



2013 Merritt Island Redevelopment Plan Update

Merritt Island Redevelopment Agency
Brevard County Board of County Commissioners
December 2013





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A special thank you to Ann Rembert, Brevard County Planning & Development Department



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Executive Summary

THE GOAL OF THE MERRITT ISLAND REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY (MIRA) IS THE BETTERMENT OF THE MERRITT ISLAND CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT.

INTRODUCTION

In 1989, the Brevard County Board of County Commissioners established the Merritt Island Redevelopment Agency (MIRA). At that time the Commission designated the District's boundaries and set up the funding mechanism in accordance with Chapter 163, Part III, Florida Statutes. The purpose of MIRA was to develop and implement a redevelopment plan to eliminate slum and blight conditions within the district. In 2011 MIRA recognized that the very conditions that were in existence in 1989 had again become visible in other areas of the Island necessitating action by the Brevard County Commission. Seeking to arrest and alter those conditions, and prevent the decline of the economic base, District 2 Commissioner Chuck Nelson and the MIRA Board commissioned a "Findings of Necessity" study and boundary expansion to apply redevelopment tools in two new areas of Merritt Island: the Barge Canal/SR 528 area and SR 3 north of the existing district, and the Cone Road area to the south.

MIRA has been highly successful in achieving many of the goals and objectives of the early Plan and completing many of the originally planned projects. However, new areas of concern within Merritt Island and a new century have dictated a need to update the Plan and provide an opportunity to consolidate the overall redevelopment strategies for the entire district, to establish a new vision and mission, and to create a unified approach to enhance and continue the positive outcomes of the Agency's work.

This plan update provides an opportunity to reassess the goals and objectives of the agency and define new implementation plans, while recognizing recent changes in the economic environment within Brevard County. This updated plan is not only a presentation of

MIRA successes and progress, it creates a renewed mission, along with direction for financial commitments and expenditures that are needed to reverse blight conditions, promote economic and business development, create a sound climate for public and private sector investments, and foster a healthy and safe living and working environment for all citizens within the redevelopment areas.

The plan is intended to serve as a comprehensive resource for community leaders, as well as the MIRA Board and staff, who are engaged in implementing projects, programs and policies in the interest of improving physical, personal, social and economic conditions on Merritt Island. Projects undertaken by the Agency will be directed by the Plan and supported through continued discussions with the residents, community members, and other agencies having a role in redevelopment activities.

THE PLAN'S PURPOSE

The stated purpose of the Plan is to help MIRA plan, fund and implement any and all public programs, projects, and activities and stimulate private sector's actions which:

- Serve to eliminate and reduce blighted conditions;
- Establish community policing to encourage compliance with established community standards and to assure the safety and security of people and property;
- Provide and encourage the expansion of stormwater management systems and improvements to other public infrastructure;
- Provide and support improvement of the roadway network for enhanced circulation, mobility and parking; and promote multi-modal, pedestrian and bicycle-safe infrastructure;
- Provide and encourage public and private landscaping and streetscape enhancements to beautify the area;
- Encourage and provide incentives for appropriate economic development by the private sector or through public - private partnerships;
- Encourage and foster the development of activities which enhance Merritt Island's cultural and historic resources and improve the quality of life.

PLAN ORGANIZATION

The Plan is divided into nine Chapters and begins with the history of Merritt Island (Chapter 1) and the establishment of MIRA and the accomplishments of the Agency (Chapter 2).



Executive Summary

OVERVIEW

The Merritt Island Redevelopment Agency has successfully implemented a redevelopment program which includes the initial Core Area (SR 520 area) as well as the State Road 3 Corridor. The program has resulted in the rejuvenation, aesthetic enhancement and economic improvement of these areas. The Merritt Island Redevelopment Agency will continue to play an important role in this effort with the recent addition of the Cone Road Sub-Area and the Barge Canal/SR3 Sub-Area. The MIRA 2013 Plan Update focuses on the existing conditions, as of 2013, in each of the Sub-Areas and summarizes the needs and issues which must still be addressed.

This document includes a separate chapter for each of the sub-areas targeted for redevelopment. These areas are shown on the adjacent map. The sub-areas are as follows:

- Barge Canal (Chapter 3)
- SR 3/Courtenay Parkway (Chapter 4)
- Cone Road (Chapter 5)
- SR 520/Core Area (Chapter 6) with a more detailed assessment of the Merritt Square Mall Focus Area (Chapter 7).

In order to document the existing conditions in each sub-area land use characteristics were inventoried by tax parcel. These included:

- Existing land use type
- Future land use designation
- Zoning District
- Appearance
- Structural Condition
- Access
- Parking
- Compatibility
- Market Value
- Age of Structure
- Acreage

The Property Appraiser Data Base, Field Surveys, and interviews with MIRA Staff and Consultants were used to assemble information to develop the plan.

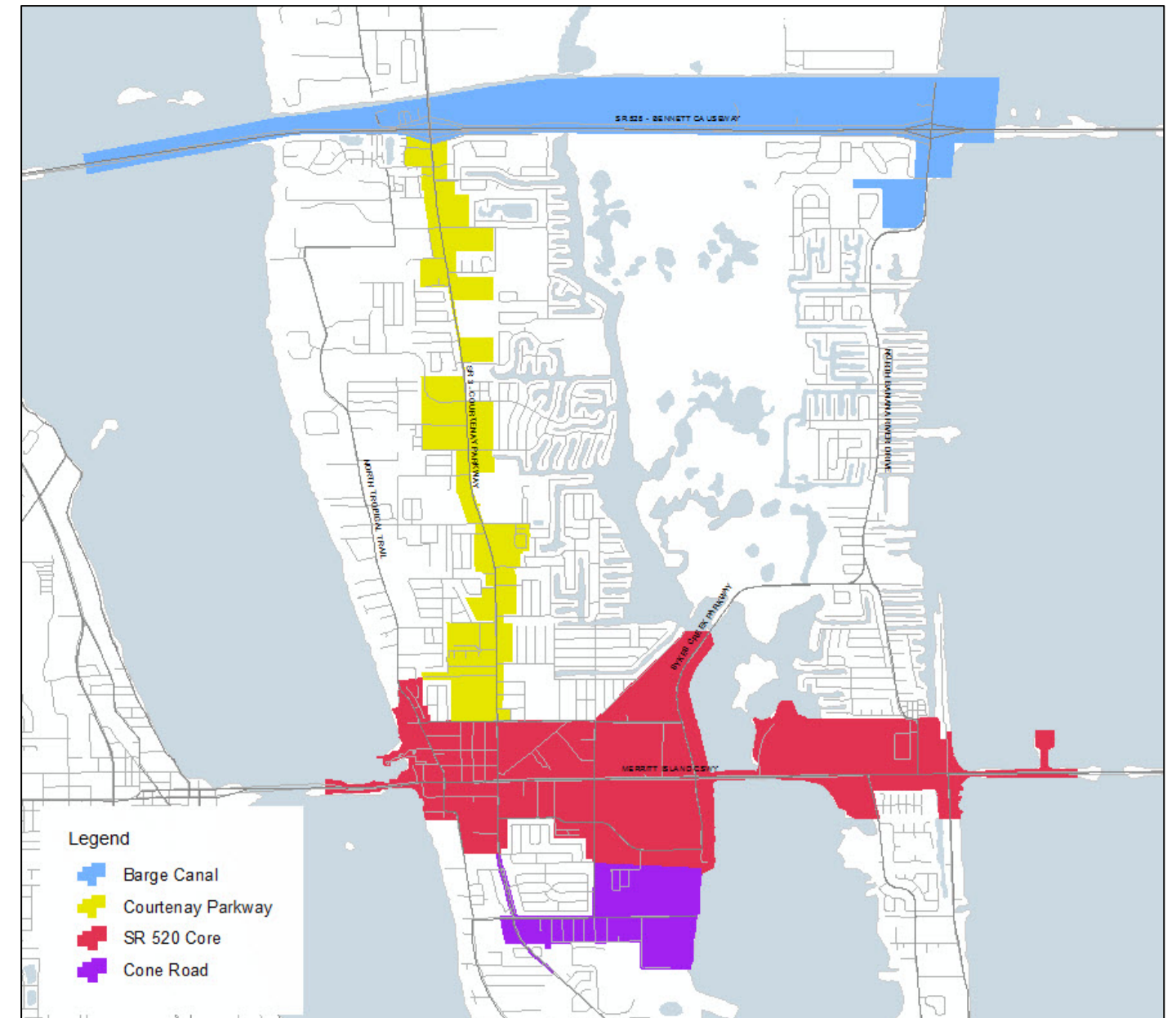
The following infrastructure was inventoried and existing deficiencies were identified:

- Water
- Sewer
- Stormwater Drainage
- Roads and pedestrian systems

Conditions of blight were also identified; these include: substandard structures, substandard lots, inadequate access, inadequate drainage, inadequate roads and sidewalks, and lack of central sewer.

All of the above mentioned data was analyzed to determine the remaining needs within each sub-area and various projects and activities have been identified for consideration by the Merritt Island Redevelopment Agency to address the needs of the sub-areas.

Finally, this document provides an overview of the options available to MIRA to fund the proposed projects (Chapter 8) and MIRA's obligations and responsibilities relating to preparation and implementation of the Plan (Chapter 9).



Merritt Island Redevelopment Area Sub-Area Boundaries



Chapter 1 - History

HISTORY OF MERRITT ISLAND

Stretching nearly forty miles north to south and six miles east to west at its widest, Merritt Island is a true island surrounded by lagoons, waterways, marshes and estuaries. To the west lies the Indian River Lagoon, an important navigational corridor used for centuries for trade and transportation and which today is a part of the busy Intracoastal Waterway, extending the entire length of Merritt Island. To the east lies the Banana River Lagoon, an internal waterway formed by Newfound Harbor and Sykes Creek that runs north and south partially through the island. Situated between the coastal barrier ridge and the Florida Mainland, Merritt Island was, in the past, reachable only by boat.

The Spanish first referred to Merritt Island as “Isa de Punta de Piedra” or Stoney Point. This referred to the tip of Merritt Island, now known as Dragon’s Point, which has a distinctive outcropping of coquina rock that has been eroded by water into fantastic shapes. Although there is some uncertainty over the naming of the island, it is thought to have its origin due to the generosity of the King of Spain. It is surmised that the King granted all of the island to Captain Pedro Marratt the head surveyor of the Spanish governor in East Florida from 1791-1800. A land grant to John McIntosh refers to “an island in the Rio Ais, known by the name of the Isla de Punta de Piedra or by the Isla de Marrat”. Perhaps the Isla de Marrat was turned into the English equivalent of Merritt’s Island. Although no one really knows how the exact naming came about, the name of the island was known as Merritt’s Island as early as 1803. The earliest map to which Merritt’s Island is named is on a Tanner’s map made in 1823.

PRE EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT

When the area was first visited by European explorers- they encountered an indigenous people known as the Ais (pronounced Ah EES). The Ais lived in villages and towns along the shores of the great lagoon called by the Spanish, Rio de Ais, and which is now called the Indian River. The Native American settlements can be traced from Cape Canaveral to the Port St Lucie inlet and are predominately clustered close to the Atlantic coastal region. The Indian River served as a transportation and trade route. The Ais used the lagoon to trade with their neighbors, the Timucuan Indians to the north and the Jaega to the south. The river’s plentiful bounty of fish and shellfish provided their main sustenance. Turkey, duck, deer, raccoon, opossum, rabbit and other small game made up about 15 percent of their diet. The abundance of food sustained a large number of warriors within the tribe. The Ais were often hostile and were reported to be cannibalistic. Jesuit missionaries were sent by the Spanish to live among the Ais and convert them. However, the Ais often sacrificed the priests in their Corn Festivals which discouraged further contact.

Over time, the Ais were eliminated from the area by diseases contracted from the Spanish and by the British who later drove the Spanish out of the area and



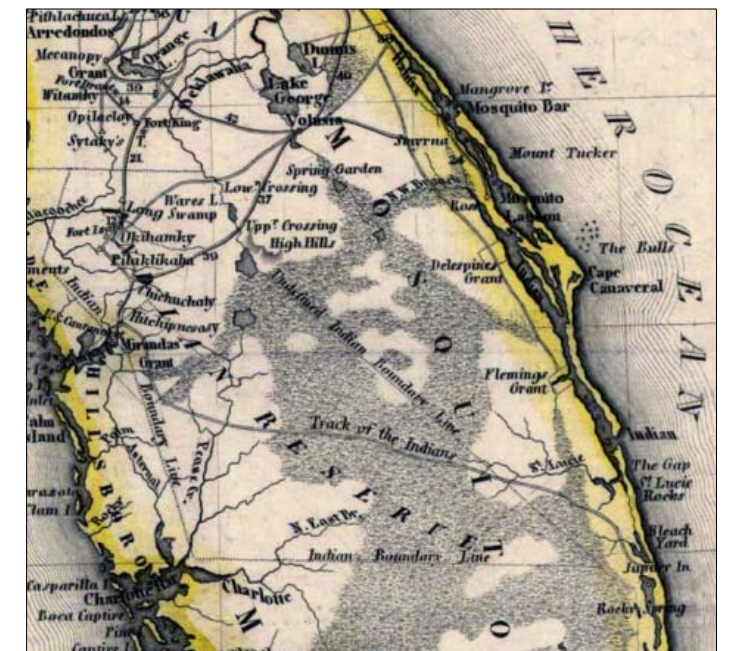
1796 Map of Merritt Island

brought Creek Indians from Alabama and Georgia into the East Florida region. The British named this new group of natives Seminoles, after the Creek word for Wild Ones or Separatists. The Ais rapidly vanished from their once thriving communities. By 1715, the Spanish, who had set up a salvage camp near the Rio San Sebastian to recover treasure from their shipwrecked fleet of gold, mentioned seeing only a few Ais fishermen. By the mid 1700’s, the remaining Ais had been absorbed, sold into slavery, and dispersed from their once prominent domain of the Indian River Lagoon. In Merritt Island, shell mounds were all that remained of these villages; unfortunately most of the mounds were used for the shell base in the construction of early Merritt Island roads long before their archaeological significance was understood.

Due primarily to the hostile Indian presence, but more likely to the extreme heat, humidity, and infestation of mosquitoes, there were no permanent Spanish or English settlements in Merritt Island or the surrounding area in any permanent fashion until the 1880s. However, several land grants were given for areas in Brevard County where the grantees eventually settled. The most important legacy of these grants is oranges. The production and cultivation of oranges, grapefruit and pineapples in Merritt Island has roots that go back to the early 1800s. Spanish settlers were required by law to plant orange seeds and seedlings, and by 1820 Dummitt Grove had been established on north Merritt Island. The sandy soil, warm winters, and abundant rain helped transform Merritt Island into an ideal place for citrus to thrive. The famous Indian River oranges and grapefruits come from this mixture of environmental conditions.



The Ais lived off the bounty of the Indian River, and the hunting of small game.



1845 Map of Mosquito County



Chapter 1 - History



Early settlers in 1800's at a typical Florida home site.



Early Merritt Island crops included pineapples and bananas.



Preparing the land for planting citrus trees

EARLY SETTLEMENT: 1700 TO 1900

Loyalists fleeing the American Revolution caused the population of British East Florida to swell from 3,000 in 1776 to 17,000 a few years later. During the period of British occupation in today's Brevard County there were several large land grants. One grant of note included 10,000 acres on the west side of the Indian River, across from the Haulover Canal, which was owned by Thomas Bradshaw; another of 20,000 acres at the head of the Indian River was held by Col. William Faucitt.

The combination of harsh environment, unfriendly Indians, and swarms of mosquitoes hindered the colonization of this area of Florida except by a few of the hardiest of settlers. Except for a failed attempt by Andrew Turnbull to establish an agricultural Colony, the area would remain largely unsettled until the 1800's, after the U.S. Army and Florida Militia established supply posts and routes through the county during the Second Seminole War. As this conflict unfolded in 1835, the only known inhabitants of the present-day Brevard County area were the Seminole Indians who had taken over the areas formerly occupied by the Ais.

Modern Brevard County has existed since 1905. The name Brevard County was given to a geographic area in east central Florida in 1855 and the origin of the county's name is attributed to Theodore W. Brevard, Florida Comptroller at the time of the county's creation. Prior to this, the area was a part of the jurisdictional area known as old St. Lucie County; prior to that it existed in Mosquito County; and prior to that the area was under the jurisdiction of St. Johns County which was one of the two counties into which the Territory of Florida was originally divided. St. Johns County generally represented the territory known as

East Florida under the dominion of Spain. After 1855, the county boundaries changed with some land being removed and other land added; however, most of the changes resulted in the removal of land to create other counties. For example, in 1861 part of western Brevard was taken to form Polk County, in 1873 part of the northwestern region was added to Orange County, and in 1874 the southern and western boundaries with Dade and Manatee Counties were changed. In 1879 part of Volusia County was added to the northern part of Brevard and in 1887, more western land was taken to form Osceola County. Finally, in 1905, the southern portion of the county was removed to form St. Lucie County, and since then county boundaries have remained relatively stable.

Before and after the American Civil War, settlers moved into the area either fleeing the conflict in the north or trying to find a new life after the war. Many slaves fleeing enslavement, as well as freed slaves found their way into the county after the war. Brevard's population, first recorded in 1860, was only 246 persons; the 1870 census showed a sizable increase to 1,216 persons. The pioneering settlers of Merritt Island built their own homes, dug their own wells, made their own clothes, and grew and caught their own food which consisted of fish, game, shellfish, turtle, manatee, wild fowl, and home-grown vegetables. Some planted citrus trees, some had cattle, and a few even obtained a milk cow. In the 1880's and 1890's, if they could afford it, the pioneers bought flour, grits, salt, and sugar from the trade boats that plied the Indian River. Some grew their own sugar cane and ground the cane to make sugar; others had beehives and obtained honey. The settlers lived in log cabins or thatched huts which were covered with palmetto or palm fronds and put together with timber they found on the river shore or ocean beach. There

were few windows in these structures and there was no screening to protect the residents from the swarming mosquitoes. In the summer months, it was said that, "You could swing a pint jar and catch a quart of mosquitoes." The settlers wore a great deal of clothing because of the mosquitoes, especially during the hot summers. Both men and women wrapped newspapers (if available) around their legs and arms, and underneath their garments as mosquito "repellant". A common item in any home during this time was a mosquito brush made of palmetto leaves hanging outside the door and when visitors came by they were politely asked to brush the mosquitoes off before entering.

During this early period, the economy of Merritt Island revolved around the production of oranges, grapefruit and pineapples. Fishing was also an important part of the daily lives of the inhabitants and as commercial enterprise. In the early days, Merritt Island was also a place for raising cattle. These cattle were allowed to roam free on the whole of Merritt Island. The men who herded them were called cow hunters, rather than cowboys, because their range consisted of some heavy palmetto scrub and hammock land, which made it hard to find and care for the cattle. The majority of the population lived on the banks of the Indian River along what is now North and South Tropical Trail and since there were no bridges, everyone traveled by boat, horse or wagon. Trade was conducted by steamers plying their way up and down the Indian River or by the hauling of goods to the St Johns River for river transport north. In 1888, the completion of the Haulover canal increased trade and the movement of goods along Florida's coast by connecting the Indian River with Mosquito Lagoon and points north through inland waterways.



The construction of Henry Flagler's Florida's East Coast railroad changed the nature of development in Florida and Brevard County. Beginning in 1892, when landowners south of Daytona petitioned Flagler to extend the railroad 80 miles (130 km) south, he began laying new railroad tracks; no longer did he follow his traditional practice of purchasing existing railroads and merging them into his growing rail system. Flagler obtained a charter from the State of Florida authorizing him to build a railroad along the Indian River to Miami, and as the railroad progressed southward, cities such as New Smyrna and Titusville developed along the tracks. The economy and population of the county and the mainland towns of Titusville, Cocoa and Eau Gallie/Melbourne saw growth from being stops along Flagler's railroad. Not only could citrus grown on Merritt Island be shipped via rail to points north and south along the railroad, but it also brought, for the first time, a tourism trade. Several hotels developed on Merritt Island during this period. By 1900, the population of Brevard County had risen to only 4,717. However, even with increased access, population growth was slow due to the harsh, humid environment and the abundance of mosquitoes.



Merritt Island had a thriving cattle industry till free range laws were changed

1900 to 1940

Beginning in the late 1800's and continuing through the early 1900's, eight small settlements arose on Merritt Island; yet by 1912 it was estimated that only about 300 people resided on Merritt Island. From Banyon, on the extreme southern tip of Merritt Island, to Orsino, in the north (now on NASA property), there were the settlements of Courtenay, Indianola, Merritt (now the 520 causeway area), Georgiana, and Lotus. These settlements along the Indian River were situated four to six miles apart, and each had a church, a school, a store and a post office. Audubon was the only settlement on the Banana River besides an exclusive club, called the Tamarind Hunting Club, which was directly across the river from what is now the Cocoa Beach Recreation Center; however, with the rapid development that occurred with the growth of the Space program, these communities now only live on in the names of streets, historic churches and cemeteries.

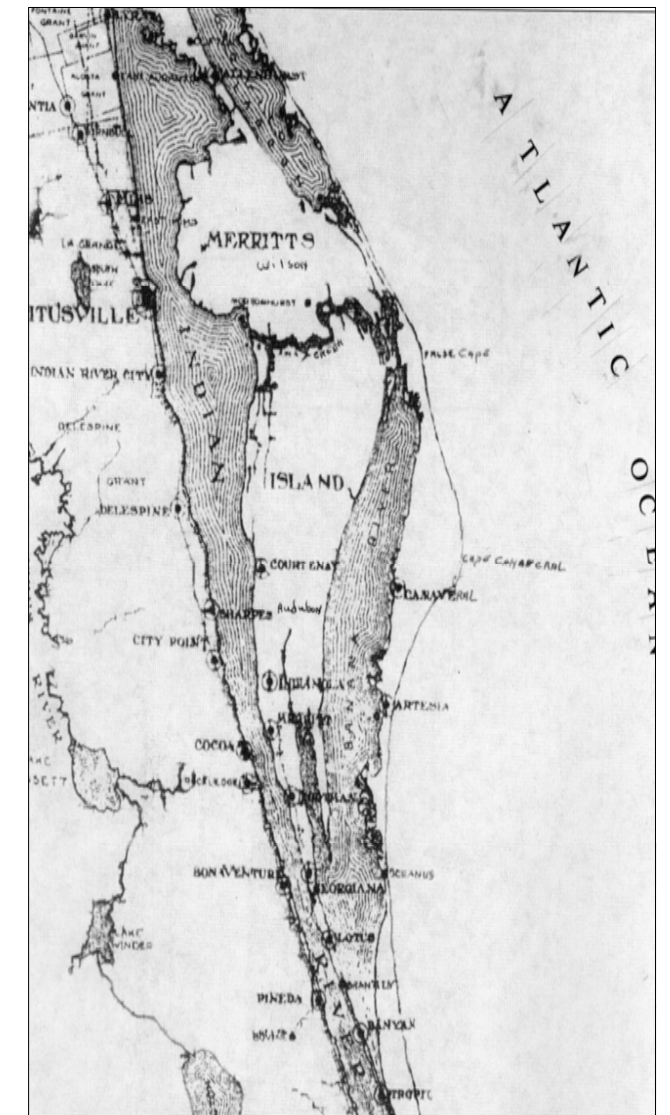
Until a bridge was built connecting Cocoa and Merritt Island in 1917, the island was only accessible by boat and ferry from the mainland and the beach. The coming of automobiles brought about significant changes to Merritt Island. The narrow wooden bridge, called "Roger's Road", connected Harrison Street in Cocoa to what is now SR 520 in Merritt Island. The route was eventually extended across Merritt Island to Audubon Road, across the Humpback Bridge over Sykes Creek to Banana River Drive. It then went across Pelican Creek to Milford Point and down South Banana River Trail to Horti Point. Another bridge was built from Horti Point on east Merritt Island to what is now Minutemen Causeway connecting Merritt Island to Cocoa Beach. This bridge opened on April 19, 1922 and required a toll of 20 cents for the round trip, plus four cents for each additional passenger. It was

reported that when it was first built, you could look from the Merritt Island side, across the bridge, and not see any signs of development on the beach side. The destination for many early tourists and beachcombers to Brevard County was the beach community, Oceanus. Oceanus, located just north of what is now Patrick Air Force Base's northern property line, eventually merged with Cocoa Beach. In 1927, Mather's Bridge at the south tip of Merritt Island opened and provided another access to the beach. The construction of these bridges meant that the once isolated and inaccessible areas of Merritt Island and the beaches were now reachable for settlers, businesses, and visitors.

While the increased traffic and connections to both the mainland and beach area developed some commercial enterprises, the economy of Merritt Island was still centered on the production of citrus. At various times other crops were also grown including pineapples, bananas, watermelons, mangos and avocados. Fishing continued to also be a significant industry in Merritt Island and cattle were an important part of the economy.

Merritt Island's commercial core has always been centered in the area of Merritt City, the closest point of transport to the mainland, rail facilities, and the much larger town of Cocoa. With the opening of the bridges and the change from horse to automobile traffic, the population began to increase, and development began to occur along the road leading to the beach. The estimated population nearly doubled from 585 in 1910 to 1,018 in 1920. The Florida land boom of the 1920's added to a rapid rise in population in the County between 1920 and 1930. Developments throughout Florida were being sold to northerners during these boom times. Merritt Island also had its developments such as the Island Beach

development platted in 1923 which still remains in scattered parcels to this day. However, this growth came to an abrupt end with the 1929 stock market crash and the depression years that followed. The land boom ended, many people were forced to abandon their home sites, and new development came to a halt. From the descriptions from people living in Merritt Island at the time it was estimated that the population was fewer than 2,000 people by 1950.



1914 map of "Merritt's Island"



Chapter 1 - History



Barge Canal Crossing



Early beachgoers could drive from Cocoa Beach to New Smyrna Beach



Opening of the first bridge between Cocoa and Merritt Island 1917



Merritt Island Garage in the 1920's



Merritt Island Garage in the 1950's

THE BEGINNINGS OF CHANGE AND GROWTH - 1940 TO 1960

Several significant events took place during the 1940's that set the stage for development of present day Merritt Island. In 1939, a momentous decision was made by then president Harry Truman to establish the Banana River Naval Air Station (BNAS). Located just south of Cocoa Beach, it covered 1,822 acres and provided a base for patrolling shipping lanes for German submarines. There were 1,500 military personnel and several hundred civilian employees at the station by 1942. The establishment of the BNAS had several significant beneficial economic repercussions. Besides the employment it brought in, the US government needed better access to their facility and, therefore, helped fund the construction of a new causeway to the beach. On June 5, 1941, the present day alignment of SR 520 opened with a single wide lane in each direction. The causeway was made up of two draw bridges, one on each river, along with a few relief bridges. The original wooden bridges were torn up shortly afterwards. An even more significant influence in the development of Merritt Island was the beginning of eradication of mosquitoes through the efforts of the Navy based at the (BNAS). These early efforts were the beginning of Mosquito control which, along with the introduction of air conditioning, made living in Merritt Island finally a pleasant experience. The BNAS was decommissioned after the war but became the home of the Joint Long Range Proving Ground in 1949 which was renamed Patrick Air Force Base in 1950.

In 1949 a barge canal was dug between the Indian and Banana rivers to connect the Indian River with the developing Port Canaveral. A Fortenberry (A was his first name), chairman of the Brevard Board of County

Commissioners and of the Canaveral Port Authority, drive to create the canal knew no bounds. He pushed the project and was rewarded with the approval by the Army Corps of Engineers for the waterway cut. While an excellent idea, the project did not include a bridge to connect the north and southern portions of Tropical Trail, effectively isolating the northern half of the island for a period of time. A temporary solution was to purchase a barge nearly the width of the canal to allow traffic to continue. However, the barge proved unsatisfactory and a terrifying experience for those who used it; it would almost sink from the weight of the cars. This oversight in the canal project, however, created a new opportunity for future growth.

The Brevard County Commission working with the State Road Department devised a new plan that would create a new road, SR-3, now called Courtenay Parkway, through the middle of Merritt Island with a concrete draw bridge with a hand operated mechanism. The project was completed in 1952 and effectively opened up a new path for development along a new transportation corridor. Although losing his reelection, Fortenberry is still remembered with a road that bears his name.

Connecting Port Canaveral to Merritt Island and the mainland was a high priority, given the potential economic advantages of shipping of goods, expanding the fishing industry, and eventually tourism. Port Canaveral had its beginning in 1878 when the US Coast and Geodetic Survey recommended construction of a port at Cape Canaveral. In 1893, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers certified that the dredging of a deep water harbor was possible, but that the existing population served by the Port would not support the project. In 1939, the Corps



reexamined the idea and dredging was scheduled to begin in 1942, but was delayed by World War II. A referendum in 1947 raised the necessary funds to begin the project. Dredging began in June 1950, and continued for three years; the Port officially opened in November 1953. Today, the cruise lines using the Port contribute greatly to Merritt Island's economy through tourism from cruise ship passengers and personnel shopping in Merritt Island.

After the World War II, the US was looking for a place to launch and test the V-2 rocket technology captured from the Germans and to develop missile systems in Cold War competition with the Soviet Union. The government already owned 686 acres around the Cape Canaveral lighthouse. They acquired an additional 12,000 acres and developed the Cape Canaveral testing facility. In May 1950, work began on construction of access roads and launch sites on Cape

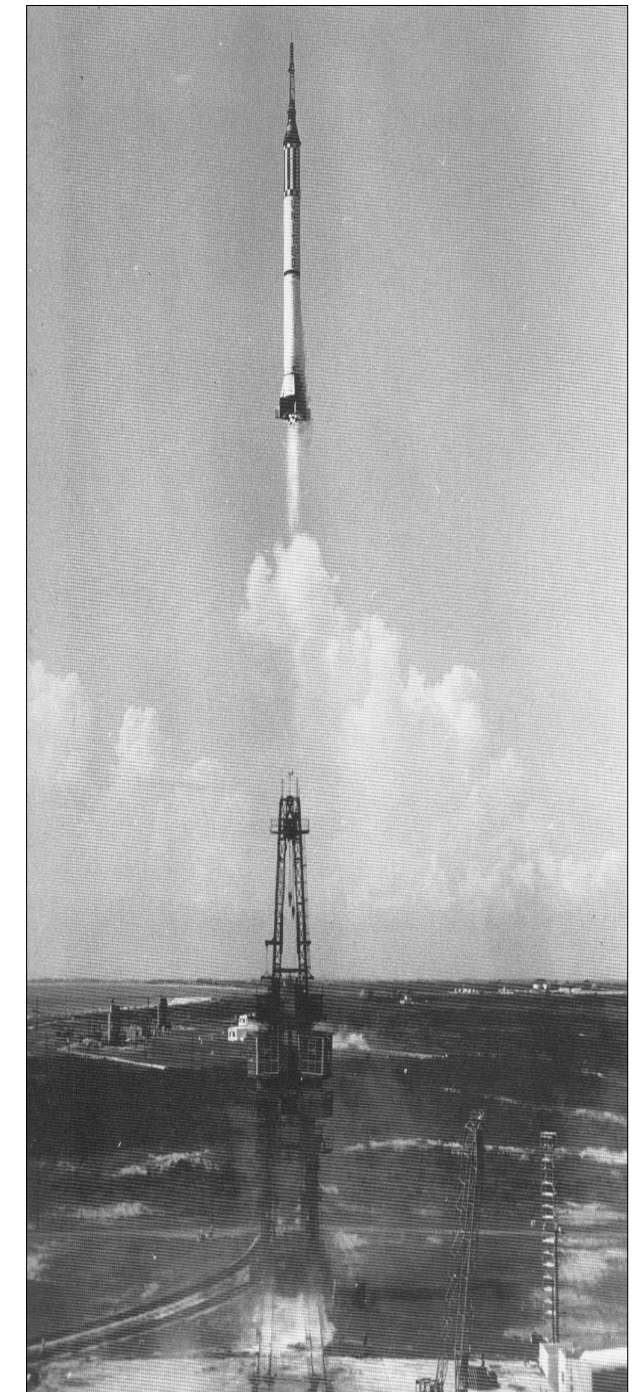
Canaveral, and throughout the 1950's, more launch pads were built and test firings of various missile systems began in earnest. The Space Race had begun and would dramatically alter the future growth and development of Brevard County and especially Merritt Island.

When new government programs began developing missiles for defense, the capability of the Eastern Test Range kept pace, and the launch complexes and industrial facilities at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station were constructed. Thousands of government and contractor employees streamed in to operate the Range and conduct launches. This explosive growth raised Brevard's population from 23,653 in 1950 to 111,435 by 1960, making it the fastest growing county in the nation. However, with the Space Race fully underway, the Russians were beating the U.S. in rocket technology with success after success. In

response, Project Mercury was announced in 1958 with the intention of sending a human into space and earth orbit. In April of 1961, the Russians again beat the U.S. by sending a man into space with the orbital flight of Yuri Gagarin. The U.S. was desperately trying to catch up with the Russian space program. Therefore, with a need for more launch facilities and a new directive from President Kennedy to land a man on the moon by the end of the 1960's, NASA was created, and Merritt Island was the chosen location for the development of the U.S. Space program. A total of 139,305 acres of land was purchased by the federal government. Merritt Island was to become a bedroom community, forever tied with the effort to send a man to the moon and to NASA projects of the future.



1943 AERIAL PHOTO OF THE 520 CORRIDOR ON MERRITT ISLAND



America's first man in space, Alan Shepard, riding on a Redstone rocket in a Mercury capsule



Chapter 1 - History



The shuttle program stabilized the employment base in Merritt Island

THE SPACE RACE PERIOD – 1960 TO PRESENT DAY

Yet as sizable as the expansion of the Space Program was prior to 1960, the decision to undertake the Apollo program and the choice of north Merritt Island as the launch base caused a much greater impact. Prior to the space boom Brevard's/Merritt Island's economy was largely based on citrus production; of the 839,404 acres in the county, more than 20,000 acres were cultivated to produce the famed Indian River oranges and grapefruit. Very little commercial development was evident on the Island and what did

occur was along the SR 520 corridor and the newly developed SR 3 (Courtenay Parkway) road way. Although census records are not available for Merritt Island before 1960; it was recognized as a census designated place in 1960 and the population was recorded to be 3,554 persons.

