



Neighborhood News

A PUBLICATION OF THE LAKE WORTH COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

SPRING 2009 EDITION

BICYCLE NETWORK PLAN



In a joint effort with the City Planning Department the CRA will be producing a Bicycle Network Plan to provide information on the current facilities, recommend improvements, provide information on way-finding signage, recommend routes and provide design guidelines. Other components of the plan include the creation of a bicycle network map, and the implementation of a bicycle policy for Lake Worth that can be integrated into other planning documents.

Kimley Horn began data collection efforts, an existing conditions inventory and meetings with Staff, CRA and City Commissioners in December. A design studio was held on January 9, 2009. A public presentation was also held on the 9th in the evening to report on progress to date and to receive additional input. This information, in addition to further research and refinement will continue to be developed over the next couple of months. A draft plan will be presented to the CRA Board by

early Spring. The Plan will also be presented to the City Commission at a later date.

Once the plan is approved, the City and CRA will meet and discuss the recommended implementation steps and phasing detailed in the final report. A comprehensive strategy will be created so improvements are aligned to produce the most impact in the areas of greatest need. With continued coordination with the County and the Metropolitan Transportation Organization (MPO), the City could be eligible to apply for additional funding from other agencies.



EcoCentre: The “Living” Building in Lake Worth

As of November the US Green Building Council South Florida Chapter (USGBC South Florida Chapter) opened up their administrative office in the EcoCentre in downtown Lake Worth. The US Green Building Council South Florida Chapter is a nonprofit organization that encourages and embraces the adoption of innovative building practices that conserve land, energy, water and resource materials. The mission of the USGBC is to transform the way buildings and communities are designed, built and operated, enabling environmentally and socially responsible healthy environment that improves the community.

“Romano Law Group is honored to have the South Florida Chapter of the U.S. Green Building Council choose EcoCentre, the Living Building in Lake Worth as its headquarters. To have a prominent, national environmental organization such as the USGBC based in our city demonstrates that Lake Worth is quickly becoming a leader of the green movement in our state.”

~ John F. Romano, senior partner of Romano Law Group and owner of EcoCentre, the Living Building

The EcoCentre is Florida’s first office building of its kind – a 33,000 sq ft, four-story structure incorporating natural “living” systems and “green” technologies designed to save energy, reduce CO2 emissions and water consumption, and create an overall healthier environment. The project is registered with the USGBC and pursuing LEED Gold, which is one of the highest certifications, recognizing that the project has been planned, designed and completed with a primary goal of environmental enhancement.

The EcoCentre is described as a “living” building because it has its own ecosystem – all of its living systems, its occupants, plants and micro-organisms interact with its non-living physical features. The result is a holistically designed structure that produces a self-sustaining eco-environment and healthy workplace. The EcoCentre features a ‘Living Machine’ which is a high-tech system that allows for on-site purification and recycling of water. The building is topped by a living roof that, when full-grown, will mimic a miniature wetlands project. The roof features maturing plants, trees and flowers that will play a part in the building’s water system and environmental life cycle.



EcoCentre’s nature-based systems will save approximately 200,000 gallons of water per year, reducing its impact on the city’s water infrastructure by recycling water from lavatories and showers, capturing and storing rainwater, and using water-efficient plumbing fixtures and condensate capture from its air-conditioning system.



EcoCentre is located at 1005 Lake Avenue

LAKE WORTH CRA Board of Commissioners

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CRA Community Police Officer: CORP. RICHARD SCIARRINO

It is my pleasure to introduce myself as the newly assigned Deputy of the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office District 14 – City of Lake Worth Substation and the Community Redevelopment Agency. My name is Corporal Richard Sciarrino, and I have been with the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office since 2001. I have an extensive background in Community Policing and Crime Prevention and have a philosophy that anything can be accomplished when the community and law enforcement work together in a cohesive partnership. Together we can maximize the quality of life in the city of Lake Worth in partnership with those we serve, and serve with.

