



**WESTGATE/BELVEDERE HOMES  
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY**  
Palm Beach County, Florida

# Community Redevelopment Plan

Adopted 2017



# Acknowledgements

This 2017 Community Redevelopment Plan was undertaken by the Westgate Belvedere Homes Community Redevelopment Agency in collaboration with Gentile, Glas, Holloway, O'Mahoney & Associates, Inc. (2GHO) and Land Research Management, Inc. (LRMI).

The CRA is grateful for the many community residents, business and property owners who participated in public input and information meetings held during the preparation of this Plan.

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Palm Beach County created the Westgate/Belvedere Homes Community Redevelopment Agency in 1989 for the redevelopment of the 1,300 acre area bounded by Belvedere Road, N. Florida Mango Road, Okeechobee Blvd., and N. Military Trail pursuant to Chapter 163, Part III of the Florida Statutes, “The Community Redevelopment Act” that calls for the creation of a Redevelopment Plan.

The original Redevelopment Plan developed in 1989 focused on improving the physical environment of the CRA by addressing drainage, sanitary sewer, roadways, streetlights and other infrastructure needs. The amended Plan of 2005 also gave priority to physical improvement while paying attention to economic and housing developments.

By the end of 2016, the CRA had updated most of the physical infrastructure facilities and facilitate the construction of more than 150 housing units by using bond financing, Tax Increment Financing (TIF), Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), Neighborhood Stabilization Programs, Florida State Grants, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funds, Palm Beach County grants, and bank loans. However, the economic development activities proposed for the commercial corridors, specially Westgate Avenue didn’t materialize due to the economic downturn of 2007 and lack of availability of TIF dollars to attract quality developers.

This 2017 Amended Plan updates the previous plans and focuses on the following six areas: Economic Development and Redevelopment, Market Positioning, Housing, Community Improvement, Infrastructure and Public Space Improvements and Planning for Redevelopment. In this Plan, the CRA has shifted from a focus on infrastructure improvements in previous plans to economic development and redevelopment. The Plan provides a framework to develop programs and strategies to incentivize developers to, first and foremost, redevelop Westgate Avenue by creating an urban village, but also to attract development and investment in other important commercial corridors in an effort to increase the tax base, revitalize the area and improve job opportunities for all the residents of the Westgate CRA.

All focus areas complement economic development priorities. In order for new businesses to be successful, we will need to make the CRA a special destination through careful marketing, facilitating the construction of mix-used mix-income workforce housing that prevents gentrification while enhancing the buying power of the area, creating open space, partnering to prevent crime, beautifying existing amenities, and providing a framework for planning and zoning code changes that permit redevelopment projects to occur in a timely and painless manner. This plan provides a basis for the amendment of the Westgate CRA Zoning Overlay to create more flexible regulations that facilitate redevelopment activities in different Sub-areas and commercial corridors. Without such amendments, the CRA will fail when competing with surrounding urban areas for redevelopment projects.

Moreover, the CRA cannot achieve its goals without consistent assistance from the Board of County Commissioners (BCC), and the following departments: Economic Sustainability, Planning, Zoning and Building, Engineering, Water Utility, Fire Rescue, Park and Recreation, Office of Community Revitalization, Environmental Resources Management, and Facilities Development and Operations.

Finally, I would like to thank the BCC, the CRA Board, CRA residents and property owners, our staff and the consulting firm 2GHO for their contributions to the 2017 Redevelopment Plan. The road ahead is challenging, but I believe if we work together we can successfully implement our new vision to rejuvenate the redevelopment area.

Elizée Michel, AICP, Executive Director

# SECTION 1

## Introduction & Background **WHO ARE WE?**



This Plan updates and amends the Westgate/Belvedere Homes Community Redevelopment Agency (“Westgate CRA or CRA”) Community Redevelopment Plan adopted by the Palm Beach County Board of Commissioners (“BCC”) on January 11, 2005 (the “2005 Plan”) via Res. #2005-0128. The BCC resolution approving the 2005 Plan is hereby adopted by reference and is included in supporting documents. Certain projects, programs, undertakings, and actions contemplated in the 2005 Plan are being implemented and will be continued in this amended version. Nothing in this amendment is intended nor shall anything herein be interpreted to stop, curtail, limit or restrict the implementation of those projects, programs, undertakings and actions unless expressly stated herein.

The provisions of this Plan shall remain in effect, and serve as a guide for redevelopment within the designated boundaries of the Westgate CRA area. All public redevelopment activities expressly authorized by the Community Redevelopment Act and funded by tax increment financing must be in accordance with a Community Redevelopment Plan approved by the Westgate CRA Board of Commissioners and the BCC. The Redevelopment Plan is an evolving document, evaluated and amended on a regular basis in order to reflect changing conditions and objectives. The agency shall have a maximum life as provided by Florida State law. All redevelopment financed by tax increment revenues shall be completed no later than thirty (30) years following the adoption of this amendment to the Plan. The adoption of this Plan and the CRA’s amended Redevelopment Trust, shall trigger the terms of Section 163.387(2)(a), Florida Statutes:

*“163.387(2)(a). Except for the purpose of funding the trust pursuant to subsection (3), upon the adoption of an ordinance providing for funding of the redevelopment trust fund as provided in this section, each taxing authority shall, by January 1 of each year, appropriate to the trust fund for so long as any indebtedness pledging increment revenues to the payment thereof is outstanding (but not to exceed 30 years) a sum that is no less than that increment as defined and determined in subsection (1) or paragraph (3)(b) accruing to such taxing authority. If the community redevelopment plan is amended or modified pursuant to s. 163.361(1), each such taxing authority shall make the annual appropriation of a period not to exceed 30 years after the date the governing body amends the plan but no later than 60 years after the fiscal year in which the plan was initially approved or adopted...”*

## A. Creation & Authority

### 1. REDEVELOPMENT AREA DESCRIPTION

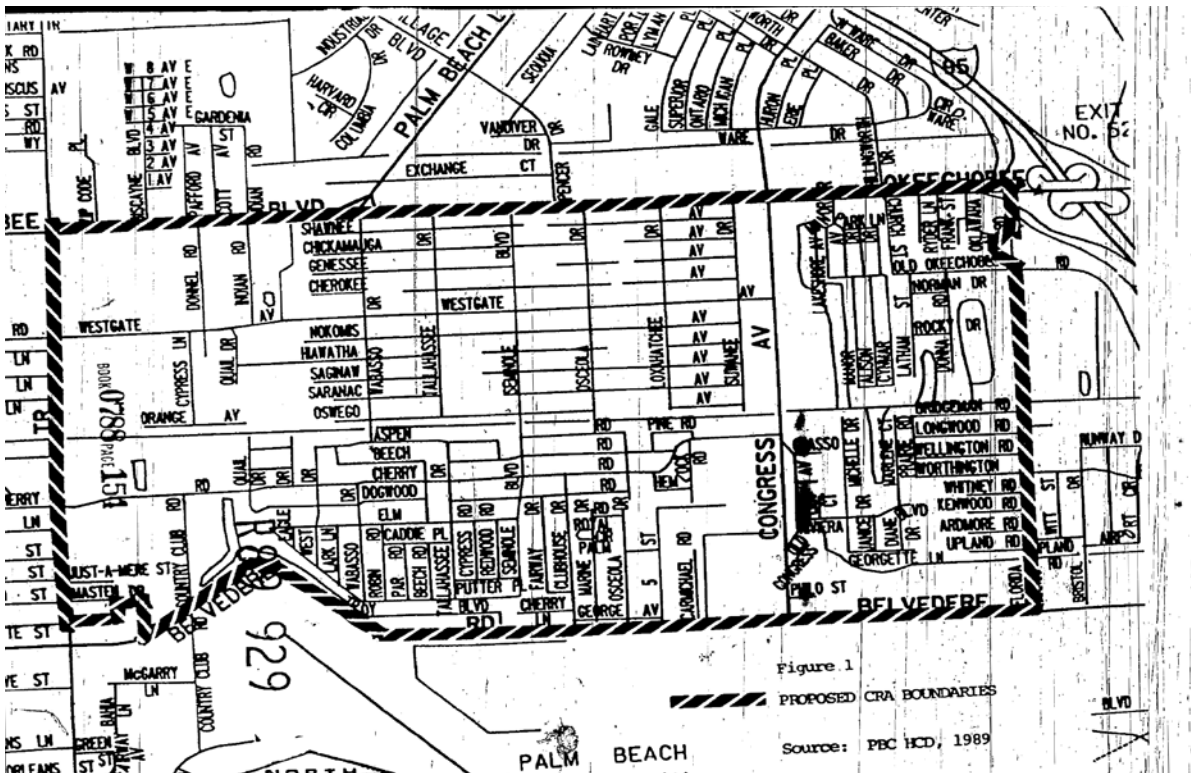
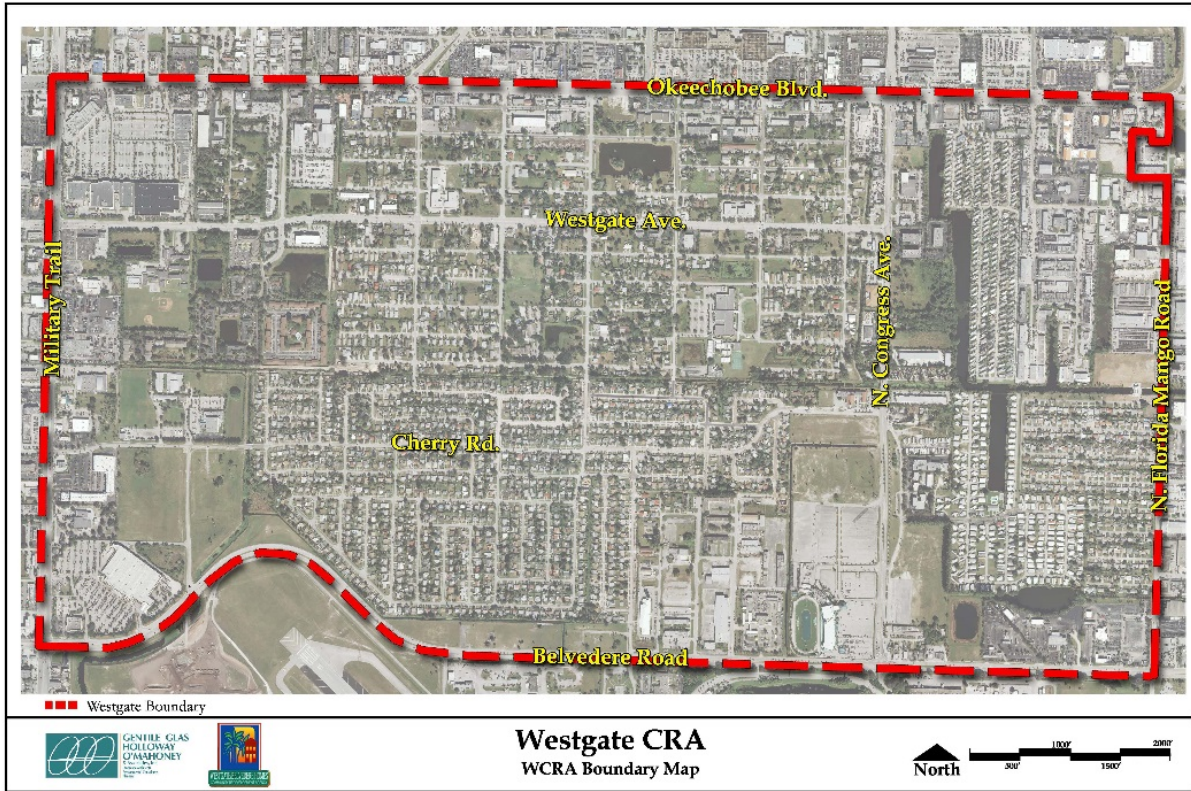
This Community Redevelopment Plan does not recommend any changes to the current Westgate CRA boundaries. The legal description of the CRA redevelopment area is hereby adopted by reference and included within supporting documents. The Westgate CRA redevelopment area is approximately 1,300 acres or 2 square miles bounded by Okeechobee Boulevard to the north, Belvedere Road to the south, N. Military Trail to the west and N. Florida Mango Road to the east (see Boundary Map on page 3 and in supporting documents). The boundaries of the redevelopment area were selected to provide a separation between neighborhoods by the heavy traffic corridors of Okeechobee Blvd, N. Military Trail and Belvedere Rd.; to extend the eastern boundary to N. Florida Mango Road to prevent the creation of a pocket area in need of redevelopment between unincorporated Palm Beach County and the City of West Palm Beach; to encompass all neighborhoods in the redevelopment area that have interrelated drainage, transportation,

land use, health and safety needs; to address a large area of the unincorporated Palm Beach County that was being impacted by commercial growth along traffic corridors; and to include all of the areas within these functional and natural boundaries that meet the criteria of slum and blight as defined by Florida Statutes. The use of Community Redevelopment powers enable the BCC and the CRA to make significant public improvements to remove blighted conditions, improve living conditions, preserve areas of low cost housing, prevent incompatible land use patterns, and assist revitalization of older commercial and residential areas.

The Westgate/Belvedere Homes area was developed in 1921, as the most western gateway into the City of West Palm Beach, and stands as one of the oldest platted subdivisions in Palm Beach County. The area was de-annexed in 1931 by the City and has remained unincorporated since. The CRA redevelopment area is centrally located within Palm Beach County. The CRA is bounded to the north and east by the City of West Palm Beach, and to the south and west by unincorporated Palm Beach County and the Town of Haverhill. The CRA area is bounded by two major arterials: Okeechobee Blvd. carries traffic east-west to and from downtown West Palm Beach, to I-95 and the Florida Turnpike. Belvedere Road, a minor arterial, functions largely to carry traffic to and from the Palm Beach International Airport and provides an alternate link to western communities. N. Military Trail is a major north-south thoroughfare that runs almost the entire length of Palm Beach County. Local roads wind through the neighborhoods; the largest of which are N. Congress Avenue and Westgate Avenue, an urban collector, seen as the “neighborhood retail” area of the community. Along the heavily travelled arterial corridors of Okeechobee Blvd., Belvedere Road, and N. Military Trail are well-established commercial uses found on stand-alone parcels and within commercial plazas.

Within the CRA redevelopment area are several distinct residential neighborhoods. Golfview Heights/Belvedere Homes and North and South Westgate Estates are separated from each other by the LWDD L-2 drainage canal, which runs east-west through the middle of the CRA area. Belvedere Heights, a small residential enclave is located south of the L-2 canal and immediately west of N. Florida Mango Road. Large and small mobile home parks are located between N. Congress Avenue and N. Florida Mango Road. While Golfview Heights/Belvedere Homes and Belvedere Heights contain single family dwellings, residential units in North and South Westgate Estates are a mix of single-family, duplexes, triplexes and larger multifamily developments.





Westgate CRA Boundary Map (1989 Finding of Necessity) – approved via BCC Resolution 89-929

## 2. CREATION OF THE COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Under authority of the Community Redevelopment Act of 1969 and Florida Statute 163, Part III, the BCC approved a Findings of Necessity prepared by the County's Housing & Community Development Department which found that the area qualified for redevelopment and created the Westgate/Belvedere Homes Community Redevelopment Agency with the adoption of Res. #89-649 on April 18, 1989. The Findings of Necessity documentation is hereby adopted by reference into this Community Redevelopment Plan and is included in supporting documents. The CRA was charged with crafting a Community Redevelopment Plan that would meet the requirements of State Statutes and address conditions of slum and blight in the CRA area. The first CRA Community Redevelopment Plan was approved by the BCC on May 23, 1989 with the adoption of Res. #989-929. The 1989 Plan was further amended and adopted by the BCC on April 2, 1991 pursuant to Res. #91-422. The organizational structure of the CRA as directed by State Statute consists of a Board of seven members recommended by the CRA and appointed by the BCC for a term of four years. A vacancy occurring during a term shall be filled for the unexpired term. Any person residing in or engaged in business in the designated CRA area may be appointed to the Board.

## 3. AUTHORITY TO UNDERTAKE COMMUNITY REDVELOPMENT

This document has been prepared by, for and under the direction of the Westgate CRA in accordance with the Community Redevelopment Act of 1969, F. S. 163, Part III. In recognition of the need to prevent and eliminate slum and blighted conditions within the community, the Act confers upon counties and municipalities the authority and powers to carry out "Community Redevelopment." For the purposes of this Community Redevelopment Plan, the following definition, taken from the Florida State Statute shall apply:

*"Community redevelopment" or "redevelopment" means undertakings, activities, or projects of a county, municipality, or community redevelopment agency in a community redevelopment area for the elimination and prevention of the development or spread of slums and blight or for the provision of affordable housing, whether for rent or for sale, to residents of low or moderate income, including the elderly, and may include slum clearance and redevelopment in a community redevelopment area, or rehabilitation or conservation in a community redevelopment area, or any combination or part thereof, in accordance with a community redevelopment plan and may include the preparation of such a plan.'*

*The ability of a county or municipality to utilize the authority granted under the Act is predicated upon the adoption of a "Finding of Necessity" by the governing body. This finding must demonstrate that:*

- (1) One or more slum or blighted areas, or one or more areas in which there is a shortage of housing affordable to residents of low or moderate income, including the elderly, exist in the county or municipality; and,*
- (2) The rehabilitation, conservation, or redevelopment, or a combination thereof, of such area or areas is necessary in the interest of the public health, safety, morals, or welfare of the residents of the county or municipality."*

## 4. POWERS OF THE COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

The Westgate CRA, reserves for itself, its officers, employees and agents, all the powers, duties and responsibilities vested to it and provided by the Community Redevelopment Act to carry out the purposes

and intent of this Community Redevelopment Plan, including the use of the power of eminent domain. The following are powers that are withheld by the governing body per State Statute:

1. *“The power to determine an area to be appropriate for community redevelopment;*
2. *The power to grant final approval to Community Redevelopment plans and modifications;*
3. *The power to zone or rezone or to make exceptions from building regulations or to enter into agreements with a housing authority; and,*
4. *The power to close, vacate, plan, or re-plan streets, roads, sidewalks, ways, or other places and to plan or re-plan any part of the County.”*

It is the intent of Palm Beach County and the Westgate CRA that whenever reference is made in this Community Redevelopment Plan, to the County, or the Westgate CRA (or CRA) in undertaking or exercising some of the power or authority granted by the Community Redevelopment Act, then such power and authority are deemed to have been granted and exercisable in connection with the implementation of this Plan. This Community Redevelopment Plan contains provisions that contemplate actions to be taken by Palm Beach County, including the BCC and various divisions, agencies, departments or boards of the County. All actions pursuant to the Plan are subject to County review.

## 5. CONSISTENCY WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Florida Statute requires that the Community Redevelopment Plan be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan of the governing entity. This amendment does not contradict, nor seek to modify, any portions of the County’s Comprehensive Plan, although future CRA initiated amendments should not be disqualified, and may become necessary as redevelopment accelerates. The Westgate Belvedere Homes CRA Area is referenced in the Future Land Use as Sub-Objective 1.2.3., Westgate/Belvedere Homes Community Redevelopment Area Overlay (WCRAO) and Transportation Elements of the County’s Comprehensive Plan (see Section 6 – Supporting Documents) as sub-objective policies, in which redevelopment incentives that allow for greater densities, inclusionary housing policies, incentives for mixed use development, and relief from traffic concurrency provisions through the creation of a Transportation Concurrency Exception Area (TCEA) are outlined. The policies of Objective 1.2, the Urban/Suburban Tier, as well as the policies of Sub-Objective 1.2.1, the Revitalization and Redevelopment Overlay also apply within WCRAO. Many of the provisions of the 2005 Plan are also codified in Article 3 (WCRAO, Westgate Community Redevelopment Area Overlay) of the County’s Unified Land Development Code (ULDC), and cross referenced in other ULDC Articles.

The Future Land Use Element (FLUE) of the Comprehensive Plan outlines the goals, objectives and policies that will assist the County in planning for future growth, protecting and managing its natural resources, preventing the proliferation of urban sprawl, providing for its economic vitality, and accommodating lifestyle choices for its residents. This amended Plan is consistent with and complementary to specific provisions set forth by Comprehensive Plan County Directions including, but not limited to: livable communities, growth management, infill redevelopment and revitalization, land use compatibility, neighborhood integrity, housing opportunity, research and development communities, level of service standards, linear open space and park systems, design, and a strong sense of community.



Ongoing implementation and satisfaction of conditions set forth in Policy 1.2-r of the Transportation Element pertaining to the Westgate-Belvedere Homes Community Redevelopment Area (Westgate CRA) Transportation Concurrency Exception Area (TCEA), is supported by the goals, objectives, programs and projects described in this amended Plan.

Prior to submittal to the BCC, the County's Planning Division must provide an administrative determination as to whether this Plan amendment is procedural or substantive. If procedural, the Plan will move forward directly to the BCC with a written finding. If substantive, the Plan will require review and determination of consistency with the Comprehensive Plan by the Planning Commission acting as the Local Planning Agency (LPA). Prior to final approval of this amended Plan by the Westgate CRA Board of Commissioners, the PBC Zoning Division will have an opportunity to provide input and feedback on policies, programs or projects set forth in the Plan.

## 6. SAFEGUARDS TO ENSURE PROPER IMPLEMENTATION AND PROJECT/PROGRAM ACCOUNTABILITY

The CRA will maintain adequate records of all assets, liabilities, income, and operating expenses of the preceding fiscal year (October 1-September 30) to provide for an annual audit. Audit findings, conducted by an independent auditor, are presented at a public meeting of the CRA Board and then forwarded to the State Auditor General's Office by March 31<sup>st</sup> of each year. The annual CRA Audit Report is also included in the financial records of the County and is forwarded to the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity as is required by designated Special Districts. The annual CRA Audit Report will be followed by a CRA Annual Report which provides status, financial, and other quantitative information on projects and programs funded for the preceding year. The CRA Annual Report will also serve to highlight CRA activities and achievements, and will act as a performance measure or monitoring tool that will inform the way in which programs and projects are prioritized during the budget planning process for the next fiscal year. The BCC must approve and adopt the CRA's annual budget for its Redevelopment Trust (or operating) Fund, Construction Fund, Sinking Fund and Reserve Fund in September of each year. The CRA will continue to seek input from the County administrators and staff, community and other important stakeholders on redevelopment activities and collaborate on strategies to implement Plan goals and objectives.

## 7. NEIGHBORHOOD IMPACTS OF REDEVELOPMENT EFFORTS

The following describes potential impacts of redevelopment efforts on the residential neighborhoods of the CRA Area:

### 1) RELOCATION OF DISPLACED RESIDENTS OR BUSINESSES

In accordance with the Community Redevelopment Act of 1969, F. S. 163, Part III, the Westgate CRA is authorized to, *"prepare plans for and assist in the relocation of persons (including individuals, families, business concerns, nonprofit organizations and others,) displaced from a community redevelopment area, and to make relocation payment to or with respect to such persons for moving expenses and losses of property for which reimbursement or compensation is not otherwise made, including the making of such payments financed by the Federal Government."*

In connection with the contemplated projects in this plan, some relocation of residents may become necessary and changing conditions and modifications to planned projects may result in additional residential and/or business displacement. In the event that existing or future CRA projects do require the relocation of residents or businesses, a relocation plan will be developed for the project, generally commensurate with the Relocation Housing objective outlined in the Housing Element of the County's Comprehensive Plan. Through the combined efforts of the CRA, the County, and private development, the neighborhood housing stock will be expanded and thereby provide opportunities for the relocation of residents elsewhere in the community.

2) TRAFFIC CIRCULATION

Proposed road and traffic improvements will be designed to provide safe and convenient movement of pedestrians and vehicles to, within, and through the redevelopment area.

3) ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

The CRA has improved and will continue to improve the environmental quality of the redevelopment area as redevelopment progresses. These improvements are primarily related to the completed and remaining improvements to public infrastructure (drainage, water, sewer,) with a growing emphasis on crime prevention, code enforcement and housing rehabilitation.

4) COMMUNITY FACILITIES

CRA activities are anticipated to have a positive impact on existing community facilities in the CRA redevelopment area. There will be continuing improvement and ongoing maintenance to all public service systems including parks, roads, sidewalks, drainage, and utilities.

5) SCHOOLS

The day care facilities, and pre-kindergarten, elementary, high, charter and vocational schools located within the CRA redevelopment area are adequate to accommodate any potential population growth through increased residential units. This amended Plan does not anticipate any significant impact on the capacity of these school facilities.

## 8. DISCLOSURE OF RESTRICTIVE COVENANTS

Control of the following restrictive or master covenants will be retained by the Westgate CRA upon adoption of the amended Plan:

- 1) A master covenant recorded in the records of Palm Beach County on August 31, 2011 for thirty-three (33) WCRA Overlay Bonus Density Program Units assigned to the "Westgate Plaza" project, located at 4150 Westgate Avenue. The Westgate CRA has the authority to allow developers to draw from a pool of bonus density units per acre to achieve increased densities when certain development and affordability criteria are met. Per ULDC Art.3.B.14.H.c.3), *"Prior to final DRO approval, the applicant shall record in the public records of Palm Beach County a Covenant binding the entire project, in a form provided by the County, which identifies each required affordable unit. In the event the project is not subject to final DRO approval, the applicant must submit a recorded copy of the Covenant to the Building Division prior to issuance of the first building permit. The Covenant shall include but not be limited to restrictions requiring: that all identified affordable units shall be sold, resold, or rented only to very-low thru middle income qualified households at*

*an attainable housing cost for each of the targeted income ranges; that these restrictions remain in effect for a minimum of ten years for units sold to eligible households, and a minimum of 20 years for rental units, from the date of each unit is first purchased or designated as a rental unit; and that in the event a unit is resold before the ten or 20 year periods conclude, a new 10 or 20 year period shall take effect on the date of resale. The Covenant shall further provide monitoring and compliance requirements including but not limited to those set forth below to ensure compliance with Plan TE Policy 1 2-r. Every deed for sale of an affordable housing unit shall incorporate by reference the controlling Covenant.”*

- 2) Restrictive controls are outlined in the deed of sale of CRA owned property located at 2640 Cherokee Avenue to an adjacent property owner for the purposes of developing a mixed use project on Westgate Avenue. The parcel must be developed as mixed use within (3) three years of the date of the recording of the Warranty Deed, otherwise ownership will revert back to the CRA.
- 3) Restrictive covenants or deed restrictions are outlined in agreements with the State of Florida for Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funds acquired to purchase properties for drainage improvements. All property purchased through State or Federal funding must be used for public drainage purposes. If property is not used for public drainage improvements, it must remain as open public space in perpetuity.

