



Staff Analysis

Future of the College Park/University Heights Redevelopment Area

Presented by:
Sarah Vidal-Finn
CRA

August 22, 2016

CITY OF GAINESVILLE STAFF ANALYSIS

Legistar No: 160297

Title: Future of the College Park/University Heights Redevelopment Area

Sponsor (i.e., Name of Commissioner or Department): Chairperson, Craig Carter, Gainesville Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA)

City Staff Contact: Sarah Vidal-Finn, Interim CRA Director

Summary of Issue

The College Park/University Heights Redevelopment Area was formed in 1994 and an expansion area was added in 2005. Over the years the District has seen both minor and major projects completed by the CRA, including successes such as the SW 13th Street Overpass “Helyx” Bridge and Plaza, Innovations Square Roadways and SW 13th Street Medians and Streetscape.

One of the goals of redevelopment is for each Community Redevelopment Area to become self-sustaining in the long term without the need for incentives from the public sector. During its Strategic Planning for Fiscal Years 2015-2016, Staff’s guiding question was “How do we get out of this business?” and worked with its governing board, advisory boards and community stakeholders to identify economic nodes in each of its redevelopment areas to catalyze redevelopment in a way that leveraged its limited resources.

As part of the FY15-16 Workplan Staff also identified the need to take inventory of projects completed and their effect on the area and quality of life in the Districts overall, knowing that success cannot be measure simply by increased property values. These conversations segued into a closer look at College Park/University Heights as the District that is bringing in the most revenue to the CRA and in particular as projects like The Standard, amongst other projects began to rise as part of a quickly evolving midtown cityscape.

History/Background Information

The Redevelopment Plan

The 2005 Amended College Park/University Heights Redevelopment Plan highlights the following objectives for reversing the observed blighted conditions within the District;

1. *Infrastructure* improvements with a focus on stormwater and co-location of facilities,
2. *Parking* with a focus on a comprehensive parking management system while addressing fee structure and public-private partnerships,

3. A focus on *Urban Form* by encouraging a mix of uses, creating incentives, fostering affordable housing, destinations and public spaces and upgrading key corridors and alleyways,
4. Improving *Traffic Circulation* by creating more complete streets with a mix of mode options, wayfinding and neighborhood signage, connecting sidewalk and crosswalks, and exploring a circulator/trolley,
5. Encouraging *Private Investment* through the elimination of impediments to investment, including incentive and façade grant programs, and linked infrastructure,
6. *Land Acquisition and Redevelopment* efforts including land assembly, condemnation, expansion and primary corridors,
7. *Creation of Mixed-use Technology Hubs* by providing land assembly, coordination, incentives and support facilities,
8. Foster *Historic Preservation and Adaptive Reuse* through tax incentives, preservation grants and coordination efforts,
9. Address *Public Spaces* through focusing on pedestrian and bicycle trails, open space and recreational centers, plazas and improvements along the Depot Rail Trail and SW 6th Street Corridors, and
10. Implementing *Funding, Financing, Management and Promotion* programs that provide management and promotion of the College Park/University Heights CRA.

Examples of Community Initiatives to Date

- Stringfellow Property
- Compactor Project 1715 NW 1st Avenue
- SW 5th Avenue Pocket/Triangle Park
- SW 13th Pedestrian Overpass
- Mellow Mushroom Façade Grant
- Mindtree (old Shands) at Alachua General Hospital
- The Lofts
- Camden Court 1142 SW 3rd Avenue
- Heritage Oaks 110 NW 12th Terrace
- Woodbury Row Apartments
- House on 1015 NW 3rd Avenue
- Oakbrook Walk Bus Shelter
- St. Charles Condos 1418 NW 3rd Avenue
- Innovation Building
- Tropical Cleaners
- Henderson Building
- Sushi Chao
- U14 Building 1402 W University Ave
- Innovation Square Roads (SW 9th Street and SW 3rd Avenue)
- NW 1st Ave Streetscape

- SW 7th Avenue
- SW 8th Avenue
- 6th Street Rail to Trail/Signage
- NW/SW 6th Street Medians, lighting, bus shelter and hardscape improvements
- SW 2nd Avenue Medians, Lighting, Bus Shelters and hardscape improvements
- NW 17th Street Sidewalk Repair
- SW 12th Street Lighting
- SW 13th Street Medians and Streetscape
- Kelly Bros Frontage

Current CPUH Community Initiatives

1. Innovation District – Public-private partnerships for the continuation of the SW 9th Street project on extensions to the north and the south led by UF Development Corporation and Trimark Properties respectively. Managing parking strategy for the district and evaluating parking facility opportunities and funding alternatives.
2. NW 1st Avenue Streetscape – (Between NW 16th Street and NW 20th Street) Overhead to underground utility conversion, infrastructure upgrades, increasing on-street parking, street trees, pedestrian accommodations, decorative lighting, bicycle parking and dumpster and solid waste facilities.
3. NW 5th Avenue Streetscape – (Between NW 13th Street and NW 20th Street) Overhead to underground utility conversation, sidewalk and connectivity improvements, pedestrian safety accommodations, stormwater and lighting improvements.
4. South Main Street – (Between Depot Avenue and SW 16th Avenue) Improvements to provide safe, secure and convenient parking and pedestrian facilities to accommodate anticipated park and museum users while maintaining vehicular access and flow.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends completing a thorough analysis of what's been accomplished to date, what's left to do and what should the CRA's role be in carrying out those initiatives by conducting a Community Vitality Report in FY17-FY18. Once completed, Staff will present the report with vetted recommendations for College Park/University Heights.

Attachments/References

1. Gainesville Community Redevelopment Agency Community Redevelopment Plan: College Park/University Heights Community Redevelopment Area, prepared by Herbert Halback, Inc. and adopted November 28, 2005

2. FY2015 CRA Annual Report
3. College Park/University Heights Advisory Board Roster and Meeting Schedule
4. FY17-18 Approved Budget and Workplan for College Park/University Heights