

**VENICE CITY COUNCIL
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY WORKSHOP**

September 3, 2014

Presented by:
Jeff Burton – Palmetto CRA
Don Paight – Fort Myers CRA

On behalf of the Florida Redevelopment Association

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY?

A Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) is a legal entity that is created by a municipality or county after a determination that “slum and blight” criteria, established in Chapter 163 Part III of the Florida Statutes have been met.

HOW ARE CRA'S STRUCTURED?

A CRA can be established as either a dependent or independent special district.

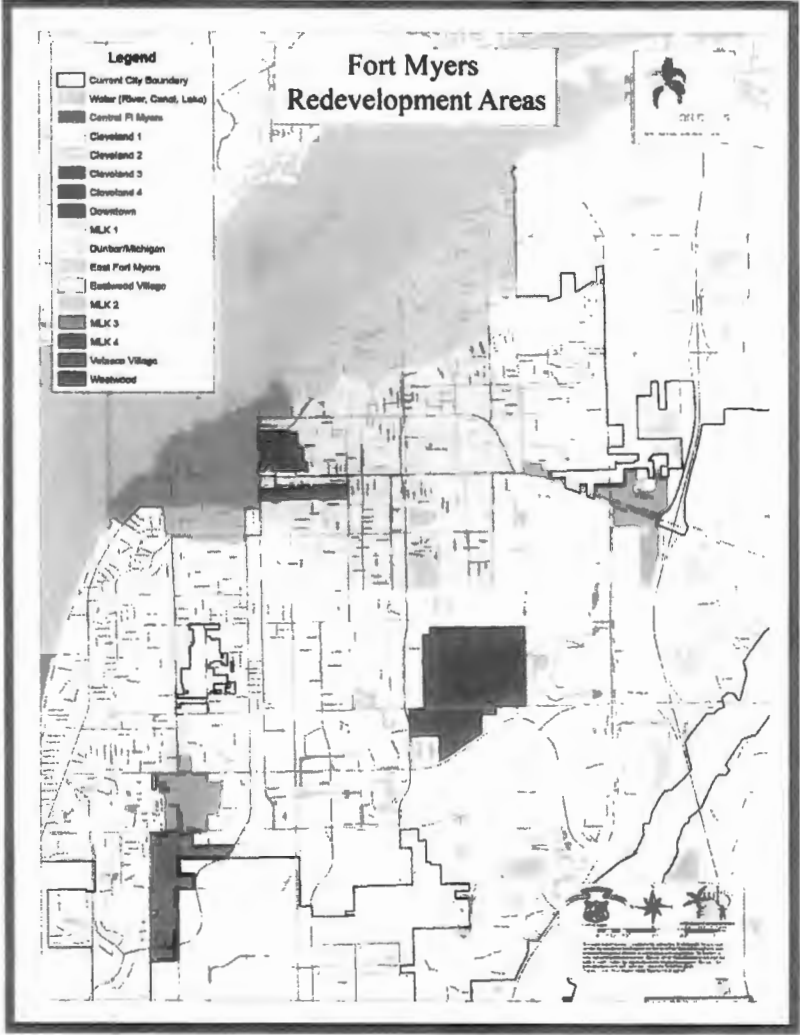
- Dependent - Governing body serves as CRA Board of Commissioners.**
- Independent – Governing body appoints the CRA Board of Commissioners**

WHAT IS TAX INCREMENT FINANCING (TIF)?

Tax increment financing (TIF) is the traditional funding mechanism for CRA's. In accordance with Chapter 163 Part III of the Florida Statutes, TIF payments are equal to 95% of the increase in tax revenue generated by the increase in property values in the redevelopment area and are used within the redevelopment area to finance CRA operating expenses, projects and programs.

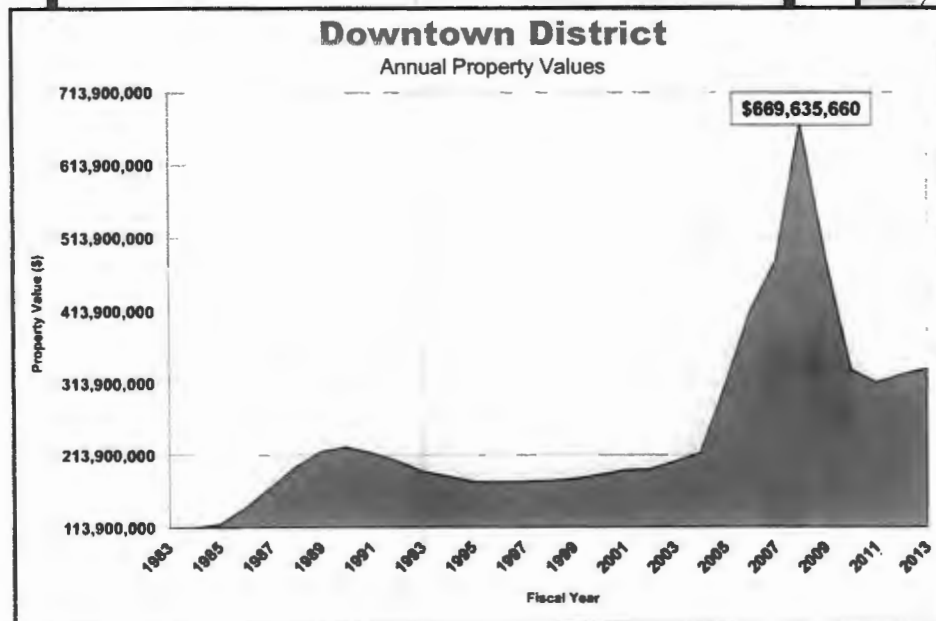
HOW DOES A CRA AFFECT THE VALUE OF PROPERTIES IN A DISTRICT?

