This Master Plan document represents the efforts, ideas, and vision for the future of the SR 7 corridor within the jurisdictions of the cities of Parkland, Coconut Creek, and Coral Springs. The designs, illustrations, and graphics included within this report are meant to convey that vision and are conceptual by nature.
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**Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council**

**Indian River - St. Lucie - Martin - Palm Beach**
OVERVIEW OF PROCESS

The Process

The Parkland/Coconut Creek/Coral Springs Master Plan grew out of a public seven-day charrette held from December 3 through December 9, 2005. The Master Plan represents the citizens’ vision for the future of the SR 7 corridor within these jurisdictions.

The charrette was held at Cypress Hammock Park in Coral Springs and was well attended by a diverse cross section of the community including residents, property owners, and local business representatives. The charrette focused on the SR 7 corridor and the surrounding neighborhoods. Key issues addressed included the width of the SR 7 corridor, enhancement of road’s aesthetics and character as a parkway, establishment of mixed-use town and neighborhood centers along the corridor, and proposals for big box retail along the corridor.

The Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council’s (TCRPC’s) Design Studio (Marcela Camblor, Wynsum Hatton, and Dana Little), and a team of professionals [A + S Architects and Planners (Derrick Smith); Daniel M. Cary and Associates; Gilgant Jackson, Kercher, Anglin, Lopez, Rinehart (Wade Walker); ArX Solutions Inc. (Patricio Navarro, Gonzalo Navarro, Sebastian Ciccioli, Paula Lopez and Sabrina Fajo); and urban designers Steven Fett, Joe Minicucci, Sita Singh, Shailendra Singh, and Ramon Trias] assisted the citizens in studying the many challenges faced by the community, and proposed specific solutions.

During the week of the charrette, the design team set up its studio at the Parkland City Hall facility where the doors remained open to the public all week. A presentation of work in progress was held on Friday, December 9. Residents, property and business owners, and city staff and elected officials were present.

Work has continued following the initial public workshop. A series of final presentations by TCRPC staff will be held during late spring or early summer of 2006. This will be a time to collect further citizen and professional input before adoption of the Citizens’ Master Plan.

The Meaning of “Charrette”

Charrette means “cart” in French. Various architectural school legends hold that at the Ecole des Beaux Arts, in 19th Century Paris work was so intense that students frequently continued to sketch even as carts carried their boards away to be juried.

Today charrette refers to a high speed, intense, and very focused creative session in which a team concentrates on specific design problems with citizens and presents solutions.
The study area includes SR 7 and the surrounding neighborhoods and districts between Sample Road and the Hillsboro canal in northern Broward County. Three different municipalities have jurisdiction within the area.

The study area includes many attractive elements as well as opportunities for improvement.
In its existing condition, much of SR 7 is unattractive and undifferentiated from other portions of SR 7 course through Broward County. The highway acts as a divider between neighborhoods, and portions of the highway frontage are in need of redevelopment. Entrances to the area along SR 7 are undefined, and generally, the highway has no sense of place.
Characteristics of the Cities, Towns and Neighborhoods

Towns are made up of neighborhoods with each neighborhood ranging in size between forty and 125 acres. Where there are multiple neighborhoods, they are typically clustered around a central business district or main street shopping area. Within neighborhoods, there are a diversity of uses and housing affordabilities with densities of residential averaging between six and ten units per acre across the entire neighborhood. Some houses occur on large lots, and some units are clustered at higher densities in the form of multifamily apartments or townhouses. Cities may have much higher average densities, and at higher densities, a greater variety of services is possible within close proximity to homes. Towns and cities recognized by their citizen’s to be great places to live share these and the following characteristics.

A well defined center and edge - The best towns have a strong sense of place. You know when you arrive, and you know when you leave. These towns do not sprawl and merge into one another, and they have a recognizable center and heart. The center is the place people go to shop, conduct business, gather news, and see their neighbors. The center usually occurs at an important intersection (main street and main street) where shops have maximum access and exposure. The town center is typically anchored by some important community civic building such as a town hall, library, or community church. The civic building is typically situated on a public green or plaza that serves as a recognized gathering place for residents.

A hierarchy of interconnected streets - Great towns have a diversity of street types serving all of the different purposes the community requires and providing strong interconnection between a diversity of land uses. Streets terminate at intersections with other streets creating a fine network of alternative transportation routes. The best places to live never undermine the value of the grid by closing streets to public use or gating off neighborhoods.

Beautiful streets designed for both cars and pedestrians - Streets are designed and viewed as part of the public realm to be used equally by both cars and people. Equal attention is given to the functionality of the street to pedestrians and automobiles. Great towns recognize that large portions of the community do not have independent access to an automobile but still need to be able to move. The ability to own and operate an automobile should not be the prerequisite to enjoying a good quality of life. However, in much of Florida, this is exactly the case. Significant portions of the population are either too young or too old to drive, and others cannot easily afford a car. In the best communities, children can walk to a playground, and the elderly are not forced to abandon their homes of many years because they can no longer drive a car.

A diversity of housing types and affordabilities - All members of the community must be able to find a suitable place to live within the community. Communities need a great variety of people to func-

The Ultimate Test of Success

The extent to which it is possible to enjoy a high quality of life with a community without having access to an automobile.

Places for work and shopping in proximity to housing - Quality of life is improved when people are able to live in close proximity to workplaces and frequently used shopping destinations. Ideally, many residents should be able to reach centrally located workplace and shopping destinations by walking or by very short vehicle trips.

 Appropriately located sites for civic buildings - Well-designed communities have specially created and prominent locations for placement of their important civic buildings such as churches, libraries, schools, theatres, and community meeting halls.

 Provision of a variety of parks and open spaces - Communities have a variety of open space needs including recreation fields, quiet places for meditation, and small open spaces where young children can safely play within shouting distance of their homes.

 Districts - Larger towns and cities often include specialized districts. Districts include industrial and research parks, universities, entertainment areas, and attractions. The best districts include a variety of uses that complement and support the primary function of the district.

Citizens participating in the Parkland/Coconut Creek/Coral Springs Charrette recognized these principles and developed a series of requests and recommendations consistent with achieving these characteristics along the SR 7 Corridor between the Hillsboro Canal and Sample Road.
Citizens’ Requests

WELL DEFINED CENTER, EDGE AND IDENTITY

Build entry features upon entering Broward County and the cities that front the corridor
Give SR 7 a sense of place
Give SR 7 the character of a parkway interrupted by beautiful mixed-use town and neighborhood centers

HIERARCHY OF INTERCONNECTED STREETS

Maintain the interconnectivity of streets throughout the study area
Maintain SR 7 at a maximum section of six lanes
Prepare the corridor for public transit

BEAUTIFUL STREETS DESIGNED FOR BOTH CARS AND PEDESTRIANS

Improve SR 7 corridor’s physical appearance
Enhance the parkway character of the corridor
Add landscaping, wide sidewalks, pedestrian-scale lighting, street furnishings, and crosswalks
Design SR 7 as a connector instead of a divider of neighborhoods

A DIVERSITY OF HOUSING TYPES AND AFFORDABILITIES

Encourage mixed-use buildings that include residential

PLACES FOR WORK AND SHOPPING IN PROXIMITY TO HOUSING

Create nodes of mixed-use at Loxahatchee Road and Wiles Road
No big-box retail surrounded by seas of parking

APPROPRIATELY LOCATED SITES FOR CIVIC BUILDINGS

Enhance public access and identity of the City of Parkland by providing a public building or museum

PROVISION OF A VARIETY OF PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

Enhance public access to natural parks and preserves
Convert the landscaped setbacks along SR 7 to linear parks between the mixed-use nodes
Improve SR 7 and Sawgrass Expressway drainage areas by converting them to parks

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Replace Sample Road flyover with an at-grade intersection
TRANSPORTATION ISSUES AND STREET DESIGN
Transportation System Issues

During the Parkland/Coconut Creek/Coral Springs Charrette the primary transportation system issues included strategies for maintaining SR 7 at a maximum six-lane section, design improvements for SR 7 to make it a beautiful boulevard and parkway, and improvements needed to support rapid transit bus service. Concerns were also raised regarding the existing SR 7 overpass of Sample Road and possibilities for its conversion to a regular, at grade intersection.

Although there is a strong consensus among the communities fronting SR 7 the roadway should be designed and maintained as a six-lane facility, existing and projected traffic counts between the Sawgrass Expressway and Hillsboro Canal suggest that the roadway will need to be expanded to eight-lanes unless strategies can be implemented to improve levels of service and provide additional north/south capacity. Strategies for improving level of service could include enhancing the street network serving business destinations along SR 7 so that residents have alternative ways of accessing businesses besides using SR 7; reducing the number of curb-cuts on SR 7; and providing parallel north/south capacity with access to the Sawgrass Expressway and east/west streets such as Sample Road, Palmetto Park Road, and Glades Road in Palm Beach County.

