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**Sent:** Friday, July 2, 2021 9:44 AM

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**Subject:** Public Comment - RFA 2021-203

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Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Miami-Dade 9% RFA 2021-203 ("RFA 203"). In reviewing the current drafts of RFA 203 and other Geographic RFAs, it appears there is an inconsistency with how RECAP exceptions are applied among the various RFAs. The only exception for applications located in a RECAP under RFA 203 are those with a development category of Redevelopment. RECAP exceptions from the other Geographic RFAs include the following:

- Development Category is Redevelopment, with or without Acquisition
- Qualifies as a Local Government Areas of Opportunity (LGAO)
- Qualifies for the SunRail Goal
- Qualifies for the Local Revitalization Initiative Goal

The Urban Center Designation in RFA 203 is in line with the intent of the Local Revitalization, SunRail, and LGAO Goals in the Geographic RFAs. We propose that projects located in a RECAP which qualify for the Urban Center Designation (or alternatively, are located in a Tier 1 Urban Center) should be eligible for funding. The only Urban Center that is encumbered by a RECAP is Leisure City, a Tier 1 district. Approximately 50% of Leisure City is occupied by a RECAP and a significant portion of the unencumbered area is restricted by Mandatory Distance Buffers, refer to attached map. Further, Cutler Ridge and Naranja are largely restricted by Mandatory Distance Buffers, almost all of Princeton is too far from community services to meet proximity requirements, and land values in Downtown Kendall and Ojus are generally cost prohibitive. With such little available land in the Tier 1 Urban Centers, we feel it makes good public policy to include a RECAP exception for these areas, especially when considering Florida Housing's current rules under other Geographic RFAs. Below is a description of the qualifications of Urban Centers and how they are consistent with other RFA goals which include a RECAP exception.

Urban Centers and Local Revitalization:

- Urban Centers are consistent with FHFC Standards for Local Revitalization Areas as described in the Local Revitalization Verification Form rev. 8-20.
- Urban Centers are based on Charrette Area Plans which are defined as "the citizen's vision for the enhancement of the Office of Community & Economic Development Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area", refer to attached Leisure City Charrette plan.
- Leisure City Urban Center is located entirely within the Naranja Lakes CRA which has a redevelopment plan in effect, refer to attached CRA map.

Urban Centers and SunRail:

- Urban Centers are designed around [SMART Plan Corridors](#) which consist of premium transit services including the South Dade Busway, an exclusive bus lane, & Metro Rail.

- The South Dade Busway & Metro Rail operate similarly to SunRail, transporting passengers from more rural areas to major employment centers at high frequency during peak hours.
- The County's Comprehensive Development Master Plan contains directives to promote Urban Centers in places where mass transit, roadways, and highways are highly accessible.
- The County has plans for the enhancement of the South Dade Busway, which include commuter rail. The project was selected to receive a \$100MM grant from the U.S. Dept. of Transportation & FTA.

Urban Centers & LGAO:

- Miami-Dade County provides impact fee waivers of approximately \$7,000 per affordable housing unit which amounts to about \$800,000 for a typical 9% project. This amount is well above the highest LGAO requirement of \$640,000 for Broward & Palm Beach Counties.
- Urban Centers allow a 25% reduction in parking requirements for affordable housing, a potential saving of \$20,000 per parking space for structured parking.

We appreciate your consideration on this matter.

