Quilts shown on the cover are by Lela Lewis (1916-1998), a former resident of Riviera Beach Heights. Lewis, a retired nurse, learned quilting as a child in Cordelia, Georgia from her mother and grandmother. She moved to Riviera Beach in 1939. (Source: www.floridamemory.com) This report is dedicated to her.

As inspiration, the quilt theme was adopted to clarify our intent of creating a sense of unity between disconnected patchworks of the community. Our goal is to transform Riviera Beach Heights into a quilt that expresses a sense of a unique and distinctive community.
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**Riviera Beach Heights Revitalization Phase I**

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Riviera Beach Heights is:

A safe, beautiful, family-friendly, walkable community where the residents, our businesses and the neighborhood flourish.
Executive Summary

The Project
The proposed project, the Riviera Beach Heights (“Heights”) Neighborhood Revitalization, Phase I, is a pilot project of central importance in the overall vision of the Riviera Beach Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA). As evidence of the CRA’s commitment to the Heights, they have committed approximately $2,000,000 for the construction costs of the Phase I development. This is the largest amount of economic support for a neighborhood revitalization that has ever been awarded by the CRA.

The vision of Riviera Beach Heights that is being presented in this document is one that integrates the wishes of the residents and mitigates the destructive forces affecting the neighborhood. During the meetings and all other interactions with the community, the residents clearly voiced their hope for a beautiful, safe, and secure neighborhood with sustainable economic development.

The neighborhood is currently fragmented into several disconnected parts, which we now refer to as patchworks.

These patchworks are:
- Patchwork 1: the east side of Old Dixie
- Patchwork 2: the west side of Old Dixie
- Patchwork 3: the north and south sides of Martin Luther King Boulevard
- Patchwork 4: the north side of Riviera Beach Heights
- Patchwork 5: the south side of Riviera Beach Heights

Upon completion, the Riviera Beach Heights Neighborhood Revitalization will embody the vision of its residents, its neighborhood business leaders, the Riviera Beach CRA and the City of Riviera Beach. Within this document is a shared vision, with a singular goal to transform the disconnected patchworks into a beautiful whole.

Background
In the Spring of 2011, Song and Associates (S+A) was selected as the architectural firm for the Conceptual Design of the Revitalization of Riviera Beach Heights, Stage I. S+A engaged the Land Developers Consortium (LDC) as a consultant for planning, landscape architecture, civil engineering and electrical engineering. LDC was selected to assist with the conceptual design primarily because they had become the regional experts for this neighborhood. In November of 2009 LDC prepared a highly detailed report with recommendations for the CRA entitled, Riviera Beach Heights Neighborhood Residential Pilot Block Revitalization Project, Phase I Recommendation Report.¹ The summary of the objectives defined in that report for Riviera Beach Heights were:

1. This report is available per request from the CRA Staff.
Executive Summary

Riviera Beach Heights Revitalization Phase I

- To work with residents, business and property owners, church leaders and parishioners to develop appropriate strategies for implementing landscape and hardscape improvements that benefit those living and working in the neighborhood as well as where these strategies are most needed.
- To develop a “plug and play toolkit” of improvement strategies or solutions that can be easily replicated in other areas of the neighborhood and the community redevelopment area.
- To define potential target areas where toolkit strategies can be implemented within the neighborhood.

Boundaries and Descriptions

Riviera Beach Heights is the largest residential neighborhood within the CRA boundaries. The neighborhood consists of approximately twenty-eight (28) city blocks. To the north is an industrial district. To the east is Old Dixie, the FEC Railroad line and the Port of Palm Beach. To the west is Australian Avenue, which is planned for expansion by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) in 2015. To the west of Australian and to the south of 6th Street are parts of Riviera Beach Heights currently located outside the CRA boundaries.

Cutting through the approximate central axis of the neighborhood is Martin Luther King Boulevard (US 710) which is also planned for improvement by FDOT in 2015. Unless carefully considered in the schematic design and future development, this will result in fracturing even farther the north and south sides of the neighborhood. Both the north and south sides of the neighborhood are primarily residential, single family and multi-unit mixed together with churches, public and private schools, daycare facilities and a large number of abandoned and vacant lots.

Those pressures, combined with the current economic climate and safety issues, have created a neighborhood and business district being assaulted by blight.

Process

The CRA and the Design Team engaged residents in two Community Meetings, over the course of several months, with the purpose of soliciting input. The first Community Listening Meeting focused on the desires of the residents and the second presented the conceptual design and an overview of the Community Development Corporation, currently being formed by the CRA.

Simultaneously with the first Community Meeting, the Design Team performed another neighborhood survey to test the results and conclusions of the previous report LDC prepared in 2009. From that second survey and the Community Listening Meeting, the data gathered generally affirmed the original report’s findings and recommendations. A document was then prepared which summarized the information gathered from the follow-up survey and meeting entitled, “Evaluation of Prior Interview Participant Feedback 2009 Pilot Project LCD, LLC Project 11-1003P”. Highlights from that evaluation were:
Executive Summary

Riviera Beach Heights Revitalization Phase I

- For both surveys a sample size of approximately 5% of the total study area (468 parcels) was considered.
- The own/rent ratio of properties in the neighborhood remained the same.
- The accessibility/mobility ratio around the neighborhood was similar except for ease of pedestrian movement, which decreased by 17% in 2011.
- The residents continued to access goods and services via pedestrian paths; this percentage remained at over 40%.
- In both studies, over 68% of the residents agreed on disliking the appearance of the streets and neighborhood in general; more than 78%, (from both years), agreed on the necessity for improvement in and around the neighborhood in general.
- Similar to the survey in 2009, the residents surveyed in 2011 expressed a concern about and a desire for improved traffic calming, street lighting, sidewalk completion and repair, signage in the neighborhood, and improved landscaping along with improved physical elements. In the 2011 survey, however, there was an increase of 53% in concern about distressed and vacant properties. Another increase of 20% was found to express concern about distressed and vacant properties in relation to crime and safety.
- An additional increase was expressed in a desire for enforcement of building code ordinances and public safety via increased police presence in the neighborhood.
- In both surveys residents voiced concern about possible expansion of the Port of Palm Beach and increased rejection of storefront development, specifically liquor stores within the neighborhood.
- Also in both surveys, residents expressed a need to improve the appearance of MLK and Old Dixie, including the FEC Railroad line.

The Design Process

Once the data from the meeting and survey was evaluated and understood, S+A and LDC, under the direction of the CRA, began developing the Schematic Design for Riviera Beach Heights Phase I Neighborhood Revitalization. The design team developed the schematics during weekly design workshops and with biweekly meetings with the staff at the CRA, where ideas and concepts were articulated and tested.

In addition, the team met with FDOT, the Port of Palm Beach, Riviera Beach Planning and Zoning, the Riviera Beach Police Department and Riviera Beach Building Code Enforcement to invite input and participation in developing Riviera Beach Heights into a vibrant, leading edge, sustainable community for the 21st century.
The Design Concept

The Design Team identified specific physical and programmatic improvements, that with economic support and a shift in perception, could transform RBH from a patchwork of disconnected pieces of urban fabric into a beautiful quilt. The metaphor of the quilt emerged from a search for a conceptual framework that related to RBH in both an authentic and historical manner. In this search, the design team encountered the work of Lela Lewis, a quilt maker and 39 year resident of Riviera Beach. Ms. Lewis served as the inspiration for the design process as she was a longtime resident of the neighborhood who designed and made quilts. This idea resonated with the Design Team as we see RBH as a collection of pieces that are semi related and needs to be connected, it just takes vision and a little work.

To create this quilt, the urban fabric of the proposed revitalization of Riviera Beach Heights must be placed in the context of its larger community, connecting local, regional and state agencies. The aim of this action would be to identify and forge the economic partnerships of patchwork pieces needed to be stitched together for the economic vitality of the neighborhood.

- The Port of Palm Beach and the Florida Department of Transportation:
  - FDOT improvements to MLK and Australian Avenue affecting the neighborhood.
  - FDOT improvements to Old Dixie affecting the neighborhood business district.
  - Infrastructure improvement and beautification of the entry to the Port of Palm Beach.
- City of Riviera Beach:
  - The City Government, in partnership with the CRA and the proposed Community Development Corporation (CDC), to help with the development of infrastructure connectivity, life safety and code enforcement and the integration of the current and future plans of the City’s Planning and Zoning Department.
- The R.B. Community Development Corporation:
  - The CRA and the newly formed RBCDC working together to improve neighborhood safety, reduce crime, improve building code enforcement and empower and help organize neighborhood groups dedicated to the improvement of both the neighborhood and the business environments.
- Palm Beach County Government:
  - Economic partnership to support the neighborhood development.
The RBH Revitalization Phase I Plan

contained within this document is a vision of a renewed and revitalized Riviera Beach Heights neighborhood. The proposed vision is one in which this neighborhood is a safe, beautiful, walkable community where the residents, their businesses and the neighborhood flourish.

