

Here's What's Happening in the Bayfront Community Redevelopment District

The Bayfront Redevelopment District is a four-mile section of U.S. 1 bounded by the City of Melbourne city limits on the north and to the Town of Malabar on the south. The Indian River Lagoon makes up the eastern boundary. The western boundary runs south from the U.S. 1 and University Boulevard intersection for approximately 500 feet, then west to the Florida East Coast (FEC) Railroad; south along the railroad about 2,200 feet; west along the city limits of Florida Avenue to Lipscomb Street; south on Lipscomb Street to Pacific Avenue; east on Pacific Avenue to Northview Street; south on Northview Street to R. J. Conlan Boulevard; south on R. J. Conlan Boulevard to Palm Bay Road; east on Palm Bay Road to the FEC Railroad; and south on the FEC Railroad to the Malabar town limits.

The City established the Bayfront Redevelopment District as a community redevelopment agency in 1999. A community redevelopment agency is defined as a separate public entity created by the local municipality in order to implement redevelopment activities outlined in Chapter 163 of the Florida Statutes. Seven (7) commissioners appointed by the City Council serve on the Bayfront Redevelopment Agency. The overall goal of the Bayfront Redevelopment Agency as stated in the adopted redevelopment plan is to develop, redevelop, and revitalize the area over a 30-year period. The ultimate goal of the Bayfront Redevelopment Plan is to have the district be developed as an attractive, inviting, and economically successful mixed-use environment that promotes a positive image and identity for the community.

The following lists some recent news, activities, and developments that have taken place within the Bayfront Redevelopment District.

New Development and Renovations:

- The Paravant Corporation had a grand opening in May 2001 at their \$6 million renovated building with equipment at the southwest corner of U.S. 1 and R. J. Conlan Blvd. At the end of 2002, Paravant merged with DRS and became DRS Tactical Systems. Façade and sign upgrades were made in the first of 2003. Initially there **were** 114 employees working at the site. Due to outgrowing the facility, DRS Tactical moved to larger quarters in Melbourne and DRS Reconnaissance and Surveillance moved into the building.
- Southeast Honda at the north end of U.S. 1 completed a \$.75 million renovation project to their facilities. The dealership has purchased the property to the north of their site and has expanded their business to the north.
- Due to Southeast Honda expansion, the Pence Septic and Land Materials Office has relocated to a new 2,100 sq. ft. building which was completed in October, 2005 at the southeast corner of Spence Drive and US 1. **The building, constructed in the Palm Bay Vernacular Architectural style, was the winner of the 2006 Keep Brevard Beautiful-Florida Today Best New Building in South Brevard.**

- Cox Truss Plant in the Kirby Industrial Park completed a new truss manufacturing facility in 2001 with a \$520,000 building at the northeast end of Kirby Avenue.
- MC Assembly has moved into the old Storage Tek/Documation facilities in the Kirby Industrial Park with 140 initial employees. A 100,000 square foot addition was completed at the site in February, 2005. The company has a total of 1,300 plus employees which makes MC Assembly the second largest manufacturing employer in the City.
- The 66-unit Venetian Bay luxury condominium development just south of the Shack Restaurant and north of the Rhum Cove Condominiums was completed in August, 2004. **Units go for \$350,000 plus.**
- The long awaited completion of the \$1.1 million Lagoon House, which is a gateway visitor's center and public information resource for the Indian River Lagoon Scenic Highway and the headquarters for the Marine Resources Council, occurred in the summer of 2004. The Marine Resources Council, is the tenant of the complex. A grand opening ceremony was held on April 2, 2005. Additionally the Lagoon House will provide environmental educational experiences and highlight the historical, archeological, cultural, natural, scenic and recreational resources available throughout the Indian River Lagoon area.
- The Greater Palm Bay Chamber has remodeled the existing Chamber building at U.S. Route 1 and Water Street into a Florida Vernacular style office building. The Bayfront Community Redevelopment Agency has provided a \$15,000 loan to the Chamber to help in renovating the building. The Chamber has taken advantage of the District's Landscape and Sign Grant Program. The Chamber moved into the building on July 7, 2006. A grand opening was held on August 24, August 2006.
- The old Crows Nest Restaurant has been demolished and the property has been sold. The new owners are developing permitting plans for a residential/office condominium complex to be built at the site to be called The Cape at Palm Bay. The developers have received a Preliminary Planned Community Redevelopment (PCR) district zoning in March 2006 by City Council to build a mixed use development proposing **64** residential condominium units and a total of 19,500 square feet of commercial office space. A public observation pier will also be provided. The development request has been forwarded to the Florida Department of Community Affairs for review and comments. **Comments are expected back from the State in the spring of 2007.** A Final Planned Community Redevelopment District has been applied for. **The Final Planned Redevelopment District application was heard by the Bayfront Community Redevelopment District on November 16, 2006 and the Planning and Zoning Board on December 6, 2006. Both Boards recommended approval of the project with conditions. The City Council will hear the request on January 4, 2007.**
- Construction has begun in the building of a 12,000 square foot structure on Kirby Circle that will house the Hamilton Masonry Company.