- **No direct fiscal impact – A CRA district does not impose a tax or assessment so there are no additional costs to a property owner.**
- **Increased Focus = Increased Investment - The creation of a CRA and a redevelopment district(s) demonstrates the City's increased focus on an area which will lead to reinvestment.**
- **Reinvestment = Increased Property Values - Property values will increase as new construction and rehabilitation occurs.**



Downtown

- Established: 9/17/1984
- Amended: 11/16/1987, 4/7/2003 and 4/19/2010
- Ordinance No. 2249, 2426, Res. 2010-10
- Sunset Date: 11/18/2032
- Base Year Value: \$113,969,750



WHAT IS THE COST OF ADMINISTERING A CRA?

- **Executive Director - \$60,000 - \$70,000 plus benefits**
- **Support staff – add as necessary (Office Manager/Administrative Assistant) \$25,000 - \$35,000 plus benefits**
- **Office space – donated City or private office – free
leased space - \$14,000 - \$16,000**
- **Office & operating supplies - \$6,000 - \$10,000**
- **Program/planning/incentive funds - \$50,000 +**

WHAT IS THE COST OF ADMINISTERING A CRA

(Continued)

- **The Fort Myers CRA began with a \$150,000 loan from the City.**
- **Staff consisted of an Executive Director for the first 6 months after which an Administrative Assistant was added.**
- **Free office space was provided in City Hall for the first 6 months.**
- **Current staff consists of an Executive Director, Deputy Director, two Redevelopment Managers and an Office Manager. The CRA oversees 14 redevelopment districts and the City parking operations with an annual budget of approximately \$3.5 million.**
- **The CRA contracts with the City, and pays a fee, for Finance, HR, IT and Insurance services.**

SHOULD BUSINESS DISTRICTS AND RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS BE INCLUDED IN ONE CRA

Yes – Combining a downtown and/or commercial district with the surrounding residential neighborhoods into one CRA area is a good idea.

- A strong, revitalized downtown will encourage reinvestment in the surrounding residential neighborhoods.**
- Vibrant, pedestrian-friendly residential neighborhoods will support the adjacent downtown or commercial corridor.**
- Inclusion of surrounding residential areas provides a greater opportunity for residents to have input into the vision and plan for the area surrounding their homes.**

WHAT ARE THE PROS AND CONS OF A CRA AREA?

Pros

- **Increased focus on revitalizing an area.**
- **Dedicated funding source (TIF).**
- **Access to a portion of the County tax millage.**
- **Ability to create and fund incentive programs (façade and landscape grants, tax increment rebates, retail recruitment incentives, etc.).**
- **Ability to fund infrastructure improvements.**

WHAT ARE THE PROS AND CONS OF A CRA AREA?

Cons

- **Tax increment is captured by the redevelopment area and is not available to the general fund.**
- **Opposition from areas outside the redevelopment district.**

WHAT OTHER FUNDING OPTIONS ARE THERE FOR A BUSINESS DISTRICT?

- **Business Improvement District (BID) – F.S. 170.01 (3) Property owners agree to tax themselves for business improvement activities (50% + 1 needed for approval).**
- **Safe Neighborhood District –**
- **Enterprise Zone – An area targeted for economic revitalization by the State of Florida in which tax credits are offered.**
- **Brownfield Area – A contiguous area of one or more brownfield sites which has been designated by a local government by resolution. Loan guarantees, tax credits and sales tax refunds offered.**

WHAT ARE THE PROS AND CONS OF OTHER KINDS OF BUSINESS TAXES?

Pros

- **Stable funding source.**
- **Only property owners directly benefiting pay assessment.**

Cons

- **Extensive marketing effort needed gain approval.**
- **Additional assessed millage may count toward City millage cap.**

City of Venice Community Redevelopment Area
Finding of Necessity

REPORT



U R B A N R E S O U R C E G R O U P

6-22-04

Mr. Martin P. Black, AICP
City Manager
City of Venice
401 West Venice Avenue
Venice, Florida 34285

Subject: Finding of Necessity Report

Dear Mr. Black:

It is our pleasure to submit to you the City of Venice Community Redevelopment Area Finding of Necessity Report. Venice is experiencing substantial activity with regard to downtown reinvestment, residential growth, and citywide expansion. In an effort to be consistent with the City's vision for sustainability, the redevelopment of the aging industrial core, situated on the banks of the Intracoastal and along an important community gateway, has the potential to become a vital and attractive destination. The establishment of a Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) is an important first step toward implementing this vision. This Finding of Necessity Report contains analysis and recommendations related to the challenges and deficiencies that exist in this aging city district.

Clearly, many of the challenges identified in this report will not be solved overnight and will not be cured through regulations alone. Also, the solutions will require a public commitment combined with private sector partnering to transform this aging district into a vibrant, functional, and sustainable community success story. We appreciate this opportunity to be a part of this important initiative and the continued progressive planning of the City of Venice.

