

#180549



FOR RECORD 11/19/8



## NW 1st Avenue

Streetscape Renovation Project

Gainesville Community  
Redevelopment Agency

## **Team Mission Statement**

*Through effective collaboration and communication, this team will transform NW 1st Avenue into a flagship streetscape that instills pride in the team and community.*

# Contents

## ABOUT

Gainesville Community Redevelopment Agency .....	04
College Park & University Heights Redevelopment Area .....	06

## PROJECT

NW 1st Avenue Original Site Conditions .....	08
Planning and Inspiration .....	12
During Construction .....	17

## SUPPORT

Working with the Community .....	20
Telling a Story .....	22
Grant Programs .....	24

## AFTER THE RENOVATION

After Photos .....	27
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## SPECIAL THANKS

Project Partners .....	30
Stakeholders .....	31



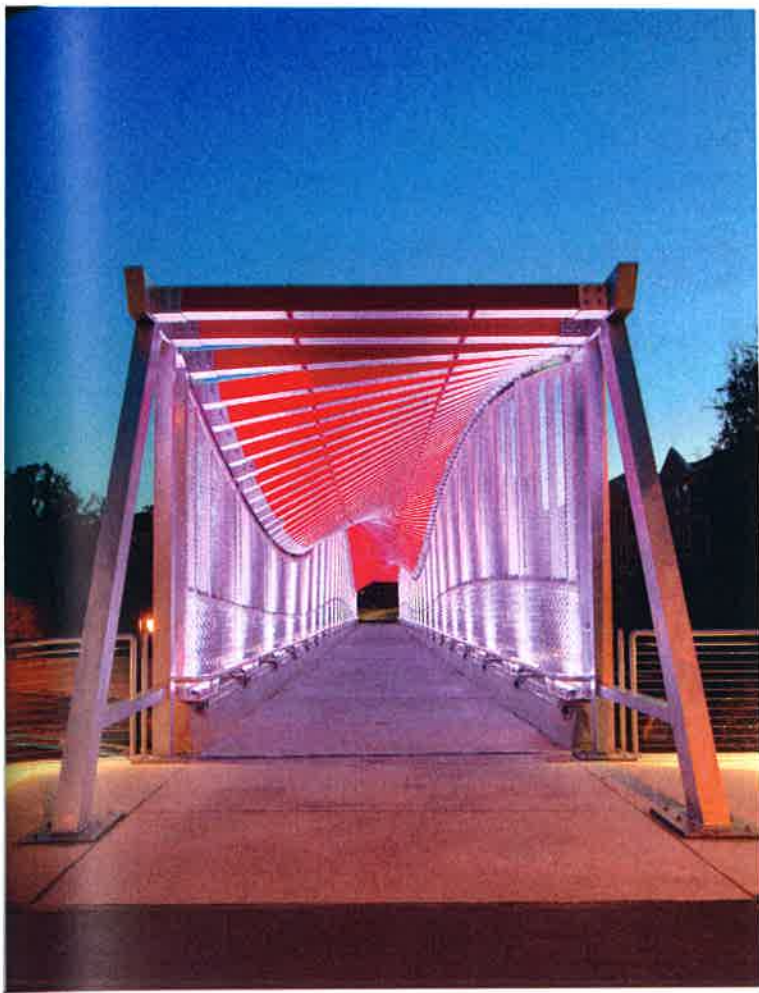
## Gainesville Community Redevelopment Agency

**The Gainesville Community Redevelopment Agency's (CRA) goal is to help Gainesville, Florida achieve its full potential as a vibrant and diverse community.**

Bridging the gap between public and private investment, the CRA sparks potential in underserved urban areas through community partnerships, economic development incentives and improved public infrastructure. Our toolkit includes: ambitious creative vision, competitive economic incentives, buckets of fresh paint, robust public infrastructure assistance, and a team of motivated thinkers and doers.

Gainesville CRA projects have ranged from creating landmark public spaces like Depot Park and Bo Diddley Plaza to uncovering our historical gems like the A. Quinn Jones Museum, beautification through city façade and paint grants, and enlisting the talent of local muralists.