Alternative north/south routes that have been discussed include the extension and widening of University Drive into Palm Beach County. The extension and widening of University Drive was not supported by the residents, and during the charrette process other alternatives were developed including creation of a new road down an existing FPL power line easement.

Unless alternative capacity can be provided, SR 7 may need to be expanded.

In addition to issues regarding the scale and section of SR 7, residents also raised concerns about the aesthetics of SR 7. The importance of addressing the design deficiencies of SR 7 is obvious. In its current form, SR 7 is designed as a highway and not as the front door or “main street” to the Parkland/Coconut Creek/Coral Springs study area or to any other community that this highway bisects. SR 7 must be designed to be functional, but the design should also recognize that SR 7 represents the front door of many communities. It is the first impression that one has of many communities. SR 7 should be viewed as an important public space designed for both cars and people.

Residents recognized that the character of SR 7 within the study area is different from most other portions of the highway’s course through Broward County. In most other areas, frontages along the highway are dominated by commercial uses. Within the Parkland/Coconut Creek/Coral Springs area, significant portions of the highway frontage exist as berms and landscaping intended to buffer adjacent residential neighborhoods from the street. Given this situation, participants in the charrette recommended designing this portion of SR 7 as a parkway broken by periodic and well-delimited urban elements that could take the form of mixed-use neighborhoods and town centers fronting a beautiful tree-lined boulevard.

The need for the SR 7 overpass across Sample Road was challenged with the suggestion that consideration be given to eliminating the overpass in favor of an at-grade intersection. The overpass depreciates the value of the land surrounding the intersection, limits access to properties, and precludes the redevelopment of the surrounding lands in an attractive and efficient urban town or neighborhood center format.

Discussion also occurred regarding bus rapid transit service and the best location for stops and transfer stations.

Residents would like to see SR 7 designed as a beautiful parkway.
Reducing the Need for Road Widening

In order to reduce or eliminate the need for expanding SR 7 from six-lanes to eight-lanes, three strategies should be employed: increase the connectivity of the grid system of streets serving the area, encourage connectivity between adjacent uses, and provide alternatives to SR 7 for north/south travel.

Connectivity of the Street System

The connectivity of the street system serving the area should be increased to the maximum extent possible with the objective being to provide residents with alternative ways to move through the area without using SR 7. Of particular importance is providing access to regularly used commercial destinations such as shopping without use of SR 7.

Currently, street connectivity within the study area is remarkably poor with very few alternative ways to move between two points. All trips are forced to use a limited number of east/west arterials and the SR 7 corridor for north/south destinations. This unnecessarily adds to the number of trips that must be accommodated by SR 7 and increases congestion on the east/west system of arterials, trip lengths, fuel consumption, and travel times.

On the aerial photograph above, proposed new or improved connections to the existing street network are shown in yellow. Although some of these connections may be viewed as controversial, each serves to reduce the number of trips that are required to use SR 7 in order for residents within the area to access existing and potential commercial destinations.
The second strategy to reduce or eliminate the need to widen SR 7 to eight lanes involves improving the connectivity between adjacent businesses and reducing the number of curb cuts on SR 7. Too often, adjacent parcels are required by zoning codes to provide separations in the form of landscape buffers or walls, and this forces separate curb cuts for access. Multiple curb cuts and separations between adjacent parcels unnecessarily increase traffic on the road system and eliminate opportunities for shared parking and business interaction.

As parcels develop and redevelop over time, connectivity between adjacent uses should be encouraged to the maximum extent possible including interconnections between residential developments and nearby commercial shopping areas.

Better interconnection between adjacent businesses encourages more customer visits and can add economic value to the associated businesses. Customers park once and visit several shopping destinations. Rather than requiring separation, adjacent businesses should be encouraged to interconnect and share both parking and access. Interconnection of residential areas and commercial shopping allows residents to access services without impacting SR 7.

Highlighted above are various scenarios that can be considered to address the SR 7 capacity issue. Each of these options should be carefully evaluated, but the most interesting solution to the problem might be the provision of a new north/south road connecting Rock Island Road in Broward County to Palmetto Park Road in Palm Beach County via an existing 200-foot wide FPL power line easement. Use of the FPL power line corridor would have minimal impact on existing neighborhoods and would provide the equivalent of a limited access road since there are no curb cuts and very few cross streets along its course.

Within the study area, the best opportunity to reduce or eliminate the need to expand SR 7 to eight lanes would be to provide alternative routes for north/south travel that interconnect with the Sawgrass Expressway and major east/west arterials. One controversial example of such an alternative route would be the route provided by the proposed extension of University Drive north into Palm Beach County. The extension of University Drive as a two-lane facility is projected to increase the north/south capacity within the corridor by 17,200 vehicle trips per day (33% increase). The extension of University Drive as a four-lane facility would increase capacity by 35,700 vpd (68% increase).

Alternative Scenarios for addressing SR 7 capacity issues between the Sawgrass Expressway and Hillsboro Canal.

Highlighted above are various scenarios that can be considered to address the SR 7 capacity issue. Each of these options should be carefully evaluated, but the most interesting solution to the problem might be the provision of a new north/south road connecting Rock Island Road in Broward County to Palmetto Park Road in Palm Beach County via an existing 200-foot wide FPL power line easement. Use of the FPL power line corridor would have minimal impact on existing neighborhoods and would provide the equivalent of a limited access road since there are no curb cuts and very few cross streets along its course.
Map showing alternative routes to SR 7 for north/south trips. A new road connecting Rock Island Road, the Sawgrass Expressway, and Palmetto Park Road in Palm County and/or the extension of University Drive north would add significant north/south capacity to the existing roadway network.
Two alternative alignments of a new road located within the FPL power line easement between Wiles Road and West Sample Road.
A strong transit strategy

One of the most effective ways to increase capacity on SR 7 and reduce the need for future roadway expansions is by encouraging the use of transit systems. Besides the existing bus services that currently serve the area, a bus rapid transit system is proposed along SR 7. The bus rapid transit system would share the outside lane of the six-lane section of the highway with cars but would have some control over signalized intersections. Therefore, the bus system would receive a significant degree of priority.

Bus rapid transit would focus on longer trips than local bus service and would stop at fewer locations. Key stops for bus rapid transit might include the Seminole Tribe of Florida’s Coconut Creek facility, Wiles Road, and perhaps Holmberg and Loxahatchee roads.

A multi-modal transit facility has been proposed in association with the Seminole Nation Casino in Coconut Creek. Located at the intersection of S.R. 7 and Sample Road, the Seminole property would seem to be a good location for a multimodal transit facility. This location is also close to the proposed Town Center of Coconut Creek.

Two alternative locations for the Multimodal Transit Facility were identified during the charrette process (see page 58 of this report). Both designs incorporate structured parking for cars, and a small surface lot facing S. R. 7 for buses.

Recommended Bus and bus rapid transit stops within the study area. Regular service would stop at all indicated locations, bus rapid transit would stop at locations indicated in black.
Along most of its course, SR 7 is an unattractive highway and not a public space designed for both cars and people.

Aesthetics

Besides concerns regarding the impacts of potential roadway expansion, residents expressed concern about the aesthetics of SR 7. In its current form, SR 7 is designed as a highway and not as the front door and "main street" to the Parkland/Coconut Creek/Coral Springs study area. SR 7 should be designed to be functional, but the design should also recognize that SR 7 represents the front door of many communities. It is the first impression that one has of many communities. SR 7 should be viewed as an important public space designed for both cars and people.

The design, proportions, and the detailing of all streets, buildings, and structures are important priorities that will have a lasting consequence on the community and on the value the area is perceived to represent to both residents and businesses. Where care has been taken to assure that design and aesthetics are given a high level of consideration, the result has been pride in community, strong economic development potential, and high property values.

If designed properly, SR 7 can be transformed from a mundane highway into a beautiful boulevard or parkway. The scale of the road is not the problem, for the detail and how the street relates to the surrounding built environment makes the road magnificent. The Champs Elysees in Paris accommodates fourteen lanes of traffic and parking between building faces, yet it is viewed as one of the most beautiful boulevards in the world.

Streets and Highways as Beautiful Public Spaces

Essential to creating a beautiful City is an understanding that highways, streets, and avenues should be viewed as an important part of the civic realm of public spaces that can and should be attractive regardless of the scale of street involved. Streets and avenues should be viewed as important public spaces that to be fully functional must be comfortable for pedestrians, bicyclists, and cars.

In order for an urban street to feel good and have a sense of place, the space occupied by the street and associated sidewalks must be delineated and defined by a continuous liner of buildings. The buildings that line the street must pull up to the street and be of appropriate scale. Wide streets should be lined with taller buildings; narrow streets with buildings of one or two stories. Where buildings are pulled up to the street to form a continuous frontage of appropriate height, the space occupied by the street is defined and begins to feel like an outdoor room or place.

