was not supported by everyone, and thus must be discussed further if it to be seriously considered. If an extension is accepted, the entry at Belvedere Road could include a divided roadway and a lighted community gateway entrance. Adjacent to the gateway could be the development site for a new Golfview Heights Community Center, if the community elects to construct one. As a follow up to the Charrette, the CRA will meet with the residents of Golfview Heights and determine if they wish to proceed with the extension and with a community center.

Seminole Road in the northern part of the District, north of the L-2 Canal is a 80' right of way, a very generous width for a local street. However, its width would provide in the future an excellent opportunity to construct on-street parking for both the residents and the commercial establishments located near Seminole's intersection with Westgate Avenue.



Fig. 4.8 Plan of Seminole Road Extension

Cherry Road. Cherry Road is a principal east-west street serving Golfview Heights, but it also acts as a secondary arterial, serving commuters who cut through the community from Congress Avenue to Military Trail. Cherry Road improvements should include landscaping, lighting and sidewalk improvements to create a more pedestrian friendly atmosphere. In addition, traffic calming should be introduced, such as a roundabout at the intersection with Seminole Road, in order to discourage cut-through traffic.

Neighborhood Streets. Neighborhood streets are in need of certain improvements including swale improvements, parking, sidewalks, lighting, and landscaping. The local streets in Westgate are typically 60' right of ways and those in Golfview Heights are 50'. In the Westgate area north of the L-2 Canal, the streets can accommodate on-street parking.

In Golfview Heights, where the right of way is limited to 50', the drainage system is designed to accommodate storm water within the front yard swales. In some areas of Golfview Heights there is the opportunity to improve backyard drainage where small canals were once established.

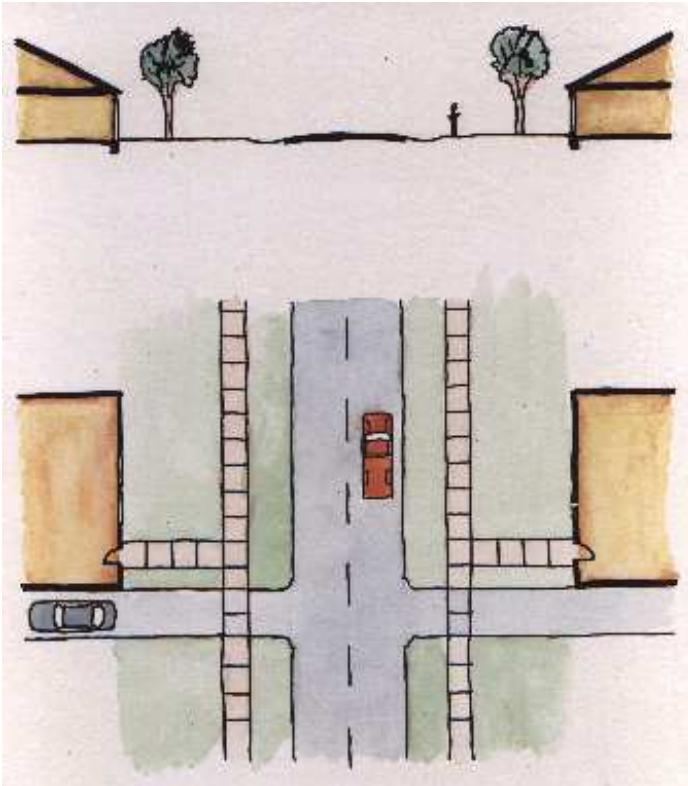


Figure 4.9 Plan and Section of a Typical Local Street

3. Streetscape Improvements. Apart from the roadways themselves, several other improvements should be made within the street right-of-ways that will improve community appearance, safety, and walkability.

Sidewalks. Sidewalks are an important component of fostering a more pedestrian-friendly environment. Currently, there are areas with only limited sidewalks in the community. Some of this is due to the open swale drainage system, which uses up the available right-of-way width on the typical 40 and 50-foot streets. By making the street and drainage improvements discussed previously, it becomes possible to introduce sidewalks on all streets, at least on one side. This should be a general objective throughout the neighborhood. Sidewalks should be a minimum of six feet wide, and would connect to clearly delineated crossings at all street intersections.

Lighting. Adequate and attractive street lighting is important to project a sense of security. Priority should be given to providing lighting along the principal pedestrian streets, although all streets should have a minimal level of urban lighting. One way of accomplishing this with limited resources would be with a yard lighting program, whereby the cost of the light would be shared between the homeowners and the CRA.