To realize this vision, the CRA, S+A and LDC are proposing physical elements, such as neighborhood and primary street entrances, green spaces, lighting, security systems and the essential programmatic elements such as the Community Development Corporation, to support the development of the business district and neighborhood. From the data contained in analytic aerial maps, the Community Meetings, and the design workshops, the conceptual design was formed. Patchwork by patchwork, each piece was placed and carefully sewn together with a singular purpose; to transform Riviera Beach Heights from a hodgepodge of disconnected patchworks into a Quilt of Connection and Distinction.
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4. Location of Vacant Lots in Riviera Beach Heights
5. A Composite of the Information of All the Maps
1. Riviera Beach, Riviera Beach Heights Outline and CRA boundary
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3. FDOT Improvements Proposed for Australian, MLK (SR 710) and Old Dixie Hwy pt.1
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4. Location of Vacant Lots in Riviera Beach Heights

Legend
- Residential
- Commercial
5. A Composite of the Information of All the Maps Previously Noted

*Existing and future traffic lights are shown*
## Riviera Beach Heights Revitalization Phase I

### RBH Property Inventory Table

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<th>Inventory Items</th>
<th>2011 FLU</th>
<th></th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total Number of Parcels (based on 468)</td>
<td>Total % Rate of Parcels (based on 468)</td>
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<td>Government Owned</td>
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<tr>
<td>FLORIDA STATE DOT</td>
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<tr>
<td>CITY OF RIVIERA BEACH</td>
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<tr>
<td>CRA</td>
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<td>RIVIERA BEACH UTILITY SPECIAL DISTRICT</td>
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<td>SDPBC</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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<td>Property Use</td>
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<td>MFR &lt;10 UNITS</td>
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<td>MORT/CEMETERY (Funeral Home)</td>
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<td>MOTEL</td>
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<td>PKG LT / MH PK</td>
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<td>SANI/ REST HOME</td>
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### Riviera Beach Heights Revitalization Phase I

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<thead>
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<th>Category</th>
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<td>0.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>STATE</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STORES</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>VACANT, VACANT COMM, ABANDONED</td>
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<td>17.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>SINGLE FAMILY</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>50.9%</td>
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<td><strong>2011 FLU</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
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<td>2.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Downtown Mixed Use</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Medium Density Multiple Family Residential, Up to 15 du/ac</td>
<td>401</td>
<td>85.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recreational</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Homestead</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>HOMESTEAD</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>26.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Tax Exempt</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>TAX EXEMPT</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>38.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RB Heights Property Inventory Summary:

The information in this table is based on the data extrapolated from the City of Riviera Beach 2011 FLU and the Field Verification (FV) done by LDC in November 2011. Inventory items named are based on the City of Riviera Beach 2011 FLU classification names.

A detailed description of the methodology employed in this analysis is included in the RBH project book 2. The following five general items from the Riviera Beach Heights 468 properties were analyzed during the inventory:

- **Government Owned Property**
  a. 8% (40 parcels) are government owned in the RBH
  b. 4% (22 parcels) are FDOT owned

- **Property Use**
  a. Based on the 2011 FLU data and the VF results, there was an increase in the following property uses: 25% multifamily, 67% parking lots, 67% vacant and abandoned lots, and 8% in single family.

- **2011 FLU**
  a. 85% (401 parcels) are classified as medium density multiple family residential for up to 15 du/ac

- **Homestead**
  a. 26% (124 parcels) are homestead

- **Tax Exempt**
  a. 38% (182 parcels) are tax exempt. (Churches and Non-profits 501(c)(3))
FINDINGS OF COMMUNITY LISTENING MEETING (2011)

2011 RBH Community Listening Meeting 1 Summary

In 2009, the Community Redevelopment Agency of Riviera Beach (CRA) and an external consultant Land Developers Consortium (LDC) finalized an evaluation and recommendations report entitled “Riviera Beach Heights (RBH) Neighborhood – Residential Pilot Block Revitalization Project, Phase 1.” The report provided a robust assemblage of community feedback and professional consultant insight to create a redevelopment guide for the RBH neighborhood. The guide suggested certain physical and programmatic strategies necessary to fulfill neighborhood resident and business owner desired improvements to the area, with the goal of developing the vision of “a better, safer & more prosperous RBH.”

In 2011, the CRA secured approximately $25 million in loans to fund various redevelopment projects throughout their designated area. Approximately $2.7 million of those dollars were committed to the redevelopment strategies identified for the RBH neighborhood. With an infusion of findings, the CRA tasked Land Developers Consortium and Song and Associates to renew redevelopment initiatives in RBH with the end goal of producing a well-rounded, sound, and achievable implementation plan for the redevelopment of the RBH neighborhood. This process began with the Community Listening Meeting in 2009. This re-evaluation was necessary to ensure that the initial findings from the 2009 report remained valid and important to the various neighborhood stakeholders and to inquire if any new issues had arisen or had become obsolete since the time of the data gathering and completion of the first report in 2009. The CRA wanted to ensure that if any new issues arose in the two years since the report was written or if any issues had diminished since then, that they were well documented, analyzed and included in the latest efforts to implement a comprehensive improvement plan utilizing established and newly formulated strategies for the entire neighborhood. The expansion to the scope of this effort in 2011 has far-reaching benefits to all stakeholders involved. In 2011, consideration of such important factors as coordination with the Florida Department of Transportation on proposed design modifications to Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard (S.R. 710) and Old Dixie Highway; landscape design initiatives with Florida East Coast Railroad; review and coordination with the Port of Palm Beach and their updates to the Port master plan; and discussion with Riviera Beach Heights residents not within the boundaries of the CRA overlay area will create important synergistic relationships and design solutions as part of the redevelopment effort.

A resident meeting was held the evening of October 17, 2011 specifically for those residents living in the south end of the “Heights” neighborhood outside of the CRA boundary that desired to see similar improvements implemented within that portion of the neighborhood located in the CRA.
The CRA invited residents, business, and property owners to participate in a community listening meeting which was held on October 8, 2011 at Mount Zion Baptist Church, [located in the project area]. During the meeting residents clearly stated that: the previous study is valid and don’t waste those efforts, the appearance of the neighborhood has deteriorated since the last study and there are more vacant lots throughout the neighborhood that are in various states of maintenance.

Residents clearly indicated that the results of the 2009 study should not be forgotten and that much of the information derived from the various data gathering efforts at that time remained valid and important today. Participants indicated that some conditions within the neighborhood have worsened over the course of the last two years. The proliferation of poorly maintained vacant lots or abandoned properties has increased since the last study analysis. These conditions have been accurately documented as part of this latest initiative. The CRA believes that dealing with these problem properties is of high priority to help revitalize the appearance and safety of the neighborhood. Participants identified the importance of programs that engage the neighborhood youth in meaningful recreation or work activities and programs for the elderly are more important today than ever. The CRA understands that significant benefits such as neighborhood pride and stewardship are achievable by engaging area youth and providing programs for the elderly as part of a social engagement effort in the community. Some new redevelopment strategies requested by the participants include increased recreation and work programs for neighborhood youth as well as the elderly (i.e., new community center or community garden(s)). Safety was another issue that was raised at the information meeting that carried over from the previous study.

The introduction of Song and Associates to lead the latest redevelopment effort brings with it a comprehensive analysis of the potential physical modifications to the existing building stock in the commercial area of the neighborhood as well as the architectural improvements that can be developed for existing residential properties. Urban design strategies will range from façade improvement program initiatives to large scale redevelopment planning where vacant or blighted areas within the community are analyzed and re-designed. Most importantly, it will bring about the implementation of the adopted strategies. CRA Staff and their consultants have organized the neighborhood into readily distinguishable “patchworks.” These patchworks when combined cover the entire Riviera Beach Heights neighborhood within the jurisdictional boundaries of the CRA. For example, the western half of the neighborhood has a mostly uniform style of development being that of single family homes, while the southeast quadrant of the RBH neighborhood has a higher mix of multi-family and single family housing typologies. The east boundary of the neighborhood along Old Dixie Highway is almost exclusively commercial and fronts onto the FEC Railway right-of-way and the western boundary of the Port of Palm Beach. Understanding existing development patterns and ownership status within each patchwork will assist in directing the most appropriate urban design initiatives within a given patchwork. Each patchwork contains conditions that are common throughout the neighborhood as well as unique to the sub-area. Strategies tailored to the specific characteristics of the built environment within each patchwork will ensure that the right improvements are implemented in the right location. The goal is to ensure that a range of “tool-kit strategies” are implemented within each of the patchworks that will improve the immediate area (i.e., sidewalk repair) and that readily transfer seamlessly from one patchwork to another (i.e., streetscape initiatives), and ultimately from this neighborhood to other neighborhoods.

Renewed surveys and questionnaires conducted in the neighborhood and at the community listening meeting re-affirmed that many of the key issues identified by stakeholders in 2009 remain valid today. Enhancement of the edge/entry conditions clearly identifying the neighborhood, improvements to internal connections through the neighborhood (i.e., sidewalks and median openings); and dealing with vacant lots and derelict buildings remain important priorities for stakeholders.
The CRA and its professional consultants are in the process of preparing detailed technical support documentation that includes surveying, civil engineering and electrical engineering reviews and reports to provide a solid foundation of information that will support the selected physical improvement strategies proposed throughout the neighborhood. Such issues as problematic drainage, improved pedestrian and landscaping pathways within the neighborhood and improving street lighting were carefully studied. Improvement strategies that are ultimately integrated into the neighborhood will be coordinated with existing infrastructure and easements.

The CRA recognizes the importance of monitoring and maintaining any programmed improvements: a revitalized area can quickly turn “dead” without vigilant follow-up and upkeep. As the long-term objective of the CRA is to utilize the implemented strategies in other neighborhoods, it recognizes that it must remain the steward of the improvements they enact in the Heights.

The feedback provided by the residents, business owners and institutional leaders is the foundation of how redevelopment shall occur in this neighborhood. All recommendations contained within this new study along with the strategies to be adopted, have been born as a direct result of this active and engaged community process. The resulting physical improvements combined with revitalization programs will begin the needed transformation of the neighborhood. The CRA is ready to put the plan into action.
Random Sampling Selection of Parcels within Riviera Beach Heights

The following information is based on a 5% random sampling selection of the total 468 parcels within the Riviera Beach Heights neighborhood that is within the CRA boundaries. One individual represents one parcel. This means that every answered survey represents 18 individuals from 18 parcels within the neighborhood. The results are based on the door-to-door field survey and from the Community Meeting held on October 8, 2011 at the Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church at 868 W. 9th St., Riviera Beach, FL 33404.

1. About 72% of residents own a property in the Riviera Beach Heights neighborhood and more than 50% have lived there for more than 10 years.

2. Over 50% support small businesses within the neighborhood, specifically food stores, restaurants, and flower shops followed by convenience stores.

3. Approximately 44% of the residents move around the neighborhood via car while 25% walk.

4. More than 60% do not like the appearance of their street or neighborhood and about 76% think that improvements can be made.