Sincerely,

**Daniel M. Lopez**

Sr. Development Manager

**McDowell Housing Partners**

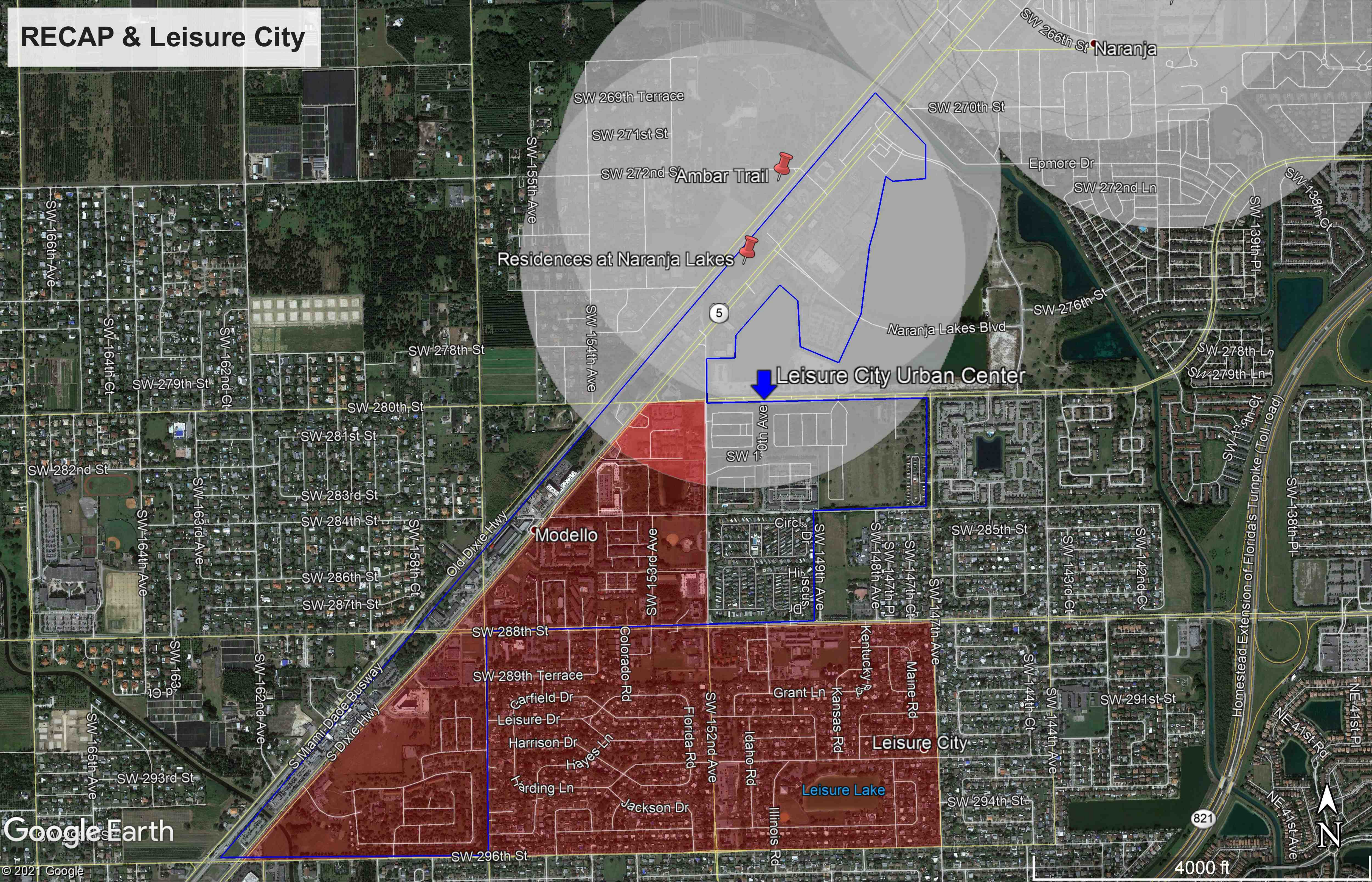
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## RECAP & Leisure City





# Leisure City/Naranja Lakes Charrette

## CHARRETTE AREA PLAN REPORT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### CITIZENS' VISION PLAN



The need to develop a vision for the revitalization of Leisure City/Naranja Lakes grew out of Miami-Dade County's area planning process in recognition of the unique characteristics of this area. Leisure City/Naranja Lakes is specifically designated as a Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (NRSA) by the Office of Community and Economic Development (OCED) and has been determined to be an area that is in need of revitalization. **The Leisure City/Naranja Lakes Charrette Area Plan is the citizens' vision for the enhancement of this OCED NRSA.** The study itself has been funded with Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds and is intended to develop a coordinated plan for the Leisure City/Naranja Lakes area. OCED will then