Cordially,

William D. Waddill
William D. Waddill, ASLA

Alan Maio
Alan Maio, AICP

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Urban Resource Group is a division of Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction & Background

The City of Venice has experienced positive growth and redevelopment over the last decade. Consequently, the City is experiencing great prosperity in its town center and along its fringes. However, its aging industrial core has not experienced the kind of transition that normally occurs with downtown redevelopment and a rapidly growing suburban population. The area has developed haphazardly over the years, resulting in a disconnected, disjointed collection of buildings that are inconsistent with both the City's land development regulations and its desired development pattern. Due to its blighted conditions and the negative effect it will have on the City core in the years to come, the area is therefore targeted for redevelopment. This Finding of Necessity Report was created to identify, analyze, and provide recommendations to address the conditions within the targeted redevelopment area. This report is the first step in identifying problems and constraints which justify alternative approaches to planning.

Methodology

The Community Redevelopment Act of 1969 was created and adopted as Chapter 163 Part III into the Florida Statutes as a vehicle to remedy areas that are found to contain certain degrees of slum and blight. The Act affirms that the prevention and elimination of slum and blight is a matter of state policy and state concern. As related to the City of Venice, the targeted redevelopment area contains many of the conditions that are cited as State concern and that are directly applicable to the Community Redevelopment Act of 1969. The Act acknowledges the need for redevelopment in distressed areas, but also creates a mechanism by which a local government can administer change in a given area—the creation of a Community Redevelopment Area.

The Community Redevelopment Act clearly defines "slum" and "blight" with specific criteria to minimize

subjective interpretation of their meaning. The targeted redevelopment area in the City of Venice initially exhibits several of the indicators listed under the slum and blighted area definitions. When attempting to cure slum and blight, one of two approaches is typically used. The first approach involves the local government imposing development standards on private reinvestment and redevelopment. The second approach involves the local government taking the lead on redevelopment.

This report is intended to be consistent with the statutory requirements for establishing a Community Redevelopment Area while considering the future implications and hardships on public and private entities.

Roadways

Failing Segment Capacity

The targeted redevelopment area includes two major roadways; Venice Avenue is the principal east-west thoroughfare and US Highway 41 By-Pass is the north-south route. Roadway capacity is expected to hinder redevelopment in the targeted area. US Highway 41 By-Pass has two segments that exceed their adopted capacity; Venice Avenue has two segments that will allow for only a nominal increase before exceeding its adopted level of service. Future investment within the area will be required to address roadway concurrency standards.

Pattern Inadequacy

The targeted redevelopment area has a roadway pattern that can be considered inadequate to support intense future redevelopment and/or will make redevelopment projects awkward in layout. Its pattern is such that US Highway 41 By-Pass and Venice Avenue serve as the only regional roadway connectors for the area. Since these roadways are already constrained, traffic will be increasingly congested as redevelopment occurs.

City of Venice Community Redevelopment Area Finding of Necessity

REPORT



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Sanitation and Drainage

Drainage and Flooding Patterns

A large portion of the targeted redevelopment area is located within the 100-year floodplain and experiences flooding in times of heavy rain. Over the years, several capital projects in the area have improved drainage and water attenuation in the immediate area. In spite of these capital projects, streets continue to experience flooding in times of heavy rain.

The district relies on two small retention basins and on inlets to direct water into the Intracoastal. The majority of properties in the district are almost entirely paved. Many of these properties do not have on-site stormwater ponds to manage runoff or to prevent water from flooding nearby streets. It is anticipated that drainage and flooding problems in the targeted redevelopment area will continue to place a financial strain on the City, as a substantial portion of drainage improvements may have to be provided by the City using public funds.

Stormwater Treatment Deficiencies

Normally, the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) standards require that stormwater runoff be retained in a manner that substantially removes sediment and pollutants from the water prior to discharge. The majority of the properties are nonconforming with regard to these standards. In the event redevelopment occurs within the area, most properties are vested with regard to impervious surface area and their lack of stormwater treatment. It is only with an increase in surface parking paving that the water management district will require that the additional area provide for runoff treatment. The costs for curing the situation are expected to be burdensome to the government agency unless an alternative funding source is identified.

Failing Infrastructure Capacity

The targeted redevelopment area is experiencing some infrastructure strain due to its age, surrounding development, and maintenance history. During times of heavy rain the City's wastewater treatment plant experiences stormwater infiltration. This infrastructure flaw reduces the plant's level of service and ability to serve new customers. Currently, the master lift station is operating at capacity. This facility predominately serves the surrounding industrial district. It is anticipated that future redevelopment with other uses in this area will be hindered by the limited lift station capacity.

Lots & Properties

Lot Usefulness

Lot location, size, and the ability to support development are key determining factors when considering the likelihood of redevelopment. If lots are awkward in shape and size, it is difficult to meet current building and zoning codes. Over 65 properties within the targeted redevelopment area have widths less than 64 feet. In addition, over 20 parcels along Venice Avenue and US Highway 41 By-Pass have 100 feet of lot depth or less. Over time, redevelopment may be stunted due to the shallow lots in this area. In order to ensure that desirable redevelopment occurs, these properties should be aggregated into larger parcels or developed with less intense uses that are appropriate to the land area.