Equally important to the walls formed by buildings pulled up to the street is the provision of a continuous system of wide sidewalks for pedestrians. Within residential areas, sidewalks should at least be wide enough for two people to walk comfortably side-by-side (five to six feet). Within denser areas or commercial districts, sidewalks should be very wide (fifteen to twenty feet minimum width) and sufficient to provide outdoor seating at tables in front of cafes and restaurants.

Street trees that provide further definition of space and shade for pedestrians are also critical. Within urban areas, the street trees should be planted with formality along a line and with regular spacing along the edge of the street between pedestrians and traffic.

Attention should also be paid to how the outdoor room and public space of the street is furnished. Excessive signage should be avoided, and attention should be paid to the aesthetics and design of street lighting, benches, shelters, and other objects that may occur within the public space.

When traffic enters a space designed as a "place," it invariably slows down. With cars moving at slow-
er speeds and with buildings pulled closer to the street, it is easier for drivers to see the stores and businesses, and the economic energy provided by the street and its traffic can be more efficiently utilized. With buildings of the right scale pulled up to the street, proper street trees, wide sidewalks, and the right mix of uses, SR 7 could become an area of pedestrian congregation rather than a place to be avoided by pedestrians. As it currently exists SR 7 divides and scars the study area rather than serving as a beautiful “main street” full of energy and activity. Traffic travels fast, because there is nothing to draw interest and make a driver take note that they have arrived in a place.

Outside of urban sections, parkway sections of the plan require equal attention to detail. Linear plantings of tall trees replace buildings as the primary tool for defining the space of the street, and special attention needs to be given to the views and management of the green space so that it does not become left-over right-of-way but a beautiful and pleasant place to walk, bike, and drive.

A unique identity within the corridor

During the charrette process, it was noted that the orientation, condition, and type of land use and development adjacent to SR 7 within the Parkland, Coconut Creek, and Coral Springs area are different from older portions of the highway’s course through Broward County. The right-of-way is much wider (200 feet), adjacent residential developments are relatively new and often separated from the highway by wide landscaped berms, and the opportunities for urban forms of redevelopment are limited to discrete areas.

Because of these differences, charrette participants suggested taking advantage of the existing parks that front the highway and the opportunities for greenway and linear parks afforded by the deep setbacks and excess right-of-way that exists, to redesign SR 7 as a beautiful green parkway. As envisioned by the charrette participants, SR 7 should predominantly have the look and feel of a parkway interrupted at specific points by urban sections where the parkway would take on the form of a tree-lined boulevard.
As envisioned by the charrette participants, SR 7 should predominantly have the look and feel of a parkway interrupted at specific points by urban sections where the parkway would take on the form of a tree-lined boulevard.

The predominant form of SR 7 within the study area would be that of a tree-lined parkway.

At specific locations along SR 7, the parkway would give way to a more urban tree-lined boulevard.
DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR PARKWAYS AND COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL STREETS
Height to Width Ratios for Streets

The height to width ratio of any space generates spatial enclosure, which is related to the physiology of the human eye. If the width of a public space is such that the cone of vision encompasses less street wall than sky opening, the degree of spatial enclosure is slight. The ratio of one increment of height to six of width is the absolute minimum if a sense of spatial enclosure is to result. Generally, the tighter the ratio is, the stronger the sense of place and often times, the higher the real estate value. Spatial enclosure is important on all streets but is particularly important for shopping streets that must compete with shopping malls, which provide very effective spatial definition.

In the absence of opportunities to provide spatial definition by building facades, disciplined tree planting is an alternative. Trees aligned for spatial enclosure are necessary on thoroughfares that have substantial front yards and setbacks.

Examples of ideal street sections showing height to width ratios.

A good height to width ratio enhanced further by street trees.

A continuous facade of buildings with minimum heights of three to four stories and street trees along the sidewalks will provide the enclosure needed to transform SR 7 into a beautiful boulevard.
Design Guidelines for Parkways

Whether a parkway, commercial street, or residential lane, street building should be undertaken with the same care that is given to creation of any other important public or civic space. Streets should be viewed as centers of human activity and should be designed to be inviting and comfortable places for people to be whether they are in a car or walking.

In many ways, parkways are more challenging to design than commercial and residential streets. It is not difficult to design a road with broad green spaces fronting it, but it is difficult to design one that feels like a place and maintains the interest and attention of both the motorist and pedestrian as they travel along its course. The most critical issues in designing beautiful and active parkways include defining the street space predominantly with trees and landscaping, and providing adequate landscape diversity, interesting views, and architectural focal points. As with any street, sidewalk placement and width, lighting, and street furnishings are also very important.

Height to width ratios. - The importance of providing properly proportioned street space was illustrated and discussed on the proceeding page. Along parkways where buildings will generally be set too far back from the street to help to define the space of the street, tall trees planted in alignment at the street edge and median should be used. Minimum and recommended heights will vary with the width of the street and sidewalks. However, for six-lane boulevards like SR 7, tree species should be selected that have mature heights of at least forty feet.

Tree placement and alignment at the street edge. - The most beautiful parkways often include strong alignments of closely planted street trees of a standard size and form. These roadside trees should be planted as closely to the curb as possible and should be of adequate size to give the street space an attractive proportion. Where streets are greater than four lanes wide, as single or double row of trees should also be planted in the median of the street to assure adequate enclosure. Trunks should be clear to at least twelve feet in order to provide views of the adjacent parkland and vistas.

Interesting landscapes and views. - The open spaces and parkland surrounding the parkway should be designed with care to provide a varied and interesting landscape for both pedestrians and motorists. Parkways should be interesting enough to calm traffic and encourage pedestrians to continue along their route.

Architectural Focal Points. - Well-designed water features, sculpture, and architectural elements including buildings and follies create focal points and interest within the parkway and are important to forming its character and sense of place.

Sidewalk widths. - Sidewalks should be separated from the street by an alignment of trees and landscaping and should be wide enough to accommodate both pedestrians and bicycles. Minimum sidewalk width for dual purpose parkways should be twelve feet but as the parkway enters a commercial area anticipated to have a great deal of pedestrian traffic, sidewalks might be much wider with trees planted in grates and space provided for tables and chairs.

Street furnishings and lighting. - Benches, shelters, fountains, and signage should be detailed and designed as furniture to be placed within the great outdoor room of the parkway. Bus shelters represent a great opportunity to provide architectural interest within the parkway. Lighting should be pedestrian scale and full spectrum.
In rural and suburban areas where building placement cannot be relied upon to define and enclose the space of the parkway and associated sidewalks, and give them the feel of an outdoor room, street trees can be used to enclose the street and sidewalk space. Trees should be planted in alignment and relatively close together, and taller trees will provide the best proportions of height to width. Wherever possible, trees that form a canopy over the street should be considered.
It is important that the open space surrounding the parkway be designed with beautiful views and focal points for both pedestrians and motorists. Shelters, fountains,* and large scale sculptures can provide accents and interest to the parkland that adjoin the street.
Examples of parks.
Design Guidelines for Beautiful Commercial Streets

Street building should be undertaken with the same care that is given to creation of any other important public or civic space. Streets should be viewed as centers of human activity and should be designed to be inviting and comfortable places for people to be whether they are in a car or walking.

The most critical issues in designing beautiful and active commercial streets include the height of buildings relative to the width of the street space, placement and alignment of buildings along the street, sidewalk widths, street trees and landscaping, adequate parking, and how the street is furnished and lighted.

**Height to width ratios** - The importance of adequate building height has been illustrated and discussed earlier in this report. Minimum and recommended heights will vary with the width of the street and sidewalks. However, for six-lane boulevards like SR 7, building heights should range between three to five stories.

**Building placement and alignment** - A continuous facade of appropriately scaled buildings set close to the street is essential to transforming the feel of SR 7 from a highway that divides the community into a beautiful public space that serves as a unifying central main street and front door to the area. The consistent alignment of building facades form the walls of the great outdoor room that the street occupies.

**Sidewalk widths** - Sidewalks should be very wide on commercial streets. Minimum sidewalk width for a commercial street should be fourteen feet, but in important commercial areas anticipated to have a great deal of pedestrian traffic, sidewalks can be up to forty feet wide. Wide sidewalks provide space for pedestrians, bicycles, and sufficient room for tables, chairs, lighting, and street trees.

**Street trees and landscaping** - The most beautiful streets include strong alignments of regularly placed street trees. Trunks should be clear of branches to at least twelve feet so that retail is easily visible from the street. Palm trees can be used in combination with arcades. Where arcades are not provided, it is much preferable to use shade trees such as oaks, black olives, or sycamores than palm trees.

**Parking** - Whenever possible, on-street parking should be provided at storefronts. Parking lots and garages should be at the rear of building and hidden from street view. Parking lots should never front the street in a commercial retail district.