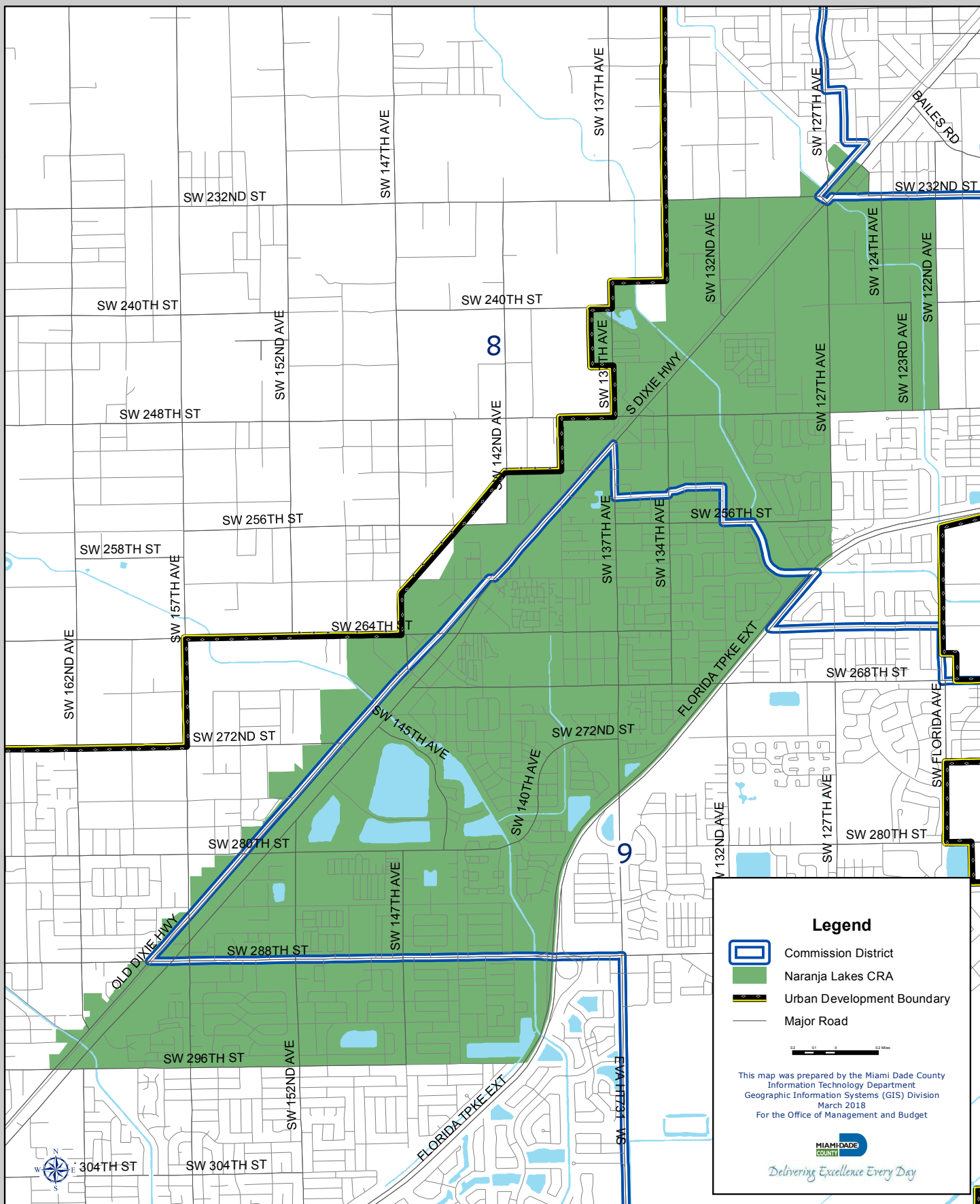


Above: Scenes from the public design process on Saturday, October 23, 2004. Citizens from the Leisure City/Naranja Lakes area participated in the charrette at The Irving & Beatrice Pescoe Elementary School.

be able to concentrate improvement efforts in this area by providing the community development programs that will benefit the area residents. In addition, part of the study area falls within the Naranja Lakes Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA). The Naranja Lakes CRA has the ability to "capture" the tax revenues generated by the increasing value of property within its boundaries and can utilize those funds to improve infrastructure, landscaping, and streetscapes. It is anticipated that the public investment will thus attract and promote new private investment in the Naranja Lakes community.