5. Over 50% of the residents would love to see the streets and sidewalks repaired, more lighting on the streets, handicap ramps on sidewalks, and the rehabilitation of distressed and vacant lots. About 35% would prefer more trees and better landscaping and hardscaping around the neighborhood while about 20% would love to see more police presence, traffic calming methods, and the enforcement of codes for property maintenance and public areas.

6. At least 20% think the streets between 8th Street (MLK) and 12th Street need special attention while about 10% think both Broadway and Old Dixie Hwy also need special attention.

The following are the findings collected from Riviera Beach’s residents and local interested groups at the CRA Riviera Beach Heights Community Listening Meeting on October 8, 2011 at the Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church. The meeting was designed to elicit critical feedback from residents and business owners (Category I) and interested community groups (Categories II & III) in the neighborhood. The findings have been categorized into specific issues presented by the participants.
Resident Input

- Distressed and Vacant Properties
  - Too many derelict and abandoned properties throughout the neighborhood
  - Vacant lots are being used to engage in illegal activities
  - The CRA and the City of Riviera Beach should buy old vacant houses and apartments on 8th street, tear them down or fix them to better the community
  - Residents need housing programs to fix their driveways, landscape, and house façades, and other internal construction repair, especially senior residents
  - Both property owners and landlords are responsible for cleaning their properties and maintaining their landscape

- Businesses
  - No additional scattered stores
  - Businesses need better landscaping, lighting and façades
  - There is a need for business incentives
  - No more liquor stores close to business areas

- Neighborhood Unity
  - Unify mailboxes
  - Unify house color schemes (24/36 color)
  - Street names
  - House numbers
  - Community centers
  - Partnership with local businesses to employ the neighborhood’s residents
  - Better amenities that encourage walking and the use of public areas

- Crime and Safety
  - There is no need for additional speed bumps but effective traffic calming methods are necessary
  - School bus stops are becoming a serious concern
  - Kids need rain protection
  - Benches
  - Kids are destroying properties near bus stop by dropping garbage, breaking sprinklers and mailboxes, and throwing rocks
  - Easement, alleys and breezeways must be clean. These areas are used for trash and to engage in vandalism
  - There is a need for increased police presence
  - Trees are being used to engage in vandalism. Think when selecting new trees
  - The sidewalks are not in good condition to walk or bike, and are not handicap accessible
Community Participation & Study Background

Riviera Beach Heights Revitalization Phase I

April 03, 2012

Riviera Beach Community Redevelopment

4-6

- Infrastructure
  - Improve sidewalks and fix broken portions
  - Ensure they are handicap accessible
  - Resurface the streets
  - Improve street safety signs such as kids play area, handicap accessible, stop signs, etc.
  - Fix broken lighting and install new ones with decorative features around the whole neighborhood
  - There are too many cars on streets
  - Fix street drainage to prevent blockages that end up flooding the street
  - Improve irrigation systems
  - Install more entry ways around the community
  - New landscape and sidewalks are not beneficial unless the structures can be fixed first

- Landscape and Green Spaces
  - St. George Park
  - Need restrooms
  - Better maintenance
  - Lighting
  - Enclosed pavilion
  - Water fountain
  - Like to have more neighborhood parks
  - Fix street landscape
  - Water bill is too high – use native plants that require less water
  - Australian Avenue needs new palm trees
  - Fix the issues with dead grass and water restrictions around the neighborhood
  - No olive trees
  - Be conscientious when selecting trees; they create places for vandals to hide
  - A community garden near Old Dixie Hwy is needed
  - Ensure community entrance has a nice maintenance free landscape
  - Who will maintain the new plants and landscaping?

- Enforcement
  - There is a need for enforcement of the following areas:
    - Traffic control
    - House maintenance
    - Public properties maintenance
    - Lawn maintenance vs. water restriction
    - Rental properties
    - Landlord responsibilities
    - Police presence
Community Participation & Study Background

Riviera Beach Heights Revitalization Phase I

- **Housing Financial Assistance**
  - Housing repair incentive grants for senior residents
  - Fixed income grants for seniors
  - Assistance on loans that can help fix the house structure and not landscape
  - Assistance to property investors to fix their properties to be rented again
  - Low interest loans for construction renovations

- **Social Engagement**
  - The community needs a community center where the residents, especially seniors and youth, can participate
  - Engage Boys and Girls clubs – the youth need a place to go and to engage in activities that can keep them away from trouble
  - Community gardens are a good idea for the neighborhood. They help beautify bad areas, help engage community participation while utilizing the dilapidated parcels
  - Local groups and the youth should be engaged to assist senior residents in repairing their houses
  - Use vacant lots to develop small community parks and gardens
  - The CRA should involve the community in current RBH initiatives and future programs like the CDC. It should start by engaging the RBH block captains
  - Engage in food co-op
  - There are too many inadequate convenience stores. They should be converted to co-op grocery stores
  - Help to develop a program to unify the community identity without breaking the budget

- **Other Comments**
  - The City of Riviera Beach needs to work closer with the CRA
  - The City of Riviera Beach needs to work closer with residents to reduce water bills
  - Why are the CRA board members and city council not in attendance at this community listening meeting?
  - Elect block captains to meet with CRA and City of Riviera Beach for community maintenance issues. More parks on vacant lots - some people do not want parks near their houses because people hang out by their house during late hours (3:00AM)
  - Share the vision by keeping us informed and involved through U. S. Mail, email, etc.
  - Engage the residents in the process – it is their responsibility
  - Include the youth
  - A senior lady on 10th Street needs a road to her house
  - Another senior lady needs a roof
  - If a senior center is developed, who will run it? Will it be under continued funding?
  - There is only one nice entrance to Riviera Heights; residents would like another
  - Start a recycled paint program with the Solid Waste Authority
February 2, 2011 Community Listening Meeting

As a follow up to the October 8, 2011 Community Meeting, the CRA invited residents, business and property owners to participate in an additional community meeting. This meeting was held at Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church on February 2, 2012. The intent of the meeting was to review the Conceptual Design of the Riviera Beach Neighborhood Revitalization Phase I with the Community.

Also the CRA wanted to demonstrate to the Community that they had listened to their concerns in October and now had a realistic, viable action plan that will empower the community, while mitigating the effects of the State Road 710 expansion.

Mr. Tony Brown, CRA Director, kicked off the meeting with a little history about Riviera Beach Heights and presented the quilt concept the designers had formulated that described how the many parts that made up such an eclectic but inclusive area can be integrated into a whole. He spoke about the Port and described its impact in the area as one of the largest economic engines in the City of Riviera Beach and its relationship to the neighborhood. He described the different patchworks within the neighborhood and commercial district. He also discussed how the neighborhood is surrounded by industrial areas that were going to remain a permanent part of the community. After acknowledging that fact, Mr. Brown stated that being surrounded by industrial uses and the Port of Palm Beach did not justify the destructive affects to the Riviera Beach Heights community. Mr. Brown’s position is that the Port and the Industrial uses to the north become good neighbors and support the revitalization of the community.

The neighborhood residents had questions primarily about the FDOT expansion of Martin Luther King Boulevard and Australian Avenue. The fear expressed by the residents was that FDOT would acquire properties from the residents along with frustration about the potential damage the neighborhood will suffer from the expansion plans.

This type of discussion dominated a large portion of the meeting. Once a clear separation between Riviera Beach Community Redevelopment Agency and Florida Department of Transportation was made by Mr. Brown, the conversation moved back to the neighborhood revitalization plan and the improvements that can be made to mitigate the State Road 710 Expansion.
## 2009 & 2011 Community Listening Meeting Questionnaire Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questionnaire (Question/Answer)</th>
<th>Y2009</th>
<th>Y2011</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Results (Percentage Rate based on 27 cases)</td>
<td>Results (Percentage Rate based on 25 cases)</td>
<td>(Percentage Change)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1 Do you own or rent your residence?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>+7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>-15.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2 For how long have you owned or rented your residence?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 - 5 year</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - 10 years</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 - 20 years</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 - 30 years</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 - 40 years</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 40 years</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3 Do you patron any local business in the Heights neighborhood?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>-30.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>-36.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4 If you answered YES to question 3, please let us know which one(s)?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Stores</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>-20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurants</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>+600%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flower Shops</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>+400%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Office</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beauty salon</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>-27.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convenience stores</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>-63.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5 Do you attend church in your neighborhood?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Community Participation & Study Background

**Riviera Beach Heights Revitalization Phase I**

April 03, 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If you patron businesses or church services within the neighborhood, how do you access these services?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Van services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do you like the appearance of your street?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do you like the appearance of the neighborhood?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do you think improvements can be made to your street?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>List the types of improvements that would be most beneficial to you as a resident of the neighborhood</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traffic calming methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repair of streets, sidewalks, lighting, and handicap ramps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rehab distresses properties &amp; vacant properties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fix drainage to prevent flooding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enforce code of ordinance for housing &amp; public areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signage (neighborhoods names, street names, children areas, speed limit, &amp; handicap access)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Community Participation & Study Background

**Riviera Beach Heights Revitalization Phase I**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Youth and senior activities/center</th>
<th>0%</th>
<th>12%</th>
<th>-</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Landscaping / hardscaping improvement</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>-38.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase business activities</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase police presence</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>+400%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Is there any type of improvement that you do not want to see?**

- No Improvement | 22% | 36% | +63.6%
- Port Expansion | 0% | 4% | -
- Too many stores | 0% | 12% | -
- More liquor stores | 0% | 4% | -
- Big developments that make the rest of the neighborhood look bad | 4% | 4% | 0%
- Investment on Avenue I, Broadway, 13th Street, and on townhouse on 8th Street. | 0% | 4% | -

**Are there any specific areas of the neighborhood that need special attention?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>4%</th>
<th>4%</th>
<th>0%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FEC Railroad Appearance</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Dixie</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>+9.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th to 12th Street</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>+81.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avenue I &amp; E</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>-27.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadway</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Based on 2009 & 2011 Random Sample Questionnaire Results gathered by LDC, LLC
Noticeable Differences Between the 2009 and the 2011 Riviera Heights Neighborhood Questionnaires:

Below are some of the most noticeable differences between the 2009 and the 2011 Riviera Heights neighborhood questionnaires. This brief analysis is based on only 11 questions out of the 12 from both years since these are 100% comparable.