**Street furnishings and lighting** - Benches, shelters, fountains, and signage should be detailed and designed as furniture to be placed within the living room of the city. Lighting should be pedestrian scale and full spectrum.
Wide sidewalks provide space for pedestrians, children on bicycles, strollers, and a variety of street activities including dining. Sidewalks in commercial areas should never be narrower than fifteen feet and in busy areas may be wider than forty feet.
The greatest and most beautiful commercial streets include a combination of wide sidewalks and formal alignments of shade trees. Random plantings of different species have no place in formal urban commercial landscapes. Trees should be of a single species and size and planted in straight lines.
Wherever possible, on-street parallel parking should be provided at the front of retail shops and businesses.

On-street parking provides short-term parking for shoppers and patrons, buffers the sidewalk from street noise and traffic, helps define the space of the sidewalk just as buildings define the space of the street, and calms and slows traffic on the street. When traffic slows because of on-street parking, it is easier for motorists to see storefronts, and it is easier for pedestrians to cross the street.

Parking lots and parking garages should always be placed at the rear of buildings; they should never front on a commercial street.

It is impossible to create a beautiful and comfortable street environment when parking lots are allowed to front the street. Gaps formed by surface parking lots undermine the critical objective of providing enclosure to the street space. Gaps in the continuous facade of retail storefronts and businesses also discourage pedestrian shoppers and as a result hurt the value of the retailing environment.
Main street should be viewed as the living room of the city. In great commercial spaces, as much care is taken in the furnishing and detailing important commercial street space as would be taken in furnishing one’s living room.
Great residential streets include the same components as beautiful commercial streets: building alignment, wide sidewalks, street trees, lighting and on-street parking. The best residential streets are narrow with on-street parking on both sides and large street trees planted close to the curbs. This combines to dramatically slow and constrain traffic flow. Residential streets differ from commercial streets in having greater (but still uniform) building setbacks, narrower sidewalks (five to six feet), subdued lighting, and more landscaping.

TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL
INDIAN RIVER - ST. LUCIE - MARTIN - PALM BEACH
Traffic Calming Strategies

Traffic calming measures include narrowing of streets, planting of street trees close to the pavement edge, on-street parking, monuments and plantings at mid-intersection, pavers at crosswalks, bulb-outs to narrow ingress and egress points where streets intersect, and many other methods.

The objective of traffic calming is to slow traffic down while still allowing it to travel through a neighborhood.

The best traffic calming methods create psychological barriers to speed rather than physical barriers. By planting large shade trees close to the edge of the pavement and creating a canopy over the street, drivers feel they are in a tight space and slow down. In addition, the trees worry them as do cars parked along the sides of the street.

Some traffic calming methods can also be used to beautify the neighborhoods. At intersections, small islands can be created, such as the one illustrated, that can include attractive landscaping, markers, and monuments.

As connections and street improvements are made to improve connectivity within the study area, consideration should be given to including traffic calming strategies into the design of the improved street sections. Incorporation of appropriate traffic calming measures will minimize the impact of traffic using the new connections on existing neighborhoods.

Consistent with the principle that streets should be viewed as part of the civic realm of public spaces and should be designed as beautiful places attractive to both people and vehicles, all proposed measures should be beautifully designed and built with high quality materials.
SR 7
AS A
PARKWAY AND BOULEVARD
Proposed parkway sections of SR 7 would include the following features. Three travel lanes would be provided in each direction separated by a median wide enough to accommodate at least one row of large shade trees. Bus rapid transit service would share the outside lane in each direction.

Sidewalks would be provided at each side of the street separated from the curb by a row of tall, closely planted shade trees. Sidewalks would be wide enough to accommodate both pedestrians and bicycles.

At least one side of the street would include a linear park connecting existing park and landscape features that currently front the street. The park would be designed to encourage use by pedestrians and bicyclists and should provide an interesting and active landscape for motorists as well.

Pedestrian scale lighting should be provided along paths and sidewalks.

Within urban sections, the parkway character of the street is maintained by a strong alignment of street trees along the sidewalk and within the median.

Along the urban boulevard, sidewalks are a minimum of twelve feet wide and may be as wide as forty feet in very active areas. A minimum of twelve feet in sidewalk width is recommended for multi-purpose sidewalks, and additional space is needed where tables and chairs are desired to accommodate outdoor dining.

Along urban sections, buildings of appropriate scale pull up to the sidewalk and define and activate the space of the street. For six-lane streets, buildings should be three to five stories tall and never less than two stories.

Pedestrian scale lighting and well-designed street furnishings are provided.
In its existing condition, SR 7 is an unattractive highway throughout its course. Most of its unsightliness stems from the fact that it was designed as a highway intended to move large volumes of vehicle trips and nothing else. It was not designed as the main street it might have been for many of the communities that developed along its path, and it was not designed with the pedestrian in mind.

With low buildings set far from the street and fronted by parking lots, the street has no sense of enclosure or boundary and seems as one a great expanse of asphalt. Where sidewalks exist, they are usually narrow and immediately at the street edge. They are presumably intended for pedestrian use, but they are inhospitable places for the pedestrian.

Within the study area, several unique conditions including the excessive right-of-way width, the large setbacks of buildings, the presence of fronting parkland, and the quality of the existing landscaping, suggest that it would be possible to transform the highway into an attractive parkway interrupted at specific points by tree-lined urban boulevard sections.

The photograph above shows a section of SR 7 within the study area as it exists today. The simulation to the right shows what that same section of road might look like after a few years of increasing the number of street trees that occur along the street edge and in the median. Just by this simple improvement, the street space begins to feel and look better. As the trees grow vertically and broaden to form a canopy over the highway, the street will become increasingly attractive and unique.

Planting appropriate street trees in strong alignments along the side of the road and in the median is one step in the transformation of the highway. Sidewalks should be separated from the street edge by trees and landscaping and should be wide enough to accommodate both pedestrians and bicycles.

Transforming the excess right-of-way into linear parks and greenways is also important to creating a beautiful parkway. These greenways should be landscaped with the care given to botanical gardens so that they become attractive for pedestrian use and provide motorists with interesting views.

These parks should be accented with architectural features such as well-designed shelters, bus waiting places, and sculpture. Proper lighting and street furnishings will assure that these linear parks are used by pedestrians and bicycles.
SR 7 and Hillsboro Boulevard Intersection: Existing Conditions

The photograph above shows a view of the approach on SR 7 to the Hillsboro Boulevard intersection from the south. There is nothing unique about this intersection today. It appears no different and is indistinguishable from other intersections along SR 7.

Buildings are set far back from the street and fronted with parking. Sidewalks are narrow and placed immediately adjacent to the curb. Nothing in the design of this section of the road suggests that it is an important intersection that has the potential to redevelop as a center of community activity.

The Citizens’ Master Plan recommends the redevelopment of this area as a mixed-use neighborhood/town center that would serve the surrounding residential neighborhoods of Parkland, Coral Springs, and Coconut Creek. As this redevelopment occurs, the parkway section on SR 7 proposed along most of the highways course through the study area would give way to a beautiful urban boulevard section. The proposed transformation of this section of SR 7 from its existing form to its future condition as a beautiful urban boulevard is illustrated in the images above right.

SR 7 and Hillsboro Boulevard Intersection: Proposed Conditions

The illustrations above stand as an example of how design can dramatically transform a mundane highway into a beautiful boulevard changing it from an area of blight that divides communities and neighborhoods into beautiful public space that is the center of community activity.

The simulation above shows the same section of SR 7 as the photograph on the left detailed as a main street. Buildings of appropriate scale are set up to the street to form a nearly continuous facade of enclosure that defines the space as a place. Interesting architecture provides landmarks and identity to the location. Ground floor retail uses face the street and are fronted by wide sidewalks that can accommodate pedestrians, bicycles, and street cafes. Street trees add additional enclosure and shade for pedestrians. Care is taken in all details to treat the space as a beautiful part of the public realm and the front door of the community.

All that is necessary to achieve such results is the recognition that streets should always be viewed as part of the public realm. As such, streets should be beautiful places designed for both cars and people. Once this is recognized, a few simple design rules can assure success on any street.
Transforming SR7 from a Highway into a Beautiful Parkway and Boulevard - Simulations of an Urban Section

Detailed simulation of the proposed neighborhood/town center at Wiles Road. The neighborhood/town center is one of a few locations where the proposed parkway character of SR 7 would give way to a more urban tree-lined boulevard.

Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council
Indian River - St. Lucie - Martin - Palm Beach
As noted earlier in this report, the large right-of-way and deep building setbacks that currently exist along SR 7 through the study area provide the opportunity to establish a beautiful linear park and greenway system that would link existing and proposed parkland within the study area and give SR 7 a parkway character.