- Beta Max Hoist, a scaffold manufacturing company, has completed construction of a 44,706 square foot building at their property on Robert J. Conlan Boulevard, just south of Johnson Auto Sales.
- On August 15, 2006 City Council adopted requests to change the Comprehensive Plan Land Use designation and zoning to Multiple Family and RM-20 Zoning on four sites along the US-1 corridor. The sites include the old Indian River Cottages property across from the Castaway Cove Condominiums, the Days Inn site, a vacant property across from the Shack Restaurant, and the Tomasina Tile parcel across from the Yellow Dog Restaurant. Condominiums and mixed use commercial-residential are the planned uses.
- The Boozer Property located at 5120 Dixie Highway, NE, which is on the west side of US 1 and southwest of the Rhum Cove Condominiums has had its Comprehensive Plan Land Use changed from Commercial to Multifamily and a rezoning application has been approved to change from HC, Highway Commercial to RM-20, Multiple Family Residential. The City is waiting on submittal of development plans for the property.
- A small scale Comprehensive Plan Land Use Amendment and rezoning was approved to change from Commercial land use to Multiple Family Residential land use on the property located on the west side of Dixie Highway, which is south of and adjacent to the BP gasoline station/convenience store. A 3 story, 13 unit townhouse development to be called Barrington Bluffs is presently under construction. (See the Building Projects Status Reports)
- AAA Boat & RV Mini-Storage received a building permit to construct a self storage and a boat/RV storage facility at the northeast corner of Kirby Circle and R.J. Conlan Boulevard at the traffic signal. 36,284 square feet of building is under construction at the site. (See the Building Projects Status Reports)
- The Riverside Professional Office, a 2-story, 6,800 square foot building located on .55 acres at the southeast corner of Palm Drive and US 1 was completed in late spring 2006. **The engineering consulting firm Wade-Trim is the primary tenant of the building.**
- Demolition began on the storm damaged Port Malabar Shopping Plaza property on July 11, 2006. The new owner has plans to construct a multi-story mixed used commercial retail/office/residential development at the site. An application for a Preliminary Planned Community Redevelopment District zoning was approved with a list of conditions to be met on the Final PCR application at hearings held in December 2005 by the Bayfront Community Redevelopment Agency and in January, 2006 by the Planning and Zoning Board and City Council. The application has been sent to the State DCA for its review and must come back for a Final Planned Community Redevelopment district review and approval by the Redevelopment Agency, Planning & Zoning Board, and City Council. The Final Planned Community Redevelopment District application has been put on hold while the developer has appealed code enforcement fines that accumulated on the property prior to the building demolition.

- A request for land use and rezoning from Residential to Commercial has been approved for property at the southeast corner of R. J. Conlan Blvd. and Southover Dr. This request was heard in October 2005 by the Redevelopment Agency and in November 2005 by the Planning and Zoning Board and City Council. The applicant plans to expand and improve the existing commercial strip center.
- The Main Street City Hall building that was damaged by Hurricanes Frances and Jeanne in 2004 will be remodeled with Florida Vernacular architecture. The building will become a small business incubator. The project is presently being bid for construction. **The bid award for construction is scheduled for January, 2007. If the construction bid is awarded in January, construction could begin around February/March of 2007.** For more information on the incubator contact Mr. Bill Pehaim at 952-3429.
- A groundbreaking ceremony took place on October 27, 2005 for the Maudlin International Trucks and Engines Parts and Services facility to be constructed on Robert J. Conlan Boulevard just north of the traffic signal at the intersection of Kirby Circle and R. J. Conlan Boulevard. The new 25,000 square foot building with 12 bays and \$500,000 in parts inventory will create at least 25 new jobs. The business opened in July, 2006. A grand opening was held on August 21, 2006.
- **City staff is presently reviewing site plans for the Falls Commerce Industrial development, a project proposing 150,000 square feet of industrial-office flex space on Kirby Circle; ATM Recycling, a 20,000 square foot industrial recycling facility; and a seven (7) unit, 7,925 square feet retail center proposed on the north side of Palm Bay Road just east of Rock Lane.**