- For both years the sample size was about ± 5% of the total study area (468 parcels).
- The own/rent ratio between both years remained almost the same.
- The accessibility/mobility ratio around the neighborhood remains almost the same except for walkability, which decreased by 17% in 2011.
- In both years, over 68% of the residents agreed on disliking the appearance of their streets and neighborhoods and more than 78% from both years agreed on the need for general improvement around the neighborhood.
- Much like the residents surveyed in 2009, the 2011 residents were concerned about the improvements for traffic calming methods and street lighting, streets and sidewalk repair, signage around the neighborhood, and landscape and hardscape improvements. In 2011, however, there was a 53% increase in concern about distressed and vacant properties and a 26% increase in concern over increasing enforcement of ordinances for properties and public areas as well as increasing police presence.
- In both years, residents expressed concern about the need for improvements around the neighborhood but in 2011 there was an increased rejection of the Port expansion and increased storefronts, especially liquor stores.
- Based on the residents’ responses from both years, the FEC railroad, the Old Dixie Highway and 8th (MLK) to 12th Streets appearance remain areas of need.
Observations and Findings

- **Observations and Findings of the Residents of Riviera Beach Heights**
  - The dominant housing stock is developer post World War II bungalows.
  - This neighborhood, like others in the time period and in various parts of the country, was built as large block, single family tracts for sale to families. The typical parcels were larger than urban sites and presented the homeowner with larger front and rear yards as their private domain.
  - The neighborhood is made up of single family houses, rental properties, churches and schools. To the north is an industrial district and to the east is the Port of Palm Beach. To the south and west are residential areas that are not included in the CRA boundary or the project boundary.
  - The one-story, single family detached type of housing is prevalent. Many parcels were dedicated to civic functions such as schools and religious institutions.
  - Over time, due to cultural and economic pressures, a once strong community image has wavered and neighborhood blight has resulted. A decline in the neighborhood has occurred through the increased heavy traffic on MLK, a decrease in commercial activity along Old Dixie Highway and an increasing number of abandoned and vacant properties.
  - The physical qualities of properties in the neighborhood range from finely trimmed well-kept properties to abandoned ones that are overgrown, boarded up and unkempt. Some properties remain of the highest quality and some are in severe decline.
  - The development began and grew into the picturesque Arts and Crafts developer style neighborhood of single family houses and fenced yards. However, the mix of resident homeowners relative to absentee landlords brought about a rental population. And with this mix, some parcels were changed to multi-family structures, sometimes two-stories tall with paved front yards.
  - The result is a less coherent housing type of neighborhood with a mix of permanent homeowners versus the transient renter.
  - The long term steadiness of some of the resident homeowners with regard to care of the property and a strong desire to be a part of the whole neighborhood has provided a buffer slowing the spread of blight. Abandoned properties and the transient renters has resulted in less ‘ownership’ of the property and more lackluster treatment of the yards and buildings.
As commercial properties along Old Dixie and MLK have been created, some prospered and survived while others were forced to close down. Some abandoned commercial buildings have been demolished and removed, leaving an open parcel along the roadways. These open lots lead to further decline in the quality of the commercial district.

MLK has always been a thoroughfare through the community, but over time, it has become the main artery for the trucking and Port industries. As properties have become less valuable due to this traffic pattern, they become less cared for. The lack of care along these blocks has added to the overall declining quality of the neighborhood.

With many properties left abandoned and later torn down, the land left remaining is left to become either overgrown or barren. These conditions contribute to the ongoing spread of blight.

The City has many demands on the use of its tax dollars, and over time, the lack of spending those funds on basic utility upkeep has contributed to Riviera Beach Height’s decline. Both the absence of proper maintenance of the infrastructure and lack of funds to complete the neighborhood utilities and infrastructure has combined to create intolerable conditions in many parts of the neighborhood.

The current zoning for the neighborhood is Multi-Family District. The original single family enclave was then allowed to be revised into a mixed neighborhood with multi-family structures. This has happened already and could further the influx of structures that are not in character with the existing residential portions of the neighborhood. The Future Land Use Designation is Multi-Family and Mixed Use along MLK and Old Dixie. If appropriate planning principles are used for local single family, multi-family and mixed use parcels, the result can be one of a coherent mix of people and businesses.

**FDOT Expansions**

MLK (SR 710) cuts through the center of the community and connects Interstate 95 with the Port of Palm Beach and other local industrial businesses near the neighborhood. The result is that this highway has been a strong deterrent to pedestrian crossings and to the community use of the street. The expansion will increase these effects.

The expansions to MLK (SR710) from Beeline eastward have been ongoing since 2000. FDOT has been working on the MLK expansion for many years. The length from Military Trail to Congress Ave has been completed and the expansion of MLK in the neighborhood is scheduled to begin construction in 2015.

To expand SR710, land purchases have been made by FDOT over time, sometimes displacing residents.

FDOT is responsible for maintaining traffic volume flows and overall use of their roadways. Sometimes against local desires, FDOT’s mandate has caused a decline in home ownership, and in this case, has broken neighborhood continuity.

The properties on both sides of MLK from Australian eastward have, over time, declined through the abandonment and demolition of buildings. The resulting open lots between those livable parcels have increased, leading to more blight.

The FDOT expansions on MLK will inevitably lead to increased traffic speeds. Even when the speed limits are clearly posted, drivers will tend to speed.
• With the expansion of MLK, the overall distance between safe zones for pedestrians will increase. The distance between sidewalk to sidewalk will require more time to cross safety by school children and elderly residents. The current FDOT design for the MLK (SR710) expansion depicts a relatively wide center median between the two lanes in each direction of traffic.

• The current design also depicts widening the north right of way and expanding to the south side to include a swale. To accomplish this, FDOT has purchased parcels on the south edge of MLK, leaving the back yards of houses on 7th Street exposed to traffic and the proposed swale buffer between.

• The proposed design of the expanded road removes private driveways opening onto MLK. As a result of this removal, FDOT was required to propose a frontage road for those affected parcels. The frontage road runs parallel to MLK and connects only to the side streets.

• The newly expanded street right-of-way is much greater in width than the existing ROW, resulting in an increase of distance and fragmentation of existing structures that have always defined this neighborhood.

• The Riviera Beach Heights neighborhood encompasses the blocks from 1st Street to 10th Street and is split by MLK (SR710). The present two ‘halves’ of the neighborhood historically have easily traveled south to north and back across MLK. With the FDOT expansion, this crossing will become far more dangerous.

• The intersections and pathways historically and currently used will be gone once the road is widened and the crosswalks limited to the traffic light locations. This restriction further fragments the neighborhood.

• The freedom to cross MLK now allows the choice of where the resident pedestrians can walk and access the various religious institutions, schools and commercial businesses. The future restricted access to MLK will destroy this feature.

• In addition to the MLK expansion, FDOT is proposing to expand approximately one thousand feet on the north and south sides of Australian Ave. FDOT is currently revising their plans to reduce any affect on both the east and west sides of the street. The revised plans have not yet been released for public review. One of the primary concerns is how the expansion will affect a small cemetery located due west of the elementary school located on the east side of Australian at the south west corner of the project boundary. FDOT has publicly claimed that they are not intending to affect any part of the cemetery.
Community Participation & Study Background

Riviera Beach Heights Revitalization Phase I

Lack of Economic Investment

• The flight of homeowners, the increase in the rentals and the economic mortgage crisis, have all created a compound effect on this neighborhood.
• This has taken away the incentives for neighbors to maintain their lots and to create volunteer opportunity to assist those properties in greater need.
• The City’s funding for normal neighborhood maintenance has not followed the needs of this community and some projects have had to be postponed waiting for improved economic conditions.
• Prior to this endeavor, the CRA has not been active enough in the pursuit of identifying and assigning funds to fix those local basic needs.
• Without taking care of the small breakdowns, larger ones grow, and out of this the combined problems become intolerable. The conditions just noted and others have created an attitude of skepticism on the part of some of the residents.
• This neighborhood has the potential for being a strong, cohesive community given the proper planning and improvements. But, this neighborhood is greatly hindered by its image and identity, primarily due to other major influences located to the north and east of its edges: The major expansion of MLK Blvd, the large impact of Port of Palm Beach trucking and the immovable FEC railway. Forming partnerships and the integration of each of these influences toward the betterment of this neighborhood is absolutely crucial.
• The Riviera Beach Heights neighborhood as a whole extends far beyond the CRA boundaries. The CRA improvement area is the limit of where the CRA funds can be spent. This puts a severe limitation on the re-birth of the entire neighborhood. The lack of an overall vision for Riviera Beach Heights and it’s connectivity with the City as a whole creates a disconnect between resources and individual project opportunities. Without a vibrant coherent vision of and for the community, no momentum can be created, no sustainable ideal can be pursued.