Corporal Richard Sciarrino

I.D. 6940

Community Policing, District 14

Lake Worth Community
Redevelopment Agency

(561) 688-3000

SciarrinoR@pbso.org

10TH AVENUE NORTH GATEWAY GROUNDBREAKING

Reconstruction of 10th Avenue North commenced in October 2008. This work is part of the CRA's Gateway project and involves the beautification and reconstruction of 10th Avenue from North A Street to Dixie Highway.

The Gateways Project was identified in the 2001 Lake Worth Redevelopment Plan as a means to transform the City's western entrances from Interstate 95 (6th Avenue South and 10th Avenue North) into attractive, safe, pedestrian-friendly corridors that will encourage positive redevelopment in the City's west side and provide efficient access to jobs, services and centers of trade.

The 10th Avenue North Gateway Project is a \$8 million dollar streetscape project that involves the transfer of roadway ownership from Palm Beach County to the City of Lake Worth. The planning and design process for both Gateway's began in 2005. The first phase of the project began in 2006 with the 6th Avenue South project which was completed in March 2007. The Gateway project is not only meant to provide an attractive entrance to our City, but to also spur redevelopment along both streets.

Properties along the roadway were rezoned in 2007 to allow for mixed-use development and higher densities. To encourage the assemblage of properties and the construction of mixed-use development the CRA created a grant program that provides funding to help cover the costs of pre-development services such as architectural, engineering and planning fees, attorney and environmental costs.

On December 5th, a groundbreaking ceremony took place along 10th Ave. North. The ceremony included speeches from Mayor Jeff Clemens, Palm Beach



Groundbreaking on 10th Avenue North pictured left to right: CRA Commissioner Donna Ross, City Commissioner Suzanne Mulvehill, CRA Vice-Chair Brendan Lynch, CRA Chair Mark Rickards, CRA Commissioner Shanon Materio, Mayor Jeff Clemens, Vice-Mayor Jo-Ann Golden, CRA Executive Director Joan Oliva, CRA Commissioner Ed Grimm, CRA Commissioner Wes Blackman, County Commissioner Shelly Vana, City Commissioner Retha Lowe and CRA Commissioner Wayne Marcinkoski.

County Commissioner Shelley Vana and CRA Chairman Mark Rickards. The public was invited to attend and encouraged to ask questions regarding the status of the project.

Once complete, the 10th Avenue Gateway project will feature new brick pavers, landscaped medians, new lighting features, pedestrian benches, neighborhood entry walls and a resurfaced roadway. All overhead utilities will be undergrounded to provide enhanced and dependable service to customers. In addition, existing infrastructure under the roadway, such as storm drains and water and sewer lines will be upgraded to create more capacity for private sector redevelopment along these corridors and reduce the need for costly future investments in public infrastructure. The expected completion date is December 2009. During the next nine months, various streets and intersections will be closed for construction related work. For construction and roadway closure information or for more information on assemblage grants, please contact the CRA office or visit our website: www.lakeworthcra.org.

A Green Lake Worth: Living With Energy Conservation



The Mayor's Climate Protection Task Force was created in 2007 in an effort to promote energy conservation. The Task Force makes recommendations to assist the City in reducing its overall energy consumption.

The City of Lake Worth hired Sue Hersey, a highly respected utility analyst to do a thorough analysis of the City's energy usage. In a presentation to the City Commission in December of 2008, Ms. Hersey noted that peak usage (the moment of greatest demand in each year) was a smaller spike than is typical. In addition, the peak usage of 88 megawatts is significantly lower than the 100+ megawatts peak in 2005. This indicates that citizens have embraced conservation measures and are making them part of their daily lives. Thank you and congratulations to all of us!

In this second half of winter, we can dramatically decrease our usage by turning off our central heat & A/C systems and capturing the heat of the sun through our windows on cool days, and opening our windows as the days warm up. If you have not

already done so, change the bulbs you use most, for example, the exterior lights and your reading light, for compact fluorescents lights (CFL's). Compared to general service incandescent lamps, CFL's give off the same amount of visible light, but generally use less power.