Brevard County's population during the 1960's doubled soaring to 272,959 in 1970. This was nothing compared to the concentrated growth experienced by Merritt Island's population which increased almost ten-fold to 30,636 people during the same period. There were reports that the need for housing was so

great that people were sleeping in drainage pipes laid beside the roads until their houses were constructed.

An unfortunate result of this rapid growth was unplanned and unregulated building. There was a lack of building codes, haphazard zoning and few architectural codes. In the race to construct housing for the influx of new residents, massive drain and fill projects replaced wetland areas and created new subdivisions over what were once pristine marshlands. Large residential development rose almost overnight. Catalina Isles, Diana Shores, Carlton Groves, Ridge Manor, Surfside Estates are just a few of the large housing subdivisions built on dredged and filled marshland to provide waterfront access. With a rapidly expanding population, the need for a high school soon became apparent and Merritt Island High was built in 1965.

The influx of new residents meant the construction of new businesses, strip commercial buildings, gas stations, banks, grocery stores and service establishments to serve the burgeoning population. Nearly all commercial enterprises centered along the Merritt Island Causeway (SR 520) and Courtenay Parkway transportation corridors. Car dealerships, in particular, tended to group along the SR 520 due to localization of such businesses. This localization facilitates customer's choices and is mutually beneficial to competing dealerships.

Merritt Island was fast becoming the commercial center of the Central Brevard economy. The pent up demand for retail and commercial space resulted in the construction of the Merritt Square Mall which opened in 1970. In its day there was nothing to compare it with in all of Brevard County. Merritt Square mall rose up on 82 acres of dredged sand at the county's center, and residents swarmed in to

spend their money at its gleaming new stores. It was indeed a magical place when first opened. The ceiling at Ivey's, which opened its doors before the other two anchors, J.C. Penney and Jordan Marsh, was an attraction in itself, where swirls of rainbow colors danced in store lights, giving off a futuristic aura. Residents from all parts of the County travelled to shop at the futuristic and huge enclosed mall. Its construction cemented Merritt Island as the commercial hub of the County. The Mall was the focal point of shopping for all of central Brevard and drew shoppers from the Titusville, the beaches, Melbourne, and even as far away as Orlando.

Just as quickly, however, population growth patterns changed; growth virtually ceased after 1968 due to massive aerospace cutbacks caused by the severe curtailment of NASA appropriations and projects. Between 1968 and 1970, over 12,000 workers lost their jobs as NASA cut back its space efforts. Merritt Island was particularly hit hard. Without alternative employment many people were forced to leave the area and with the rise of foreclosures, housing became extremely inexpensive.

Beginning in late 1971, a revived economy and a national and local housing boom fostered population growth once again. This period of growth was short lived however, as NASA employment cutbacks, the Arab oil embargo and the following national recession caused migration into Brevard to diminish and out-migration to increase due to severe local unemployment. However, in the latter half of 1976, the Brevard economy again began to improve. Industrial expansions and relocation of electronics-related manufacturers provided the impetus for the current growth occurring in Brevard but most of that



growth was occurring in the southern half of the county.

During the 1980's and 1990's the Space Shuttle program stabilized the employment base in Merritt Island. The location of Sea Ray boats manufacturing and testing facility on the Barge Canal during this period also helped promote growth in the area. The Island experienced slow but steady population growth rising from 30,636 in 1970 to 32,514 in 1980. Population growth continued to rise till 1990 when it peaked at 36,429 persons. Since that time the population has declined slightly to 36,090 in 2000, and to 34,743 in the 2010 census. The closing of the Sea Ray plant, the winding down of the Space Shuttle program, and the national recession have contributed to this decline.

Due to the geography of the county, growth within Brevard has not occurred evenly. The north and central areas, including Merritt Island and the north beach area of Cape Canaveral and Cocoa Beach, have experienced very slight or insignificant population gains. Much of the disparity in growth between areas can be explained by employment opportunities. The three areas showing slow growth are also the three main bedroom communities of the Space Center, where employment has declined since 1970. During the early 2000's, Merritt Island again witnessed an explosion of housing growth, caught up in the housing bubble of the early 2000's. The speculative development, however, came to an abrupt end with the stock market crash of 2008 and the bursting of the housing bubble. The end of the Space Shuttle program has further cast a shadow on the future of Merritt Island and its commercial growth.

Competition has strained the commercial draw of the Merritt Island commercial corridor. The Melbourne Square Mall opened in 1982 as population growth

shifted to south Brevard due to the industrial expansions of companies like Harris Corporation, Rockwell, Ratheon and DRS. To keep pace with growth and competition from elsewhere in the County the Merritt Square Mall has undergone several

renovations and additions. In 1985, an 80,000 foot expansion called the Merritt Square Pavilion, now nearly vacant, included an overhauled Publix grocery, a six-screen theater and a 6,000-square-foot Jungle Jim's family restaurant. In 1988, a fourth major anchor

was added with the addition of a Sears store and a western wing that expanded the total square footage by 192,000. In 2004, a 16 theater, Cobb Movie Theater was added which remains a main commercial draw in the central Brevard area.

Several shopping centers have also been developed along the Merritt Island Causeway and North Courtenay Parkway. Most notably was a Walmart Supercenter built in 1994 on the eastern half of the SR 520 corridor on Merritt Island. Soon after, in 1996, a Target store was built along North Courtenay Parkway. Tourism and crew visitation from cruise ships docked at Port Canaveral have been a commercial plus for the Merritt Square Mall and other Merritt Island establishments, as well as the commerce of Cocoa Beach and Cocoa Village. This growth has served to offset some of loss in commerce from newer shopping alternatives on the mainland. Beginning in the 1980's, the large planned development of Viera began to take shape and over the last twenty years has grown into a large community complete with its own shopping facilities. The Avenue of Viera built in 2004 offered a new style of shopping with open spaces and walkways connecting stores.

Merritt Island's attractiveness for commercial development and further growth is uncertain at this juncture due to the current economy, layoffs at the Space Center, and increasing competition in the retail sector. However, Merritt Island has always been a unique area and it just may be its uniqueness that will set the stage for increased growth. This has certainly worked for the Cocoa Village area and perhaps by combining the open landscaped retail spaces of the future with the natural beauty of Merritt Island, this approach will once again bring Merritt Island back as "the" place to shop in the future.



MERRITT SQUARE MALL WILL GET A \$3.2 MILLION FACELIFT

OCTOBER 11, 1985 - BY PETER ADAMS OF THE SENTINEL STAFF

When ground is broken next weekend at Merritt Square Mall here, it will be the first step toward moving Brevard County's second largest mall out of the 1970's and into the 1980's.

Built in 1970, the mall has had no major renovations since. In the meantime, Melbourne Square Mall has been built; the \$40 million shopping center opened in 1982. The expansion of the Merritt Square Mall will be completed in two phases. When work is finished in 1987, the mall could have a fourth anchor tenant.

Anna Thacker, manager of the shopping center, said the mall is looking for a major retailer to complement stores already in place. Those include Jordan Marsh, Ivey's and J.C. Penney.

The first phase of the \$3.2 million expansion, to be completed in June 1986, will add 60,000 square feet to the mall's existing 668,000 square feet. Ground breaking is set for Wednesday.

Plans include a 13,600-square-foot addition to the Publix supermarket and six movie theatres in addition to the six AMC theaters already in place.



Chapter 1 - History

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Chapter 2 - Accomplishments

In the late 1980's, the Brevard County Board of County Commissioners (BCC) recognized the decline and the resulting blighted conditions prevalent in portions of Merritt Island and decided to implement a redevelopment program. (From page 2-3) Redevelopment programs are implemented for many urban areas depleted of their economic resources by populations relocating to suburbia, dilapidated corridors changed by altered mobility patterns, and new shopping areas springing up in areas outside the core business districts. Merritt Island was an urban area that required this type of program.

Under Chapter 163, Part III, Florida Statutes, known as the Community Redevelopment Act of 1969, local governments are given specific tools to prevent, eliminate, reverse, or arrest conditions in their jurisdictions which are detrimental to the sustainability of economically and socially vibrant communities. They are given the power to create Community Redevelopment Agencies which are responsible for preparing Redevelopment Plans for designated areas. Once a plan is adopted by the local elected officials, the Agency is responsible for implementing the plan through various means and funding sources including, but not limited to, land use regulations and tax increment financing. The specific statutory references which declare the purpose, intent, and reasons for pursuing redevelopment programs in general, and most particularly those that relate to the conditions found on Merritt Island today, are provided in the Appendices.

The Merritt Island CRA met the statutory requirements for declaring blight on four occasions:

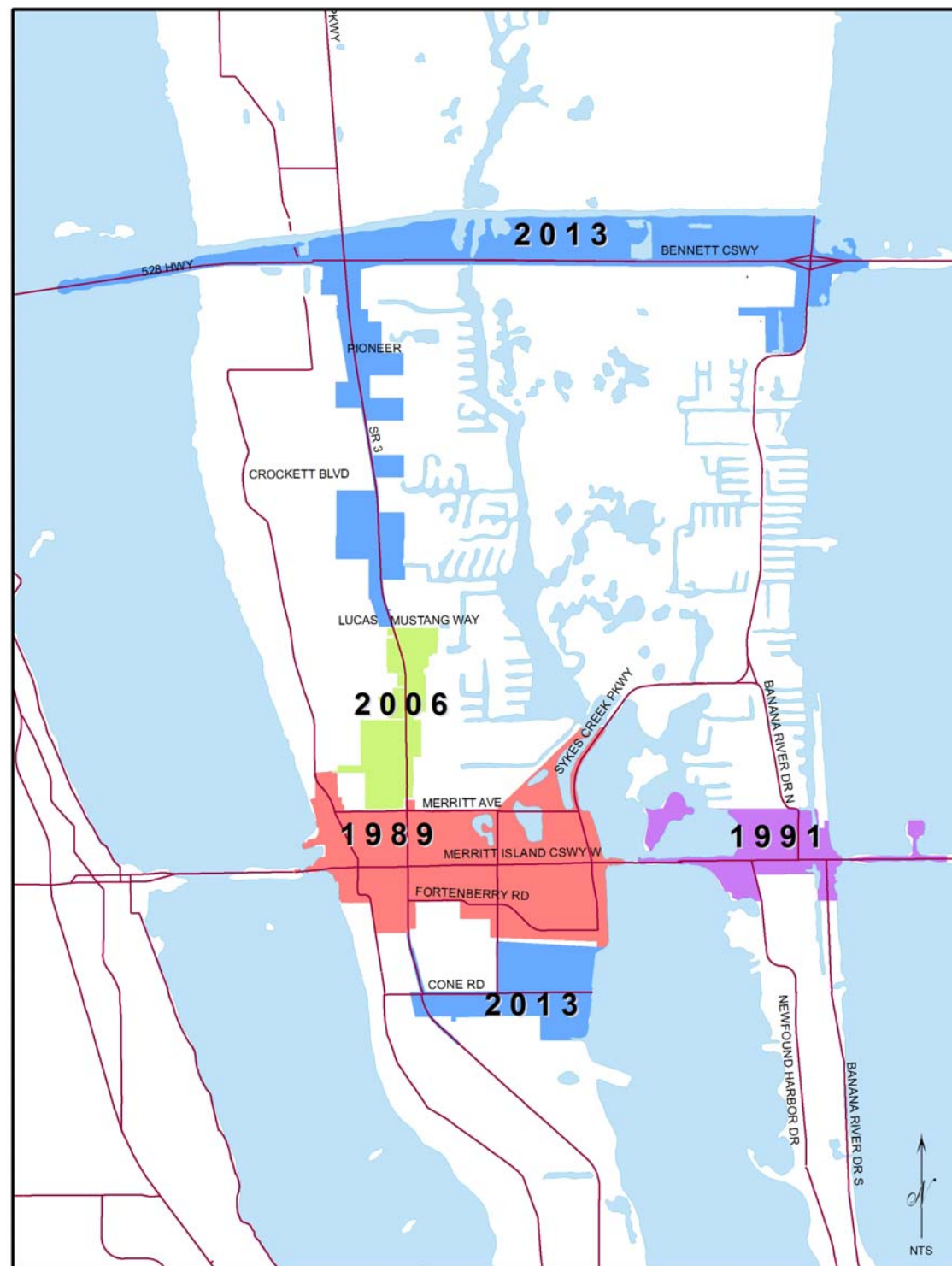


Exhibit 2-1 – Redevelopment Area Boundaries Chronology

1988, 1991, 2006, and 2011. The predominant issues on each occasion have included:

1. Problems associated with impacts from transportation projects that have left defective or inadequate lots, little access management, poor parking provisions, problems with remaining local streets and their layout or pattern, other internal roadway issues, poor, if any pedestrian access; and few public transportation facilities;
2. Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout;
3. Faulty site layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility and usefulness;
4. Unsanitary or unsafe conditions;
5. Deterioration of site or other improvements; and
6. Inadequate and outdated building patterns and land use systems that contribute to blight and economic disincentives.

As noted on the adjacent Redevelopment Area Boundary Map, in 1988 the first Slum and Blight Study was adopted for the areas on Merritt Island between the Indian River Lagoon and Sykes Creek and the following year the Merritt Island Redevelopment Agency (MIRA) was established. On May 15, 1990 the Board of County Commissioners adopted a Resolution of Findings of Fact and Determination of Need for the expansion of the CRA in 1991 to the area east of Sykes Creek to the Banana River. In 2006 the Agency recognized worsening conditions were along SR 3 north of Merritt Avenue to Lucas Avenue and the Plan was further amended to include this area.



Chapter 2 - Accomplishments

In 2011, the Commission recognized that the end of the Space Shuttle program were creating economic problems and deteriorating prospects for Merritt Island's future. In May 2011, a new Findings of Necessity study was adopted by the Board of County Commissioners with a directive given to proceed with an amendment and update to the current MIRA Community Redevelopment Plan (CRP). All Resolutions, Ordinances and legal descriptions relating to the formation of MIRA are found in the Appendix.

In order to justify expansion of the district, MIRA undertook the 2011 Blight Study which evaluated the areas north of Lucas Avenue on SR 3 to the Barge Canal and the Cone Road industrial areas. The Study established the existence of blighted conditions; identified the specific problems that could be addressed through the adoption of an amendment and update to the Redevelopment Plan. The findings of necessity to expand the existing CRA into two new areas adjacent to the existing MIRA districts is important for several reasons:



Barge Canal Area

- The North Barge Canal area is owned predominately by the Canaveral Port Authority (Port). Port Canaveral will be the economic engine driving economic growth and development of Brevard County over the next 10 years, especially with the decline in the space program. The County and Port can partner on the best ways to use and enhance these lands as the gateway into the area. The large vacant buildings present economic development opportunities, as does the enhanced public access to the waterfront.

- Cone Road, with its small lots and disjointed land uses, can be made into a good and productive industrial district to serve the employment needs of the area and service the Merritt Island airport, itself an asset to the island, albeit not in the CRA.

While the need for redevelopment has been clear, the impact MIRA's actions have had on the community redevelopment area are even more striking. Without MIRA's

resources and the implementation of the various redevelopment projects, many of the areas within the District would be lagging today. It is important to discuss the historical success story of the agency.

The following section provides a pictorial history divided into 5 year periods since 1989, of the accomplishments of

the Merritt Island Redevelopment Agency, and the private development projects that are located in the district.



Sections of Cone Road Ditch



1989 - 1995

In 1989, Brevard County established the Merritt Island Redevelopment Agency (MIRA) in order to address declining physical and economic conditions apparent in high vacancy rates, poor and deteriorating building conditions, and other blight factors. In the early 1990's transportation issues were wreaking havoc on businesses in the Central Merritt Island business core area, shown in yellow on Exhibit 2-1.



SR 520 prior to widening

In anticipation of the potential adverse impacts associated with a road widening project on SR 520 in central Merritt Island, MIRA was able to be of some assistance. As with most redevelopment programs established in the State of Florida, revenues were limited in the early stages of the program. The focus of the Agency at that time was to develop the organizational framework for the program, establish working relationships with area businesses, and coordinate efforts with the Florida Department of Transportation. The MIRA program began with a loan of \$72,000 from Brevard County which was repaid within 2 years. In 1990 approximately \$85,000 in tax increment revenues were generated.

Initially, the program's emphasis was on the design and funding of upgrades to the amenities associated with

the widening of SR 520; these included adding mast arm traffic signals, illuminated street signs and upgraded street lighting. The Agency was successful in obtaining a \$1.5M commercial line of credit from SunBank, with an initial draw of \$400,000, which established the funding mechanism for these initial improvements. MIRA was also extremely successful in obtaining grants from many sources during the first five years of the program. More than \$2M in grants were obtained and used to pay for an extensive public improvements during this time, including construction of Waterway Park, the Veterans Memorial Center, and planting of more than 2,000 trees along SR 520, Merritt Avenue and Sykes Creek Parkway.

The national economy experienced a moderate recession in the early 1990's. However, a new wave of private development occurred after completion of the road project in 1994. Several restaurants and commercial development projects began location in Merritt Island. Starting with the Outback Steakhouse and Home Depot, the number of new restaurants and major commercial developments verified the fact that there was pent-up retail demand in Merritt Island and MIRA capitalized on this fact during subsequent years.

The district was expanded to the east (the area shown on the Map 2-1 in yellow as 1991, known as MIRA EAST) in anticipation of the second phase of the road project and the construction of the new Super Wal-Mart at Newfound Harbour Drive. Plans were undertaken for the extension of sanitary sewer lines to serve commercial properties along SR 520 on the Newfound Harbor peninsula. Tax increment revenues generated within the original boundary area increased from \$85,000 in 1990, peaked at \$340,000 in 1992, and then began to decline as a result of the recession to \$245,000 in 1995.

S.R 520 Widening Project



Before

After



Chapter 2 - Accomplishments

1996 – 2000

During the mid to late 1990s, MIRA completed several projects on the SR 520 eastern expansion, including upgrades to traffic and street lighting systems, planting of trees and the installation of the sanitary sewer main. The Agency updated the redevelopment plan to provide more focused attention on the conditions in Merritt Park Place, an older residential subdivision located at the western side of the Island. Merritt Park Place had experienced a conversion from single family homes to cottage commercial and office uses during the early 1990s.



SYKES CREEK IMPROVEMENTS

By 1996, with nearly 100 businesses located in Merritt Park, commercial activity was causing a strain on residential infrastructure that was inadequate and unintended for commercial development. Anticipating the continuation of the trend of commercial conversions, MIRA embarked on a major capital improvement program for the area. Working closely with property owners, the Agency began the first phase of planning, designing and constructing drainage and sewer systems, sidewalks, street lighting and beautification improvements in the area.

The national economy began its recovery at this time and the tax base within the district began a steady increase from \$281,000 in 1996 to \$530,000 in 2000. High density residential growth would prove to be a substantial positive factor in the tax base as projects came on-line. Private sector development occurring during this time frame included several new national retailers and restaurants. Health First Fitness Center, a large scale athletic training and multi sport facility, was developed and continues to provide recreational services and amenities that benefit the community.

Development Activity Post SR 520 Road Widening



Home Depot



Outback Steakhouse



Steak n Shake



WalMart Super Center



2000 - 2005

MIRA continued to concentrate on substantial infrastructure improvements in Merritt Park Place during this period. Phase II improvements were directed toward the internal street network, with major infrastructure and beautification improvements on Parnell, Myrtice, Hibiscus and

Tangerine Streets. The capital improvement program was well received by property owners within Merritt Park Place.

MIRA established a Commercial Façade Improvement Grant Program in 2001 which was designed to stimulate private investment in property renovations. The Commercial Façade Improvement grant program had little traction

initially, however, it has proven to be very popular in recent years. By stimulating private investment that has substantially improved the appearance of the area. While generating growth in the tax base, MIRA was able to offset costs and conserve the tax increment revenue stream which could then be used to finance other substantial improvements such as pedestrian crossings, street lights, and beautification.

The early to middle part of the 2000s marked the beginning of the boom era for development in the nation. While commercial development activity continued, a dramatic change occurred in the speculative residential real estate market, especially in Florida. New condominium projects were sprouting up in Brevard County, especially in the neighboring central Brevard communities of Cocoa, Cape Canaveral and Cocoa Beach. The first phase of the Island Pointe condominium project and the Harbor Del Rio condominiums was approved and constructed.

During this time Commercial development activity continued with more national chain restaurants and retailers locating in Merritt Island. Tax increment revenues grew from \$617,000 in 2001 to over \$1.0 Million in 2005.



Island Point Condominiums



Harbor Del Rio Condominiums

Merritt Park Place



Before

After



Chapter 2 - Accomplishments

2006 – 2012

Choosing to build on the success of the capital improvements program undertaken in Merritt Park Place, MIRA embarked on a similar program for the street network in the remainder of the redevelopment area. There are now more than 300 businesses located in Merritt Park Place, an increase of more than 200 businesses choosing to locate in that area since the mid 1990s.

Major transportation, drainage, sewer and landscaping improvements were completed on North SR 3, Palmetto Avenue, the North Tropical Trail, Merritt Avenue East, Rose Street, Myrtle Street, Palmetto Avenue, South Tropical Trail/Magnolia Avenue and included the West Fortenberry ditch and sidewalk improvements. Similar improvements are in various stages of design and construction on SR 520, Fortenberry Road, and Imperial, Goodwin and Plumosa Streets. Thirty nine development projects have been undertaken during the past 5 years, including the redevelopment of four (4) major commercial centers.

In 2009, the tax base started declining as property values reflect the impact of the severe national recession which began in 2008.

During this time frame, the Agency started to pursue strategies that will enable redevelopment of properties that face economic and physical constraints or that are unable to develop because of regulatory and permitting issues. Working closely with the County's Office of Natural Resources, MIRA purchased a large tract of land (Pulte Property), to develop a regional stormwater retention facility. This facility will

treat stormwater generated from properties that are currently constrained because they are not large enough to meet current requirement for on-site stormwater retention. This strategic purchase and project will increase the amount of developable area on properties from Goodwin Drive to Sykes Creek Parkway, south of SR 520. It includes the potential to relocate retention facilities at Merritt Square Mall, creating additional land area for expansion of the Mall.

MIRA also developed a SR 520 Corridor Master Plan and permits are being acquired for pedestrian mobility enhancements, improved intersections and landscape beautification. Completion of these projects are anticipated by 2014. FDOT has completed the safety enhancements for the portion of SR 520 from the Hubert H. Humphrey Bridge to SR 3 (Courtenay Parkway). In addition, MIRA has a commitment from FDOT for approximately \$66,000 to enhance the landscaping at the easternmost portion of Waterway Park. MIRA is also requesting an additional fund to upgrade this project and landscape the proposed safety enhancements on SR 520.

In the past 2 years, the Agency has invested \$307,000 in 29 commercial grant projects that have resulted in \$1,851,360 of private sector investment in property renovations. This represents more than a 6-to-1 return on private investment for every dollar spent as the value of these improvements.

MIRA finished a gateway signage concept plan in 2011 which included several public workshops with the MIRA Beautification Committee and the Board of Directors. The results of this planning

effort included the selection of a gateway plan promoting an image and developing a "brand" for Merritt Island. It is anticipated that major gateways will be developed on the east and west entryways of SR 520 and later on SR 528, as these are the major point of entry into Merritt Island. The Agency is also pursuing the development of landscape improvements which will reinforce the gateway experience at the SR 528/SR3 interchange. The following pages present a pictorial summary of some of the projects undertaken by the agency during this time frame, and the visible transformations of certain properties within the CRA.



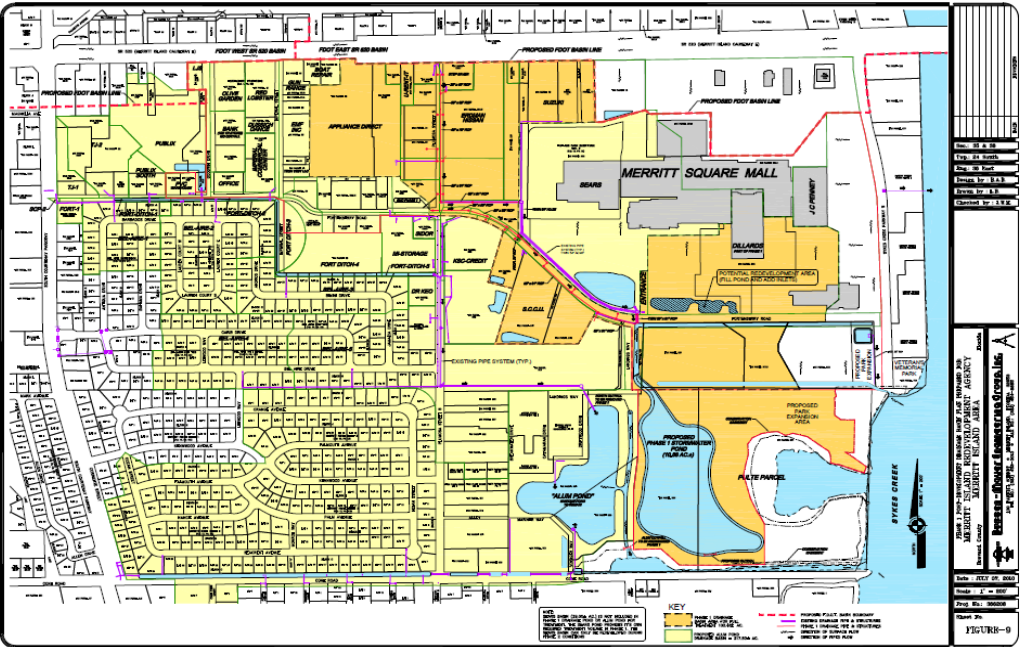
South Tropical Trail Sewer Expansion



Waterway Park



Pulte Property Stormwater Project



North Tropical Trail Realignment Project



Before



During



During



After



Chapter 2 - Accomplishments

Palmetto Avenue Piping/Sidewalk Project



Before



During



After

West Fortenberry Road Piping/Sidewalk Project



Before



During



After

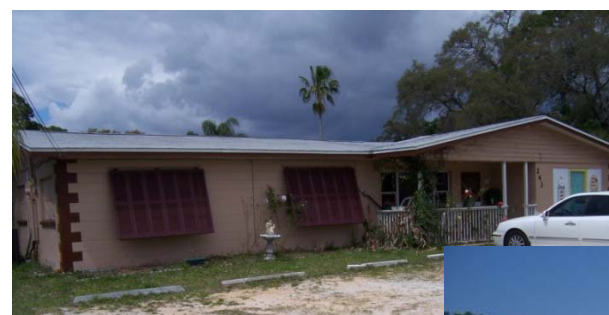


SR 3 Landscape Project



Chapter 2 - Accomplishments

Commercial Façade Grant Program



Before



After

Mane Stop and Spa



Before



After

30 North Grove Street



Before



After

Noro & Company



Before



After

AG Edwards Building



Commercial
Façade
Grant
Program



Before



After

Hurwood Plaza



Before



After

La Casa



Before



After

Space Coast Board of Realtors



Before



After

Jaynes



Chapter 2 - Accomplishments

Commercial Façade Grant Program



Before



After

Senior_Link



Before

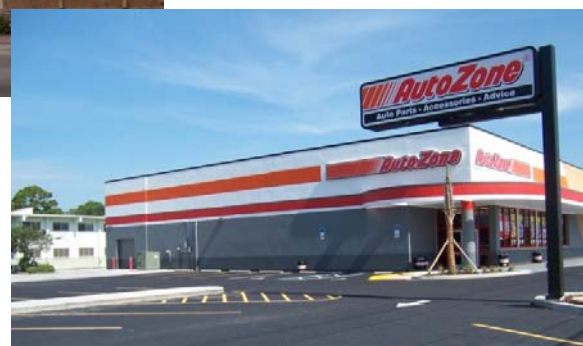


After

Connie's Permanent Make-up



Before



After

Meadows, Inc.



Before



After

Classy Cuts All Pet Grooming



Commercial
Façade
Grant
Program



Before



After

Dawson Law, P.A.

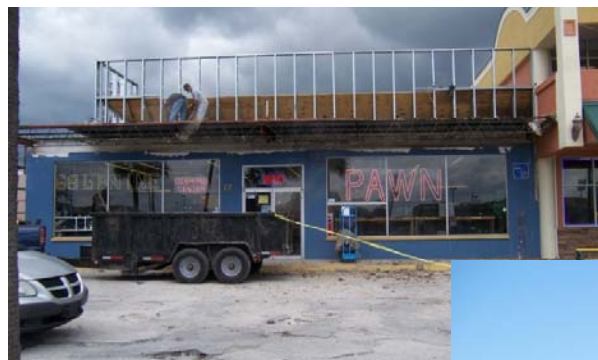


Before



After

Cowling Eye Center



Before



After

Gold Mines Pawn



Before



After

140 East Merritt Island Causeway



Chapter 2 - Accomplishments

Commercial Façade Grant Program



Before



After

Hobbs Pharmacy



Before



After

Hook N Lasso (Direct Seafood)



Before



After

Holiday Office Plaza



Before



After

Ronat/Brandt



MIRA ASSESSMENT

The Merritt Island Redevelopment Program has been successful by most measures. It has helped to strengthen the tax base, provided infrastructure, stimulated development activity, and has improved the physical and aesthetic quality of the community. The CRA has experienced a transformation in appearance with the investment in parks, commercial façade renovations and major corridor improvements including the planting of several thousand trees on both public rights-of-way and integrated into site development on private sector projects.

In addition to expanding the CRA and, in light of the current economic conditions, physical decay in adjacent areas, job loss, faulty development and shifting shopping patterns, the MIRA Board, staff, and consultant, also held workshops in July 2011, February 2012, and March 2012 to evaluate the 1991 Plan Goals, Objectives, capital projects, future projects and design elements of the Agency. An assessment to determine the validity of the prior Goals and Objectives for MIRA are provided in Table 2-2, and an assessment of the status of the projects based upon discussions at that workshop are provided in Table 2-1.

The assessment enabled the Agency to update MIRA’s Goals, Objectives, and capital projects of Merritt Island.