Current Level of Resident Empowerment

• Capital improvements by individual homeowners for neighborhood projects is not available for the community; no group association with maintenance funds is available to the residents.
• As in any neighborhood, most improvements made to one’s property are limited to the available funds from personal incomes.
• Where there is the quality of care, it is shown to be from those who have made it their priority. Where incomes do not allow the choice of priorities, the care of the yard and home may become a lower priority. This is especially true for the elderly living on fixed incomes such as Social Security.
• Some of the homeowners do not have enough equity and/or assets to personally set in motion a home improvement program that would require additional capital to make those improvements.
• The neighborhood has spawned a strong group of activists committed to the well-being of the neighborhood. In the past, the City government has not provided enough economic and other resources to help maintain infrastructure and assistance programs needed to meet both the immediate and long-term goals of the community.
• Without combined access and guidance to available city, county, state and federal programs neither the individual nor the neighborhood will be able to leverage their current resources and leadership to create a revitalized community.
Agency Meetings

Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Design Team Meeting October 25, 2011
S+A requested an update of the status of FDOT’s proposed expansion for Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. (SR710). SR710 connects I-95 to Riviera Beach via the ‘Beeline Highway’ from the west, changing to MLK Blvd. at Military Trail. FDOT has completed a portion of the MLK widening from Military Trail eastward to Congress Avenue. Their current plans have the next length of roadway expansion located eastward from Congress Ave. to Ave. O, scheduled for bidding in May 2012 and from Ave. O to east Old Dixie Highway, scheduled to begin in 2015. It is this latter widening improvement project that will have adverse effects on the Riviera Beach Heights neighborhood.

The purpose of the meeting was to get the latest information on the road improvements design and a schedule of when construction was planned. The planned expansion of SR710 is a four lane highway with a separating median, two travel lanes in each direction. The proposed project starts at the north R.O.W which creates a frontage road parallel with MLK. The resulting widening required properties abutting MLK to be taken to provide a drainage swale designed to run parallel with MLK. The resulting improvements left the back yards of properties on 7th Street exposed to the swale and to this wider road.

The proposed median between the frontage road and westbound lanes will receive landscaping and street lighting. The southern edge of improvements between sidewalk and swale will also receive landscaping and street lighting.

FDOT will consider landscaping and street lighting (solar lighting systems) upgrades in lieu of FDOT standards lighting with formal submittal of approved alternatives. Approval will be required by the City and costs beyond their current designs would be paid by City / CRA / Palm Beach County. If accepted by FDOT, those construction documents would include the proposed alternative designs.

FPL existing power lines run along the north side of MLK. Some existing poles must be relocated due to widening and will be replaced with their more wind hardened pole types in the new locations. (Current alignment will cause a move northward to north R.O.W.) Some poles will not be required to be moved but will eventually be replaced with the wind hardened pole types. The City has not investigated the burial option of power lines along MLK / Old Dixie as they have along Broadway.
Port of Palm Beach (P of PB) / Design Team Meeting October 27, 2011
S+A requested a meeting with the Port of Palm Beach located at the east end of MLK and along Old Dixie. The Port exerts a large influence on the eastern portion of the neighborhood as well as the neighborhood as a whole.

The current Port entrance is the eastern end of MLK Blvd and serves as the only transportation vehicle entrance. The gated entrance is located due to the alignment of MLK from the Beeline Highway and points west. The great number of transport trucks using SR710 has greatly affected the quality of the neighborhood and is a component of the FDOT widening projects.

The purpose of this meeting was to introduce S+A, LDC and the CRA to the Director of the Port of Palm Beach and to elicit input for the design of the Riviera Beach CRA Neighborhood Revitalization areas that share boundaries with the Port.

The highest priorities are the security of the Port and the expansion potentials for more containers through improved truck and rail transportation serving the Port. The resulting hard edge of concrete fencing and increased traffic is considered detrimental to the neighborhood improvement efforts.

One important goal of the revitalization is the improvements to the edges of the neighborhood. It was in this light that the P of PB was asked if they would consider improving the look of their perimeter fencing via landscape buffers and other fence/wall designs. It was requested that the pre-gate opening, truck queuing, be arranged to stack on the Port property instead of the truckers choosing to park along MLK, a major source of the current poor livable quality at these blocks.

The Port was amiable to the goals of the CRA, but their first priority is the viability of the business. However, it is felt that there will be some efforts made and goals reached between the P of PB and this CRA neighborhood.

City of Riviera Beach Code Enforcement Meeting November 2011
S+A requested the meeting with the City’s Code Enforcement Director, Ms. Natalie Moore. Ms. Moore shared that Code Enforcement currently holds liens on many of the vacant and abandoned properties located in Riviera Beach Heights. She offered that currently her office lacked the funds to proceed with the legal requirements to obtain these properties. She also offered that if the CRA was willing to assist with the legal fees she would be willing to transfer ownership to the CRA for future development.

Ms. Moore suggested that the CRA identify the properties they wished to develop and her department would assist in the transfer of title once the legal fees were paid and all required legal procedures were completed.

A large number of properties that Code Enforcement currently holds liens on are on MLK. Also Ms. Moore offered that the CRA could gain ownership of abandoned or vacant easements throughout the neighborhood for improvement.
In general, Ms. Moore offered her support for the CRA efforts and is willing to forge a lasting partnership with the Riviera Beach Heights Neighborhood Revitalization.

Following this meeting, Ms. Moore met with the CRA and Design Team to clarify her department’s role and the procedures to acquire properties on which Code Enforcement currently holds liens.

**City of Riviera Beach Police Department Meeting November 2011**

S+A requested the meeting with the City Police Department. S+A met directly with Commander Madden.

Commander Madden was given a brief overview of the proposed master plan for the Riviera Beach Heights Neighborhood Revitalization. A long discussion was held where Commander Madden described the current crime statistics for the neighborhood and the City and his department’s efforts to correct this situation.

Recently the City has invested over $300,000 in two high tech crime deterrent systems. The first is a pan/tilt/zoom security camera system linked into a seven-day-a-week, twenty four hour a day monitored station located within the police department offices in City Hall. The system has high resolution and is equipped with license tag identification technology. This technology has dramatically increased the department’s response time to potential criminal activity.

He also described and provided a tour of the recently installed “Shot Spotter” technology. “Shot Spotter” technology is sound sensors placed in a matrix within a neighborhood to record gun shots that have been fired. If installed correctly this technology can help identify were a gun was fired within a three foot radius.

Commander Madden offered that if the CRA would provide the neighborhood with the pan/tilt/zoom cameras and “Shot Spotter” technology the Police Department would provide monitoring of these systems at no cost to the CRA. In addition, Commander Madden offered free access to the internet to the neighborhood if the CRA would purchase and install the modems.
Along with the support for crime prevention technology, Commander Madden offered the department’s resources to lead and support a Volunteers in Policing Program (VIPS) for the neighborhood. His department already has in place resources and staff to provide training, supervision and ongoing training and support. The neighborhood would have to provide approximately six people for his staff to train and the CRA would have to provide a car to be used by the volunteers for neighborhood patrol.

A follow up meeting was proposed and will be scheduled following review and approval of the Conceptual Design.

**Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council Meeting November 2011**

S+A contacted the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council (TCRPC) to schedule a meeting to review the sketches of the proposed master plan for the Riviera Beach Heights Neighborhood Revitalization. S+A spoke with Dana Little, the Urban Design Director of the TCRPC.

During that telephone conversation, Mr. Little recommended that the Design Team review their Riviera Beach Community Redevelopment Area Citizen’s Master Plan and Charrette Report dated January 2008 and the Riviera Beach CRA Plan dated October 2010.

In brief, both of these document strongly recommend against the FDOT expansion of MLK (SR710) and affirm this report’s findings that if not mitigated, this expansion will have an extremely destructive effect on the neighborhood. The TCRPC recommendation is to relocate the expansion to the south in the FPL easement to avoid further fragmenting the already disconnected neighborhood. In addition to the recommendation to relocate the expansion to the south, both reports recommend returning MLK to a small neighborhood scaled road that reconnects the north and south fragments via pedestrian connections and architectural design standards.

**Conceptual Design Master plan**
Riviera Beach CRA Planning
Action Plan –Immediate Implementation

▪ The following items are suggested for immediate implementation by the Riviera Beach CRA.

▪ They are comprised of the physical improvements to the Riviera Beach Heights neighborhood that will make a Significant Visual and Environmental Impact to the neighborhood.

▪ They do not include the Future Action Plan Elements to be implemented by the CDC or the Programmatic Elements as outlined in the Project Narrative.
Immediate Action Plan

Riviera Beach Heights Revitalization Phase I

Streets and Sidewalks: 6th, 7th, 9th, and 10th Street

• Sidewalks exist in most areas: repair, pressure wash, replace damaged, and supplement where missing
• Banners – Install neighborhood banners
• Street trees along right-of-way
• Low cost decorative Riviera Beach Heights street signs
• Way finding signs installed at key nodes in neighborhood
• Low cost decorative cross walks installed at key nodes within neighborhood
• Blue squares represent vacant lots
Immediate Action Plan

Riviera Beach Heights Revitalization Phase I

- Street trees
- Pressure clean existing sidewalks
- Significant landscaped improvements to change the character of these major north/south streets
- Enhance views and visual appeal by completing the streets with our terminus parks (discussed later)
- Proceed with regardless of whether the light moves
- Terminus park at North end of Avenue I. This park will receive landscaping beautification as well in the other terminus park location
- Blue squares represent vacant lots
Immediate Action Plan

Riviera Beach Heights Revitalization Phase I

- Of 5 total terminus pocket parks in the concept plans, these two are the recommended first phase projects.
- They will make a critical visual impact on the two corridors that are located at 10th Street which is the buffer from the industrial area to the North - this also coordinates our visual impact dollars with the investment in the I & J corridors.
- The terminus at J should feature landscaping beautification.
- Parks should be designed to keep costs low.
- Terminus park at north end of Avenue I. This park will include smart features, a historical theme with mango trees, and all other terminus parks will receive landscaping.
- Blue squares represent vacant lots.
Immediate Action Plan

Riviera Beach Heights Revitalization Phase I

Key Monument Signs & Landscape

- Install at major right-of-ways and neighborhood entrances as they are the best place to make an impact.
- Install small monument signs and landscaping with lighting at Old Dixie @ 10th, 9th, 7th, 6th, and at Australian @ 10th, 9th, 7th, 6th.
- Install large entrance monument signs and landscaping with lighting and architectural features at 1st and Old Dixie.
- Install low cost attractive signs at MLK and Australian with nice landscaping that can be relocated when road goes under construction.
- Install entrance monument signs and landscaping at North and South entrances to Avenue I and J.
- Blue squares represent vacant lots.
“Paint Your Heart Out”
“Rebuilding the Neighborhood Together”

- One application cycle and community event to paint every home in the neighborhood that would like to participate and utilize our color choices. These improvements can be combined with additional minor home repairs and enhancements.
- The RBCRA will reach out to the following organizations to create partnerships and request participation in the event: Youth Build Program, Riviera Beach contractors, community volunteers; major CDC Kick-off Event!
- The event is to be the kick-off of the community development corporation.
Immediate Action Plan

Riviera Beach Heights Revitalization Phase I

Key Plan

- Smart park features.
- Healthy living walking trail with additional exercise nodes.
- Blue squares represent vacant lots.
### Riviera Beach Heights Immediate Action Plan - Stage 1 Projects*

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Physical Elements</th>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>CRA Project Estimate</th>
<th>Target Completion</th>
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*In addition to the above projects, the Riviera Beach CDC should pursue: blighted property acquisition and rehabilitation, green initiatives, provision of affordable housing.