In addition to monthly cleaning of your A/C filters, there is an excellent product available to clean your A/C coils once a year, a foaming product sold under various names at Lowe's and Home Depot. The cleaner removes dirt and mold from both the interior and the exterior of window units and from the compressor of central units. It increases efficiency significantly and in the case of window units, dramatically improves the quality of the air provided.

Thanks for your care and attention, and please remember, **"When not in use, turn off the juice".**

~ Laurence McNamara, Vice-Chairman,
Mayors' Climate Protection Task Force

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

As a Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), the state of Florida allows certain powers and duties that are designed to promote investment and redevelopment of properties in order to cure conditions of slum and blight within its geographic area.

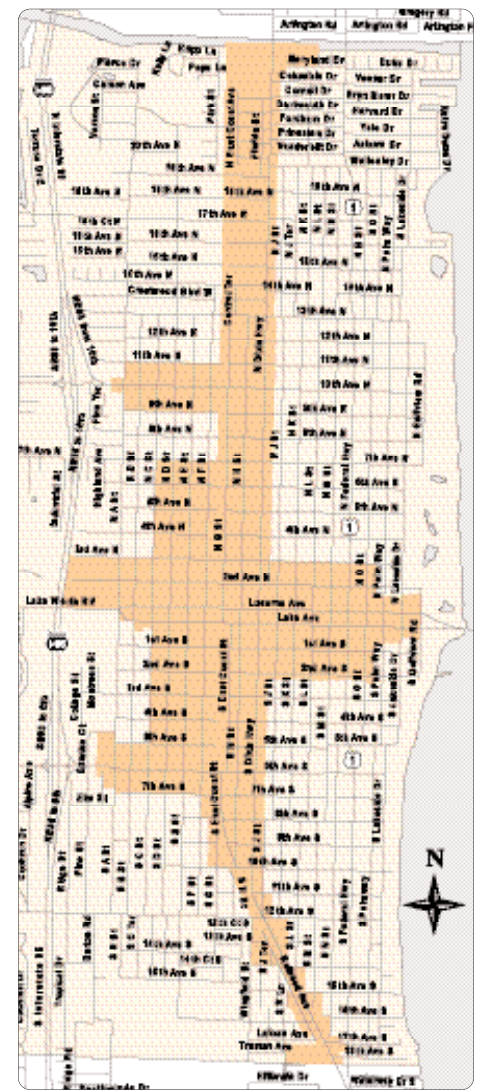
The CRA boundaries are unique in Lake Worth. In the N. Dixie Hwy. extent of the district, the eastern side is made up entirely of the shallow commercial properties. On the western side, the district goes all the way to the FEC RR tracks, which includes multi-family zoned areas as well as commercially zoned areas. In summary, there is a lot of land area within the CRA district that is predominantly residential. This is both good and bad. It is good in that as the commercial area redevelops and better reaches its tax revenue producing potential, more funds can be directed to this area to address the slum and blight conditions in some of our most challenged neighborhoods. The bad is that it's potential to contribute additional tax revenue is not as great as commercial properties within the district as it is essentially in a "built out" condition - property values will rise and fall with the overall real estate market.

It's important to remember that when Lake Worth was originally laid out as a city in the 1920s, Dixie Hwy. - and the FEC Railroad - were the main means of coming and going. There was a great reliance, one that we shared with other coastal communities, on tourism. Looking back into historical material from the 1950s, the financial powerhouse in this community was the mom-and-pop ownership of motels and commercial establishments along US Highway 1. It was the commercial strip - where you could find all sorts of goods and services directed at those traveling on US 1. In its day, this area contributed greatly to the property tax base of the community.

When I-95 was built in the 1970s, all the "interstate" traffic that shuffled through the city was diverted to the new highway. Dixie Hwy became a local arterial and properties along this corridor still hasn't recovered from that shift. A recent study authored by the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council identified an imbalance between the number of people living in Lake Worth and the proximity of normal goods and services that residents require on a day-to-day basis. This creates an economically unsustainable situation where employment and shopping areas are distant from the city's residential areas. This situation requires residents to travel outside the city for those opportunities - using fossil fuel powered motor vehicles that contribute to global warming and spending our community's economic resources in other places. By attracting redevelopment opportunities which will provide jobs and a better selection of goods and services, the CRA can help address this imbalance. This will result in a higher quality of life in Lake Worth that is more economically and environmentally sound. This is a future that we can all embrace.