Landscaping. Much of the existing charm of CRA Redevelopment Area is due to the lush landscaping in the area, whenever it exists. The proposed improvements for the public rights-of-way will incorporate landscaping that is compatible with the native vegetation, while balancing ease of maintenance with safe sightlines.

Underground Utilities. Currently, most of the CRA Redevelopment Area is served by overhead power, which runs along the street rights-of-way and sometimes within easements. Relocating these lines underground will be an expensive proposition and is less of a priority than other improvements. However, in certain areas that may experience significant redevelopment, this could be done as part of a more involved infrastructure improvement project.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Pathways. A fundamental objective of this Plan is to improve pedestrian connectivity, and to de-emphasize vehicular mobility in favor of alternative modes of transport. The proposals for the street network and for the type of new development all help to reinforce this objective. Specific elements of the pedestrian system were discussed above, including sidewalks, lighting, and others. The Plan for CRA Redevelopment Area also calls for substantial mixed-use redevelopment, particularly on Westgate Avenue and Congress Avenue. This will introduce more destinations convenient for both pedestrian and bicycle access. The proposed street modifications will also serve to calm traffic flows in the neighborhood, and enhance the safety of both pedestrians and cyclists. It should be noted that the pedestrian/cyclist network is not strictly utilitarian, but will also link the many green spaces in the community including unpaved right-of-ways and the L-2 Canal Greenway. The Master Plan suggests that bicycle pathways be established along Cherry Road and Seminole Road, connecting in the future to the Greenway along the L-2 Canal. This would be the beginning of a bicycle and running trail infrastructure for the community.

Figure 4.10 indicates how such a pathway could be integrated into the green space system. This shows the condition between Oswego Street and the L-2 Canal, which would be widened to improve storage capacity, but would still leave a wide greenway. This greenway could be attractively landscaped to serve as a linear park, as well as an attractive amenity for lots located on the north side of Oswego.

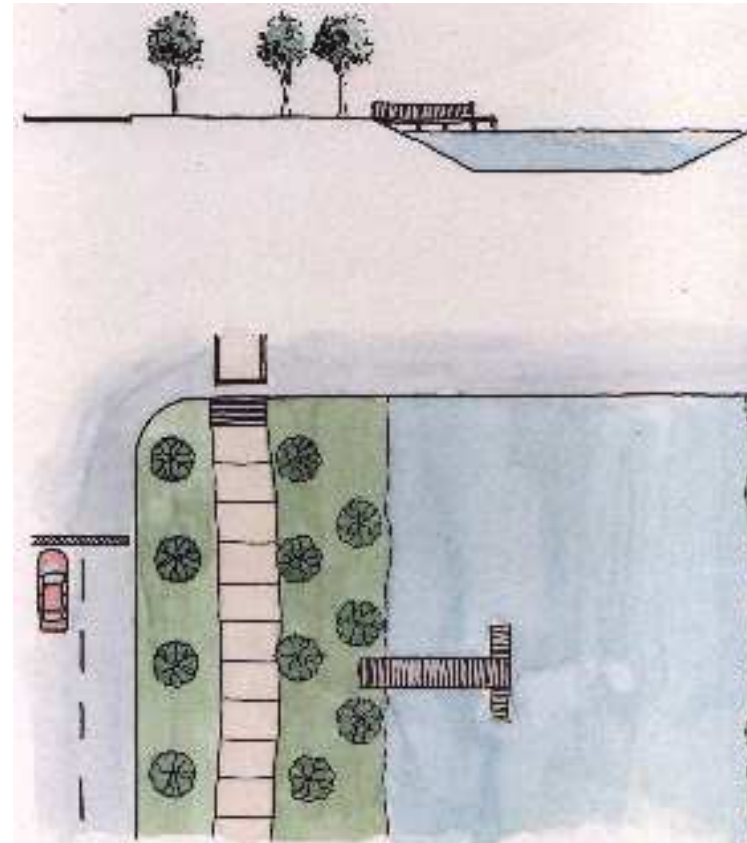


Figure 4.10 – A greenway alongside a canal

Gateway Markers. The CRA has already initiated the placement of gateway markers in the neighborhoods to identify the areas. Likewise during the charrette, several stakeholders suggested that additional markers be placed along Cherry Road, Seminole Road, Westgate Avenue and Congress. Specific suggestions include the entry points of the CRA, such as the north and south ends of Congress Avenue, and the intersections of the following: Westgate Avenue and Military Trail, Old Okeechobee Road and Florida Mango Road, and Florida Mango Road and Belvedere Road. Through placement at important intersections, the markers will designate the significance of entering this historic community.

4. Other Infrastructure.

Wastewater Collection System for Golfview Heights. The community of Golfview Heights is only partially served by an underground sanitary sewer collection system. As described in Section II of the Plan, approximately 50% of the subdivision is lacking a central sewer system. It is the intention of the CRA to provide a central system within two years.