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS	STATUS
SR 520 6-LANING	Completed
MERRITT AVENUE 4-LANING	Portions Completed
NORTH TROPICAL TRAIL	Completed
SOUTH COURTENAY PKWY (SR3)	No Activity
NORTH COURTENAY PKWY (SR3) SAFETY ENHANCEMENT	Completed from SR3 to Nevins Court
FORTENBERRY RD WIDENING	Piping, curb and gutter, and sidewalk improvements have been completed, widening project cannot be accomplished because of the lack of road right of way.
MAGNOLIA AVENUE IMPROVEMENTS	Completed
TANGERINE AVE	Abandoned
PLUMOSA AVE	Intersection completed. While stormwater has been scheduled, widening has not.
BORMAN AVE	Consider improvements as part of the Mall redevelopment.
NORTH BANANA RIVER DR	Abandoned
NEWFOUND HARBOUR DR EXTENTION	Extension was not completed; this is no longer feasible with the new Wal-Mart.
SOUTH BANANA RIVER DR AND MILFORD POINT INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS	No Activity
TRAFFIC SIGNALS ON SR 520	Completed
PUBLIC PARKING	On-going
PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE FACILITIES	On-going

TABLE 2-1: CAPITAL PROJECT ASSESSMENT FROM 1991 PLAN



Chapter 2 - Accomplishments

TABLE 2-1: CAPITAL PROJECT ASSESSMENT FROM 1991 PLAN
(CONTINUED)

PUBLIC FACILITIES	STATUS
WASTEWATER COLLECTION SYSTEM RETROFIT	Completed
STORMWATER MANAGEMENT	On-going
SHORELINE (STABILIZATION, ACCESS, ENHANCEMENT)	Completed
WATER REUSE	Not completed, project is not cost feasible

RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENTS	STATUS
INTRACOASTAL WATERWAY PARK	Completed
BREVARD COUNTY VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK	Completed; new phase in planning
KIWANIS ISLAND PARK	Completed
SYKES CREEK NORTH (ULAMAY)	No Activity
GRIFFIS LANDING (BLUE CRAB COVE)	Land Purchased; Griffis Landing concept plans in process

BEAUTIFICATION	STATUS
SYKES CREEK PARKWAY BEAUTIFICATION PROJECT	Completed
CAUSEWAY BEAUTIFICATION PROJECT	Completed
BEAUTIFICATION PLAN	SR 3 from SR 520 to Skylark completed; landscape plans have been completed for SR 520 and SR 3. Bid in 2012.
SIGNAGE PLAN	Not Completed
COMMERCIAL FACADE GRANTS PROGRAM	Established and on-going



TABLE 2-2: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES ASSESSMENT FROM 1991 PLAN

ADMINISTRATION		
Goal	Objectives	Assessment
I. Establish the administrative and financial mechanisms necessary to achieve the goals and objectives of the Merritt Island Redevelopment Plan Amendment.	• Prepare and adopt the Redevelopment Plan Amendment for the Redevelopment Area outlining specific goals, objectives, and projects to be implemented in accordance with the Future Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan. • Enable the Redevelopment Agency to oversee the planning process and to develop the appropriate funding mechanisms necessary to implement the Plan. The requirements for membership to the Agency are defined in Chapter 163, Part III, Florida Statutes. However, subcommittees may be established to ensure representation from all affected parties in the area. • Promote effective communication and a cohesive, cooperative spirit among the various public and private leaders in the County. • Use the talents of existing civic and County organizations and committees to initiate desirable review and special events activities. • Develop and implement sound marketing and promotion strategies. • Provide public information services concerning all aspects of the Redevelopment Program, such as radio and newspaper reports or neighborhood meetings.	Valid and Ongoing
SLUM AND BLIGHT		
I. Establish the administrative and financial mechanisms necessary to achieve the goals and objectives of the Merritt Island Redevelopment Plan Amendment.	• Eliminate dilapidated and unsafe structures through the application of the County's Code Enforcement Program and provide for relocation assistance for displaced residents and businesses when necessary. • Encourage the upgrading of existing substandard structures through the enforcement of the County's housing and building codes as well as through financial incentives. • Eliminate unsanitary and unsightly outside storage conditions through the enforcement of the County's zoning codes and creation of new land development regulations. • Encourage the consolidation of small parcels of land into parcels of adequate size to encourage new construction and stable growth.	Valid and Ongoing
II. Prevent the future occurrence of slum and blight.	• Coordinate with the community, County Planning and Zoning Staff and the Local Planning Agency to upgrade the zoning and development controls within the Redevelopment Area to develop a high degree of design and performance standards for mixed-use development. • Cooperate with County Economic Development organizations to draft an economic development strategy for the Redevelopment Area that will insure future stability and consistency with other County economic goals and objectives. • Create programs for development, financial, or other economic incentives in order to facilitate new investment opportunities.	Valid and Ongoing



Chapter 2 - Accomplishments

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT		
Goal	Objectives	Assessment
I. Establish an identifiable character and an economic vitality for the Redevelopment Area.	• Establish a partnership between the public sector and private sector including interested property owners within the Redevelopment Area for the purpose of understanding the mutual benefits of proposed redevelopment projects. • Identify potential projects within the Redevelopment Area for both the public and private sectors and work toward their implementation. • Utilize selected public actions to stimulate and encourage private investment in redevelopment and rehabilitation activities. • Make the Redevelopment Area competitive with the major activity centers and commercial corridors in the County. • Create investment opportunities which will increase the tax base in the Redevelopment Area thereby assisting the Agency in financing public actions to support redevelopment. • Improve the tax base by providing appropriate incentives to encourage the location or expansion of development and business in the Redevelopment Area. • Improve the investment image of the Redevelopment Area • Encourage a diversified economic base with labor intensive employment • Initiate Public Improvement Projects which will attract and stimulate private investment, thereby improving the economic health of the area land use.	Valid and Ongoing
II. Establish a land use pattern that reflects the Redevelopment Area as a total community of diversified interests and activities, and promote compatibility and harmonious land-use relationships.	• Promote and locate strategic land use activities of regional importance within the Redevelopment Area consistent with the Future Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan. • Promote partnerships between the public and private sectors, including interested property owners for the purpose of property assemblage, financing, and the construction of projects recommended in this Plan, as well as others deemed to have a public purpose. • Encourage a diversity of residential, retail, and professional service developments throughout the Redevelopment Area, at high intensities, consistent with road and public facility levels of service appropriate for an urban core sector as defined in the County Comprehensive Plan. • Provide for incentives and/or bonuses for developer proposals exhibiting desirable site development techniques and providing desired amenities • Work with the Planning and Zoning Staff in the development of performance standards to be used within the Redevelopment Area which will provide incentives and/or bonuses for developer proposals which provide for creative design and amenities. • Encourage innovation in land planning and site development techniques. • Achieve the on-site mixing of residential and commercial uses in appropriate locations. • Provide appropriate levels of public services to handle increased activity and higher densities consistent with the Future Land Use and Capital Improvements Elements of the Comprehensive Plan.	Valid and Ongoing



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT		
Goal	Objectives	Assessment
I. Create a safe efficient traffic circulation system which provides sufficient access between activity centers within the study area and the balance of the community.	• Study the feasibility of creating new traffic corridors north and south of SR 520 consistent with the Traffic Circulation Element of the Comprehensive Plan in order to provide convenient access to properties and businesses, thus reducing the need for local trips on SR 520. • Encourage the provision of increased parking in convenient locations to accommodate new development. • Provide adequate loading and unloading space for goods with minimum disruption of through traffic. • Provide a safe, appealing and efficient pedestrian and bike path system linking all major activity centers, parking facilities, and residential areas. • Work with the Florida Department of Transportation, Planning Staff and Property Owners to ensure consistency with the Traffic Circulation Element regarding access along SR 520. • Identify means of reducing access points along SR 520 through funding frontage roads, joint access, and mutual participation.	Valid and Ongoing
BEAUTIFICATION		
I. Create an identifiable character for the SR 520 corridor and surrounding area which will reflect a pleasant, appealing, working, residential and shopping atmosphere within the Redevelopment Area.	• Provide incentives to encourage the rehabilitation and modernization of those buildings which are structurally sound, but are in a deteriorating condition. • Provide a landscaping, streetscaping, and lighting plan in conjunction with the SR 520 widening which will help to create an identifiable human scale character for the SR 520 corridor. • Require the placement of utility lines underground where it is feasible to improve visual qualities. • Develop sign regulations, in coordination with the Planning and Zoning Staff, which will control the size, type, location, and amount of signage for the purpose of minimizing visual clutter, enhancing community character and maximizing the flow of clear information to the motoring public. • Utilize a variety of beautification techniques to provide comfortable, pleasing, and healthful work, leisure, residential, and shopping environments. • Encourage pedestrian and bicycle pathways through the district, appropriately designed and separated from auto circulation paths for safety purposes. These should be used as positive tools to improve the area's environment through their use of landscaping and visual treatments. • Develop design guidelines for street lighting and traffic signalization which will be applied throughout the SR 520 corridor.	Valid and Ongoing



Chapter 2 - Accomplishments

PUBLIC FACILITIES		
Goal	Objectives	Assessment
I. Provide necessary public facilities at acceptable levels of service to accommodate the new development proposed within the Redevelopment Area, consistent with the Policies of the Capital Improvements Element of the Comprehensive Plan.	• Work with the Brevard County Water/Wastewater Division to develop a sanitary sewer collection system that will serve the entire Redevelopment Area, including all proposed new development for the Area.	Completed
	• Coordinate with or assist the Brevard County Office of Natural Resources Management to develop an overall Stormwater Management Plan for the Redevelopment Area consistent with the County's Master Plan. • Work with Brevard County's Traffic Engineering Department to ensure that all roads, intersections, directional signs, and signalization within the area promotes the highest level of service possible within the Redevelopment Area.	Valid and Ongoing
	• Encourage the Brevard County Utilities Department and/or the City of Cocoa Utilities Department to provide a wastewater re-use system for landscape irrigation throughout the Redevelopment Area.	Not Cost Feasible
PUBLIC FACILITIES		
Goal	Objectives	Assessment
I. Encourage the acquisition, demolition, and re-use of those properties which, because of their location, condition, or value no longer function at their highest potential economic use.	• Identify and cooperate with those property owners within areas designated for potential redevelopment projects to assess their willingness to participate in those projects. • Encourage partnerships among the property owners, the private sector, and the public sector in order to implement proposed redevelopment projects which will achieve public goals • Facilitate redevelopment transitions by developing appropriate relocation plans sensitive to the needs of those whose properties will undergo re-use activities. • Minimize the impacts of increased traffic circulation and increased densities and activity levels on residential areas. • Create incentives to encourage private participation in redevelopment programs.	Valid and Ongoing



Chapter 3 - Barge Canal Sub-Area

DESCRIPTION

The Barge Canal Sub-Area includes SR 528 and the lands to the north that front on the Barge Canal. It extends from the Indian River Lagoon on the west to the Banana River Lagoon on the east.



Barge Canal Sub-Area



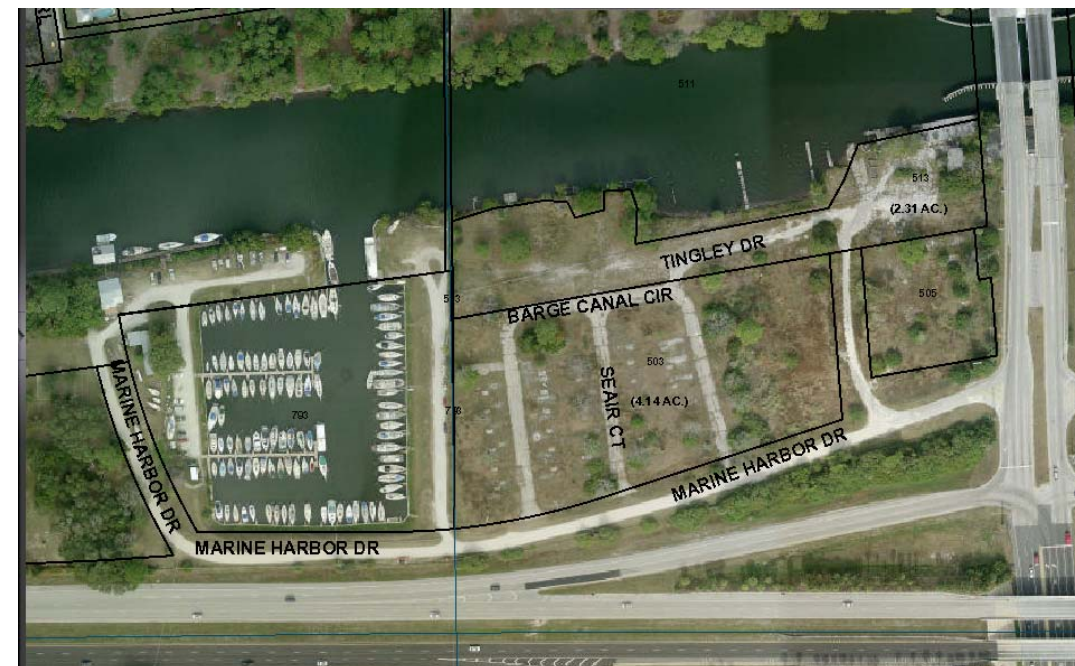
Chapter 3 - Barge Canal Sub-Area

This sub-area can be further divided into the following three separate components:

- The east end of the sub-area along **North Banana River Drive** – The majority of the properties located north of SR 528 are smaller lots and include the open storage of derelict autos, trucks, and boats. South of SR 528, the sub-area includes Kelly Park, a waterfront park owned by Brevard County and Kelly Park West which has tennis courts and ballfields, and is also owned by the County.
- The area between N. Banana River Drive on the east and SR 3 on the west – This area includes the privately owned **Harbortown Marina** facilities, industrial complexes, and large tracts of vacant land under the control of the Canaveral Port Authority and the State of Florida.

- West of SR 3 – This area comprises the **Old Tingley Marina** and RV Park, now derelict, the Port owned marina, a cemetery, and the Port owned riverfront property along the SR 528 Causeway.

Given its extensive waterfront and proximity to Port Canaveral, this is a prime district for redevelopment catering to the marine industry and port-related tourism. Despite the waterfront location, there is little public access to the waterfront with the exception of Kelly Park on the east end of the sub-area. At the west end of the sub-area, the old Tingley Marina/RV Park as well as the riverfront property along the SR 528 Causeway may offer opportunities for future public access.



Harbortown/Bertram Complex



North Banana River Drive Area



Old Tingley and Port Authority Marina Area



DATA SUMMARIES

Parcel Size - The majority of the properties within this sub-area are large tracts of land ten acres or larger with the exception of the properties north of SR 528 along North Banana River Drive. The Canaveral Port Authority owns almost 300 acres of the total 420 + acres of vacant land which is approximately 71% of the properties. The State of Florida owns a 98 acre parcel to the west of Harbortown Marina. The Authority's lands include the Barge Canal waterway and several large tracts to the east of the Sea Ray facility. They are depicted in green on the graphic below.

Taxable Value - According to data provided by the Brevard County Property Appraiser, the sub-area showed a 33% decline in assessed property value from the year 2005 to the year 2011. In comparison, the County's overall assessed value declined by 29.4% during the same time frame. Property values that are static or declining may indicate a weakening market or reflect a change in the investment image of an area. It should be noted that this time frame has shown a serious economic decline in the real estate market overall. However, the fact that the area's rate of decline is higher than that of the County's overall would indicate that the sub-area is in a more serious decline than that of the County as a whole.

TAXABLE VALUE GROWTH RATE 2005-2011			
Taxable Value	2005	2011	Change
Brevard County	\$2,962,784,160	\$2,142,657,193	-29.4%
Barge Canal Sub-Area	\$60,176,550	\$40,390,950	-33%

Age of Structures - Within the Barge Canal Sub-Area almost 30% of the buildings were constructed prior to 1980. The developed properties occur in three basic clusters. On the east end of the sub-area there are approximately six buildings with an average age of 1989 and one relatively new structure built in 2008 north of SR 528 along North Banana River Drive. Partially because of their age, most of these buildings are showing signs of poor maintenance and create a negative influence which can contribute to a loss of economic status and a lack of interest in new development. The only buildings in the sub-area south of SR 528 are a convenience store built in 1975 and the County Park facilities. The second cluster of developed properties occurs to the west and is separated from the first cluster by a large vacant tract of land owned by the Canaveral Port Authority. This second cluster includes five buildings constructed in 2001 now being utilized as a boat manufacturing complex and a private marina constructed in 2006. These buildings are well-maintained and are a complement to the industrial potential of this sub-area. Likewise, the third cluster of buildings include the boat manufacturing complex owned by Sea Ray Boats and an industrial complex occupied by Arnott Air Suspension Products. These buildings are well maintained and appear to be in good condition. At the extreme west end of the sub-area is the old derelict, abandoned Tingley Marina and RV site with uninhabitable buildings built in 1952 and 1960 and a marina owned by the Canaveral Port Authority with a few buildings showing signs of disrepair.



Port Authority Properties

STRUCTURES BUILT BY YEAR				
Time	Brevard Co	% of Total	Barge Canal Sub-Area	% of Total
2000 to present	44,584	21.5%	8	22%
1990 to 1999	36,583	17.6%	10	27%
1980 to 1989	50,811	24.5%	8	22%
1970 to 1979	20,958	10.1%	8	22%
1969 or earlier	54,798	26.4%	3	8%
Total Structures	207,734		37	

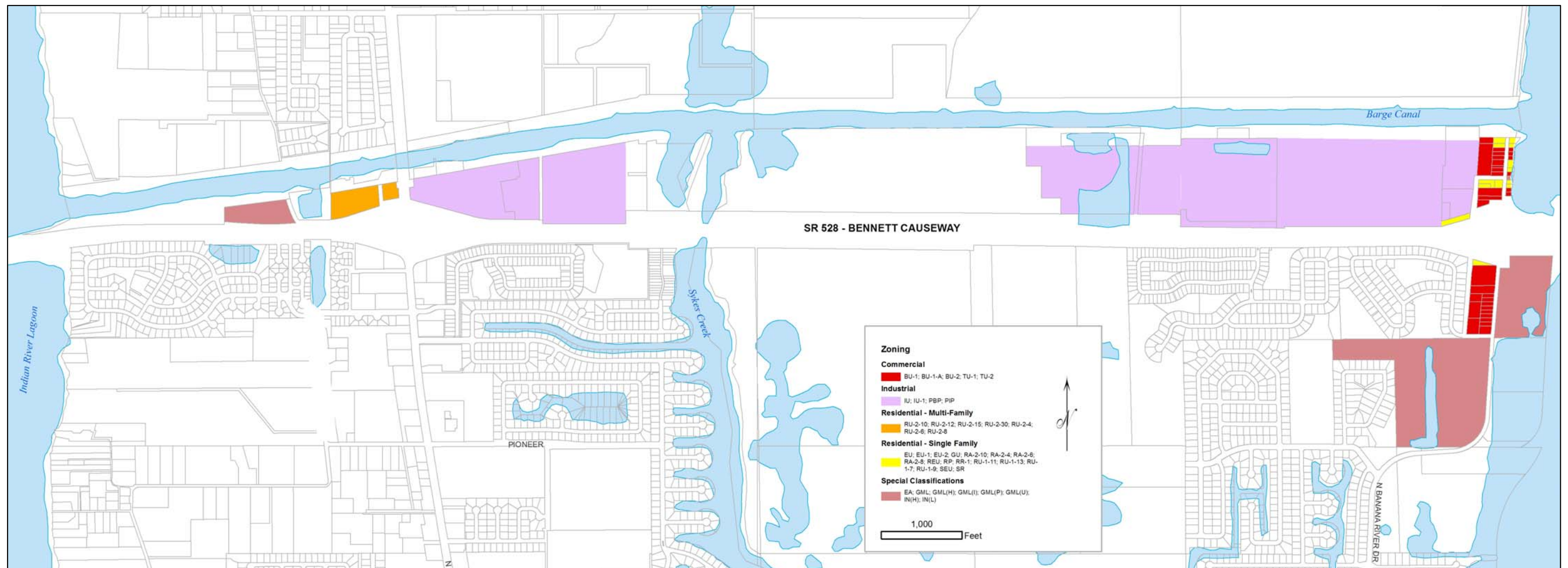


Chapter 3 - Barge Canal Sub-Area

ZONING

At the east end of the Barge Canal sub-area the zoning is BU-2, an intense commercial district which is appropriate for the boat repair and storage that dominates the use on North Banana River Drive north of SR 528. South of SR 528, the properties are primarily vacant with the exception of a convenience store and the park facilities. The BU-2 zoning in this area appears to be a bit heavy considering that most of these properties are vacant and are surrounded on the east and south by County owned park lands.

Almost all of the property between the Banana River Drive intersection to the SR 3 intersection are zoned industrial (PIP Planned Industrial Park). This is appropriate zoning since the industrial character is already established within this area and the large vacant tracts lend themselves to future industrial use. West of the SR 528/SR 3 intersection are the vacant (old Tingley) marina and RV park properties zoned multi-family residential (RU-2-10).

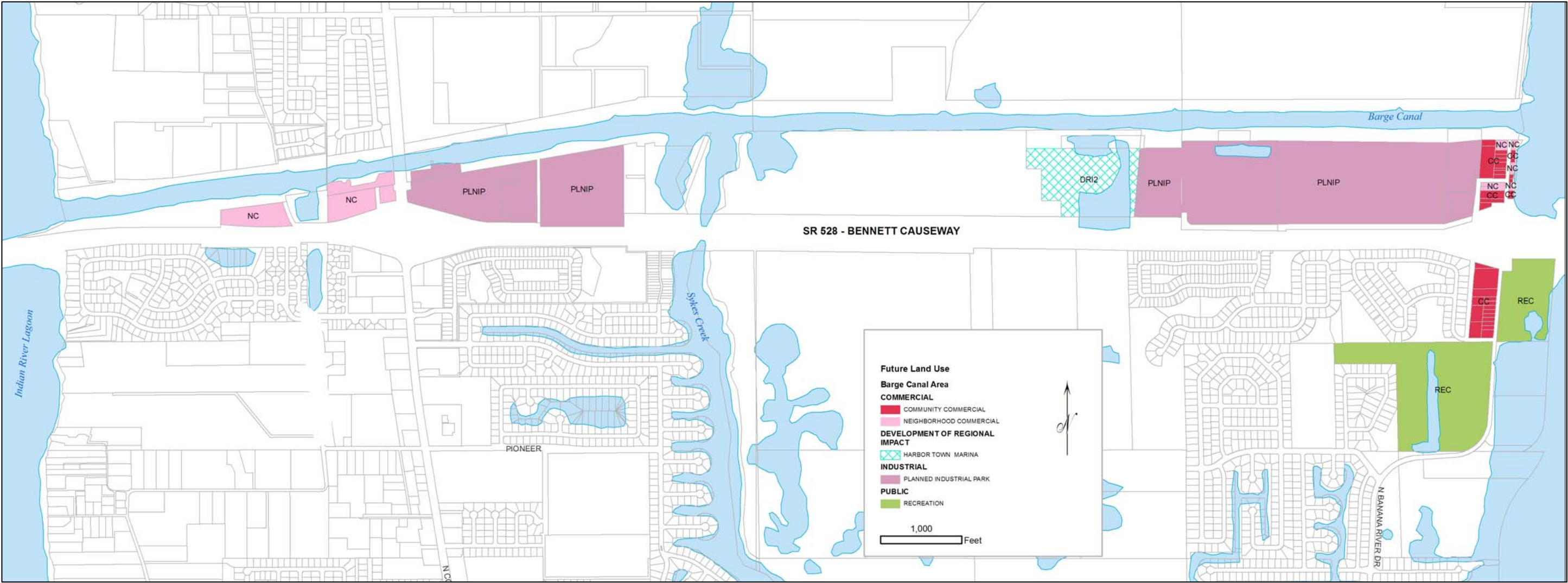


Zoning Map



FUTURE LAND USE

The future land use for this sub-area is consistent with the existing zoning: community commercial along N. Banana River Drive, Industrial (PIP) between the N. Banana River Drive intersection and the SR 528 intersections and Neighborhood Commercial west of SR 3.



Future Land Use Map



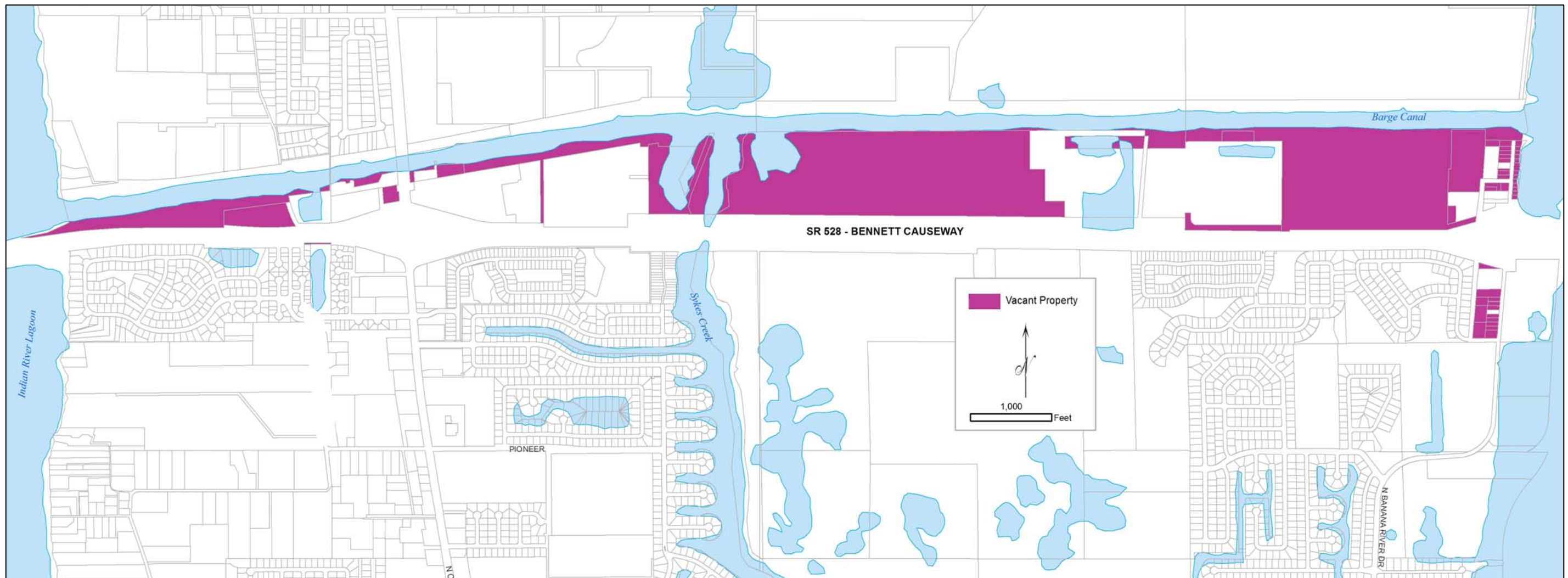
Chapter 3 - Barge Canal Sub-Area

EXISTING LAND USE

At the east end of the sub-area along North Banana River Drive north of SR 528 the area is primarily characterized by boat and vehicle storage and repair yards with the exception of a retail store, a flex warehouse building, and a parking area for cruise ship passengers. This area, generally exhibits a blighting influence due to the dominance of unkempt outside storage and the age and lack of maintenance of the existing buildings. South of SR 528 along Banana River Drive are two well-maintained Brevard County owned

parks, Kelly Park, a waterfront park providing access to the Banana River, and Kelly Park West which provides ballfields, tennis courts, and pavilions. West of the blighted area long North Banana River Drive the tracts include: a large vacant parcel owned by the Canaveral Port Authority; the Bertrand Boat Manufacturing Co., which includes four buildings in a well-maintained and functional condition; Harbortown Marina, again a well-maintained facility; a second large vacant parcel owned by the State of Florida; and the well-maintained seven building manufacturing complex occupied by Arnott Air

Suspension Products and SeaRay Boats. West of SR 3 are 4 primary properties: the old Tingley Marina and RV Park which is vacant and in a total state of disrepair; an occupied marina owned by the Port Authority; a cemetery; and vacant land along the Barge Canal owned by the Canaveral Port Authority.



Vacant Parcels



CONSISTENCY

Overall, the existing land uses are consistent with both the zoning and the future land use designations within the Barge Canal sub-area. However, the area along the west side of North Banana River Drive south of SR 528 should be reviewed as to whether a lighter commercial zoning district would be more appropriate than the existing BU-2 zoning.

GENERAL AESTHETICS CONDITIONS

The visual blighting conditions within this sub-area occur on both the east and west ends of the sub-area. North of SR 528 along N. Banana River Drive, the concentration of boat and auto repair and storage yards along with warehouse type buildings reflecting a lack of maintenance, along with the possibility of soil contamination, creates an image of this area which may negatively impact future investment and redevelopment. The central portion of this sub-area between N. Banana River Drive and SR 3 reflect two industrial complexes which are well-maintained and along with the large vacant properties owned by the Port Authority offer many opportunities for future quality industrial development. The properties west of SR 3 in this sub-area appear to be an excellent opportunity for redevelopment. With the cooperation and partnership of the Canaveral Port Authority, this area, consisting of the old Tingley property, the Port owned marina and vacant land west of the old cemetery, all with Barge Canal frontage, offer a variety of opportunities for public access to this unique ecosystem.



Barge Canal Area Industrial Development



North Banana River Open Storage





Chapter 3 - Barge Canal Sub-Area

INFRASTRUCTURE/PUBLIC FACILITIES

- Water – The City of Cocoa provides potable water system throughout this sub-area.
- Sanitary Sewer – Brevard County provides sewer service throughout this area with the exception of those properties located on North Banana River drive north of SR 528.
- Storm Water Management – Except for the newer manufacturing complexes, i.e., Arnott, Sea Ray Boats, Bertram Boats, and Harbortown Marina, few of the remainder properties provide stormwater treatment. This is especially problematic for the boat repair and storage properties along N. Banana River Drive.
- Multi-modal Transportation – Sea Ray Drive is the only road providing access for this sub-area east of SR 3 to N. Banana River Drive north of SR 528. This road is a two lane fairly well-maintained road with swale drainage. There are no sidewalks or bike paths along this road. West of SR 3, the access to the old Tingley property and the Port marina property, Marine Harbor Drive, is a very poorly designed and maintained dirt road. The access to this area is very close to the on-ramp for SR 528, causing stacking and safety problems which need to be addressed.



Marine Harbor Drive

CONCLUSION

There are three distinct physical characteristics reflected in this sub-area. At the east end is a concentration of boat repair and open storage facilities with older warehouse type buildings in various stages of disrepair. These uses represents the most significant blighting influence for this area. This, combined with the lack of storm water treatment or sanitary sewer, is a major environmental concern, especially being so close to water bodies, i.e., the Banana River and the Barge Canal.

The second section of this sub-area represents the majority of the land and is a combination of large vacant tracts owned by the Canaveral Port Authority and the State of Florida, as well as several industrial complexes including Arnott Air Suspension, the Sea Ray facility and the Bertram Boat facility, along with Harbortown Marina. All of these developed properties are, for the most part, well-maintained and set the character for the area for future industrial water related uses. This area represents an outstanding opportunity for future development, especially if the Canaveral Port Authority can become a planning partner in the effort.

At the west end of this sub-area are the vacated, abandoned Tingley Marina and RV Park, the Canaveral Port Authority marina, and the cemetery which is well-kept. The only road to these properties is an extremely poorly maintained dirt road. Another challenge for this road is the fact that it accesses SR 3 in very close proximity to the on-ramp to SR 528, creating a major ingress/egress problem. This will become an even larger safety issue if the properties are redeveloped to their fullest waterfront potential. Once again, in order for these properties to be redeveloped to their highest and best use, the cooperation of the Canaveral Port Authority will be required in the planning effort since they own the actual Barge Canal frontage. It should be noted that this area west of SR 3 offers an excellent opportunity for a waterfront park with public access to the Barge Canal.

IDENTIFIED ISSUES

- A concentration of boat auto repair establishments and outside storage along with older deteriorating buildings located in close proximity to the Banana River reflecting both aesthetic and potential environmental concerns.
- Little or no public access to the waterfront, especially considering the many commercial and recreational opportunities that present themselves.
- Lack of identity or defining entrance to Merritt Island.
- Little or no landscaping, signage, or other beautification features at the SR 3/SR 528 overpass and interchange which is a critical focal center for the entrance to Merritt Island. SR 528 is the gateway to Merritt Island, the Port, and the Beaches. As such, the appearance of this area speaks volumes to visitors, tourists, and potential business people, developers, and investors.



Marine Harbor Drive Access



Marine Harbor Drive

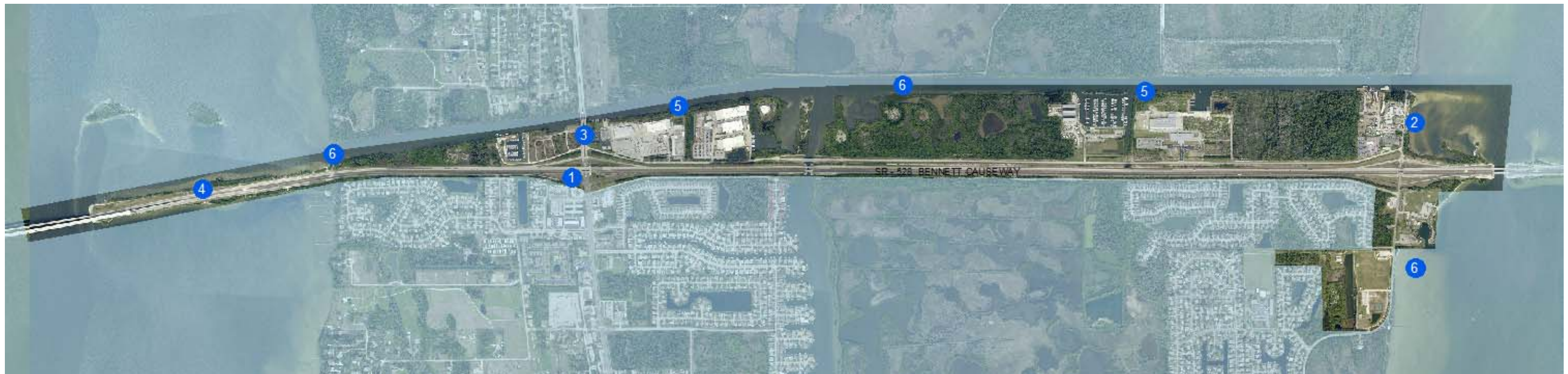


RECOMMENDED PROJECTS

1. Develop a gateway for the SR 528/SR 3 Interchange to include signage and extensive landscaping per the concept plan shown in the exhibit below.
2. Implement a pilot property clean-up and code enforcement project to remove abandoned vehicles and to clean up shoreline conditions in the eastern industrial open storage area north of SR 528 along North Banana River Drive. This area represents the most significant blighting influence and potential environmental concern for this sub-area.
3. Work with Brevard County, Port Canaveral, and FDOT on this project to improve access to the old Tingley Marina property and consider it for public acquisition and future development to provide the public with a water access park and water taxi to the Port.
4. Initiate a small area master concept plan for this area which should include the Canaveral Port Authority's vacant land fronting on the Barge Canal that can be developed as a park at the base of the SR 528 Causeway Bridge with water related activities similar to Waterfront Park on SR 520.
5. Consider Brownfield designation for this sub-area as well as Foreign Trade Zone to provide economic incentives and to draw new employment and new industries.
6. Work with the State of Florida and the Canaveral Port Authority to develop opportunities for eco-tourism to include hiking trails and kayak launches on the state-owned property west of the Harbortown Marina and the Port Authority's land west of SR 3.



Proposed Gateway Signage Project



Barge Canal Sub-Area Projects



Chapter 3 - Barge Canal Sub-Area



SR 528/SR3 Conceptual Landscape Plan



Chapter 4 - SR 3 Sub-Area

DESCRIPTION

State Road 3 (Courtenay Parkway) is the primary north-south corridor through Merritt Island. The SR 3 sub-area includes Courtenay Parkway and all of the adjacent commercial, multifamily, and vacant properties fronting on the road. It extends from the SR 528 interchange at the north end to Merritt Avenue at the south end. The SR 3 corridor is essentially strip commercial in character. The properties are a mix of suburban shopping, office, restaurant, and both chain and local retail. While many of the buildings are showing their age, they are predominantly of sound construction. While many of the property owners have taken advantage of the Merritt Island Redevelopment Agency's Facade Improvement Program and have significantly improved the aesthetic appeal of their properties, there are still some structures in need of rehabilitation or facade improvements. Typical of strip commercial areas, most of these properties have setbacks that provide for parking in the front of the buildings, but with insufficient separation or buffering between the right-of-way and the parking areas. As a result, acquiring additional right-of-way to accommodate bike paths or additional landscaping is economically prohibitive. Recently, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and the Merritt Island Redevelopment Agency (MIRA) initiated several design improvements to the southern portion of SR 3. This resulted in an improved cross-section design, upgraded lighting, pedestrian crossings, new traffic signal mast arms, as well as landscaping within the medians. These projects significantly improve the overall aesthetic appearance of this section of the roadway.



SR 3 Sub-Area
Aerial

DATA SUMMARIES

Parcel Size- The size of parcels has a significant impact on the redevelopment potential for any specific property or area. Often, older commercial properties are too small for development under current zoning and land development regulations. Along SR 3 the chronological development, for the most part, took place from south to north with the older buildings concentrated at the south end of the sub-area. (See Age of Structures below.) The size of properties south of Mustang Way is significantly smaller than those north of Mustang Way. Since these parcels were developed prior to more modern development standards they reflect a lack of on-site stormwater treatment, adequate buffers and landscaping, and their smaller size now limits their development potential. When this occurs, often the only recourse is to assemble properties in order to obtain a parcel large enough to meet current design standards. This increases the cost of development which is a deterrent to private sector investment.