**The Leisure City/Naranja Lakes area is also one of several important communities along the U.S. 1 / South Miami-Dade Busway corridor that has been designated as a Community Urban Center (CUC) on the Miami-Dade County Comprehensive Development Master Plan (CDMP) Land Use Plan map.** While there is a hierarchy of intensity for the urban centers –

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY  
Naranja Lakes Community Redevelopment Area



regional, metropolitan and community, CUCs are much smaller in scale and serve a much more localized area with a diversity of uses and activities. These designated community urban centers are encouraged to become the center of intense business and residential development around which a more compact and efficient urban structure will evolve with residential densities occurring along the edge. Urban centers are places where people can live, work and shop within a convenient walking distance while having access to other areas of Miami-Dade County by way of the rapid transit system. Urban centers should have their own identity, mix of residential and business uses, architectural character and sense of place. The CDMP states that, "urban centers should be characterized by physical cohesiveness, direct accessibility by mass transit service, and high quality urban design."

## Study Area

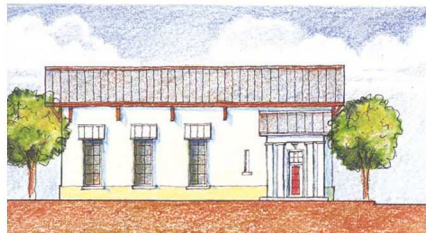
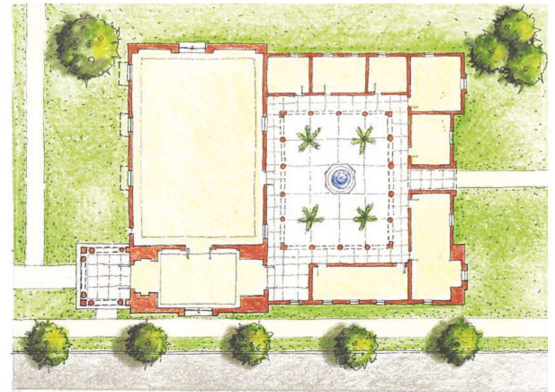
The area is defined on the north by SW 272nd Street, Old Dixie Hwy on the west, SW 147th Avenue on the east, and SW 296th Street on the south.

## Charrette Process

The Leisure City/Naranja Lakes Citizens' Vision Plan (Figure 1) is the result of a design workshop called a charrette. A charrette is a creative process where residents, stakeholders, elected officials, and staff from local governments and agencies have the opportunity to collectively participate in the development of a vision for the future of a specific area. It is an effective way to engage a community and develop consensus on issues and concerns in an area. The main activity of the charrette is the design workshop, where participants create their own 'Citizens' Plans.' The design workshop is kicked off by a collective brainstorming of ideas by residents discussing things they liked about their own community, uncovering common goals & dreams for the future, and developing consensus on various issues. All ideas, from the practical to the whimsical, are welcomed and are compiled into a list of 'Citizens' Requests'. These requests and the Citizens' Vision Plans created during the design workshop, are used as the source for the design concepts and recommendations developed in further detail over the following week by the charrette design team. After a week of intensive design work, a presentation is made to the community based on the citizens' common vision.