## 9. INTERLOCAL AGREEMENTS

The following multi-party agreements have been executed by the CRA over the last several years, and to assure continuity, are acknowledged and referenced as a part of this amended Plan:

- 1) Interlocal Agreement enacted by Resolution R-2011-1429 between Palm Beach County and the Westgate/Belvedere Homes CRA and executed on September 18, 2011. The agreement allows the CRA to assume responsibility and funding of the maintenance of certain public infrastructure improvements throughout the CRA area.
- 2) Interlocal Agreement between Palm Beach County and the Westgate/Belvedere Homes CRA executed on May, 5, 2011. The agreement authorizes the CRA to complete the L-2 acquisition and expansion project funded by State and Federal grants received and administered by Palm Beach County. The agreement also allows the CRA to receive reimbursement payments submitted to Palm Beach County for the project.
- 3) Interlocal Agreement between the Lake Worth Drainage District (LWDD) and the Westgate/Belvedere Homes CRA executed on June 22, 2012. The agreement allows the CRA to assume responsibility and funding for the maintenance of portions of the L2 Canal.
- 4) Interlocal Agreement enacted by Resolutions R-2017-0070 and R-2017-0071 between Palm Beach County and the Westgate/Belvedere Homes CRA and executed on January 10, 2017. The agreement authorizes the CRA to procure and manage professional consultants to prepare a Westgate Avenue Corridor Streetscape Plan funded by the Florida State Department of Economic Opportunity Community Planning Technical Assistance Grant program received and administered

by Palm Beach County. The agreement also allows the CRA to receive reimbursement payments submitted to Palm Beach County for the project.

## 10. TAX INCREMENT AND TAX INCREMENT FINANCING

The State, in adopting Florida Statute 163, Part III, created a CRA's main source of income, tax increment financing (TIF). All CRAs in Florida are dependent taxing districts, meaning that they depend upon other taxing districts to make contributions to their redevelopment trust fund. The TIF funds are based upon the improvement value of assessed property values within a CRA district once the base year has been set by a CRA's governing body. Tax increment revenue can be used for any programs or projects that are described in an approved Community Redevelopment Plan. Tax increment funds can also be used for administrative costs and for the repayment of revenue bond(s), debt service, and fees.

### B. The Need to Update the Community Redevelopment Plan

In 1989, the year that the Westgate CRA was created, many neighborhoods in the area had structural deterioration, inadequate street layout, unpaved roads, lack of sidewalks, severe drainage problems, and insufficient public sewer and water service. These conditions, combined with code enforcement issues, conflicts in land use and zoning, a high percentage of low to moderate income households, a dilapidated housing stock, property neglect, and stunted economic growth underlined the need initiate community improvement.

Although specific zoning regulations were yet to be written into the County's Zoning Code (the ULDC), the Westgate Belvedere Homes Community Redevelopment Area was represented as a special overlay district in the Land Use Element and the Future Land Use Atlas map of the County's Comprehensive Plan. Special provisions had been adopted to encourage development and redevelopment in the Westgate CRA area including the ability to increase residential density by drawing from a 1,300 unit 'density pool' designated as "WCRA units". But with 90% of homes in north and south Westgate on septic tanks and wells, chronic flooding in all areas after major storm events, and 25% of streets in north and south Westgate unpaved, the focus of the 1989 Plan was firmly on public infrastructure improvements. In 1991 the Westgate CRA amended the original Community Redevelopment Plan to include a master physical plan focused primarily on infrastructure and the methods of funding the improvements required to address those needs. In the years following the creation of the Westgate CRA and the original and updated Community Redevelopment Plans, the CRA set out to correct years of neglected and deteriorated infrastructure with an ambitious strategy that would dramatically improve quality of life for many residents.

In 2005, the Westgate CRA updated its Redevelopment Plan to one that included a broader vision of the community and that reflected current trends in land use planning, zoning practice, and urban design. The 2005 Plan set the stage for redevelopment and economic development while still devoting a large amount of effort and resources to continual infrastructure improvement. Tax increment revenues were projected to nearly double to \$2.2 million by 2008 which would allow the CRA to begin offering true financial incentives to developers. Investment and reinvestment in the area would mitigate negative perceptions



of the Westgate area; a chronic challenge faced by the community. Following the adoption of the 2005 Plan, the Westgate CRA initiated amendments to zoning and property development regulations to further incentivize and direct redevelopment, particularly along Westgate Avenue envisioned as an “urban village”.

But by the beginning of 2009, a steady decline in the economy arrested any large-scale infill or new development in Westgate, across Palm Beach County, and throughout the United States. By 2010-2011, property taxes had fallen dramatically, CRA tax increment revenues were severely diminished, and the implementation of many initiatives outlined in the 2005 Plan were substantially impacted. The CRA re-directed efforts to public/private partnerships to build affordable housing throughout residential neighborhoods, began sponsoring community activities and events, and continued to improve infrastructure. Only in recent years, as the market began to show signs of recovery, and development began to accelerate, that property values have slowly increased in the redevelopment area.

The goals and objectives that directed the programs and strategies outlined in the 2005 Plan formed the essential framework necessary carry out ongoing work efforts; the mandate of the Plan remains largely relevant today. The Westgate CRA has accomplished much tasked by the Plan since adoption in 2005, particularly in upgraded public infrastructure. But the area still suffers from widespread blighted conditions, especially in its more visible internal mixed residential and commercial areas. The continued presence of deteriorated or dilapidated structures and neglected lots breeds disregard, encourages vandalism, crime, and loitering, ultimately placing a burden on code enforcement and community policing efforts. When slum and blight persists, residents and private developers become more reluctant to invest in the area.

The Westgate area is in an enviable position for its prime real estate location in Palm Beach County. The opportunities for expansive redevelopment are countless. The purpose of this Plan is not to completely overhaul or eclipse the carefully deliberated goals, objectives and strategies outlined in previous plans, but rather to re-focus the efforts of the Westgate CRA to more effectively address outstanding redevelopment objectives and to reorganize priority projects in a way that is current with the economic climate and market trends. Many recommendations for infrastructure and housing strategies from the 2005 Plan have been implemented or are currently being implemented. This Plan updates critical data and information on land use, demographics, and market conditions, provides an overview of what the CRA has accomplished since the last Plan update, and what the CRA hopes to achieve moving forward. Relevant programs and projects from the 2005 Plan will be revived and new work programs and priority projects will be identified. With renewed commitments and an invigorated approach, the Westgate CRA is positioned to bring smart, market-driven redevelopment and economic development strategies to the forefront of its work efforts with the ultimate goal of eliminating slum and blight and creating a vibrant, sustainable community.

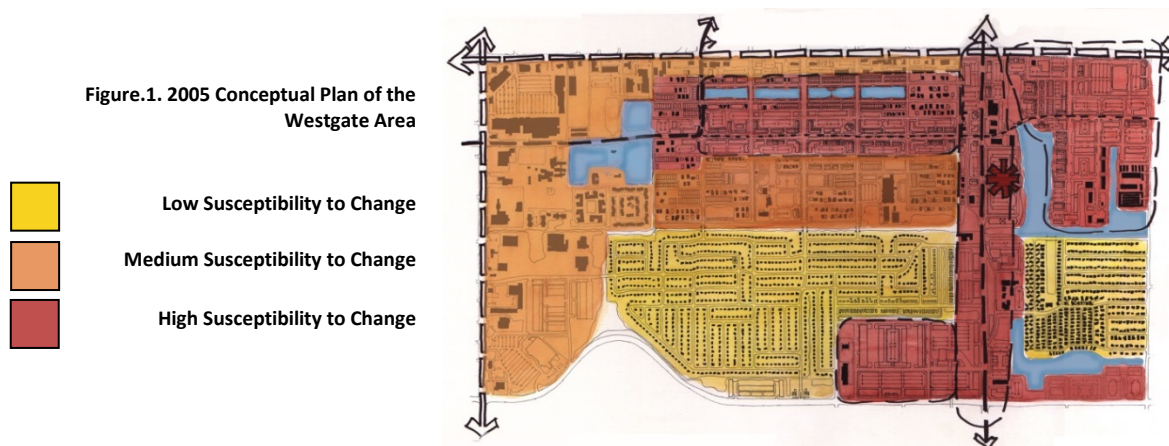
# SECTION 2

## Accomplishments and Ongoing Work Efforts **WHAT HAVE WE BEEN DOING?**

## A. Revisiting the 2005 Community Redevelopment Plan

*"To understand where you are going, you must first understand where you have been."*

-- adapted from Ciero

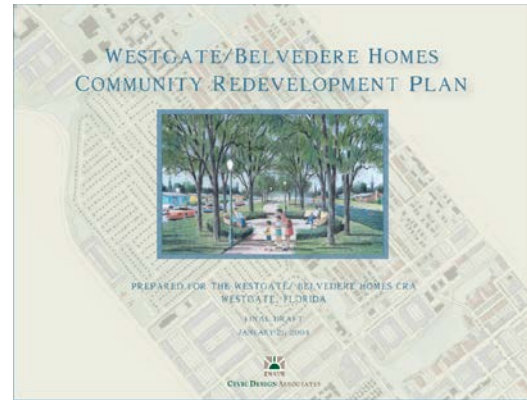


In 2003, the Westgate CRA, along with planning consultants Civic Design Associates Urban Planners, conducted an extensive and inclusive public design charrette. Input from residents and business owners, CRA Board members, County officials and staff, and external engineering and planning consultants informed the direction of the 2005 Community Redevelopment Plan (the final draft of the Plan was completed in 2004 and adopted by the BCC in January of the following year). In addition to the priorities, issues and opportunities identified through public input, programming, conceptual design standards and development regulations were introduced to compliment the implementation of the charrette-based plan. While infrastructure improvements, particularly drainage and storm water capacity, remained the ongoing primary focus, the 2005 Plan took a more comprehensive and visionary approach to redevelopment within the CRA. This approach drew from increasingly influential concepts in urban planning and design; new urbanism and smart growth. These movements promote more intense and dense infill vertical redevelopment in older existing urban centers to prevent sprawl and create diverse, walkable, compact, vibrant, mixed-use communities assembled in an integrated way that contain the housing, work places, shops, entertainment, schools, parks, and civic facilities essential to the daily lives of the residents, all within easy walking distance of each other. New urbanism and smart growth are especially evident in the vision for the Westgate Avenue corridor.

The conceptual plan of the CRA in Figure 1 above illustrates in a very abstract way how the design charrette and public input influenced where and how the CRA would focus redevelopment efforts. The major areas of improvements represented in the 2005 Plan can be broadly categorized into these focus areas: PLANNING, INFRASTRUCTURE, REDEVELOPMENT & DEVELOPMENT, and COMMUNITY with specific priority projects identified below.

**2005 PLAN – PRIORITY PROJECTS:**

- Storm water infrastructure;
- Sanitary Sewer in Golfview Heights;
- Zoning and design guidelines for infill development;
- Congress Avenue beautification;
- Westgate Avenue beautification;
- Westgate Avenue commercial corridor redevelopment;
- L-2 Canal Improvements and Greenway Linear Park;
- Façade Loan and/or Grant Program;
- Land Acquisition for Westgate Avenue mixed-use development;
- Land acquisition for L-2 Canal Improvements and Greenway Linear Park



**Westgate CRA  
2005 Community Redevelopment Plan**

Many of the goals and objectives of the 2005 Plan and previous Redevelopment Plans have been accomplished or are in the process of being implemented through specific programs and projects, as well as evolving strategies that build on the work and growth of the CRA, along with new market possibilities.

## B. Accomplishments and Ongoing Work Efforts

### 1. PLANNING

A CRA's path is ever evolving; it must be responsive to fluctuations and trends in the economy, housing market, transportation, and demographic shifts, as well as to new thinking in urban design and redevelopment planning. An important component of the Plan was, and remains today, the "Planning Program" which has allowed the CRA to conduct studies, evaluate issues, prioritize, and re-prioritize to ultimately implement the goals and objectives of the 2005 Plan and the meet the intent of the CRA as mandated by the Community Redevelopment Act and, F. S. 163, Part III. Through careful and measured planning strategies, the Westgate CRA has been able to develop policies and guide development regulations as needed to pursue targeted projects that increase opportunities for redevelopment, open space, economic development and affordable housing.

Planning work efforts include:

- 1) **REGULATION:** Zoning Code regulation development and implementation, and project review and facilitation;
- 2) **POLICY:** Comprehensive Plan policy development and the implementation of Future Land Use and Transportation Elements to incentivize redevelopment; and,
- 3) **STUDIES:** Design, demographic, market and feasibility studies.

#### 1.1. REGULATORY AND POLICY INCENTIVES

##### 1.1.1. The Westgate CRA Zoning Overlay

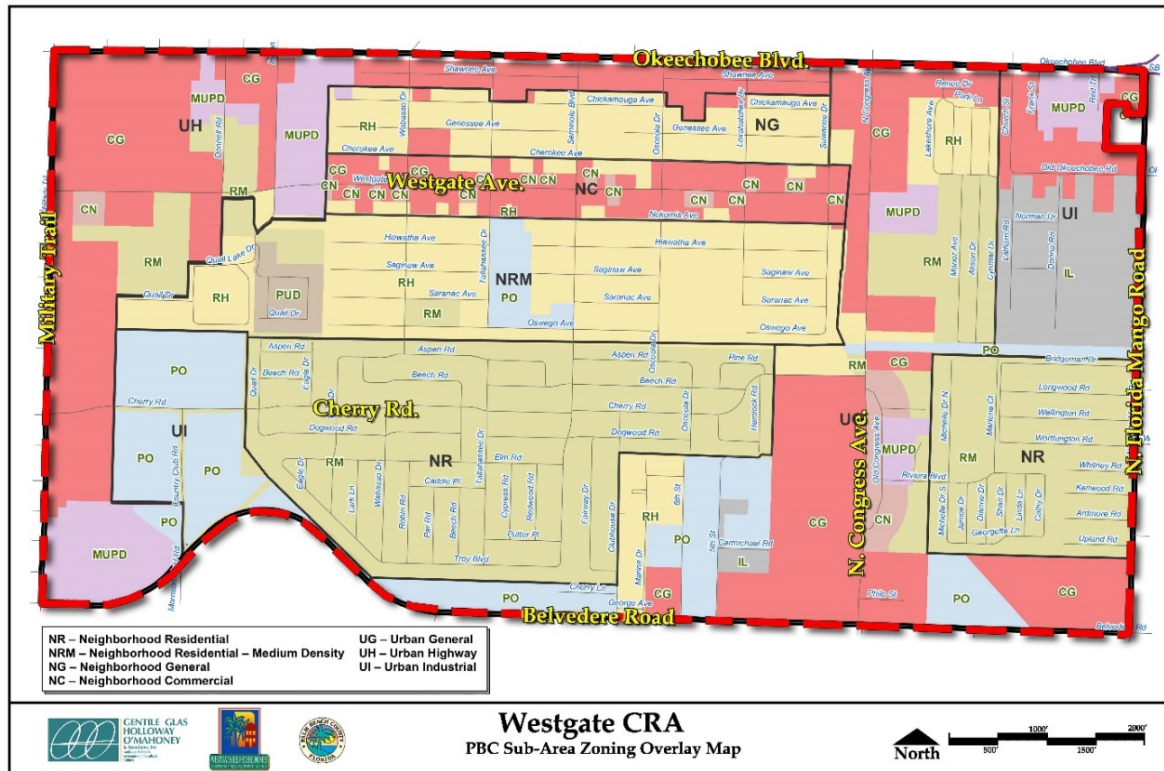
Within a year following the adoption of the 2005 Plan, the County amended the ULDC to expand and update CRA Zoning Overlay regulations to encourage new infill development and further redevelopment

within the CRA. Special consideration to implement new urbanism-inspired form-based design and property development regulations was afforded to priority areas within the CRA. Based on geographical areas, called “Sub-areas,” introduced by the 2005 Plan, development was required to comply with additional Sub-area regulations that included protective measures, design standards and redevelopment incentives. The development objectives of each CRA Sub-area are intended to encourage specific uses and architectural typologies and discourage others, in accordance with the vision of the 2005 Plan. Certain Sub-areas were anticipated to remain virtually unchanged, particularly those incorporating the heavy commercial corridors of N. Military Trail and Okeechobee Blvd, while areas in other Sub-areas, such as the Neighborhood Commercial (NC), are the focus of very exact visionary goals. It is important to understand the objectives of each sub area because they have stood as the implementation of many redevelopment goals since their creation in 2006. Redevelopment Plan-based Sub-areas as they exist today in the WCRA Overlay of the ULDC are:

- 1) NR, NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTIAL. Intended to maintain and encourage the redevelopment of existing single-family residential dwellings.
- 2) NRM, NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTIAL – MEDIUM DENSITY. Intended to encourage mixed use development based on CL (commercial low FLU) neighborhood based uses and single-family, townhouse and multi-family dwelling units.
- 3) NG, NEIGHBORHOOD GENERAL. Intended to encourage mixed use development, including more intense commercial uses, and townhouse and multi-family dwelling units.
- 4) NC, NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL. to be the key focal point of the redevelopment area, with provisions allowing for or requiring mixed use development with more intense commercial uses.
- 5) UG, URBAN GENERAL. Additional redevelopment area allowing for mixed use development with more intense commercial and residential uses, including multi-story towers where feasible.
- 6) UH, URBAN HIGHWAY. Existing commercially developed corridors with little or no changes proposed to current Zoning PDR’s or use regulations.
- 7) UI, URBAN INDUSTRIAL. Existing commercial and industrial areas that will be encouraged to be redeveloped by the recent adoption of FLU amendments allowing CH (commercial high FLU) or IND (industrial FLU) development.

Beyond the creation of Sub-areas, several other important elements are built into the CRA’s Overlay regulations. Development review procedures require applicants to receive a recommendation letter from the CRA Board of Commissioners prior to submittal to Palm Beach County Zoning Division; this affords the CRA some dominion on use and appearance within its boundaries. The CRA reviews applications for all development within its boundaries including requests for zoning map amendments, plan amendments, variances, and density bonuses for consistency with CRA overlay regulations and the intent of the Redevelopment Plan. Heavily form-based, the overlay regulates site configuration, building placement and orientation, access, uses by floor, and building design, including the requirement for galleries or arcades and plazas and squares for redevelopment projects on Westgate Ave and elsewhere. The overlay also allows for increases in residential intensity (20-150 du/ac), an increase in the floor area ratio and height limitations to allow taller buildings that can accommodate more office space in certain areas of the CRA, and significant deviations from parking requirements; all of which can greatly impact the success of an infill redevelopment project.





Westgate CRA Overlay Sub-area superimposed over the Standard District Zoning Map

### 1.1.2. Traffic Concurrency Exception Area (TCEA)

In 2001 the Westgate CRA was designated a Traffic Concurrency Exception Area (TCEA) in the Transportation Element (TE) of the County’s Comprehensive Plan; several other municipalities in Palm Beach County also have designated TCEA’s. Per Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) guidelines, a TCEA is “an urban area delineated by a local government where infill and redevelopment are encouraged, and where exceptions to the transportation concurrency requirement are made, providing that alternative modes of transportation, land use mixes, urban design, connectivity, and funding are addressed.” Concurrency is a growth management tool intended to ensure that the necessary public facilities are available concurrent with the impacts of development. The primary purpose of a TCEA is to allow development to occur in urbanized areas where infrastructure already exists in turn reducing urban sprawl. TCEA’s were created to prevent discouragement in potential investors who wish to undertake urban infill redevelopment; the concurrency requirement for transportation services can be cost prohibitive for smaller scale projects. These anticipated projects and investments would ultimately generate additional vehicular traffic which would impact the transportation network of the CRA and the surrounding area. Since traffic volumes on some of the roadways surrounding the CRA were either already exceeding the adopted level of service (LOS) threshold or were projected to exceed it, the Westgate Community Redevelopment Area TCEA was created as an incentive and allow development and redevelopment of properties located within the CRA area.

*17 building permits issued for development & redevelopment projects in the CRA area utilizing 6,249 daily trips from the TCEA pool*

The number of daily trips associated with a development is linked to the use proposed. Initially, when the CRA became a TCEA, the designation provided for a substantial increase in retail and industrial/warehouse square footage with no increase proposed in single family residential units and only a minor increase in multi-family units. The TCEA can be seen as a direct reflection of the combined land use vision of the Comprehensive Plan and the Redevelopment Plan and in 2001, the Westgate CRA was still primarily focused on updating internal underground infrastructure networks. The CRA initiated an amendment to the TCEA following the adoption of the 2005 Redevelopment Plan that allowed for a significantly different mix of land use thresholds. The 2005 Plan vision for the Westgate and N. Congress Avenue corridors included mixed use, high density multi-family, and more intense commercial uses. The amended TCEA mirrored that vision by increasing multi-family units, office, and commercial/retail uses, while simultaneously decreasing industrial and warehouse land uses. In late 2015, the CRA initiated another amendment to the TCEA which removed the cap on individual use types to allow more flexibility. A project must receive a recommendation of approval from the CRA Board to be considered eligible to benefit from the trip pool. Several infill development and redevelopment projects have utilized the TCEA incentive since its creation.

### 1.1.3. Bonus Density Pool

Following the creation of the CRA, the County's Comprehensive Plan referenced the Westgate CRA and the Community Redevelopment Plan in Sub-Objective 1.2.3. of the Future Land Use Element. Within this sub-objective, a policy assigned a fixed number of bonus density units which could be increased via amendments to the Comprehensive Plan text. Through the bonus density pool, the CRA has been afforded the ability to allow residential densities higher than those designated on the County's Future Land Use Atlas (FLUA). Additional units for a residential project must be drawn from a designated WCRA "bonus density pool" of 1,300 units. The project must receive a recommendation of approval from the CRA Board to be eligible.

*237 bonus density units  
approved by the CRA Board  
95 units set aside for  
very low to moderate income households*

The availability of a bonus residential density pool acts as an incentive for infill redevelopment and new development within the CRA area, where approximately 70% of parcels in the CRA have a CH-8 (commercial high with an underlying residential of 8 dwelling units per acre) Future Land Use (FLU) designation. Limits to the number of bonus units that can be allocated to a project range from 20 in the NRM Sub-area to 150 in the UH Sub-area. Regulations and criteria for the approval of bonus density units for a development are codified in the WCRA Overlay where 40% of bonus density units given to a project must remain affordable; a development is not permitted to be 100% affordable. This requirement provides for a range of income levels within one development commensurate with the County's inclusionary housing policy. Thirty-three (33) bonus density units were approved in 2011 for Westgate Plaza, a successful seniors affordable housing project, with 13 units to remain affordable; several other residential projects utilizing bonus density units have been approved by the CRA Board but not yet built.

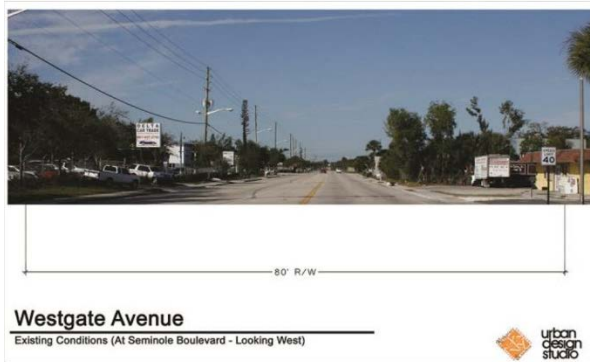


### 1.2. STUDIES

#### 1.2.1. Westgate Avenue Streetscape Plan Design Study



The Westgate Avenue 2008 Streetscape Plan target area (left) and plan view (below). Before & after conceptual views (far left and right)



In late 2005, the CRA contracted with an urban design firm to conceive a streetscape design for a section of Westgate Avenue that would capture the vision of “Westgate Village” as the downtown commercial center of redevelopment area. The streetscape design affected a total of 12,900 linear feet of roadway and 12 intersections. The plan proposed a reduction from four lanes to two lanes, on-street parallel parking, the removal of the center turn lane and the addition of center landscape medians, sidewalks and a bike lane. In addition to the traffic facilitation and calming aspects of the plan, the streetscape was designed to enhance the pedestrian environment, and encourage alternative modes of transportation by incorporating street lights, public art, street level landscaping, mass transit stops and shelters. The estimated cost to complete the project was estimated at \$3 million. The concept design was reviewed by County Engineering and Planning Divisions for traffic volume, circulation, and urban design and the CRA was given conditional approval of the conceptual plan. However, given the major deficit in projected TIF revenue since 2008, the implementation of the Streetscape Plan was put on hold. In 2016, the CRA revived the Westgate Avenue corridor streetscape design project when awarded a technical assistance grant from the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) to create a concept plan for a more functional and beautified streetscape that would foster investment interest and economic growth. A consultant has been selected and this project is currently underway.

### 1.2.2. Project Catfish Conceptual Feasibility Study

In 2011, the CRA, in collaboration with the PBC Department of Economic Sustainability (DES), contracted with a local architectural firm to prepare a marketing feasibility study for the development of available sites within the CRA area for presentation to potential developers. Conceptual sketches demonstrating possibilities for development of 3 sites of approximately 12-15 acres each located along Westgate Ave. and Congress Ave. were prepared. The study was mandated to provide at least one option for each site for a mixed use commercial development. The completion of this study prompted the CRA to issue an RFQ for a “master developer” to bring the most viable concept to life. The process of implementing this master developer program is ongoing.



Project “Catfish” conceptual graphic

### 1.2.3. Parking Standards Study

In 2007, a study to examine the parking rate for multi-family developments, particularly affordable housing and seniors projects, was conducted to justify deviations from ULDC parking rate standards. The study determined that on average the parking rate is less than 1.2 spaces per unit. Local variables such as density, demographics, availability of public transit, potential for walking or biking, and household income are determining factors. The outcome of this study was a modification to residential parking standards in the WCRA overlay. A decreased parking standard is an important redevelopment incentive for projects with a restrictive lot size that must meet a pro forma for a certain number of units to be economically viable.

## 2. INFRASTRUCTURE

One of the primary reasons for establishing the CRA in 1989 was to assist the County in completing area specific infrastructure improvements including sewer, water, drainage, street improvements, and sidewalks to eliminate blighting influences, encourage redevelopment, and improve living conditions for residents. The Findings of Necessity and all Redevelopment Plans since the creation of the CRA have been heavily oriented to upgrading infrastructure, and in the early years of the CRA, infrastructure dominated the agenda of CRA Board. Most neighborhood streets were in need of improvements such as paving, parking, swales, landscaping, sidewalks and lighting. The equation was simple: improvements to infrastructure and modest upgrades to affect the beautification of internal commercial corridors and residential neighborhoods would increase redevelopment potential within the CRA. The CRA typically must contribute a percentage of the overall project costs. By leveraging TIF funds with state and federal grants, the CRA has completed substantial public infrastructure improvements.

*\$30.9 million in combined TIF dollars and grant funding allocated to public infrastructure improvement projects*

### 2.1. SANITARY SEWER, STORM WATER DRAINAGE, STORAGE CAPACITY AND FLOOD MITIGATION

The location of the Westgate CRA redevelopment area within the lowest elevation of the C51 drainage basin in Palm Beach County, has meant that the area has been chronically prone to flooding during major storm events. The hurricanes of 2004 (Charley, Frances, Ivan, Jeanne) and 2005 (Dennis, Emily, Katrina and Wilma), brought federal disaster declarations in south Florida and subsequent funding for flood mitigation and housing projects Countywide allowing many planned CRA projects to become reality. The need for upgraded infrastructure has always been considered the highest priority for those living in the community and has likely been the largest single constraint to successful redevelopment. New small scale developments or infill developments were required to provide on-site runoff retention areas to compensate for lost impervious area; the need for additional land rendered most development too cost prohibitive. Figure 2 on the following page illustrates the need for improved drainage and capacity showing that 15% (or 200 acres) of land would be ideal for storage to accommodate an 100-year storm event.