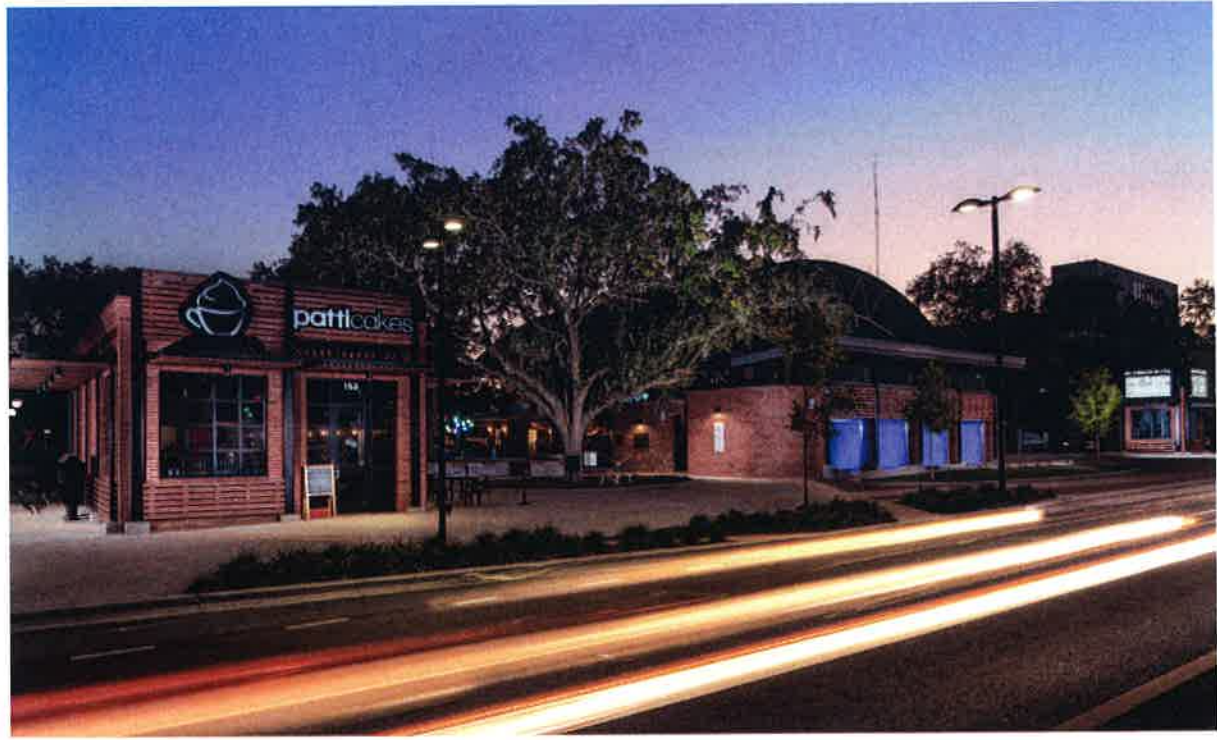
The Gainesville CRA is committed to building awesome things that make a difference in our community.



The SW 13th Street Helyx Bridge, located in the CRA's College Park & University Heights Redevelopment Area.



Depot Park, located in the CRA's Downtown district.



Bo Diddley Plaza and Patticakes, located in the CRA's Downtown Redevelopment Area

## About the College Park & University Heights Redevelopment Area

The CRA targets redevelopment efforts in four core urban areas in Gainesville: Downtown, Eastside, Fifth Avenue & Pleasant Street and College Park & University Heights.

The *NW 1st Ave streetscape* project is located in College Park & University Heights (CPUH) redevelopment area, located just north of the University of Florida (UF) campus. The identity and future of this area is deeply intertwined with UF. As living close to campus becomes increasingly appealing, students opt to walk and cycle to class, and enjoy a more urban lifestyle around the university campus.



Students at The Swamp restaurant, a recipient of the CRA's architectural & façade improvements programs.



University of Florida students line up around the block for an event.



A game day crowd at the Midtown Social on NW 1st Ave.



David from Style Cuts on NW 1st Ave has been cutting hair in this location since 1977.