~ Wes Blackman, CRA Commissioner

LAKE WORTH CRA BOUNDARY MAP



WELCOME! New Businesses in Lake Worth

Lake Worth CRA welcomes these new businesses in the downtown:

Nature's Way - 517 Lake Avenue

Rita's Ice - 411 Lake Avenue

Kilwin's - 512 Lake Avenue

Kava Bar - 508 D Lake Avenue

John A. Rooney - 508 B Lake Avenue

Ouzo Blue - 707 Lake Avenue

Bali Imports - 628 Lake Avenue

Tiki Tanner - 603 Lake Avenue

Dream Some Jewelry - 413 Lake Avenue

If you are a new business and would like to be included in the CRA's newsletter please contact the CRA office at 561-493-2550.

Banner Project

The CRA recently implemented a Street Banner Program. The first phase of the program included 6th Avenue South from A Street to Dixie Highway. The goal of the program is to create a distinct and visual impact when entering the City. The CRA completed Phase I of the Gateways on 6th Avenue South in February 2007. Since then colorful banners that have been installed provide the City with a sense of place, help activate public space, promote a positive image for the City and add vitality to the streetscape. The CRA hopes to work with the City and install banners in other entrance ways and interest points in the City.





LAKE WORTH COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

29 SOUTH J STREET, SUITE 1 • LAKE WORTH, FL 33460 • T: 561 493 2550 F: 561 493 2549 • LAKEWORTHCRA.ORG

“The Lake Worth CRA is investing in our community to revitalize and rebuild our neighborhoods and commercial corridors.

We are dedicated to maintaining the character of the City, responding to community needs and encouraging sustainable economic growth to improve the quality of life for our residents and the future health of our City.”

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BROWNFIELD UPDATE

In November, the CRA conducted a half-day Brownfield workshop at the City's Municipal Golf Course. This workshop provided the public with an opportunity to learn about the numerous financial benefits of being designated a Brownfield area. Speakers at the workshop included professionals from the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council. Technical experts were also on hand to answer questions concerning the potential contamination of property and assigning liability.

The entire CRA district was designated a Brownfield area in 2004. A result of this designation was the awarding of grant funds from the EPA to be used towards environmental property assessments. Brownfields are abandoned, idled, or underused industrial or commercial properties where expansion, reuse, or redevelopment may be complicated by real or perceived environmental conditions. Most commercial lenders require that an environmental assessment be completed prior to any real estate transaction.

The CRA will pay for environmental assessments to any property located within the CRA district. Please contact the CRA office for more information regarding this exciting opportunity.

In an effort to be environmentally responsible, the CRA is making its newsletter available in a digital PDF format. **If you have access to e-mail, we ask that you please e-mail us at cra@lakeworth.org with the subject line; Mailing List.** We will then remove you from our hard-copy mailing list and instead send correspondence to you via the internet.

Events & Meetings

EVENING ON THE AVENUES

Held the 1st and 3rd Friday of every month with live music and arts & crafts. We encourage visitors to stroll the Avenue and visit downtown boutiques and restaurants.

BIKE NIGHT

Every Thursday in Downtown Lake Worth on Lake Avenue

GREAT AMERICAN CLEAN UP

April 18th at The Church of Nazarene located on 2nd Avenue North and D Street

BUSINESS WORKSHOP

May 15th
Lake Worth Municipal Golf Course

TROPIC FEST

4th of July at Bryant Park
Celebrate our nation's Independence Day in Lake Worth with live music and fireworks.

The Lake Worth CRA meets the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of every month at 6:00pm at City Hall, Commission Chambers. For more information visit us online at www.lakeworthcra.org