Taxable Value - According to data provided by the Brevard County Property Appraiser, the sub-area showed a 29.4% decline in taxable property value from the year 2005 to the year 2011. In comparison, the County's overall taxable value also declined by 29.4% during the same time frame. Property values that are static or declining may indicate a weakening market or reflect a change in the investment image of an area. It should be noted that this time frame has shown a serious economic decline in the real estate market overall. However, the fact that the area's rate of decline is the same as that of the County's overall would indicate that the sub-area is the same state of economic decline as that of the County as a whole.



TAXABLE VALUE GROWTH RATE 2005-2011			
Taxable Value	2005	2011	Change
Brevard County	\$2,962,784,160	\$2,142,657,193	-29.4%
SR 3 Sub-Area	\$163,191,638	\$136,708,620	-29.4%



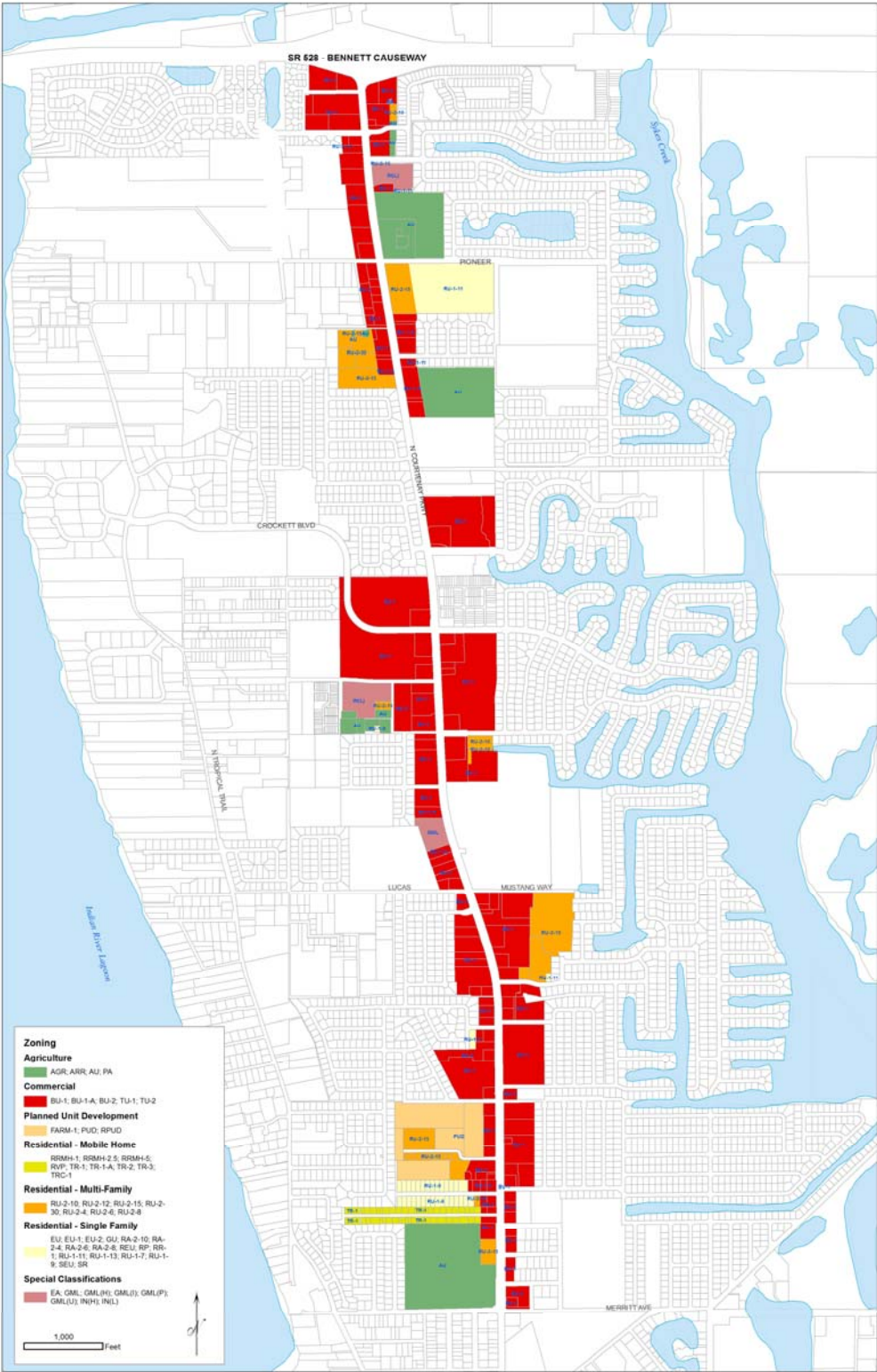
Chapter 4 - SR 3 Sub-Area

Age of Structures – As mentioned previously, the chronological pace of development generally progresses from south to north along SR 3. Within the south portion of this sub-area between Merritt Avenue and Mustang Way, 83% of the commercial buildings were built prior to 1990 with 50 percent being built prior to 1970. This age progression, from south to north, is also reflected in the size of the parcels and the physical condition of the buildings.

STRUCTURES BUILT BY YEAR				
Time	Brevard Co	% of Total	SR 3 Sub-Area	% of Total
2000 to present	44,584	21.5%	28	8%
1990 to 1999	36,583	17.6%	31	9%
1980 to 1989	50,811	24.5%	74	21%
1970 to 1979	20,958	10.1%	37	12%
1969 or earlier	54,798	26.4%	176	50%
Total Structures	207,734		346	

ZONING

With the exception of the ball fields located at Merritt Avenue and SR 3 and Merritt Island High School located at SR 3 and Mustang Way, almost all of the properties within this sub-area fronting on SR 3 are zoned commercial, either BU-1 (general commercial) or BU-1-A (neighborhood commercial). South of Mustang Way, there is a large apartment complex not fronting on SR 3 that is appropriately zoned RU-2-15 (multifamily). Likewise, there is an apartment complex along Minna Lane not fronting on SR 3 that is also appropriately zoned RU-2-15.

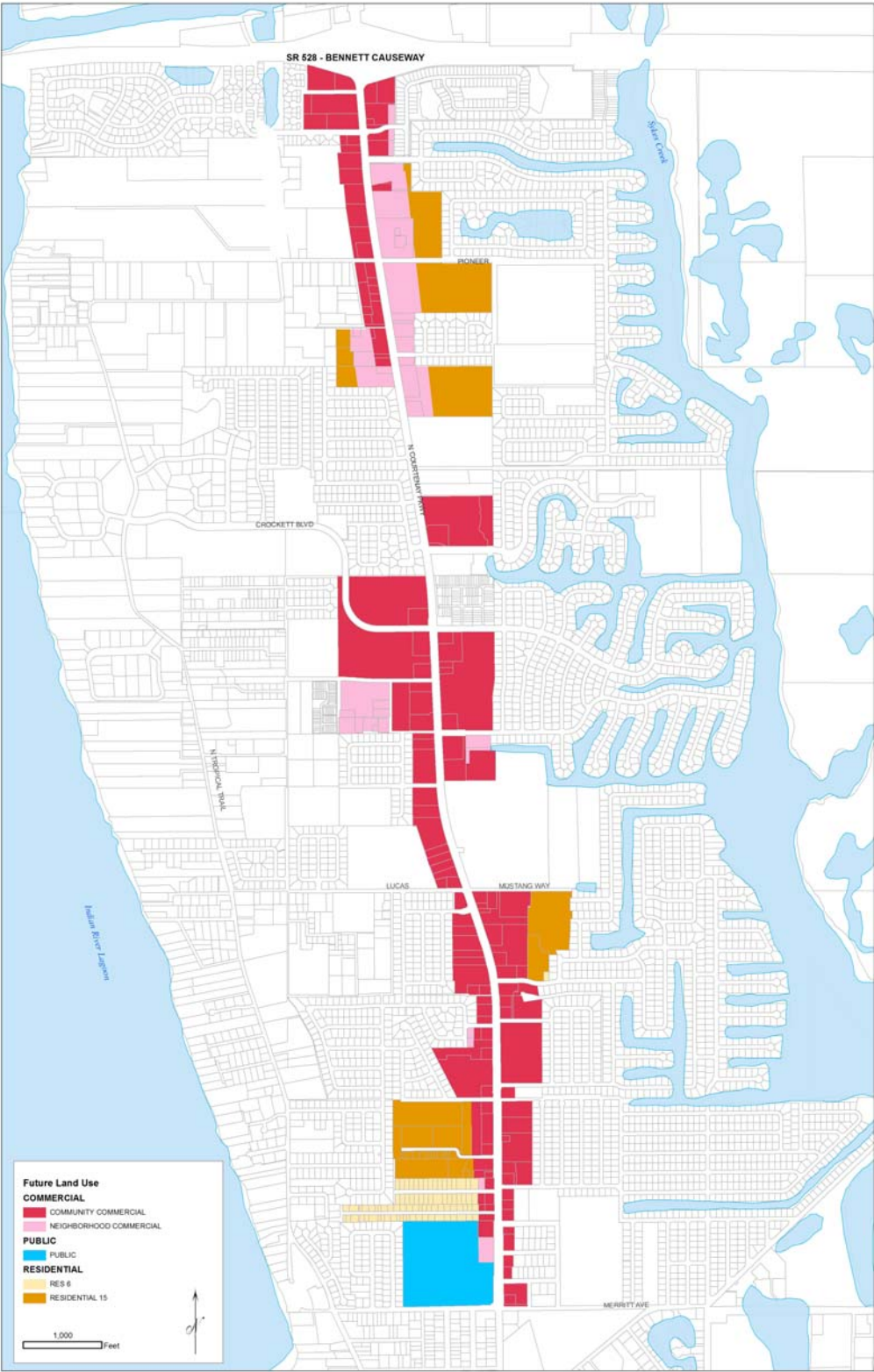


Zoning Map



FUTURE LAND USE

For the most part, the future land use designations within this sub-area are consistent with the zoning districts, with a few exceptions. (See Consistency.)



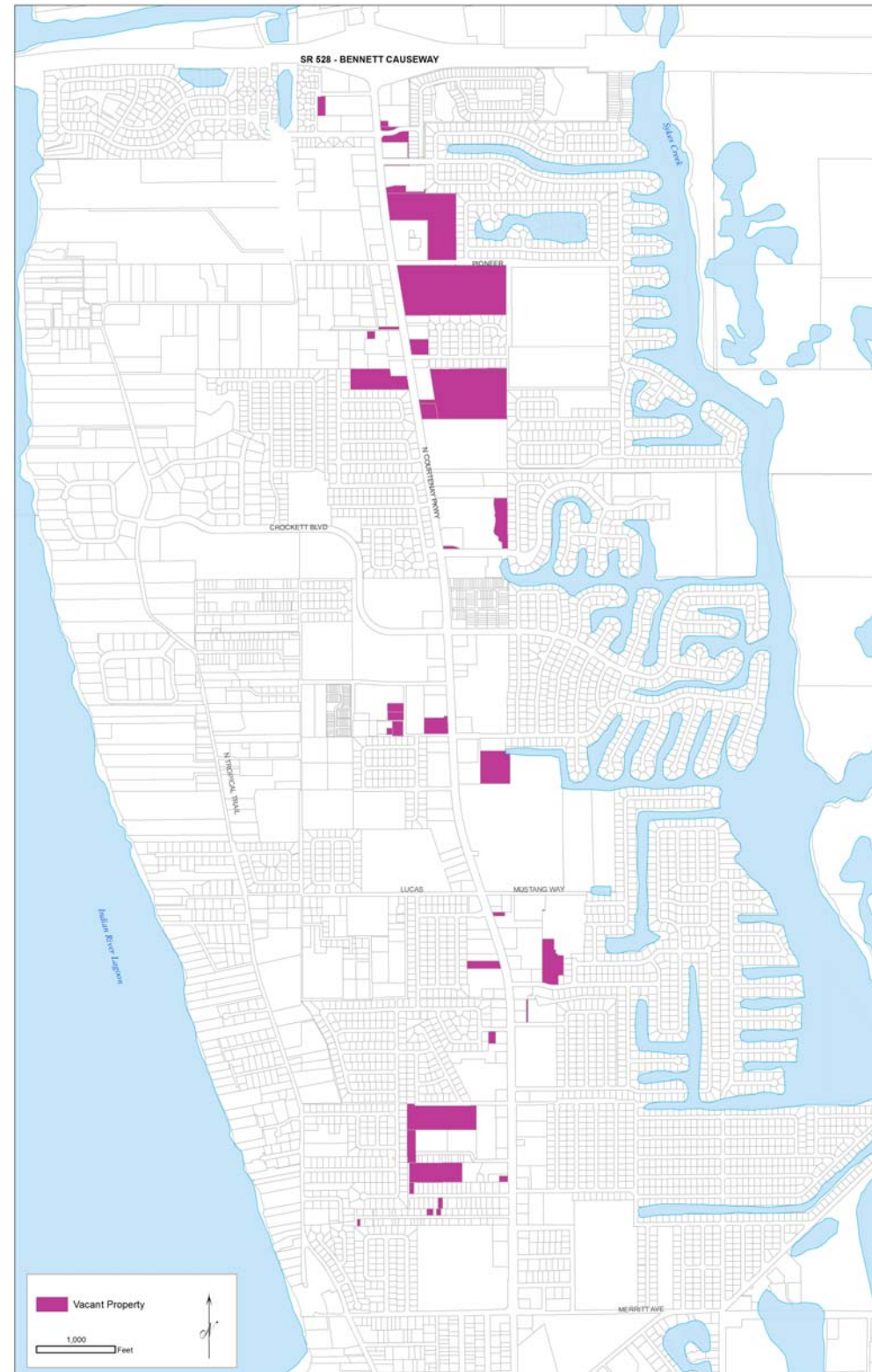
Future Land Use Map



Chapter 4 - SR 3 Sub-Area

EXISTING LAND USE

State Road 3 can best be described as a strip commercial arterial corridor. The exceptions to this include three multifamily residential apartment complexes, a government building located at the north end of the sub-area, Merritt Island High School, Merritt Island Public Library, and a recreation complex. In addition, there are approximately six (6) churches dispersed along the corridor. Along with the stand-alone commercial buildings, there are six (6) shopping centers and big box stores of various sizes. State Road 3 is a 100 foot constricted corridor. This means that the existing development pattern does not allow for additional right-of-way acquisition for widening the right-of-way to accommodate landscaping, bike paths, or turn lanes. Therefore there are few opportunities for development, or redevelopment, with the exception of the vacant lands indicated in the following map.



Vacant Land Use Map



CONSISTENCY

There are a few properties within this sub-area where the zoning or the future land use designation does not appear to be consistent with the existing use of the property. They include the Brevard County Government Complex located in the north portion of the area. This complex is zoned BU-1 with a future land use designation of Community Commercial rather than GML (Government Managed Lands) and Public Lands. The Merritt Island Public Library located in the central portion of the sub-area is appropriately zoned GML; however, it has a future land use designation of Community Commercial instead of Public Lands. Just south of the library there is a small apartment complex which is zoned BU-1 with a Community Commercial future land use designation instead of Multi-Family Residential. Likewise, both north and south of Skylark on the east side of SR 3 are large apartment complexes which are zoned BU-1 and have a future land use designation of Community Commercial instead of RU-2-15 with Multi-family future land use designation. Lastly, the county owned baseball fields and recreation complex on Merritt Avenue are zoned AU (Agricultural) instead of GML.

GENERAL AESTHETICS CONDITIONS

Since the majority of the structures within the south half of this sub-area were constructed prior to 1970, many do not meet modern development building codes and land development regulations. As such, they often lack adequate landscaping, parking and vehicular access. Over the last several years, many property owners have taken advantage of the MIRA facade improvement program and have enhanced the appearance of their properties considerably. However, there are still properties in need of repairs, including facade improvements, landscaping, and storm water retention. Since these older properties are smaller in size, the proliferation of signage, along with the above mentioned issues, at times creates an unsightly and cluttered appearance. Conversely, most of the properties north of Lucas were developed under more modern regulations and, therefore, reflect a more aesthetic appeal and less cluttered character. It should be mentioned that a significant amount of frontage along the west side of SR 3 north of Crockett Boulevard is dominated by a fence (approximately 1800 linear feet) which separates the Carlton Groves single family subdivision from SR 3. Because of the lack of uniformity in both materials and level of maintenance, this fence adds a distinct blighting influence in this part of the corridor. On a positive note, as a result of recent road design improvements, the Merritt Island Redevelopment Agency in conjunction with FDOT has installed traffic signal mast arms and lighting, along with landscaping and brick pavers within existing medians which has softened the otherwise stark appearance of the south portion of the SR 3 corridor.



Cluttered Signage



Landscape Improvements



Chapter 4 - SR 3 Sub-Area



Recent Façade Improvement



Potential Façade Improvement



Modern Office Complexes



Unsightly Fencing Buffering Carlton Grove Subdivision



INFRASTRUCTURE/PUBLIC UTILITIES

- **Water** – The City of Cocoa provides potable water throughout this sub-area.
- **Sanitary Sewer** - Brevard County provides sanitary sewer throughout this sub-area.
- **Stormwater Management** – While most of the newer developed properties within the north half of this sub-area treat their own stormwater with on-site retention systems, most of the older properties within the south half have no stormwater treatment.
- **Multi-modal Transportation** – State Road 3 (North Courtenay Parkway) is a constricted 100 foot wide corridor with the adjacent properties developed to the road right-of-way line, leaving little or no financially feasible opportunities for right-of-way acquisition and road widening. State Road 3, from State Road 520 to State Road 528 is currently functioning close to the peak of its design capacity and has been assigned a level of service (LOS) designation of “E”. The design capacity of this segment is for 43,900 trips. The current volume is approximately 33,422 trips. The roadway is currently operating at 76% of its design capacity. Further complicating traffic flow on this segment is the fact that there are no north/south parallel local streets, with the exception of North Tropical Trail to the west. Also, the minimal amount of right-hand turn lanes, with the exception of those located at major street intersections, in effect, requires the right travel lane to become a right turn lane, resulting in efficient traffic movement. Access management along this corridor is almost non-existent, given the number, location, and width of driveways within this area. This extensive side friction also results in further congestion on the road. Street lighting along the corridor, especially along the northern portion of the sub-area, is very poor and in some areas non-existent. This condition also aggravates the safety concerns for both pedestrians and vehicles. Also, the concrete power poles are located only a few feet

from the travel lane, creating a serious safety concern. This lack of clear zones throughout the corridor is a problem that will be hard to correct. Lastly, at many of the intersections, driveways are located very close to corners, a situation which does not conform to safety standards.



Sidewalk Obstacles



Driveway Intersection Conflicts/Backing Into Roadway

CONCLUSION

The main factor which has determined the physical character of SR 3 has been the chronological timing of the development. The properties developed at the south portion of the sub-area were built earlier than those progressing north to SR 528. This has resulted in most of the aesthetic and design issues being concentrated in the south half of the sub-area. These concerns include: smaller lot size that can no longer be redeveloped under current land development regulations; older structures needing physical or cosmetic improvements; lack of perimeter or parking lot landscaping; proliferation of unsightly signage; absence of on-site storm water management and treatment; and an excessive number of driveway cuts which reduces the functionality of the roadway and creates an unfriendly and often unsafe pedestrian environment. Conversely, the properties located at the north portion of the sub-area have been constructed more recently and, as a result, do not generally exhibit the above mentioned issues.



Chapter 4 - SR 3 Sub-Area

IDENTIFIED ISSUES

- Some buildings in the south half of the sub-area need rehabilitation or facade improvements.
- Poor access management and lack of inter-connectivity between commercial uses has resulted in an excessive amount of curb cuts and extensive side friction. The SR 3 corridor is a constricted right-of-way which severely limits economically feasible right-of-way acquisition and solutions to this problem.
- An unsightly fence for a significant distance along the west side SR 3 north of Crockett and adjacent to the Carlton Grove subdivision.
- Poor street lighting along the north half of the SR 3 corridor.
- Lack of bikepaths along the corridor.
- No sidewalks on the west side of SR 3 north of Spruce.

RECOMMENDED PROJECTS

1. Continue the successful Facade Improvement program to include landscaping and improved signage
2. Replace the existing Carlton Grove fence on the west side of SR 3 with a uniform decorative wall.
3. Add upgraded street lighting along the north half of the corridor.
4. Initiate a pre-engineering study to assess cross section options to accommodate bike paths and additional landscaping along SR 3.
5. Construct sidewalk/bike path on the west side of SR 3 north of Spruce Avenue to SR 528.
6. Pursue FDOT Corridor Study designation with Brevard County to secure funding for aesthetic and functional improvements, including intersections and bus stops.



Proposed Sub-Area 3 Projects



Chapter 5 - Cone Road Sub-Area

DESCRIPTION

The Cone Road Sub-Area encompasses the seriously deteriorating industrial lands located south of Cone Road and north of the Merritt Island Airport. The area supports many small industrial and service-related businesses. It is not designed as an industrial park, in that each parcel is a stand-alone development with private access, utilities, stormwater, etc. Compliance with current land development regulations seems to vary from parcel to parcel. In addition, there are several properties which appear to be utilized for residential purposes. Also, there is a parcel of property owned by Brevard County (approximately 5.7 acres) which is being utilized by the Brevard County Public Works Department as the District 2 Operations Center and Storage Area. Lastly, south of Cone Road are two large vacant parcels, one fronting on Newfound Harbor, totaling approximately 24 acres.

North of Cone Road the majority of the property is owned by Brevard County and is to be utilized as a future regional stormwater management facility and public recreation area. Also, on the north side of Cone Road is a north-south roadway, Plumosa Street, which is a collector road. Fronting on this street is a variety of commercial uses mixed with some residential uses.



Cone Road Sub-Area Aerial

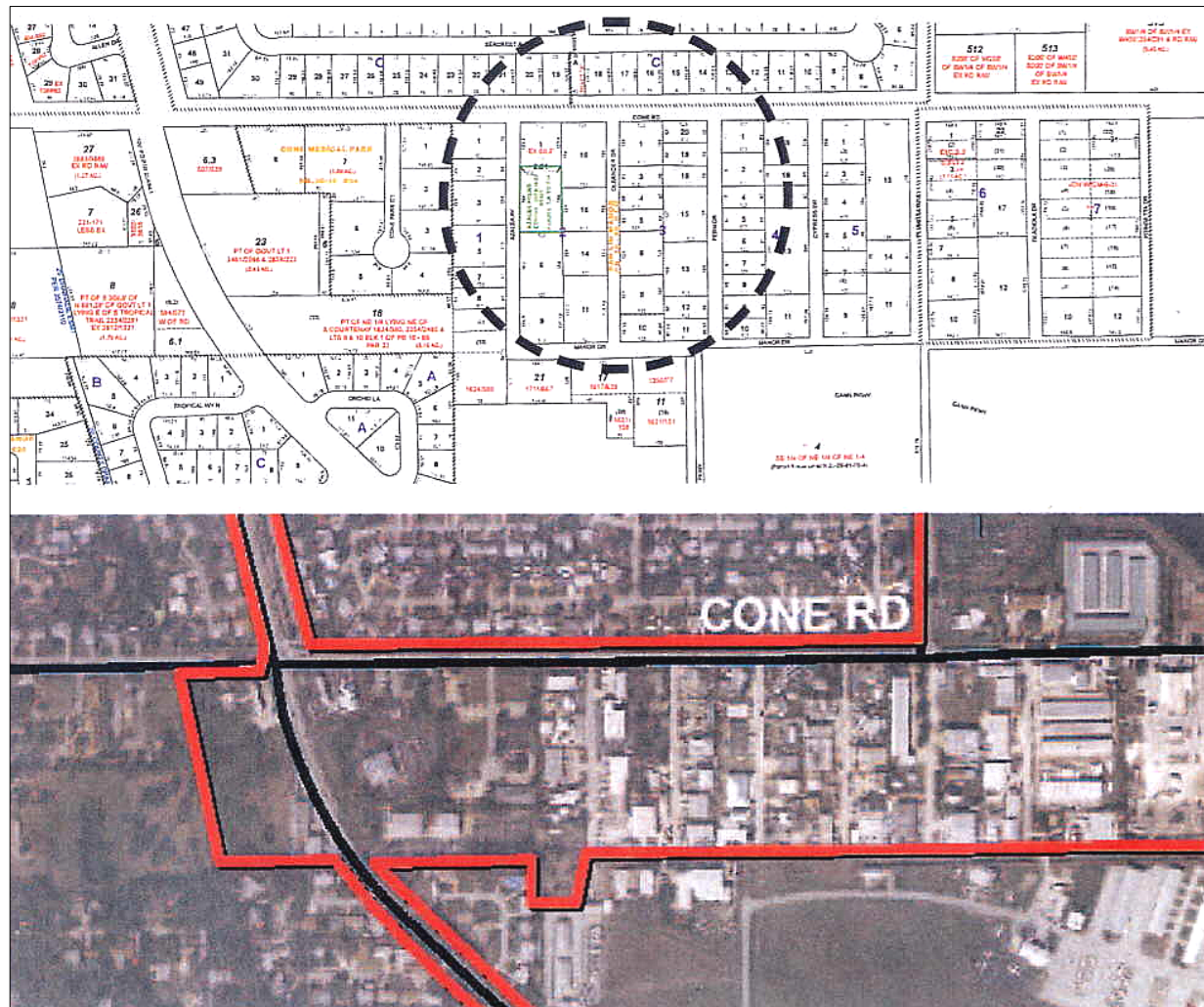


Chapter 5 - Cone Road Sub-Area

DATA SUMMARIES

Parcel Size – The size of parcels has a significant impact on the redevelopment potential for any proposed property. Typically, older platted subdivisions and commercial properties are too small to meet current land development regulations which require stormwater management, landscape buffers, access management, zoning setback and parking requirements. The Cone Road Area was originally platted for single family use with small lots that have been converted to commercial storage, warehousing, heavy commercial, and industrial uses. Due to this

fact, many of the properties in this area do not meet current land development regulations as mentioned above, nor do they meet the minimum lot area requirements listed in the Brevard County Zoning Code. They are therefore considered non-conforming lots of record. Contemporary development trends favor larger sites for redevelopment as they offer the flexibility to provide a variety of uses and a mix of activities. Larger sites also reduce the complexities involved with assembly of smaller parcels to support large scale redevelopment projects. (See example below)



Example of Non-Conforming Lots of Record in Cone Road Sub-Area

Market Value – Ideally the value of property should increase over time and show signs of growth somewhat consistent with trends in growth of the overall economy. Property values that are relatively static or declining may indicate a weakening market or reflect a change in the investment image of an area for several reasons. It is the intent of the Community Redevelopment Act to preserve the tax base and, therefore, the revenues for taxing authorities to support public services. According to data available from the Brevard County Property Appraiser, the Study Area showed a 46.4% decline in taxable value from the year 2005 to 2011. In comparison, the County's taxable values decreased by 29.4% during the same period. It should be noted that this time frame has shown a serious economic decline in the real estate market overall. However, the fact that the area's rate of decline is higher than that of the county's overall would indicate that the sub-area is in a more serious decline than the County as a whole.

TAXABLE VALUE GROWTH RATE 2005-2011

Taxable Value	2005	2011	Change
Brevard County	\$2,962,784,160	\$2,142,657,193	-29.4%
Cone Road Sub-Area	\$62,277,170	\$33,676,190	-46.4%

Age of Structures – The age of structures is a potential contributor to the declining conditions and high vacancy rates witnessed in the study area. Aging buildings typically require increased maintenance and repair. Additionally, the interior space, exterior appearance, and functional aspects of older buildings may be considered obsolete for modern market demands. The age of a building in and of itself is not a blighting condition. If adequate investment and maintenance is made, older buildings can remain viable and desirable in the real estate market. In fact, the historic building stock lends to the attractive neighborhood setting and has contributed to the resurgence of private renovations, occurring primarily in the Merritt Park Place area within the CRA. Conversely, in the Cone Road Area a concentration of older, poorly maintained and dilapidated buildings creates many negative influences in an area including a loss of economic status, a lack of interest in new development, an increased occurrence of crime, and decreased revenues for businesses. GIS data indicates that approximately 58% of the structures are over forty years old. The older structures are generally concentrated on smaller parcels, and are not as well maintained as newer structures and facilities in the area.

STRUCTURES BUILT BY YEAR

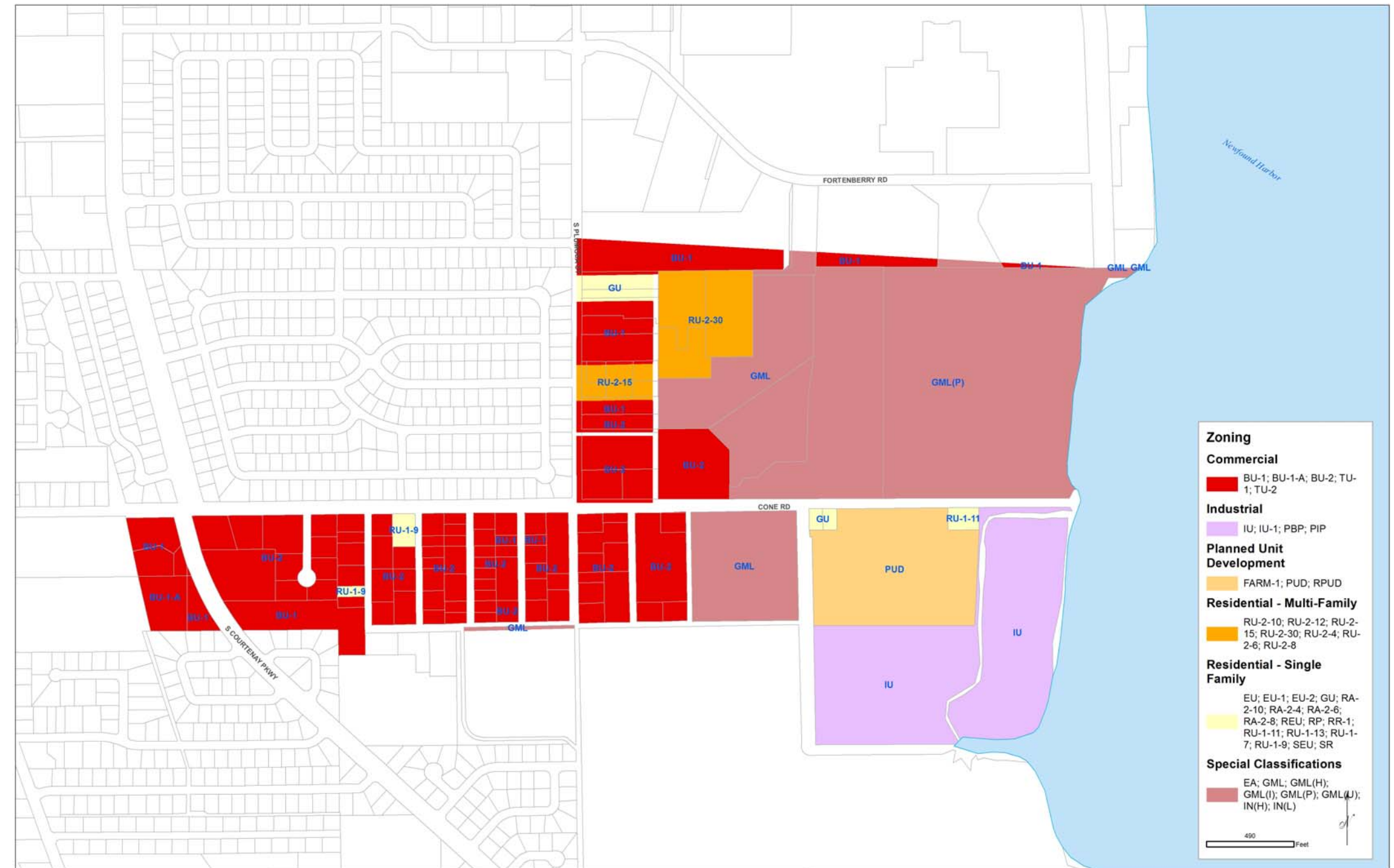
Time	Brevard Co	% of Total	Cone Road Sub-Area	% of Total
2000 to present	44,584	21.5%	10	8.1%
1990 to 1999	36,583	17.6%	7	5.7%
1980 to 1989	50,811	24.5%	22	18.0%
1970 to 1979	20,958	10.1%	12	9.8%
1969 or earlier	54,798	26.4%	71	58.1%
Total Structures	207,734		122	



ZONING

Much of the industrial area south of Cone road is zoned BU-2 for heavy commercial use. The county owned property is zoned appropriately as government managed lands (GML). The large vacant parcels are zoned Planned Unit Development (PUD) and Light Industrial (IU). In addition, there are four (4) spot residential zonings along Cone Road and Azalea which are incompatible with the surrounding zoning and existing land uses.

North of Cone road the county owned parcels are zoned GML while the frontage properties along Plumosa and Breakwater are zoned primarily commercial ((BU-1 and BU-2) with some medium and high density residential (RU-2-15) and RU-2-30).