**The CRA will attempt to leverage the above projects by pursuing grant funding; these projects will be limited by the available funding provided in the CRA budget approved annually by the CRA Commission.
The Riviera Beach Community Development Corporation

The Redevelopment Goals of the Riviera Beach CRA
The Riviera Beach CRA’s mission is to support and execute community redevelopment to prevent the spread of and eliminate the existence of blighted conditions. Given the CRA’s mission the redevelopment goals for the Riviera Beach Neighborhood Revitalization are:

- Maximize the quality of life of the residential areas by providing:
  - Enhanced streetscapes, landscaping, lighting and safe community parks and public spaces.
  - Neighborhood primary and secondary entrances in association with street signage with banners and information kiosks that support and enhance the identity of the neighborhood.
  - Traffic calming techniques as required.
  - Improved pedestrian circulation throughout the neighborhood with connectivity to the larger urban fabric.
  - Address crime and safety.
  - Improve building code enforcement.
  - Develop methods and means to implement maintenance and monitoring programs.
  - Develop the existing business area into a vibrant and vital business district.
  - Eliminate blight and the influences of spreading blight.
  - Support and strengthen the existing community cohesiveness through various resident participation programs.

Recommendations for the Revitalization of Riviera Beach Heights
The following are the recommendations from the Design Team for the execution of the Immediate and Future Action Plans:
Submit for review and approval the CRA’s recommendations for the Immediate Action Plan of Phase I of the Neighborhood Revitalization Conceptual Design.

- Begin as quickly as possible the design development through bidding and permitting of the Immediate Action Plan of Phase I.
- Begin as quickly as possible the design development through bidding and permitting of the Future Action Plan to its completion.
- Include the development of a community center in the Future Action Plan by re-purposing an existing vacant and/or abandoned house. The conceptual framework of the community center should be based on the historical narrative of a community center that once existed in the neighborhood but no longer exists.
- Provide a community garden that is centrally located, preferably on an abandoned or vacant lot.
- Continue to work with FDOT to enhance the landscaping and lighting and to mitigate the expansion of the Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.
- Mitigate impact of FDOT improvements to Australian Ave and Old Dixie Hwy.
- Develop the Business District via concept of the “Unfolded Walmart” in a manner that is in harmony with the existing business owners and that attracts new businesses. Design and conceptualize the Business District so it becomes an interface that serves both the residents and the Port of Palm Beach.
Future Action Plans & Community Empowerment

Riviera Beach Heights Revitalization Phase I

- Work with the Port of Palm Beach to enhance their entrance in line with the Concept Design included in this document.
- Continue to forge relationships with the City of Riviera Beach, FDOT, the Port of Palm Beach and the County Government for economic support.
- Rezone the Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard per the Conceptual Design.
- Expand the CRA Boundaries to include areas south of the Project Boundary and West of Australian Ave.
- Put in place the Programmatic Elements proposed in this document.

Role of the Riviera Beach Community Development Corporation

The Riviera Beach Community Development Corporation (RBCDC) must develop a strategy to build on the investment momentum created by the RBCRA to ensure the investment extends into the neighborhoods and to small businesses within the CRA. The RBCDC has the opportunity to utilize the market forces in play to create sustainable communities. The opportunity for persons residing in these neighborhoods to “live, work, and play” in their community is distinctly possible. The RBCDC was created to develop these aforementioned goals.

Organization

The Riviera Beach Community Development Corporation is organized as an Internal Revenue Code Section 501 (c)(3) non-profit. In addition, the RBCDC will be organized to meet the Federal HUD requirements of 24 CFR. 92. Meeting these requirements establishes the eligibility to be certified as a Community Housing Development Organization and therefore eligible for HOME Funding set asides from Palm Beach County. The CDC is headed by the Community Development Officer (CDO), Annetta Jenkins, under guidance from the CDC Board.

19 members board development consistent with the CHDO guidelines with the 6 members being appointed by CRA Board and the remaining members elected or appointed from the community based organizations which serve low and moderate income persons.
The RBCDC, under the leadership of the C.D.O., is to provide implementation activities for the RBCRA. One of its primary goals will be to oversee the implementation of the RBH revitalization Phase I plan. Other primary functions of the CDC are:

- Leverage RBCRA funds for redevelopment activities.
- Manage the design process for other neighborhoods within the CRA.
- Develop a marketing strategy for redevelopment.
- Provide linkages for economic developments within CRA neighborhoods.

The CDC will employ various tools and strategies to achieve redevelopment of CRA neighborhoods, beginning with the RBH neighborhood.

**CDC Operations**

The 19 member CDC Board is staffed by residents, business owners and representatives of community based organizations that represent or serve low-income communities. This allows the CDC to access more resources on various levels. The Board may determine to have committees which will have a policy review of specific aspects of the RBCDC’s operations, i.e., real estate; development and resources; capital infrastructure projects; communication neighborhood marketing; and human infrastructure. The CDC Board will be presented with projects under consideration by staff for funding utilizing the CDC’s economic tool kits. The CDC will be expected to coordinate activities with the City of Riviera Beach’s Economic Development professional. The CDC will issue an annual report to the community documenting its performance against the goals of the CDC. Although the CDC is responsible for redevelopment throughout the CRA, this plan only describe its function in RBH.

**Action Plans Overview**

Action Plans will fall into 3 basic categories

- Capital Infrastructure Projects
  - Coordinating with the community and the CRA’s design consultant, S+A and LDC on efforts to mitigate the impacts of the SR 710 reconstruction by FDOT.
  - Manage the design effort of the CRA’s consultant for Riviera Beach Heights intended to provide neighborhood connectivity and a sense of place.
  - Work with the design consultants on the required infrastructure improvements to Ave E.
- Real Estate Development Opportunities
  Identify development opportunities along SR 710 to:
  - Enhance the quality of the housing available for low and moderate income persons.
  - Develop an economic development tool kit of incentives and resources
  - Attract businesses which enhance the services available within the community.
  - Attract businesses which provide enhanced employment opportunities for residents.
  - Create a redevelopment strategy along SR 710 for light industrial; mixed use and retail.

- Human Infrastructure
  - Identify grant dollars through PBC for board training for members of the RBCDC board.
  - Develop a “pipeline” system tying business expansion to job training. Coordinating with Mayor Master’s job program and Work Force Alliance
  The RBCDC will actively market the Enterprise Zone Tax Credits. The Enterprise Zone Tax Credits provide a credit against the salaries paid to persons residing in the Enterprise Zone. The RBH CDC will not only market but package the credits for the businesses utilizing the program.
Project Narrative of the Conceptual Design
The general context of the architectural conceptual design was developed from the information gathered from the meetings with residents of Riviera Beach Heights, the historical context of the neighborhood, the neighborhood’s architecture heritage, information from the report on the neighborhood produced by LDC in 2009 with the Neighborhood Inventories and Evaluation of the Prior Report, feedback produced shortly after the first community listening meeting in 2011, and the existing conditions of the neighborhood structured into the five (5) patchworks as defined by the CRA.

We Listened
The residents, concerned local activists and a few of the local business owners that participated in the Community Listening Meeting voiced their specific hopes and concerns for their neighborhood revitalization:

- Repair and complete existing sidewalks.
- Improve infrastructure such as:
  - Repair the streets.
  - Repair the storm sewer in several locations.
- Provide parks and playgrounds that are well lit and safe, where the elderly can relax and children can play.
- Provide lighting, security systems and landscaping on all streetscapes.
- Provide traffic calming installations and techniques.
- Improve connectivity of the neighborhood with the larger community.
- Improve quality of the Business District
- Mitigate destructive industrial influences
- Mitigate FDOT Expansion
- Improved safety and security.
- Create a neighborhood crime watch.