C. Community Amenities

The most important amenity proposed for the CRA Redevelopment Area is that intangible combination of elements that, taken together, reinforces a “sense of community.” Many of these elements are already in place, or exist as untapped potential. Foremost among these is a clear neighborhood structure in the shape of a defined commercial center and a neighborhood activity center. The Plan suggests that Westgate Avenue is the logical location for the neighborhood commercial center, while the area around the existing Westgate Community should be the natural focus for community amenities. However the community is in need of stronger community amenities in order to assist in the elimination of slum and blight.

Westgate Avenue Neighborhood . The Plan proposes a redeveloped commercial area along Westgate Avenue, with a plaza located at the intersection of Seminole Road and Westgate Avenue. A plan of this area is shown in Figure 4.11. This plan suggests several elements that could be incorporated to guide the nature of future development and transform the area into a desirable mixed-use neighborhood. Essentially, this plan suggests that land uses should be allocated according to a disciplined strategy that sets a very deliberate pattern as one moves along a typical street perpendicular to Westgate Avenue.

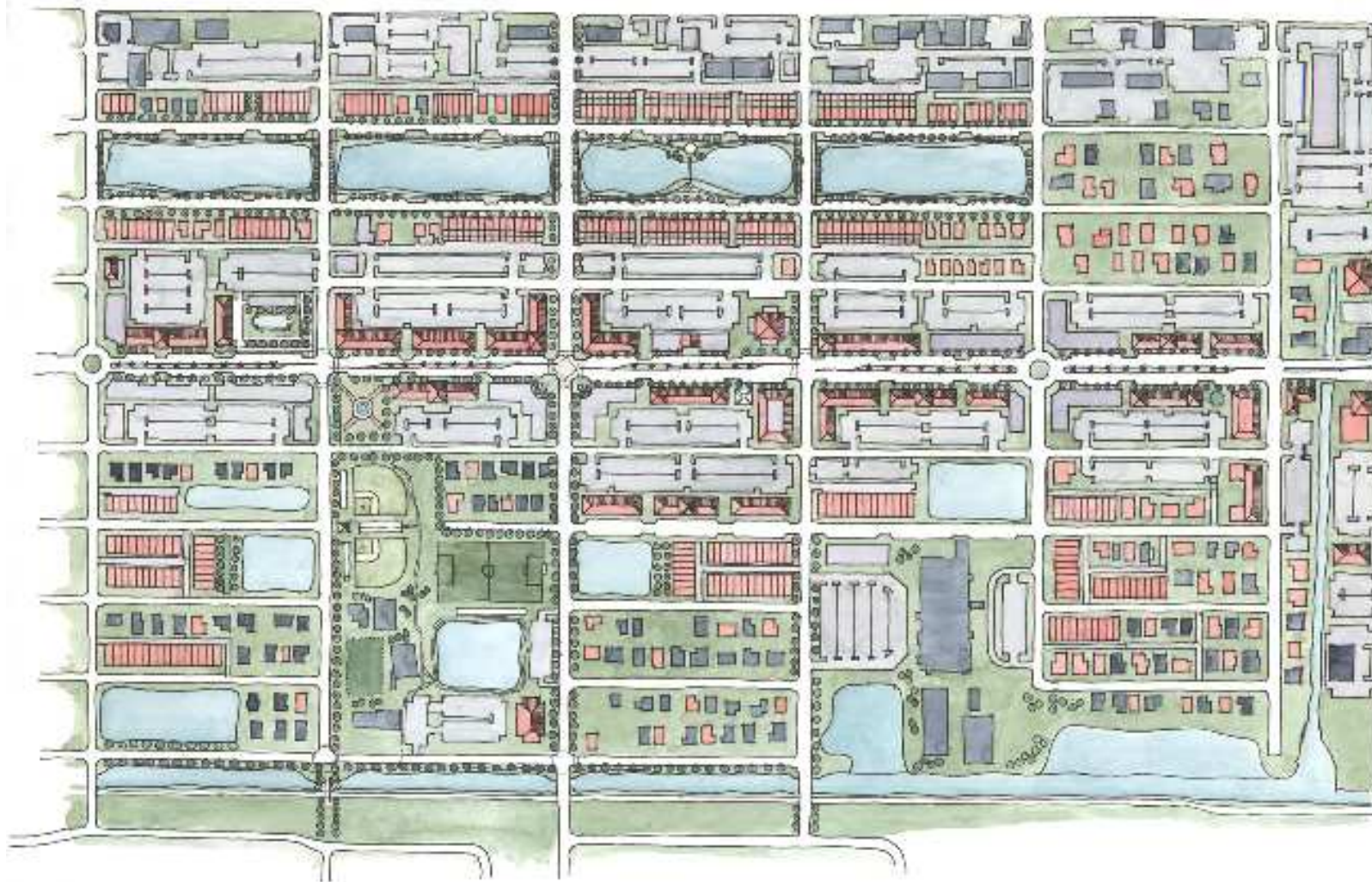


Figure 4.11 – Plan of the Westgate area.