Ownership Fragmentation

The targeted redevelopment area has over 220 individual parcels with very few parcel groupings that are under the same ownership. Each block has at least 10 different property owners. In terms of reinvestment, the properties in the area may be difficult to consolidate to support a large redevelopment proposal. The ownership fragmentation pattern of the private and public lands is expected to stunt redevelopment activity in this area.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Value

The targeted redevelopment area has not experienced the same rate of property appreciation as the rest of the City in the recent past. The Community Redevelopment Act of 1969 states that an indicator of blight exists when the aggregated assessed values of real property in the area for ad valorem tax purposes have failed to show a stable increase concurrent with the County and the City over prior years. In the case of the proposed redevelopment area, these statistics are a clear indicator of blight.

Nonconformities

Parking

When traveling throughout the targeted redevelopment area, it is apparent that parking is a common deficiency experienced by the majority of properties. There are several areas within the industrial core where vehicles are parked and stored along the public right-of-way. Parking deficiencies are also present in the form of parking lot design and location. Provisions for adequate parking will be a key consideration for any reinvestment initiative by the private sector.

On-Site Retention

The majority of properties within the redevelopment area do not contain on-site retention facilities to manage and treat stormwater runoff. When analyzing stormwater retention improvement opportunities, two basic options exist. One option is to require retention facilities on each individual site. A second option is to plan for regional stormwater management by providing for master retention facilities similar to residential or office subdivisions. The current situation within the targeted redevelopment area is a combination of both, and when redevelopment occurs and certain thresholds are reached, land developers must provide for additional on-site retention. The nonconforming clauses will not require substantial on-site retention as properties redevelop. As a result, the financial burden will be the City's responsibility to provide publicly-funded facilities to lessen the effects of flooding over time. A centralized water manage-

ment strategy would provide a more efficient, attractive solution to the drainage challenges that exist in the district, and would encourage appropriate redevelopment.

Landscaping

The targeted redevelopment district has very few areas where landscaping has been installed, and even fewer areas that meet current land development landscaping regulations. An opportunity exists to enhance the targeted area within the right-of-way as part of a streetscaping initiative, financed by the public sector, or a public/private partnership. However, due to other site development constraints identified in this analysis, such improvements would be of little value as an incentive for redevelopment without more systemic solutions.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the City designate the subject properties a Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) as highlighted in the Florida Statutes. As part of the CRA, a Community Redevelopment Agency will be established to administer planning efforts in the area. The City should establish a means of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to allow for the creation of funding sources for future investment in the area. Most importantly, it is recommended that a CRA Master Plan be created in order to establish a future vision for the area. It is also recommended that a Capital Improvements Plan be created to implement the Master Plan and should, at a minimum, address parking, drainage, sanitary sewer and roadways. It is further recommended that the City's Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code be amended to create development standards that are consistent with the Master Plan. The CRA should also use City-owned property as a catalyst for redevelopment, and locate existing municipal offices and facilities outside of the area. Finally, the City should pursue an economic development strategy to attract quality redevelopment proposals into the area which will ultimately implement the CRA Master Plan.

City of Venice Community Redevelopment Area Finding of Necessity

REPORT



INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

The City of Venice rests along the shores of the Gulf of Mexico and has experienced positive growth and redevelopment over the last decade. Its town center is thriving with cafes, art galleries, and restaurants. Its neighborhoods shine with manicured lawns and historic homes. Furthermore, the outer limits continue to expand as the City annexes new suburban neighborhoods and commercial districts. While the City is experiencing great prosperity in its town center and along its fringes, its aging industrial core may hinder this community from fully realizing its vision for the future.



The industrial area along the eastern banks of the Intracoastal and along US Highway 41 has not experienced the kind of transition that normally occurs when a city experiences recent downtown redevelopment and a rapidly growing suburban population. The area is composed of a multitude of properties that mostly contain modestly-sized industrial businesses. The area appears rather unkempt, with several properties seemingly overbuilt and undermaintained. Many of the businesses store materials outdoors in clear sight from the nearby right-of-way. Vehicles are regularly stored along streets due to a shortage of on-site parking. The district is almost entirely paved with very little vegetation to soften its rough industrial appearance. Although situated along the Intracoastal, the waterway is invisible from the area due to building sites and large clusters of exotic, invasive plant material. Drainage patterns continually pose a problem in times of heavy rain, as some of the



stormwater runoff carries the area's pollutants directly into the Intra-coastal Waterway. Furthermore, the area has devel-

oped haphazardly over the years resulting in a disconnected, disjointed collection of buildings that are inconsistent with both the City's land development regulations and its desired development pattern.

Due to its blighted conditions and the negative effect it will have on the City core in the years to come, the area is therefore targeted for redevelopment. Given its positioning adjacent to the Intracoastal Waterway, the town center, and the City's transportation gateways, this area is in a strong position for redevelopment.

This Finding of Necessity Report was created to identify, analyze, and provide recommendations to address the conditions within the targeted redevelopment area. This report is the first step in identifying problems and constraints which may justify alternative approaches to planning. The following sections highlight the requirements for creating a Community Redevelopment Area as provided for in the Florida State Statutes and contain detailed analysis of the targeted redevelopment area.

City of Venice Community Redevelopment Area Finding of Necessity

INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

The targeted area is located east of the Intracoastal Waterway, south of the Venice Plaza shopping center, west of Country Club Way, and north of the City of Venice municipal limits (refer to the following page). Venice Avenue and US Highway 41 By-Pass are principal thoroughfares that traverse the area. The majority of this area is industrial development with commercial properties along the main thoroughfares. The boundaries specifically include both sides of Venice Avenue and US Highway 41 By-Pass, in consideration of future redevelopment and capital improvement opportunities.