**Historic flooding at  
Lakeside Mobile Home  
Park**

*Fig. 2. The blue square superimposed over an aerial photo of the CRA represents an area of about 200 acres, or 15% of the total 1300 acres contained within CRA. In an ideal situation, this is something close to the area of water retention needed to properly address the current flooding problem.*

IV-4. 2005 Plan



The 2005 Plan contemplated several options to address inadequate storage capacity. Among them: the consolidation of wet retention ponds into an efficient area wide system where larger bodies of water could serve as a focal point for the development of community amenities. The CRA developed a comprehensive drainage plan for the area in 2006 through a partnership with the Stub Canal Task Force. The task force, comprised of municipalities and governmental entities affected by the C51, included Palm Beach County, the City of West Palm Beach, Palm Beach International Airport, the CRA, Glen Ridge, Cloud Lake, Haverhill, LWDD, SFWMD, and others. The drainage plan for the CRA area included the widening of canals, a pumping station, the widening of the Cherry Road Bridge, swales improvement, a drainage

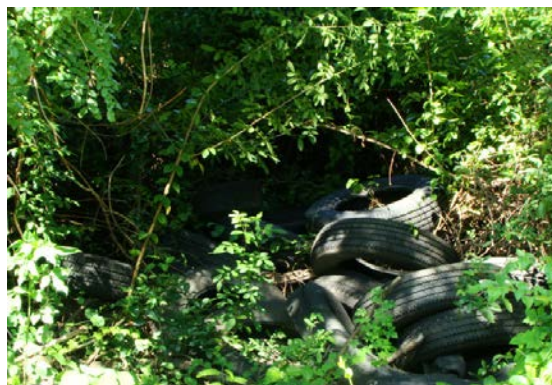


system, a central lake and additional retention and detention ponds. The CRA is the first community to complete all projects assigned by the Task Force. As a result of continued efforts, flooding in residential areas following storm events has been significantly reduced; of the 200 acres of supplementary water retention recommended in the 2005 Plan, 70 acres has been added through CRA land acquisition and PBC owned retention areas. The CRA has worked with the County, State and Federal agencies to leverage TIF dollars with other grant funding sources.

### 2.1.2. The Dennis P. Koehler Preserve & the Babbling Brook 2008-2012

This stormwater retention project combines infrastructure improvement with public art, placemaking, and environmental stewardship demonstrating how flood mitigation can be seen in a multi-dimensional context. Using low impact development (LID) practices and artful interpretation, this project has become an amenity to the community, and a redevelopment tool that has furthered the elimination of slum and blight in the Westgate area. The CRA is currently working with the County to designate the Preserve a passive park, and is also working with a private developer to secure access rights to an adjacent lot for park-related event parking.

The project began in 2008 with the excavation of approximately 6.85 acres for additional stormwater storage capacity for the area. The first phase of the three phase project was the expansion and conversion of an existing dry detention area into a wet retention pond. The size and depth of an existing dry detention area was enlarged to increase treatment volume and reduce the grade of the side slopes to allow for the construction of a functional and aesthetic littoral grassy area around the edge of the pond. To amass the land necessary for the wet retention pond conversion, 11 derelict structures were acquired by the CRA for a cost of \$2 million. Many of the lots had become garbage dumping grounds, were unkempt, and attracted the homeless and drug abusers. The CRA coordinated with property owners for relocation, resulting in no displacement.

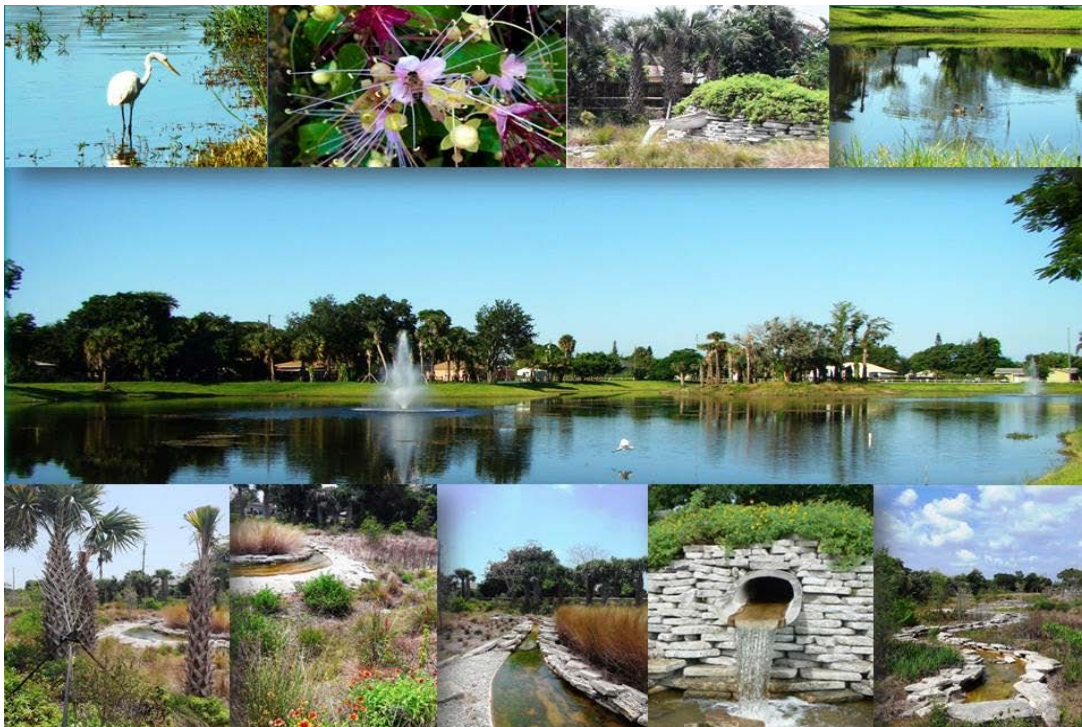


Condition of vacant lots where the Dennis P. Koehler Preserve now sits prior to acquisition by the CRA

The second phase of the project involved conveying collected stormwater runoff through a series of constructed culverts and inlets throughout the area. The stormwater collected by the lake discharges to the West Palm Beach Canal, also known as the C-51 Canal. The Canal was originally dug to drain the Everglades and lower Lake Okechobee for agricultural purposes. It remains an important part of Central and South Florida’s flood control system today but the poor quality of discharged water into the Lake Worth Lagoon has severely impaired the productiveness and biodiversity of the estuary. Historical discharge into the Lake Worth Lagoon resulted in the accumulation of pollutants and sediments which interferes with the marine biological community. Stormwater storage and pretreatment through this project has regional financial and ecological impacts by improving the water quality for the communities downstream and the Lake Worth Lagoon. These improvements are anticipated to reduce pollutant loadings to the Intracoastal Waterway and the Lake Worth Lagoon.



Rendering of central lake and stormwater treatment area



The Dennis P. Koehler Preserve & the Babbling Brook

The third phase of the project incorporates an EcoArt element to assist with the pretreatment of water and bring environmental awareness to the public. Since flooding has long been problematic for the CRA area, the public art component provides a way to engage and help the community take ownership of the lake. Based on the existing conveyance system, runoff from the entire drainage sub-basin could be

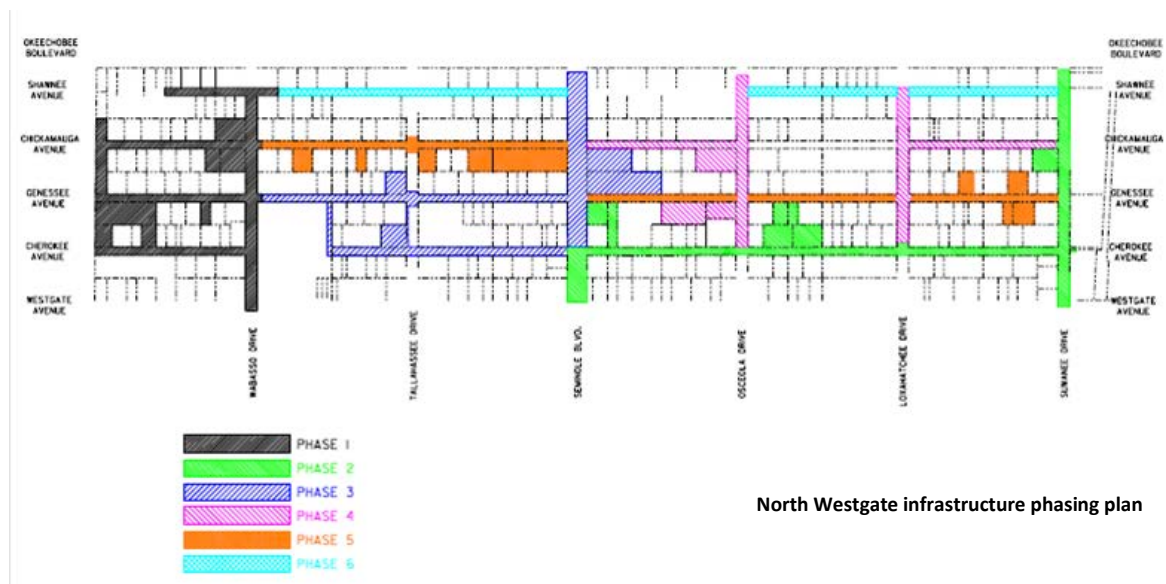
collected during small storm events and treated. The CRA’s innovative approach to flood mitigation utilizes environmental funds to foster the community’s ecological awareness. The project also serves to eliminate blight in this area of north Westgate; this project demonstrates that flood mitigation can become a tool for redevelopment. The Dennis P. Koehler Preserve, named for one of the original CRA Board members who was passionate about the work of the CRA, and the Babbling Brook, are a great source of pride for the CRA as well as residents of the community. It has gained status as a Florida Audubon Urban Oasis, and has served educational purposes through a mentoring partnership with Oxbridge Academy. The project received funding from the CDBG, Disaster Recovery Initiative (DRI), FEMA (Hazard Mitigation Grant Program), Lake Worth Lagoon Partnership Grant, Chain of Lakes, PBC Office of Community Revitalization, BCC District 2 Funds, and CRA TIF. The total project cost was approximately \$4.5 million. All phases of the project were completed in 2012.

### 2.1.3 South Westgate Infrastructure 1992-1996

Among the first large scale infrastructure improvement project undertaken by the CRA, this project provided sanitary sewer, drainage and roadway improvements to the South Westgate Estates neighborhood. The project was funded through a \$3.3 million bond secured with assistance from County administration and the BCC.

### 2.1.4 North Westgate Infrastructure 2004-2011

The completion of Phases I through VI of the North Westgate Infrastructure Project improved sanitary sewer, drainage, and roadways in the North Westgate neighborhood including paving and sidewalk improvements. Funding was provided by leveraging funds from Federal (FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program), State of Florida (CDBG and Disaster Relief Initiative), and local resources (Palm Beach County, Lake Worth Lagoon, and Chain of Lakes) with CRA TIF. Phases I and II of this extensive improvements project began in 2004 and included a Weirs and Weirs Modification sub-project to allow more cubic feet of water to flow north to south after a storm event significantly reducing flooding. Phase II was completed in 2005 and Phases IV through VI were completed in 2011. Total construction costs were \$7 million.



North Westgate infrastructure phasing plan



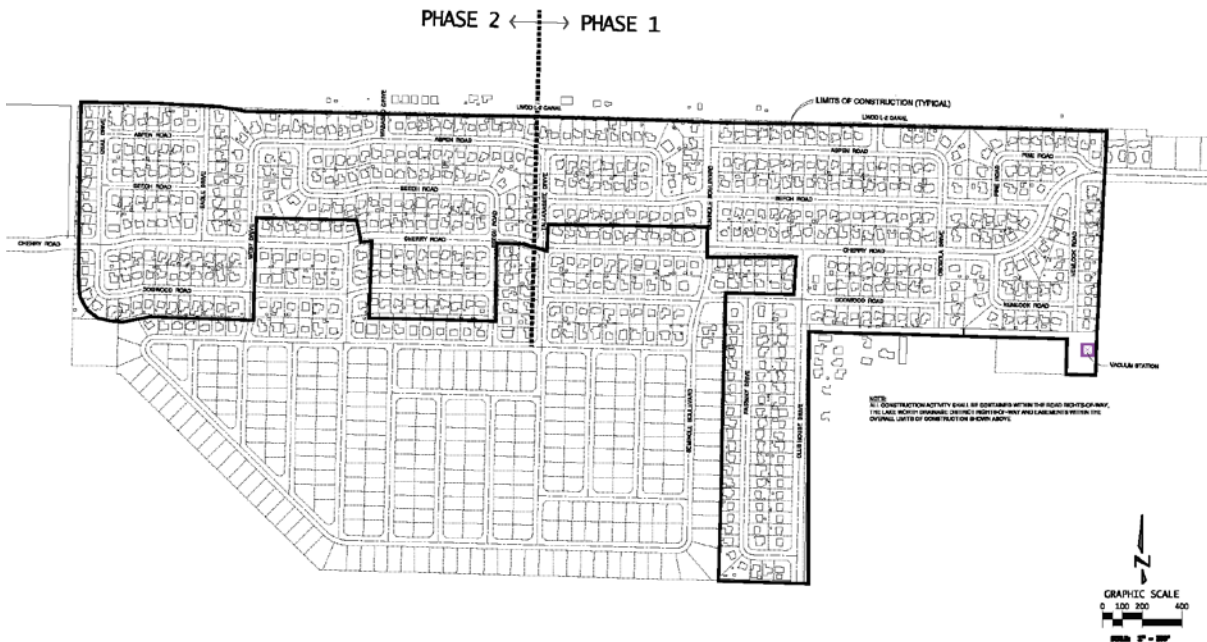
### 2.1.5 Belvedere Homes Drainage, Sanitary Sewer & Water Mains (Phases 1 & 2) 2013

Completed in 2013 this \$7 million project leveraged CRA TIF, CDBG DRI#4, and FEMA (HMGP) funds to replace outdated infrastructure in order to mitigate flooding and address septic tank deficiencies. It serves 587 households, located in the northern portion of the Golfview Heights/Belvedere Homes neighborhood; to date 100 households have connected through PBC Water Utilities.



**Belvedere Homes Pump Station**

The project was included the construction of a state of the art pump station building and associated drainage, water, and sewer facilities for approximately 50% of the homes. This vacuum sewer system was the first of its kind in unincorporated Palm Beach County, and the pump station building designed to provide uninterrupted service and to withstand the impact of a Category 5 hurricane. While the south western segment of Belvedere Homes has sufficient sanitary sewer, a Phase III of this project is anticipated to address drainage.



**Belvedere Homes Infrastructure Improvements Phasing Map**

### 2.1.6 LWDD L-2 Canal Improvements 2012

In a joint effort between the CRA, the County, and the LWDD, a small segment of the LWDD L-2 Canal was improved to provide additional stormwater storage capacity and more efficient stormwater conveyance throughout the low lying community, thereby, alleviating flooding for homes and streets within the drainage basin. The project also included landscaping enhancements along the open space to the north of the canal right-of-way. This infrastructure project was envisioned in the 2005 Redevelopment Plan to



have a dual purpose: flood mitigation and a community enhancement opportunity. Considered one of the most visionary ideas to come out of the 2003 community design charrette, the Greenway is a linear park proposed alongside the L-2 Canal extending from N. Florida Mango Road to the western boundary of the CRA area. The Greenway would provide much needed open space for the community and would also be functional. The Greenway would measure approximately 40' to 50' in width and would be parallel to the L-2 Canal. Pedestrian amenities would include lighted sidewalks connecting public, commercial and residential uses and where appropriate, benches, shaded elements, and focal points. Phase I of the project was completed in 2012.

#### 2.1.7 LWDD L-2 & L-2B Canal Improvements 2014-present

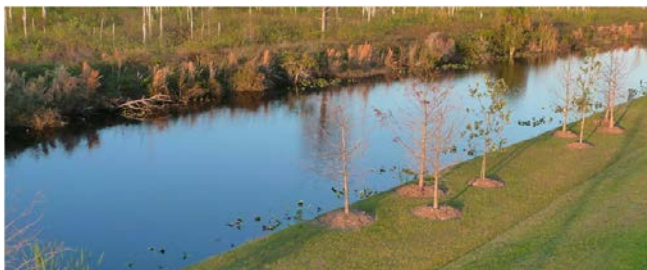
The \$3 million project is a coordinated effort with the County and LWDD to improve the canal cross sections to improve the stormwater storage capacity of the canals. It is also a part of the Greenway linear park project. Areas of impact will primarily benefit the properties within the L-2 and L-2B Sub Basins. Phase I was completed in late 2013 utilized CRA TIF FEMA, CDBG and OCR funds Phase II is underway with 18 homes acquired on Osceola Avenue.

#### 2.1.8 L-2 Pump Station 2011-2014

This project provides drainage improvements for the Lakeside Mobile Home Park, via the installation of a stormwater pump on the L-2 Canal near N. Florida Mango Rd. The \$4 million project was funded by CRA TIF and FEMA (HMGP) and will provide flood mitigation for approximately 400 acres of adjacent properties.

#### 2.1.9 Cherry Road Bridge Expansion 2011

The expansion of the Cherry Road Bridge provides much needed relief for discharging water runoff into the C-51 Canal. The expanded Cherry Road Bridge Crossing is one of the projects identified by the Stub Canal Task Force as critical for flood mitigation for the Westgate/Belvedere Homes CRA area and adjacent communities. The \$1 million project, funded by CRA TIF and CDBG dollars, was completed in July 2011.



Phase I L2 Canal Expansion



Cherry Road Bridge Expansion

## 2.2 ROADWAY AND STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS

### 2.2.1 N. Congress Avenue and Cherry Road Median & ROW

The section of N. Congress Avenue that bifurcates the CRA north south, considered a neighborhood connector, has benefited from the addition of a landscape median and ROW landscaping improvements

to enhance community appearance, safety and walkability. Sidewalk networks were limited within the community; the 2005 Plan suggested that sidewalk and landscaping improvements could occur as a direct result of infrastructure, streetscape and ROW work. Priority was to be given to providing lighting on primary pedestrian streets to create a sense of security.

### 2.2.2 Belvedere Homes Streetlight Program 1999-ongoing

Initiated in 1999, 163 regular streetlights have been installed throughout the residential and commercial areas of North and South Westgate and in the Golfview Heights/Belvedere Homes neighborhood through the Belvedere Homes Streetlight Program. The CRA sets aside an amount from the yearly budget to pay for power to these light standards. The CRA has also installed and pays for 40 decorative streetlights on Cherry Road as well as backyard security lighting to several private homes.



Cherry Road Streetlights

## 3. REDEVELOPMENT AND DEVELOPMENT



Palm Beach Marketplace on Okeechobee Blvd. redevelopment project by Deziel Company (during construction pictured left & after pictured right)

The CRA was established to redevelop the area within its boundaries through a myriad of tools and incentives that address slum and blight in the community. There is a natural progression away from the spiral of decline and neglect, to frustration, public attention and investment, and ultimately to community vision, private interest and development. Public infrastructure improvements have provided a spring board for both public and private dollars to address vertical redevelopment in the community. The first tier of redevelopment activities includes housing rehabilitation and new construction, and publicly stimulated private investment. As the CRA matures, the level of community support and private interest and investment grows.

### 3.1. HOUSING

#### 3.1.1. Neighborhood Renaissance CDBG Infill Housing

The CRA entered into a public-private partnership with local nonprofit, Neighborhood Renaissance, a 501(c)(3) development corporation, to acquire properties in Westgate and build affordable single-family homes and a two-unit townhouse to replace housing that was severely damaged by Hurricane Wilma in 2005. The project became a reality through an extended partnership of Palm Beach County's Department of Economic Sustainability (PBC DES), Neighborhood Renaissance, the Florida Community Loan Fund (FCLF) and the CRA. The project was funded by the 2005 CDBG Disaster Recovery Initiative (DRI), a program established through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and administered through Florida's Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO). The County provided more than \$2 million toward the \$3.7 million infill housing project. The DRI funds were designated by HUD to help cities, counties and states recover from natural disasters. The program has enabled the County to work with public and local housing agencies to replace and rehabilitate homes, improve drainage infrastructure, and construct hurricane hardening improvements to buildings as a result of damage sustained from Hurricane Wilma.

*\$6.2 million in combined TIF dollars  
and grant funds to build 26 new homes  
and rehabilitate 42 homes*



Neighborhood Renaissance/CDBG Infill Housing (top row before)

The project was awarded DRI#3 funds as a result of the innovative development approach and the quality housing units proposed by the development team. The project was successful because of the CRA's site control of the eight lots needed for the grant and its willingness provide patient capital in the form of a zero interest loan to be leveraged with the FCLF construction loan. The development agreement between the CRA and Neighborhood Renaissance allowed the nonprofit to repay the CRA for the land in 13 payments within 30 days of each property's closing. Construction was completed in 2012 for a total of 18



dwelling units located on scattered sites throughout the North Westgate neighborhood. The three and four bedroom homes met green building standards and contain energy-efficient features. By the summer of 2013, all homes were sold to persons of low-and moderate-income, in keeping with HUD's national objectives. All units are owner occupied.

### 3.1.2. Neighborhood Improvement Program (NIP)

Although the residential neighborhoods of Golfview Heights and Belvedere Homes are relatively stable, those areas benefit greatly from streetscape improvements and CRA assistance for rehabilitation. The objective is to encourage preservation of the existing housing stock by combining CRA sponsored home improvement grants and low interest loans to homeowners for home improvement projects that would correct existing code deficiencies, structural deficiencies, weatherization, accessibility and other general exterior property improvements. The cumulative effect is to improve overall appearance and perception to encourage home ownership. Funds for the NIP are allocated from projected TIF revenue each budget year and are administered through the CRA. The CRA has provided 56 grants to homeowners totalling \$165,000 since 2007.

### 3.1.3. Habitat for Humanity

In April of 1993, the BCC approved a loan in the amount of \$85,000 to a private development group and the PBC Housing Partnership to purchase a 2.68 acre site in Westgate to develop single family affordable homes. Due to the developers' inability to perform, in 2000 the BCC accepted a deed in lieu of foreclosure of the mortgage. The County, through the Housing and Community Development Department, conveyed the property to Habitat for Humanity of Palm Beach County, Inc. in 2001. In 2003 the property reverted to the County because Habitat for Humanity had not satisfied all the conditions negotiated in the conveyance agreement, and was unable to commence construction within the stipulated two year period. However in 2004, the County re-conveyed the property to Habitat for Humanity. In 2005, the CRA swapped four lots with Habitat for Humanity for infill housing scattered throughout the CRA area in exchange for three lots along the L-2B Canal. The lots received from Habitat will become part of the canal greenway project. Habitat for Humanity has built homes on all four lots.

### 3.1.4. NSP2 (RRGP) Affordable Housing



NSP2/RRGP Affordable Housing

The rehabilitation of seven (7) homes and reconstruction of six (6) new homes units was a partnership between Palm Beach County and the CRA. The project consisted of six neo-traditional three-bedroom/one-bath and seven three-bedroom/two-bath homes. In order to promote sustainability, the homes include green features such as energy efficient construction techniques and products, improved indoor environments, and increased water efficiency. The project received \$2.44 million through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Neighborhood

Stabilization Program 2 Residential Rehabilitation Grant Program (NSP2 RRG). Gap financing was also provided by the Palm Beach County Housing Finance Authority (HFA). Permanent financing was provided

by EverBank and Iberia banks to the prospective buyers and a 30% direct subsidy was used to make the homes more attainable.

Under NSP2 RRG, the CRA is responsible for the acquisition of foreclosed or distressed properties, rehabilitation/construction of the units, and resale of those properties to eligible homeowners within two years. Per program guidelines, 50% of the units were to be sold to households with incomes no greater than 120% of the area median income (AMI) and 50% of the units will be sold to households with incomes no greater than 50% of AMI. Among the many accolades of the project, one of the most notable is that redevelopment can occur without displacement since a majority of the prospective homeowners made the move from being renters in Westgate to Westgate homeowners. PBC DES estimated that this project would have a five-year economic impact of \$5 million. It is projected that overall, the county's NSP2 program will generate more than \$161.3 million over five years. All construction and rehabilitation work was completed in 2013.

#### 3.1.5. Westgate Plaza by Landmark Corp.

In 2012 Landmark Corporation, in partnership with the Palm Beach County Housing Authority, DES and the CRA, constructed an 80 unit affordable housing development for seniors on Westgate Avenue. These partnerships enabled the developer to acquire grant funding from the NSP2 for more than 13 affordable



Rendering of Westgate Plaza

units and construction funding through low income tax credits. The CRA was able to further assist the project through its bonus density pool. The project is a good example of how incentives for additional density, parking reductions, site and design flexibility, and building configuration played a critical role in the success of the development.

The CRA also facilitates home improvements through other agencies. The CRA has participated in providing information for Foreclosure Prevention Workshops, and efforts of the Office of Community Revitalization, and the Housing Partnership, Inc. The CRA has partnered with the Solid Waste Authority in efforts such as Paint Your Heart Out, which is a Recycled Paint Program that provides free exterior home painting for income qualified elderly citizens 60 or older, hurricane victims, and disabled or single parent households.

### 3.2. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

#### 3.2.1. Land Assembly for Westgate Avenue Mixed-Use Projects

The CRA has assembled approximately two acres of land located within the Westgate Avenue corridor and is holding the assemblage for issuance of a public RFQ. The redevelopment site is bordered by Westgate Avenue to the north, Nokomis Avenue to the south, Osceola Drive to the east, and Seminole Boulevard to the west. The intent is to collaborate with private sector business, property owners, developers and others to expand the investment. The fundamental goal is to position Westgate Avenue as a mixed-use, neighborhood commercial destination of a quality that not only serves the needs of the adjacent resident population, but also is attractive to the downtown West Palm Beach and unincorporated

County employment base and those who visit the area. Redeveloped sites should help invigorate the Westgate Avenue corridor adding new compatible uses that help create an identifiable sense of place as it fosters housing and/or employment opportunities, improves access, increases the availability of goods and services, and helps create an environment that will attract other private investment capital.

### 3.2.2. Site Development Assistance Program

Launched in 2007, over \$155,000 in grants for exterior façade, site, and landscaping improvements has been awarded to businesses in the CRA area through the CRA's in house Site Development Assistance program.

Reimbursement grant funding is available to new and existing projects within the Community Redevelopment Area to help defray or leverage the cost of exterior improvements and project related engineering, architectural, and permitting costs associated with new construction, building expansion, and renovations. The program was established to encourage commercial property owners to upgrade their properties by improving the external appearance of their properties and/or invest in their operations. The intent is to eliminate blighted influences, stabilize property values, and facilitate redevelopment activity in the target area.

*\$155,000 in site development grant assistance awarded to businesses in the CRA since 2007*



Private development projects in the CRA: Indan Road Plaza (left) and Midpoint Office/Warehouse (right)

## 4. COMMUNITY

Activities or areas that create a sense of community from annual events to physical amenities are important redevelopment tools that assist in eliminating slum and blight. These efforts create a common bond between stakeholders and a sense of neighborhood belonging that goes beyond the boundaries of a particular property.

### 4.1. Annual Celebrate Westgate Festival

The Celebrate Westgate Festival began in 2007 as a way for Westgate residents to enjoy a day of family fun and friendship. Designed to provide community outreach, the CRA partnered with approximately 20 public, nonprofit, and for-profit entities. Gathering in the Resource Tent, these entities bring awareness and needed services to the community through an informal setting. Resource materials include topics such as family planning/prenatal education, preventive medical testing, homeownership opportunities, legal and financial assistance, census information, and



neighborhood contacts. A highlight of the Festival is the yearly community art project within the children's art tent facilitate by local artists. Attendance at the Festival has doubled to over 700 registered attendants since its inception.