Westgate itself is fronted by mixed-use buildings close to the sidewalk. The remainder of the block, behind the buildings, serves as parking, which may extend across the next street, depending on the heights of the buildings and the amount of parking required. This parking abuts the back side of rear-loaded townhomes that front onto the next street, Genessee. The entire next block is devoted to a drainage pond, attractively landscaped to serve as a neighborhood park. The pattern repeats with townhomes fronting the north side of the park/pond, behind which is the parking for the commercial properties fronting on Okeechobee Boulevard.

While this regularized pattern does require some significant re-allocation of land uses, it yields a much more valuable neighborhood, despite the fact that an entire block had to be given over to drainage. For those current landowners whose properties are in the proposed pond, they should have the opportunity to trade it for another property with redevelopment potential. Ultimately, the potential value of any property in this area will be contingent on the ability of the CRA to accomplish land re-allocation on this scale.

The effect of this new development pattern is illustrated by Figure 4.12, which shows the central block of the park and pond, fronted on either side by two to three story townhomes. The area would have at least as much residential density as it could have had under current conditions, plus, the drainage has been accommodated in a manner that creates a valuable and attractive community amenity.



Figure 4.12 – Townhomes along the drainage park.

The buildings on Westgate Avenue front the street and feature active, pedestrian-oriented, uses at the street level. The upper floors could be used as small office suites or residential apartments. The view down Westgate Avenue is shown in Figure 4.12, with the plaza visible in the distance on the right.



Figure 4.13 – View down Westgate Avenue

The plaza itself is intended to be a neighborhood amenity and gathering space. Proposed improvements include landscaping, a fountain, benches and café seating, as well several small concession pavilions and a band/performance platform. With convenient, on-street parking and a fairly dense mix of surrounding buildings, this plaza is well-located to be an active and vibrant commercial center. The plaza would be linked to the Westgate Community Center by bicycle paths and landscaping.

Westgate Community Center. This existing park features several playfields and courts, a playground, gymnasium, and a community center facility. The Master Plan proposes to enhance and improve the Center, particularly the outdoor areas. The proposal calls for the expansion of the retention lake and creation of a lakeside amenity for the residents to use for picnics, exercise, and other social activities. The lake could be an attraction rather than what it is today: a fenced off, poorly maintained detraction.

Schools. There are currently three public schools within the CRA Redevelopment Area community serving the population of children living there. Westgate Elementary School is the traditional elementary school, while Gold Coast Community School and Survivors Charter School are alternative schools for children with learning or discipline issues. The Plan suggests linking the schools to the Greenway so that children can walk or bike to school from their homes. Westgate Elementary is situated on the L-2 Canal and would be part of the Greenway.

The Greenway. The Greenway, a linear park proposed alongside the L-2 Canal extending from Florida Mango Street to the western boundary of the CRA District, was one of the most visionary ideas of the Master Plan Charrette. Residents applauded the idea of having a significant linear park or greenway running through their community. It would provide much needed open space for the community and would also be functional. The Greenway would measure approximately 40' to 50' in width and would parallel the L-2 Canal, the east-west drainage ditch currently carrying a major portion of the storm water run-off in the area. The Greenway would consist of a paved trail for walking, jogging, dog walking, and bicycling. It would be lighted and landscaped and would contain sitting areas at periodic intervals. The Greenway would be located generally on the north side of the L-2 Canal except when it crosses over the L-2 and runs a short distance to the western edge of Golfview Heights. The CRA currently owns over a dozen lots on the north side and would contribute these to creating the Greenway. The acquisition and development costs of the Greenway would be borne by the CRA, the County and the drainage district. Figure 4.14 depicts a view of the proposed enhancements along the Greenway.



Figure 4.14 - Greenway at the Community Center



Figure 4.16 - View along the Greenway



Figure 4.15 - Community Center

Neighborhood Parks. The Plan proposes to provide additional open space to the residential areas in the form of small neighborhood parks. These parks can be passive in nature or can be active depending upon the desires and care given by the immediate neighborhood residents. The Plan proposes that a budget be set up to implement neighborhood parks and that neighborhood groups advance their concepts for location and design. The location of the parks may be on vacant land or on property currently occupied by a blighted building.