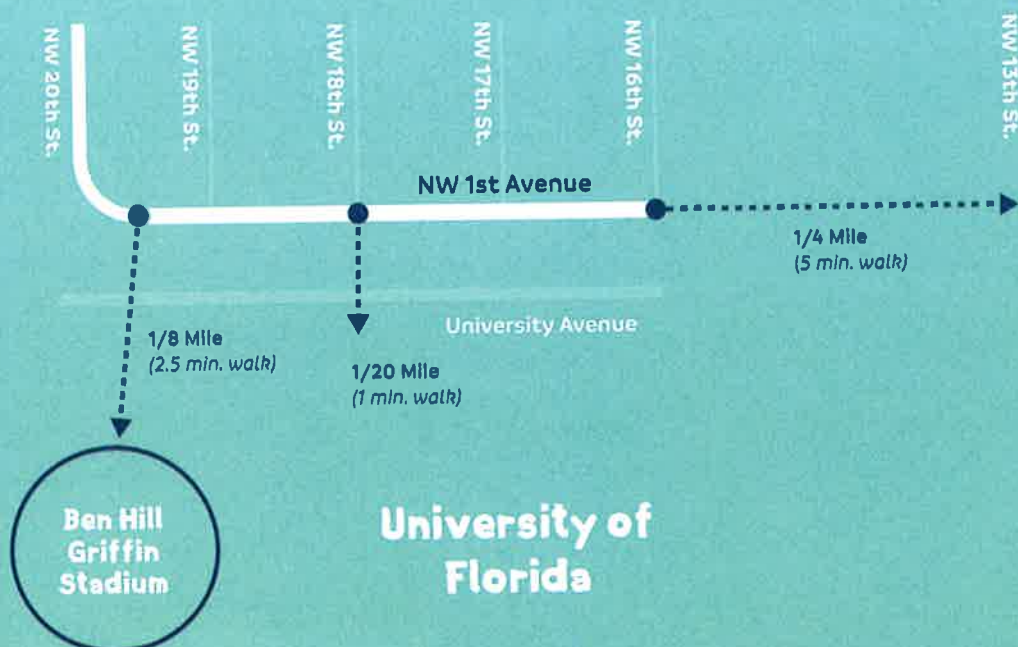
# Original Site Conditions

NW 1st Avenue between NW 16th and 20th streets, located one block north of West University Avenue, is an alternative thoroughfare for pedestrian and vehicle traffic — bridging between the bustling University Avenue to the south and the quiet residential neighborhood to the north. It features a dense mix of commercial, entertainment and residential buildings, strategically located a block away from the UF campus and the 88,000 seat Ben Hill Griffin Stadium, home of the Florida Gators.

NW 1st Avenue has long been a popular game day destination, in spite of its physical condition and

common nickname, “Dumpster Alley”.

The much-loved area, while busy, was in great need of improvements. The sidewalks were not continuous, and existing sections were often blocked by dumpsters, illegally parked cars, utility poles and wires, or delivery trucks. Street parking for visitors was non-existent (the 38 parking spots were available for those with a permit only) and the street was in need of better shade during the day and lighting at night. Multiple bars empty onto NW 1st Avenue at closing, and late night safety concerns had been raised by residents.







Pedestrians walk in the street due to illegal parking and missing sidewalks.



Utility poles and overhead wires interrupted the sight line.



Uneven sidewalks, illegal parking and trash issues outside of a fraternity house.

Various dumpsters along NW 1st Avenue blocked pedestrian and parking opportunities.





The lack of parking and delivery spaces resulted in illegally parked cars that blocked sidewalks and were blocked in by delivery vehicles.



Lack of continuous sidewalks on both sides of the street made it tough for pedestrians.



Narrow sidewalks, illegal parking, and dumpsters in the right-of-way were common sights along NW 1st Ave.

# NW 1st Avenue Streetscape

## Planning & Inspiration

The transformation of NW 1st Ave was identified as a desired project of the College Park & University Heights advisory board over 20 years ago. After working closely with stakeholders and community members, the CRA determined that the major needs were for additional sidewalk space, trees, street lights and parking.

The CRA realized measures had to be taken to improve health and public safety concerns like: dumpster management, installation of smart lights, adding police cameras, mobile parking meters, and dedicated scooter and heavy vehicle parking.