#### 4.2. Westgate Greenmarket Express

In 2011, the USDA designated the Westgate area a “food desert” which is defined as an area whose residents have little to no access to a grocery store offering fresh produce, whole grains and milk within one mile. The CRA also acknowledged the problem of obesity in the U.S. was epidemic and one factor was the availability of fast food rather than fresh food in low-income neighborhoods. In response, the CRA began the mobile Greenmarket Express in 2012. The mobile greenmarket is designed to reach low-income households & encourage residents to eat healthy food supplied by farm. The Greenmarket Express is a retrofitted electric golf cart, donated by the Quantum Foundation, which follows a set route through the residential neighborhoods of the CRA each Saturday morning. The USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) allows qualified residents to pay with food stamps. The CRA allocates approximately \$20,000 annually to this successful program.



*The Westgate Greenmarket Express*

#### 4.3. “The Gate” Urban Farm - Community Garden



In 2015 the community garden was started on an acre of land owned by the CRA dedicated to growing fruits, vegetable and herbs for the community that ultimately will be distributed through the mobile Greenmarket Express. Individual plots and raised beds are available for individual residents. The garden also serves as a gathering and education facility as well. Once the garden is well established, the intent is to open a permanent greenmarket on site. The CRA allocates \$80,000 annually for the operations and management of the garden.

#### 4.4. Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office Sub-station

In 2008, through a rental agreement with a private property owner, the CRA opened a satellite office for Palm Beach County Sheriff's community policing deputies to utilize during shifts. The intent is to have a comfortable, accessible space for deputies and to provide an active police presence in the community. The CRA funds this space through TIF dollars.

#### 4.5. Westgate CRA Gazette & Outreach

The CRA provides regular community updates through their newsletter and through monthly CRA Board meetings. The newsletter provides information on upcoming events, resources and serves as a historical record of activities in the CRA. CRA Board meetings are open to the public and serve as a point of contact and information for resident questions or to conduct outreach to business owners.



### C. What have we been doing?

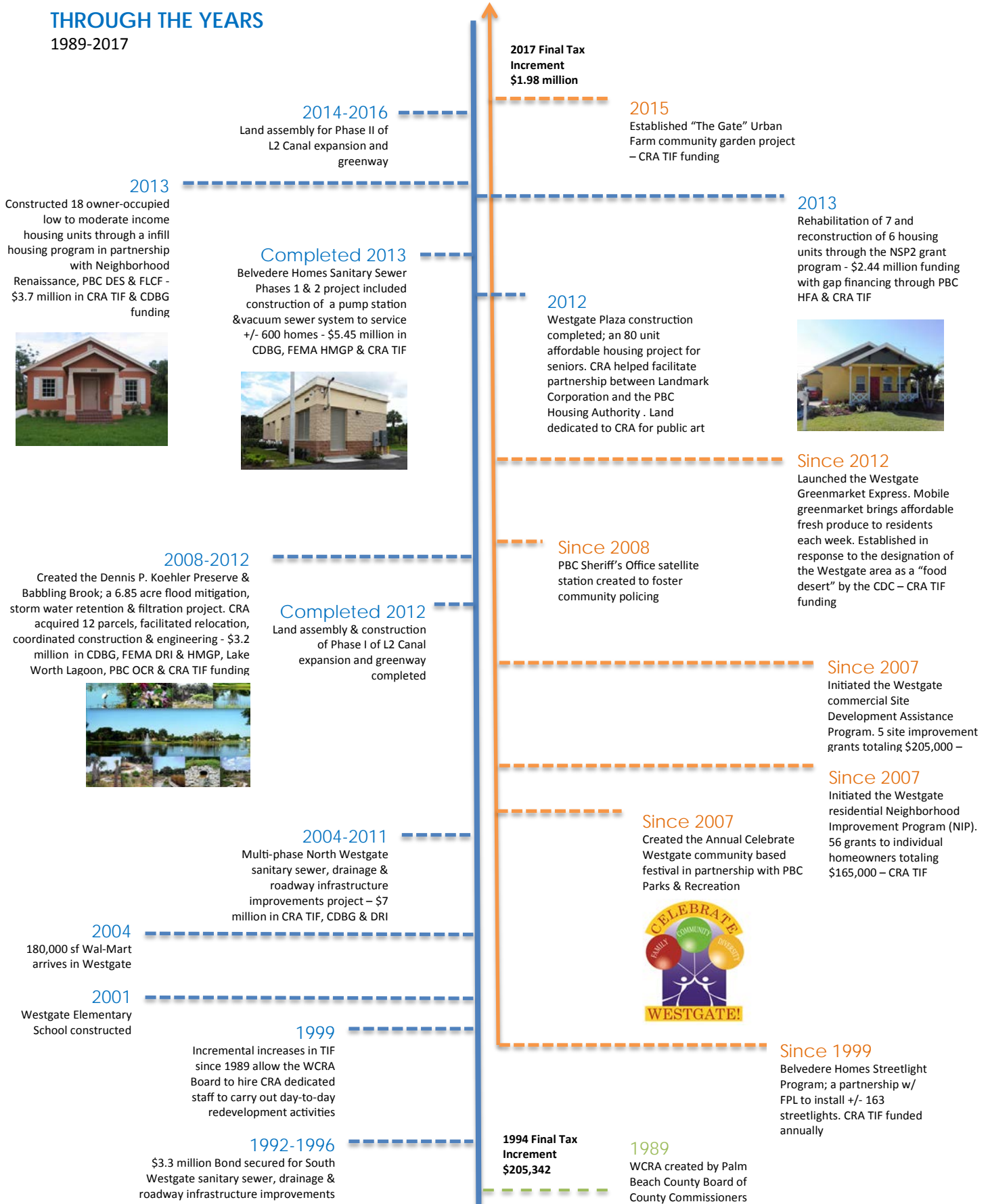
*In 1994 the TIF was \$205,342  
In 2017 the TIF is \$1.98 million*

Created in 1989, the CRA, its Staff and seven-member Board, was tasked to foster the redevelopment of approximately 1,300 acres of a community with documented slum and blight that was prone to devastating flooding. The range of work of the CRA and its current staff of four is substantial. The CRA has invested \$30.9 million into infrastructure improvements and \$6.2 million into housing leveraging TIF dollars with grant funds.

As the 2005 Plan envisioned, with much of the necessary infrastructure work completed, the CRA is now shifting efforts toward vertical redevelopment and economic development. Unfortunately, the Plan did not foresee the 2008 economic recession and subsequent slow rebuilding of the economy. In this amended Plan, the CRA is proactively seeking creative and effective ways to address needs and issues and create a new vision for the Westgate/Belvedere Homes community moving into the future.

### THROUGH THE YEARS

1989-2017



# SECTION 3

## Status and Analysis of the Redevelopment Area **WHERE ARE WE NOW & WHAT DO WE WANT TO DO?**

## A. Existing Conditions

### 1. LAND USE AND ZONING

Building type, age and street patterns differ throughout the redevelopment area. Prior to the creation of the CRA, land use was somewhat fragmented, particularly in North Westgate Estates, along Westgate Avenue and in the commercial, residential and industrial areas between Congress Avenue and N. Florida Mango Road. Existing land use in the CRA is predominately residential with more than 60% of parcels zoned for either medium or high density. Figures 1 and 2 on the following pages are current land use and zoning maps for the Westgate CRA produced by the Palm Beach County Planning Division (also see Section 6 – Supporting Documents). While a small number of parcels have an industrial or institutional future land use designation, more than 75% of the CRA has a commercial high future land use which varies from having an underlying residential density of 8 dwelling units (du's) per acre to 18 du's per acre dependent upon the parcel or site. Westgate Community Redevelopment Area Overlay (WCRAO) Sub-area geographical boundaries closely match existing land use patterns; overlay standards and regulations aim to transition areas of slum and blight toward revitalization.

There are several clusters of high density residential found typically on sites with larger scale multi story multifamily developments and mobile home parks. A lower future land use density of 5 du's per acre is only found in older established single family residential neighborhoods. Principal areas of housing are the Golfview Heights/Belvedere Homes and Belvedere Heights neighborhoods that consist of single family detached dwellings; single family, duplexes, and triplexes are commonly found in South Westgate Estates; with pockets of residential in North Westgate Estates and mobile home parks.

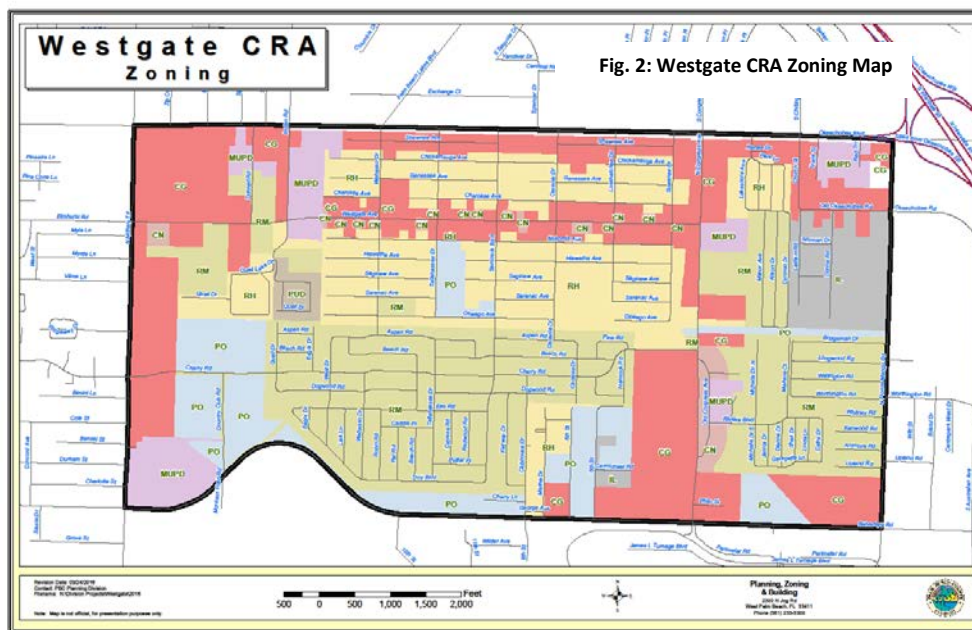
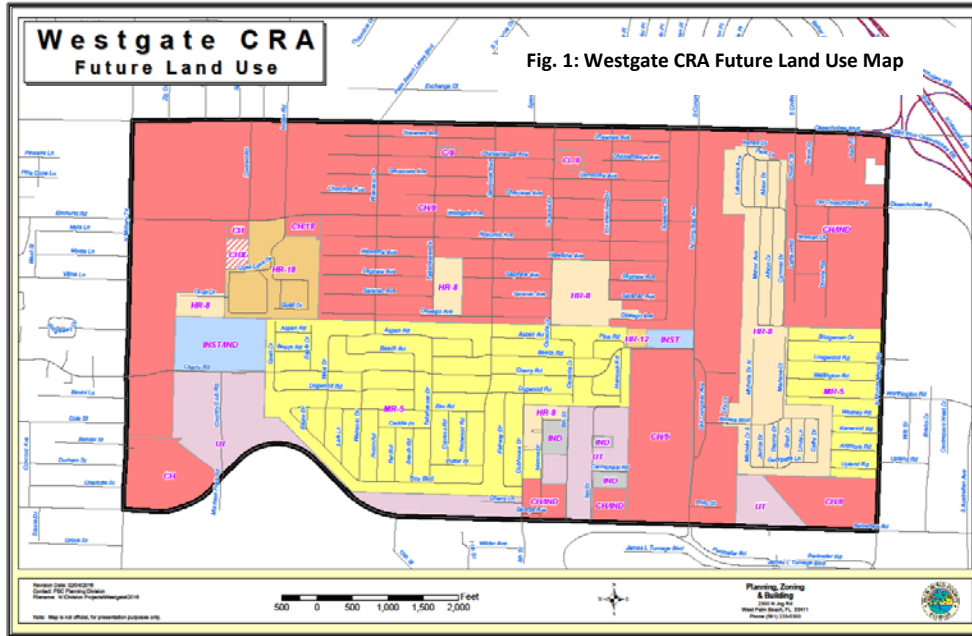
Commercial comprises the second largest zoning district in the CRA, followed by publicly owned (PO) and light industrial (IL). Commercial uses line all four perimeter roadways of the redevelopment area as well as along N. Congress Avenue, Westgate Avenue, and other interior streets south of Okeechobee Blvd. While Westgate Avenue has historically served as a neighborhood commercial corridor, Okeechobee Blvd and N. Military Trail, as well-travelled arterial roadways, have the largest concentrations of intense commercial uses. Auto related uses proliferate throughout the redevelopment area, in part due to proximity to the airport; rental car agencies line Belvedere Road, but also due to a large number of vehicle sales and rental, general repair, auto paint and body services along Okeechobee Blvd., N. Military Trail, N. Congress Avenue, and Westgate Avenue. Prior to 1995, Westgate Avenue was largely zoned CN (neighborhood commercial), but through a CRA-initiated corridor wide rezoning effort, many property owners voluntarily opted to rezone their parcels to CG (general commercial), allowing for more intense commercial land uses along this priority redevelopment corridor. Several areas in the northeast light industrial quadrant of the CRA are zoned commercial but carry a dual commercial high/industrial (CH/IND) future land use designation to allow for a better mix of land uses.

Many individual and assembled lots throughout the CRA are publicly owned by Palm Beach County directly or by other County agencies. Some are zoned PO, others UT (public utilities), and others retain the

*“Everything that can be counted does not necessarily count; everything that counts cannot necessarily be counted.”*

*-- Albert Einstein*

standard zoning district. Palm Beach County, by acreage, is *the* largest landowner in the CRA. The Airport Authority (PBI) holds 32 acres along Belvedere Road which will remain vacant as a dedicated airport runway approach. Westgate Elementary School sits on 19 acres; Gold Coast High School on 13 acres. The County Municipal Complex which houses a library and a training facility is 19.5 acres and the Westgate Recreation Center and Park sits on 12 acres on Oswego Avenue. Numerous County owned small wet and dry detention lots are scattered throughout the CRA. The L-2 Canal, which bisects the redevelopment area east to west, is owned in part by the Lake Worth Drainage District and in part by Palm Beach County.



To better understand and document existing socio-economic, physical, and market conditions in the redevelopment area, the CRA engaged Land Research Management, Inc. (LRMI) in April 2016 to conduct a CRA-wide demographic and housing study along with a market analysis of two prominent commercial corridors: Westgate Avenue and N. Congress Avenue. The demographics and housing study was compiled using data from the US Census and American Community Survey, Palm Beach County Planning Division, the Palm Beach County Property Appraiser, and field surveys. To supplement this effort, planning consultants, Gentile, Glas, Holloway, O’Mahoney & Associates, Inc. (“2gho”), conducted a visual or “windshield” survey in April 2016 of all commercial corridors and residential areas.

Okeechobee Blvd. and N. Military Trail are perimeter roadways with established commercial activity and character, and very few small or vacant lots to allow for infill redevelopment. And while these important perimeter corridors, and others, will not be overlooked in the redevelopment goals and strategies outlined in this Plan, Westgate Avenue and Congress Avenue have historically offered the best opportunities for commercial or mixed use development and redevelopment within the CRA area due to accessibility, connectivity, and available vacant land, and will continue to be priority focus areas. LRMI’s corridor-specific market analysis provides a detailed inventory of commercial development along Westgate Avenue and Congress Avenue including uses, square footage, and occupancy as well as predominant uses and market potential for these corridors. The most relevant data and findings will be summarized and presented in this section (see Section 6 – Supporting Documents for the complete Demographic, Housing and corridor-specific Market Analyses).

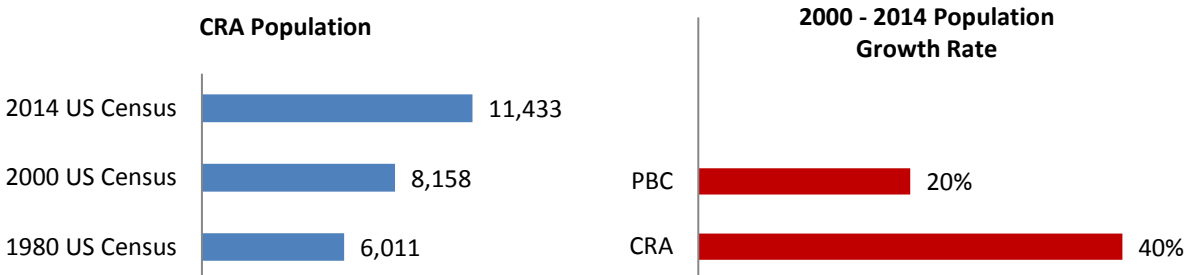
## 2. DEMOGRAPHICS

### 2.1. Population



US Census Tracts 29 and 30 are used to define CRA statistical data. In 1980, the population of the CRA redevelopment area was 6,011; the CRA was created in 1989. In 2000 the population had grown to 8,158; and in 2014, the population increased to 11,433. The rate of population growth within the CRA is twice that of the County as a whole; an increase of 40% compared to a 20% increase in the County between the years 2000 – 2014. The median age of 30 remained consistent

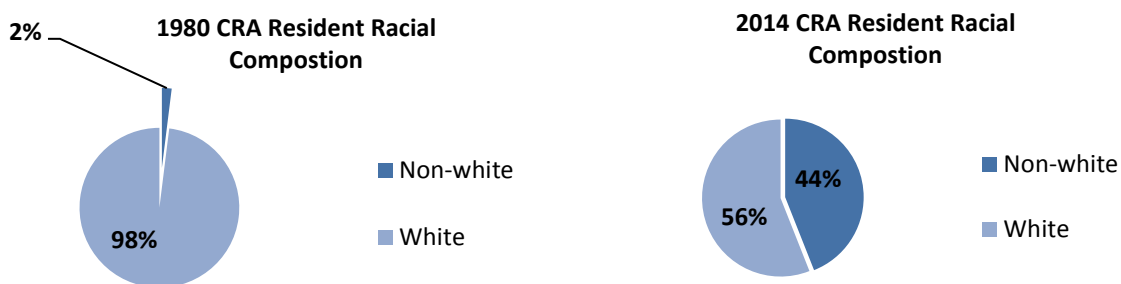
through 2000 – 2014. Overall, the prime working age group of 15 – 54 year olds experienced the greatest growth rate at 54%. Contrary to the overall trend, the 35 – 44 age group, defined as “millennials” or typically those born between 1980 and 2000, has experienced a decline by 24 residents. Young children (under 5 years of age) and residents of retirement age also experienced a low percentage of total growth; under 5 years – 158 residents (4.8%) and 65 years and older – 247 residents (7.6%).





### 2.2. Racial Composition

The racial composition of residents within the CRA has dramatically diversified since the original 1989 Plan; only 1.97% or 119 of the total population were identified in the 1980 US Census as non-white. In 2014, white (56%) and black or African American (30%) populations constitute the predominant racial categories. Similarly, the two predominant racial categories in Palm Beach County are also white (75%) and black or African American (18%). CRA residents of Hispanic or Latino origin constitute 52% of the total resident population, considerably higher than the 20% countywide rate. Within the population growth of 3,275 residents during the 2000 – 2014 period, white (42.3%) and Black or African American (44.2%) racial categories constituted 86.5% of the total growth. But by far the largest growth in the CRA can be seen from those of Hispanic or Latino origin which had a total increase of 3,288 residents.



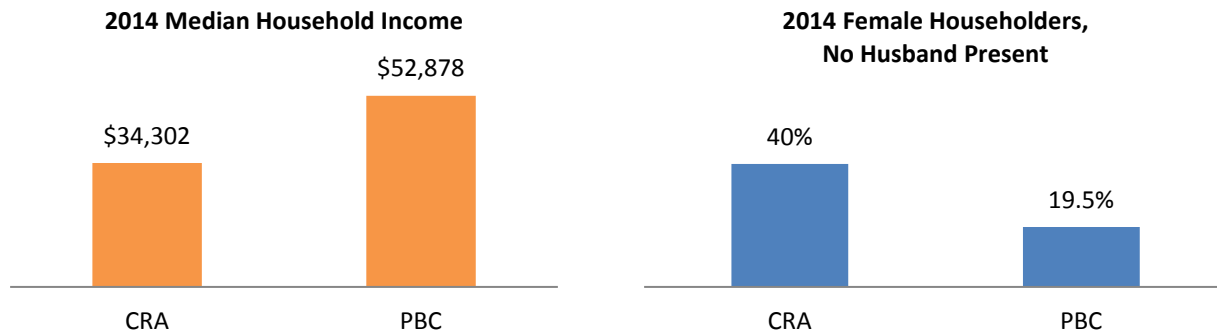
### 2.3. Household Income

Historically, median household income in the CRA has fallen below the County's median household income levels. This disparity becomes particularly evident when comparing 2014 CRA median household income with 2014 Palm Beach County median household income. In 2000, the CRA had 2,774 total households with a median household income of \$29,200 annually; in 2014 the number of households increased to 2,939 with a median household income of \$34,302; in Palm Beach County, it was \$52,878. The greatest growth rate in the CRA between 2000 and 2014 occurred in the \$35,000 - \$49,999 income range, however based on 2010 Census data compiled by the PBC Planning Division, 57% of CRA households remain in lower income ranges; 28% are considered very-low. By comparison, only 30% of Palm Beach County households are within the low to very-low income range, with 50% falling within the moderate and above category. The 2016 Palm Beach County median family income (based on a family of 4, per HUD) was \$65,400.

### 2.4. Household Composition

Of the 2,939 households in the CRA, 3.89 is the average number of people per household. The composition of households in the CRA differs substantially from Palm Beach County as a whole. 75% of households in the CRA are generally categorized as family households which is higher than the County rate of 62%. When examined by family type, only 46% are defined as "married couple family" versus the County rate of 73%. 40% of family households in the CRA are defined as "female householder, no husband present"; by comparison, this rate is only 19.5% in the County. Family households with a female householder with own children less than 18 years of age has increased in the 2000 – 2014 US Census period; as have households with individuals aged 65 years and over. This data points to trends that are not uncommon across the

nation and in areas that have a low to moderate median household income: larger numbers of persons per household that include children under 18 and larger numbers of single mother households with children under 18.



### 3. RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS

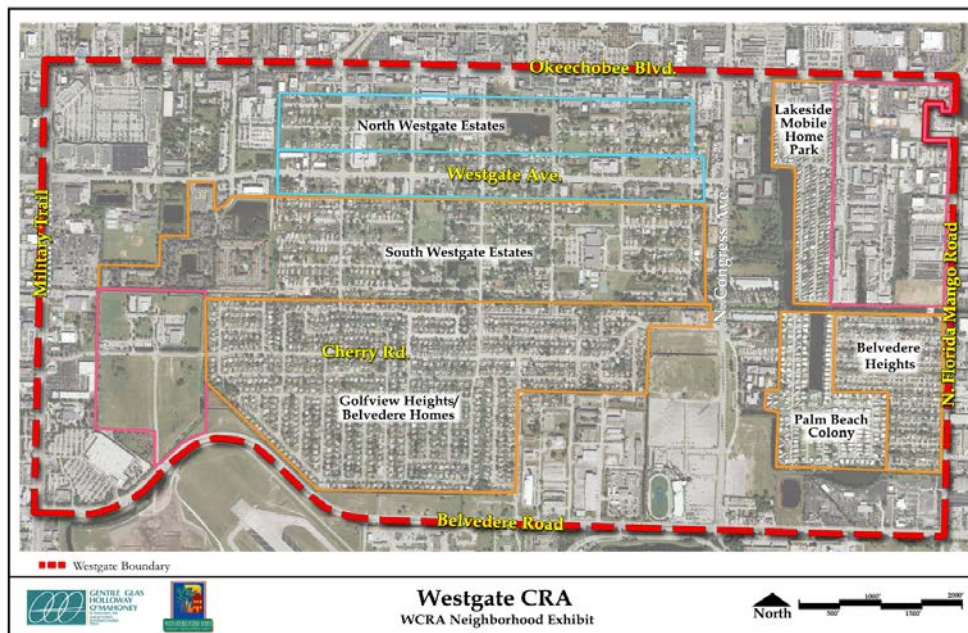


Fig. 3. CRA Neighborhoods (see also Section 6 – Supporting Documents)

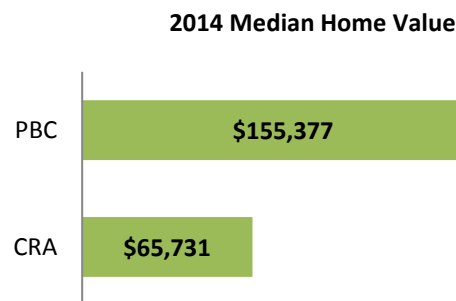
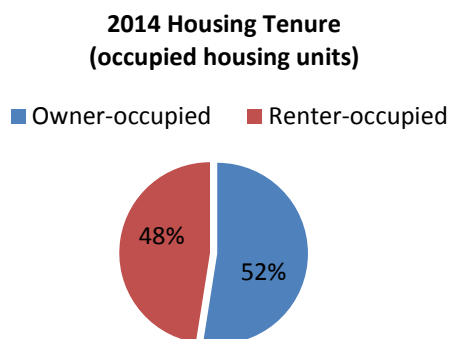
#### 3.1. General Description

There are 3,203 occupied housing units in the Westgate CRA redevelopment area that can be grouped into six distinct residential neighborhoods. Golfview Heights/Belvedere Homes, considered the residential core, is separated from North and South Westgate Estates by the L-2 Drainage Canal, which runs east-west through the center of the CRA. North Westgate Estates is a transitional zone with a mix of residential, commercial and office warehouse uses located north of Westgate Avenue. South Westgate Estates is largely single family, with several duplexes, triplexes, and some institutional and civic uses. Belvedere Heights, a smaller single family residential neighborhood, is located south of the L-2 Canal and

immediately west of N. Florida Mango Road. In addition to these neighborhoods are several multi-family low-income tax credit developments clustered along Westgate Avenue. The mobile home parks of Lakeside Mobile Home Park on Okeechobee Blvd., Palm Beach Colony Mobile Home Park on Congress Avenue, as well as two smaller mobile home parks on Congress Avenue comprise approximately 96 acres of residential land in the CRA. Housing occupancy and tenure, values, and general neighborhood conditions vary considerably between residential areas in the CRA.

### 3.2. Housing Occupancy and Tenure

Single family dwelling units account for 52% of housing stock in the CRA; 19% of total dwelling units are mobile homes; a figure which is substantially higher than in the County. Small multiple-unit buildings (duplexes, triplexes and quads) account for 332 units of the remaining housing stock. Only 7 multifamily developments in the CRA have 10 units or more, three of which are income restricted; Palms West (or Live Oak Plantation), Mallards Landing, and Westgate Plaza. Based on 2014 US Census data, household occupancy rate is 92% in the CRA; only 264 units are sitting vacant and 2,939 are occupied. In 1980, 68% of occupied housing units were owner-occupied; in 2000 58%; and in 2014 52.5% indicating a troubling trend that home ownership is on the decline in the CRA. Renter-occupied housing units have been historically high in the CRA; 47.5% in 2014. The rental vacancy rate has decreased substantially from 12.8% in 2000 to 3.15% in 2014 and at the same time the average household size of renter-occupied housing in the CRA is nearly twice that of the countywide average; 4.06 persons in the CRA to 2.67 persons in the County. LRMI conducted additional field research in May 2016 which indicates that the rental vacancy rate continues to decrease in the CRA. Only 3 vacant units remain among the combined total of 533 units in the three large income-restricted rental developments; all three have a waiting list for future availability.