Neighborhood Revitalization.

The existing residential areas of Belvedere Homes and Golfview Heights are fairly stable and are not anticipated to change much. Some needed infrastructure improvements, such as sanitary sewer and better street lighting, have already been discussed and are incorporated in the list of improvement projects in the CRA plan. Other improvements, such as landscaping, assistance with remodeling, and conversion of duplex units into single family units, would go a long way toward improving the overall appearance of the neighborhood, and would also

encourage increased homeownership. Another factor that detracts from the overall appearance of the community is the large number of cars that are parked on the streets and, sometimes, in the front yard. Many homes do not have garages, or only a one-car garage if they do. Several strategies could be used to address this situation.

The biggest change would occur if small parking courts could be created between the houses, as indicated on Figure 4.17. Where the existing space between the homes is sufficient, as many as four cars could be accommodated, all behind the front façade line, so that they would be less visible from the street. Where adjacent properties could put their driveways side by side, it would also reduce the number of driveway cuts occurring along the street. This strategy would remove a significant percentage of units from the street, while the ones remaining on the street could be required to park on one side of the street only. This would discipline the appearance of the street, as well as making it easier for cars to move along the street.

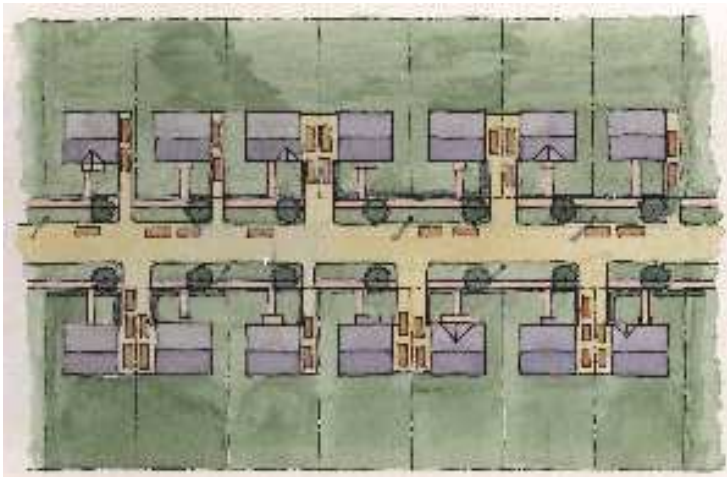


Figure 4.17 – A typical neighborhood street

The appearance of the houses would also be improved by adding low picket fences or hedges to define the front yards. This can be done quite inexpensively and goes a long way to build community pride. An illustration of the cumulative effect of the off-street parking strategies, fencing, and other street improvements is shown in Figure 4.18.



Figure 4.18 – A typical neighborhood street

D. Redevelopment and Development Opportunities

Summary. The Master Plan suggests a series of public improvements, such as a master storm water drainage program and beautification of Congress Avenue and Westgate Avenue. These actions would benefit the redevelopment potential of many sectors and parcels of land within the CRA District. The following is a discussion of some of these redevelopment opportunities, as illustrated in the Master Plan.

Congress Avenue. Congress Avenue offers several significant redevelopment opportunities for privately owned property. The first of these is the area at the intersection of Congress Avenue and Belvedere Road, as well as some of the adjacent land on Congress Avenue. These parcels, known as the Kennel Club, offer the most potential for larger scale redevelopment. The Kennel Club, situated on a 46-acre site would be suited for a public/private partnership with Palm Beach International Airport. At the corner of the site on Belvedere Road, the Master Plan suggests the development of a major hotel and a vertical automobile rental facility. This location would work well with the current master plan for the airport, which anticipates the terminal and parking facilities extruding eastward from their present position. This would lend itself well to a future pedestrian bridge connection across to a central rental facility on the site of the Kennel Club.

The six to eight automobile rental agencies at the airport, currently located on individual sites along Belvedere Road, would be incorporated into a single facility. Automobiles would be rented, returned, and serviced within the multi-story facility. The incorporation of the vertical facility would enable the Airport to better utilize the land on Belvedere Road currently occupied by these agencies.

In addition to the rental facility, a major hotel would also be located in the area, on the east side of Congress. This hotel would be readily accessible from the airport and could serve as an alternative to the

limited service hotels located further north, offering business facilities such as a conference center.

Other uses on the Kennel Club site, as illustrated in the Master Plan, include office and office warehouse flex space. The flex space would be utilized by distributors who utilize air cargo facilities at the Airport.