Cone Road Sub-Area Zoning Map

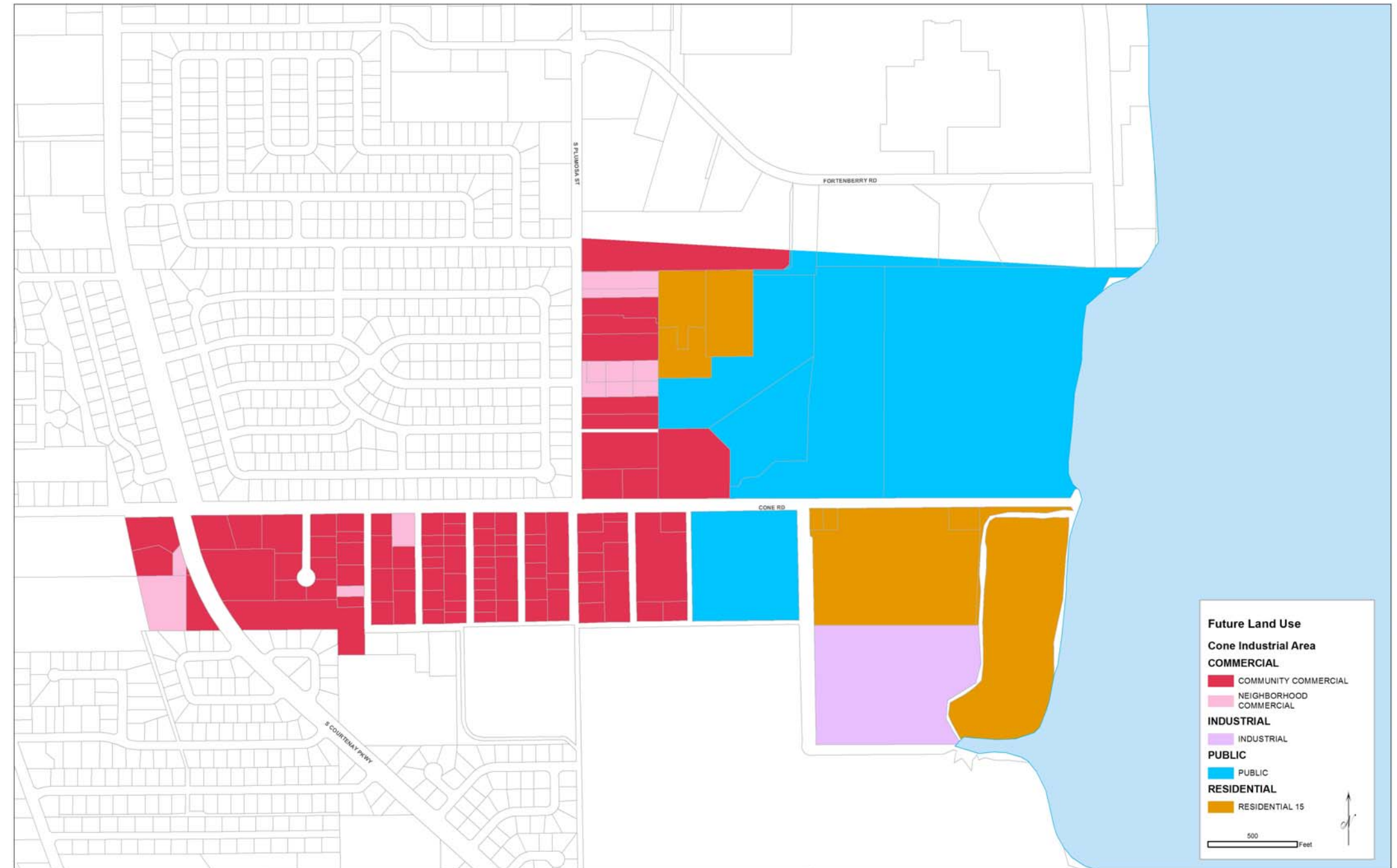


Chapter 5 - Cone Road Sub-Area

FUTURE LAND USE

The future land use designations south of Cone Road are, for the most part, consistent with the zoning districts discussed above. A predominance of community commercial in the industrial area, residential 15 and public for the vacant land, and county owned land at the east end of Cone Road. One apparent conflict with regard to land use designation is with the vacant property fronting on Newfound Harbor, which is zoned industrial (IU) with a future land use of residential 15.

North of Cone Road the future land use designations again appear to be consistent with the designated zoning districts since the residentially zoned properties along Plumosa and Breakwater are allowed in the neighborhood commercial land use classification. The one exception is the county owned property which is appropriately zoned government managed lands, but the future land use classification is medium density residential (Res 15).

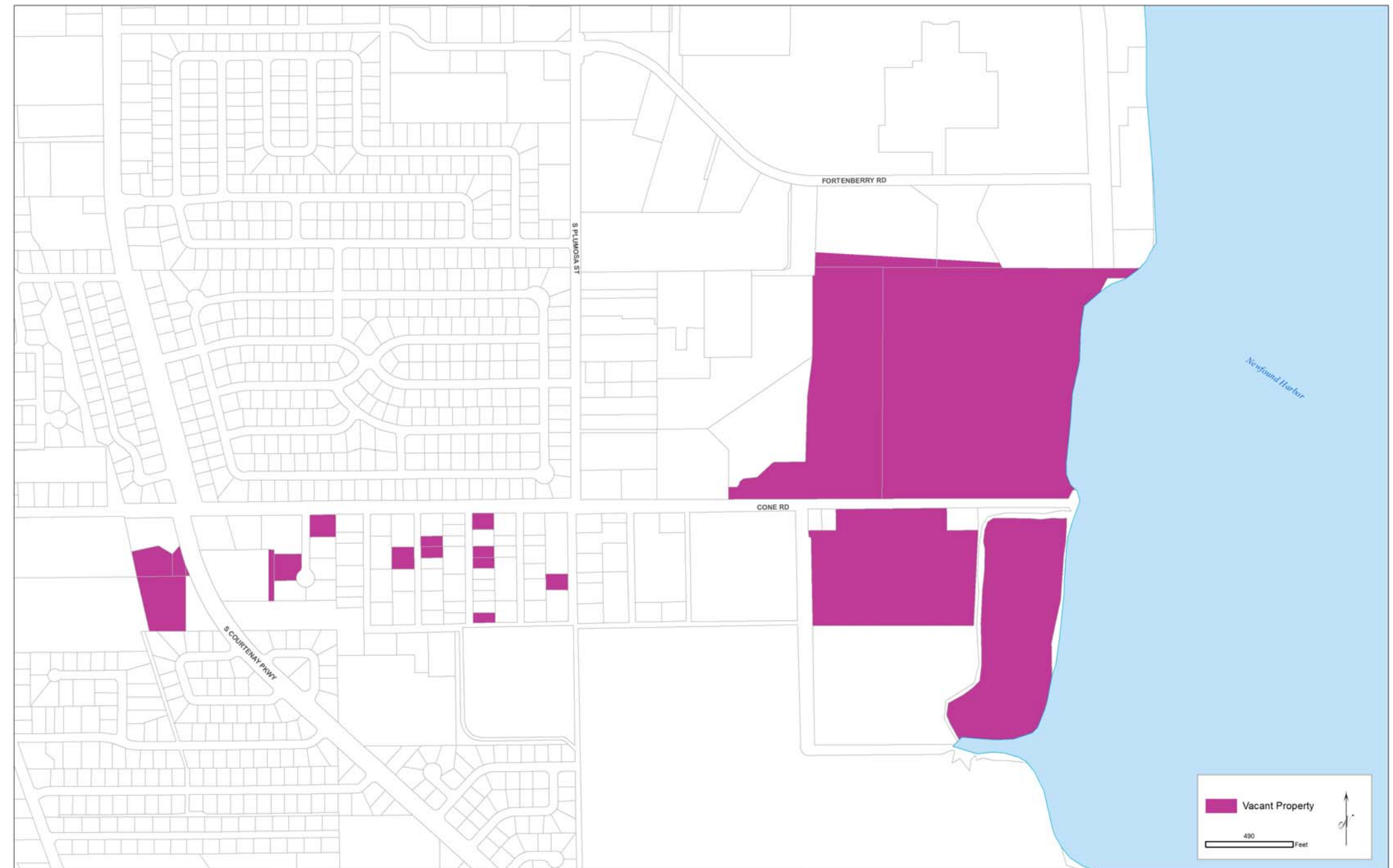


Cone Road Sub-Area Future Land Use Map



EXISTING LAND USE

With the exception of the large vacant parcels located south of Cone Road on the east end and the county owned property north of Cone Road, the majority of the property in the Cone Road Sub Area is developed. The following map and chart indicates the vacant parcels within the area. As would be expected, the vast majority of uses south of Cone Road in the industrial area consist of light and heavy industrial, as well as several service related businesses. North of Cone Road along Plumosa and Breakwater there is a variety of commercial uses with a few low and medium density residential uses.



Cone Road Sub-Area Existing Land Use



Chapter 5 - Cone Road Sub-Area

CONSISTENCY

For the most part, the existing land uses are consistent with both the zoning and future land use designations within the Cone Road Sub-Area.



Aesthetic Condition In the Cone Road Sub-Area

GENERAL AESTHETICS CONDITIONS

The industrial area south of Cone road was originally platted as a single family residential subdivision with lot dimensions of 50 feet wide and 150 feet deep. While most of these lots have been combined to accommodate their current uses, the properties are still relatively small considering the heavy industrial nature of the uses. As a result, the congestion and visual blight throughout this area is well established and difficult to remedy. While many of the commercial properties are well-kept and well-maintained, others are in varying stages of disrepair. A majority of the supply storage areas are cluttered and unkempt, many structures are deteriorated or deteriorating, and vacant lots are not well-maintained.

North of Cone Road along the commercially developed corridor of Plumosa Street, the physical appearance reflects a diverse mixture of newer well-kept businesses and older buildings in a state of decline, a condition typical of many strip commercial corridors.



INFRASTRUCTURE/PUBLIC FACILITIES

- **Water** – The entire Cone Road Sub-Area is serviced with potable water provided by the City of Cocoa
- **Sewer** – The entire Cone Road Sub-Area is serviced with sanitary sewer by Brevard County with the exception of the industrial area south of Cone Road which, in spite of its small lots and heavy use density, relies on septic systems.
- **Transportation** – Cone Road is very narrow with a deep, dangerous ditch on the north side. It dead ends near Newfound Harbor but has no adequate turn-around and provides no water access.
- **Stormwater Management** – The entire Cone Road Sub-Area is characterized by a lack of basinwide stormwater retention and treatment. The exception to this are those relatively new commercial buildings along Plumosa Drive that, because of modern stormwater rules, were required to provide their own stormwater retention system. The dangerous ditch adjacent to Cone Road on the north side is a problem that needs to be corrected in the near future. Piping and covering this ditch would go a long way in cleaning up this corridor and making it safer.



Open Drainage Ditches on Cone Road Sub-Area



CONCLUSION

The Cone Road Sub-Area reflects two separate characters. South of Cone road is a heavy industrial area with a substantial number of deteriorating structures and on-site storage and dumping issues. In addition, many of these uses are located on small lots relative to the nature of the use. Also, the lack of sanitary sewer in this area is a strong deterrent to private sector investment, especially for commercial and industrial properties.

The industrial areas south of Cone Road also exhibit a significant number of aging structures. Aging buildings typically require increased maintenance and repair. Additionally, the interior space, exterior appearance, and functional aspects of older buildings may be considered obsolete for modern market demands.

North of Cone Road the sub-area reflects a strip commercial character along Plumosa Street. While there are some older buildings, more modern structures dominate this corridor.

With regard to the road corridors within this sub-area, Cone Road exhibits a combination of safety and aesthetic concerns. There is a deep open ditch on the north side of this relatively narrow road, and there is no turnaround or river access at the east end. Improvements, including piping and covering the open ditch on the north side of the road would provide the opportunity for road-widening and the addition of sidewalks and bike paths. Lastly, the west half of Cone Road on the north side and the entire west side of Plumosa Street is bordered by rear lots of the Belaire single family subdivision. Currently, these homes are buffered from Cone Road and Plumosa Street primarily by a six foot wooden fence which is in a significant amount of disrepair.

IDENTIFIED ISSUES

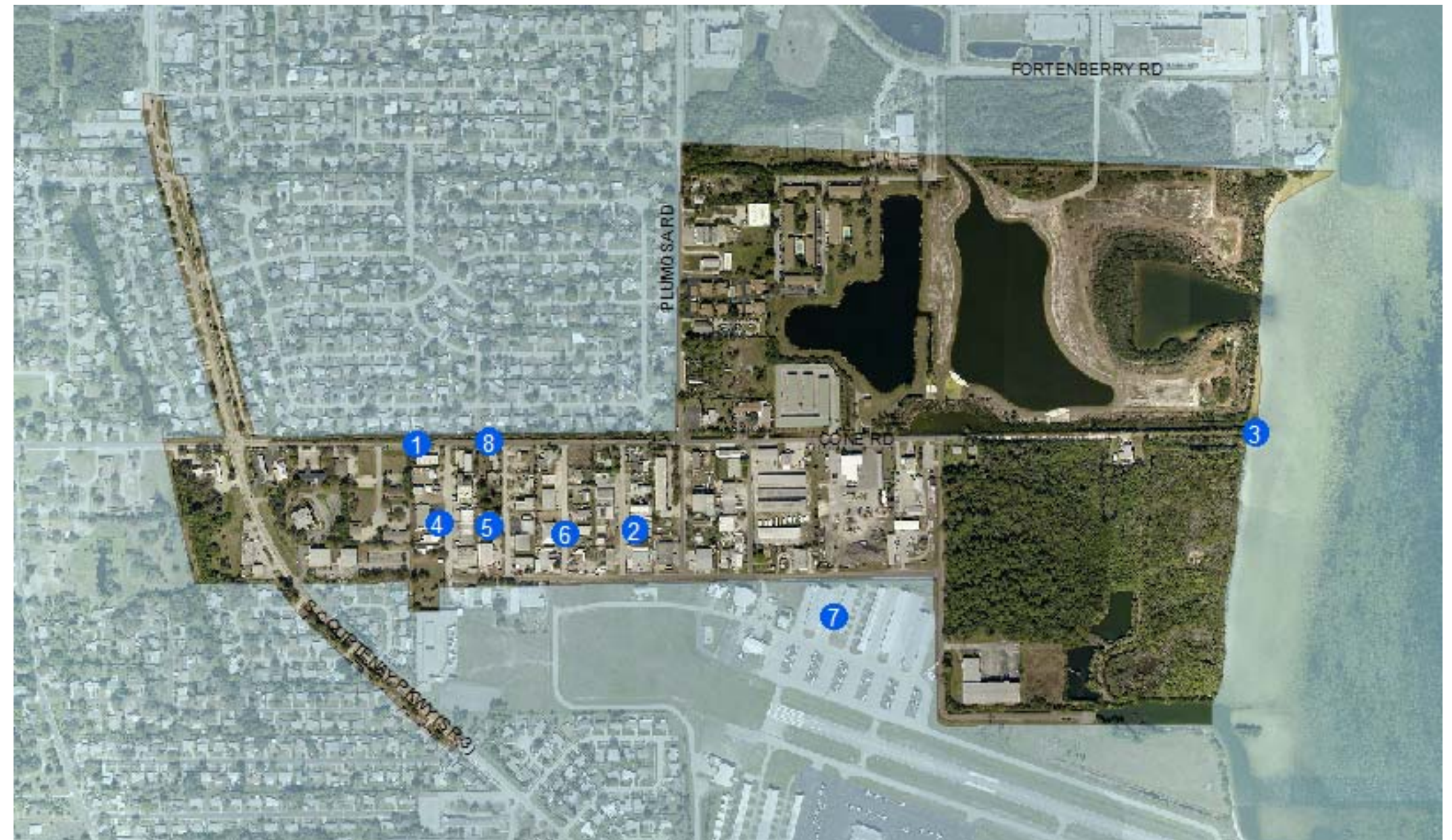
- Severe deterioration of properties and structures.
- Vacant buildings.
- Inadequate lot sizes.
- Cone road is narrow, lacks sidewalks and is flanked by a dangerous ditch.
- Development and redevelopment are constrained by the need to comply with restrictive land development and stormwater requirements.
- The area lacks identity as an industrial zone.
- Conflicting land uses, as several parcels remain in residential use.
- Lack of sanitary sewer in some locations.
- Cone Road dead-ends without adequate turnaround and does not provide access to the water.
- Unsightly wooden fences bordering the north side of Cone Road and the west side of Plumosa Street.



Chapter 5 - Cone Road Sub-Area

RECOMMENDED PROJECTS

1. Widen Cone Road, pipe ditch, and provide sidewalks and landscaping.
2. Rezone residential properties to commercial or industrial.
3. Provide for waterfront park and waterfront access.
4. Initiate preliminary engineering for stormwater management plan.
5. Initiate preliminary engineering for sanitary sewer extension.
6. Investigate Brownfield designation.
7. Work with the Titusville-Cocoa Airport Authority to coordinate economic development goals in and around the Merritt Island Airport.
8. Replace deteriorating wood fences on the north side of Cone Road and the west side of Plumosa Street with a more permanent decorative wall.



Cone Road Sub-Area Projects



Chapter 6 - SR 520 Commercial Core Sub-Area

DESCRIPTION

State Road 520 (also known as Merritt Island Causeway) is the primary west/east major arterial road, extending from Cocoa on the mainland through Merritt Island to Cocoa Beach. The SR 520

Commercial Core Sub-Area extends the entire length of SR 520 from the Indian River Lagoon on the west and to the Banana River Lagoon on the east. It extends north to approximately Merritt Avenue and south to approximately Fortenberry Road. This sub-area can be divided into three separate segments:

- **East Merritt Island** which includes that area north and south of SR 520 east of Kiwanis Island.
- **Central Area** which includes that area along SR 520 from Newfound Harbor on the east to

Courtenay Parkway (SR 3) on the west, and extending north to Merritt Avenue and south to Fortenberry Road.

- **West Merritt Island** from Courtenay Parkway (SR 3) on the east to the Indian River Lagoon on the west and extending approximately from Merritt Avenue on the north to approximately 900 feet south of Fortenberry Road on the south.

The SR 520 Commercial Core Area has a diverse mix of regional and local commercial uses. The area includes

Merritt Square Mall which was once one of the predominant regional shopping destinations for Brevard County. In addition, the area includes major user groups such as car dealerships, box retail stores, historical Merritt Park Place, (the oldest residential subdivision on Merritt Island now transitioning to commercial use), and the Merritt Island Baptist Church campus at the west portion of this sub-area. Also, it should be noted that Griffis Landing is one of the key waterfront properties located within this sub-area with redevelopment potential.



SR 520 Commercial Core Sub-Area Aerial



Chapter 6 - SR 520 Commercial Core Sub-Area

DATA SUMMARIES

Parcel Size – Once again, the timing of the development within the SR 520 Commercial Core Sub-area has significantly determined the size of the developed parcels in this area. The chronological age of development along the SR 520 corridor begins with the oldest developed lots at the western portion of this sub-area and progressively getting newer going east. As would be expected, the lot sizes in the older developed area at the west end are significantly smaller than those to the east. From a redevelopment standpoint, the smaller lots to the west would have to be assembled in order to be redeveloped and to provide enough area to accommodate modern development requirements such as storm water retention, landscape buffers, parking, etc. Again, as would be expected, these older, smaller developed lots are in the most need of redevelopment; however, the acquisition and assemblage of these properties often makes the cost of developing new projects prohibitive.

Age of Structures – As mentioned, the chronological pace of development generally progresses from west to east along SR 520 in Merritt Island. Within the sub-area, 47% of the buildings were constructed prior to 1969 (28% prior to 1960) with the vast majority of these being within the west half of the sub-area.

Taxable Value – Ideally the value of property should increase over time and show signs of growth somewhat consistent with trends in growth of the overall economy. Property values that are relatively static or declining may indicate a weakening market or reflect a change in the investment image of an area for several reasons. It is the intent of the Community Redevelopment Act to preserve the tax base and therefore the revenues for taxing authorities to support public services. According to data available from the Brevard County Property Appraiser, this sub-area showed a slight decrease (11.2%) in taxable value from the year 2005 to 2011. In comparison, the County's taxable values decreased by 29.4% during the same time frame. It should be noted that this time frame has shown a serious economic decline in the real estate market overall. However, due to the fact that the County's rate of decline is higher than that of the sub-area, it would indicate that the County as a whole is in a more serious decline than the sub-area.

TAXABLE VALUE GROWTH RATE 2005-2011

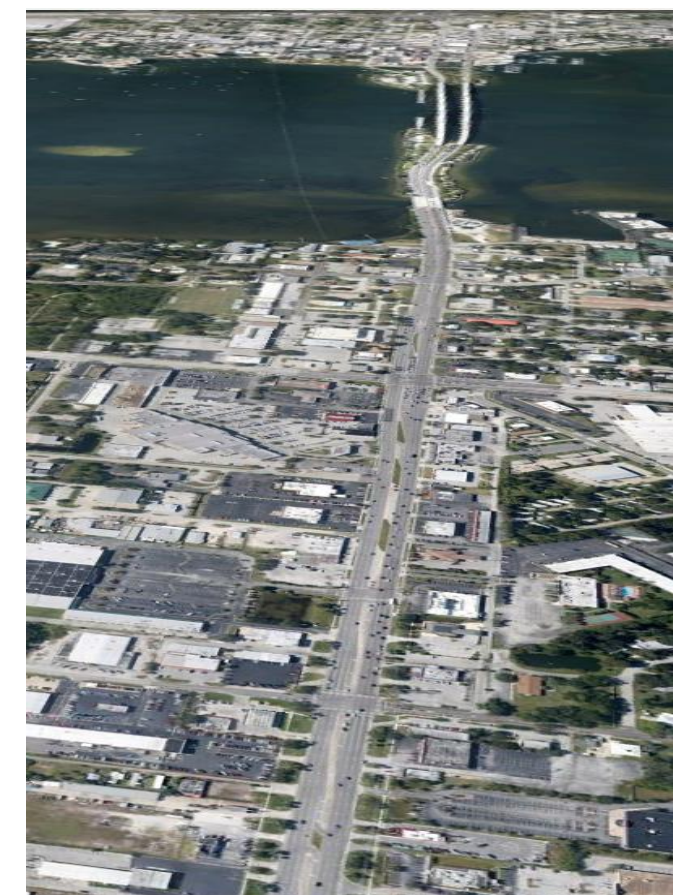
<u>Taxable Value</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>Change</u>
Brevard County	\$2,962,784,160	\$2,142,657,193	-29.4%
Cone Road Sub-Area	\$394,253,120	350,260,670	-11.1%

STRUCTURES BUILT BY YEAR

<u>Time</u>	<u>Brevard Co</u>	<u>% of Total</u>	<u>SR 520 Sub-Area</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
2000 to present	44,584	21.5%	63	12%
1990 to 1999	36,583	17.6%	62	12%
1980 to 1989	50,811	24.5%	75	15%
1970 to 1979	20,958	10.1%	72	14%
1969 or earlier	54,798	26.4%	240	47%
Total Structures	207,734		514	



The Merritt Island Causeway looking back toward Cocoa in 1961. Merritt Island's first theater, the Barn drive-in theater, is shown on the left.

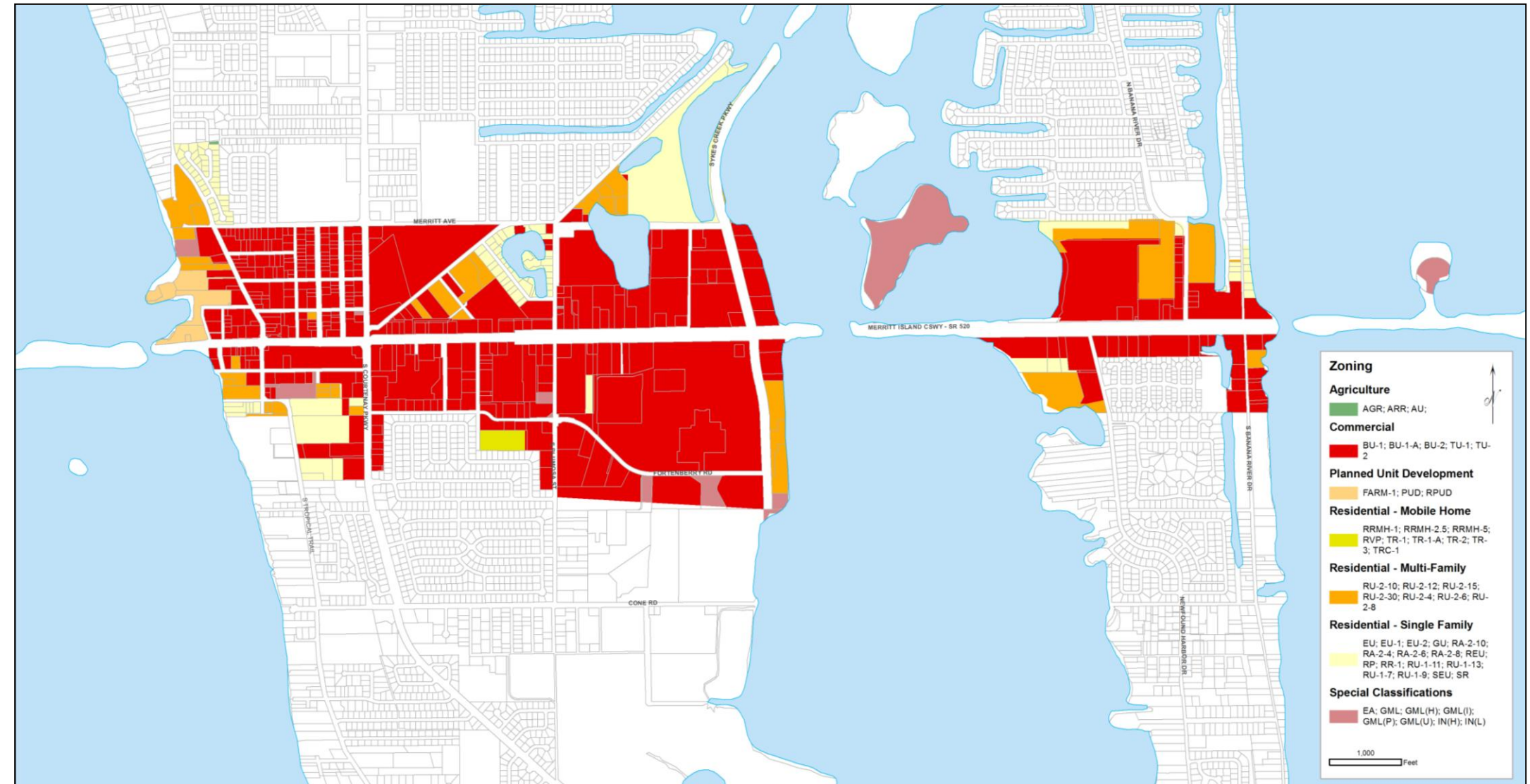


The Merritt Island Causeway looking toward Cocoa today



ZONING

The SR 520 Commercial Core Sub-Area is, for the most part, zoned for commercial use. The exception to this includes the multi-family projects scattered throughout the perimeter of the area, as well as two single family subdivisions. The two predominant zoning districts for this area are either BU-1 (retail commercial) or BU-2 (general commercial for more intense commercial uses). The multi-family residential uses are zoned RU-2-15 (medium density residential), while the two single family subdivisions are zoned RU-1-7.



SR 520 Commercial Core Sub-Area Zoning Map



EXISTING LAND USE

The east section of the SR 520 sub-area, east of Kiwanis Island, is primarily characterized by several major car dealerships, a Super Walmart store, and a variety of strip commercial retail, restaurants, and offices. The commercial development within this area is primarily newer projects on larger lots, meeting current land development regulations and projecting a more modern appearance. There is also a large multifamily residential project, the Merritt Island Co-op, located at the northeast portion of this section.



Car Dealerships in east section of SR 520 Sub-Area

The central section of this sub-area between Sykes Creek Boulevard and Plumosa Street is dominated by Merritt Square, which is an indoor shopping mall, located on the south side of SR 520 and is anchored by major retailers such as J. C. Penney's, Sear's, Macy's, and Dillard's. The mall also includes several chain restaurants and numerous retail stores. The north side of SR 520 in this section is characterized by the Sabal Pointe Shopping Center anchored by Barnes and Noble and Pier 1 Imports. There are also several retail chains such as Office Depot and B.J.'s; restaurants such as Longhorns, Chilis, and Applebees; Healthfirst Fitness Center; and Harbor Del Rio, a multifamily residential condominium complex fronting on Merritt Avenue. Again, most of the development in this segment of the sub-area is newer, on somewhat larger lots, meeting modern development standards, and is generally aesthetically appealing.



Merritt Square Mall

The area between Plumosa and SR 3 is characterized by a shopping center anchored by Home Depot fronting on SR 3. There is an apartment complex fronting on Palmetto Avenue and a motel with access to SR 520. On the south side of SR 520 is a shopping center anchored by Publix and TJ Max which fronts on SR 520 and SR 3 and numerous restaurants, including Olive Garden, Red Lobster, Denny's, Starbucks, etc. Most of these older buildings meet modern development standards such as storm water retention, landscaping and proper ingress and egress.

However, there are still some developments scattered throughout, both on the north and south side of SR 520, that do not meet current development regulations. Despite the age of these structures, an aggressive MIRA funded facade improvement program instituted in the last several years has improved the general aesthetic appearance along this portion of the corridor considerably.



Chapter 6 - SR 520 Commercial Core Sub-Area



Recent Façade Improvements in SR 520 Sub-District



Central Section Business of SR 530 Sub-District Needing Façade Improvements

The west section of this sub-area between SR 3 and the Indian River Lagoon features the Merritt Park Place historical district. This commercial district is located north of SR 520 with SR 3 to the east and Tropical Trail to the west. This area was the first single family residential subdivision on Merritt Island. Over the years, however, these single family homes began transitioning to commercial use. Several years ago, the Merritt Island Redevelopment Agency decided to encourage this transition by initiating a major infrastructure construction project to extend sanitary sewer, replace aging water lines, and install piped storm water drainage in the area. The streets were reconfigured to include resurfacing, landscaped medians, and sidewalks. These improvements helped to transform an older decaying neighborhood into a vibrant historic commercial area featuring a variety of small businesses. South of SR 520 in this area, the predominant feature is the Merritt Island Baptist Church campus which enjoys almost 1,400 feet of frontage along this portion of SR 520. Another important feature of this west area is the Griffis Landing property which is located on the Indian River Lagoon. This property has been purchased by Brevard County and is being planned as a working waterfront providing much needed public access to the lagoon.



Baptist Church



Merritt Park Place Business



Griffis Landing

CONSISTENCY

For the most part, the existing land uses within this sub-area are consistent with both the designated zoning districts and future land use designations. One major exception to this is the newly acquired county owned property along the Indian River Lagoon just east of Waterway Park known as Griffis Landing. A portion of this property is currently being used for commercial purposes; however, it should be considered GML (Government Managed Lands) as opposed to its existing zoning designation of PUD (Planned Unit Development).

GENERAL AESTHETIC CONDITIONS

The majority of the buildings located along the east portion of the SR 520 corridor are relatively new, sited on larger lots, and meet the current development codes and landscaping requirements. As a result, this portion of the sub-area reflects a positive aesthetic image for this major arterial roadway traversing the commercial core of Merritt Island. This portion of the SR 520 right-of-way is also well landscaped with both landscaped medians as well as perimeter landscaping which has been further enhanced by the private property owners, mostly car dealerships, who have landscaped the frontages of their properties.

In the central section of the sub-area (between Sykes Creek Parkway and Plumosa) most of the developments are sited on larger lots with relatively new structures and, for the most part, are well-

landscaped. There are some exceptions which detract from the overall aesthetic appeal of the area. Including Merritt Square Mall on the south side. The distinct lack of landscaping within the Mall's acres of parking area emphasizes the aging appearance of the buildings themselves. East of the mall and also on the south side of SR 520, there are a few smaller strip commercial buildings that appear older and in need of facade improvements. On the north side of SR 520 is the vacant K-Mart site and the vacated Circuit City store. The medians in the SR 520 right-of-way in this area are lacking, and therefore provide less opportunities for landscape enhancement. While the right-of-way perimeters are landscaped with trees, participation by private properties is less because of their lack of available frontage.



SR 520 West Without Landscaping



SR 520 East With Landscaping



Chapter 6 - SR 520 Commercial Core Sub-Area

West of Plumosa Avenue in this central portion of the sub-area, the commercial development has taken place on smaller lots and reflects older structures. Many of these businesses have benefited enormously from the MIRA funded facade improvement program and, as a result, the general appearance of this portion of SR 520 has improved significantly over the last several years. There are still a few strip commercial properties, including an older shopping center with a high vacancy rate on the south side of SR 520 that could benefit from MIRA's Facade Improvement Program.

West of SR 3, the sub-area is characterized by the well-maintained and landscaped Baptist Church campus which takes up the majority of the south side of SR 520 in this area. The balance of this portion of the sub-area consists of a variety of older and newer strip commercial buildings, many in need of rehabilitation and facade improvements. The section of the SR 520 right-of-way west of Plumosa Avenue to the Indian River, with the exception of the Baptist Church frontage, has minimal landscape enhancements with little participation from private property owners because of the limitations of available frontage. Merritt Park Place, the historic single family subdivision which underwent significant infrastructure and landscaping improvements stands as an excellent example of a redevelopment success within this SR 520 commercial core sub-area. The entrance to Merritt Island from the Cocoa mainland features Waterway Park. This park is a county owned facility providing public access to the water and is well landscaped. The entrance signage also enhances this gateway look.



Merritt Square Mall – Lack of Landscaping



Trees Within ROW Perimeters



Gateway Sign



Merritt Park Place Streetscape



INFRASTRUCTURE/PUBLIC UTILITIES

- **Water** – The City of Cocoa provides potable water throughout this sub-area.
- **Sanitary Sewer** – Brevard County provides sanitary sewer throughout this sub-area.
- **Stormwater Management** – The properties located on the east portion of the sub-area are newer and with few exceptions, treat their own storm water with on-site storm water retention systems. For the most part, the properties in the sub-area going west to the Indian River are older and have not met current development standards which now include requirements for on-site stormwater treatment. These properties which are discharging untreated stormwater into adjacent water bodies include Merritt Square Mall with its acres of impervious surface. In order to help alleviate this water pollution problem, Brevard County, with the assistance of the Merritt Island Redevelopment Agency and the St. Johns River Water Management District has recently acquired 54 acres of property just south of Merritt Square Mall to be developed into a regional stormwater park that would function as both a stormwater treatment facility receiving the untreated storm water from this drainage basin, as well as a public recreation area.
- **Multi-Modal Transportation** – The SR 520 corridor is categorized as a Regionally Significant Arterial in the Brevard County Transportation Plan and is part of the state highway system. As such, it is governed by a set of stringent rules designed to facilitate east-west traffic movement on a regional basis. In addition, SR 520 is a dedicated evacuation route. However, it also

serves as the primary access for many of the businesses along the corridor. The right-of-way varies significantly from west to east, averaging approximately 150 feet in width on the western portion, expanding to 200 feet in width east of Imperial Street. The roadway also supports utilities such as overhead electric, sanitary sewer and potable water which present obstacles to beautification. This sets up very different characteristics relative to beautification opportunities, parcel access, and pedestrian accommodations. The roadway is considered constrained with regard to right-of-way and, according to the Brevard County Transportation Planning Organization, is not programmed for capacity enhancements beyond operational improvements. The constrained nature of the right-of-way on the western portion creates issues with regard to beautification efforts within the right-of-way and parking/landscaping on private parcels. Much of SR 520 in this sub-area is comprised of a 7 lane section (continuous left turn lane) which is dangerous and contributes to visual blight. In addition, traffic conflicts are caused as a result of insufficient lot depth on older commercial properties. Many properties have separate and often excessive access to SR 520. This is unsafe and aesthetically unappealing, and adds to traffic congestion on the roadway.