As proposed within the Citizens’ Master Plan, the linear park and greenway system would vary in width and character depending on location and the availability of land. In some cases, as illustrated in the image at the right, the park might be very wide providing long views of carefully landscaped parkland. In other cases, the greenway could be raised above the elevation of the street and take on the character of a wide landscaped hill or berm. In cases where limited available space occurs, the system might take on the character of a wide and shady sidewalk or path separated from the street by trees and landscaping.

In order for the greenway to feel like a special place and not simply left over right-of-way, a great amount of care should be taken in its design and landscaping. The wide, multi-use pedestrian and bicycle paths should vary in its course and landscaping and should include enough interest to encourage users to want to see what is around the next corner. Targets or destinations should always be in view such as a sculpture or beautiful piece of architecture -- something that spurs on the pedestrian.

The greenway should include focal points of interest at varying scales - some may be noticed and appreciated only by the pedestrian and others may catch the attention of motorists giving the parkway a special character.

Attention should also be paid to the lighting and furnishing of the linear park and greenway. The park should be attractive day or night and should include shelters and strategically located places for people to rest or read a book.

The study area currently includes some beautifully landscaped parkland.
Details of a short section of linear park and parkway at the intersection of Regency Road and SR 7. The linear park and street are detailed to make them interesting and attractive environments for pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists.
The linear park and greenway should include architectural features, variations in landscape and sections of wall, and other features that make the greenway interesting to pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists traveling on SR 7. Appropriate architectural features might include follies, shelters, and pergolas. The landscape can be varied to include open park areas and formal planting of trees.

The topography of the linear park and greenway should vary with some areas being fairly flat and open providing views of adjoining park land and other areas gently or even steeply raised above grade. The design of the landscape within the linear park should be given the same care that would be given to a botanical garden.
Architecture and sculpture should be included within the linear park and greenway to make the spaces interesting to all.
The linear park and greenway should include a diversity of landscapes. Some may be formal and others naturalistic. However, in all cases, they should be managed and maintained as if they were a botanical garden rather than left over Florida Department of Transportation right-of-way.
Broward County has purchased a remnant of native habitat within the study area and has begun making improvements to the Hillsboro Pineland Natural Area. As the greenways and linear parks are developed along SR 7 to connect the existing park properties and establish the parkway, consideration should be given to opening an entrance to Hillsboro Pineland Natural Area directly off SR 7 and developing an Environmental Studies Center. This provides the opportunity to provide a beautiful building within the proposed park system and would call attention to this important Broward County investment.

As envisioned in the Master Plan, the Environmental Studies Center would be constructed as a model for energy efficient and environmentally sound building construction and would serve as the interpretive center for the park and an educational resource for schools within the nearby communities.
The proposed environmental studies center at Hillsbоро Pineland Natural Area as it would face SR 7. Carved alligators guarding the entry off the sidewalk and entry will become a favorite location for photographers and children.
The Loxahatchee Road Parcel: Creating a Sense of Arrival
Perspective looking south as SR 7 crosses the Hillsboro Canal and enters the City of Parkland and Broward County. Development of the land between Loxahatchee Road and the Hillsboro Canal provides the opportunity to create a beautiful entryway into the City of Parkland and Broward County.
A Beautiful Entry into the City of Parkland and Broward County

The Loxahatchee Road Parcel

The undeveloped Loxahatchee Road parcel represents a unique opportunity for the City of Parkland to provide a beautiful entryway into the city and addresses a variety of special housing needs that were identified by residents during the charrette process. Located adjacent to an existing retail center, the site could be developed as predominantly residential focused on the needs of seniors or the elderly. Currently, few options exist for seniors who are capable of living independently but are uncomfortable driving. Traditional downtowns that include a mix of housing, shopping opportunities and services represent the ideal “naturally occurring retirement communities.” Seniors who do not feel comfortable driving can live independently having their needs meet within walking distance. The proposed development of the Loxahatchee Road parcel represents an opportunity to transform the existing strip retail center into a neighborhood center with all of the essential characteristics of naturally occurring retirement communities.

Alternatively, the Loxahatchee Road parcel represents an opportunity to provide an increment of workforce housing within the City of Parkland. It takes a diversity of skills to make a community complete, and as housing prices increase, it is difficult for any but the wealthy or those with high incomes to find appropriate housing. The Loxahatchee Road site is large enough to accommodate a diversity of housing types: types housing for the elderly, units for young people beginning their careers, and market rate housing.

As designed in the Citizens’ Master Plan, ground floor retail is proposed to face SR 7 with residential units above the retail. Retail, perhaps in the form of restaurants, could occur facing the proposed expansion of the Hillsboro Canal into a boat basin. This would help to activate the waterfront with people. Remaining portions of the property are proposed to be residential.

It is essential that care be given to the architecture of the project. As will be noted in the simulations of the project that occur on the following pages, a beautifully designed project has the potential to create a grand entrance to the City of Parkland and Broward County.

The City of Parkland should work with Broward County and the Florida Department of Transportation to upgrade the aesthetics of the bridge crossing of the Hillsboro Canal. Broward County should support this opportunity to enhance this important northern entry point into their County.

Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council
Indian River - St. Lucie - Martin - Palm Beach
Twin towers mark the entry of SR 7 into the City of Parkland and Broward County. A small turning basin fronted by interesting architecture makes the entrance powerful and memorable. Retail uses front SR 7 and turn the corner to include the low buildings facing the turning basin and provide the opportunity to populate the waterfront. The upper levels of the buildings facing SR 7 are envisioned as residential as is the remaining portions of the project. The architecture and design of the project are intended to create a great place to live and a beautiful entry into the City.

The towers east and west of SR 7, the expansion of the Hillsboro Canal into a turning basin, and the architectural features fronting the turning basin combine to create the beautiful first impression of the City.

Retail uses, including restaurants should be provided within the buildings fronting the basin to help populate the space. Civic uses such as clubrooms and meeting space for residents should also be considered. The courtyard area is large enough to accommodate a public green and parking for the surrounding residential buildings. Provision should also be made for boat tie-ups so that boaters can access the restaurants and other retail by water.
As proposed, the turning basin becomes a waterfront amenity and park for residents and the public visiting the restaurants and shopping opportunities. It should be viewed as a public park and not a private amenity serving only residents of the development. Public access is essential to its viability and to activate it properly as a space.

Public spaces feel good when they have a critical mass of people within them. If there are too few, the spaces feel dead and are avoided.

The proposed park extends west along the Hillsboro Canal and is fronted by a new street and wide promenade to be shared by pedestrians and bicycles.

The proposed park occurs on South Florida Water Management District right-of-way, and the District has generally been amenable to such improvements provided they do not interfere with their management responsibilities.

The large building with an internal parking garage is shown as three stories but could be built at four stories without compromising the plan. A slightly taller building might make sense in order to provide a significant increase in workforce housing.
Depending on the market, secondary retail uses could extend along the waterfront as illustrated. Uses could include exercise facilities, coffee shops, and other uses focused largely on residents but that would also benefit from pedestrian traffic along the park. Most likely, however, the proposed building would be predominantly residential.

As noted earlier, the building is illustrated with three stories but could easily be built to four stories without compromising the plan.

The parking garage accommodates a large amount of parking for both residents and visitors to the waterfront park and promenade. It also makes the uses that can be accommodated within the building very flexible. This building type can easily support offices uses, residential as is proposed in this report, or a mix of uses.
Mixed-Use Neighborhood Center at Wiles Road
During the charrette process, residents identified the intersection of Wiles Road and SR 7 as a location that they would like redeveloped as a mixed-use neighborhood or town center. Residents were opposed to the area developing as big box retail and wanted an attractive center of community activity with uses such as restaurants, cafes, and businesses that provided regularly used goods and services.

In its existing condition, a portion of the land is undeveloped. Other portions are occupied by older strip shopping plazas that are ready for redevelopment (see images to the right). In most cases, the remaining land is occupied by single-story buildings with surface parking lots that under utilize the land relative to its current value and development potential.

The redevelopment potential of this location as a mixed-use town center that could include both shopping and housing has apparently already been anticipated. During the charrette, the parking lot of a mostly closed strip center was being used as a temporary home by several families in campers. Everyone appreciates the convenience of living close to shopping.
Plan for the mixed-use neighborhood center at Wiles Road.

**Neighborhood /Town Center at Wiles Road**

The proposed neighborhood/town center at Wiles Road is focused on the "main and main" intersection of Wiles Road and SR 7 and would include land within Coral Springs and Coconut Creek's jurisdictions. In order that the town center have maximum impact as an important place along the proposed SR 7 parkway, it is important that both sides of the road be developed in an integrated manner.

In retail jargon, the neighborhood/town center at Wiles Road is likely to develop as a combination "neighborhood center" and "community center." Neighborhood centers include grocery stores, pharmacies, restaurants, and services such as dry cleaners. Community centers can include discount department stores, sporting goods and office supply stores, and bookstores.