### 3.3. Home Value and Affordability



Home values in the CRA are significantly lower than countywide values. The median home value in 2014 in the CRA was \$65,731 and the countywide median was \$155,377; a difference of \$89,646. Approximately 31% of owned homes are valued at less than \$50,000. However, PBC Property Appraiser data shows that 36 homes in the CRA sold for between \$125,000 and \$149,999 in the period from June 2015 to May 2016; only 2 sold for less than \$50,000. This indicates a possible reversal in the trend for the CRA but it also reveals that an overall lack of available

housing countywide has inflated sales prices in all areas creating a disparity between home value and sale price. In 2014, an estimated 52% of homeowners paid less than 30% of their income for gross housing costs; the median mortgage payment was \$1,127. This rate is at par with countywide averages. Conversely, 72% of renter households in the CRA pay in excess of 30% of their income for monthly gross rent expenses; only 60% of renters countywide pay in excess of 30% implying a much higher cost burden for renters in the CRA.

### 3.4. Character and Physical Conditions

North and South Westgate Estates, and in particular South Westgate Estates, are neighborhoods with evidence of deterioration in the condition of homes and property maintenance. While South Westgate is still primarily residential, North Westgate Estates has a considerable number of commercially zoned lots and sites and several commercial and warehouse uses along Shawnee Avenue one block south of Okeechobee Blvd. The Dennis P. Koehler Preserve and the Babbling Brook, a CRA wet retention/storm water filtration project on Chickamauga Avenue at Seminole Blvd. turned public art and community amenity, as well as the newly created “The Gate” community garden are located in North Westgate Estates.

Roads throughout the North and South Westgate typically have a 40 ft. ultimate ROW, with the exception of Westgate Avenue which has an 80 ft. ROW, and are in fair condition. Infrastructure improvements have been made to both North and South Westgate, however, sidewalk network connectivity and adequate streetlights are lacking. Access to Golfview Heights/Belvedere Homes from South Westgate is via Wabasso Drive and Seminole Blvd.; the only internal streets that cross the L-2 Canal other than Congress Avenue, effectively segregating these neighborhoods from one another. The area has large number of vacant lots, both privately and publicly owned, as well as many abandoned or boarded-up homes. Lot width in South Westgate is, on average, smaller than Golfview Heights/Belvedere Homes at 50 feet, with an average depth of 115 feet. There are several churches on residential streets in South Westgate including Westgate Tabernacle. The CRA provides the PBSO with a “sub-station” for use by community policing deputies on Suwanee Drive. Westgate Elementary School, the Westgate Recreation Center, and PBC Fire Station No. 24 are located in the South Westgate Estates neighborhood, and serve as positive community anchors. Thirteen (13) new homes were built in 2012 in South Westgate Estates through a CRA partnership with Neighborhood Renaissance; four Habitat for Humanity homes were also constructed in this neighborhood. The westernmost segment of this neighborhood between Wabasso Drive and the L2-B Canal, is an area where extreme property neglect, littering, and illegal dumping, contributing factors to slum and blight, are most pervasive.

Golfview Heights/Belvedere Homes, south of the L-2 Canal and north of Belvedere Road, and Belvedere Heights, between N. Congress Avenue and N. Florida Mango Road, are perhaps the most stable single-family neighborhoods; housing stock is largely in good condition and properties are mostly well maintained. Parcel width, on average, is 60 linear feet by 100 feet in depth; most homes are single story. All fifty-six (56) CRA Neighborhood Improvement Program (NIP) grants awarded since 2007 have been to individual homeowners in the Golfview Heights/Belvedere Homes neighborhood for exterior renovations both large and small. The CRA has made further progress in reversing signs of neighborhood deterioration

in Golfview Heights/Belvedere Homes through infrastructure projects which improved drainage and sanitary sewer, roadways, sidewalks and swales. The CRA also installed and maintains decorative streetlights which are an aesthetic and security benefit to residents on Cherry Road. A pedestrian walkway crosses the L-2 Canal at Osceola Drive from Aspen Road with direct access to Westgate Elementary School at Osceola Drive at Hiawatha Avenue. There are no neighborhood parks in Golfview Heights/Belvedere Homes or Belvedere Heights neighborhoods.

Lakeside and Palm Beach Colony Mobile Home Parks are privately owned and streets and individual lots within these communities are fairly well maintained; both parks have a dedicated access road which sets the communities back from the road, effectively screening them from public view. These mobile home parks have a combined total of 541 dwelling units and a combined 2016 assessed value of \$22.8 million. Both developments have a club house and common area pool for community residents. Lakeside Mobile Home Park has historically suffered from flooding during storm events, but CRA infrastructure and flood mitigation projects have done much to alleviate this condition. Both mobile home parks have privately owned wet retention lakes that serve as on site storm water storage. Two small mobile home parks on Congress Avenue, less than two acres each, are less well maintained and lack any real curb appeal. Internal roadways are poorly maintained, and individual mobile homes, particularly in the southernmost park, are in dilapidated condition and crowded onto tiny lots with minimal setbacks and virtually non-existent landscaping.

#### 4. COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS



The Westgate CRA is bounded by two major arterial roadways: N. Military Trail (SR-809) runs north-south and is the western boundary of the redevelopment area and Okeechobee Blvd. (SR-704) runs east-west and is the northern boundary; Belvedere Road (SR-7), a minor arterial roadway runs east-west as the southern boundary. Both N. Florida Mango Road (the eastern boundary of the redevelopment area) and N. Congress Avenue are severed by the airport property. Okeechobee Blvd. and Belvedere Road are critical components of the regional transportation network.

Okeechobee Blvd. has interchange access to I-95 and Florida's Turnpike and Belvedere Road has interchange access to I-95 and direct access to PBIA.

##### 4.1. Westgate Avenue

Westgate Avenue is a 5-lane designated Urban Collector roadway with signalized intersections at Congress Avenue, Loxahatchee Drive, Wabasso Drive, Indian Road and at N. Military Trail. Accessibility to the regional roadway network is a positive characteristic of the corridor. Traffic volumes along the Westgate Avenue link from Military Trail to Wabasso Drive average 13,764 vehicles per day. Traffic volumes to the east of Wabasso Drive are substantially lower, averaging 8,641 vehicles per day. A probable explanation for this disparity in traffic counts is that motorists travelling north on Military Trail destined for Palm Beach Lakes Boulevard or eastbound Okeechobee Boulevard avoid the Military Trail/Okeechobee Boulevard intersection by taking the alternate route of Westgate Avenue to Wabasso Drive. Wabasso Drive, on the short link between Westgate Avenue and Okeechobee Boulevard, is a two-lane designated Urban



Collector roadway. Prior to 2002, Westgate Avenue was a two-lane roadway; the County expanded it as a capital improvements project with the intent that it would act as a reliever for traffic congestion along Okeechobee Blvd at Palm Beach Lakes Blvd and the I-95 interchange. Ultimately, the project would be phased into an extension of Westgate Ave. eastward to Old Okeechobee Road with access to Australian Avenue and downtown; this would also serve to improve connections between the Golfview Heights/Belvedere Homes community and downtown. This extension project no longer exists on the County's Thoroughfare Improvement Map (TIM).

The Westgate Avenue corridor has historically been characterized as a small scale locally serving retail and commercial business corridor, with some office-warehouses, a smattering of single family residential, and institutional uses. There is very little uniformity in use, lot size, building architecture, height or placement. There are three large scale multifamily residential development on Westgate Avenue: Westgate Plaza, a seniors' affordable housing development at the western segment of the corridor, Palms West (or Live Oak Plantation), and Mallards Landing which are both income restricted. All other residential properties are single-family, triplexes or smaller apartment complexes under 10 units. Residential lots are generally located in the eastern segment of the corridor. Properties are often not well maintained and most homes are antiquated with some built as early as the 1920's. There are roughly 27 vacant parcels along the corridor; many are clustered. The CRA owns several parcels on the corridor that are assembled and held for redevelopment as wet or dry retention areas. The eastern terminus of Westgate Avenue is flanked by two gas station/convenience stores; and the western by a small commercial plaza and the rear of Cross County Mall.

There are 29 along the Westgate Avenue corridor currently supporting 212,814 sf of commercial land uses. Multi-tenant properties on the western segment range in size from 1.5 to 2.5 acres in size and were constructed more recently, during the 2000 – 2006 period. Midpoint Commerce Center has been purchased and two are currently occupied. These condominium spaces have all been sold primarily to professional services businesses and specialty contractors. There are four flex space facilities on Westgate; tenants include retail, professional and personal services, specialty contractors, auto repairs and service, and interior design businesses. Individual tenant bays range from 100% warehouse to 100% finished office space. Of the total number of commercial businesses, 23 are housed in structures built at least twenty-five years ago. Only three have been built since the year 2000. In addition to age of structure, commercial properties are small; twelve properties are less than one-half acre and an additional nine are between one-half and one acre in size. Only 2 properties are larger than two acres. In general, Westgate Avenue corridor commercial uses are located in older one-story buildings on small properties and consist primarily of single-tenant businesses. Of these businesses, certain uses predominate: 6 are vehicle sales and services, 5 are specialty contractors, and 4 are small grocery/convenience stores.

#### 4.2. N. Congress Avenue

N. Congress Avenue within the CRA redevelopment area is bounded by Okeechobee Blvd. on the north and Belvedere Road on the south. The corridor consists of nearly 340,000 sq. ft. of developed commercial space. Commercial uses can be placed within four general categories: retail, vehicle sales and service, professional office, and light or semi-industrial (i.e. office or showroom/warehouse or flex space and

warehouse uses). Several vehicle sales and service businesses line this corridor. N. Congress Avenue office facilities are categorized as “Class C” due primarily to their location outside of the principal office building concentrations in the West Palm Beach vicinity and provision of functional as opposed to upgraded space. N. Congress Avenue is 4-lane roadway divided by a landscape median at the south end, and is generally in good condition. Landscape median improvements completed by the CRA have added some visual interest, however ROW’s are lacking in character, and because there are so few shade trees adjacent to sidewalks, are not conducive to walkability. There is a signalized intersection at Westgate Avenue and another at Old Congress Avenue and the Kennel Club entrance; traffic flow is relatively constant during business hours but significantly reduces after dark. Traffic volumes along the Belvedere Road to Okeechobee Boulevard link, which average 15,323 vehicles per day, are the lowest of any Congress Avenue segment between Boca Raton and North Palm Beach. While most sites have buildings with good or at least functional architecture and well maintained properties; other smaller commercial operations, in particular auto repair uses, have structures which are bordering on sub-standard and would be hard-pressed to meet current zoning and building codes.

Most commercial properties in the north segment of the corridor contain single-tenant businesses. Parcels are typically small, with most properties less than one-half acre in size, and structures are generally antiquated, with the majority constructed prior to 1990. Parcels in the central segment of the corridor are larger than those in the north segment and most were constructed after 1990. Congress Avenue Office Park, a two-story office complex and Congress Commerce Center, an office-warehouse facility are the only multiple-tenant facilities. A single-tenant +/- 60,000 sf building constructed in 2007, previously the Social Security Administration facility, is currently vacant. There are approximately 7 acres of vacant land on the east central side of N. Congress Ave; lots are long and narrow reaching as far back as the wet retention lake belonging to Lakeside Mobile Home Park. The parcels are overgrown with dense vegetation and have spawn homeless tent cities that proliferate due to lack of exposure; prostitution and drug trafficking in these areas have become serious issues for law enforcement. These lots were purchased in late 2016 by a private developer.

The southern segment of N. Congress Avenue contains four commercial properties; 2 are single-tenant facilities and 2 are multiple tenant facilities. All buildings were constructed prior to 1990. Age, tenant mix and condition of the buildings and grounds utilized for retail uses indicate low rent structures. Airport Liquors, a 1,200 sf retail store/cocktail lounge built in 1980 sits on the north east corner of N. Congress Avenue at Belvedere Road. The historic Palm Beach Kennel Club on Congress Avenue at Belvedere Road is the major landowner along the corridor holding a total of 58 acres of land; only 11 acres contain built structures with the remainder vacant or utilized for parking. The Kennel Club leases portions of this vacant land to nearby car rental or car dealerships for storage of inventory. Future development and redevelopment of these large vacant parcels will dictate the future character of the corridor, and by ripple effect the entire redevelopment area.

#### 4.3. Okeechobee Blvd. & N. Military Trail

These high traffic corridors are major commercial thoroughfares that have an established character. Okeechobee Blvd. is an 8-lane divided roadway; traffic flow is constant and particularly heavy during peak

east-west commuting hours. Similarly, Military Trail, a 6-lane divided roadway, is a heavily travelled north south connector used as an alternative to I-95 or the Florida Turnpike. Historically Military Trail began in Jupiter and ended in Boca Raton, but has been truncated and/or renamed in various jurisdictions. The south side of Okeechobee Blvd. between N. Military Trail and N. Florida Mango Road and the east side of Military Trail between Okeechobee Blvd. and Belvedere Road fall within the CRA redevelopment area.

Retail is the most prevailing commercial use on Okeechobee Blvd.; car dealerships, gas stations, auto repair shops, and drive-thru fast food establishments dominate the section in the redevelopment area. Cross County Mall, the Mercedes-Ferrari-Maserati car dealership, and Okeechobee Place and Palm Beach Marketplace are the largest landowners. Shawnee Avenue, one block south of Okeechobee Blvd. runs through a large portion of the CRA, truncated in sections by several larger sites, from Suwanee Drive dead-ending at the Mercedes-Ferrari-Maserati car dealership site. The location of this street means that parcel sizes fronting Okeechobee Blvd. and backing onto Shawnee Avenue are approximately 100 feet in depth. Older businesses located on these small parcels would typically not meet current parking, buffering, or setback requirements, so substantial improvements would become difficult, as would infill redevelopment without considering lot assembly. There are several access points to local internal streets from Okeechobee Blvd. Church Street provides access from Okeechobee Blvd into the northeast industrial district. At its widest, Church Street is a 3-lane roadway with less than a 40 ft. ROW. It narrows further as it turns into Old Okeechobee Blvd. It is not uncommon for am and pm peak hour congestion to occur at this intersection.

Cross County Mall is situated at the corner of Okeechobee Blvd. and N. Military Trail extending to Westgate Avenue. The site sits on 40 acres of land including outparcels and a large parcel on Westgate Avenue utilized for compensating storm water storage. Although the mall offers a variety of retail, personal services and restaurants, long time anchor tenant K-Mart has recently vacated the largest retail bay. The site design of the mall is outdated with outparcels that face inward impeding sight lines into the site, and poor site circulation. Okeechobee Place and Palm Beach Marketplace, located at the eastern corner of the redevelopment area, are small newly renovated and rejuvenated commercial plazas with a variety of uses that serve and attract surrounding residential communities, businesses, and passers-by. The owner utilized WCRA Overlay standards to push outparcel buildings toward the street creating a frontage that is engaging and active. The rehabilitation of the commercial plazas at this corner has re-activated the area, however without a dedicated traffic signal; the heavy flow of traffic on Okeechobee during peak hours often leads to ingress/egress back-ups. Okeechobee Steakhouse at the corner of Okeechobee Blvd. and Wabasso Drive is landmark feature; the restaurant is expanding to include a catering business on Shawnee Avenue. Several Okeechobee Blvd. development projects are either currently in the entitlements process or building permit review including a Cumberland Farms gas station; Marino Motors, a high-end auto showroom that is repurposing an existing site for a new use, the renovation and expansion of the Mercedes-Ferrari-Maserati car dealership, and a proposed drive-thru restaurant.

N. Military Trail offers similar if not identical commercial uses to Okeechobee Blvd.: car dealerships, auto repair and maintenance, retail, personal services and fast food restaurants. The Ford and Lincoln car

dealerships and Walmart are the largest landowners. The buildings and site at Palm Beach Commons, a small 6.5-acre commercial plaza, have been recently renovated with Key West architectural features and increased landscaping, however the plaza is set too far back from the road making it difficult to identify shops and services without the benefit of signage. The 180,000 sf Walmart, built in 2004, is situated at the corner of N. Military Trail and Belvedere Road serving Golfview Heights/Belvedere Homes and other residential communities to the west. There is only one 2-acre vacant site zoned multifamily residential on the segment of N. Military Trail within CRA boundaries.

#### 4.4. Belvedere Road

This southern CRA boundary is a major roadway that runs on the north side of the Palm Beach International Airport. Lacking any significant memorable character, this corridor contains a mix of uses as well as underutilized parcels of land. Most parcels are publicly owned either by the Airport Authority or the US Government; an operating US Navy barracks and training facility is at Clubhouse Drive and Belvedere Road. Country Club Road provides access from Belvedere Road to a County municipal facility which houses a newly opened library and PBSO storage and training facilities. The Airport Authority holds a large swath of vacant land along Belvedere Road earmarked for future airport-related service projects and terminal support facilities in publicly owned buildings and parcels. Many parcels are within the runway protection zone so private development is restricted by use and by height, but some do offer development potential. Several national brand car rental agencies line Belvedere Road to serve airport travelers and form the principal land use in this segment of Belvedere Road within the redevelopment area. In total, approximately 36.2 acres and 2,395 linear feet of frontage along Belvedere Road are dedicated to car rental agency use. Although most businesses use walls or thick landscape buffering to screen operations from public view, all inventory is stored on surface parking areas.

#### 4.5. N. Florida Mango Road & Old Okeechobee Road

N. Florida Mango Road acts as a connector from Belvedere Road to the northeast industrial area and Old Okeechobee Road from Australian Avenue. Florida Mango begins at 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Lake Worth, is bisected by the airport property, and dead-ends before reaching Okeechobee Blvd. South of the airport, Florida Mango supports largely residential and some commercial uses; once the roadway resumes after the airport and into the CRA area it becomes more commercial, and after it crosses the L-2 Canal uses are almost entirely industrial; Old Okeechobee Blvd. divides light industrial from more intense commercially zoned parcels. The neighborhood of Belvedere Heights, south of the L-2 Canal can only be accessed from N. Florida Mango Road. The northern segment of this corridor is predominately dedicated to warehouse, office/warehouse, distributing, or manufacturing uses. With the exception of a small residentially zoned parcel owned by the County at the corner of N. Florida Mango Road and Bridgeman Drive, the only other vacant parcel is entitled to be developed as a 4-acre warehouse/contractor storage yard facility.

Old Okeechobee Road begins at Church Street and Latham Road in the northeast corner of the redevelopment area, continuing into West Palm Beach to Australian Avenue; it resumes on the east side of I-95 finally terminating at Tamarind Avenue. There is one signalized intersection on Old Okeechobee Road at N. Florida Mango Road in the CRA area. Old Okeechobee Road is a 2-lane roadway, with a narrow



ROW that leaves no dedicated area for sidewalks and heavy truck traffic that creates issues with flow and access. Intense commercial and industrial uses prevail.

## B. Identifying Opportunities, Needs and Issues

*"If opportunity doesn't knock, build a door."*  
-- Milton Berle

### 1. PRIORITY #1: THE REMOVAL OF SLUM AND BLIGHT

The primary directive of the Westgate CRA is, and will remain, the eradication of slum and blight. All programs and projects outlined in this Community Redevelopment Plan are conceived to ultimately arrest and reverse the impacts of slum and blight. The CRA has made great strides in upgrading basic infrastructure to improve the health and well-being of residents, has acquired land for open space and community amenities, and assembled lots for redevelopment by the private sector. But when slum and blighted conditions persist, the private sector is reluctant to invest, the tax base is negatively impacted, properties values are diminished, and economic growth is impaired; the pattern becomes self-sustaining.

### 2. GATHERING COMMUNITY INPUT

In December 2015, the CRA, along with planning consultants 2gho, hosted a community forum to gather input from residents, business and property owners and other important stakeholders. The purpose of the meeting was to understand what community residents, property and business owners consider opportunities for and persistent challenges to the successful redevelopment of Westgate. There was positive feedback and support for the CRA and recognition of the important infrastructure, housing and community work that has been accomplished. Overall, issues of safety, homelessness and loitering, property maintenance, and derelict housing were of most concern. The location of Westgate was overwhelmingly identified as being the area's biggest attribute. Many residents saw a need to increase home ownership and decrease low income rental housing. Property and business owners would support the creation of a local merchant association and more public parks and community events were seen as beneficial to the community. It seemed clear that for those who attended the forum, there was a growing, and encouraging sense of pride in place. When a community begins to take ownership, this becomes a base from which future successes can be built.



**2015 Community Forum**  
31 attendees including  
residents, business & property  
owners, County Staff, PBSO,  
and Commissioner Burdick,  
District 2

Location Location Location  
 Property Maintenance Merchants Association  
 Traffic Calming Home Ownership Dining & Shopping Options  
 Mixed Uses Street Lighting Crime Prevention  
 Remove Derelict Housing Bike Lanes Address Chronic Loitering  
 Public Art Public Parks Community Events

Post-community forum 2gho also conducted a series of interviews with CRA Board members and Staff to gather feedback. There was a consensus in opinion: generally, both the Board and Staff echoed the concerns and opportunities identified by the community. All agree that the location of the CRA is not only ideal but unique as one of the few areas that have not yet been fully developed in urban Palm Beach County. Work efforts should be directed to improving the physical appearance of the area, and attracting a mix of vibrant uses to N. Congress Avenue and the Westgate Avenue corridor to increase the tax base. Public-private partnerships would offer opportunities to maximize redevelopment potential; the Palm Beach Kennel Club is considered a key player and development of the Kennel Club land must be considered and anticipated. Strategic market positioning and promotion by the CRA would counteract a lingering negative image of the area and ultimately entice new investment. Positive strides have been made over the past several years, particularly in the completion of much needed infrastructure improvements. Moving forward, the focus is shifting to efforts on developing the vertical environment and expanding economic opportunity. Special attention must be paid to issues and needs such as increased police presence and code enforcement challenges.

### 3. NEGATIVE PERCEPTIONS: REPOSITIONING WESTGATE IN THE MARKET

Perception is often greater than fact. Regardless of the central location of the redevelopment area, its proximity to transit networks between the western residential communities and the eastern urban corridor, the airport, I-95, the Tri-Rail system, cultural amenities, and centers of commerce and governance, Westgate is either simply unknown to many in Palm Beach County, or worse, is perceived in a way which perpetuates a negative image. Era after era of sub-standard, devalued housing, property neglect, and pervasive crime have done much to create this image. Unless for specific purpose, little in the current landscape of Westgate captures the attention and generates enough interest for a passer-by to venture into the community; perimeter commercial corridors dominate and neighborhood commercial areas struggle to compete.

Self-promotion is often overlooked as a tool for success. People rarely come to Westgate, rather, they go through Westgate, in transit to elsewhere. Community redevelopment cannot be successful without attracting people to Westgate as a destination, encouraging new interest in the community, and most importantly, motivating the private sector to invest in Westgate. Proactive strategies that are both robust and subtle must work together to create a more positive image of Westgate. A fresh, modern Westgate brand coupled with a strong social and print media presence declares that the CRA is “open for business”. Promotional and programmatic CRA partnerships with local Chambers of Commerce, the PBC Business

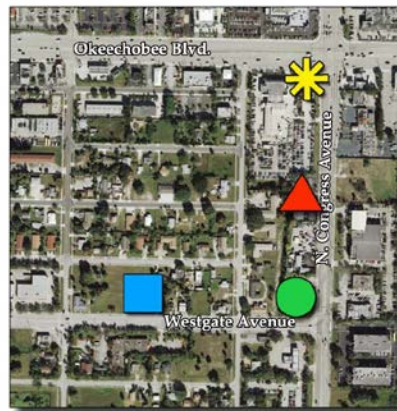
Development Board (BDB), County Departments and Administration can play an important role by providing a platform to showcase Westgate to a broader audience.

Changes to the physical environment through place-making can carve out a unique identity for the area. Place-making initiatives may take the form of installing gateway or entry features at prominent intersections that mark the transition into the community. These features could incorporate landscaping or hardscaping elements, banners, lighting or public art. Seminole Blvd., an internal north-south roadway that runs from Okeechobee Blvd., through North and South Westgate Estates, crossing Westgate Avenue and into the Golfview Heights/Belvedere Road neighborhood an ideal focus area for place-making efforts. The CRA holds an assemblage of lots at the southeast and southwest corners of Seminole Blvd. and Westgate Avenue that is targeted for infill redevelopment by the private sector. This intersection is anticipated as a future hub of a revitalized Westgate Avenue corridor. Other important intersections may include: Okeechobee Blvd. at Wabasso Drive which turns into Palm Beach Lakes Blvd north of Okeechobee Blvd. (“The Gate” Urban Farm is located on Wabasso Drive at Genessee Avenue); N. Congress Avenue and N. Military Trail as the east and west access points to Westgate Avenue; and N. Military Trail at Cherry Road as the access to the Golfview Heights/Belvedere Homes neighborhood. Wayfinding signage may also be installed to direct people to positive community amenities such as the Dennis P. Koehler Preserve and Babbling Brook, “The Gate” Urban Farm, Westgate Elementary School or the Westgate Recreation Center.

### Place Making Opportunities

#### Legend:

-  Entry Feature
-  Wayfinding
-  Landscape Feature
-  Pedestrian Amenities



Examples of entry features, wayfinding & pedestrian amenities

An important element to renewing the image of Westgate is to facilitate the creation of engaging and interactive public places for the community to gather. Project for Public Spaces advocates a “lighter, quicker, cheaper”<sup>1</sup> approach that is based on taking small incremental steps towards building a stronger community. The benefit in adopting this approach for place-making initiatives is that it allows for a certain amount of experimentation in what works and what doesn’t without the burden of large amounts of administrative effort and public investment. Projects using this approach can be as simple as a temporary or pop-up park utilizing a CRA owned vacant lot or a commercial parking lot or one-of-a-kind, fun events centered around a theme familiar to the community, like cars or aviation, or a community flea market or garage sale that can draw interest from outside of the community. Once redevelopment accelerates, the “Main Street” program, founded by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, can become a successful tool that the CRA could use for promotion and advertising. The designation requires that a town, neighborhood or community have an identifiable downtown core or main street and the interest and involvement of local merchants is critical to activate and sustain the program.

#### 4. NURTURING ECONOMIC VITALITY: OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT

Essential to the success of an emergent Westgate brand is a vibrant Westgate economy; one cannot be accomplished without the other. The Westgate CRA is charged with the task of community redevelopment within a much greater functional and operational system. Unincorporated Palm Beach County is expansive; small incremental increases to the tax base within the redevelopment area, although important, are likely to have little impact; larger projects are needed. In reality, the success of the Westgate economy may be more dependent upon and linked to the actions and successes of its neighbors. The City of West Palm Beach, and in particular, its urban core, is undoubtedly experiencing a tremendous boom, both economically and culturally. The Westgate CRA can not only look to West Palm Beach, and other jurisdictions, for inspiration, it can forge cross-jurisdictional partnerships to achieve mutually beneficial goals. Is there an opportunity to attract spin-off or complementary businesses? Are downtown transportation networks challenged to meet demand? Has the downtown residential or commercial rental market been saturated? How can the CRA fill a need or offer alternatives?