CONCLUSION

The SR 520 Commercial Core Sub-Area encompasses the commercial and multifamily residential properties extending north and south of SR 520 (Merritt Island Causeway) from the Banana River Lagoon on the east to the Indian River Lagoon on the west. This sub-area can be divided into three separate segments:

- **East Merritt Island** – This segment extends from the Banana River to Newfound Harbor and is characterized by newer development on large parcels including car dealerships and a Super Wal-Mart. These properties, as well as the SR 520 road right-of-way, are generally well maintained and landscaped, reflecting a very positive appearance for this portion of Merritt Island. The infrastructure throughout this segment, including the roadway design and function, exhibits no deficiencies. Stormwater management throughout this sub-area is, for the most, adequately addressed utilizing on-site storm water retention systems. The zoning and comprehensive plan future land use designations appear to be consistent with the existing uses. No major issues have been identified for this segment.
- **Mall Segment** – This segment consists of those commercial properties extending north and south of SR 520 from Newfound Harbor Drive on the east to Courtenay Parkway (SR 3) on the west. The most dominant use within this segment is the Merritt Square Mall, an indoor mall with several major anchors. The mall property has very little landscaping and the buildings are showing signs of age. A major facelift or a complete redesign of this significant property would go a long way in the aesthetic enhancement and economic well-being of the Merritt Island Core Area. The balance of the SR 520 frontage in this segment consists of a variety

of chain restaurants and retail stores. For the most part the buildings are well-maintained on the medium sized lots. The exception to this include some buildings located west of Merritt Square Mall. The portion of this segment between Plumosa Avenue and SR 3 was developed earlier and has several older buildings and strip centers on small lots with little landscaping, along with parking and access issues. This aesthetic negative is somewhat offset as a result of an aggressive facade improvement program in this area. It should be noted, however, that the lack of medians along with the sparseness of landscaping in the SR 520 right-of-way poses a challenge to the overall aesthetic appeal of this segment.

- **West Merritt Island** – The West Merritt Island segment of this sub-area extends from SR 3 to the Indian River Lagoon. This segment is the oldest of the Core Sub-Area segments and therefore is characterized by older buildings on smaller lots. Due to the fact that the majority of these properties were developed prior to modern land development regulations, there is a lack of both private and public landscape improvements, as well as a lack of on-site storm water management. Also, many of the properties have inadequate parking and exhibit access management issues. However, along the south side of SR 520 in this segment, the major development is the well-maintained Merritt Island Baptist Church campus. The entrance to Merritt Island from Cocoa features the county owned, and well landscaped Waterway Park, providing one of the few opportunities for the public to enjoy the waterfront within the SR 520 Commercial Core Sub-Area. Adjacent to the park is the newly acquired county owned riverfront property (Griffis Landing) for which a master plan has been completed.



Chapter 6 - SR 520 Commercial Core Sub-Area

ISSUES AND NEEDS

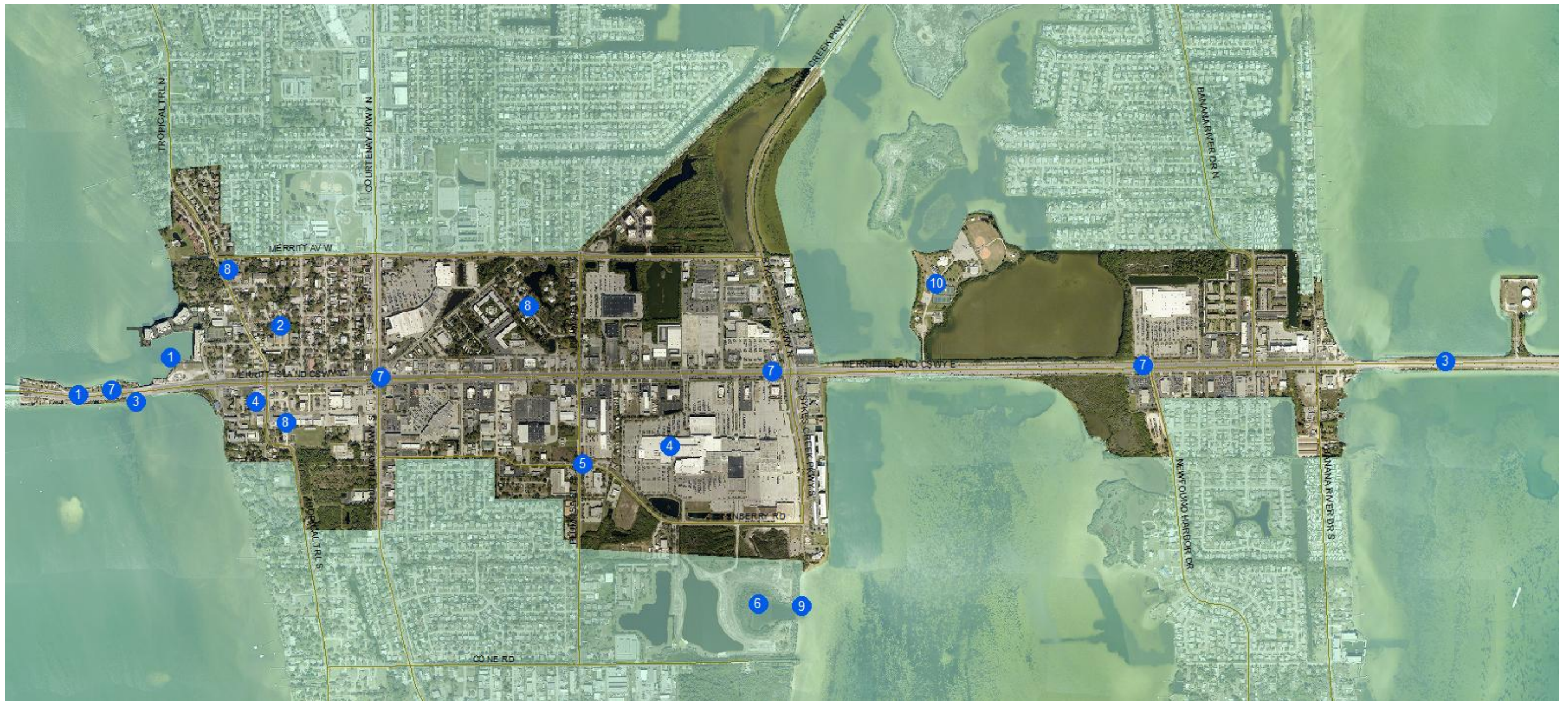
- **Public Waterfront Access** – The SR 520 Commercial Core Sub-Area lacks opportunities for public access to the water in spite of the abundance of river frontage throughout the area.
- **Lack of Parking for Merritt Park Place** – The redevelopment of historic Merritt Park Place has been a major success for the Merritt Island Redevelopment Agency. The investment in infrastructure and landscaping has resulted in a vibrant pedestrian friendly specialty shopping and small business area. As a result of its success, the lack of public parking is becoming a major issue that still needs to be addressed.
- **Merritt Island Gateway Signage** – SR 520, extending from the City of Cocoa on the mainland to Cocoa Beach on the barrier island is one of the most traveled arterial roads in Brevard County. This well-traveled corridor also extends through Merritt Island's commercial core district. Currently, the entries to this portion of Merritt Island from both the east and west lacks adequate and well-landscaped gateway signage.
- **Future Development of the Magnolia Avenue and South Tropical Trail Area** – The recent MIRA funded infrastructure improvements (sewer and water) in the Magnolia and South Tropical Trail area have created an opportunity for this aging and stagnant area. Future growth opportunities have yet to be defined for this area. The Merritt Island First Baptist Church as well as the surrounding commercial and multifamily properties could benefit from a small area redevelopment plan in partnership with the MIRA.
- **Merritt Square Mall Development Potential** – The Merritt Square Mall is the most significant single economic generator in all of Merritt Island from the perspective of employment and ad valorem tax generation. However, the indoor mall, which was constructed 50 years ago, is beginning to show its age. With this in mind, MIRA along with Brevard County and the St. Johns River Water Management District have created a regional storm water pond and park which may provide the catalyst for a more cost effective redevelopment of the aging commercial center. It would allow the Mall as well as surrounding commercial properties to redevelop without subtracting a significant percentage of their parcel area for on-site storm water retention. This significant economic incentive, combined with much needed regulatory modifications with regard to zoning and land development regulations may remove many of the hurdles standing in the way of its full redevelopment potential and benefits. MIRA needs to work with the Mall owner, Brevard County, and surrounding property owners to develop a small area plan and to assess how these tools can best be utilized to complement the mall for its full economic benefit and aesthetic appeal. This plan needs to include a conceptual development plan as well as new land development regulations that will allow this area to achieve the full benefits of redevelopment.
- **Fortenberry Regional Storm Water Pond** – A significant amount of acreage comprising the most intensely developed properties within the Merritt Island Commercial Core Sub-Area historically have discharged their untreated storm water into the adjacent water bodies, thereby contributing to the pollution of the Indian River and Banana River Lagoons. The potential public benefits of this project are enormous and it must be seen to its conclusion.
- **Fortenberry Road and Plumosa Avenue Intersection Stormwater Improvements** – Historically, this area lacks adequate stormwater management and has experienced periodic flooding. The MIRA and Brevard County have committed two million dollars to resolve this issue by purchasing and constructing a regional storm water park. Improvement of the conveyance system to deposit untreated stormwater from the Fortenberry Plumosa intersection into the new stormwater pond is critical.
- **SR 520 Landscape/Streetscape Improvements** – While the east segment of the SR 520 Commercial Core Sub-Area has few issues with regard to its aesthetic character as a result of the well maintained landscaping both within the SR 520 right-of-way and on the adjacent private properties, the same cannot be said of the segments between Newfound Harbor and the Indian River Lagoon. The MIRA, in conjunction with FDOT and Brevard County, should extend the landscape/streetscape theme through the entire sub-area.
- **Storm Water Improvements** – While the previously mentioned Fortenberry Regional Storm Water Park has the potential of receiving approximately 165 acres of untreated storm water within this sub-area, there are still three sub basin areas in the business core district that lack storm water treatment. These areas, including Merritt Park Place, need further study to understand how best to collect, convey, and treat this water as well as to provide for funding for these improvements.
- **Veterans Memorial Park Expansion** – The Veterans Memorial Park has been an important waterfront memorial and tribute to America's war veterans. Featuring informative exhibits, this facility has the potential to expand as part of the new Fortenberry regional stormwater public park. This needs to be encouraged and a master plan for this expansion needs to be developed.
- **Kiwanis Island Eco-tourism Destination** – The MIRA has several opportunities for the newly emerging eco-tourism industry. The SR 520 Commercial Core Area provides an important water access opportunity at the Kiwanis Island Park facility located on Sykes Creek. The MIRA should partner with Brevard County Parks and Recreation to meet these needs.



PROPOSED PROJECTS

The map below references existing and proposed projects within the SR 520 Commercial Corridor that are described on the following pages.

SR 520 Commercial Core Proposed Projects Location Map





Chapter 6 - SR 520 Commercial Core Sub-Area

1. **Waterway Park/Griffis Landing** Improvements – MIRA, along with Brevard County, must utilize the recently obtained DEP permits for the Waterway Park improvements to include an expansion bridge from Waterway Park to Griffis Landing and to implement the Griffis Landing Development Plan.

2. **Merritt Park Place** – Identify those properties which can be acquired to improve the public parking opportunities for this growing commercial area.

3. **Merritt Island Gateway Signage** – Design and construct attractive gateway signage and landscaped areas at both the east and west access points to this

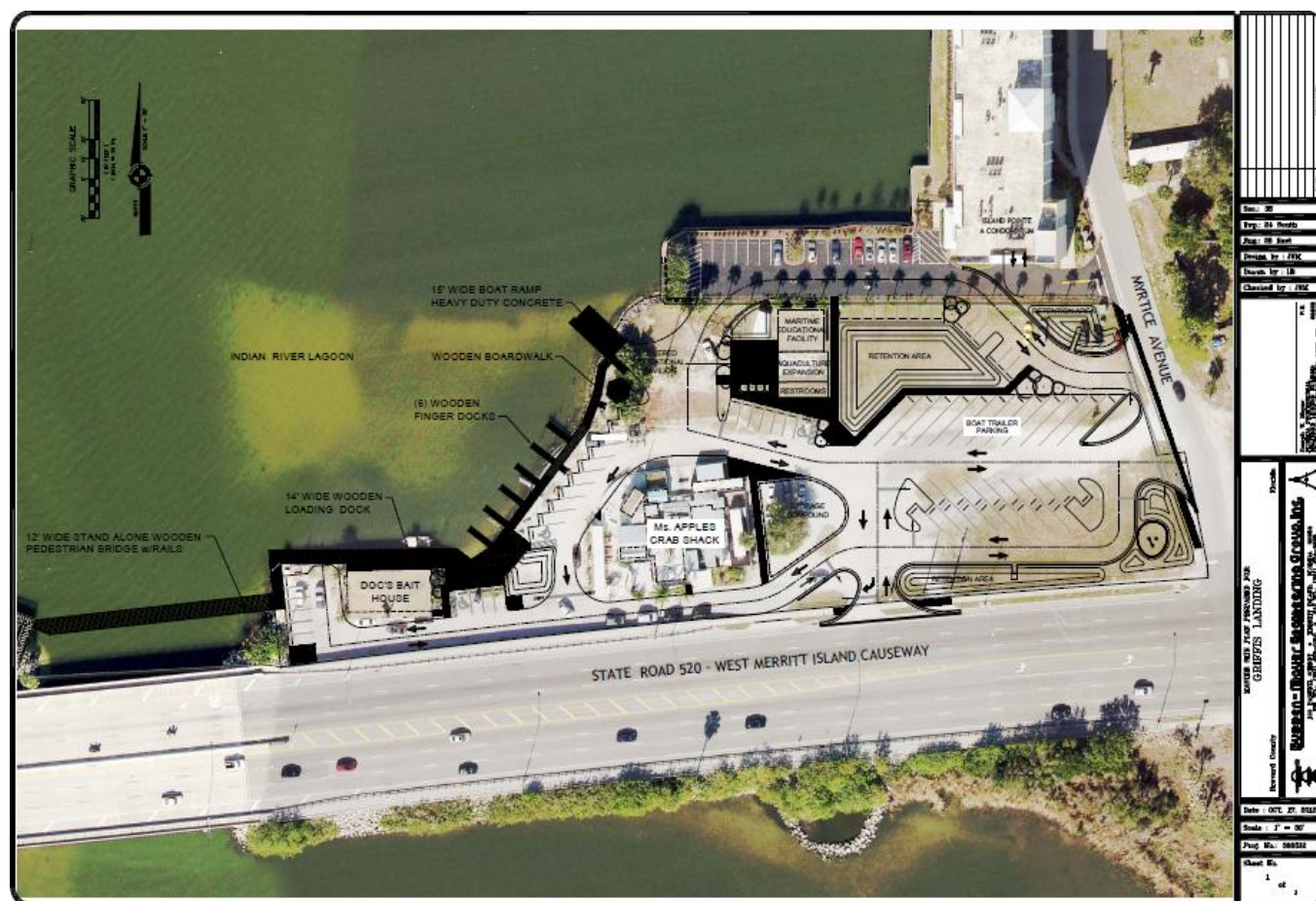
portion of Merritt Island along SR 520. (Note: This project is underway.)

4. Small Area Planning Studies

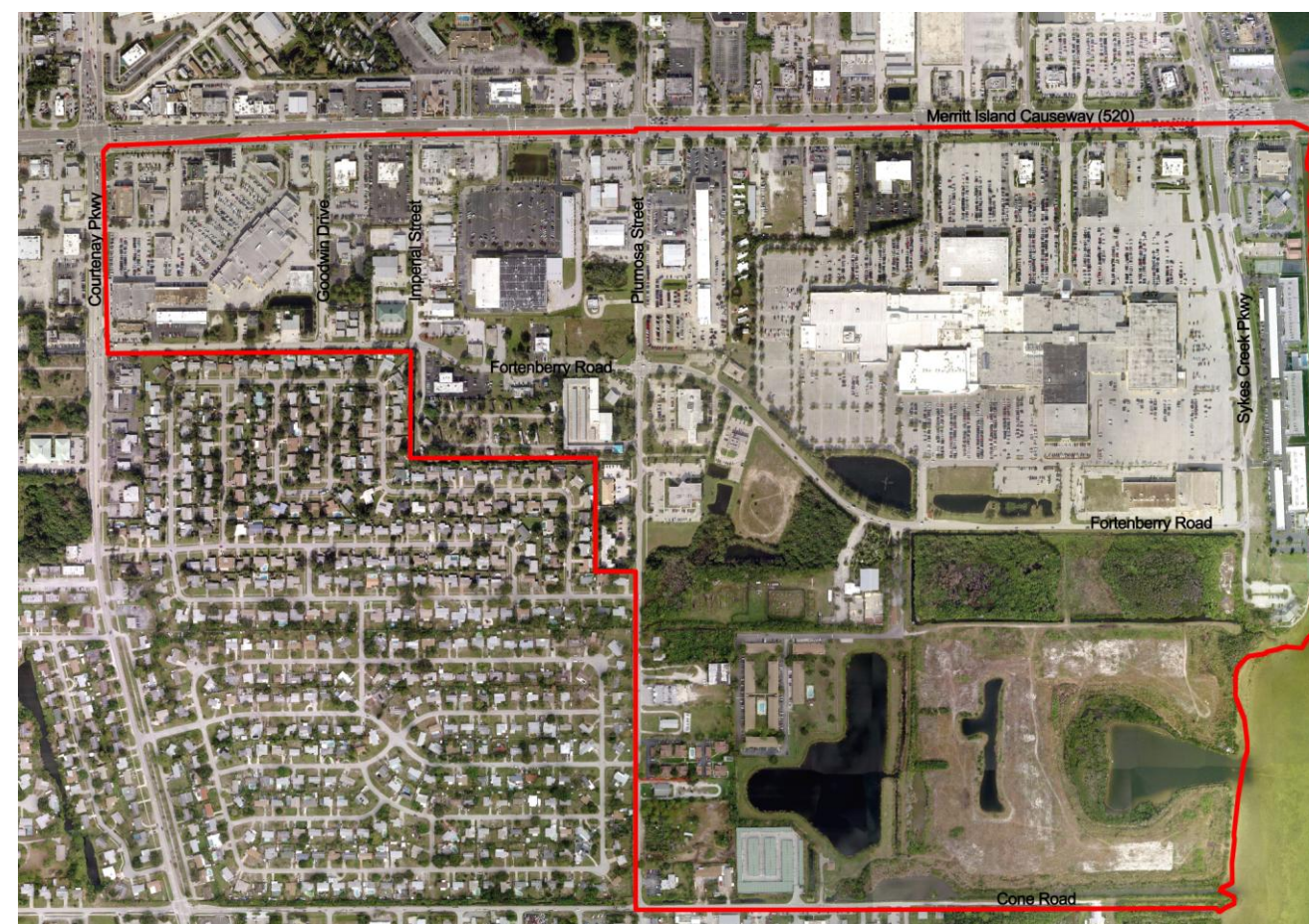
a. **Magnolia Avenue/South Tropical Trail** – Develop a small area future development plan in conjunction with the Merritt Island Baptist Church and surrounding property owners to identify those redevelopment opportunities that have been created as a result of the newly installed water and sewer lines, as well as drainage improvements.

b. **Merritt Square Mall** – Initiate a small area planning study that will access the opportunities

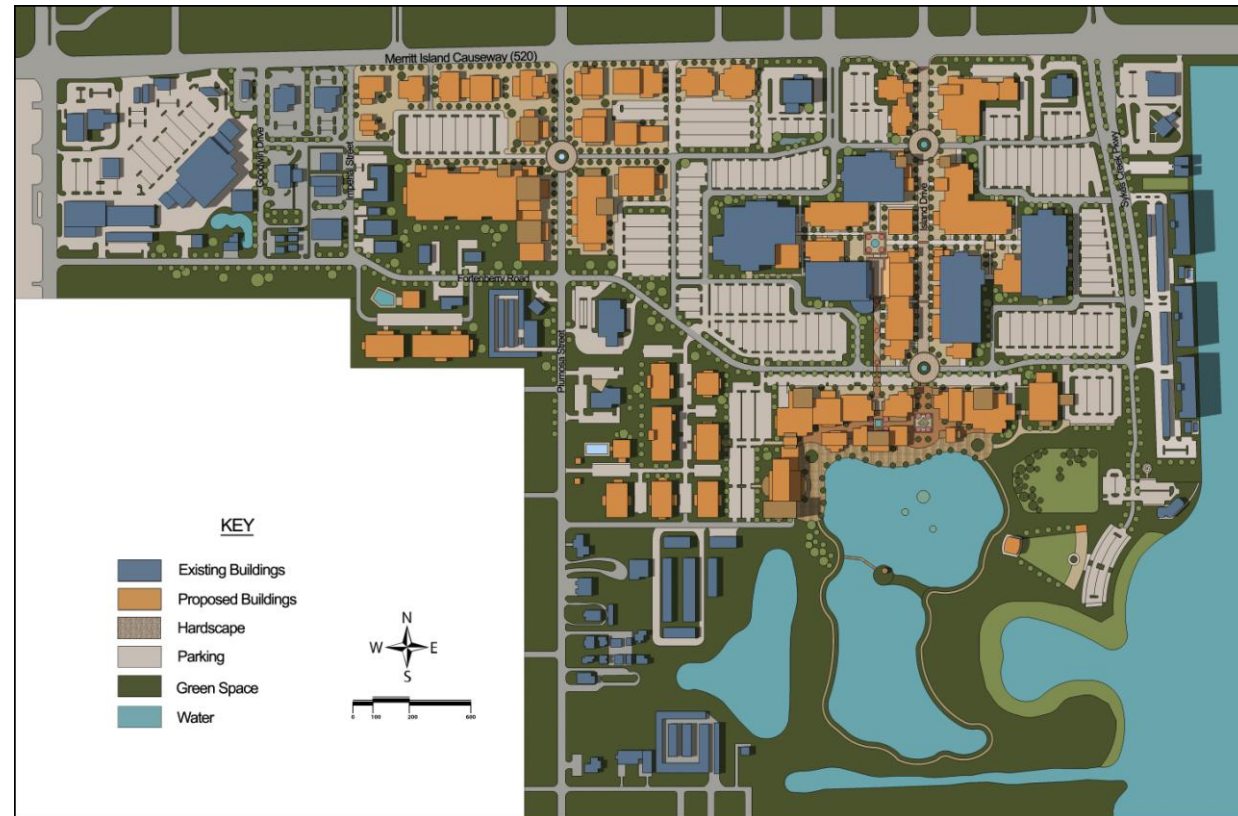
to upgrade and modernize the aging Merritt Square Mall. This study should include the possibility of realigning or creating new streets, creating more flexible development regulations, consider an outside oriented pedestrian mall concept. The new regional storm water park should be utilized to its maximum potential to help maximize land availability and offset redevelopment costs for this project. As the economic center of Merritt Island, it is vitally important for the Merritt Square Mall and surrounding area to be economically successful in today's market place.



Griffis Landing Master Site Plan



Mall Area Study Boundary



Merritt Square Mall Area Redevelopment Visualization Plan



Bird's Eye View with SR 520 in Forground and Veterans Park at the top.



Concept Plan Street Views



Chapter 6 - SR 520 Commercial Core Sub-Area

5. **Fortenberry Road and Plumosa Avenue Intersection Storm Water Improvements** – This project will result in the construction of a much needed storm water conveyance system to be directed to the new regional storm water treatment pond and will correct an historic flooding condition in this area. This project has been designed and permitted through a partnership between MIRA and Brevard County and construction has begun.

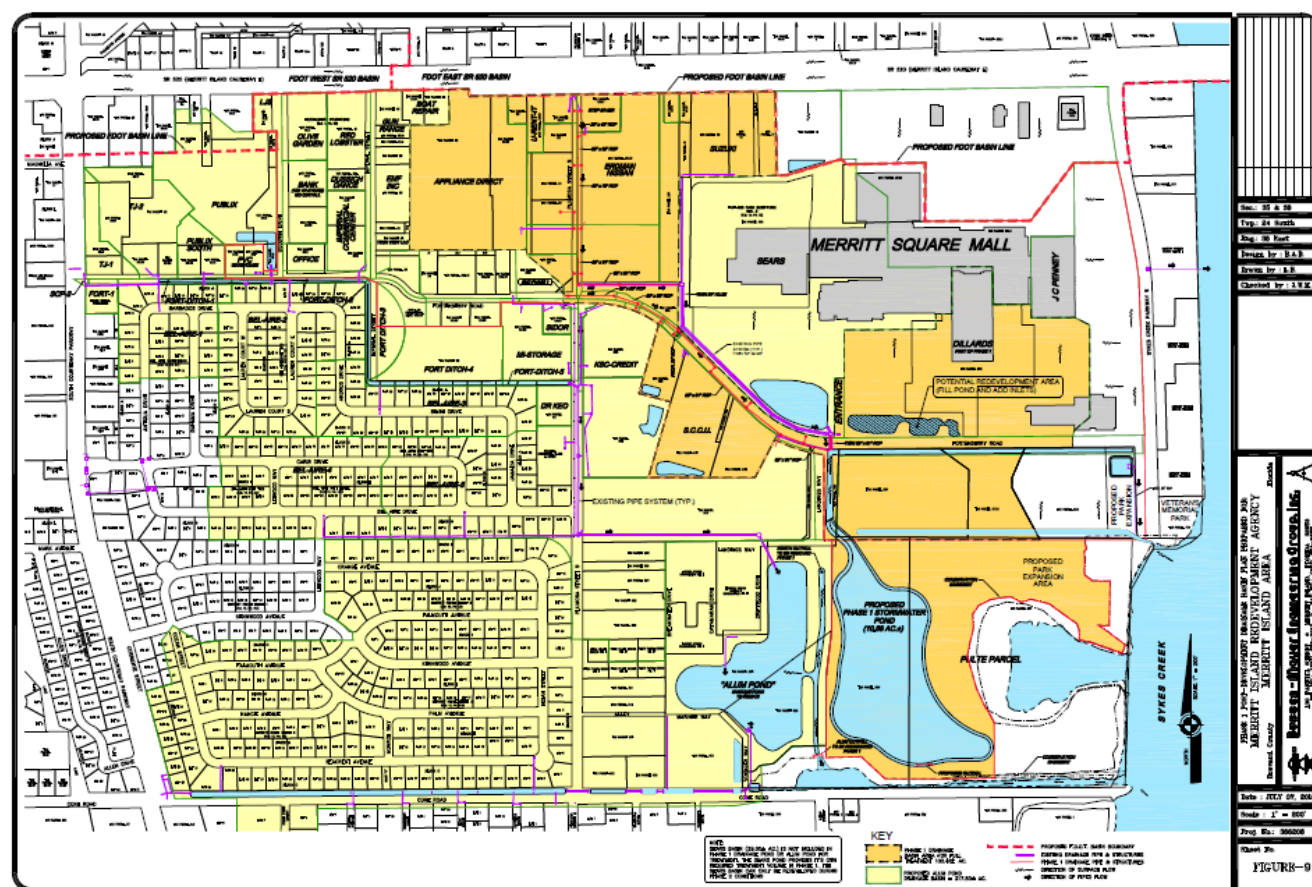
6. **Fortenberry Regional Stormwater Pond** – The Merritt Island Redevelopment Agency purchased the 54 acre Pulte property, in cooperation with Brevard

County, for the purposes of creating a regional storm water pond and for the expansion of Veterans memorial Park. Currently, the County is constructing 50 percent of the storm water pond and is anticipating completing the remaining 50 percent in the next two years. Upon completion, the storm water pond will be capable of treating 165 acres of previously untreated area. The County is considering a storm water credit ordinance to permit redevelopment projects to purchase storm water credits for offsetting their portion of the storm water that will be sent to the new treatment pond, thereby allowing redevelopment projects to develop more

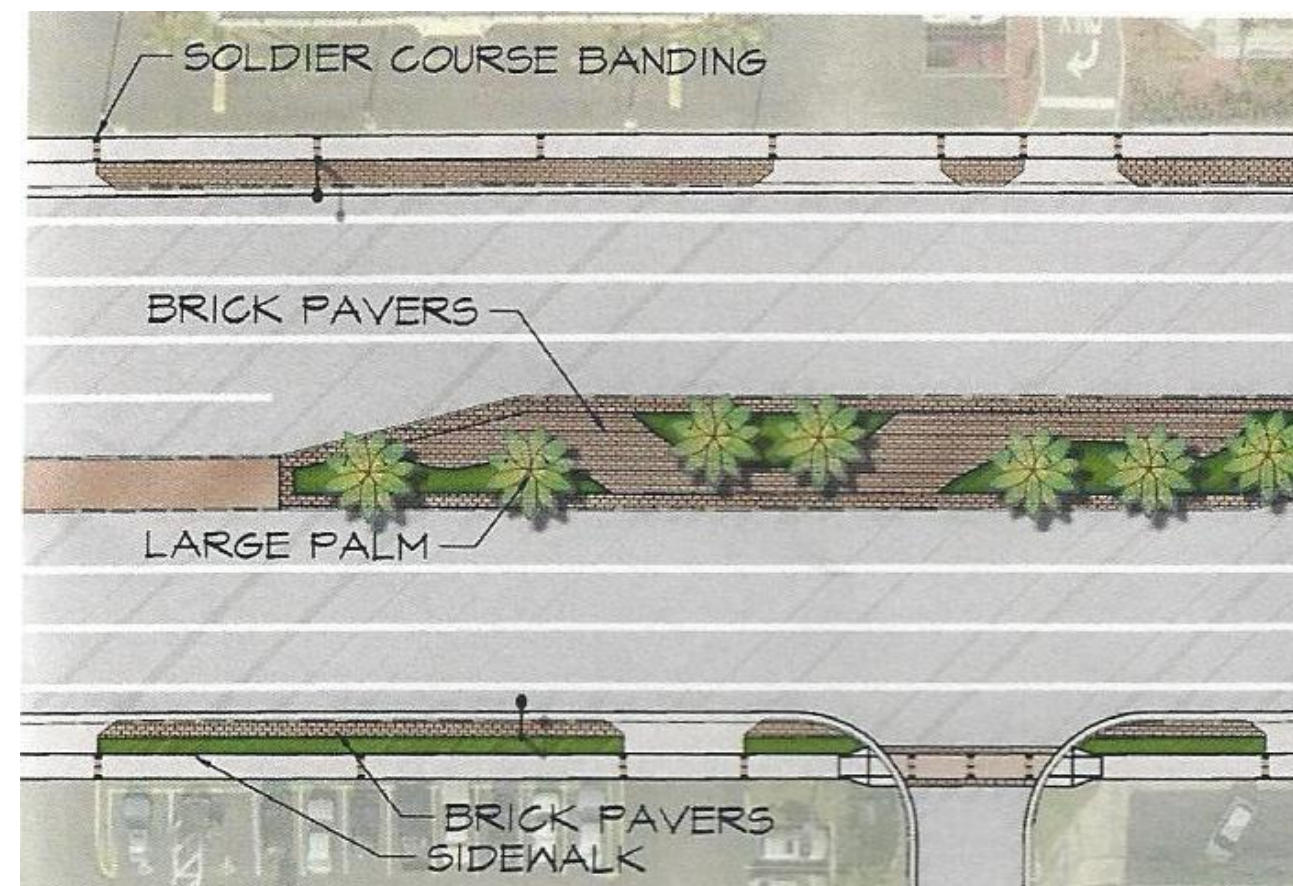
economically and environmentally sound.

7. **SR 520 Landscape and Streetscape Improvements** – In cooperation with Brevard County and FDOT, the Merritt Island Redevelopment Agency is in the first of three phases of its improvements program to enhance State Road 520. The MIRA is streetscaping that segment between SR 3 and Newfound Harbor to include median landscape and streetscape improvements, irrigation, and other related improvements. Phase 2 will provide the same improvements from the Hubert Humphrey Bridge to SR 3, including enhancements such as new mast arms and intersection walkways as well as street corner

enhancements. Phase 3 improvements will be accomplished in most part by FDOT when it resurfaces SR 520 and changes out the mast arms of those intersections on SR 520. It is anticipated that MIRA will partner with FDOT to provide intersection improvements consisting of brick paver walkways and street corner improvements from SR 3 to the Banana River.



Drainage Basin for Fortenberry Regional Stormwater Pond



Proposed Landscape/Streetscape Improvements for SR 520



8. Merritt Island Commercial Core Area Sub-Basin Storm Water Improvements – Initiate a pre-engineering and design study for each of the three remaining sub-basins which lack stormwater treatment and include these in the Agency's Capital Improvements Program.

9. Veteran's Memorial Park Expansion – A master plan for the park is underway and should be completed by Brevard County Parks and Recreation within the next 12 months. MIRA, in conjunction with Brevard County, will facilitate construction of the improvements.