Park and Landscape Improvements:

- Landscape improvements between University Boulevard and Kingswood Drive have been installed with a \$147,000 Florida Department of Transportation Highway Beautification Grant, which was applied for by the Marine Resource Council (MRC). The Bayfront Redevelopment Agency helped secure this grant with \$10,000 of matching funds. The landscaping will be maintained by the MRC.
- **The City is applying for permits from the Florida Department of Transportation and the St. Johns River Water Management District to construct an at-grade walkway of varying widths along the Bay near US-1 and Palm Bay Road, connecting the sidewalk at Stearns Park to Bay Boulevard. A footbridge will be constructed over a drainage outfall across from the Chamber Building. Proposed future improvements include an arched gateway feature, a plaza, observation pier, canoe launch, picnic areas, and landscaping. Permitting applications to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and the Florida Department of Transportation are being prepared. Construction of the walkway and footbridge along with decorative site/street lights is anticipated to occur in 2007.**
- A Florida Department of Transportation Highway Beautification Grant of \$50,000 was awarded to the City for landscaping improvements at the US 1 Turkey Creek Bridge. The planting of sabal palms, calypso oleander, saw palmetto, sand cordgrass and blanket flower along the north and south sides of the bridge was completed in the summer of 2002.

- The Port Malabar Garden Club and Richard Rickert, an Eagle Scout candidate, renovated and relandscaped the Port Malabar Boulevard monolith at US 1 in May 2003. The Bayfront Redevelopment Agency paid for plant materials and sod.
- Sunflower Landscaping has relandscaped the entrance sign tracts at Port Malabar Blvd. and the railroad tracks. The project was completed in 2003.
- The Bayfront Redevelopment Agency has partnered with Keep Brevard Beautiful and the Marine Resources Council to eliminate Brazilian Pepper Trees, an invasive non-native species, from the banks of the Indian River Lagoon through a continuing series of “Pepper Tree Busts” **in the BCRD**. The removal of the non-native trees opens up the scenic vista of the Lagoon and helps native vegetation grow which in turn helps to control erosion of the bluffs along U.S. 1.
- The Florida Department of Transportation (DOT) has spent an estimated \$31 million in emergency shoreline restoration work along the US 1 – Indian River Lagoon shoreline which experienced severe erosion from the effects of Hurricanes Frances and Jeanne in 2004. The DOT work has removed miles of Brazilian Pepper trees and other exotic vegetation and has armored the shoreline with rocks to protect the road right of way. A positive aspect of the project is that the work has opened up the scenic vista of the Indian River Lagoon.
- Redevelopment Gateway and Subdistrict signage utilizing the City’s new logo and tag line were installed in March 2004 by Routed Signs, Inc. at the entryways to the redevelopment district and other locations within the district.
- The directional sign for Castaway Point Park at US -1 and Bay Boulevard was paid for by the Bayfront Community Redevelopment Agency.
- The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) will be resurfacing US-1 in 2006 from R. J. Conlan Boulevard to past the southern city limits. The FDOT will provide \$150,000 to the City to provide for landscaping within the road right of way. This landscaping will be added to the bond landscape project mentioned below.
- A low profile boardwalk was constructed at Castaway Point Park connecting the two (2) piers at the site and thus providing handicap accessibility between the piers. A \$50,000 Florida Inland Navigation District grant and a \$50,000 match by the City funded the improvement.

District Studies and Public Works Projects:

- The Bayfront Redevelopment District’s engineering and planning consultant team of Baskerville and Donovan, Inc. and Lawandales Planning Associates worked on developing concept plans and visions for the Bayfront Village Area, US 1 corridor, the Driskell Heights neighborhood and the Palm Bay Road corridor. Workshop meetings were held with the City Council in January 2004 and with the public on April 13th, 2004 and other occasions to help in developing the vision and concept plans.
- The concept plan for the Palm Bay Road corridor from R.J. Conlan Boulevard to US – 1 was approved by the Agency. The plan proposes such enhancements as intersection street graphics, on-street parking, pedestrian sidewalks, a traffic circle at Main Street and Palm Bay Road, crosswalks at intersections, etc. The total cost involved is estimated to be \$7.88 million. Funding is not available at this time.