As proposed in the Citizen’ Master Plan, the neighborhood /town center is formatted as a genuine urban town center with a mix of uses and public greens and plazas that may be used for community gathering and events such as art shows or festivals. Building heights within the town center are envisioned to range between two and five stories. On retail frontages including S. R 7, shop fronts would pull up to wide sidewalks and face the street. Upper levels might include a mix of uses including both office and residential. Buildings would form a continuous facade along the streets of the town center assuring that the street space has a comfortable sense of enclosure. Parking should occur in two formats: on-street parallel parking and behind buildings as garages or surface parking, depending on the intensity of development proposed.

A Super Target has been proposed for a significant portion of this property, and if developed as proposed, the Target would preclude the development of an attractive neighborhood center as envisioned by the Citizens’ Master Plan. During the charrette, residents stated that they did not want big box retail and preferred a human scale traditional neighborhood center.

Target has built stores in urban formats of two stories that rely on structured parking lots. This approach could be incorporated into the proposed plan in the manner illustrated. In the alternative plan at the right, the Target has a reduced footprint and would be built as a two-story building. It has liner buildings on principle street frontages so that the big box nature of the building is hidden from view and does not hurt the vitality of the street.

Parking is provided in a lined garage across the street from the store entrance. Service and delivery occurs at the rear of the building where it is shielded from view.

There are a variety of ways to accommodate the Target, but all require Target to respect the master plan objectives of creating a traditional town center.
Traveling south on SR 7 just south of Wiles Road.

As the parkway approaches the neighborhood center, the linear parks that are proposed to line SR 7 give way to a more urban landscape. There should be a sense of arrival and place associated with a neighborhood or town center. It should stand out and be clearly identifiable.

Upon arrival at the neighborhood center, the sidewalk widens, and the landscaping becomes more formal. Along SR 7 and within the neighborhood center, the sidewalks should be very wide to accommodate landscaping, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

Mixed-use buildings of two to three stories pull up to the sidewalk and help to enclose the space of the street making it feel like a great outdoor room designed for both cars and people.

Buildings of at least two and three stories pulled up to the sidewalk are needed to enclose the street space of SR 7 properly. Where buildings are not of sufficient height, tall trees closely planted and aligned in formal rows at the street edge can help to define and enclose the street space.

Ideally, seventy percent of the street frontage should be faced with buildings within the neighborhood center. Within retail areas, gaps between buildings discourage pedestrian activity and adversely affect retailers.
Traveling south on SR 7 approaching a new street that aligns with Turtle Run Boulevard.

Retail uses front wide sidewalks along SR 7, and pedestrians are buffered from the street by street trees and landscaping.

Taller buildings should be encouraged along SR 7 in order to hold the space of the wide boulevard section. Tall trees, such as palms, help to frame the space and are desirable in front of retail since they do not block the visibility of the storefronts.

Strong alignments of street trees and an active street frontage have a calming effect on traffic, which is desired within the town center.

Traveling south on SR 7 approaching the extension of Turtle Run Boulevard.

Quality architecture and good building materials should be used within the town center regardless of the style of architecture selected. Interesting buildings of appropriate scale, varying heights, and appropriate articulation create an interesting view and will contribute to the formation of a strong sense of place.
Traveling west along the extension of Turtle Run Boulevard.

The extension of Turtle Run Boulevard is proposed a two-lane street with wide sidewalks, street trees, and on-street parking to support the ground floor retail shops.

Because the street is narrower, tall buildings are not required to hold the space of the street to make it feel comfortable. However, a continuous frontage of buildings and retail is vital. Gaps in the retail frontage discourage pedestrian shoppers from traveling further down the street and will hurt retail locations beyond the gaps.

Retail frontages should have awnings or arcades to provide shelter from sun and rain. Arcades provide the most comfortable environment, but awnings have greater visibility from the street.

Traveling west in the direction of the public square.

The arcade building on the left is a classical mixed-use building type for retail streets. The ground floor is reserved for retail uses, the second floor might be office or residential, and the third floor includes loft apartments.

Wide sidewalks and on-street parking are provided, but street trees become optional because of the arcade.
The street opens to the town center on the left. Civic spaces can be in the form of greens or plazas but are generally hardscaped where heavy use is expected.

It is essential that a variety of uses are provided surrounding the public square uses that generate a large amount of pedestrian activity at all times of the day and evening.

Ideal uses surrounding the square include retail shops and restaurants with outdoor dining, cafes, hotels, and civic uses. Traditionally, town squares were anchored with civic uses such as meeting hall, libraries, theaters, and churches. The presence of a civic building helps to signal the public nature of the space and helps to differentiate it as an important place.

Just as the uses that surround the square are important in generating pedestrian activity, the size of the square is also an important consideration. Oftentimes, public spaces are too large.

A space perceived as lively, dead, attractive, or uncomfortable is largely based upon the density of people seen within the space. When the density of people within the space is too low, it is perceived as dead space and avoided. When the density is high, people feel safe and enjoy being there. Consequently, the size and density of the public space should be appropriate to make the space “alive.”

Just as active surrounding uses and scale are important so is the programming of the space. Fountains and programmed activities can help assure the success of a public space as a community-gathering place.
Just as it is important that the space of the street be enclosed by buildings, it is even more important that the square have good proportions and height to width ratios. It is the living room of the community and should feel like a great outdoor room.

Tall palms add formal character to the space of the square. The low bollards protect pedestrians and add detail to the furnishing of the space.

Parking is hidden behind the buildings and may take the form of a surface lot or a parking garage depending upon the scale of the buildings it must service. What is essential, however, is that it is reasonably convenient to access and hidden from view:

The proposed fountain provides a terminating vista to the four streets that radiate from its center. The view of the fountain and its central column and figure make each of the radiating streets a special place that can command premium real estate values. A residence with views of the square and fountain will be in high demand.

Besides terminating the view down four streets and anchoring the town center, the traffic circle also calms traffic within the heart of the neighborhood/town center.
Depending on the market, other streets feeding the central square may also have retail on their ground floors or could become multi-family residential buildings. A high density of residential within the town center will help to make the retail successful and will make the streets active.

As a smaller street, this one is detailed as a two-lane street divided by a green median planted with tall palms.

Street frontages have wide sidewalks, street trees, and on-street parking throughout the neighborhood/town center.

Approaching the town center, the view is terminated by the fountain with its tall column and figure drawing the pedestrian forward.

The center could include uses such as a hotel with a tall tower like that of the Biltmore in Coral Gables. Beautifully designed tower elements become landmarks that can be seen from the distance and are useful in navigating.

Because of difficulties of rendering simulations, street furnishings have not been illustrated to a great extent. However, street furnishings are elements of the street and should be amply provided including benches, sitting places, bus shelters, water fountains, and art.
Public art is an investment that is repaid by increased property values and the pride such investments give a community. Where people love their community, they invest in it.

This principle was recognized by the developers of Coral Gables who invested large amounts in the beauty of the civic realm of the city they founded and were rewarded in property sales and the legacy they left behind. Today, Coral Gables enjoys some of the highest property values in Florida and is one of the most beautiful cities in America.

Coral Springs and Coconut Creek have a great opportunity to provide their residents with a well-designed neighborhood/town center and create a memorable location along SR 7 that will support its transformation from an unremarkable highway to a beautiful boulevard and parkway.

A neighborhood/town center in a traditional urban format, as presented here, is more in keeping with the character of these communities than would be development of the land as big box retail.
Seminole Tribe of Florida’s Coconut Creek Casino
Proposed Redevelopment of the Seminole Nation Casino Property

The Seminole Nation of Florida proposes to redevelop its casino facility in Coconut Creek with a larger casino, hotel, restaurant, retail uses, and parking garage. A plan has been developed for the property that follows the model used to develop the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel and Casino. This plan treats the project as a stand-alone destination with little interaction to surrounding properties.

During the charrette process, an alternative plan was developed that provided the Seminole Nation with the option of phasing the development of this property in an urban format that would more fully interconnect with the town center development proposal being considered by Coconut Creek for the properties immediately to the east. The proposed development of the Coconut Creek town center provides the opportunity for a more integrated urban model to be used than the destination-oriented approach currently being envisioned. If the Seminole Nation property is viewed as the SR 7 face of the Coconut Creek town center and fully integrated into the town center, synergistic opportunities may exist that would benefit both properties including attracting a more diversified client base. The casino will attract visitors that may wish to shop within the town center. Conversely, interconnection with a town center may make the casino a more attractive destination for some visitors.

The alternative developed during the charrette also shifted the access to the casino property east providing a new signalized intersection and a direct connection to the proposed casino and hotel as well as direct access to the proposed Coconut Creek town center. The alternative plans for the property are illustrated and compared in greater detail on the next page of this report.
Two Variations of the Site Plan for the Seminole Nation Casino property in Coconut Creek. The plans differ in their access point off of SR 7, the location of structured parking, and in the location of the proposed hotel.