Veterans Park Expansion Plan

10. Kiwanis Park Eco-Tourism Improvements – In partnership with Brevard County Parks and Recreation, consider ways to enhance Kiwanis Island to meet the growing needs for eco-tourism and at the same time, develop a strategy for capitalizing on the County's increased eco-tourism activity, utilizing this unique waterfront location and the surrounding natural resources of Kiwanis Park.



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Chapter 7 - Merritt Square Mall Focus Area

INTRODUCTION/BACKGOUIND

The Merritt Square Mall Focus Area is located within the SR 520 Core Area of the Merritt Island Redevelopment District. The Mall and its surroundings have historically been the center of commerce, not only for Merritt Island, but much of Central Brevard County.

The Focus Area is bordered by SR 520 to the north and Newfound Harbor to the east. The Focus Area boundary encompasses Veteran's Memorial Park and the Fortenberry Regional Stormwater Pond at the south of the Merritt Square Mall, and then follows Fortenberry Road west as the rest of the southern border to SR 3.

Strategically located between the beach communities of the City of Cape Canaveral and Cocoa Beach, and the inland cities of Cocoa and Rockledge, the Merritt Square Mall has served as the cultural, social and commercial center of this community. It is the most significant economic generator in all of Merritt Island from the perspective of employment and ad valorem tax generation.

Originally built in 1970, the Mall received significant renovations in 1985. There are six anchor stores and nearly 800 thousand square feet of retail space.

Surrounding the mall is a variety of other commercial uses including restaurants, big box retailers, auto dealers, several banks and a grocery anchored shopping center at South Courtney Parkway/SR 3 and SR 520. High-rise residential towers anchor the eastern boundary of the focus area along Newfound Harbor.

As the Merritt Square Mall approaches 50 years old, the status of the mall as the center of commerce for Central Brevard County has been challenged by the opening of the Melbourne Square Mall in 1982 (27 miles south) and The Avenue at Viera in 2005 (12 miles south).

INTENT

The intent of this Chapter of the Merritt Island Redevelopment Plan is to map out a specific strategy for capitalizing on past infrastructure investments and position the focus area for development/redevelopment that meets the needs of the community for the 21st century.

FOCUS AREA MAPS

Brevard County Planning and Development, Geographical Information Systems (GIS) has provided the following maps to provide a better understanding of the structure of the area:

- Aerial Photograph with Major Property Owners
- Adopted Future Land Use
- Zoning
- Current Use



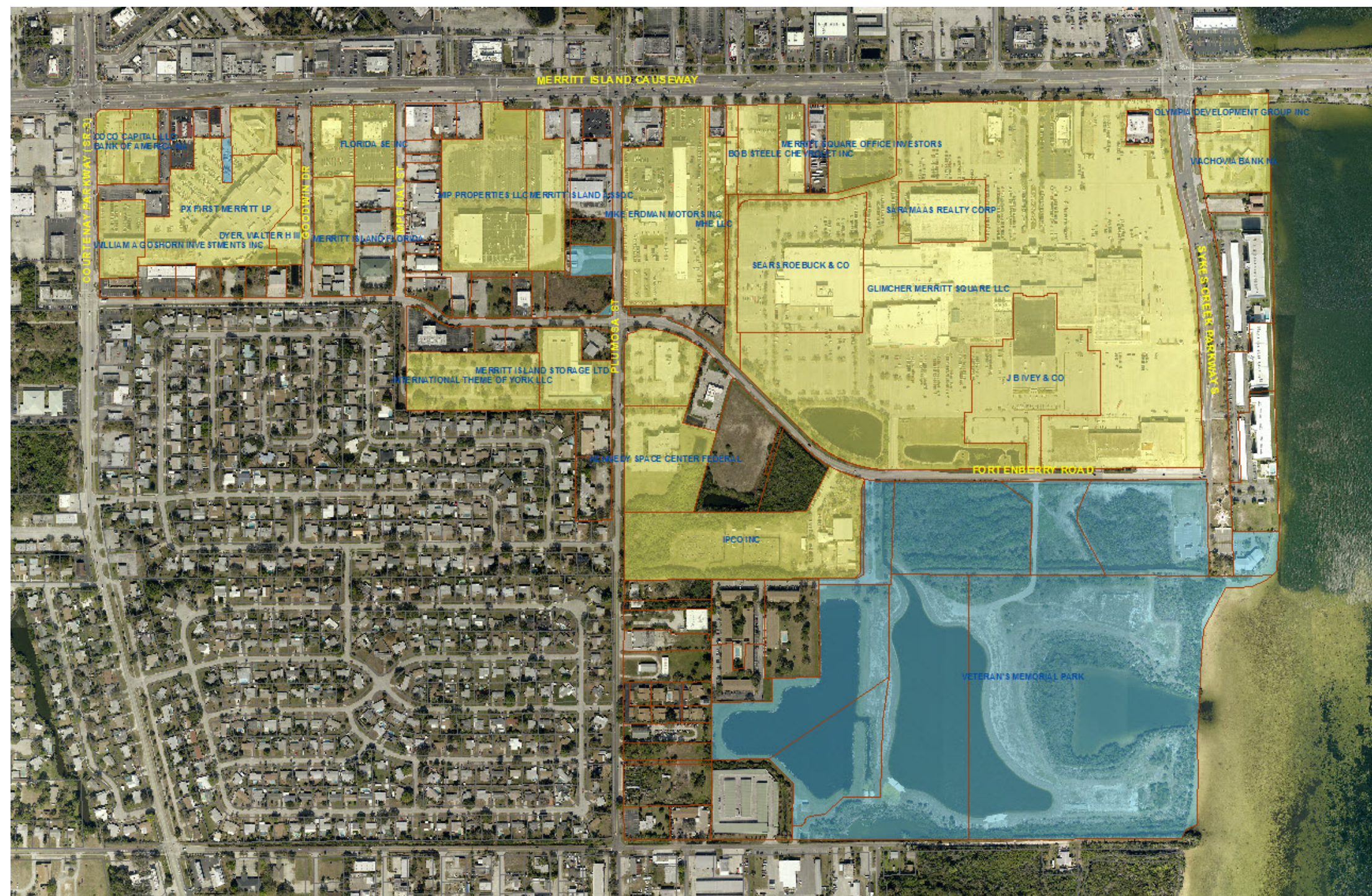
Merritt Square Mall and surrounding area



Chapter 7 - Mall Focus Area

MAJOR PROPERTY OWNERS

The aerial exhibit to the right shows the major property owners of the Focus Area. At over 80 acres for the mall and anchor store outparcels, the Merritt Square Mall is the largest property in the study area. Other large retail properties include the Publix anchored center at the southeast corner of SR 520 and SR 3, along with the Harbor Freight anchored center owned by MP Properties. It is important to note that the property has anchor stores that are separately owned by the retailers themselves, and are not part of the mall ownership. Publically owned land at the Veterans Memorial Park and adjacent Fortenberry Road stormwater facility make up another 58 acres.



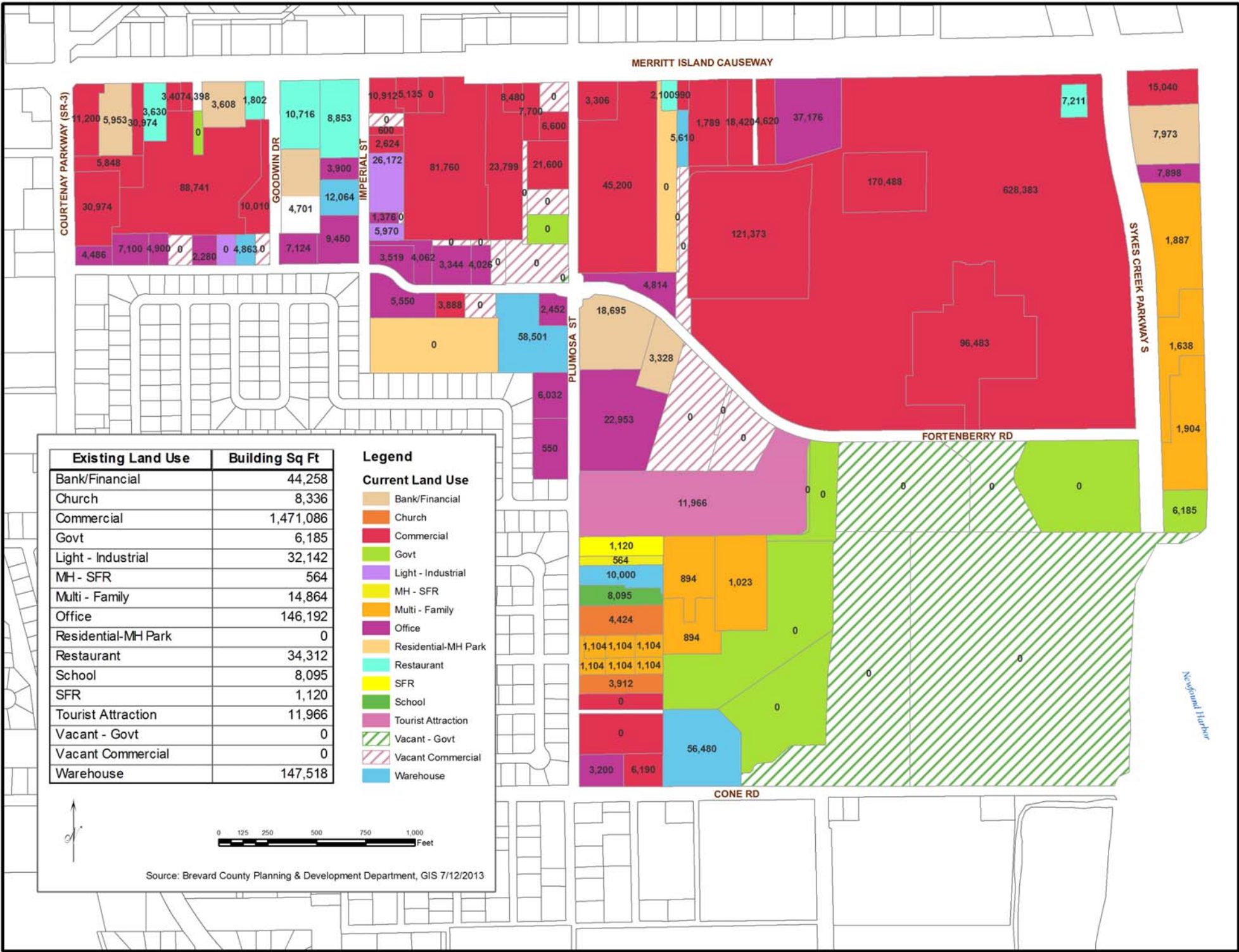
Ownership within the Focus Area

Source: Brevard County GIS



EXISTING LAND USE

The Focus Area is dominated by the commercial uses of the mall and other retail and restaurant properties that total over 140 acres of the 357 acre study area. The other major land use is the publically owned land of the Fortenberry Stormwater project and Veterans Park. The Residential uses include the high-rise condominiums along Sykes Creek Parkway on Newfound Harbor and apartments on the east side of Plumosa Street, south of Fortenberry Road. There is a vacant mobile home park at the south end of Imperial Street.





Chapter 7 - Mall Focus Area

FUTURE LAND USE

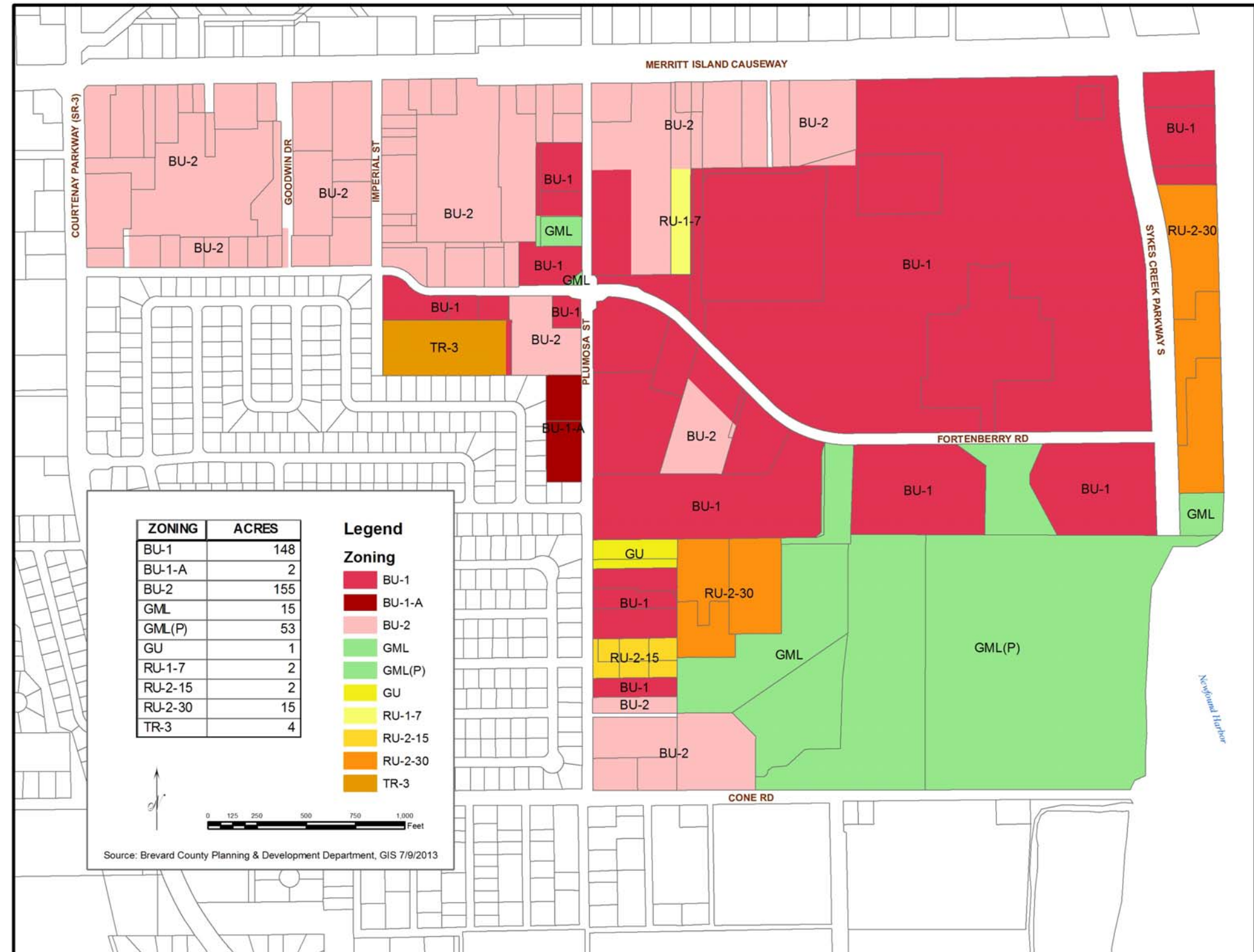
As expected, the Focus Area is mostly designated as Commercial on the Future Land Use Map. The major exception is the southeastern area that is designated as Residential 15. This area includes an apartment development, but mostly consists of publically owned land as part of the Fortenberry Road stormwater project and Veteran's Park.





ZONING

For the most part, the zoning in the Focus Area is consistent with the Future Land Use. The two primary zoning classifications are BU-1, general retail which applies to the mall and surrounding area; and BU-2 for the outlying areas, which allows for warehousing and wholesale retail.





Chapter 7 - Mall Focus Area

ISSUES

Blighted Conditions - The Mall Focus Area has numerous properties that are suffering from visual blight and economic blight. As shown in the images to the right, many of these properties are poorly maintained. The area includes many vacant commercial stores and a vacant mobile home park at the south end of Imperial Street.

National Trends - The last indoor shopping mall to open in the US was in 2006. As consumers move toward lifestyle centers, discount stores and online purchases, the traditional enclosed malls of America have suffered. While other retailing categories have rebounded from the recession, enclosed malls continue to suffer decline across the country. According to the research firm Reis, Inc., malls currently have their highest vacancy rates in 20 years.

Local Market - The community around the Merritt Square Mall Focus Area is largely built-out and therefore somewhat stagnant in income and population. As noted prior, in 2005, the Avenue at Viera opened just 12 miles to the south of the Merritt Island Mall, offering the community an open-air lifestyle center that has proven to be more viable in today's retail environment.

Workforce reduction at the Space Center, combined with the overall recession, has contributed to the decline in demand for commercial retail uses. On the plus side, the growth of the passenger cruise industry at Port Canaveral has brought an influx of tourists to the area.



Blighted conditions in the Focus Area

1. Fortenberry Regional Stormwater Pond

PHASE I HIGH-LEVEL SHORT-TERM TRAILING HOOF PLAN FOR THE MERRITT ISLAND REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

MERRITT ISLAND AREA
Barnett County

Date: JULY 09, 2010
Scale: 1" = 800'
Proj. No.: 060008

Client: [Redacted]

KEY

- PHASE I URBAN DEVELOPMENT
- PHASE II URBAN DEVELOPMENT
- PROPOSED FOOT BASIN BOUNDARY
- EXISTING STORMWATER POND & STRUCTURE
- PHASE I URBAN DEVELOPMENT - EXISTING
- DIRECTION OF SURFACE FLOW
- DIRECTION OF FLOOD FLOW

FIGURE-9



Chapter 7 - Mall Focus Area

2. SR 520 Streetscape Project

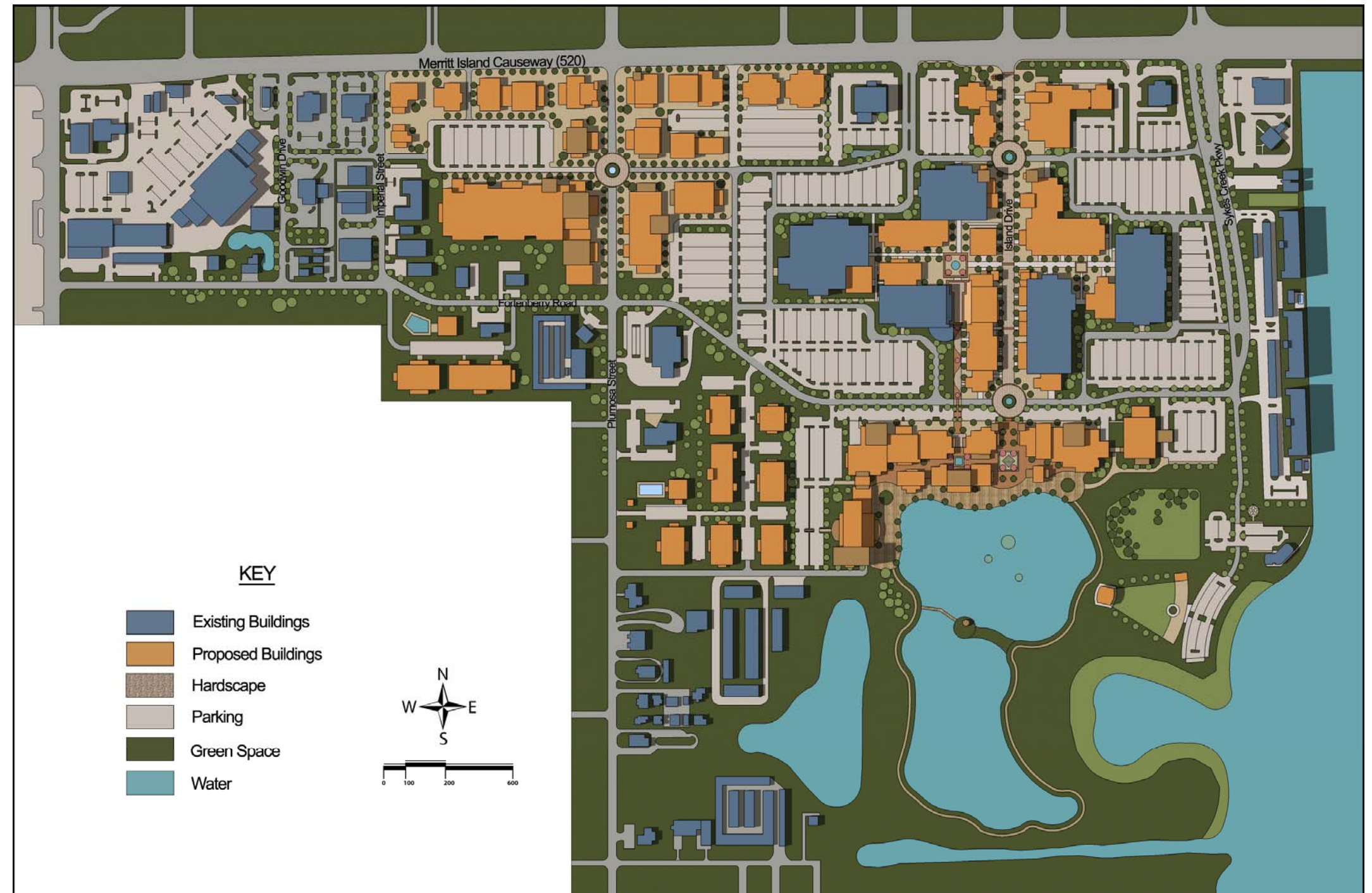
In association with Brevard County and FDOT, MIRA is providing landscape and streetscape improvements along SR 520 through the study area. The project includes median landscaping, irrigation, streetscape/hardscape and other related improvements to improve the aesthetic appeal of the area. The project is under construction at the writing of this document. The following are some photos of the project under construction.





3. Redevelopment Visualization Plan

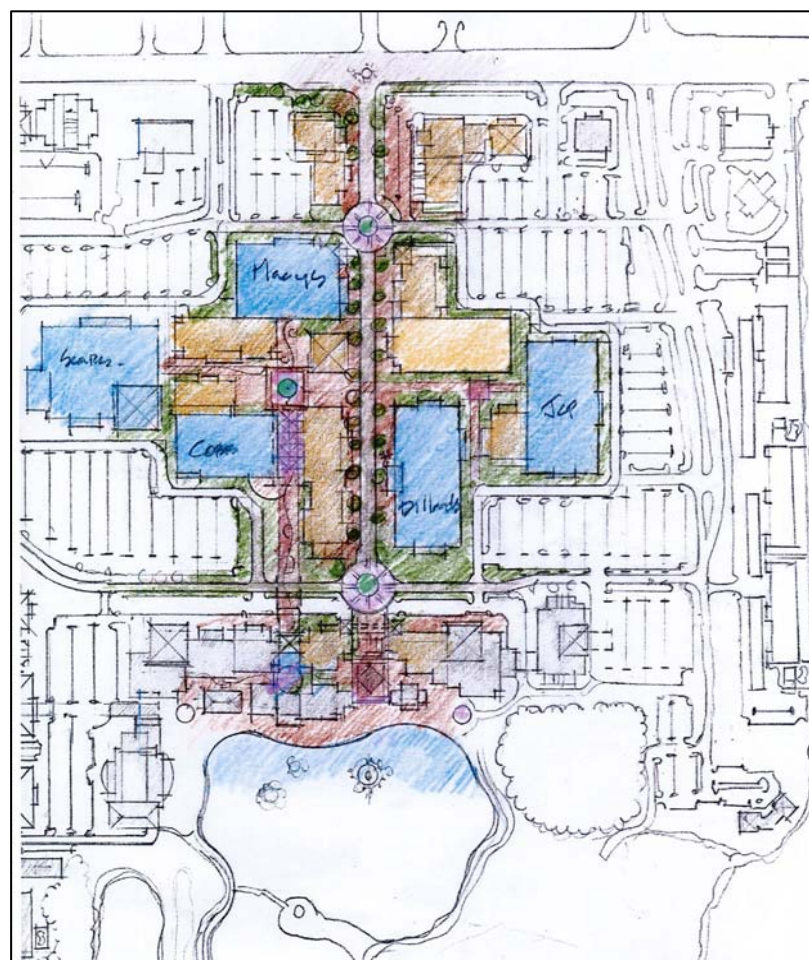
In 2012, MIRA engaged the services of a local architect to brainstorm the possibility of redeveloping the Merritt Island Mall into an outdoor lifestyle center that takes advantage of the location to the expanded Veteran's Park, while keeping the mall anchor stores intact. The results of this effort are a series of character images and the following plan.



Merritt Square Mall Area Redevelopment Visualization Plan



Chapter 7 - Mall Focus Area



Visualization Plan Alternative Concepts



View 1



View Key



View 2



View 3



View 4



View 5

Visualization Plan Character Imagery



Chapter 7 - Mall Focus Area

Work Plan

1. Market Analysis

In order to focus the marketing and redevelopment efforts within the Focus Area, MIRA will engage a market analyst to determine the existing and projected demand for retail space. A special emphasis will be placed on determining what retail commercial, or mix of uses, can be supported by the market area now and in the future. The analysis will look at national trends, local conditions, and competitive market areas.

The market study will include the following tasks:

- Review and analyze existing uses, location of vacant land, access to adjacent major roadways, etc. Report on key site factors such as visibility, nearby employment, access, surrounding land uses, linkages to support services, planned infrastructure and support service improvements in or near the subject property, etc.
- Obtain local demographic data as necessary regarding population, household income, employment centers, etc.
- Make preliminary estimates of potential growth in population and related needs.
- Profile retail, restaurant and services development and absorption trends in the defined market area.
- Identify and profile *existing* concentrations of retail, restaurant and services projects that could be competitive with development opportunities of the Mall Focus Area.
- Identify *proposed* retail, restaurant and services projects that could be competitive with development at the Mall Focus Area via interviews with appropriate planning agencies and local real estate industry professionals.

- Estimate supportable demand for retail, restaurant and services square footage.

2. Small Area Plan/Zoning Overlay

In association with Brevard County Planning and Development, MIRA will prepare a zoning overlay for the Merritt Square Mall Focus Area. The purpose of the zoning overlay is to encourage redevelopment by allowing flexibility in the uses and design requirements for the Focus Area, while setting minimum design requirements to facilitate quality development. The zoning overlay may consider mixed uses, and form-based design standards with an emphasis on the pedestrian experience. This effort will guide development and redevelopment toward the type of uses that have been identified in the Market Analysis described above.

The work associated with the zoning overlay will include the following:

- Interviews with key stakeholders in the Mall Focus Area to determine obstacles to development/redevelopment of high-quality projects as it relates to the existing regulatory framework.
- Utilizing the existing Visualization Plan and Market Analysis, prepare a small area plan for the development/redevelopment of Mall Focus Area. The Small Area Plan will include a conceptual land use plan, descriptive narrative, and will provide additional detail to address the requirements that will define a sense of place.
- Draft Mixed-Use Zoning Overlay that will create incentive-based guidelines for regulating the development/redevelopment of Mall Focus Area. The Zoning Overlay will provide a general framework for the development/ redevelopment of this area as

defined by the MIRA. The Overlay will provide general guidelines for the following:

- Proposed uses
- Density/Intensity
- Massing/scale
- Building Orientation
- Pedestrian/vehicular access
- Signage
- Streetscaping
- Height
- Lot Setbacks

3. Marketing Plan

Armed with the market analysis and zoning overlay, MIRA will work with retail, commercial, and other real estate professionals to position the Merritt Square Mall Focus Area to take advantage of local and national retailing trends, and create marketing materials to help attract viable commercial businesses.



Chapter 8 -Financial Background

Redevelopment areas exist because they suffer from a lack public and private investment. They are generally degraded physically, socially, economically, and need someone to take a risk. By creating a redevelopment district, the public sector demonstrates their willingness to take a risk and take actions to halt degradation and plan projects to stimulate private sector investment. In essence, the agency is inviting someone into their worst area and asking them to invest dollars. The private sector has to determine that there will be a return on that investment or at worst, that they will not lose their investment. It requires a partnership between the public and private sectors. Therefore, financial capacity and incentives are integral to the success or failure of any Redevelopment Agency.

Financial planning for redevelopment within a constrained economy will create difficulties in making tax increment financing (TIF) projections or general financing and planning for MIRA's revenues and expenditures. However, to provide a basis for understanding capital capacity, this section is critical to giving the County, MIRA, and stakeholders a guide for managing financial matters and project scheduling. Separate sections are devoted to the project cost estimates and proposed project time frames. This section provides insight into funding options, sources and projections.

Tax increment financing was originally developed as a method to meet the local match requirements of federal grant programs. With the reduction in federal funds available for local projects, however, tax increment financing is standing on its own as a method to finance local redevelopment and economic development in Brevard County and its local governments. State law controls tax increment financing. In Florida, tax increment financing is derived from the Community Redevelopment Act of 1969, which is codified as Part III, Chapter 163 of the

Florida Statutes. This act provided for a combination of public and private redevelopment efforts, but did not authorize the use of tax increment financing. The Act was amended in 1977 to allow tax increment financing. Under the Statues, municipalities must go through a number of steps to establish a redevelopment area and implement a tax increment district.

Upon approval of the governing body, a Trust Fund for a Community Redevelopment Area may be established. The revenues for the Trust Fund are obtained by allocating any increases in taxable assessed value to the area. The assessed value of the district is "frozen" and any increases (the tax increment revenues) are available for improvements to the area. The tax collector collects the entire property tax and subtracts the tax on the base value, which is available for general government purposes.

Tax increment financing is the most utilized method for cities and counties throughout the country to redevelop urban areas through improvements, which promote economic activity. Although the legal requirements are complex, the basic concept is relatively simple. In general, a municipality and county both continue to receive property tax revenues based on the frozen value. The incremental increases in values are then taken and transferred to the Redevelopment authority. The tax increment revenues can be used immediately for committed projects, or can be bonded to maximize the funds available. Any funds received from a tax increment financing district, however, must be used for sole purpose of the redevelopment of the area in conformance with the Redevelopment Plan and not for general government purposes. The types of tax increment revenue expenditures that are allowed are defined under Florida Statues 163.387(6).

GENERAL FUNDING SOURCES

CRA's often have to package many financial programs in order to have enough resources, especially when newly enacted. While the Bond market is not strong for CRA's, many in Florida will use a Bank held Letter of Credit to fund large scale projects, particularly those designed to "jump-start" their programs. Local governments commonly loan their CRA's start-up funds as well, paid back over time as the TIF trust fund grows from private investment. The following list shows other potential resources that can be coupled with or used to fund the projects outlined in the Plan within the redevelopment area.

- a. Special revenue bonds.
- b. General obligation bonds.
- c. Grants and Loans to the agency from the County's special or general funds for start up or special project costs.
- d. Fees, leases, and charges.
- e. Industrial Revenue Bonds: Industrial revenue bonds may be used to finance industrial and some commercial projects. The primary emphasis on such projects is the creation of jobs. IRB's are tax-exempt, and consequently, are typically three percentage points below prevailing interest rates.
- f. Commercial Loans: The Redevelopment Agency may directly borrow funds from local lending institutions, utilizing both short term and long term borrowing. Through an RFQ process, terms and conditions may be specified in an attempt to secure the lowest available interest rate. Lending institutions are required by Federal Law to meet certain Community Reinvestment Act portfolio requirements. Local banks should be pursued to contribute to MIRA projects.
- g. Private Contributions: Voluntary contributions by private companies, foundations, and individuals are potential source of income to the Redevelopment Agency. Although such contributions may account for only a small portion of redevelopment costs, they do provide

opportunities for community participation with positive promotional benefits.

- h. Special Assessment Districts: The County could also establish special assessment districts and MSTU's like in the case of stormwater management, (Florida Statutes Chapter 170) for the purpose of funding various capital improvements within an area or for the construction of a particular project.
- i. Grants from State and Federal Funding Sources, are leveraged within CRA districts, many of which get extra points for being used to fund economic development and redevelopment projects. The world of Grants has changed or is changing due to economic conditions, requiring local governments to be vigilant in the grants arenas.



Chapter 8 Financial Background

REVENUES

Table 8-1 below shows the property valuation and annual percentage change for each of the existing Mira Districts. The “Base Year” value for each area is shown for the year that the assessed value was “frozen”. The increases (or decreases) beyond the Base Year value represents the value on which the increment tax is based.

As indicated in the table, the SR 520 Business District (Trust Fund BU 1) and the East Merritt Island District (Trust Fund BU 2) have assessed values well above their respective base year assessment. The tax revenues of those incremental increased property values provide the funding for MIRA.

As shown on the last column of the table, the taxable value of the property within the SR 3 District (Trust Fund BU 3) has fallen below the base year assessment. Until the assessed value of

the property within the SR 3 District rises above the base year assessment of \$50,549,420, there is no incremental value, and thus no incremental tax revenues.

Table 8-2 to shows the history of the tax increment revenue from each of the three districts from the year 2001 to 2013. As noted, there is no tax increment from the SR 3 Trust Fund BU 3 from 2009 to 2013.