Congress Avenue also contains several vacant parcels near the L-2 Canal. These parcels along with others north of the L-2, would be ideal sites for a mixture of uses, including ground floor retail, office and residential. If the Master Plan proposal for the development of a large retention lake adjacent to the Lakeside Mobile Home Park were to be realized, then the parcels on Congress Avenue, whose back lot lines would face the lake, would be ideal sites for mixed-use. The buildings could be low-rise apartments with retail on the ground floor, in the currently popular style of traditional neighborhood development. They could provide a great opportunity for “near-downtown” living.

Figure 4.19 suggests another, more aggressive redevelopment possibility. If sufficient contiguous property could be assembled, a project of considerable intensity and impact could be realized. Such a project would take advantage of the proximity to the airport and the potential of a strong commercial area to create a mixed-use project on a scale similar to that of City Place. Such a project would have ground level retail as well as office and residential uses. Taller structures, perhaps up to 15 stories, would take advantage of the waterside views.



Fig. 4.19 - Congress Avenue Mixed-Use Buildings

In summary, Congress Avenue represents a major opportunity to establish an office, residential and mixed-use corridor for the CRA District.

Westgate Avenue. Westgate Avenue represents the opportunity of establishing a neighborhood downtown, a mixed-use retail center that serves the residential citizens of the CRA District as well as those, particularly commuters, who choose to stop and shop in a more unique and specialized shopping environment. The Master Plan illustrates the Westgate Avenue concept, described as follows. Ground floor space would be situated close to the street and would contain both retailers and commercial offices, such as real estate, insurance, and other. The upper floors of the buildings would contain residential apartments, either for rent or for sale. These apartments are important to sustain the retail on the ground floors. Parking would be situated in the street (a newly designed Westgate Avenue) and in the rear of the property.

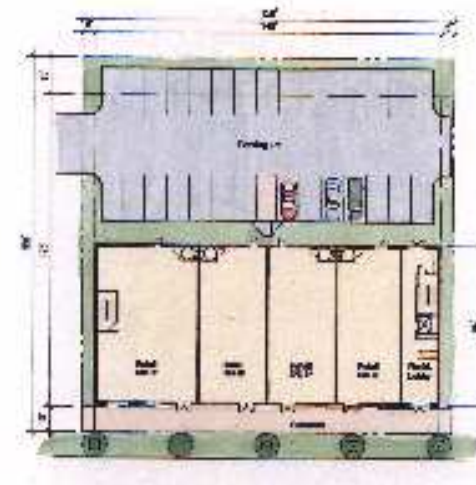
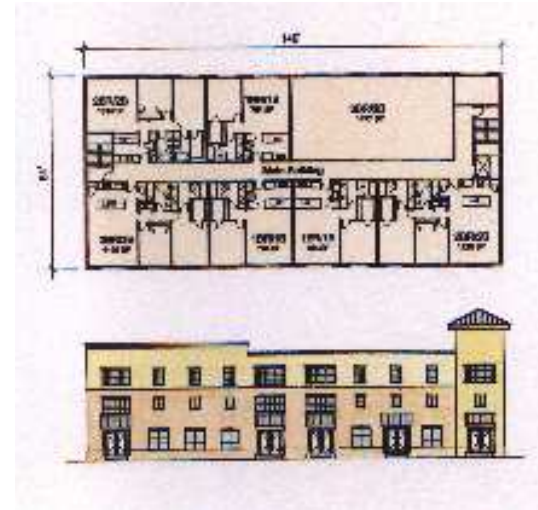


Fig. 4.20 - Mixed-Use Building Type

Northeast Warehouse District. This area, located in the northeast part of the CRA, has easy access to downtown West Palm Beach and will likely transition to higher status uses as time passes. Two major changes proposed in this plan should help this to occur. One is the removal of the trailer park in order to improve drainage and the other is the extension of Westgate Avenue east of Congress. Both of these items have been previously discussed and are illustrated in Figure 4.21. This will make the area both more accessible and more attractive, and should encourage the transition of land uses to more office and commercial uses. The existing warehouse uses could be relocated to the southwest portion of the CRA, where the proximity to one of the runway approaches makes that land of limited value for other uses.