The plan on the left consolidates the hotel and casino into one building similar to the approach taken at the Hard Rock Hotel and Casino site. Parking is handled in a single large garage that would be built in a single phase. The parking garage would be visible from SR 7 and properties to the north. Access off SR 7 is indirect except to the parking garage.

The plan on the right provides for the hotel and casino in separate buildings that face one another. Parking is provided within a series of garages that could be built over time. The garages are shielded by uses so that they are not visible from SR 7 or adjacent properties. Access is direct and accommodated by a new signalized intersection and reconfiguration of the approach lanes.
Locations for a multi-modal transit facility

Located at the intersection of S.R. 7 and Sample Road, the Seminole property would seem to be a good location for a multimodal transit facility.

Two alternative locations for the Multimodal Transit Facility were identified during the charrette process. Both designs incorporate structured parking for cars, and a small surface lot facing S. R. 7 for buses. The structured parking would be lined with ground floor uses on all sides, and could include residential or offices uses above the ground floor shielding the parking structure from view.

Any surface lot for buses should be detailed as a public plaza, as illustrated in the simulations at the lower portion of this page. Tall trees and small architectural features along S. R. 7 help to define the space of the plaza and S. R. 7.

Simulations of the proposed Multi-modal Transit Facility
Casinos have a long tradition of using fantasy architecture. Consideration should be given to building a casino that would stand out as an attractive landmark and incorporate symbols and icons reflective of Seminole Nation culture.
The Seminole Nation could consider a design competition for any new casino proposed for the Coconut Creek property. The recommended approach of using fantasy architecture and symbolic design would combine to create a building that was unique and that would stand out as a landmark visible from a distance.

The building could incorporate symbols and icons reflective of Seminole Nation culture, as in the example provided above. The building features sculptures of alligators and anhingas, Seminole Nation warriors, and stained glass windows created with symbols including "corn," "storm," "rain," and "tree."

Seminole Nation symbols and icons could be incorporated into the design of the casino.
Special Project:
Taming Big Box Retail
Plans and Counter Plans

A Super Wal-Mart is proposed for the northeast corner of the intersection of SR 7 and Hillsboro Boulevard. During the charrette process, residents were opposed to big box retail because of the negative impacts it was perceived as having on traffic and surrounding neighborhoods.

The proposed plan for Wal-Mart is typical of the approach to site development that residents dislike. A large single-story box is placed in the middle of a sea of parking with negative visual impacts on all sides.

Generally, big box retail developments have at least three negative impacts on local communities. First, the low building profile and large setbacks fail to hold the space of the surrounding streets making the streets feel and look bad. Instead of helping to define space, the opposite occurs. Secondly, they generally have at least three unattractive sides that are aesthetically similar a huge warehouse. Thirdly, they generate a large amount of traffic and contribute to road widening.

The Citizens’ Master Plan proposes an alternative design that minimizes the aesthetic impacts of big box by shielding the building with more attractive building types and by utilizing structured parking.
Alternative site plan for the proposed Super Wal-Mart

The Counter Plan

The counter plan for the Wal-Mart site reduces the negative aesthetic impacts of the big box by reducing the amount of surface parking provided and by accommodating peak demand parking in a covered garage located immediately adjacent to the store. By reducing the parking field (which is generally never full except during peak holiday demand), the building can be pulled closer to the street. With an attractive front facade and appropriate street trees, the building can contribute positively to defining the street space.

The proposed garage and the rear of the building that faces the park are lined with uses. The parking garage liner could include retail or office uses on the ground floor and residential above. Along the park side of the building, three-story townhouses are proposed with their parking accessed from the rear via an alley separating the townhouses from the store.

The proposed approach addresses the aesthetic impacts of the use but not the traffic impacts. Given the concern over widening SR 7 to eight lanes, Parkland should be concerned about a large traffic generator in any form.
IMPLEMENTATION

TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL
INDIAN RIVER - ST. LUCIE - MARTIN - PALM BEACH
The Importance of the Master Plan

The SR 7 Corridor between the Hillsboro Canal and Sample Road includes significant redevelopment and development opportunities. There is no doubt that this corridor will redevelop, but in order to assure that redevelopment improves the quality of life within the community and enhances property values in surrounding neighborhood, it is important that the redevelopment conform to a master plan for the area adopted by the cities of Coconut Creek, Coral Springs, and Parkland.

In order for a redevelopment effort to succeed fully, it is essential that there be a clear and well thought out understanding of how the area should develop and how properties should interact to create the best value and environment within which people will live and work. This vision must be articulated in the form of a detailed master plan that forms the primary basis for reviewing development proposals within the area. The objectives of the Citizens’ Master Plan is to maximize the value of the area in terms of property values and its contribution to the quality of life of residents and to provide assurance to developers and potential investors in the area that their property will increase in value as neighboring properties are developed. Developers need to understand what specific objectives the city is working to achieve and what is likely to happen on adjacent parcels of land in the future. They need assurance that what will happen next door will not adversely impact the value of their own investment.

In the absence of a detailed master plan, most redevelopment efforts will fall well short of realizing their true potential or in some cases will simply fail. In the absence of a master plan, property owners often fail to invest in redevelopment for fear of missing some hoped for future opportunity or out of fear of what might happen on neighboring parcels. Often what development is proposed without the guidance of an overall strategy for redevelopment turns its back on the surrounding properties and tries to wall or gate itself off from neighboring parcels. The result is rarely good.

Because of this need for assurance and certainty, it is equally important to adopt a well-thought out master plan, rarely change the plan, and never change the plan to accommodate a particular project. If the development community perceives that the city is not committed to its plan, uncertainty arises, and quality developers will shy away.

The Keys to Success

There are two important keys to the successful redevelopment and revitalization of the SR 7 corridor. The first is a recognition that the general principles outlined on page v of this report represent a fundamental paradigm for city building that should form the basis for most, if not all, city planning decisions. The Citizens’ Requests (page vi) and the Citizens’ Master Plan itself (page 2) were developed based on these general principles, and individual development approvals should be judged based on consistency with them.

The second key is to assure that projects proposed within the city are designed to interact and support

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**SR 7 as a parkway.**

**The Importance of the Master Plan**

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**Keys to Success**

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**Bus shelters to offer a dignified place to wait.**

**Simulation of proposed Seminole Nation Casino.**
IMPLEMENTATION

Priorities and Project Management

The Citizens’ Master Plan represents a vision intended to guide governmental actions and investment toward a well defined objective. The plan is comprehensive, and includes a large number of proposed improvements and redevelopment opportunities. Not all of these opportunities should be pursued immediately, attention and resources should instead be focused on those opportunities that are strategically most important to achieving the long term objectives of the plan.

Items requiring Immediate Attention

The Cities of Parkland, Coral Springs and Broward County, should meet with Palm Beach County and FDOT to discuss the feasibility of building a new north south road within the FPL powerline easement connecting Rock Island Road to Palmetto Park Road in Palm Beach County. Although the possibility of using the FPL power easement as a new street corridor seems a promising alternative to widening SR 7, a great deal of lead time will be needed to evaluate, plan, design and implement such an approach and the idea should be discussed as soon as possible with the effected parties.

Parkland, Coral Springs and Coconut Creek should each establish an experienced senior level redevelopment team that is charged with shepherding all existing and proposed development within the study area to consistency with the Citizens’ Master Plan. The established teams should work together and regularly communicate. It will take months to develop and adopt into law all the zoning code and comprehensive plan changes that may be needed to assure that redevelopment proceeds in the manner proposed in the Citizens’ Master Plan. Any changes made to the plan in one jurisdiction must be coordinated with adjoining jurisdictions to assure successful implementation.

Until this process is complete, the responsible jurisdictions can not rely on the on the normal development review and approval process alone to be successful. During this interim period while plans and implementing ordinances are being developed and adopted, the jurisdictions must be creative and persuasive to accomplish their objectives. It is vital that the teams work aggressively and in partnership with one another and developers to encourage and facilitate full implementation of the plan. The key to success will be to demonstrate to developers that being consistent with the plan will be more profitable, quicker and easier than not being consistent.

High Priority Items

The Cities of Parkland, Coral Springs and Coconut Creek should adopt the Citizens’ Master Plan
IMPLEMENTATION

Plan, by resolution, as the vision of these jurisdictions for the ultimate buildout of the study area. This is a critical first step toward moving forward with the revitalization of the corridor. Parkland, Coral Springs and Coconut Creek should assign an individual or team with responsibility to shepherd the Citizens’ Master Plan through the Review, Approval and Adoption process. It is important that someone in each jurisdiction be designated as the person responsible for assuring that the Parkland/Coral Springs/Coconut Creek Citizens’ Master Plan for the SR 7 Corridor is expeditiously adopted, and that all Comprehensive Plan, Zoning and Land Use changes necessary to assure implementation of the plan are processed. The study area is already experiencing rapid growth and development pressure, and achieving the objectives of the plan requires that Land Use and Zoning policies be put in place to assure that new development proceeds as envisioned. It is recommended that a team representing planning, design, and law be assigned the responsibility.