City of Venice Community Redevelopment Area Finding of Necessity

REPORT



METHODOLOGY

Most cities contain specific areas that have fallen into disrepair or have not experienced appropriate, continued investment required to ensure their sustainability. In many cases, such areas contain inadequate modern capital improvements such as utilities, drainage, or transportation facilities. In other cases, growth trends have left the areas with a multitude of development hardships such as awkward lot layout, inadequate street patterns, aging buildings, and other nonconforming development patterns. Whatever the condition, these areas are often unattractive to investment due to these hardships or their neglected appearance. The City of Venice targeted redevelopment area appears to contain similar conditions—a stunted investment, infrastructure deficiencies, and development hardships—as those which exist in other community redevelopment areas within the State of Florida.

The State recognizes the negative impacts to communities created by blighted areas as they fail to be sustainable and ultimately become a burden on the jurisdiction in which they exist. The Community Redevelopment Act of 1969 was created and adopted as Chapter 163 Part III into the Florida Statutes as a vehicle to remedy areas that are found to contain certain degrees of slum and blight.

This Act states that certain areas exist with slum and blight conditions which constitute a serious and growing menace that is injurious to the public health, safety, morale, and welfare of the residents of the State. The Act continues to state that the existence of such areas contributes substantially and increasingly to the spread of disease and crime, and constitutes an economic and social liability imposing onerous burdens which decrease the tax base and reduce revenues. These areas are said to substantially impair or arrest sound growth, retard the provision for housing accommodations, aggravate traffic problems, and substantially hamper the elimination of traffic hazards and the improvement of traffic facilities. The Act also affirms that the prevention and elimination of slum and blight is a matter of state policy and state concern. The Act affirms this in order that the State and its local governments shall not continue to be endangered by areas which consume an excessive proportion of tax revenues because of the extra services required for police, fire, accident, and other forms of public protection, services, and facilities.

The Act also finds that certain slum and blighted areas may require acquisition, clearance, and disposition, as the prevailing condition of decay may make impractical the reclamation of the area. More simply, the Act acknowledges that time or private





METHODOLOGY

investment may not be enough to cure conditions of slum and blight. The Act further acknowledges that curing such areas of slum and blight is for the public purpose, and thus public money may be expended and eminent domain and police power may be used in the public interest. Another finding of the Act is that tourist areas which are deteriorating and economically distressed usually contain excessive building density patterns, inadequate transportation and parking facilities, faulty lot layout, or inadequate street layout, and could be revitalized in a manner that will vastly improve the economic and social conditions of said community. Finally, it is found that there exists a severe shortage of housing affordable to residents of low or moderate income. This situation affects the health, safety, and welfare of the residents of such communities.

The State of Florida recognizes the need to remedy struggling areas with the findings in the Community Redevelopment Act as described above. As related to the City of Venice, the targeted redevelopment area contains many of the conditions that are cited as State concern and which are directly applicable to the Community Redevelopment Act of 1969.



While the Community Redevelopment Act acknowledges the need for redevelopment in distressed areas, it also creates a mechanism by which a local government can administer change in a given area—the creation of a Community Redevelopment Area. Prior to its creation, however, the local government shall adopt a resolution, supported by data and analysis, which makes a legislative finding that the conditions in the area meet the criteria of slum and blight. Also, the data and analysis shall find that the redevelopment of said area is necessary in the interest of the public health, safety, morale, or welfare. This Finding of Necessity Report contains the data and analysis required to make possible the creation of a Community Redevelopment Area.

The Community Redevelopment Act of 1969 clearly defines “slum” and “blight” with specific criteria as to reduce their vagueness and personal interpretation. *Slum area* is defined as an area having physical or economic conditions conducive to disease, infant mortality, juvenile delinquency, poverty, and crime because there is a predominance of buildings or improvements, whether residential or nonresidential, that are impaired by reason of dilapidation, deterioration, age, or obsolescence, and exhibit one or more of the following factors:

- (a) Inadequate provision for ventilation, light, air, sanitation, or open spaces;
- (b) High density of population, compared to the population density of adjacent areas within the county or municipality, and overcrowding (as indicated by government maintained statistics or other studies and the requirements of the Florida Building Code); or
- (c) The existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes.



METHODOLOGY

Blighted area is defined as an area in which there are a substantial number of deteriorated or deteriorating structures, in which conditions (as indicated by government maintained statistics or other studies) are leading to economic distress or endangering life or property, and in which two or more of the following factors are present:

- (a) Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout, parking facilities, roadways, bridges, or public transportation facilities;
- (b) Aggregate assessed values of real property in the area for ad valorem tax purposes have failed to show any appreciable increase over five years prior to the finding of such conditions;
- (c) Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness;
- (d) Unsanitary or unsafe conditions;
- (e) Deterioration of site or other improvements;
- (f) Inadequate and outdated building density patterns;
- (g) Falling lease rates per square foot of office, commercial, or industrial space compared to the remainder of the county or municipality;
- (h) Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land;
- (i) Residential and commercial vacancy rates higher in the area than in the remainder of the county or municipality;
- (j) Incidence of crime in the area higher than in the remainder of the county or municipality;
- (k) Fire and emergency medical service calls to the area proportionately higher than in the remainder

of the county or municipality;

- (l) A greater number of violations of the Florida Building Code in the area than the number of violations recorded in the remainder of the county or municipality;
- (m) Diversity of ownership or unusual conditions of title which prevent the free abandonment of land within the deteriorated or hazardous area; or
- (n) Governmental-owned property with adverse environmental conditions caused by a public or private entity.