##### 4.1. Small Businesses

Demographics, both existing and projected, can provide some direction on how best to formulate an economic development strategy. Data compiled by LRMI indicates that the most residents of the CRA are of working age, the Hispanic population is growing, the population is generally much more racially diverse, there is an increase in single mothers and a notable decline in the millennial age group. While attracting, and retaining, a younger, hipper generation to Westgate through unique and



A microbrewery in Asheville, NC

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.pps.org/reference/lighter-quicker-cheaper/>



trending social amenities, work co-ops, live-work loft space, or workforce housing types is priority; the provision of a service, or a retail or dining experience that speaks to the existing population is equally as important to achieve. To propel economic development forward, the CRA must take a balanced proactive approach. Initiatives to recruit or capture a trend, target a niche market, or satisfy a service or resource need in the community are a key focus.

A small business incubator initiative or microenterprise cooperative would target a specific type of specialty industry, retail or service provider, or a cluster of complementary collocated businesses such as design-build services, microbrewery-food truck start-ups, or music-art collectives. A business recruitment strategy would seek to actively pursue a business or industry type that is lacking in the community. For example, currently there are no banking institutions within the CRA boundaries; the presence of a legitimate bank would counteract predatory lending operations like check cashing or pawn shops. The CRA may offer grant funding incentives to start-up or relocate a small business to the CRA. The development of a Merchants Association can be a strong force in promoting the variety of services Westgate offers and a way for small businesses to interact, share resources, advertising costs, and cross-market.

#### 4.2. Priority Commercial Corridor #1: Westgate Avenue

Envisioned as the CRA's downtown commercial district in the 2005 plan, "Westgate Village" is a ..."redeveloped commercial area along Westgate Avenue, with a plaza at the intersection of Westgate Avenue and Seminole Road; Westgate would be fronted by mixed use buildings close to the sidewalk. Parking is located at the rear, with smaller offices or residential apartments on the second or third stories. The plaza itself becomes a community gathering area." The intent of this vision has shaped land acquisition, as well as design and property development regulations within the WCRA Overlay Sub-area for the corridor.

The Westgate Avenue corridor continues to represent both a challenge and an incredible redevelopment opportunity; multiple vacant parcels and underutilized commercial buildings lend themselves to complete reinvention. The area of North Westgate between the Okeechobee Blvd. commercial corridor and Westgate Avenue creates an ideal transitional zone to mixed use. But the corridor is land-locked; it is not a thoroughfare, so it must become a destination corridor making the right mix of uses even more critical to its success. Mixed use is fundamental to the practical theory of new urbanism. The WCRA zoning overlay is premised on utilizing "smart growth and form based code principles that incorporates urban design and mixed use development to achieve infill, residential and commercial redevelopment". In reality, this mandate has been difficult to achieve. While the CRA may consider an eventual transition from traditional mixed use, the intent of new urbanism will be upheld by encouraging vertical or horizontal, as well as a functional integration of a mix of uses that still remain true to form based code principles.

Smart Growth America states that, "small-scale manufacturers like woodworkers, steel fabricators, hardware prototypers, microbrewers, and coffee roasters with regional distribution have emerged as a significant force in today's urban economy. For many cities and neighborhoods suffering the loss of skilled-

labor employers, this emerging, city-oriented industrial sector offers a powerful revitalization tool that can connect residents to good paying jobs and economic opportunity in the neighborhoods they call home”<sup>2</sup>. Research by LRMI indicates that based on current market trends along the Westgate Avenue corridor, the development of single-story flex space should be anticipated. Office-warehouse uses were encouraged along Westgate Avenue in earlier versions of the Redevelopment Plan, proliferated through the late 1990’s and early 2000’s, and are now a prohibited use in certain Sub-areas of the WCRA Overlay. Traditionally flex space implies a combination of commercial and industrial uses, typically involving warehousing, distributing or manufacturing as the principal use and ancillary office space, or vice-versa. Light non-egregious industrial uses may be an ideal target market for business recruitment. The CRA may consider amending land use and development regulations to create a district or hub within the overlay that encourages flex space microbusiness. Showroom or retail space could be located within a building to front and engage the street, while warehousing or operations occur at the back of the structure; this development type may be complemented by the inclusion of second story or attached housing units.



<sup>2</sup> <https://smartgrowthamerica.org/small-scale-manufacturers-creating-good-jobs-great-products-vibrant-neighborhoods/>



Example of the “container” store trend in Buenos Aires

Of the approximately 2,260 parcels in the CRA, 184 are vacant; equivalent to 8% or 140 acres of land. Of the vacant parcels, 104 or 122 acres are zoned commercial. While many of these parcels are privately or publicly held for future development or storm water storage, 122 acres of commercially zoned vacant land represents an enormous opportunity. As part of its ongoing programs, the CRA will continue to acquire and assemble land, both vacant and developed, for infill redevelopment by the private sector in strategic areas of the CRA with a

focus on the Westgate Avenue corridor. Temporary uses, such as pop up container stores, food truck vendors, or flea markets that hold a vacant parcel for future permanent development may also be considered as an alternative as redevelopment begins to percolate on Westgate Avenue.

Comments from the 2015 Community Forum revealed that CRA residents want more retail and dining options along Westgate Avenue. A few neighborhood-serving specialty grocers and restaurants already exist and could be enhanced by the addition of millennial-oriented businesses, such as coffee shops, bakeries or gelaterias, although retail businesses that are not totally dependent upon a high volume of walk-in sales could also be considered since, at least currently, the lack of through traffic on Westgate Avenue is not conducive to attracting additional retail commercial development that is dependent upon exposure to passing motorists, particularly in the central and eastern segments. Small infill redevelopment projects are sprouting along Westgate Avenue that may signal a new trend; the purchase, renovation and conversion of single-family homes to commercial uses. The owner of a specialty grocer located on the northwest corner of Westgate Avenue and Seminole Blvd., has assembled adjacent lots, and has received County approval to expand and renovate the existing commercial structure, and construct a second mixed use retail/restaurant/residential building. Additional conversions and renovation of existing vacant structures and older single-family homes along the corridor offer immediate opportunities for seed commercial development and redevelopment.

The CRA will continue to implement incentives that encourage a property owner or developer to combine a mix of uses to allow for better trip internalization. The CRA will consider creating programs that seek to reduce or allow for credits toward impact fees. TIF rebates on larger scale projects may also be considered as a development incentive. The in-house CRA site development assistance grant program available to qualifying commercial properties in the redevelopment area has been successfully utilized by property owners to offset renovation costs. The CRA will expand and increase funding of this important program, and will work to fully develop a complementary façade improvement program. The residual impacts of these ongoing programs cannot be underestimated; improved building appearance, site layout, and landscaping increases property value, sends a persuasive message to neighboring businesses to follow suit, and can be a catalyst for transforming the look and feel of a street.



A Westgate Avenue corridor streetscape redesign that improves walkability, calms traffic, considers undergrounding existing utilities, adds bike lanes and enhances the Westgate corridor overall to attract new investment that fosters economic vitality is a top priority, as is the ongoing CRA acquisition of parcels between Westgate Ave. and Nokomis Ave. to Tallahassee Drive to complete the block for private redevelopment.



“Heart of Westgate” – ongoing CRA land acquisition & assembly for private & the Westgate Avenue Corridor streetscape initiative

#### 4.3. Priority Commercial Corridor #2: N. Congress Avenue

N. Congress Avenue offers several significant opportunities for development on privately owned property and this important corridor remains a focus area for the CRA. In the 2005 Plan, and through regulations and standards in the ULDC WCRA Overlay, N. Congress Avenue is targeted for mixed use development, more intense commercial and residential uses including multi-story towers. The 2005 Plan also envisioned a public-private partnership between the Department of Airports, the Palm Beach Kennel Club and multiple car rental agencies that would see the development of a vertical car rental facility and off site airport parking structure on the east side of Congress Avenue near Belvedere Road where piecemeal sites owned by car rental agencies on Belvedere Road would amalgamate in one central location. A hotel/conference center was also proposed to provide visitors an alternative with easy access to the airport. The expansion of the Kennel Club to include a casino, hotel, retail and residential is an ongoing objective of the owners, and an effort supported by the CRA. However, years of lobbying and attempts to amend State legislation that would loosen gambling regulations have, to date, proven unsuccessful. Looking to the future, the CRA must remain ever cognizant of the eventual development of Palm Beach Kennel Club lands when planning for business recruitment and streetscape design.

The Congress Avenue corridor, in effect, serves as a cut through for traffic going to and from the airport. With relatively low traffic volumes along the corridor, conditions are not necessarily conducive to attracting additional retail commercial businesses that rely upon visibility from passing motorists. As properties fronting Congress Avenue redevelop or improve their sites, the County’s Engineering Department has been requiring a ROW dedication; the ultimate ROW for Congress Avenue is 120 ft. The widening of Congress Avenue is a line item on the County’s long term CIP list. Proximity to the regional roadway network and the airport is a positive characteristic of the corridor in terms of attracting businesses that need to operate within arms-length to these facilities. Since the majority of developed



commercial office space can be classified as “Class C”, meaning least desirable architecturally with outdated building infrastructure and technology, those spaces have the lowest rental rates, take the longest time to lease, but are often targeted as redevelopment opportunities. This Class C designation is further compounded by property neglect and incompatible adjacent uses such as auto service and repair or adult entertainment. The CRA can take a proactive approach in facilitating the transition of developed commercial office from Class C to toward a more marketable brand by encouraging a dynamic composition of uses including residential. A CRA effort to beautify Congress Avenue landscape medians and ROW’s and create more transit-friendly and walkable streets can stabilize property values, along with providing incentives to individual property owners for site and façade improvements.

The development of vacant land into commercial or high density residential on the east side of N. Congress Avenue, and new occupants in the currently vacant Social Security Administration building, offers the potential to establish an improved character for that portion of the corridor and helping to elevate the desirability of the area. The CRA will pursue a partnership with the PBC Business Development Board (BDB) to create a marketing program for the Congress Avenue corridor oriented to attracting specific business types. LRMI offers the following business recruitment recommendations based upon conversations with BDB Staff, in combination with the locational attributes of the corridor:

- A/A/E/ (Aviation, Aerospace and Engineering): Companies that provide aviation engineering and technical support and prefer proximate airport locations.
- Business/Financial Services: The corridor has potential for accounting and insurance firms.
- Distribution/Logistics: Proximity to PBI is also a benefit to firms that conduct businesses that rely upon air freight, including import/export companies.
- Healthcare: Emergency walk-in care clinics have been in demand throughout the County.

#### 4.4. Belvedere Road and Collateral Airport Lands

The significant number of assets held by the Department of Airports must be addressed when considering any opportunity or potential to develop vacant parcels or redevelop existing sites along Belvedere Road. The 2006 Master Plan, prepared for the Department of Airports by CH2M HILL, recommended several strategies for the eventual development of airport lands, held both within the CRA boundaries and on other lands adjacent to the airport property. Based on a combination of regulatory restrictions, existing commitments, future aviation uses, and potential revenue streams, CH2M HILL suggests that the Department of Airports should develop 6 of the 13 properties located within the CRA boundaries. Remaining vacant properties are needed for airport use or have other restrictions. Recommended uses by property range from aviation-related to retail, hotel, restaurant, low-rise office and light industrial/logistics. Two large parcels along Belvedere Road are seen to have excellent potential for commercial development, including restaurant, hotel, and retail, given their extensive frontage. Set as a high priority, these parcels “...have excellent potential for commercial development...given their extensive frontage on Belvedere Road”<sup>3</sup>. Further, parcels located at the northern terminus of Country Club Road and Cherry Road should be targeted for redevelopment as commercial or warehouse/logistics facilities.

<sup>3</sup> [https://res-4.cloudinary.com/simpleview/image/upload/v1/clients/pbi/013\\_AddendumE\\_CollatDevel\\_Rev1\\_4448702b-d9ef-4c5e-82a6-da64f7270d33.pdf](https://res-4.cloudinary.com/simpleview/image/upload/v1/clients/pbi/013_AddendumE_CollatDevel_Rev1_4448702b-d9ef-4c5e-82a6-da64f7270d33.pdf)

CH2M HILL proposes the following manufacturing industry clusters: pharmaceuticals and medical equipment; communications manufacturing; machinery, equipment and small component manufacturing; and aerospace.

By attracting a cluster of specialty or niche airport-related businesses to Congress Avenue, Belvedere Road, and into the northeast industrial quadrant, the area begins to be perceived as an important core for airport support services. As a component of formulating a comprehensive business recruitment program, the CRA could work with the Department of Airports to cross-promote; the airport holds the land and the CRA can provide the development or redevelopment incentives. An opportunity also exists to partner with the Department to create deeper, larger wet retention areas on those vacant parcels not targeted for development. Due to its location in the C-51 Basin, larger scale development projects within the CRA are required to provide off site compensating storage if on site storage is not adequate. To make a project economically viable, a developer needs to maximize and utilize all available land for built structures, parking and buffers, so additional storm water storage is difficult to achieve. If the CRA has a reserve that can be dedicated, at least partially, toward compensating storage requirements, that becomes a powerful incentive.

#### 4.5. Other Commercial Corridors

Increased economic vitality, redevelopment, and streetscape improvement efforts in the CRA must not be exclusive of Okeechobee Blvd., N. Military Trail, and major roads within the northeast industrial quadrant. Although limited and restricted by existing development, no area within the designated CRA boundaries is without some development or redevelopment potential. A broader market or feasibility analysis would provide the CRA with some direction on land values and business recruitment. The CRA could take a more active role in the zoning approvals process in terms of architectural and site element requirements when a structure and or site is repurposed for a new or expanded use.

#### 4.6. Consolidate Parking

Parking within the redevelopment area represents both a challenge and an opportunity. Huge areas of vacant land are consumed by surface parking, both temporary and permanent; car rental agencies and car dealerships store vast amounts of inventory. There is a need to consolidate to free up land for development opportunities. The CRA may seek out a private-public partnership with car dealerships and/or car rental agencies to construct a multi-level parking structure. Properly designed and located in the appropriate area, a parking structure could serve multiple purposes by housing ground level retail or office space, or residential units above a multi-level parking garage. A parking structure may also serve the alternative transportation needs of the City of West Palm Beach; increased density and intensity downtown to attract more Class A office space end-users, but little



Winter Haven, Florida – downtown public parking garage

available land for parking and an inability to widen lanes to carry more traffic. A park and ride partnership between the CRA and the City of West Palm Beach to provide service via Palm Tran or the trolley from a designated “Westgate Park n’ Ride” to downtown locations such as City Place, Clematis Street or the waterfront represents an opportunity to solve multiple needs and issues.

#### 4.7. Go Green

Initiatives to “go green” are gaining momentum statewide and nationally; Palm Beach County was designated a “Certified Silver” Green Local Government in 2012. Moving forward the CRA will consider the practical use of green energy solutions such as solar lighting at CRA owned community amenities such as “The Gate” urban farm, the Preserve or other open space projects, and in streetscape design projects and programs. Green design incentives may be provided to private developers through an in-house grant program and/or through regulatory standards established within the WCRA Overlay. The CRA may consider developing regulations which allow reduced parking rates for mixed use developments that provide green elements such as hybrid or electric car plug-ins or bike-share kiosks.

In 2003, by BCC resolution, the Westgate CRA redevelopment area was designated a Brownfields Area. These areas are defined as “contiguous areas of one or more brownfield sites, some of which may not be contaminated. Such areas may include all or portions of community redevelopment areas, enterprise zones, empowerment zones... and other designated areas or communities experiencing economic distress”. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection, in collaboration with Enterprise Florida and the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity Division of Strategic Business Development, have created a series of brownfields redevelopment incentives that can be used, alone, or in concert with other CRA incentives, to attract developers to the area. The CRA has assisted a number of property owners with applications to FDEP for site or building environmental evaluation. The program offers liability protection and tax credits for assessment and remediation costs, a sales tax credit on building materials and a job bonus refund.

## 5. HOUSING

### 5.1. Existing Housing Stock

Approximately 40% of housing stock in the CRA was built over 50 years ago, between 1950 and 1959. Although progress has been made throughout residential areas through successful CRA projects to construct and rehabilitate homes utilizing public-private partnerships, CDBG and NSP2 grant program funding, widespread blighted conditions remain and deteriorating conditions ultimately lead to stagnating property values, further neglect and an increase in crime. LRMI analysis indicates that 18% of CRA households are estimated to be overcrowded (<1 person per room) versus 3% countywide. The age and value of housing, coupled with overcrowding conditions, leads to the conclusion that the condition of housing stock in many areas of the CRA is a concern. The CRA will continue to offer an in-house neighborhood improvement grant to qualified residential property owners to assist with the costs of exterior renovations. The CRA may also consider a program that assists homeowners in the identification and remediation of lead-based products and/or asbestos, a common issue in areas dominated by antiquated housing stock. The CRA could facilitate the creation of a Landlord’s Association to establish a communications network between property owners to share information regarding tenants, and that

would work with PBC Code Enforcement to improve their properties with funding incentives provided by the CRA.

### 5.2. The Westgate CDC

The creation of a Community Development Corporation (CDC), an operationally separate entity with 501(c)(3) status with the ability to actively fundraise and pursue grants for community improvements would obtain certification as a Certified Housing Development Organization (or CHDO) with the goal of providing an affordable housing stock in the CRA. The CHDO may purchase dilapidated or abandoned homes for rehabilitation or demolition, acquire duplexes to convert to single-family housing, assist homeowners with improvements to their property, and work with families or persons in economic distress to utilize available County resources and provide incentives for new home owners. The CRA or the CHDO would work in partnership with the PBC Department of Economic Sustainability (DES), Housing Authority and Community Land Trust (CLT), and PBC Affordable Housing Collaborative to leverage grant funding for housing programs. A Community Land Trust provides access to land and housing to people who are otherwise denied access; increases long-term community control of neighborhood resources; empowers residents through involvement and participation in the organization; and preserves the affordability of housing permanently. Though the program specifics vary among different CLTs, the basic model is the same. CLTs offer a balanced approach to ownership: the nonprofit trust owns the land and leases it for a nominal fee to individuals who own the buildings on the land. As the home is truly their own, it provides the homeowners with the same permanence and security as a conventional buyer, and they can use the land in the same way as any other homeowner.

### 5.3. Housing for Millennials and the Workforce

The CRA will work to provide amenities that stabilize the community and attract a new housing demographic. Programs and projects that foster economic development must work in tandem with programs that incentivize new housing development. CRA TCEA monitoring data indicates an imbalance between new residential square footage and commercial or other non-residential uses; the ratio is tipped in favor of commercial uses with a pronounced lack of new housing; more rooftops are needed to realign with growth in commercial development. The CRA's housing policy will focus on promoting a mixed income (affordable, workforce and market rate) housing type and tenure that supports a need within the community but also within the County; a strategy consistent with the County's inclusionary housing policy. The challenge of mixed income housing is that it can require a rather complex combination of public funds, tax credits and private investment to be successful, so developers are often discouraged or reluctant. Strictly



Examples of housing utilizing green principles (top) and a tiny house community (bottom)



market rate housing tends to be problematic for low-income areas because of the stigma of these neighborhoods, and conversely, strictly low-income housing, particularly when clustered, can also be a barrier successful redevelopment. The CRA will consider strategies and incentives that seek to create the ratio balance that works for potential residential developers. There is an increasing demand for housing that is cost-effective for those at a moderate-income level. Many millennials and young urban professionals require minimal living, space seek to leave a light environmental footprint, but want access to services and amenities. This presents an opportunity for developers to locate in Westgate and construct studio apartments or tiny house communities. The CRA may also consider a CRA-managed workforce housing program based on a target percentage of average median income; the CRA would have some authority over the number of County workforce housing obligation transfers allowed by a developer within the redevelopment area.

#### 5.4. The Issue of Homelessness

Based on data gathered by the PBC Housing Leadership Council (HLC) for the PBC 2016 Affordable Housing Roundtable, housing to address immediate sheltering needs for the homeless and those in peril of becoming homeless, as well as workforce housing for cost burdened low to moderate income earners are among *the* most pressing housing needs in Palm Beach County. Nearly 72,000 very low-income households pay more than 50% of their incomes for housing. The CRA is experiencing an unprecedented low rental vacancy rate and the average household income in the CRA is just a little over half of the average countywide. Homelessness is fast becoming endemic in Palm Beach County as well as in Westgate and it is an issue which cannot be ignored. The homeless in Westgate tend to congregate in areas where cover is provided by thick vegetation on vacant lots or easements, or loiter at 24-hour convenience and gas stations, and unfortunately, the presence of the homeless in Westgate impacts perception and investment interest.

The Department of Children and Families January 2015 Point-in-time Count for PBC<sup>4</sup>, counted 1,421 homeless persons countywide both in sheltered and on the streets. 1,006 households were identified as not meant for human habitation. The majority of homeless are male between the ages of 25-60. Of the 1,421 homeless persons, 157 were military veterans, 77% had a disabling condition; and 43% had a drug or alcohol addiction. The HLC promotes a philosophy of providing for the entire continuum of care – homelessness, supportive housing, affordable housing and workforce housing. The CRA may consider partnering not-for-profit or private developers that operate and manage housing for communities for individuals and families in need that may combine affordable housing with on-site supportive services.

## 6. COMMUNITY

The Young Foundation, a British non-profit urban studies think-tank, defines sustainable communities as those that “meet the social, economic and environmental needs of existing residents without reducing the same opportunities for future generations”<sup>5</sup>. The basic elements and scaffolding for a healthy sustainable community exist in Westgate, however opportunity exists for the CRA, through streetscape

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.homelesscoalitionpbc.org/p/12/facts-and-figures#.WI-U6mciw5s>

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.futurecommunities.net/files/images/Design\\_for\\_Social\\_Sustainability\\_0.pdf](http://www.futurecommunities.net/files/images/Design_for_Social_Sustainability_0.pdf)

and open space improvement projects, public-private partnerships, events and festivals, intergovernmental cooperation, and proactive community policing and code enforcement initiatives, to play a role in creating a less transient and more stable, and sustainable community. The Westgate CRA must always consider the “community” in Community Redevelopment Agency. Redevelopment cannot successfully occur without continual input and support from the community, by engaging the community, and by building the community. Schools are an important tool in community building.

### 6.1. Events and Amenities

Continued community activities sponsorship not only provides a way for the community to come together but also works towards counteracting negative stereotypes of the area. The CRA would facilitate the creation of a Neighborhood Association representative of residents of all six residential districts in the CRA. The administration and operation of the Celebrate Westgate Festival, “The Gate” urban farm and greenmarket, and the Greenmarket Express would ultimately come under the umbrella Westgate CDC organization. Public art can be an effective



Public Art installation at Westgate Plaza

and in expensive way to beautify a community. The Westgate CDC could work with local businesses, or secure private foundation grant funding to sponsor public art installations at key landmarks or intersections within the CRA. The Babbling Brook EcoART project is an excellent example of unique and functional environmental art and a resource should be shared through an educational partnership with local schools or by supplementing this community amenity with a public art installation.

### 6.1. Crime and the Perception of Crime

Community policing is a philosophy that places emphasis on police-community relations to solve problems of crime, disorder and fear, particularly in communities where trust in law enforcement is an issue. Partnerships and interaction with the community are critical. Community Policing Deputies dedicated to patrolling the area within the Westgate/Belvedere Homes boundaries have been assigned throughout the years and the CRA funds a sub-station for the use of PBSO Deputies. The CRA has forged a mutually beneficial partnership with PBSO Community Policing Deputies; information sharing has allowed the CRA to understand where law enforcement is focusing efforts. “Broken windows policing,”<sup>6</sup> a theory first developed by James Q. Wilson and George L. Kelling in 1982 – “if an area looks good, it sends a message that someone cares and crimes tend to decrease. Should one window go un-repaired, other windows are likely to be broken,” also plays a role in community policing strategies. Property neglect and crime are not mutually exclusive, rather one supports the other. The perception of crime is often more disabling for a community than actual crime statistics would support. However, according to data shared with the CRA by the PBSO in October of 2016, there is an increase in crime overall in the Westgate area. The redevelopment area is in PBSO District 3, one of the largest policing districts in PBC. From 2010-2015 the number of robberies against a person have increased and property crimes such as vehicle burglaries and

<sup>6</sup> <http://cebcp.org/evidence-based-policing/what-works-in-policing/research-evidence-review/broken-windows-policing/>

stolen vehicles have tripled in North and South Westgate Estates, however no violent crimes, such as homicides, were reported. Although the crime rate is generally much lower in Golfview Heights/Belvedere Homes, the types of crimes committed, or not committed, were virtually identical. Often, burglaries or robberies, considered crimes of opportunity, are more easily preventable.

### 6.2. Property Neglect

There is a need for improved code enforcement throughout the redevelopment area on residential and commercial lots. Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles uses landscaping, lighting, and window transparency and placement to show that areas are monitored and have ownership. The effectiveness of such principles is dependent upon willing property owners, proactive code enforcement, and a positive community relationship with PBSO deputies. Code enforcement data for select areas provided to the CRA by the PBC Building Department for June 2014 through June 2016 indicates that most code enforcement cases area related to overgrown vegetation, illegal or abandoned parked cars, illegal signs or no/expired occupational licenses along Westgate Avenue. In residential areas violations are more related to fences or structures without a permit, unstable, unsafe, or unsanitary structures, openly stored trash, or overgrown vegetation. The CRA is committed to implementing strategies to address crime and property neglect that hinder redevelopment efforts through initiatives that utilize security patrols or off-duty deputies to monitor activity particularly in areas known by law enforcement as problematic; the formation of a Citizens on Patrol through volunteers from the Neighborhood Association encourages those all-important “eyes on the street”.

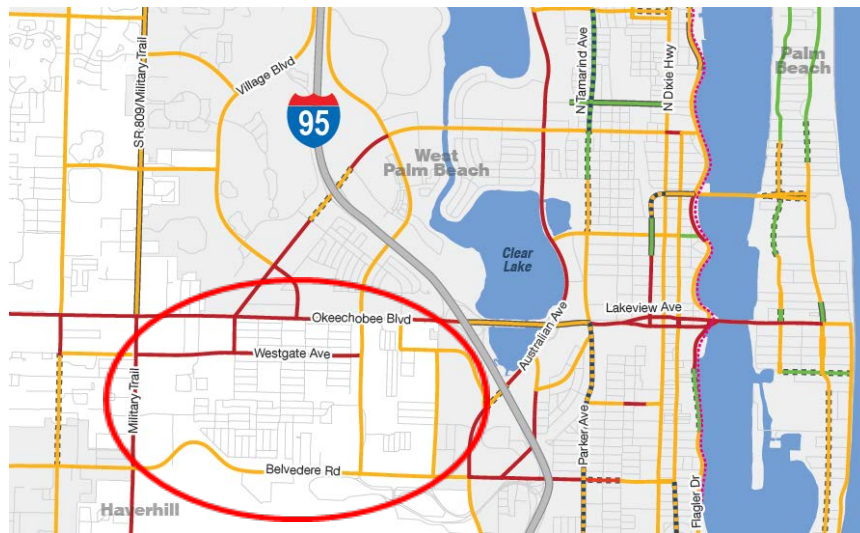
## 7. PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE: IMPROVED QUALITY AND FUNCTIONALITY

From the Finding of Necessity, through the creation of the Westgate CRA in 1989, and all Community Redevelopment Plans since, infrastructure improvements remain a priority. Successful CRA efforts to improve and upgrade basic underground infrastructure in residential neighborhoods will now be supplemented with a new focus on above-ground streetscape improvements and the development of public spaces.