The development approach envisioned by the Master Plan is different than the approach used by many local governments. The jurisdictions are advised to review the Downtown Master Plan developed for West Palm Beach as a model that has been accepted by the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and has proven effective and fairly easy to administer. West Palm Beach has been very successful in encouraging the redevelopment of its downtown and has developed a number of models that may be useful within the study area.

The most difficult task may be to convert the existing Floor Area Ratio (FAR) approach to zoning, to a model based on building form. It is necessary to assure that no Burt Harris taking claims result from the conversion, which is accomplished by assuring that landowners have as much or more development potential after the conversion as they did before. Ideally the revised code should provide incentives for redevelopment of lands, but this must be done in a way that the value of the property is not increased without desired redevelopment occurring. If land value is increased without requirements for construction of the desired product, it may have the effect of slowing the redevelopment process, since landowners ask too much for property.

This problem has generally been best addressed by providing limited duration zoning incentives. A significant increase in development potential, consistent with the goals of the plan is provided for a limited and defined period of time, and becomes effective only if the required building type is actually built within the specified time frame. This is a use it or lose it incentive. Nothing prevents the landowner from proceeding with development of the base amount allowed in the plan after the incentive period runs out, but the bonus of density (or other specified incentive) is only granted if development actual-

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**IMPLEMENTATION**

What is most important is that no action is allowed that would preclude the ultimate implementation of the street sections proposed.

*By existing CRAs with jurisdiction over the study area should update their plans to make them consistent with the adopted Master Plan.* - Such action is necessary to give the CRA the authority to implement aspects of the plan.

**Moderate Priority Items**

Each jurisdiction, including any CRAs with jurisdiction over the study area should update their plans to make them consistent with the adopted Master Plan. - Such action is necessary to give the CRA the authority to implement aspects of the plan.

- A process should be established that makes it easy for developers to get approvals for projects that are consistent with the adopted Master Regulating Plan, and Zoning Code, particularly within any CRA boundaries. Expedited reviews are provided as incentives to projects that are found to conform to the adopted Master Plan and implementing ordinances. Again, the City of West Palm Beach has developed a successful model for this approach that it uses to manage development proposals within the downtown.

**Longer Term Priorities**

Continue to participate in the SR 7 Collaborative in establishing direction for the future of this important Street. SR 7 should be viewed as the “main street” and front door of a great many communities within Broward County. Its transformation from an ugly highway to a beautiful main street boulevard should be the highest priority of many communities.

Pursue Regional Activity Center Designation. - Parkland, Coral Springs and Coconut Creek should support the adoption of standards by Broward County to promote infill and mixed-use development along the SR 7 corridor, and should seek designation as an Activity Center.

Parkland, Coral Springs and Coconut Creek should consider retaining the services of a City Urban Designer with a strong background in architecture and urban design. - On the short term these services can be acquired by contract, but as fairly mature cities, consideration should be given to hiring a full time City Urban Designer within the Planning Department. Typical duties of the City
Urban Designer include: proactively developing conceptual plans for different parcels, developing counter proposals to developer submitted plans that are not consistent with the City’s vision, reviewing building and development plans for consistency with good urban design principles, and developing design guidelines and codes.

**Funding Sources**

**Tax Increment Revenues:** Tax Increment Revenue is typically the major source of funding for redevelopment projects under the State of Florida Community Redevelopment Act.

**Redevelopment Revenue Bonds:** Section 163.385 of the Florida Statutes empowers the City to issue Revenue Bonds to finance redevelopment projects with the security of the bonds based on the anticipated assessed valuations of the completed community redevelopment. In this way, “tax increment” is used to finance the long-term bond debt.

**Interest on Redevelopment Trust Fund:** Any interest that may be earned from deposit of Trust Fund monies may become a part of the funds used for redevelopment activities.

**Industrial Revenue Bonds:** Chapter 159, Florida Statutes, cites the Florida Industrial Development Act, which authorizes the use of Industrial Development Revenue Bonds to finance certain types of capital projects for private development.

**General Obligation Bonds:** Some jurisdictions have also issued General Obligation Bonds for projects within the CRA area. These bonds are secured by debt service millage on the real property within the City and typically must receive voter approval. For example, sports stadiums are often partially funded by such bonds.

**Special Assessment Districts:** This is a tax system whereby property owners within the district agree to pay an additional fee or an ad valorem tax to raise funds for specific projects, which will benefit them. This approach could be used to fund improvements within the SR 7 corridor that are over and above what FDOT and the respective jurisdictions are willing to contribute.

**Land Sales and Leases:** Cities may acquire and sell land or property.

**Contributions and Donations:** Voluntary contributions by private companies, service organizations, individuals or foundations are a potential source of income for special or popular projects, particularly those of a high civic nature, such as building parks, or perhaps a beautiful bridge or public building.

**Foundations:** Several communities have researched the purpose and intent of foundations and designed portions of their Plan to attract grants from a particular foundation. Foundation money is often a good source for training and education programs.

**Public/Private Ventures and Partnerships:** Some redevelopment projects have been designed to stimulate additional private investment and were accomplished through public/private ventures or partnerships. The City can give assistance to a developer in the assembly of land for a private development. In return, the developer may be obligated for building renovations, street, landscaping, sidewalk and other redevelopment improvements. The private contribution may also be through direct contributions, or payment to assessment districts.

**Community Contribution Tax Incentive Program:** This program was created by the Florida legislature to encourage corporate involvement in community revitalization. This program allows businesses a fifty-percent tax credit on Florida corporate income tax or insurance premium tax for donations to local community development projects. Donations must be made through an eligible non-profit corporation conducting a City approved community development project such as affordable housing.

**Direct Borrowing:** The City is empowered to fund redevelopment projects and programs through direct borrowing of funds. Depending on the particular projects, the City may utilize both short and long-term borrowing.

**Enterprise Zone Investment:** This program is designed to encourage increased business in distressed areas. The State provides property tax credits, jobs tax credits, partial building sales tax refunds and partial sales tax refund on business equipment purchased.

**Utility Enterprise Funds:** Several communities in Florida have used “enterprise funds” to fund infra-
structure improvements in their redevelopment areas.

Private Business Development Program with Banks: Banks may incorporate a subsidiary to provide loan assistance not normally permitted for commercial banks. The loans are used to help start or expand business operations, as long as the purpose is related to community development and not to just simply a conventional commercial loan.

Bank Reinvestment Pools: Many cities have developed a cooperative approach with local lending institutions to supplement the funding for their community redevelopment program. The Community Reinvestment Act of 1977 requires banks to define a service area, assess local credit needs and make efforts to meet the community’s needs. The Citizens’ Master Plan may serve as the basis for goal establishment and planning by local lending institutions.

Property Improvement Grant Programs: Several communities have established grant programs that are used for facade improvements and building renovation. These programs are usually directed towards improvements that have a high potential for stimulating additional private development in the area. Several communities have used State Programs and private investments to initiate a revolving grant program. For example, Chapter 80-249 of the Laws of Florida offers a 50% credit against state corporate income taxes for contributions of up to $200,000, for community development with the contributions used as a direct grant or to start a revolving loan fund.

County, State and Federal Grant Programs: Funding may be available from several Federal and State agencies, such as the Department of Community Affairs and the Florida Department of Transportation.

Economic Development Administration Grants: This federal agency provides grant to fund public works projects. This grant/loan program assists distressed communities to attract industries, encourages business expansions and primarily focuses on generating long-term, private sector employment opportunities.

Small Business Administration (SBA): The Small Business Administration is a federal agency that provides low-interest loans to business people who cannot qualify for standard commercial loans. This loan program has been used to encourage economic development by assisting small business start up and expansion within the CRA districts.

Ongoing Assistance

Parkland, Coral Springs and Coconut Creek have put together a team of very competent professionals with wide ranging and extensive planning and redevelopment experience. Their greatest difficulty with implementing the recommendations of this report will undoubtedly be time. A large amount of time consuming work will be needed to move this plan forward expeditiously.

The Regional Planning Council has developed a team of experts that can provide cities with supplemental man power and experience, should time constraints make such assistance necessary. The Council can direct City staff to model ordinances, RFPs, models for design competitions, and development regulations and codes that can simplify the task of developing these documents. Assistance in actually preparing such documents is available on a contractual basis.
THE CHARRETTE PROCESS
Views of the residents drawing and sharing their ideas.
THE PUBLIC PLANNING PROCESS - CITIZENS' PRESENTING THEIR PLANS

TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL
INDIAN RIVER - ST. LUCIE - MARTIN - PALM BEACH
THE PUBLIC PLANNING PROCESS - CITIZENS' PRESENTING THEIR PLANS
Images from the December 2005 Coconut Creek/Coral Springs/Parkland Charrette held in Parkland, Florida.