To do this dumpsters had to be relocated from the right of way and put into enclosures. The teams of Causseaux, Hewett and Walpole, Inc. (CHW) acting as Civil Engineers, Nix Engineering as Electrical Engineers and David Conner & Associates on Landscape Architecture were assembled for the improved vision of NW 1st Avenue.



Numerous stakeholder meetings were held and surveys were conducted to understand each user's need for the street.

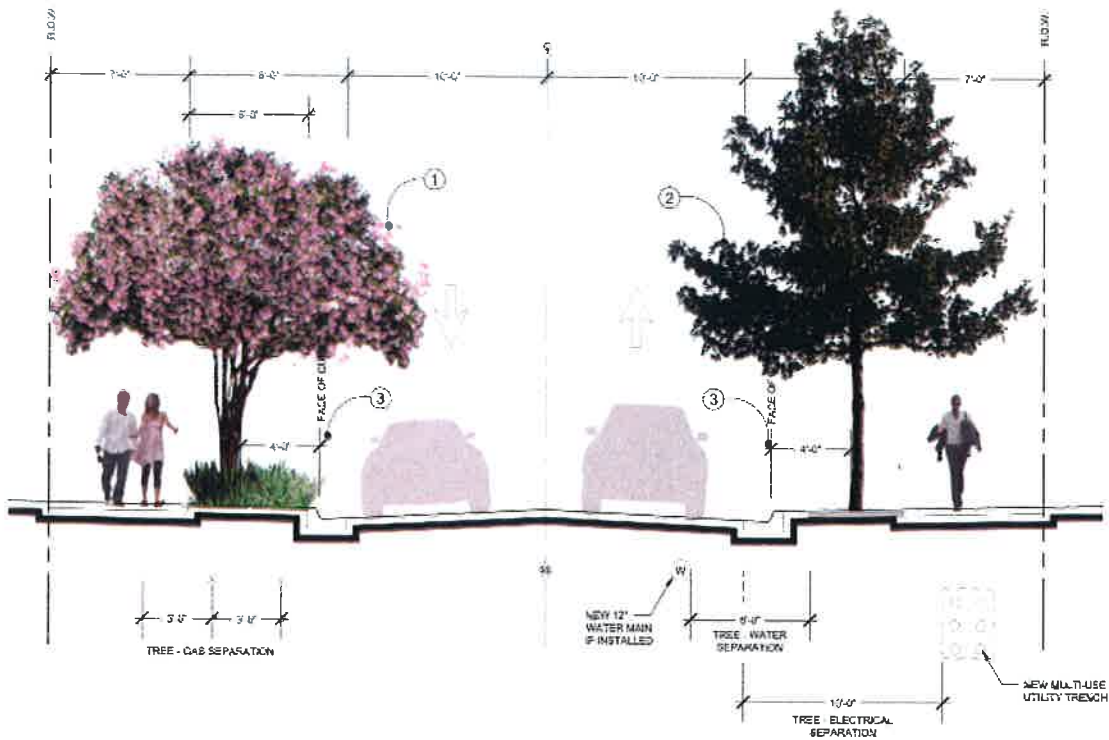


The CRA kicked off the discussion of the project with stakeholders in 2012, and interested stakeholders were continuously involved throughout the planning, design and construction of the project.