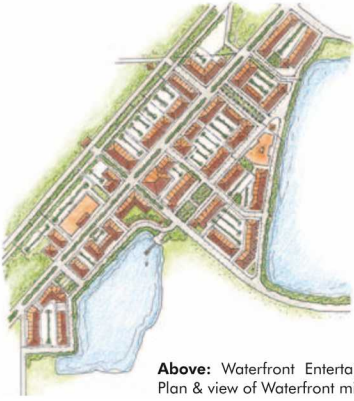
**Above:** Town Center and Main Street proposed redevelopment plan & view looking across Town Square



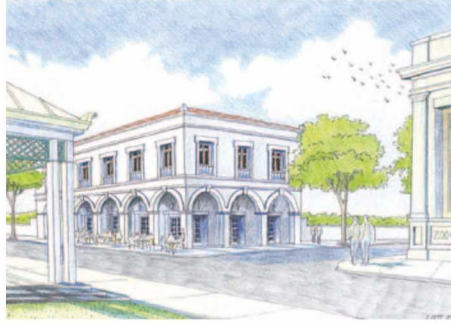
**Above:** Potential Community Center building plans & elevations



**Above:** View over U.S. 1 & SW 288th Street of potential redevelopment



**Above:** Waterfront Entertainment District Redevelopment Plan & view of Waterfront mixed-use building

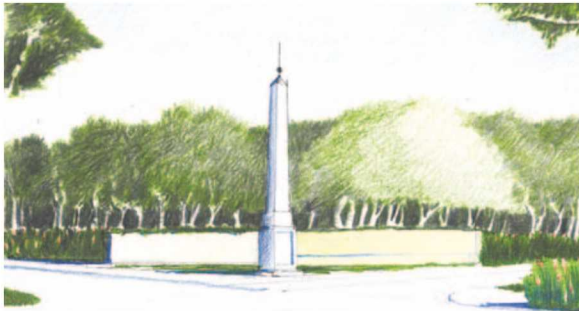


This Area Planning Process supports the development policies and implementation strategies for areas throughout the County in order to ensure proper urban growth patterns and to provide for well-planned transit supportive communities containing a variety of uses, housing types and public services.

### **The Leisure City/Naranja Lakes Charrette:**

The Leisure City/Naranja Lakes Charrette took place Saturday, October 23, 2004 at the Irving & Beatrice Pescoe Elementary School (29035 SW 144 Av) near the study area and was well attended by residents, property and business owners representing a diverse cross-section of the community. For a week, the design team worked in an office building (27501 S. Dixie Highway) within the study area further developing the ideas presented and requests made during the design workshop. During the week, the public was welcomed to participate in the design process and interested residents were able to observe and interact with the design team. Urban designers and staff from Miami-Dade County's Urban Design Center assisted citizens in studying the many challenges faced by the community and recommended specific solutions. These proposals and preliminary recommendations were shown in a presentation to the community on the evening of Friday, October 29, 2004.

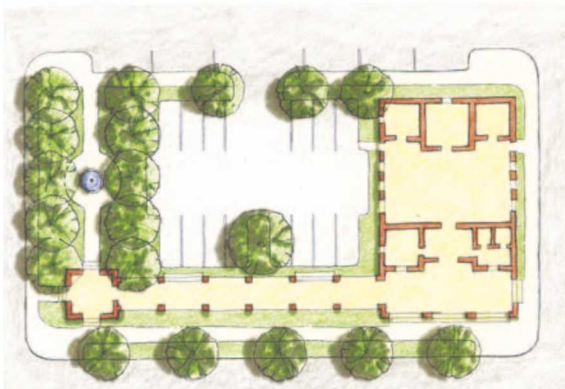
A series of presentations by County staff will be conducted in the first half of 2005. This will be a time for citizens to provide further input and direction, and will represent the first step toward the implementation of the Leisure City/Naranja lakes Area Plan.