TABLE 8-2: MIRA INCREMENTAL REVENUE HISTORY

YEAR	Trust Fund B1	Trust Fund B2	Trust Fund B3	Total Funds Revenue
	SR 520 Business District	East Merritt Island	SR 3	
	Increment Revenue	Increment Revenue	Increment Revenue	
2001	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2002	\$713,167.00	\$125,123.00		\$838,290.00
2003	\$758,718.00	\$146,384.00		\$905,102.00
2004	\$851,291.00	\$185,787.00		\$1,037,078.00
2005	\$1,114,303.00	\$190,394.00		\$1,304,697.00
2006	\$1,191,391.00	\$176,330.00	\$36,646.00	\$1,398,823.00
2007	\$1,261,382.00	\$185,766.00	\$29,881.00	\$1,472,415.00
2008	\$1,257,486.00	\$264,286.00	\$22,435.00	\$1,544,207.00
2009	\$1,042,852.00	\$186,335.00	0	\$1,229,187.00
2010	\$931,763.00	\$126,232.00	0	\$1,057,995.00
2011	\$764,738.00	\$113,173.00	0	\$877,911.00
2012	\$703,751.00	\$110,944.00	0	\$814,695.00
2013	\$725,807.00	\$105,876.00	0	\$831,683.00
NOTES: 1 2013 Property Valuation Based on June, 2013 Preliminary Assessment Roll				
2 Trust Fund B3 - SR 3 Base Year adjusted in 2008 from \$50,614.70 to \$50,549,420				

TABLE 8-1: MIRA DISTRICTS PROPERTY VALUATION

YEAR	SR 520 Business District - Trust Fund BU 1		East Merritt Island - Trust Fund BU 2		SR 3 -Trust Fund BU 3	
	Property Valuation	Annual Change	Property Valuation	Annual Change	Property Valuation	Annual Change
1988	\$145,100,340	(Base Year)				
1990			\$17,082,580	(Base Year)		
2001	\$225,579,920		\$36,544,300			
2002	\$231,493,000	2.62%	\$36,879,440	0.92%		
2003	\$244,484,000	5.61%	\$40,296,010	9.26%		
2004	\$265,673,140	8.67%	\$47,971,190	19.05%		
2005	\$325,386,170	22.48%	\$51,468,480	7.29%	\$50,549,420	(Base Year)
2006	\$411,677,180	26.52%	\$58,249,880	13.18%	\$59,105,520	16.93%
2007	\$434,684,730	5.59%	\$62,817,090	7.84%	\$57,913,590	-2.02%
2008	\$429,272,290	-1.25%	\$81,212,770	29.28%	\$55,993,160	-3.32%
2009	\$377,377,500	-12.09%	\$62,330,850	-23.25%	\$49,695,150	-11.25%
2010	\$321,328,750	-14.85%	\$43,797,210	-29.73%	\$41,225,720	-17.04%
2011	\$264,875,870	-17.57%	\$37,910,100	-13.44%	\$34,136,180	-17.20%
2012	\$253,652,250	-4.24%	\$37,499,850	-1.08%	\$33,853,540	-0.83%
2013	\$259,385,170	2.26%	\$36,811,420	-1.84%	\$34,739,480	2.62%
NOTES: 1 2013 Property Valuation Based on June, 2013 Preliminary Assessment Roll						
2 Trust Fund B3 - SR 3 Base Year adjusted in 2008 from \$50,614.720 to \$50,549,420						



FINANCIAL ESTIMATES

Tax Increment Fund estimates are provided in Table 8-3 to show approximate increments of assessed values and tax increment revenues for general planning purposes for the Community Redevelopment Area. These are estimates only and subject to changes from year to year. The exact increment will not be determined until County millage rates are adopted each year. CRA districts are “Special Districts” in the state of Florida, subject to rules and reporting requirements. Other special districts such as a Community Development District, Business Improvement District, Neighborhood Enhancement District, Main Street, or other similar programs, can be layered with a CRA to enhance the financial capabilities of the area as a whole and infuse other resources to leverage the TIF. In general, MIRA is subject to any statutory requirements governing Special Districts under Florida Law and must register for same and submit required annual documentation.

With no new major private investment projects planned within the CRA, the annual increases in revenue are projected to be small (1.5%). The small increment of funding will limit CRA investment to small projects, or saving for larger projects in the immediate future.

TABLE 8-3 MIRA REVENUE ESTIMATES

<u>Year</u>	<u>Revenue Projection</u>
2013	\$813,683
2014	\$825,888
2015	\$838,276
2016	\$850,850
2017	\$863,613
2018	\$876,567
2019	\$889,716
2020	\$903,062
2021	\$916,608
2022	\$930,357
2023	\$944,312

Notes: 1. 2013 revenue estimates based on July 2013 Preliminary Assessment Roll.
2. Ten year MIRA Revenue Projection based on 1.5% annual increase

INCENTIVES

Incentives should be considered as the best use of the CRA’s dollars to stimulate location of new/expanding business opportunities, bringing people, jobs, spawning entrepreneurship and investment into the area. These might include:

- a. MIRA installation and provision of “public” improvements, even those designed to facilitate private development such as water/sewer lines, parking/roadways, landscaping, signage, and other infrastructure needed to make a project financially feasible.
- b. Permit fee reductions; impact fee reductions or delayed payment schedules; low-interest loans or grants for business start up or building improvements on infill sites or historic structures.
- c. Working with the Economic Development Commission of the Space Coast, the Port, and others on finding sites and locations for business development.
- d. Commercial Façade Grant Program, landscaping, property improvement, paint-up/fix-up, and infrastructure Grants.

Code and permit consistency, particularly in the “process” is critical to bringing private development to the area. Time is money in the development community, and any changes to schedules brought on by inconsistency in the application of rules, changes in mid-stream, or additional unknown requirements will only add to the private sectors wariness in making investments in redevelopment districts and cause them to ‘pull-out’.



Chapter 8 Financial Background

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Chapter 9 - Responsibilities

This Chapter identifies MIRA's responsibilities and obligations relating to preparation and implementation of the Community Redevelopment Plan (CRP) as stipulated in Chapter 163 of the Florida Statutes. It also addresses MIRA's responsibilities and intentions to protect the residents, property owners and other stakeholders of the CRA from additional impacts to neighborhoods, traffic patterns, environmental quality, community resources, schools and quality of life which may result from implementation of the plan. These responsibilities are delegated to MIRA by the Brevard County Commission, however, the Commission retains the vested authority and responsibility for the plan and any plan amendments.

STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

The following discussions will confirm MIRA's compliance with statutory requirements by cross referencing the requirement with the document (such as the Brevard County Land Development Regulations), or the Chapter or section in the plan identified in bold where the topic is presented.

Section 163.362, F.S. identifies what must be included in every community redevelopment plan. Specifically a CRP shall:

- A. Contain a legal description of the boundaries of the community redevelopment area and the reasons for establishing such boundaries shown in the plan.
- B. Show by diagram and in general terms:
 1. The approximate amount of open space to be provided and the street layout. (Redevelopment Plan, Comprehensive Plan),
 2. Limitations on the type, size, height, number, and proposed use of buildings. (County's Land Development Code and Comprehensive Plan),
 3. The approximate number of dwelling units. (Redevelopment Plan, FLUM, and Zoning Map),
 4. Such property as is intended for use as public parks, recreation areas, streets, public utilities, and public improvements of any nature. (Redevelopment Plan, FLUM and Zoning Map).
- C. If the redevelopment area contains low or moderate income housing, contain a neighborhood impact element which describes in

detail the impact of the redevelopment upon the residents of the redevelopment area and the surrounding areas in terms of relocation, traffic circulation, environmental quality, availability of community facilities and services, effect on school population, and other matters affecting the physical and social quality of the neighborhood (Neighborhood Impact Assessment/Statement and Residential Use).

- D. Identify specifically any publicly funded capital projects to be undertaken within the community redevelopment area. (Redevelopment Plan – Recommended Projects).
- E. Contain adequate safeguards that the work of redevelopment will be carried out pursuant to the plan (Redevelopment Plan).
- F. Provide for the retention of controls and the establishment of any restrictions or covenants running with land sold or leased for private use for such periods of time and under such conditions as the governing body deems necessary to effectuate the purposes of this part (This shall be done pursuant to negotiations and contracts at the time of any land lease or sale).
- G. Provide assurances that there will be replacement housing for the relocation of persons temporarily or permanently displaced from housing facilities within the community redevelopment area (Neighborhood Impact Assessment/Statement and Residential Use, FLUM and Zoning maps).
- H. Provide an element of residential use in the redevelopment area if such use exists in the area prior to the adoption of the plan or if the plan is intended to remedy a shortage of housing affordable to residents of low or moderate

income, including the elderly, or if the plan is not intended to remedy such shortage, the reasons therefore (Neighborhood Impact Assessment/Statement and Residential Use, FLUM and Zoning maps).

- I. Contain a detailed statement of the projected costs of the redevelopment, including the amount to be expended on publicly funded capital projects in the community redevelopment area and any indebtedness of the community redevelopment agency, the county, or the municipality proposed to be incurred for such redevelopment if such indebtedness is to be repaid with increment revenues (Redevelopment Plan).
- J. Provide a time certain for completing all redevelopment financed by increment revenues. Such time certain shall occur no later than 30 years after the fiscal year in which the plan is approved, adopted, or amended pursuant to the requirements of s. 163.361(1).



Chapter 9 - Responsibilities

NEIGHBORHOOD IMPACT ASSESSMENT/STATEMENT

This section for the Chapter relates to MIRA's obligations and intentions to protect the residents of the CRA from additional impacts to the neighborhoods and residents which may result from implementation of the plan.

As previously stated the main goal of redevelopment plans is to correct areas of blight and promote quality residential and commercial use, particularly with regard to developing and maintaining sustainable neighborhoods. The MIRA Plan identifies areas for the private sector to create new, replace, and infill residential and mixed-use development that will aid in retaining the existing housing stock and promote a livable, walkable, and sustainable CRA and surrounding areas.

There are no plans for the MIRA to become residential real estate developers. MIRA will seek to protect residents in their decisions, provide compatibility and good transitions when funding projects, and create stability within existing residential neighborhoods to foster community pride, ownership, and responsibility for property conditions. This plan is designed to preserve, conserve, the investments made to all properties in the CRA.

MIRA's Plan does not include any programs that will dislocate residents. Should any residential units require relocation due to direct expenditures by the MIRA, the agency will prepare a relocation study and work with other housing providers to locate appropriate housing.

MIRA will follow Department of Housing and Urban Development (DHUD) relocation assistance policies to provide equitable treatment for all property owners

and tenants in the event of displacement resulting from property acquisition by MIRA. The purpose of the plan is to stimulate private sector investment, which may result in property acquisitions within the redevelopment area. Private-sector land acquisition and redevelopment projects are not subject to the same provisions as governmental bodies. However, in the case of tenants displaced as a consequence of a voluntary sale by the private sector, the Redevelopment Agency, if requested, may assist by providing referrals and technical assistance to known local private and public housing providers in the area, in order to assure the displaced parties have replacement housing available to them.

ESTABLISHMENT OF RESIDENTIAL USE

The purpose of Redevelopment Plans is to correct areas of blight and promote quality residential use, particularly with regard to developing and maintaining sustainable neighborhoods. Should any residential units require relocation due to direct expenditures by the MIRA, the MIRA will prepare a relocation study and work with other housing providers to locate appropriate housing. MIRA does not anticipate to be a developer of housing. This Plan does identify areas for the private sector to create new, replacement, and infill residential and mixed-use development that will aid in retaining the existing housing stock and promoting a livable, walkable, and sustainable CRA and existing surrounding areas.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

The MIRA CRA is a predominately urbanized area, however, the County has prepared and is implementing a Master Stormwater Management Plan and has acquired property for regional stormwater systems that will serve as Stormwater parks instead of ponds. Plan implementation will result in more green and landscaped spaces than presently exist, which will be a positive impact on the environment. The plan calls for creating eco-tourism opportunities, regional stormwater systems, and upgrades to the stormwater utility. Brevard County currently requires environmental permitting for development approval and on or off-site stormwater management systems are required to adequately handle runoff from new developments and redevelopment on older properties that do not have the lot size to accommodate current stormwater retention requirements. There are no plans to introduce any type of land use or business that would be a "pollution" producer. There are no adverse, only positive, impacts anticipated from the proposed redevelopment program.



TRAFFIC CIRCULATION

The plan calls for development of vacant parcels plus improvements and redevelopment of existing commercial, industrial and residential lands.

Generally, street network improvements will include intersection improvements, traffic light upgrades, turn lane enhancements, and other multi-modal additions. Most of the anticipated traffic will continue to move through the area along the major arteries of SR 3, SR 528 and SR 520. FDOT and Brevard County are working together on beautification and streetscaping enhancement projects that are proposed in this plan. They will continue to be partners in making changes or improvements to the circulation system. Resources for physical changes to the roadway are allocated through the Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) process. In addition, the private sector will support a large portion of the cost of the improvements necessitated by growth.

Residential streets adjacent to the MIRA will not significantly be impacted by traffic related to MIRA improvements activities, if at all. To the extent that vacant lots are developed throughout the district as infill sites, the increase of such traffic would be small that the level-of-service standards on any of the streets should not be significantly affected. The existing roadway system remains virtually intact, unless changes to some of the side streets occurs in future years as funding, support and interest grows.

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES

The plan will result in enhanced community services and facilities in the CRA. Such enhancements include, but are not limited to: increased public safety; added streetscaping for beautification and environmental enhancement; modifications to several intersections to make them safer; street, sidewalk, and drainage improvements; traffic calming enhancements; monumentation and new signage for identification; upgraded utility systems; Museums, Veteran's Centers, public buildings and community centers; enhanced recreation programs and facilities. Public/private cost share programs to encourage public facility and service improvements will also be pursued.

EFFECT ON SCHOOL POPULATION

The Plan will have little direct impact on the school population. One positive benefit for the school-age population residing in or using the redevelopment area will be the new sidewalk linkages, traffic control devices, and better pedestrian movement. Demographic analysis shows the average household size and school populations decreasing over the next 5 years on Merritt Island. The interlocal agreement with the School Board will enable Brevard County to monitor the growth and capacity at all of its elementary, middle, and high schools used by its residents. Brevard County and School Board work closely to assure quality in building capacity and overall education.

ADDITIONAL PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL QUALITY OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD

While much has been accomplished, there is still much to do to improve the quality of life of the MIRA. It is expected that the overall physical and social conditions of MIRA will not improve without the redevelopment program. Redevelopment programs will increase community pride and motivation to participate in activities that result in physical, economic and social improvements.



Chapter 9 - Responsibilities

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CONSISTENCY

The Redevelopment Plan is determined to be in compliance and consistent with the County's adopted Comprehensive Plan, including the Future Land Use Map (FLUM). However, priority should be given to amendments will facilitate the implementation of the Community Redevelopment Plan (CRP).

RESTRICTIONS

In accordance with the Florida Statutes only the Brevard County Commission is authorized to pledge the full faith and credit of Brevard County, or guarantee the indebtedness of any person performing any work or providing labor or services in connection with any redevelopment project, or to otherwise obtain funds from any source or in any manner not specifically authorized in the Plan, the Act, or the provisions of applicable law. MIRA has all the powers and authority vested by Chapter 163, Part III, Community Redevelopment, as may be amended from time to time and as allocated by the Brevard County Commission in various Ordinances adopted for the program.

RELOCATION ASSISTANCE

Brevard County will follow Department of Housing and Urban Development (DHUD) relocation assistance policies to provide equitable treatment for all property owners and tenants in the event of displacement resulting from property acquisition by the Redevelopment Agency. The purpose of the plan is to stimulate private sector investment, which may result in property acquisitions within the redevelopment area. Private-sector land acquisition and redevelopment projects are not subject to the same provisions as governmental bodies. In the case of tenants displaced as a consequence of a voluntary sale by the private sector, the Redevelopment Agency, if requested, may assist by providing referrals and technical assistance to known local private and public housing providers in the area, in order to assure the displaced parties have replacement housing available to them.

PLAN APPROVAL

The Community Redevelopment Plan (CRP) has been approved and adopted pursuant to Chapter 163.360 Florida Statutes. Upon approval by the Brevard County Commission, the Redevelopment Plan shall be considered in full force and effect for the defined redevelopment area. Brevard County may then cause the Merritt Island Redevelopment Agency (MIRA) to carry out the implementation of the Plan.



DURATION OF THE PLAN

The redevelopment provisions, controls, restrictions and covenants of the Redevelopment Plan shall be effective for 20 years from the date of adoption.

AMENDMENT OF THE PLAN

The Redevelopment Plan may be modified, changed, or amended at any time by the Brevard County Commission in accordance with the requirements of Section 163.361, F.S.

SAFEGUARDS AND RETENTION OF CONTROL

This Redevelopment Plan is the guiding document for future development, redevelopment and ancillary programs, projects, and activities in and for Merritt Island Community Redevelopment Area. In order to assure that redevelopment will take place in conformance with the principles and strategies expressed in this plan, the Redevelopment Agency will utilize the regulatory devices, instruments and systems used by Brevard County or delegated to MIRA to permit development and redevelopment within its jurisdiction. These regulatory devices include but are not limited to the Comprehensive Plan, the Land Development Code, adopted design guidelines, performance standards and Brevard County authorized development review, permitting and approval processes and any other adopted codes, standards, and policies. In accordance with the requirements of Section 163.362 (2) (b), F.S., the County's regulatory controls determine the limitations on building height, structure, size and use. The Redevelopment Plan sets forth proposed uses and development idea/opportunities and illustrates them on accompanying maps.

The Brevard County Commission retains the vested authority and responsibility for:

- The power to grant final approval to the Redevelopment Plans and modifications;
- The power to authorize issuance of revenue bonds or other financial debt as set forth in Section 163.385, F.S.;
- The power to approve the public acquisition, demolition, removal or disposal of property as provided in Section 163.370(3), F.S.

The Redevelopment Agency shall provide adequate safeguards or any other provisions necessary to carry out the Goals, Objectives, Programs, and Projects enumerated in the Redevelopment Plan.



Chapter 9 - Responsibilities

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The Community Redevelopment Agency shall comply with the reporting requirements of Section 163.356 (3) (c), F.S.

Additionally, the Agency shall comply with the auditing requirements, as set forth in Section 163.387 (8), F.S., which mandates an independent financial audit of the Redevelopment Agency Trust Fund each fiscal year and report such an audit. The MIRA or its agents shall conform to the statutory requirements as applicable for special districts under the laws of the State of Florida.

SEVERABILITY

If any provision, section or clause of the Redevelopment Plan is held to be invalid, unconstitutional, or otherwise illegal, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of the Redevelopment Plan.



CRA TERMINOLOGY

Within this document the following terms shall have the meaning described below, unless the context dictates otherwise:

- A. **Act:** “The Community Redevelopment Act of 1969”, as set forth in paragraph 163.330 et seq Florida Statutes, as may be amended from time to time.
- B. **Agency:** The Merritt Island Community Redevelopment Agency (MIRA) designated in accordance with the Act.
- C. **Comprehensive Plan:** The adopted Comprehensive Plan used to guide the future development of lands contained within the Merritt Island Community Redevelopment Area as approved by the Brevard County Board of County Commissioners and as may be amended from time to time.
- D. **Community Redevelopment Area (CRA):** those lands within the legally described boundaries of the district as established by Ordinances and Resolutions of the Brevard County Commission.
- E. **County:** The County of Brevard, Florida, and all departments, bureaus and agencies thereof.
- F. **County Commission:** The Brevard County Board of County Commissioners as shall be from time to time be constituted and charged with the duty of governing Merritt Island.
- G. **Floor Area Ratio Net (FAR):** The ratio of the area of the principal uses or use of a structure (exclusive of stairwells, halls, corridors, lobbies, patios, balconies, elevators, equipment and mechanical rooms, and enclosed vehicular parking or loading areas, which are designed and constructed as an integral function of the structure or building) to the area of development parcel or building site for which development approval is being sought.
- H. **Improvements:** Building, structures, and other improvements including, without limitation, subsurface structures and foundations and public improvements constructed, erected, or placed or to be constructed, erected, or placed on any real property in the redevelopment area.
- I. **Open Spaces:** Any parcel of land or water essentially unimproved and set aside, dedicated, designed, or reserved for public or private use or enjoyment or for the use or enjoyment of owners and occupants of land adjoining or neighboring such open space.
- J. **Owner:** Any person owning real property within the Redevelopment Area. Person: Any individual, firm, partnership, corporation, company, association, joint stock association or body politic, including any trustee, receiver, assignee or other person acting in a similar representative capacity.
- K. **Plan:** This Community Redevelopment Plan as may be amended from time to time.
- L. **Planning Commission:** The Planning and Land Development Regulation Board of the County.
- M. **Redevelopment Area:** Same as the CRA.
- N. **Project:** The undertakings and activities of the Agency or any person in the Redevelopment Area for the elimination and prevention of the development or spread of slum and blight as encompassed by this Plan.
- O. **Public Improvements:** All public utilities, structures, and other improvements including, without limitation, overpasses or underpasses, bridges, streets, gutters, sidewalks, street lights, sewers, storm drains, traffic signals, water distribution systems, electrical distribution systems, telephone systems, curbs, buildings, parks, playgrounds, plazas, recreation areas, off-street parking areas, elevated parking decks or garages, landscape areas, waterways and related facilities.
- P. **Real Property:** Land, including underwater and waterfront property, buildings, structures, fixtures, and improvements on the land; and property appurtenant to or used in connection with the land; every estate, interest, privilege, easement, franchise, and right in land, including, but not limited to, rights-of-way, terms for years, and liens, charges, or encumbrances by way of judgment, mortgage and otherwise the indebtedness secured by such liens.
- Q. **Residential density:** The number of dwelling units in a structure divided by the area in acres of the parcel of land on which the structure is located and for which development approval is being sought.
- R. **State:** The State of Florida
- S. **Zoning Ordinances (Land Development Regulations):** The Zoning Ordinances or Land Development Regulations of the County as the same presently exist and may be amended from time to time hereafter.



Appendix A - Terminology

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Proposed M.I.R.A North Area Legal - Barge Canal/North SR 3

Beginning at the intersection of the West line of Range 37 East and the Center Channel of the Barge Canal; thence East along said Center Channel and its easterly projection into the waters of the Banana River (said point lying approximately 1,650.00 feet east of the west shoreline of said Banana River) lying in Section 7, Township 24 South, Range 37 East; thence South to the South Right of Way line of State Road 528 (aka Beachline Expressway); thence West along said South Right of Way to the East line of Tax Parcel 7 (aka Kelly Park East), lying in Section 18, Township 24 South, Range 37 East as recorded in Official Records Book (ORB) 781, Page 108 of the Public Records of Brevard County, Florida; thence South along said East line to the South line of said Tax Parcel 7; thence West along said South line and its westerly projection to the West Right of Way line of North Banana River Drive; thence South along said West Right of Way line to the South line of Tax Parcel 4, lying in said Section 18, as recorded in ORB 2744, Page 1515 of said Public Records (aka Kelly Park West); thence west along said South line to the East line of Phase One, "The Lakes of Ridge Manor Subdivision" as recorded in Plat Book 33, Page 43 of said Public Records; thence North along said East line of Plat Book 33, Page 43 to the North line of said plat; thence West along said North line of plat and its westerly projection to the West line of said Kelly Park West; thence North along said West line to the North line of said Kelly Park West; thence East along said North line to the East line of the plat of Island Crossings as recorded in Plat Book 41, Page 78 of said Public Records; thence North along the East line of said plat to the South Right of Way line of said State Road 528; thence West along said South Right of Way line to the West

line of the plat of Palmetto, as recorded in Plat Book 51, Page 55 of said Public Records; thence South along said West line and its southerly projection to the South Right of Way line of Via de la Reina; thence East along said South Right of Way line to the West line of Block E, Villa de Palmas Unit No. 1, as recorded in Plat Book 20, Page 45 of said Public Records; thence South along said West line to the South line of said Block E; thence East along said South line to the West line of Raintree by the Lake, as recorded in Plat Book 28, Page 16 of said Public Records; thence South along said West line and its southerly projection to the South Right of Way line of Pioneer Road; thence East along said South Right of Way line to the West Right of Way line of Lewis Carroll Avenue; thence South along said West Right of Way line to the North line of Fairfax Subdivision, as recorded in Plat Book 21, Page 8 of said Public Records; thence West along said North line to the West line of said plat of Fairfax Subdivision; thence South along said West line to the North line of Tax Parcel 539.1, lying in Section 14, Township 24 South, Range 36 East as recorded in ORB 559, Page 707 of said Public Records; thence East along said North line to the East line of said Tax Parcel 539.1; thence South along said East line to the South line of said Tax Parcel 539.1; thence West along said South line to the East Right of Way line of North Courtenay Parkway (aka State Road 3); thence South along said East Right of Way line to the North line of Tax Parcel 1, lying in Section 23, Township 24 South, Range 36 East as recorded in ORB 5460, Page 5466 of said Public Records; thence East along said North line and its easterly projection to the West line of Waterway Manor Unit No. 1, as recorded in Plat Book 21, Page 15 of said Public Records; Thence South along said West line to the North Right of Way line of Florida Boulevard; thence West along said North Right of

Way line to the East Right of Way line of said North Courtenay Parkway; thence South along said East Right of Way line to the North Right of Way line of Diana Boulevard; thence East along said North Right of Way line to the West line of Diana Shores Unit No. 1, as recorded in Plat Book 20, Page 24 of said Public Records; thence South along said West line and along the West line of Diana Shores Unit No. 4, as recorded in Plat Book 21, Page 17 of said Public Records to the North line of Tax Parcel 501, lying in said Section 23, as recorded in ORB 876, Page 351 of said Public Records; thence East along said North line to the East line of said Tax Parcel 501; thence South along said East line to the South line of said Tax Parcel 501; thence West along said South line to the East Right of Way line of said North Courtenay Parkway; thence South along said East Right of Way line to the intersection of the easterly projection of the North Right of Way line of Lucas Road; thence West along said North Right of Way line to the East line of Tax Parcel 19.01, lying in said Section 23, as recorded in ORB 4736, Page 737 of said Public Records; thence North along said East line to the North line of said Tax Parcel 19.01; thence West along said North line to the East line of Orange Blossom Heights, as recorded in Plat Book 20, Page 110 of said Public Records; thence North along said East line to the North line of said Plat Book 20, Page 110; thence West along said North line to the East line of Merritt Court Townhomes, as recorded in Plat Book 32, Page 15 of said Public Records; thence North along said East line and its northerly projection to the intersection of the westerly projection of the South line of Carlton Groves South, as recorded in Plat Book 21, Page 67 of said Public Records; thence East along said South line to the West Right of Way line of North Courtenay Parkway; thence North along said West Right of Way line to the North line of

Carlton Groves Subdivision Number Three, as recorded in Plat Book 16, Page 126 of said Public Records; thence West along said North line to the East line of Lot 40, Block C of said Plat Book 16, Page 126; thence North along said East line and its northerly projection to the South Right of Way line of Butler Avenue; thence East along said South Right of Way line to the southerly projection of the East Right of Way line of Mimosa Avenue; thence North along the East Right of Way line of said Mimosa Avenue and its northerly projection to the North Right of Way line of Venetian Way; thence West along said North Right of Way line to the East Right of Way line of San Angelo Way; thence North along said East Right of Way line to the South Right of Way line of State Road 528 (aka Beachline Expressway); thence West along said South Right of Way line to the Center Channel of the Indian River; thence North along said Center Channel to the westerly projection of the Center Channel of the Barge Canal; thence East along said westerly projection of the Center Channel of the Barge Canal to the Point of Beginning.



Appendix B - Legal Descriptions

Proposed M.I.R.A South Area Legal - Cone Road Sub-Area

Begin at the Northeast corner of Tax Parcel 501, lying in Section 36, Township 24 South, Range 36 East as recorded in Official Records Book (ORB) 6033, Page 2921 of the Public Records of Brevard County, Florida; thence South along the East line of said ORB 6033, Page 2921 and its southerly projection along the Ordinary High Water Line of Newfound Harbor to the intersection of the easterly projection of the South Right of Way line of Wall Street; thence West along the South Right of Way of said Wall Street to the West Right of Way line of Kemp Street; thence North along the West Right of Way of said Kemp Street to the South Right of Way line of Manor Drive; thence West along the South Right of Way line of said Manor Drive and its westerly projection to the East boundary line of Tax Parcel 18, lying in Section 2, Township 25 South, Range 36 East as recorded in ORB 2985, Page 3156 of said Public Records; thence South along the East line of said Tax Parcel 18 to the South line of said Tax Parcel 18; thence West along the South line of said Tax Parcel 18 to the East line of the plat of Tropical Gardens as recorded in Plat Book 16, Page 138 of said Public Records; thence north along the East line of said Plat to the North line of said Plat Book 16, Page 138; thence West along the North line of said Plat to the East Right of Way line of South Courtenay Parkway; thence South along said East Right of Way line to the intersection of the easterly projection of the South Right of Line of Brandy Lane; thence West along said easterly projection to the West Right of Way line of South Courtenay Parkway; thence North along said West Right of Way line to the North line of said plat of Tropical Gardens; thence West along said North line to the West line of Tax Parcel 8, lying

in said Section 2 as recorded in ORB 4098, Page 599 of said Public Records; thence North along the West line of said Tax Parcel 8 and its northerly projection to the North Right of Way line of Cone Road; thence East along said North Right of Way line to the West Right of Way line of South Courtenay Parkway; thence North along said West Right of Way line to the South boundary line of the existing Merritt Island Redevelopment Area Boundary as described in Brevard County Ordinance 88-37; thence East along said South boundary line to the East Right of Way line of said South Courtenay Parkway; thence South along said East Right of Way line to the North Right of Way line of Cone Road; thence East along said North Right of Way line to the West Right of Way line of Plumosa Street; thence North along the said West Right of Way line to the Northeast corner of Lot 53, Block A of Bel Aire Unit Two, as recorded in Plat Book 17, Page 50 of said Public Records (said point also being on the aforesaid South boundary line of the existing Merritt Island Redevelopment Area Boundary as described in Brevard County Ordinance 88-37); thence East along said South boundary line to the West Right of Way line of Sykes Creek Parkway; thence South along said West Right of Way line to the North line of aforesaid Tax Parcel 501; thence East along said North line to the Point of Beginning



The following is a list of resolutions and ordinances pertaining to the Merritt Island Redevelopment Agency. Official copies of these documents may be obtained from the Brevard County Clerk of the Court.

Resolution 88-312 Adopted on September 13, 1988: Defining the Community Redevelopment Area; Finding the Existence of Conditions in the Area that Warrants the Creation of a Redevelopment District in Accordance with Criteria Set Forth in Chapter 163, Florida Statutes.

Ordinance 88-37 Adopted on October 4, 1988: Creating a Redevelopment Agency, pursuant to Chapter 163.356, Fla. Stat.; Authorizing the Agency to Exercise Powers within the Community Redevelopment Area; Appointing a Board of Commissioners of the Community Redevelopment Agency; Designating a Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Board; Providing for Terms of Office for the Commissioners.

Ordinance 88-43 Adopted on November 15, 1988: Amending Section III to Create a Community Redevelopment Agency Comprised of Persons Residing or Engaged in Business Within the Area of Operation of the Agency, Pursuant to Section 163.356, Florida Statutes; Appointing a 7 member board or commissioners of the Community Redevelopment Agency; Providing for the designation of a Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Board; Providing for terms of office of the commissioners; Providing for an effective date.

Resolution 89-221 Adopted on June 6, 1989: Approving the Community Redevelopment Plan for the Merritt Island Redevelopment Agency Pursuant to the Provisions of Chapter 163, Florida Statute.

Ordinance 89-28 Adopted on June 6, 1989: Pursuant to Florida Statutes 163.387, Providing for the creation and administration of a Community Redevelopment Trust Fund for the Merritt Island

Redevelopment Area as set forth in Resolution No. 88-312 of the Board of County Commissioners, Brevard County, Florida, for the duration of the Community Redevelopment Plan; Designating the Community Redevelopment Trust Fund as the recipient of funds pursuant to Chapter 163.387(1), Florida Statutes, to be administered by the Merritt Island Community Redevelopment Agency; Acknowledging the adoption of the Merritt Island Redevelopment Plan and its implementation by the Redevelopment Agency. Providing for severability; providing for an effective date.

Resolution 90-188 Adopted on May 15, 1990: Finding the existence of conditions in the area that warrant the extension of the current redevelopment district boundary in accordance with criteria set forth in Chapter 163, Florida Statutes; Making certain findings and determinations; Providing an effective date.

Resolution 91-457 Adopted on December 9, 1991: Relating to Community Redevelopment in Central Merritt Island; Approving the Merritt Island Redevelopment Plan as amended, for the Merritt Island Redevelopment Area pursuant to the provisions of Part III of Chapter 163, Florida Statutes.

Ordinance 91-39 Adopted on December 9, 1991: Amending Ordinance 88-37 Relating to Community Redevelopment in Central Merritt Island; Amending the Redevelopment Area to Add Land to the Redevelopment Area Pursuant to Chapter 163.361, Florida Statute; Extending the Boundaries of the Redevelopment Area to Consist of Additional Property Eastward and Adjacent to the Merritt Island Redevelopment Area Which Adjacent Property is Located in Township 24, Range 36, Sections 25 and 36, and Township 24, Range 37, Sections 30 and 31 all within the Unincorporated Area of Brevard County, Florida District II; as more particularly described in this Ordinance;

Authorizing the Agency to Exercise Powers within the Community Redevelopment Area.

Ordinance 91-40 Adopted on December 9, 1991: Pursuant to Chapter 163.387, Florida Statute, Providing for the Administration of a Community Redevelopment Trust Fund for the Merritt Island Redevelopment Area as set forth in Resolution 90-188 of the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC), Brevard County, Florida, for the Duration of the Merritt Island Redevelopment Plan; Designating the Community Redevelopment Trust Fund as the Recipient of Funds Pursuant to Chapter 163.387(1) Florida Statute, to be Administered by the Merritt Island Community Redevelopment Agency; Acknowledging the Adoption of the Merritt Island Redevelopment Plan, as amended and its Implementation by the Merritt Island Community Redevelopment Agency.

Resolution 97-294 Adopted on December 9, 1997: Approving an amendment to the Merritt Island Redevelopment Plan, for the Merritt Island Redevelopment Area pursuant to the provisions of Part III of Chapter 163, Florida Statutes by identifying specific redevelopment projects and recommended actions.

Ordinance 06-32 Adopted on May 16, 2006: Making Findings of Blight and Necessity; Amending the Merritt Island Redevelopment Plan; Amending Boundaries of the CRA; Amending and Providing a Legal Description of the Additional Area to be included within the Community Redevelopment Area.

Resolution 06-165 Adopted on May 16, 2006: *Relating to Community Redevelopment in State Road 3 Corridor Area of Merritt Island;* Amending the boundaries of the Community Redevelopment Area; Finding the existence of conditions in the area that warrant the creation of a Redevelopment District in Accordance with Criteria set forth in Chapter 163, Florida Statutes; Making certain

findings and determinations; Providing an effective date.

Resolution 11-122 Adopted on May 24, 2011: Relating to Community Redevelopment in Merritt Island; Defining the Community Redevelopment Area; Finding the Existence of Conditions in the Area that Warrant the Extension of the Current Redevelopment District Boundary in Accordance with Criteria Set Forth in Chapter 163, Florida Statutes.



Appendix B - Legal Descriptions

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