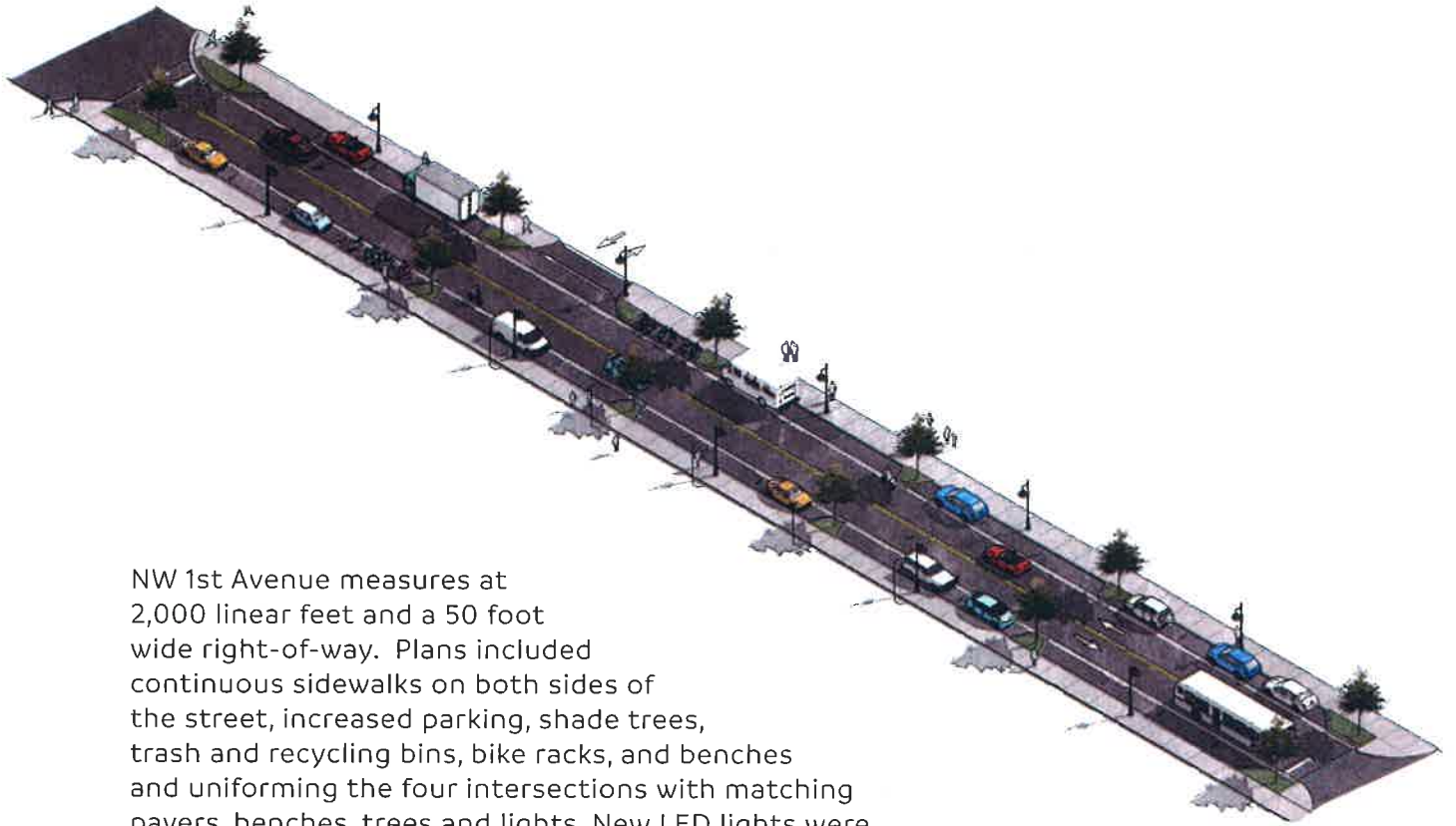
Artist's rendering of a proposed streetscape plan for NW 1st Avenue was designed to maximize space and to improve the flow of vehicular and pedestrian traffic.