### 7.1. Public Streetscapes

All CRA streetscape initiatives must consider walkability, a measure of how friendly an area is to walking, to be successful. FDOT adopted Complete Streets policies in 2014; an approach also recently adopted by the PBC MPO. Complete Street policies and guidelines are now being applied to transportation improvement initiatives throughout the County. Similarly, ‘road diets’ are also an increasingly popular tool for creating a more walkable and safe pedestrian environment by slowing traffic, narrowing lane width, or adding on-street parking options and landscaping. Complete Streets and road diets could be considered for internal roadways throughout the CRA such as Westgate Avenue, Congress Avenue, Seminole Blvd., and Wabasso Drive. A recent MPO pedestrian safety audit revealed that Okeechobee Blvd. at N. Military Trail is among the most dangerous intersections in Palm Beach County for pedestrian related fatalities. At the end of 2016 the MPO also created a bicycle level of service classification for major roadways in the County. Westgate Avenue, N. Military Trail, and Okeechobee Blvd. are determined to be areas of high caution for cyclists (see graphic and legend below). The CRA has an inherent responsibility to work with the County, the MPO, and the City of West Palm Beach to ensure that any planned improvements provide

better walkability and safety for residents walking or biking to and from places of employment or residence in the CRA. Where walkability may be lacking, the redevelopment area does have well-connected transit services to downtown, Tri-Rail, the Palm Beach Outlets and PBIA (see Transit Map included in Section 6 – Supporting Documents).



PBC MPO Bike Suitability Map & BLOS (bike level of service)

**Red = Caution** – high vehicle traffic, and high speed roads (>35 mph) with no designated space for bicyclists to travel, and traffic from heavy vehicles, such as freight trucks

**Yellow = Fair** – moderate to high vehicle traffic and low speed roads (<35 mph) with no designated bike facilities, or high speed roads (>35 mph) with some space for bicyclists to travel.

[http://www.palmbeachmpo.org/static/site/files/BikePalmBeach/Bike\\_Suitability\\_Map.pdf](http://www.palmbeachmpo.org/static/site/files/BikePalmBeach/Bike_Suitability_Map.pdf)

Although the County has deemed the Westgate Avenue Extension not-viable, the CRA still considers a connector through the eastern section of the CRA important to redevelopment and economic development efforts by bringing more downtown-destined through traffic along the corridor. An extension would designate Westgate Avenue a thoroughfare which in turns allow the CRA to pursue funding offered by MPO or FDOT for streetscape improvement projects that otherwise would not be available since Westgate is currently an urban collector. Among the priorities identified by residents at the 2015 Community Forum was improved street lighting throughout residential neighborhoods. The CRA has installed and maintains 163 standard FPL streetlights in North and South Westgate Estates, and 40 more decorative streetlights in Belvedere Homes through the Cherry Road Streetlight project. Certain pockets and neighborhoods, however, are still not well lit. To supplement this ongoing streetlight program, the CRA will partner with MPO, DES, the Office of Community Revitalization (OCR), Engineering, and FPL to install additional streetlights in Westgate Estates, Belvedere Homes, and Belvedere Heights.

Based on 2014 data, of the 11,433 residents in the redevelopment area 2,912 are between 0 and 19 years of age; a significant base of day care, pre, elementary and high school aged children. Of those 2,912 school-aged children, a certain percentage would be assumed to attend Westgate Elementary School. A Safe Routes to School initiative by the CRA in partnership with the PBC School District, through funding by FDOT and the Municipal Planning Organization (MPO) would seek to improve the existing infrastructure to provide a better path for children to walk or bike to school. A CRA-owned parcel at Osceola Drive at Aspen Road in Golfview Heights/Belvedere Homes offers opportunity to create a pocket park, either passive or active, dedicated to this neighborhood. As a part of a Safe Routes to School initiative, the CRA could also improve the existing pedestrian crossing by expanding it to allow children, either on foot by bicycle to more safely access Westgate Elementary just north of the L-2 Canal.





Safe Routes to School & potential Golfview Heights/Belvedere Homes neighborhood pocket park

### 7.2. Public Spaces

A vacant 0.3 acre corner lot in Belvedere Heights owned by PBC also provides an opportunity to establish a neighborhood pocket park. The CRA is actively pursuing the rezoning and designation of the Dennis P. Koehler Preserve and the Babbling Brook to a publicly-owned passive park to allow the CRA (or CDC) to hold community events and gatherings at this important community amenity. Phases II of the L-2 Canal Expansion project is ongoing. The CRA has acquired several lots along Oswego Drive opposite from the Westgate Recreation Center dedicated to this project. Since this effort is State funded, regulations require that land not used for canal excavation, must be preserved, in perpetuity, as open space. A greenway or linear park, combined with an outdoor amphitheater for community concerts, movies or events is ideal complement to the amenities available at the recreation center. A partnership with PBC Parks and Recreation could facilitate. There are many additional opportunities to create public parks throughout residential areas in the redevelopment area.



Potential Belvedere Heights neighborhood pocket park



Oswego Avenue linear park connector to L-2 Greenway project

### 7.2. Public Infrastructure

Certain identified public infrastructure projects are yet to be completed. A study done for the 2005 Plan recommended that 200 acres would be required for storm water storage needs in the CRA; 70 acres have been added. Additional capacity may be provided through the acquisition of lands along the L-2, L-2B, E31/2 and airport canal. Roadway and sidewalk infrastructure improvements completed in South and North Westgate 15-25 years ago will eventually require repair or replacement. Drainage, water main, roadway and sidewalk replacement improvements throughout the Belvedere Heights neighborhood; and Phase III of the Belvedere Homes infrastructure project targeting the southwest quadrant are anticipated to be facilitated by the CRA through grant funding. Maintenance of CRA-owned wet and dry detention areas and other CRA-properties will continue.

## 8. PLANNING FOR REDEVELOPMENT

### 8.1. Flexibility and Cooperation

The entitlements process for development projects in unincorporated Palm Beach County can be an arduous one. Once an application is submitted to the Zoning Division a project can remain in process, particularly if a public hearing is required for approval, for a length of time that becomes unrealistic for any developer to achieve a comfort level that a project can move forward. Many small redevelopment projects can “die on the vine” or worse, fail to initiate, when confronted with a daunting entitlements process. The intent of the WCRA Overlay is to facilitate, not hinder redevelopment. But, often property owners with limited resources find both the financial burden and physical property constraints more than they can bear in attempting meet both ULDC property development regulations and WCRAO regulations.

Assistance, cooperation, and facilitation from Planning and Zoning, and Engineering Departments are paramount in achieving the goals and objectives of the Plan. Consideration must be made for simplifying the process and regulatory requirements to provide the needed flexibility for individual properties to redevelop while maintaining overall integrity of the vision for the Westgate CRA redevelopment area as a

whole. Specifically, there needs to be greater consideration for redevelopment that encourages private investment in keeping with the Plan as well as flexibility within the WCRA Overlay to accommodate the reality of infill redevelopment.

### 8.2. Land Use & Zoning

Amendments to the ULDC, and to the WCRA Overlay, either initiated by the CRA or privately, occur regularly. Amendments to the County's Comprehensive Plan, particularly to the WCRA TCEA within the Transportation Element, also occur as needed, although not as often. Modifications to WCRA Overlay standards and regulations, and the ULDC generally, are made as conditions change, trends become apparent, technical glitches are found, or to accommodate new uses. CRA Staff recognizes that certain regulations and standards could hinder successful redevelopment if allowed to remain as is, while other regulations may permit development that is not appropriate or compatible with the goals and objectives of the CRA's Community Redevelopment Plan.

There is a need for policy adjustment and supporting regulations that consider the larger purpose and vision of the CRA by allowing broader flexibility in how individual parcels may redevelopment. Use, design and property development regulations as applied to most commercial WCRA Overlay Sub-areas can be thought of as a gentle push toward better building placement and massing. But, achieving the dramatic change envisioned on Westgate Avenue and elsewhere has required the implementation of strict design standards, property development, and use regulations and these requirements often do not come without certain, often unforeseen, problems. The CRA will consider re-evaluating certain regulations and standards within the WCRAO, the ULDC, or the Comprehensive Plan, that may include, but not limited to the following:

- 1) POTENTIAL CHANGES TO THE NC SUB-AREA REGULATIONS
  - contemplate a mix of uses or multiple uses as opposed to traditional mixed use
  - maintain form based regulations requiring building placement and massing, but reconsider integration of uses that is solely vertical
  - develop guidelines that allow adaptive reuse of land and structures
  - flex space regulations to allow for controlled small scale manufacturing/light industrial
- 2) WCRAO SUB-AREAS IN GENERAL/ULDC
  - renovation thresholds for non-conformities
  - greater allowances for setbacks, height, intensity, parking, loading, orientation or access
  - develop PDR's in the UH – building frontage, setbacks
  - regulate development by prohibiting uses that do little to foster economic development and revitalization
  - explore new concepts in industrial development – flex space mix, warehousing
- 3) COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (FLUE & TE)
  - an increase in daily trips/pm peak trips for the TCEA

# SECTION 4

## Redevelopment Goals, Objectives & the Work Program **WHERE ARE WE GOING?**



## A. Redevelopment Work Program – Framework

Since its creation, the CRA has been focused on the future while working within the reality of existing conditions. There is the inherit knowledge that you have to walk before you can run. Though much of the 2005 Redevelopment Plan still stands, the actual work of the CRA will be moving from an underground focus to vertical redevelopment and economic development. With the majority of infrastructure improvements completed and the real estate market recovering from its historic down turn, the Westgate CRA is poised to run.

The Redevelopment Work Program identifies the implementation strategies needed to reach long term redevelopment goals and objectives. Priorities must be understood within the boundaries of budget constraints, but also capture impromptu opportunities and incentives that may be created through other means. The Work Program must be a living, evolving document for the CRA.

### 1. STRUCTURE

The CRA has established Focus Areas based on an analysis of existing conditions and the identification of opportunities, needs and issues in the Westgate area. Focus Areas may overlap each other since many CRA activities are interrelated and serve a common purpose. The projects and programs of the CRA are designed to solve underlying problems which have a blighting influence on the Community Redevelopment Area, satisfy basic needs of the community, or take advantage of opportunities for economic, social or aesthetic improvement. Overall, redevelopment strategies of both the CRA and the County are embodied within these projects and programs undertaken by the CRA.

The following section provides a detailed description of the Work Program including the current and proposed projects and programs for which funding is provided or will be provided in the future. For thematic and organizational purposes, these projects and programs have been divided into six focus areas:

**FOCUS AREA 1** – *Economic Development & Redevelopment*

**FOCUS AREA 2** – *Market Positioning*

**FOCUS AREA 3** – *Housing*

**FOCUS AREA 4** – *Community Improvement*

**FOCUS AREA 6** – *Public Infrastructure Improvements and Public Spaces*

**FOCUS AREA 7** – *Planning for Redevelopment*

### 2. ADMINISTRATION AND PARTICIPATION

The CRA will coordinate and administer the Work Program, including the development of individual programs, projects and studies, with assistance from professional consultants as required, and in collaboration with County Administration, key County Departments and Agencies. The CRA may also work with neighboring jurisdictions, developers, private property owners, residents, and business owners to accomplish its work. The Work Program will operate under the direction of the Westgate CRA Board with the BCC as the governing authority. When launching a program, project or study that may impact the

community, the CRA will conduct public workshops that will serve as outreach to both provide information and receive feedback.

### 3. FUNDING SOURCES

The CRA, leveraged with grants from public agencies or private foundations, utilizes its TIF funds to implement its Work Program. Other potential funding sources are described in Section 5 and include, but are not limited to, the County, State and Federal Governments, developers, businesses, banks, builders, homebuyers, foundations and private contributions.

Budget constraints are always challenging but are a reality to the CRA. The CRA recognizes these constraints and other influencing factors. The challenge is to sustain the vision despite the limitations of available resources. Since the market downturn, and subsequent gradual recovery, CRA revenue from tax increment funds shows signs of rising but is still below its historic high of 2008/2009. Though efforts to spur redevelopment slowed within the CRA when TIF revenues were low, other important work continued to further the goals and objectives established by the 2005 Plan.

### 4. SCHEDULE

The CRA Work Program is designed to implement the goals and objectives of the Plan. The CRA has a limited life based on Florida State Statute, and the Plan is updated periodically to address current conditions and to identify progress in its redevelopment life cycle. Previous sections have outlined the accomplishments of the CRA and current conditions, needs and opportunities in the Westgate area. The Work Program is developing in its complexity; though many of its activities are ongoing, the CRA establishes five-year priorities but also adjusts these priorities annually to take advantage of leveraging grant dollars as they are received. The timely completion of a project or work program is dependent upon the provision of funding. Many programs are ongoing and will remain through the life of the CRA, while some projects are anticipated to begin and end within a five to ten-year period.

Generally:

- Planning and implementation efforts for the CRA are ongoing;
- Following the external audit and CRA annual report, and during the fiscal year budget planning process, the CRA will create yearly “action plans” that set forth priority work projects. The creation of an action plan will provide a mechanism to monitor and evaluate performance and reprioritize programs and projects as necessary into the future. The action plan also provides the record of accomplishments for the year;
- Five Year Priority goals will be established, reviewed annually, and will be adjusted based on current conditions, grant opportunities, PBC CIP’s, and available tax increment funding.

## B. Redevelopment Work Program – Focus Areas

Focus Areas provide an organizational way to approach work efforts. This organizational structure is not however, meant to be mutually exclusive, since many projects and programs contain components which may fit into more than one focus area. The following programs and projects are identified as priorities and will be actively implemented over the next 5 years – 2017-2022:

### PRIORITY PROGRAMS & PROJECTS

#### Focus Area 1: Economic Development & Redevelopment

- Priority Corridor Projects (Westgate Avenue & Congress Avenue)
- Incentives & Grants Programs

#### Focus Area 2: Market Positioning

- ReBrand & ReBoot Westgate Campaign
- Placemaking & Entry Features Initiatives

#### Focus Area 3: Housing

- Workforce Housing Incentives Program
- Residential Neighborhood Improvement

#### Focus Area 4: Community Improvement

- Community Policing & Property Maintenance
- Events & Community Programming

#### Focus Area 5: Infrastructure

- Streetlights, Streetscapes & Public Spaces
- Belvedere Homes Infrastructure Project
- Belvedere Heights Infrastructure Project
- Ongoing Maintenance of CRA Detention Ponds

### Focus Area 1: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & REDEVELOPMENT

#### 1.1. GOAL

To grow businesses, employment, and community potential for the CRA through programs and projects which encourage and promote opportunity for ongoing private investment and reinvestment that eliminates slum and blight.

#### 1.2. OBJECTIVES

- 1) To create opportunities and encourage private reinvestment to facilitate increases to the tax base and to accomplish the work of the Plan during the life of the CRA;
- 2) To explore innovations and ideas for community enrichment, planning & design, place-making, street beautification, sustainability and economic revitalization that stimulates redevelopment and economic development in the CRA;

- 3) To improve the physical character and economic vitality of Westgate and encourage the development of Westgate Avenue as an “urban village” or “Mainstreet”;
- 4) To establish policies and programs that better integrate and promote a shared vision for the development opportunities offered by established CRA interests, efforts of large property owners, as well as with adjacent non-CRA areas for redevelopment and shared economic growth;
- 5) To create a plan to improve the aesthetic appeal of the CRA and encourage more community serving dining, shopping, recreational and cultural experiences as well as mixed use development opportunities within the CRA;
- 6) To better integrate all commercial corridors into a cohesive vision for stimulating and supporting non-residential land uses within the redevelopment area;
- 7) To address social issues that impact community stability and limit redevelopment opportunities; and,
- 8) To improve and beautify the physical character and functionality of Westgate Avenue to attract new investment and a vibrant mix of uses.

### 1.3. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

- 1) **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** – Facilitate economic development through direct financial incentives and indirect development incentives via program and policy development including community input and the creation of a working group like a Merchants Association. In addition, work to create more community serving opportunities for employment, dining and shopping;
- 2) **FLEXIBLE DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS** – Develop flexible design considerations that permit the promotion of CRA goals of eliminating slum and blight, stabilizing neighborhood and businesses, and encouraging economic development, and to address impediments to developing incrementally with infill and small lots including parking, setback, landscaping, access, innovations, sustainability, resiliency, and the need to incentivize redevelopment;
- 3) **STUDIES** – Conduct market or feasibility studies to identify ways to stimulate balanced and sustainable economic development through the identification of surplus and deficit business and services within the CRA as well as practices that would promote and maintain economic stability;
- 4) **PUBLIC-PRIVATE INVESTMENT** – Examine the ongoing need to develop safe, convenient multi-modal transportation systems that benefit the CRA community by providing interconnected systems for pedestrians and varied vehicular options as well as promoting healthy lifestyles;
- 5) **BROWNFIELD & SUSTAINABILITY**– Operate as a resource for redevelopment of brownfield sites and more encourage more sustainable building practices;
- 6) **BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT** – Facilitate business growth by developing business incubator or recruitment programs, a regular working group/Merchant Association, and continuing to offer site development assistance funding;
- 7) **LAND ACQUISITION & MASTER REDEVELOPMENT** – Continued acquisition of land for private commercial and/or residential redevelopment, and to facilitate public infrastructure improvements;
- 8) **NUSIANCE ABATEMENT** – The CRA will work in tandem with PBC code enforcement to rehabilitate or remove derelict structures.



#### 1.4. PROGRAMS & PROJECTS

##### [1.4.1. Westgate Avenue Corridor Streetscape Project](#)

###### Project Description:

The objective of this project is to improve walkability and other multi-modal transportation opportunities, to beautify, enhance and create an environment to attract new investment to foster economic vitality within the project area. The project will include evaluation and analysis of existing context and conditions, including physical conditions, land use and zoning, and traffic patterns of the Westgate Avenue corridor.

The project will be phased as follows: Phase I: issue RFQ & initiate Plan; and Phase II: design & implement short and long term improvements. The CRA will include mapping and regulatory assessment of the area. The CRA will also include stakeholder participation. The CRA was awarded a \$25,000 FY 2016 Florida Department of Economic Opportunity Community Planning Technical Assistance Grant to develop a Westgate Avenue Corridor Streetscape Plan. The project commenced in January of 2017 and is anticipated to be completed by end of May 2017.

##### [1.4.2. "Heart of Westgate" Land Assembly & Redevelopment Project](#)

###### Project Description:

The objective of this project is to acquire parcels at the northeast and northwest corner of Tallahassee Drive for infill redevelopment. The CRA is working with the PBC Department of Economic Sustainability (DES) to secure Section 108 Loan for the project. The CRA has assembled approximately two acres of land located within the Westgate Avenue corridor and is holding the assemblage for the issuance of a public RFQ. The redevelopment site is bordered by Westgate Avenue to the north, Nokomis Avenue to the south, Osceola Drive to the east, and Tallahassee Drive to the west. The CRA may utilize property exchanges and equity partnerships to assemble land along Westgate Avenue and issue a Master Redeveloper RFQ or design the project in-house and initiate an ITB. The CRA will create a developer incentives package including bonus density units, TCEA trips, tax abatement, upfront cash, or grant application assistance. The project may be funded through CDBG grants, bank loans, or land swaps.

##### [1.4.3. Ongoing Land Assembly for Infill Redevelopment Program](#)

###### Project Description:

The intent of this ongoing program is to collaborate with private sector business, property owners, developers and others to expand investment opportunities. The fundamental goal is to position Westgate Avenue as a neighborhood commercial destination of a quality that not only serves the needs of the adjacent resident population, but also is attractive to the downtown West Palm Beach and unincorporated County employment base. Redeveloped sites should help invigorate the Westgate Avenue corridor adding new compatible uses that help create an identifiable sense of place as it fosters housing and/or employment opportunities, improves access, increases the availability of goods and services, and helps create an environment that will attract other private investment capital. The CRA may continue to utilize property exchanges and equity partnerships to assemble land along Westgate Ave., Nokomis Ave., Cherokee Ave., Shawnee Ave., Chickamauga Ave., or N. Congress Ave, for infill redevelopment.

#### [1.4.4. Congress Avenue Beautification Project](#)

##### Project Description:

Congress Avenue is one of the most important corridors in the CRA redevelopment area since it is the major north-south thoroughfare that cuts across the east central area of the CRA. The R-O-W measures 80' in width north and south of Westgate Avenue and 100' in width from Belvedere Road north to the L-2 Canal. This project will include R-O-W improvements to enhance walkability, improved landscaping in existing medians, entryway features and signage. The CRA will develop a Congress Avenue Beautification Plan and issue an RFQ to create a design for the area. The CRA will work with private property owners on property maintenance by offering reimbursement grants or match grant funding for improvements to site landscaping and/or building façade improvements.

#### [1.4.5. Westgate Merchants Association](#)

##### Project Description:

Along with CRA goals and objectives to stimulate reinvestment and redevelopment, the community has supports better business development and promotion. The effort will start with a Westgate Avenue Merchants Association and eventually expand to other corridors. The CRA will facilitate the creation of a Westgate Merchants Association through tax increment revenue to mobilize business owners toward a common goal – economic growth and revitalization.

#### [1.4.6. Site Development Assistance Grant Program](#)

##### Program Description:

The Site Development Assistance Program is an ongoing program available to new and existing sites within the community redevelopment area. The program was established to encourage commercial property owners to upgrade their properties by improving the external appearance of their properties. The result will eliminate blighted influences, stabilize property values, and facilitate redevelopment activity in the target area. The CRA provides funding assistance to help defray or leverage the cost of exterior improvements and project related engineering, architectural, and permitting costs associated with new construction, building expansion, and renovations. Funding is dispersed on a reimbursement basis only and the total amount of funds is allocated annually for specific prioritized project areas. Assistance from this program may, at the sole discretion of the CRA, be combined with assistance from other CRA grant or County initiated programs.

#### [1.4.7. Façade Improvement Grant Program](#)

##### Program Description:

The program would provide funds for exterior design and improvements to both commercial and residential properties in the CRA to eliminate blighting influences and revitalize areas. The program goal is to improve the visual appearance of existing structures to encourage activity and promote a safe environment for both residents and visitors to the area. The CRA will establish architectural guidelines for the program. The CRA will set the funding levels through the CRA Board as tax increment revenue becomes available on an annual basis. The funds may be loans or grants as decided by the Board on a case by case basis and may require matching funds from applicants.

#### 1.4.8. Sustainability Incentives Program

##### Program Description:

The intent of this program is to facilitate a more sustainable redevelopment that utilizes “greener” practices and design along with resiliency considerations. The CRA will encourage private developers to consider such practices through financial incentive based programs or regulatory deviations. The CRA will serve as a clearing house for information as well as look to partner with other public and private efforts to promote conservation practices for energy, water and natural resources as well as greener design practices that promote healthier environments for people like improved indoor conditions (natural lighting, low VOC, materials etc.) or outdoor experiences (walkability, reduction of heat island effect, etc.) and improving the natural environment (increasing landscaping, improving water quality, etc.).

The CRA will partner with PBC Office of Climate Change & Sustainability – Palm Beach County and encourage use of their programs (like a “Go Green” Initiative to provide funding to qualified applicants implementing solar panels as a component of a redevelopment project, or parking deviations for development projects utilizing electric car plug-ins or bike share programs). The CRA will also examine WCRA overlay regulations to encourage and promote green building and development practices. The CRA will also look to incorporate ways through its programs and projects to promote more sustainable practices and design.

## Focus Area 2: MARKET POSITIONING

### 2.1. GOAL

To reposition the Westgate area in the market as a desirable place to live, work and play through positive branding and promotion, business attraction strategies, and community enrichment through place-making initiatives and the creation of interactive and engaging public spaces to further the reversal of slum and blight.

### 2.2. OBJECTIVES

- 1) To create a new image for the redevelopment area that projects an emergent, “we are open for business” Westgate;
- 2) To attract, promote and incentivize businesses and redevelopment that meets community specific needs or satisfies a market trend;
- 3) To build synergistic working relationships with existing property owners seeking redevelopment opportunities within the CRA; and,
- 4) To develop place-making initiatives that foster community identity through improvements to the physical environment, and through programs that attract community participation and interest from adjacent communities.

### 2.3. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

- 1) **BRANDING** – The CRA will work to implement a comprehensive “branding” structure for establishing an identifiable presence for Westgate for use in social and print media, within the community, and to promote the area to associations, businesses and trades.
- 2) **BUSINESS RECRUITMENT & BUSINESS INCUBATION** – The CRA will develop networking strategies

with other area groups that promote economic development and actively recruit specific industries or businesses.

- 3) **MARKETING AND INFORMATION DISSEMINATION** – The CRA will develop a coordinated marketing strategy to promote its accomplishments, businesses, events, neighborhoods and programs through its newsletter, other County area publications, and through social media. This effort may include a new logo, website design, Facebook and Twitter posts, blogging, and fact sheets and brochures.
- 4) **PRESENCE OF THE CRA** - The CRA will work to develop a strategy that refreshes the physical environment and appearance of the redevelopment area to maximize accessibility and image. Entry or “gateway” features, way-finding, streetscape elements, common landscape and hardscape features such as corner stones, signage, banners, street lights, directories, and signature landscape materials will be utilized.
- 5) **AMBASSADOR PROGRAM** – The CRA will examine the possible development of an ambassador program or elements of such a program as a tool to promote image, public safety, information and business development.

## 2.4. PROGRAMS & PROJECTS

### 2.4.1. RE-brand & RE-boot Westgate Campaign

#### Project Description:

This is an initiative to promote the redevelopment area to create positive awareness. This phase of the CRA life cycle is focused on the vertical redevelopment and economic development of the area which is largely dependent on attracting positive interest to the CRA. The CRA will work with a public relations consultant to create a viable Westgate brand. Efforts will include, but not be limited to, developing relationships with other working groups such as Local Chambers of Commerce, Palm Beach County Planning Congress, the PBC Business Development Board, or private schools, business associations, and civic organizations, as well as marketing and promotion efforts such as a refreshed website, a better social media, and a better print media presence. This initiative will be funded by tax increment revenues and/or grant funding.

### 2.4.2. Place-making & Entryway Features Initiatives Program

#### Program Description:

This program is part of the ongoing effort to bring in new interest and investment, and to establish a sense of recognition, arrival and place for the community as a whole. Efforts include entry features, signature streetscape elements, common landscaping, signage including way-finding, pedestrian amenities and public art components. The CRA will work to create a physical identity through these elements. The CRA will address key access points or intersections including N. Congress Ave. at Westgate Ave., N. Military Trail at Westgate Ave., Cherry Road at Westgate Ave., Wabasso Drive at Okeechobee Blvd., and Seminole Blvd. at Okeechobee Blvd. This effort would convert major intersections like N. Military Trail and Westgate Ave. N. Congress Ave. and Westgate Ave., Wabasso Drive and Westgate Ave., and Belvedere Road and N. Congress Ave. into portals to the community.