From analysis of the information gathered at the Community Meeting and the Evaluation of the Prior Report, two distinct categories of elements of the overall revitalization were refined into a structure to transform the residents’ wishes into a viable conceptual urban design. The two categories were the physical elements and the programmatic elements of the project as a whole.
The Physical Elements include:

- Infrastructure Improvement
  - Utility Infrastructure
    - Storm/Sewer/Water
    - Electric
  - Street Repairs
    - Right-of-Way Improvement
    - Street Repair
- Streetscape Improvement
  - Enhancement Strategies for FDOT Expansion of MLK Jr. Blvd, Australian and Old Dixie Hwy
  - Enhance Old Dixie Business District
  - Enhance Entrance to Port of Palm Beach
  - Sidewalk and Curb Repair
  - Landscaping and Irrigation
  - Street Lighting
  - Way Finding Signage
  - Information Kiosks
  - Street Signs with Banners
  - Street Entrance Monuments
  - Street Furniture
  - Bus Stops
- Smart Parks
  - Linear Connector Parks
  - Passive Parks
  - Playground/Active Parks
  - Terminus Parks
Programmatic Elements include:

- Safety/Security and Building Code Enforcement
  - Design Streetscapes and Parks to be Safe and Secure via the Physical Elements
  - Neighborhood Crime Watch Organization
  - Volunteers In Policing (VIPs) in Concert with the Local Police Department
  - Safe Place Designations in the Neighborhood
  - Abandoned and Vacant Lot Maintenance and Improvement Program
  - CRA Enhanced Policing Program
  - Assistance to the Elderly
  - CRA Code Enforcement Reaction Team

- Social Engagement
  - Create a Community Center
  - Create a Neighborhood Association
  - Create a Youth Build Program

- Business and Neighborhood Unity
  - Create Neighborhood Business District Association
  - Economic Support to Enhance Potential Businesses in the Revitalized Business District
  - Create Connection to Marina/Waterfront for the Residents
  - Improve Relationship between the Community and the Port of Palm Beach

- Financial Assistance
  - Incentive Programs for both Residents and Business Owners
  - Create the Community Development Corporation

- Land Use and Zoning
  - Expand the CRA Boundaries to Include Areas South, West and North of Riviera Beach Heights
  - Re-zone as Required to Mitigate FDOT Expansion to Martin Luther King Boulevard
Transforming the Clusters into Patchworks

Originally the CRA divided Riviera Beach Heights into (5) five clusters based on their understanding of the challenges that were specific to each part of the neighborhood. These clusters has now been transformed into patchworks:

Patchworks 1: Martin Luther King Boulevard (SR 710), Old Dixie to Australian Avenue, 7th Street north to 9th Street

Patchworks 2: East Side of Old Dixie Highway (the entrance to the Port of Palm Beach and the FEC Railway Line Cluster 3(a): Old Dixie Highway to Avenue G between the north side of 10th Street and the south side of 6th Street Cluster 3(b): Avenue I to Avenue G between SR710 and the south side of 6th Street

Patchworks 3(c): Avenue I to Old Dixie Highway between SR710 and 10th Street

Patchworks 4: West of Avenue I to Australian Avenue (the CRA boundary for the north and south limit), (outside of SR 710 impacts)

Patchworks 5: Surrounding Neighborhoods

Patchworks 5(a): Riviera Beach Neighborhood directly south of the CRA boundary

Patchworks 5(b): Neighborhood located west of the CRA boundary

Patchworks 5(c): Industrial Properties located north of Riviera Beach Heights Neighborhood.

Stitching the Disconnected Fragments of Patchworks to Create Connectivity and Cohesion

After testing design concepts and adopting the quilts of Lela Lewis as a conceptual metaphor, the clusters were re-defined into (7) seven patchworks. The re-defined patchworks are:

Disconnected Patchwork

Patchwork 1: Old Dixie Highway East-----------------------------------------------1. Mitigate impact of FEC Railroad and Port of Palm Beach by creating a beautiful streetscape.

Patchwork 2: Old Dixie Highway West-----------------------------------------------2. Create a vital business district.

Patchwork 3: MLK Blvd (SR 710), Old Dixie to Australian Ave.-------------------3. Mitigate impact of FDOT expansion and create a sustainable mixed use development.

Stitching Connection

Aerial Map Showing Patchworks
Future Action Plans & Community Empowerment

Riviera Beach Heights Revitalization Phase I

Patchwork 4: Old Dixie Highway East-----------------------------------4. Improve quality of life for the residents through physical and programmatic elements.

Patchwork 5: Old Dixie Highway West-----------------------------------5. Create a vital business district.

Patchwork 6: Australian Avenue, East Side-----------------------------------6. Mitigate impact of FDOT expansion and create a sustainable mixed use development.

Patchwork 7: Industrial Area north of Riviera Beach Heights-----------------------------------7. Mitigate impact of FDOT expansion and create a sustainable mixed use development.

From a Hodgepodge to a Quilt of Connection and Distinction

The existing conditions of the Neighborhood have sometimes been described as a “hodgepodge.” In the online version of the Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary, it defines “hodgepodge” as “a heterogeneous mixture: a jumble.” It was the jumbled existing conditions that led the Design Team to seek a metaphor for describing where a heterogeneous mixture could be transformed into a beautifully integrated whole. The quilts of the late Lela Lewis provided a symbol and a process that opened the path to transforming Riviera Beach Heights from a hodgepodge of disconnected patchworks into a beautiful quilt of stitched connectivity and cohesion. The CRA, Song and Associates and LDC have created this stitched connectivity and cohesion through the Master Plan of the neighborhood and the Tool Kit of Urban Design Elements.

The Conceptual Master Plan

The Master Plan, as proposed, includes eight (8) eight urban design interventions. The first of these are proposed to be placed at the neighborhood edges and streets intersecting with Australian and Old Dixie: primary and secondary entrance signs are proposed. These entrance signs both mark entry into the neighborhood for pedestrian and vehicle traffic and also reclaim the space of the street for the residents. The reclaiming of the streets is both symbolic and literal. The intent is to inform anyone entering into the community that they have moved into the interior of the neighborhood. These entrance signs also define a space that residents could close off several times during the year for neighborhood festivals.

The second intervention is a Linear Park System proposed for (2) two locations in the neighborhood. One of the linear parks provides connectivity of the north and south sides of the neighborhood and the other provides connectivity to the east and west sides. The linear park connecting the north and south sides of the neighborhood is located on Avenue L from 10th Street to the West Riviera Elementary School. The linear park connecting the east and west sides of the neighborhood is proposed the run parallel to 9th Street connecting Australian to Old Dixie where a Community Plaza (intervention 3) is proposed to provide a central node for the New Business District.
Also a series of five Terminus Parks (intervention 4) are proposed on the north side of 10th Street. Similar to the linear parks, these parks would also be “Smart Parks” that would include security systems such as pan/tilt/zoom cameras and emergency telephones. Some of the Terminus Parks would be active and some would be passive parks. The passive parks are proposed to be designed to provide a quiet place for adults and the neighborhood elderly to relax and the active parks are intended to include playground and sports equipment for adults, teenagers and children alike.

The fifth intervention of the urban design proposes the creation of Landscaped Connectors at Avenues I and J. The existing urban fabric would be enhanced by new landscaping, lighting, signage, entrance signs and security systems. Once the improvements are completed these two streets could be closed off in conjunction with MLK for neighborhood festivals or, if FDOT would not approve the temporary closing of MLK, these streets could become the primary location for neighborhood festivals or other neighborhood gatherings.

Working with FDOT to mitigate the expansion of Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard constitutes the sixth intervention of the proposed urban design. During several meetings with FDOT, their team expressed a willingness to work with the CRA to minimize the effect of the expansion on the neighborhood. Examples of their willingness to cooperate have been demonstrated in their openness to combining funds to improve the lighting system, landscaping and sound attenuation. Specifically, the enhancements the CRA and the Design Team have proposed to be considered by FDOT are to replace their typical lighting fixtures with solar lighting, improving the design of a sound attenuation green wall if required and the possibility of a more lush landscaped streetscape on both street edges and in the median on SR 710.

The seventh intervention of the proposed design is to complete and transform the street system in the neighborhood into something new. Currently on the north and south sides of Avenue L and the south side of Avenue K, easements exist were it appears streets were proposed but never completed. In the proposed Master Plan the small section of incomplete streetscape on Avenue K would be provided with landscaping, lighting, signage and the security systems. With regard to Avenue L, this existing condition is being transformed into a linear connecting park that was previously described.

The eighth and final intervention of the Master Plan is to enhance the existing Port of Palm Beach Entrance sign, landscaping and re-designing the existing concrete wall surrounding the Port. The existing wall is proposed to become a green wall extending to a height of approximately twenty feet to conceal stacked trailers and other stored items and equipment from view from Old Dixie. The recommendation is that the CRA provide the design concept and the Port provides the economic support for the construction of the improvements to demonstrate a willingness to be a good neighbor to the Riviera Beach Heights Community.
In addition to the Conceptual Master Plan for the neighborhood, the Design Team developed a series of conceptual designs for the key locations in the neighborhood. Prior to the Conceptual Designs are photographs of the existing conditions of each key location. The Conceptual Designs shown are in reference to and supported by an Urban Design Tool Kit that has been developed and is placed toward the end of this chapter.

**The Urban Design Tool Kit**
The Urban Design Tool Kit contains the inspiration for the specific elements of the conceptual design and an interpretation of each precedent of the lighting, urban street entrances, residential street entrances, kiosks, traffic calming techniques, security systems and a conceptual design for bus stops. The vocabulary for the architectural construct was inspired by the historical context of the neighborhood.

**The Historical Context**
In the conclusion, a brief detailed history of Riviera Beach in relation to Riviera Beach Heights, is given. Along with this historical narrative is a history of the genealogy of the architecture of Riviera Beach Heights. Essentially the vocabulary of Riviera Beach Heights is second generation Arts and Crafts. The houses in the neighborhood are bungalows most likely built slightly before, during and after World War II. What is interesting is that the Arts and Crafts Movement was a critique of the damage done to the communities in Great Britain and later the European Continent as a result of the Industrial Revolution. Given the existing blight is at least partially a result of the destructive influences of the industrial patchwork that surrounds the neighborhood on the north and east sides, it seems appropriate to affirm and extend this Arts and Crafts influence for the aesthetic and ethical dimensions of the project.
Landscape Narrative

Introduction
The goal for the landscape enhancements was to selectively incorporate trees, palms and green spaces to enhance the existing Riviera Beach Heights neighborhood. Identification of suitable areas for landscape enhancements were identified through site analysis, community meetings and design team collaboration. Featured landscape areas at identified entrances, pedestrian connections and the layout of a street tree system support the overall goals of this project.