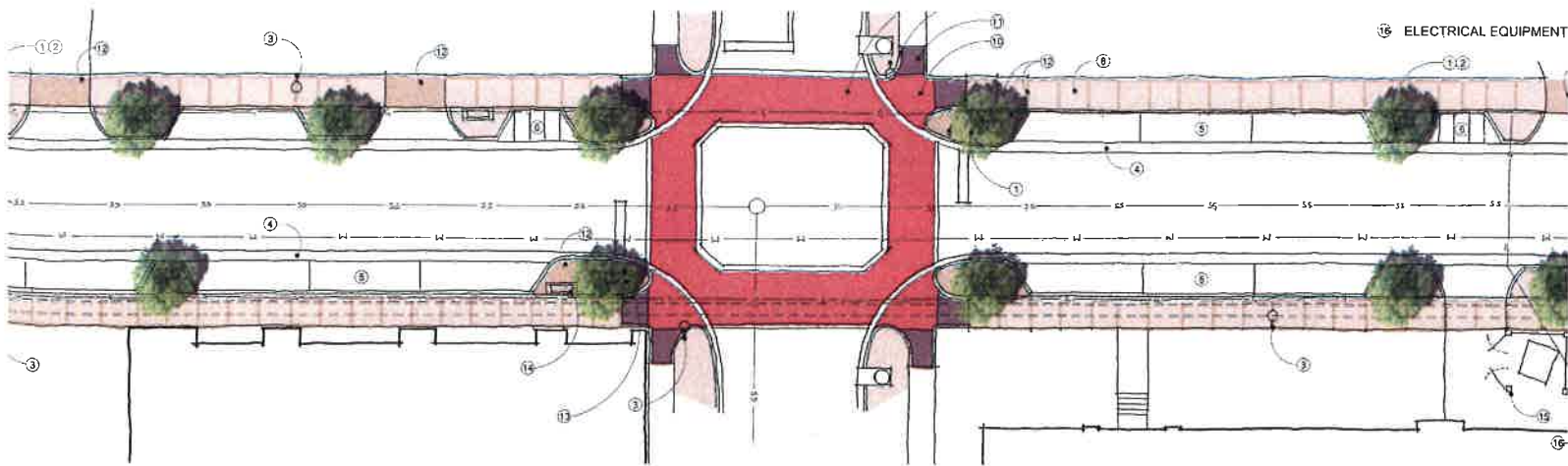


A new underground utility trench was installed to replace above ground utilities and poles, making more space for pedestrian use and landscaping.

Silva cell technology was used in the planting of the trees.



NW 1st Avenue measures at 2,000 linear feet and a 50 foot wide right-of-way. Plans included continuous sidewalks on both sides of the street, increased parking, shade trees, trash and recycling bins, bike racks, and benches and uniforming the four intersections with matching pavers, benches, trees and lights. New LED lights were installed along the street for better visibility.



# By the Numbers



**55** **Parking Spaces**  
INCLUDE ADA AND LOADING ZONES



**110** **Spaces**  
SCOOTER PARKING:  
FROM 4 SPACES TO 110



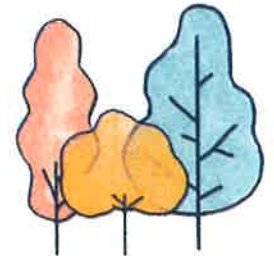
**32** **Bike Racks**  
FROM 0 RACKS TO 32  
(HOLDS TWO BIKES EACH)



**2** **Spaces**  
ADA/ACCESSIBLE PARKING  
SPACES - FROM 1 TO 2



**7** **Spaces**  
ADDITIONAL LOADING ZONES:  
FROM 2 TO 7 SPACES



**46** **Trees**  
NEWLY PLANTED  
SHADE TREES



**8** **Stations**  
RECYCLING STATIONS:  
FROM 2 TRASH BINS WITH  
NO RECYCLING TO 8 TRASH  
& RECYCLING BINS ALONG  
THE STREET



LIGHTS: CONSISTENT LED LIGHTING ALONG  
THE ENTIRE STREET

SIDEWALKS: A CONTINUOUS 2,000 LINEAR  
FEET OF 7 FEET OF WALKING SPACE



## Better Dumpster Management

MOVING DUMPSTERS LOCATED IN THE  
STREET, TO WELL-KEPT DUMPSTERS,  
LOCATED IN ENCLOSURES OFF THE  
SIDEWALK



## During Construction

Construction began with CPPI serving as Construction Manager in January 2017 and was completed in July 2018.



Construction was planned in a phased approach to minimize impact on businesses and visitors. The two end blocks of the street were tackled for the first few months followed by the interior blocks. Access to businesses was provided at all times.



One College Park

University of  
Florida Campus

Stadium Club  
and Garage

Aerial view of NW 1st Ave, facing East.



Silva Cell installation.



Joint utility trench installation.



Crews sealing a HPDE gas line. These lines are compressed to make one long pipe to cover the length of the street.



Preparations for street paving.



Crews removing the final utility pole.



An asphalt truck mobilizes in preparation for the final layer.



The final layer of asphalt.

## Working with the Community

To the CRA, supporting the businesses along the corridor was as important as getting the job done. CRA staff spent countless hours before and during construction on a multifaceted outreach campaign.