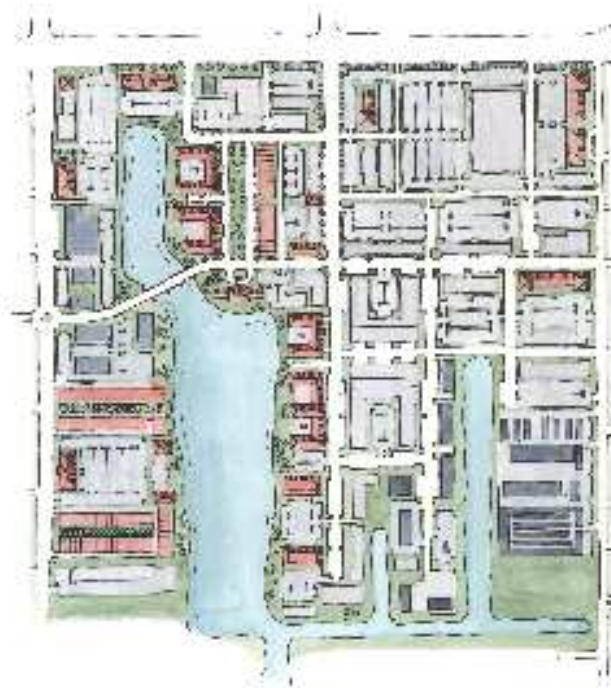


Figure 4.21 – The northeast quadrant

Belvedere Road. The major arterial currently houses many airport uses, particularly the automobile rental agencies. In addition the County owns much of the area between Club House Drive and Congress Avenue. The area currently houses the offices of the County as well as Hertz automobile rental agency. The County contemplates moving their offices to another location (Vista Center) and subsequently much of the land will become available for redevelopment. The Airport will determine its use since the asset could enhance the viability of the airport. The Master Plan illustrates the use of the area as office and office/warehouse flex space. These uses would be very suitable for a growing airport.

Okeechobee Road. Okeechobee Road is one of the most heavily traveled arterials in the County and contains a multitude of uses, including automobile agencies, big boxes, small and medium sized retailers, sit-down restaurants, and numerous fast food restaurants. The south side of Okeechobee Road contains very shallow uses whose parking is in most cases very limited. The Master Plan illustrates the expansion of the Okeechobee sites by incorporating land back to Chickamauga Street. This has already happened in a few locations such as the Mercedes dealership.

Neighborhood Townhomes. Several types of townhouse developments could be used in the areas between the more intensive, commercial on Okeechobee Road and the less intensive proposed mixed-use buildings on Westgate Avenue. This type of building would mediate the differing scales of development of the commercial and residential areas, and help to provide a smooth and harmonious transition between the two. Townhouses are a very flexible building type that can fill a variety of roles within the urban fabric, from a continuous street wall of the row house to a smaller scaled building that contains two to four units. They might front directly on the street with a small stoop area, or be set back behind small, fenced courtyards. In any case, the garages should be accessed from the rear, where alleys can be introduced, which minimizes the impact of the automobile on the front of the unit, and makes the street more conducive to pedestrian

activity. Figure 4.22 shows a row of townhouses and demonstrates how the scale of such a building is compatible with the existing neighborhood, while also providing a transition to the more intensive development in the commercial center. As discussed earlier, the townhouses would face the retention lakes on Chickamauga and Genesee Streets.