The targeted redevelopment area in the City of Venice initially exhibits several of the indicators listed under the slum and blighted area definitions. In addition, the elimination of such conditions or circumstances that have led to slum and blight is determined to be in the public's interest.

When examining the area in detail, this Finding of Necessity Report finds that the following conditions of slum and blight are predominate in the targeted redevelopment area:

- * Failing roadway capacity
- * Inadequate roadway pattern
- * Persistent drainage problems
- * Untreated stormwater runoff
- * Failing sanitary sewer lift station capacity
- * Deteriorating stormwater and sanitary sewer lines
- * Deficient lot usefulness
- * Fragmented property ownership
- * Low aggregated taxable value appreciation
- * Excessive property and building nonconformities such as parking, retention, and landscaping

This report discusses these items in greater detail in the subsequent sections.

City of Venice Community Redevelopment Area Finding of Necessity

REPORT



METHODOLOGY

The area includes numerous less-than-desirable characteristics; however, for the purposes of evaluating the need for a Community Redevelopment Area, only the standards stated in the Community Redevelopment Act of 1969 (Chapter 163 Part III Florida State Statutes) were explored.

Slum and blight conditions should be evaluated in terms of their effects on public services and public investment. In the most basic sense, the public sector is committed to providing urban services with a finite amount of funds, and the private sector strives to create products in order to obtain a profitable return on all investments. When considering the roles and values of the public and private sectors, it is apparent that conditions of slum and blight create hardships for both sectors trying to achieve their goals. Normally, the conditions of slum and blight are a deterrent to private investment as the costs to cure conditions far exceed a profitable return. For the public sector, the costs to cure conditions require large appropriations from general funds and, over time, tend to become a liability and strain on the jurisdiction.

When attempting to cure slum and blight, one of two approaches is typically used. The first approach involves the local government imposing development standards on private reinvestment and redevelopment. These standards usually include redevelopment of property entirely consistent with current codes and/or correcting infrastructure deficiencies for the immediate vicinity. Usually, these costs far exceed those of new construction on undeveloped parcels elsewhere. The result is a lack of interest to reinvest in older, decaying community districts as the costs are prohibitive. This situation also often occurs in jurisdictions where either public funds are limited to assist in the community revitalization, or where the consensus is that the private sector should be entirely responsible for curing a distressed area. Finally, this situation leaves a local government with the dilem-

ma to either impose high standards to cure the area's slum and blight, or lessen standards in order to ensure some reinvestment in the area. The first option lessens the likelihood that reinvestment will occur due to high costs, while the second encourages reinvestment but does not necessarily cure existing problems.

The second approach involves the local government taking the lead on redevelopment. In this situation, the public sector initiates redevelopment with infrastructure improvements, aesthetic enhancements, and/or property acquisition. Typically, public entities initiate improvements to lessen the burden on the private sector or to incrementally reduce the conditions of slum and blight. In general terms, local governments have limited monetary resources, which prevents the jurisdiction from performing all the needed tasks to ensure a blighted area will transition into a healthy, viable district.

This report is intended to be consistent with the statutory requirements for establishing a Community Redevelopment Area while considering the future implications and hardships on public and private entities. The following sections analyze various conditions of slum and blight as they exist in the targeted redevelopment area.



City of Venice Community Redevelopment Area
Finding of Necessity

REPORT



ROADWAYS - FAILING SEGMENT CAPACITY

The targeted redevelopment area includes two major roadways; Venice Avenue is the principal east-west thoroughfare and US Highway 41 By-Pass is the north-south route. Other local streets allow for circulation within the area, but Venice Avenue and US Highway 41 provide for the only regional connections.

Venice Avenue and US Highway 41 By-Pass are constrained roadways, as they have nearly reached or exceeded their adopted levels of service (LOS). An exception is Venice Avenue leading east from US Highway 41 By-Pass. Level of Service describes the operation of a roadway in relation to its capacity for a defined number of vehicles. In determining this capacity, roadways are divided into segments between traffic signals and designated to handle a finite number of vehicles during the evening peak hour periods. In doing so, these volumes include a corresponding letter between A and F to describe the roadways' intensities; an A roadway has clear, swift moving traffic similar to a local residential street, whereas an F roadway is considered slow and congested and is often found in urban centers or resort areas.

US Highway 41 By-Pass includes three roadway segments in the targeted redevelopment area. The

segment limits are as follows: TJ Maxx entrance to Albee Farm Road - Albee Farm Road to Venice Avenue - Venice Avenue to Center Road. The first two segments have an adopted level of service F; whereas the segment between Venice Avenue and Center Road has an adopted level of service E. Two of these segments exceed their capacity by 18% and the remaining segment is just below its adopted capacity.

Venice Avenue includes three roadway segments in the targeted redevelopment area. The segment limits are as follows: Business US Highway 41 to Grove Street - Grove Street to US Highway 41 By-Pass - US Highway 41 By-Pass to Cherry Street. The first two segments are operating at a level of service C and contain approximately 191 available vehicle trips to be added to the roadway before exceeding their adopted capacity. The segment east of US Highway 41 By-Pass is operating at a level of service B and can support approximately 997 additional vehicle trips added onto this roadway.