Entrances
Two main “gateways” into the neighborhood have been identified by the project team; at the western boundary of the neighborhood is the intersection of Australian and Martin Luther King, Jr Boulevard (MLK Blvd.), and at the eastern boundary of the neighborhood is the intersection of Old Dixie Highway and MLK Blvd. Each of these gateways is to be announced with community signage elements, which are supported and enhanced by related landscape design. Tall, curvy sabal palms are the dominant feature of the landscape at these gateways, providing vertical reinforcement and unique presence due to the curving trunks. The sabal palm is an appropriate fit due to its hurricane-resistant, drought-tolerant nature; and as the designated Florida State Tree, fits the character of an older, established Florida neighborhood. These palms will be accented by landscape uplights to increase visibility and interest at night. Other supportive shrub-level landscape will be designed to complement the signage element layout and scheme.

In addition to the main “gateways,” there are secondary access points to the neighborhood along Australian Avenue at 10th, 9th, 7th, and 6th streets, as well as along Old Dixie Highway again intersecting with 10th, 9th, 7th, and 6th streets. To provide consistent neighborhood identification at these secondary access points, a simple but strong landscape feature of a cluster of tall curved sabal palms is recommended to emulate the gateway entrances. These clusters will have fewer trees than the gateways and no shrub layer, but will feature the same landscape uplighting for visibility and interest at night.

Street Trees
Perhaps the strongest example of “stitching together” the neighborhood is evident in the street tree layout. Providing a rhythmic pattern of trees consistently along all the neighborhood streets reinforces continuity and neighborhood identity. Street tree species selection will depend upon the unique conditions of each street, responding to the presence or absence of overhead power lines. The following list identifies potential species selections in accordance with FPL’s “Right Tree/Right Place” guidelines.

Where overhead power lines are present:

- *Thrinax radiata* (Florida Thatch Palm)
- *Cordia sebestena* (Orange Geiger Tree)
- *Conocarpus erectus sericeus* (Silver Buttonwood)
Where overhead powerlines are not present:

*Coccoloba diversifolia* (Pigeon Plum)
*Sabal palmetto* (Sabal Palm)

Avenue I presents a special condition for the streetscape due to the wide ROW and center median between MLK and 6th Street. This permits the selection of shade trees to enhance the pedestrian experience and signify the historic importance of Avenue I in the original Inlet City Plat. The center median will be landscaped with curved sabals to tie into the landscape scheme at the gateways and access points to the neighborhood, and enhanced with shrub planting.

**Linear Park along 9th Street**
A linear park running from Avenue L to Avenue G is proposed along the south side of 9th Street to provide a green park buffer between the proposed mixed use development along MLK Blvd and existing single family residences fronting 9th Street. This park will also provide opportunities for community activities and enhance the pedestrian experience. A continuous hedge is proposed as a green backdrop along the southern boundary of the park to screen the proposed mixed use area. Canopy trees such as live oaks and flowering trees such as *glaucous cassia* or *pink tabebuia* are proposed to create a shade along a meandering walkway.

**Pedestrian Greenway Connection along Avenue L and 10th Street**
Avenue L is currently an undeveloped right of way. The project team proposes utilizing this right of way as a green pedestrian connection, incorporating the principles of CPTED and “Smart Park” design to increase connectivity from the neighborhood to schools in the immediate area, as well as a proposed cultural center and neighborhood basketball court on the northwest corner of MLK Blvd. and Avenue L. This greenway will be open, clean, and simply designed to be easy to maintain. Canopy trees such as live oaks will be incorporated along a meandering walkway.

**Neighborhood “Smart Parks”**
There are seven proposed neighborhood “Smart Parks.” Six of these are located at the terminus of the north-south avenues: the south end of Avenue L, both the north and south ends of Avenue K, the north end of Avenue J, the north end of Avenue I, and the north end of Avenue H. Industrial uses border the neighborhood to the north, and utilizing the vacant ROWs as simple parks provide an aesthetic terminus to the view down the street, serving as a visual backdrop to separate the neighborhood from industrial sites. Flowering trees such as *glaucous cassia* or *pink tabebuia* will be incorporated to add visual interest and an endearing landscape element that improves residents’ view of their neighborhood. The seventh park is located adjacent to the southwest corner of the intersection of 6th street and Avenue H. This lot is currently abandoned/vacant, and is proposed as a park to balance the overall location and accessibility of parks throughout the neighborhood. These park spaces will be simple and open in their design to support CPTED principles and provide safe places for residents to enjoy. Program elements which may be proposed, include a children’s playground, a low-growing butterfly garden, a “bird condo,” informational kiosks featuring local heroes and/or historical/cultural storyboards.
### Riviera Beach Heights Future Action Plan CRA Estimate - Projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical Elements</th>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>CRA Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• (4) Terminal Parks on 10th</td>
<td></td>
<td>$ 1,021,176.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Complete 6th, 7th, 9th, 10 w/ Landscaping, Lighting, etc.</td>
<td>Landscaping, Clean Sidewalks, Lighting w/ Security Systems</td>
<td>$ 1,370,945.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Repair Streets and Sidewalks on Both Sides of Avenues K, H, I Includes Landscaping, Lighting, Security Systems, Street Signs</td>
<td></td>
<td>$ 531,115.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Enhance Lighting and Landscaping @ MLK w/ FDOT</td>
<td>Includes solar lighting &amp; security systems</td>
<td>$ 200,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Bury Overhead Power Lines In Residential Streets</td>
<td></td>
<td>$ 811,323.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Bury Overhead Power Lines In Business District</td>
<td></td>
<td>$ 104,129.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Permanent Entrance Monuments @ MLK, Old Dixie and Australian Intersections</td>
<td>Remove &amp; Replace Temporary Entrances, includes landscaping, security and the Business District Plaza</td>
<td>$ 500,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Bus Stops @ MLK, Old Dixie &amp; Australian Purchase Vacant &amp; Abandoned Lots</td>
<td>Includes security systems From The CRA</td>
<td>$ 100,000.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total | $ 4,638,688.00 |
Riviera Beach Heights Future Action Plan - Programs

Programmatic Elements

Safety

• Neighborhood Crime Watch
• Volunteers in Policing Program
• Private Security Company
• Safe Place Sign and Designation
• Abandoned/Vacant Lot
• Maintenance
• Code Enforcement Team

Social Engagement

• Community Center
• Park System Association
• Neighborhood Association
• Youth Build Program
Riviera Beach Heights Future Action Plan - Programs

Programmatic Elements Cont.

Social Engagement Cont.

• Community Garden & Market

Business and Neighborhood Unity

• Business Development Association

• Access to Old Dixie Hwy

• Access to Marina
• Neighborhood Commercial Use
• Incentive Program

Financial Assistance

• Business

• Residential

Land Use

• Rezone Selected Areas
A. Neighborhood Entrance Signs
B. Linear Park
C. Terminal Park
D. Community Plaza for Commercial District
E. Landscape Connectors for North and South Sides of Neighborhood
F. Landscaping and Lighting Working in Cooperation with FDOT
G. New Streets - Completing Infrastructure
H. Entry to Port of Palm Beach
I. Abandoned and Vacant Lots
Wayfinding and Lighting Layout Plan

Legend
Wayfinding
Lighting
Kiosk

(Actual quality of street lights TBD by photometric studies provided by electrical engineer.)
Future Action Plans & Community Empowerment

Riviera Beach Heights Revitalization Phase I

Australian and MLK, Looking South East
Existing Conditions

Key Plan
Future Action Plans & Community Empowerment

Riviera Beach Heights Revitalization Phase I

Proposed Conceptual Idea

Australian and MLK, Looking South East

Key Plan
Future Action Plans & Community Empowerment

Riviera Beach Heights Revitalization Phase I

Australian and MLK, Looking North East
Existing Conditions

Key Plan
Future Action Plans & Community Empowerment

Riviera Beach Heights Revitalization Phase I

Riviera Beach Community Redevelopment
April 03, 2012

Key Plan

Australian and MLK, Looking North East

Proposed Conceptual Idea
Riviera Beach Heights Revitalization Phase I

MLK and Avenue I Looking South
Proposed Conceptual Idea

Key Plan
Riviera Beach Heights Revitalization Phase I

Old Dixie Highway and MLK, Looking North West
Existing Conditions
Future Action Plans & Community Empowerment

Riviera Beach Heights Revitalization Phase I

Old Dixie Highway and MLK, Looking South West
Existing Conditions

Key Plan
Future Action Plans & Community Empowerment

Riviera Beach Heights Revitalization Phase I

Old Dixie Highway and MLK, Looking South West
Proposed Conceptual Idea

Key Plan
Port of Palm Beach Entrance at Old Dixie, Looking East
Existing Conditions
Riviera Beach Heights Revitalization Phase I

Port of Palm Beach Entrance at Old Dixie, Looking East
Proposed Conceptual Idea

Key Plan
Riviera Beach Heights Revitalization Phase I

Pocket Park on Avenue J, Looking North
Existing Conditions

Key Plan
Future Action Plans & Community Empowerment

Riviera Beach Heights Revitalization Phase I

Riviera Beach Community Redevelopment

April 03, 2012

6-33

Hero Park on Avenue I, Looking North
Existing Conditions

Key Plan
Hero Park on Avenue I, Looking North
Proposed Conceptual Idea
Abandoned Easement Located at Ave. L
Existing Conditions
Future Action Plans & Community Empowerment

Riviera Beach Heights Revitalization Phase I

Linear Park Connecting North and South Sides of Riviera Beach Heights at Ave. L
Proposed Conceptual Idea

Key Plan
Riviera Beach Heights Revitalization Phase I

Neighborhood Safety Initiative

- Shot Spotters
- Pan-Tilt-Zoom Cameras
- Neighborhood Crime Watch/ VIPS
- Emergency Phones

*To be included in all parks and selective neighborhood locations
The Existing CRA Boundary only includes part of the Riviera Beach Heights Neighborhood. The neighborhood revitalization efforts in this plan could be replicated and expanded throughout the entire Riviera Beach Heights neighborhood. Discussions with local residents indicate that the community desires that these efforts are expanded to the entire neighborhood. The CRA should consider expanding the boundaries to include all of the RBH Neighborhood which has a well defined boundary shown on the map above. The expanded area would include 5th to 1st street and would extend west of Australian Avenue approximately 3 blocks.