- Based on the visioning and concept plans the BCRA has developed a prioritized capital improvements program that includes the following projects:

Phase 1:

- Bayfront Walkway
- Property Acquisition (3 sites)
- Castaway Beach Park Improvements/Expansion
- US-1 Landscaping
- US-1 Sidewalk
- Conlan Blvd. Landscaping
- Small Business Incubator Parking Addition

Phase 1 Total Estimated Cost - \$5.8 million

Phase 2:

- Palm Bay Road Enhancements (Lighting, Landscaping, Sidewalks, etc.)
- US-1 Decorative Lighting
- Conlan Blvd. Decorative Lighting

Phase 2 Total Estimated Cost - \$11.4 million

In order to construct these extensive improvements much sooner in time and thereby enhancing the redevelopment area as soon as possible, the Agency's economic consultant, Fishkind & Associates, completed a finance plan that shows that the Agency can finance its capital improvements via two bond issues, one in 2006 and another in 2011. The BCRA approved a resolution proposing to bond the phase 1 projects with a \$6 million bond/bank loan at its April 11, 2006 meeting and City Council at a special meeting on April 27th authorized the phase 1 bond. The bond was closed on June 30th. The Agency issued a request for qualifications for engineering consulting firms to provide detailed permit plans and construction management of the projects. The engineering firms of Wade Trim and Miller Legg were chosen to be the Continuing Engineering Consultants for the projects at the regular September, 2006 BCRA meeting. Work on the projects will then begin in October of 2006 with construction beginning on some of the projects around the first of 2007.

- Work on the Liberia Avenue Linear Park has been completed in the Driskell Heights neighborhood (Powell's Subdivision). The project has piped-in the open drainage ditch along the north side of Liberia Avenue and converted parts of the Liberia Avenue roadway into a linear park with a trail and park improvements. A system of roundabouts and loop streets are included as part of the overall street network in the neighborhood. Landscaping was installed in July/August and benches should be installed in August. A grand opening celebration was held on September 30th from 10 am to 2 pm. A neighborhood water park near the intersection of Liberia Avenue and Northview Street was completed in April 2004.
- The paving of Wipperman and Dacotah Avenues off of Orange Blossom Trail was completed in the summer of 2004.

- The Redevelopment Agency's consultants have prepared a Design Standards Specifications Manual and Catalog to be used by both the public and private sectors as a guide for development site features such as lighting, landscaping, benches, trash receptacles, etc. The purpose of the Standards Manual and Catalog is to provide a consistent development theme in the District. The decorative street lights mentioned under "New Development and Renovations" was based on the lights chosen in the manual.
- Eleven (11) derelict boats, the remnants of Hurricanes Frances and Jeanne in 2004 and Hurricane Wilma in 2005, were removed from the Indian River Lagoon, Palm Bay and Turkey Creek in July 2006. Funding for the vessel removal was provided by the Florida Inland Navigation District, the Bayfront Redevelopment Agency and the City of Palm Bay.
- **The resurfacing of US-1 from Robert J. Conlan Boulevard to Malabar Road has begun. The repaving of the road should occur around January 2007. The project will take 180 days to complete.**

Business Grants and Loans:

- Economic Incentive Grants –Façade, Beautification, and Business Recruitment grants are available to commercial, mixed use and industrial businesses in the Bayfront Redevelopment District.

The Façade Grant will provide a 50% match for storefront improvements up to a maximum of \$5,000 per storefront. Contact Mr. Bob Williams, 952-3429 for more information on the façade grant.

The District's Landscape Grant has now expanded into a Beautification Grant which can be used to assist property owners in upgrading not only their landscaping but their signage and parking lot facilities as well. Money for building demolition is also available from the Beautification Grant. Beautification Grant awards of up to \$2,000 per program (landscaping, signage, parking lot, and demolition) with a \$5,000 maximum per property are available on a first come first serve basis.

The District's Business Recruitment Incentive Program grant has also been expanded to include not only the recruitment of new business to existing buildings in the Redevelopment District, but the construction of new - commercial and industrial building square footage in the District. For more information contact the Economic Development Department at 321-952-3426.

- **The Redevelopment District's Beautification Grant has been expanded to include platted residential neighborhood entryway features such as monument signs and landscaping. The residential entryway grant will provide a 50% match for the cost of signage and landscaping with a \$3,000 maximum per entryway.**

- The City has Micro Enterprise Loans and discounts on Economic Development Loans to businesses located in the redevelopment district (contact the City's Housing & Neighborhood Development Services Division – 952-3429).

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Revisions in bold font