The following table lists each road, its segments, adopted level of service, and current operating level of service:

Roadway Segments			Existing Conditions		Minimum Adopted Standards		
Roadway Name	Limits		Existing Number of Vehicles	Existing Level of Service	Adopted Level of Service	Service Volume	Reserve Capacity
US Hwy 41 By-Pass	TJ Maxx Entrance	Albee Farm Road	3,825	F	F	3,240	(-585)
US Hwy 41 By-Pass	Albee Farm Road	Venice Avenue	3,825	F	F	3,240	(-585)
US Hwy 41 By-Pass	Venice Avenue	Center Road	3,825	E	E	4,120	295
Venice Avenue	Business US Hwy 41	Grove Street	2,049	C	C	2,240	191
Venice Avenue	Grove Street	US Hwy 41 By-Pass	2,049	C	C	2,240	191
Venice Avenue	US 41 By-Pass	Cherry Street	2,143	B	C	3,140	997



ROADWAYS - FAILING SEGMENT CAPACITY (continued)

Roadway capacity is expected to hinder redevelopment in the targeted area. US Highway 41 By-Pass has two segments that exceed their adopted capacity, and Venice Avenue has two segments that will allow for only a nominal increase before exceeding their adopted levels of service. Given the growth trends in the surrounding suburban areas and reinvestment in the town center, the levels of service on these roadways are expected to continually worsen regardless of any future construction activity within the targeted redevelopment area.

Since the levels of service are poor or failing within the targeted redevelopment area, future investment within the area will be required to address roadway concurrency standards. Some vehicle trips will be credited from previous uses being transitioned into new development; however, this will not be the case in all situations. Future commercial uses will also be able to capture some existing vehicle trips that are presently traveling on the constrained roadways. In those situations, a detailed traffic study can prove that redevelopment projects may not necessarily worsen roadway capacity. These instances usually occur with convenience stores, some restaurants, and neighborhood grocery stores. However, a new, much more intense use, such as an office or multi-family project, will be hindered due to the failing roadway infrastructure. In that event, a substantial amount of public infrastructure improvements will be required in order to mitigate impacts to these roadways. Additionally, as the roadway volumes increase, even nominal building expansions on existing structures may trigger costly transportation infrastructure improvements.

It should be noted, however, that US Highway 41 By-Pass is planned for widening from a four-lane section to a six-lane facility. The roadway improvement will not occur prior to January 2007 given the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)

design and funding schedule. In the interim, future redevelopment strategies must consider impacts to these constrained roadways and should provide alternatives to lessen such effects. Also, redevelopment strategies should balance the need for infrastructure improvements with consideration that reinvestment may not occur if the costs to infrastructure improvements are not fiscally reasonable. Finally, policies should be considered to encourage an effective mix of uses, appropriately designed to minimize trip generation while maximizing internal capture. The following map illustrates the roadway segments and identifies the levels of service.





SANITATION & DRAINAGE - DRAINAGE AND FLOODING PATTERNS

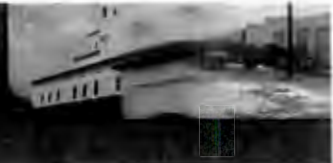
A large portion of the targeted redevelopment area is located within the 100-year floodplain and experiences flooding in times of heavy rain. Over the years, several capital projects in the area have improved drainage and water attenuation in the immediate area. These improvements include multiple, but isolated, stormwater detention ponds and some inlet modifications. Aside from these capital projects, streets continue to experience flooding in times of heavy rain.

The intersection at Venice Avenue and Warfield Avenue experiences a tremendous amount of flooding in spite of the adjacent capital improvement. Venice Avenue serves as a major thoroughfare into the downtown and the island portions of the city. This roadway is also a primary hurricane evacuation route for city residents. These two factors alone require that this intersection remain functional and receive drainage improvements to ensure that the pavement remains above floodwater.

Two modestly-sized public retention ponds are located within the industrial portions of the proposed redevelopment area. The first pond is known as Rose Lake and is located along the abandoned railroad line and near Seaboard Avenue's southern terminus. Rose Lake acts as a drainage basin for its immediate area, collecting water from the southern end of Seaboard Avenue. The pond also collects some water from abutting properties. The other pond is located adjacent to the water plant on the north side of Venice Avenue. This pond collects stormwater from the Camion Street vicinity and the northern portions of Warfield Avenue. Portions of Venice Avenue also drain into the pond near the water plant. Neither Rose Lake nor the other pond have outflows to discharge the water elsewhere. The remainder of the area relies on inlets to direct water into the Intracoastal.

Another troubling aspect of drainage in the targeted redevelopment area is that the majority of properties are almost entirely paved. Many of these properties do not have on-site stormwater ponds to





SANITATION & DRAINAGE - DRAINAGE AND FLOODING PATTERNS

manage runoff or to prevent water from flooding nearby streets. These properties are currently “grandfathered-in” by their nonconforming status and are not required to provide such facilities to mitigate impacts on the surrounding area. Most redevelopment projects will be exempt from retention requirements. As redevelopment occurs, retention standards will be required only for additional impervious surface areas and specifically for additional surface parking lots. Considering the present situation and nonconforming standards, it is anticipated that the drainage patterns will not be improved by private property owners as redevelopment occurs.