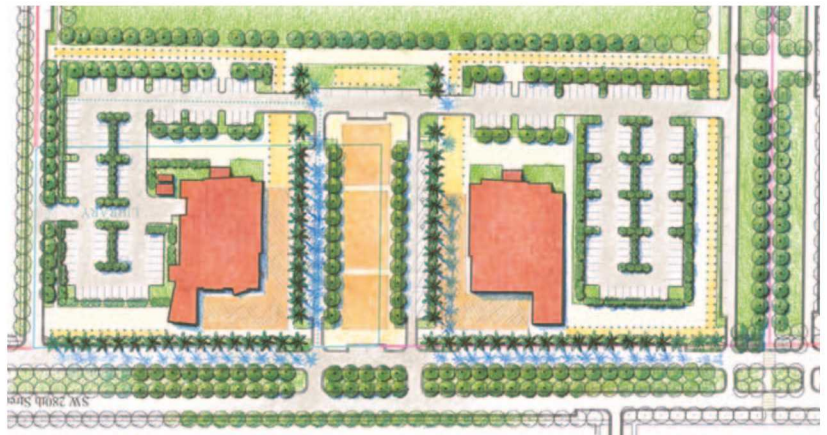
**Above:** South gateway to Leisure City/Naranja Lakes



**Above:** View of SW 152nd Ave. of potential redevelopment



**Above:** Potential Police Station plan & elevation



**Above:** Royal Colonial Park future redevelopment plan & view of Civic Plaza

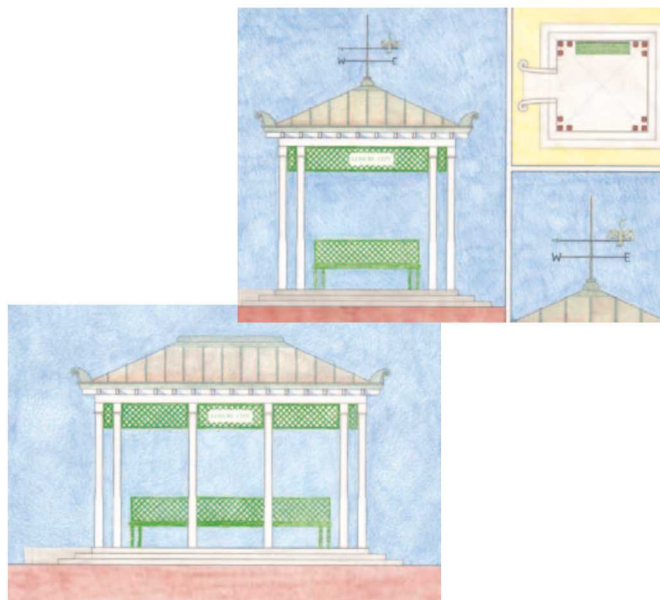
# Leisure City/Naranja Lakes Charrette

## CHARRETTE AREA PLAN REPORT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Citizens' Vision Plan Highlights

Based on the requests and suggestions made during the design workshop, the Citizens' Vision Plan includes these main concepts:

- To develop a pedestrian-friendly town center and main street on the Busway station along SW 280th Street and U.S. 1.
- To establish a transit-oriented development in proximity to the Busway with mixed-use amenities such as restaurants and shops.
- To redevelop and restore obsolete buildings with new structures that respond to the community's vision.
- To enhance open spaces, create pocket neighborhood parks and revitalize the existing Leisure and Leisure Lakes Parks.
- To transform the US1 corridor area as a signature district and develop entrance features announcing the arrival to an important community center.
- To develop the Royal Colonial Park area as a unified campus like setting, with affordable housing, a library, a school and a multipurpose recreational facility all within walking distance of each other.
- To redevelop the Naranja Shopping Center area into a regional waterfront entertainment district that provides mixed-use and a retail center destination.
- To create clearly identifiable neighborhoods that are physically and visually linked to each other.
- To improve streets by providing sidewalks and shade trees.



Above: Potential new bus shelters & public pavilions

### BEFORE AND AFTER:



Above: Potential improvements to the existing Redland Center housing

Leisure City/Naranja Lakes Charrette Report prepared with the assistance of: Chamber South and South Florida Regional Planning Council. For more information contact Miami-Dade County Department of Planning and Zoning at 305-375-2842



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### Special Thanks:



Commissioner  
Katy Sorenson  
District 8

Commissioner  
Dennis Moss  
District 9