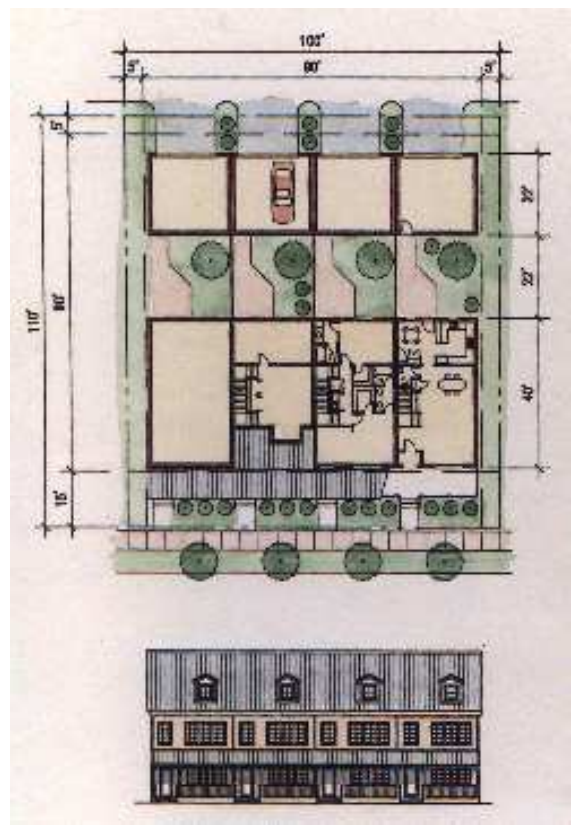
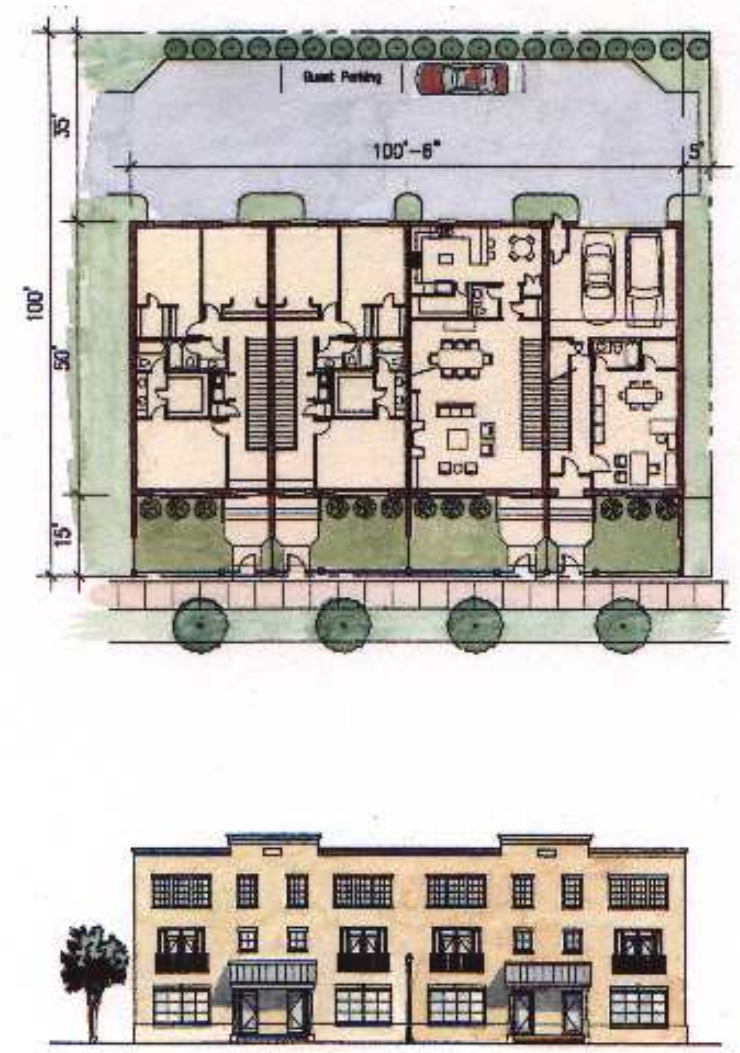


Figure 4.22 New Townhouse Types.



Duplex Housing Redevelopment. Multi-family units, predominantly duplexes, make up a portion of the residential structures in CRA Redevelopment Area. While this provides much-needed affordable housing in the neighborhood, there are some detrimental aesthetic effects to the large number of multi-family units. The major complaint seems to be the large number of vehicles parked in front of the units, in many cases on the lawn as well as the driveways. The large number of driveways is also unsightly, and tends to discourage pedestrian activity.

The Plan proposes several strategies for the duplex housing that will help to mitigate the negative effects of the duplex housing while still maintaining a good variety of housing options.

First, is to introduce modest renovations that would add elements, such as a front porch, to an existing duplex unit in a manner that would give it the scale and appearance of a single-family unit, while retaining a functional duplex. Other inexpensive elements, such as a picket fence, could also be used to discipline the front yard area, create a clear distinction between the public and private realms, and foster a sense of ownership; and, hopefully, civic pride in maintaining the outward appearance of the unit. The CRA will create a redevelopment program discussed in Section V of this Plan to assist duplex owners to renovate the exterior of structures.

The duplex could also be converted to a single family residence with a special policy that the unit be occupied by a home owner not a renter. The duplex conversion would need CRA assistance as discussed in Section V of this Plan. The CRA or home buyer could purchase an existing duplex. The CRA could resell the duplex to a homebuyer with the stipulation that they must live in the structure for a period of five or more years in order to qualify for a conversion subsidy.

E. Summary

It is clear that the CRA has a number of exciting redevelopment possibilities. The area has been long constrained against development by its drainage problems. While this will not be easy to address, the benefits should more than outweigh the efforts. Only a coordinated and comprehensive strategy such as the one proposed here will accomplish the necessary changes, but the time and the will of the community seem to favor this action. There are, of course, concerns in the community regarding the scale of development and the range of change proposed, but this type of major redevelopment is limited to areas that are greatly underdeveloped. The stable residential areas will remain largely undisturbed, except for some much needed infrastructure and streetscape improvements.

While the vision proposed here may not be realized in its specific detail, it is intended primarily as an illustration of the possibilities that are inherent in the area. The following sections of the report cover in more detail the strategies necessary to implement this plan.