It is therefore anticipated that drainage and flooding problems in the targeted redevelopment area will continue to place a financial strain on the City. Given the area’s character, drainage deficiencies, and regulations pertaining to nonconformities—and absent an effective redevelopment strategy—a substantial portion of drainage improvements may have to be provided by the City using public funds. The following maps illustrate the floodplain boundaries as related to the targeted redevelopment area and illustrate the drainage infrastructure for solving stormwater runoff.





LOTS & PROPERTIES - LOT USEFULNESS

A number of properties within the targeted redevelopment area have been subdivided over time in awkward sizes and configurations. Specifically, many of the lots along US Highway 41 By-Pass and within the industrial core do not have adequate width to support reasonable redevelopment. Similarly, many of the lots along US Highway 41 By-Pass and Venice Avenue do not have adequate lot depth to meet district setbacks, while accommodating a reasonable amount of parking and a modestly-sized building footprint.

Lot location, size, and the ability to support development are key determining factors when considering the likelihood of redevelopment. If lots are awkward in shape and size, it is difficult to meet current building and zoning codes. Awkward parcel configurations also make it necessary to acquire additional land to accommodate a modest development. In many cases in redevelopment areas, ownership is fragmented and property acquisition is difficult.

The majority of the properties within the targeted redevelopment area are located within the ILW and CI zoning districts. These two districts are intended to support intense development and specifically do not state a minimum lot size, width, or depth. However, given current industry development trends and zoning standards, certain assumptions were made to analyze whether a lot could be considered useful for redevelopment.

Location aside, lot width is perhaps one of the highest considerations when determining a parcel's ability to support commercial, industrial, and multi-family redevelopment. When considering current parking standards, a parcel must have at least 64 feet of frontage. City standards require parking stalls to have 20 feet of depth and drive aisles to have 24 feet of width. When considering a single parking driveway, double loaded with a row of parking on each side, the aggregated width is 64 feet. Depending on the adjacent uses, a landscaped

buffer may be required on either side. When considering these basic requirements for parking plus the potential for increased parking quantity requirements, lots with less than 64 feet of frontage may fail to redevelop.

Over 65 properties within the targeted redevelopment area have widths less than 64 feet. Most of these properties are located within the industrial core along Warfield Avenue, Grove Street, and Cypress Avenue. Several others are located along Venice Avenue and along the side streets to the east of US Highway 41 By-Pass. Only five of these narrow parcels are under the same ownership as the properties in which they are adjacent. Over time, there is a small likelihood that these parcels will be redeveloped. In order to ensure that desirable redevelopment occurs, these properties should be aggregated into larger parcels or developed with less intense uses that are appropriate to the land area.

Lot depth is another key factor when considering redevelopment potential, especially for those parcels located along principal transportation corridors. Over 20 parcels along Venice Avenue and US Highway 41 By-Pass have 100 feet of lot depth or less. When considering zoning district setback requirements and parking size requirements, a parcel depth of 100 feet will support only a relatively shallow building not exceeding 20 feet of depth. Over time, redevelopment may be stunted due to the shallow lots in this area. While the 100-foot average lot depth is appropriate for single-family development, future commercial, industrial, and multi-family redevelopment is not likely to occur on these shallow lots. Coupled with the planned US Highway 41 By-Pass roadway widening and potential land acquisition, these parcels are expected to experience additional development hardships as they become increasingly shallow. The following maps illustrate parcels with inadequate lot depths and widths.

City of Venice Community Redevelopment Area Finding of Necessity REPORT



VALUE

The targeted redevelopment area was examined in terms of taxable earning potential. The findings show that the area has not experienced the same rate of taxable value appreciation as the rest of the City or Sarasota County in the recent past. The following figures compare the taxable value over the last five years for the targeted area contrasted with the overall City of Venice and Sarasota County values.

The past trends suggest that properties within the targeted redevelopment area demonstrate only a gradual taxable value increase over time. Overall, the targeted redevelopment area has failed to show a clear pattern of property value appreciation that is in keeping with values in the City and the County.

In 2000, the aggregated taxable value for the properties within the targeted redevelopment area experienced a nominal taxable value increase of 1.3 percent from the preceding year. During this same year, the City as a whole experienced a 6.4 percent change and Sarasota County experienced a 7.9 percent change against the previous year's taxable value. In 2001, the taxable values increased within the targeted redevelopment area at a similar rate as the City but far below Sarasota County. In every consecutive year since, the targeted redevelopment taxable values have fallen well below rate increases in the City as a whole and in Sarasota County.

TAXABLE VALUE						
YEAR	Sarasota County (1)	Percent Change	City of Venice (2)	Percent Change	Proposed CRA (1)(2)	Percent Change
1999	21,910,287,140	N/A	1,234,093,402	N/A	47,390,215	N/A
2000	23,814,783,362	7.9	1,318,536,181	6.4	48,015,374	1.3%
2001	26,384,358,272	9.7	1,396,604,849	5.6	50,003,265	4.2%
2002	29,899,430,459	11.7	1,532,754,601	8.8	51,629,980	3.3
2003	34,114,0003,308	12.3	1,751,106,844	12.4	55,799,090	8.1%
2004	No Data Available	-	2,099,413,812*	12.0	No Data Available	-

* estimated value
 (1) Data provided by the Sarasota County Property Appraiser
 (2) Data provided by the City of Venice