- The UF Foundation donated the use of an adjacent one-acre site for one year for construction and temporary parking for businesses and residents.
- The City supplied free City of Gainesville parking decals for street parking in the neighborhood.
- The CRA provided a mobile office on NW 1st Ave with a notary public on-site in order to facilitate the signing of temporary construction easements.
- Businesses were provided with promotional materials, including: banners, flyers, posters and stickers and buttons, about the project for their patrons
- CRA staff and the extended project teams personally supported local businesses by having regular group lunches at different restaurants in Midtown — an overall spend of over \$2,500.00. These lunches were an opportunity for the entire design and construction team to communicate with business owners and show support.
- The CRA also used Midtown businesses catering services for other community events, unrelated to the NW 1st Avenue Streetscape, and hosted a home-game tailgate in Fall 2017.

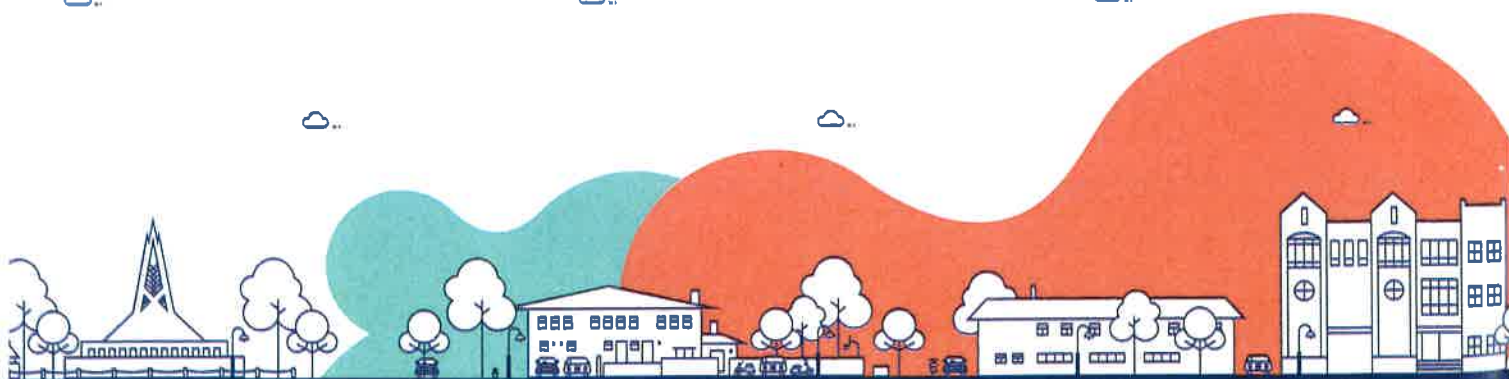




## Telling a Story

With little but architectural renderings to show the finished look, more was needed to allude to the final outcome and future experience of the neighborhood. The decided approach was to focus on what you can do *while in Midtown* — places to visit, where to eat, activities and retail. We aimed to tell a story through its livelihood — but to also encourage patronage as businesses remained open during construction.

BUDA, a local multidisciplinary creative agency, was brought on as a partner to craft the visuals for the vision of NW 1st Avenue and to lead the integrated marketing campaign throughout completion. The southern street-view of NW 1st Avenue was illustrated in a clean, linear style. A series of playful, custom illustrations of neighborhood activities were created. To tie it all together a colorful logo, that echoed a splash of paint, was born from the idea of renewal, renovation and the storefront improvement programs offered by the Gainesville CRA.





Various aspects of project improvements were custom illustrated for the campaign.



## Grant Programs

To complement the streetscape renovation, the College Park & University Heights advisory board approved an enhanced incentive program in order for businesses to take advantage of the construction conditions and make improvements to their storefronts and properties. The CRA offered several business grants to area property owners to make improvements to their storefronts and properties. Grants covered between 50% and 100% of the business owner's cost of improvements.

A total of 22 grants were approved with a total CRA investment of \$321,000.00 (almost 15% of the overall construction budget). Six architectural assistance grants, four paint grants, and 12 façade grants were awarded to stakeholders in this neighborhood. The CRA contracted four local architectural firms to provide schematic design services and unveil potential renovation scopes to interested properties. Many of the properties who took advantage of this program decided to pursue the design concepts and renovate their properties with the support of CRA façade grants.



*Pi Kappa Alpha Fraternity post-renovation with contributions from the CRA enhanced façade grant program.*