#### 2.4.3. Business Incubator Initiative

##### Program Description:

In anticipation of a private investment cycle, access to capital and technical expertise will be important for future entrepreneurs that will locate their businesses to the CRA Area. The desire is to attract but also to develop capacity within the redevelopment area. Some of the future tenants and developers of the community will be those who reside in the community and have a stake at seeing it improve. This program has been created to assist the small entrepreneur or microbusiness, even those that have little experience but wish to open a new business including encouraging business trends like food trucks and microbreweries. As an incentive and inducement, the CRA may assist borrowers by buying down the interest rate that banks charge and effectively enable the lenders to make low interest loans. The CRA may initiate and fund a sub-program that provides access to support services and technical assistance, which could include mentoring programs, temporary incubator space, educational opportunities, and free or reduced cost services for rent, internet access, or other business related needs.

#### 2.4.4. Business Recruitment Program

##### Program Description:

Business recruitment is essential to economic development and redevelopment. Not only will a vibrant business landscape attract other businesses, those businesses afford residents opportunities to access resources and services locally that will make the community attractive to others. The CRA will work through other advisory groups and business groups to facilitate relationships and opportunities to attract and retain business targeted for the community. The CRA will work to retain and expand area businesses that work to promote stability in the community. The CRA will look to encourage business recruitment and retention in concert with other CRA incentives and programs.

#### 2.4.5. Westgate Ambassador Program

##### Program Description:

Since Westgate Avenue has been targeted for a more concentrated focus, the CRA will develop an ambassador program to help create an added level of assistance and comfort to retain and attract business along this corridor. It is hoped that this can grow as a community effort and an extension of community building. In addition, it can also serve to facilitate interest in other areas and activities of the broader CRA community. The CRA will work with other companion efforts and agencies of the county including PBSO, OCR, Parks & Recreation as well as the School District to develop this program.

### **Focus Area 3: HOUSING**

#### **3.1. GOAL**

To create and maintain quality housing stock that addresses a mix of community needs and income levels.

#### **3.2. OBJECTIVES**

- 1) To enhance the existing housing stock and facilitate the development of new residential units that attract a mix of income levels, addresses disadvantaged or special needs populations, and encourage mixed use where appropriate through program development and funding efforts;
- 2) To improve the quality of life for residents through neighborhood improvements that include

expanding and supporting housing stock through home improvements programs, increasing home ownership, active code enforcement, aesthetic “curb appeal” considerations like lighting, hardscaping, landscaping, public safety considerations, and public infrastructure and facility projects; and,

- 3) To address social issues that impact community stability and limit redevelopment opportunities.

### 3.3. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

- 1) **WORKFORCE HOUSING** – Develop a comprehensive strategy to attract workforce housing developers to Westgate and to address the need for housing stock that serves a range of incomes and needs including special needs, seniors and homeless persons.
- 2) **FLEXIBLE DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS** – Develop flexible design considerations that further the promotion of CRA goals, address community priorities, and impediments to developing incrementally on infill and small lots.
- 3) **PUBLIC-PRIVATE INVESTMENT** – Examine the ongoing need to develop safe, convenient multi-modal transportation systems that benefit the CRA community by providing interconnected systems for pedestrian and varied vehicular options as well as promote healthy lifestyles and efficient land use patterns.
- 4) **LAND ACQUISITION & MASTER REDEVELOPMENT** – Continued acquisition of land for private commercial and/or residential redevelopment, and to facilitate public infrastructure improvements;
- 5) **NUSIANCE ABATEMENT** – The CRA will work in tandem with PBC code enforcement to rehabilitate or remove derelict structures.
- 6) **NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT** – The CRA will create programs and continue programs that improves the quality of life for its residents and furthers overall redevelopment goals. The CRA will work to create a program that includes expanding and supporting home ownership and continue to provide funding assistance to homeowners for property. Other mechanisms will include code enforcement, aesthetic “curb appeal” considerations like lighting, hardscaping and landscaping, public safety considerations, and public infrastructure and facility projects.

### 3.4. PROGRAMS & PROJECTS

#### 3.4.1. Workforce Housing Incentives Program

##### Program Description:

To encourage the development of workforce housing, and a range of mixed income housing opportunities, the CRA will utilize various housing incentives including the Density Bonus Program, the County’s Workforce Housing Program and Impact Fee Affordable Housing Assistance Program, grant application assistance, land and drainage agreements, expedited review, TIF rebates, and upfront cash when available. In addition, the CRA will seek incentive provisions within land development regulations, and acquire land and obtain foreclosed properties from the County and banks for housing development. The CRA will create a community development corporation (CDC), a 501 (c)(3), non-profit, and the eventual approval of the organization as a CHDO whose mission is to design and carry out an affordable housing program. The CRA will form a Board, create bylaws, and articles of incorporation, apply for 501 c 3 status,

hire staff and provide seed money for the CDC which would operate within the CRA offices but independently from the CRA having the ability to actively fundraise for projects within the CRA.

#### [3.4.2. Neighborhood Improvement Grant Program](#)

##### Project Description:

This is an ongoing CRA program specifically targeted to home owners to defray the costs of renovations to home exterior and property improvements, or the conversion of duplexes to single family dwellings. Residential areas contain consumers that could contribute to the commercial success of the redevelopment area. The preservation of existing housing stock remains a priority mandate.

#### [3.4.3. Landlord's Association](#)

##### Program Description:

To create a continuum of code enforcement efforts, the CRA will work to encourage landlords to improve the exterior and bring their properties into code compliance by providing incentives through site improvement grants or other incentive programs. The CRA can facilitate healthy landlord-tenant relations through a regular networking effort to share information on tenant issues, housing opportunities and other activities that promotes quality housing for residents and supports quality area business opportunities. The CRA will develop a regular working group and a means to communicate with groups to promote these efforts. The CRA will facilitate the creation of a Westgate Landlord's Association through tax increment revenue.

#### [3.4.4. Homebuyers Assistance Program](#)

##### Program Description:

In order to reduce the number of renters in the community and to increase the number of home owners, the CRA will stimulate home ownership over a long period of time. The program may entail the CRA providing grants to home buyers who wish to rehabilitate a property or construct a new property within the district. The CRA will coordinate to take advantage of existing first time homebuyers programs through banks and the County. The CRA could provide design services to the home buyer in order to facilitate the process and to assure that the exterior design meets the CRA's and the community's criteria. The CRA and County could assist the home buyer in finding a suitable contractor for the rehabilitation or construction of a new home, and a bank for financing. This program would be funded through tax increment revenue, CDBG grants, bank loans, HOME, SHIP, and other housing grants.

#### [3.4.5. Disadvantaged Groups or Special Needs Housing Program](#)

##### Program Description:

To address a need for affordable housing for specific disadvantaged groups, the CRA may acquire properties or land for constructing special needs housing. The housing may be located to take advantage of supportive services that may already exist. The CRA will seek to partner with developers for residential projects that target special need groups such as the elderly, disabled, homeless, veterans, LGBTQ community, or college students. It is also the intention of this program to work with existing area non-profit organizations that are developing such housing opportunities. The CRA may need to acquire the first

several properties in order to seed the program, and non-profit groups would provide the funds for the development and operations of the facilities.

#### Focus Area 4: COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT

##### 4.1. GOAL

To create a desirable, safe and sustainable community that encourages redevelopment and economic growth to eliminate slum and blight.

##### 4.2. OBJECTIVES

- 1) To address social issues that impact community sustainability and redevelopment by promoting access to information, resources, services and employment;
- 2) To continue to foster community partnerships with community policing deputies and County code enforcement that improve the safety and aesthetic appeal of the CRA;
- 3) To explore innovations in community enrichment and place-making, street beautification, and economic revitalization that allow the CRA to pursue public and/or private grant funding;
- 4) To continue to unify the community and promote community self-worth and spirit through the creation of community gathering places and new or ongoing events; and,
- 5) To create opportunities to expand, enhance and utilize existing open space to create new neighborhood parks, pedestrian amenities and interconnected multi-modal systems within the CRA.

##### 4.3. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

- 1) A CDC – Create an independent non-profit CDC (Community Development Corporation) to manage and promote community activities such as the annual Celebrate Westgate Festival, the Community Garden, and the Greenmarket.
- 2) SAFE COMMUNITY – Examine ways to promote public safety and neighborhood stability through physical design elements like lighting and sidewalks but also through increasing police presence, creating a safer more walkable community, and engaging and educating the community in self-protection.
- 3) COMMUNITY BEAUTIFICATION – Develop programs to encourage home and business property maintenance and improvements as well as to promote safety and pedestrian activity through financial incentives, public art and award recognition.
- 4) COMMUNITY OUTREACH & SUPPORT – Bring services and resources to the community to address the needs of residents through information dissemination, working with other county departments and agencies, sponsoring events and creating facilities that address community needs to foster a healthier and more economically stable community.
- 5) COMMUNITY BUILDING – Provide and sponsor community activities that encourage people to interact, promote education and healthy living.



#### 4.4. PROGRAMS & PROJECTS

##### [4.4.1. Events & Community Programming](#)

###### Program Description:

The importance of creating a sense of community within the CRA is vital to its long-term stability. Events and community outreach has helped to unify residents and create a sense of ownership and pride. Ongoing community events and programming are essential and have grown programs like the Greenmarket Express into “The Gate” Urban Farm and Greenmarket. The Annual Celebrate Westgate Festival is also growing and would be expected to one day be turned over to a CDC. These activities also provide a source of publicity and educational opportunities. The CRA will continue existing events and continue to develop activities including but not limited to concerts, movies in the park, races, boxing matches, art shows, and themed festivals that can also attract others from outside the community and grow interest and investment opportunities for the community. It is expected that these activities will continue beyond the life of the CRA through a CDC as well as the through the Westgate community. Community events, activities and sponsorship are currently funded through tax increment revenue, but will transition to CDC management and funding by 2022.

##### [4.4.2. Community Policing Initiatives](#)

###### Program Description:

Concerns around criminal activity arose in public comments during the 2015 Community Forum, along with the desire to develop relationships with the Sheriff’s office. The CRA is seeking to develop a “Citizens on Patrol Program” requiring 15 residents or business owners so the PBSO can initiate program and provide training. The CRA will continue funding for the Westgate PBSO Sub-station through tax increment revenue. To address new concerns like the growing presence of gang activity in low income tax credit housing developments, CRA will pursue hiring off-duty police officers for additional security patrol. The CRA will explore the possibility of leasing land to cell phone towers and windmill energy groups to pay for additional community policing.

##### [4.4.3. Property Maintenance Initiatives](#)

###### Program Description:

Within the CRA sub-standard housing conditions, poor street lighting, overgrown vegetation on vacant lots, and illegal dumping are common. The County has a nuisance abatement ordinance that allows the Special Magistrate to levy fines against a property owners’ property tax. The goal is not to punish property owners but to facilitate improvements to eliminate slum and blight. The CRA will continue to work with code enforcement and willing owners to improve their properties. The CRA will explore the development of an ongoing proactive program to encourage property owners to facilitate safety and crime prevention through maintaining their property. In addition, the CRA will pursue the ability to acquire dilapidated housing stock to demolish and hold for redevelopment.

##### [4.4.4. Public Art Program](#)

###### Program Description:

Many communities recognize the value of art for aesthetics, community building and establishing a sense of place and community presence. Within the CRA the goal is not to add to development expenses but to

compliment redevelopment efforts. The CRA wishes to work with various community groups including educational and local businesses, and private foundations to sponsor public art installations. The CRA will also seek to partner with the PBC FD&O Art in Public Places committee.

#### [4.4.5. Safe Routes to School Plan, Design & Implementation](#)

##### Project Description:

The CRA will create a plan that creates a safe route to school for students residing in the redevelopment area attending Westgate Elementary School. There are often target funding sources for such improvements. The State, FDOT, as well as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), can issue grants to improve the existing infrastructure to make it safer for children and parents to bike and/or walk to school by installing sidewalks, bike lanes and signage. Several locations around Westgate Elementary School offer an opportunity to improve walking conditions including a pedestrian bridge crossing the L-2 Canal. The CRA will partner with local schools and the MPO to secure funding to design and implement a Safe Routes to School Program for the community.

#### [4.4.6. Westgate/Belvedere Homes Neighborhood Association](#)

##### Project Description:

Supporting the community in maintaining the stability of residential neighborhoods is an ongoing effort. There has been a specific need to re-establish the Westgate Belvedere Homes Neighborhood Association. The CRA can provide technical assistance and funding to support the Association. The CRA will work along with other PBC departments such as OCR to rebuild the Westgate Belvedere Homes Neighborhood Association so that it can continue to support the existing quality residential housing stock and facilitate community building.

## **Focus Area 5: PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS & PUBLIC SPACES**

### **5.1. GOAL**

To provide sufficient and ongoing levels of public infrastructure and services to support existing community needs, improve the quality of life for residents, and incentivize redevelopment and private investment to eliminate slum and blight.

### **5.2. OBJECTIVES**

- 1) To develop regular coordination with PBC engineering staff to address both short term and long term means to maintaining storm water management within the CRA;
- 2) To create opportunities within infrastructure projects to expand, enhance and utilize existing open space to create new neighborhood parks, pedestrian amenities and interconnected multi-modal systems within the CRA;
- 3) To maintain sufficient capacity in the storm water system to prevent flooding during storm events as redevelopment occurs and to address increasing resiliency as environmental factors intensify future events;
- 4) To provide safety and security as well as visual presence to the community residents and business owners by ensuring public improvements including but not limited to streetlights, complete street

considerations, improved multi-modal connectivity, pedestrian amenities, bus shelters, and traffic calming;

- 5) To consider the heat island effect, renewable energy usage, and other sustainable practices in the development of public infrastructure projects and promote the educational opportunity that any such consideration offers for the public;
- 6) To pursue opportunities to maintain interconnected travel options between the CRA and its neighbors that promote a grid pattern and maintain a more traditional network of streets and multi-modal opportunities including the ability to connect Westgate Avenue to the east and/or west to provide alternative routes for local traffic;
- 7) To develop strategies in collaboration with appropriate PBC departments that provide for the ongoing preservation and maintenance of public improvements including funding mechanisms, land use designations, and long term operations and facilities management; and,
- 8) To continue to upgrade existing infrastructure systems to promote a higher quality of life for residents and further stabilize the community.

### 5.3. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

- 1) MASTER DRAINAGE DISTRICT – The CRA will initiate a study, together with the County, to explore the feasibility of establishing a master storm water drainage district in which property owners will contribute to both capital costs and maintenance costs to a trust fund that in turn provides improvements to the area such that any new development may not be required to provide on-site detention or retention to satisfy their storm water requirements.
- 2) MASTER DRAINAGE PLAN – Create a Master Drainage Plan to quantify the impact that infrastructure improvements have had on storm water storage capacity. Storage capacity values or compensating storage capabilities could be used as an incentive for developers.
- 3) PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT PRESERVATION & MAINTENANCE – The CRA will develop an ongoing management program for public improvements & facilities such as CRA-owned wet and dry detention areas, lift stations, canals & swales; open space and park facilities like Dennis P. Koehler Park and the Babbling Brook, including the acquisition and protection of such properties through land use and zoning.
- 4) INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM – Ongoing improvement program for sanitary sewer, water mains, utility undergrounding, roadways, and storm water infrastructure throughout the CRA to eliminate deficiencies and encourage private reinvestment.
- 5) ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS – The CRA will promote roadway improvements and designs that further the broader goals and objectives of the CRA to encourage walkability, pedestrian amenities including bus shelters, traffic calming, and public improvements that assist private investment.
- 6) INTERCONNECTIVITY & ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION – The CRA will continue to work to create interconnected pedestrian and multi-modal routes including establishing and maintain a grid pattern to facilitate alternative local routes with surrounding communities to promote expansion of economic opportunities and healthier community design. This may include studies for roadway expansion, intergovernmental coordination as well as land acquisition.

- 7) PUBLIC OPEN SPACE & GREENWAYS – The CRA will continue to expand public open space, parks, greenways and linkages as a part of public infrastructure projects and make provisions for their ongoing public access and maintenance. This includes the ongoing LWDD L-2 Canal expansion project.

#### 5.4. PROGRAMS & PROJECTS:

##### [5.4.1. Neighborhood Streetlight Program](#)

###### Program Description:

Ongoing operation and maintenance of FPL and decorative street lights in Westgate Estates and Belvedere Homes and the installation of additional streetlights throughout North and South Westgate Estates, Belvedere Homes and Belvedere Heights. Streetlights will be installed throughout the CRA on standard FPL poles or decorative poles and will be coordinated with other roadway streetscape efforts in the CRA.

##### [5.4.2. Belvedere Heights Infrastructure Improvements](#)

###### Project Description:

Design and seek funding to install new and improved drainage systems, replace water mains, and reconstruct roadways and sidewalks in Belvedere Heights. Funding will be sought through FEMA DRI, HMGP, CDBG grants, and tax increment revenue.

##### [5.4.3. Belvedere Homes Phase III Infrastructure Improvements](#)

###### Project Description:

Initiate Phase III of Belvedere Homes infrastructure improvement project to install drainage systems, replace water mains, and reconstruct the roads in the southwest quadrant of Belvedere Homes. Funding will be sought through FEMA DRI, HMGP, CDBG grants, and tax increment revenue.

##### [5.4.4. Parks and Open Space Program](#)

###### Project Description:

The CRA will identify underutilized or vacant parcels within the community that would benefit from the creation of a neighborhood park, acquire land as feasible, and design and seek funding to convert vacant land into permanent open space. This program includes the convert the Dennis P. Koehler Preserve and the Babbling Brook to a passive park for community residents and visitors including land use and zoning approvals.

##### [5.4.5. L2 Canal Expansion and Greenway Project](#)

###### Project Description:

Complete the L-2 Canal expansion project and improve the remaining land for use as community amenities.

#### 5.4.6. R-O-W Improvements Program

##### Program Description:

Facilitate commercial redevelopment with small but effective R-O-W improvements to important commercial corridors, such as landscaping and lighting. Consider a plan to underground utilities in priority commercial corridors.

#### 5.4.7. Pedestrian Friendly Streets and Street Diet Program

##### Program Description:

Seek county approval to implement 'complete street' programs for Nokomis Ave., Westgate Ave., Cherokee Ave. Chickamauga Ave., Shawnee Ave., Wabasso Drive, and Seminole Blvd.

#### 5.4.8. Land Acquisition for Additional Storm-water Capacity Program

##### Program Description:

Acquire properties alongside the L-2, L-2B, E31/2 and Airport Canals for additional storm-water capacity.

#### 5.4.9. Ongoing Maintenance of CRA Owned Wet & Dry Retention Areas

##### Program Description:

Work with private contractors to maintain CRA owned retention and detention ponds to prevent flooding, eliminate blight and prevent crime.

### **Focus Area 6: PLANNING FOR REDEVELOPMENT**

#### **6.1. GOAL**

To eliminate slum and blight by identifying opportunities for redevelopment and reinvestment through the analysis of changing needs, issues, and community conditions and by evaluating, recommending and implementing effective programs, policies and regulations within the County's Comprehensive Plan, ULDC and the WCRA zoning overlay.

#### **6.2. OBJECTIVES**

- 1) To conduct studies and/or review current demographics, economic indicators, market trends and community issues as well as funding opportunities to establish priority items for the Work Program and annual priority action plans;
- 2) To explore innovations and ideas in planning practice and redevelopment efforts in other communities to promote community enrichment and place-making, street beautification, and economic revitalization;
- 3) To develop and monitor policy, standards, regulations, and guidelines of the Comprehensive Plan and ULDC to ensure effective facilitation of redevelopment within the CRA area;
- 4) To create area-specific policies and design standards to promote and incentivize private development and reinvestment consistent with the Community Redevelopment Plan goals and objectives;
- 5) To enhance the existing housing stock and facilitate the development of new residential and/or mixed uses through regulatory policy and programs design consistent with the CRA goals;



- 6) To develop a comprehensive housing strategy that creates quality housing and attracts a mix of income levels to the area as well as provides for housing for disadvantaged groups;
- 7) To create opportunities through regulations and incentives to expand and enhance existing open space and create new neighborhood parks, pedestrian amenities and interconnected multi-modal systems within the CRA; and,
- 8) To establish policies and programs that better integrate and promote a shared vision for the development opportunities offered by established perimeter corridors, large property owners, as well as with adjacent jurisdictions for redevelopment and shared economic growth.

### 6.3. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

- 1) INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION – Establish an ongoing and regular coordination effort to identify common goals and address potential opportunities and barriers to redevelopment with entities such as, but not limited to, PBC Administration, Planning, Zoning & Building, Engineering, Water Utilities, OCR, DES, Parks & Recreation, Airport Authority, Chambers of Commerce, the Business Development Board, drainage districts, and the City of West Palm Beach and Town of Haverhill.
- 2) JOINT MASTER PLANNING – Develop and maintain communication with large property owners and major existing developments within the CRA to facilitate coordinated master planning and development activities. Including, but not limited to, the Department of Airports, the Palm Beach Kennel Club, rental car businesses on Belvedere Rd., and commercial centers on Okeechobee Blvd.
- 3) COMPREHENSIVE PLAN & ULDC AMENDMENTS – Maintain a collaborative working relationship with Planning and Zoning staff to address ULDC zoning regulations and the County's Comprehensive Plan to facilitate and incentivize redevelopment as conditions change. These efforts include ongoing re-evaluation of Comprehensive Plan language pertaining to the WCRA Overlay provisions, traffic concurrency exception provisions, density bonus pool, and housing policies, and ULDC Articles, the U/S Tier, Urban Redevelopment Area, and WCRA Overlay regulations. Amendments may also seek to better promote uses that encourage the vision of Westgate Avenue as a neighborhood downtown and eliminate the proliferation or over-saturation of specific uses that fail to create pedestrian interest and community services and fail to stimulate property reinvestment such as automotive uses and outdoor storage, or that may limit economic viability; and design regulations for flexibility for infill and redevelopment parcels as well as to promote the objectives of the CRA Redevelopment Plan.
- 4) ADVOCACY – Provide project advocacy and plan review to promote redevelopment and the goals of the CRA plan through a more structured role in the County's development review process and through the initiation of policy or code amendments that promote Redevelopment Plan goals and objectives.
- 5) STREETSCAPES – Develop streetscape designs, regulations, and standards that include urban design considerations for complete streets, road diets, wayfinding, utilities undergrounding, and low impact development for major transit corridors like Westgate Avenue and Congress Avenue to facilitate private investment and to create a sense of place within the community.
- 6) NEIGHBORHOOD/AREA SPECIFIC – Develop sub-area specific programs, policies or neighborhood plans to address more specific community needs.

- 7) SUSTAINABILITY – Pursue the development of resiliency strategies and sustainability practices within CRA programs, policies and design regulations within the WCRAO, that stimulate public and private investment.
- 8) SAFE COMMUNITY – Examine ways to promote public safety and neighborhood stability through physical design elements like lighting and sidewalks but also through increasing police presence, creating a safer more walkable community, and engaging and educating the community in self-protection.
- 9) GRANT SOURCING & ADMINISTRATION – Pursue and administer grant opportunities that allow for the leveraging of TIF dollars to implement the Plan. Grant opportunities will be considered in prioritizing work in annual budget planning when timing of such grants warrants re-prioritization.
- 10) CAPACITY BUILDING – Continue to develop CRA capacity through professional development and operational practices through staff development, use of consultants, and capital investments like equipment and software. This would also include community building and educational efforts.

#### 6.4. PROGRAMS & PROJECTS

##### 6.4.1. Grants Sourcing & Financing Strategies Program

###### Program Description:

In order for the CRA to accelerate its programs and projects, it will be necessary to seek funds and financing beyond those available through tax increment. The CRA will aggressively seek public and private grant funds, including community building, historic preservation grants, planning grants, technical assistance grants, infrastructure grants, economic development grants, housing grants and others. The strategy should be one that applies to all of the focus areas of the CRA. Special attention should be given to securing major grants for economic development projects. The CRA will focus, among others, on grant funding from New Market Tax Credits, Section 108 Loans, and on possible General Obligation Bonds to raise money to finance economic development projects. The CRA may retain the services of a grant consultant to seek funding of its efforts. The CRA could consider coordinating with the County to have their grant consultant also provide services to the CRA. Priorities within the work program will be adjusted as project or program specific grant funds becomes available to the CRA.

##### 6.4.2. Land Development Regulations & Land Use Policy Amendments

###### 6.4.2.a. WCRA Overlay & ULDC Amendments

###### Program Description:

As redevelopment opportunities emerge and to encourage private investment within the CRA, ULDC regulations may be adjusted and refined to address and better align with the needs of the CRA. As the CRA has matured, its role to activate and facilitate redevelopment has grown, therefore justifying a need for more authority within the entitlements process. It is also necessary to address changes in planning and development practices. This would include complete streets, resiliency and encouraging sustainable “greener” development. To effectively implement the vision of the Plan, and the many efforts outlined in specific focus areas, regulations should examine those not previously contemplated in the WCRAO such as, but not limited to multiple use development, adaptive re-use, incremental improvements of non-conformities, and ensuring that redevelopment is not cost prohibitive to property owners.

#### [6.4.2.b. Comprehensive Plan Amendments](#)

##### Program Description:

As a part of ongoing CRA efforts the Comprehensive Plan and its provisions should be reviewed and amended as need. Currently provisions under the Transportation Element require annual reporting and monitoring as related to the Traffic Concurrency Exemption Area. As the 2016 report indicated most of the trips in the TCEA pool have been allocated to projects which have either received a building permit or are in different stage of the land development entitlement process. As the original TCEA allocations was noted to be a portion of the Phase I development envisioned for the CRA, it was envisioned that once those trips were utilized, the TCEA allocation should be re-examined to address the next level of build out within the CRA. The CRA will initiate an amendment in 2017 to request more TCEA trips be allocated as a part of the redevelopment incentives envisions for the CRA.

#### [6.4.3. Primary Commercial Corridors Market Analysis](#)

##### Project Description:

The CRA will engage a consultant to conduct a comprehensive market analysis for primary commercial corridors – Okeechobee Blvd., Belvedere Rd., and N. Military Trail. The study will seek to complement redevelopment initiatives and efforts for Westgate Avenue and the intentions of the perimeter property owners and businesses. The effort will be funded by tax increment revenue and/or through grant funding.

#### [6.4.4. Northeast Industrial District Study](#)

##### Project Description:

The CRA contains an industrial area that offers both challenges and opportunities to be explored. The CRA will engage a consultant to conduct a market analysis for potential development opportunities and target industry/businesses for the northeast industrial district. The effort will be funded by tax increment revenue and/or through grant funding.

#### [6.4.5. Adaptive Reuse Program](#)

##### Program Description:

To encourage private adaptive reuse projects that can have an ongoing life as redevelopment advances, the CRA will explore maintaining flexibility in zoning regulations through the ULDC. In addition, the CRA may acquire and retrofit older buildings for office and community meeting space including seeking to re-purpose surplus County buildings within the redevelopment area as they become available.

#### [6.4.6. Master Drainage Plan](#)

##### Project Description:

To assist current landowners with the development of existing undeveloped parcels the CRA will review potential short-term improvements that may provide additional storm water retention facilities that could be used as a “bank” of storage that could be purchased by future developers as credit toward compensation of filling within the 100-year flood plain. The CRA sees the provision of a master drainage system for the area as a major program to encourage private development in the CRA.

The CRA may initiate a conceptual master storm water drainage plan for the purpose of determining the amount of retention that would be required to provide adequate drainage for the community including the projected infill development suggested in the Master Plan. The study would quantify the amount of land needed and the anticipated costs for a master drainage system and the means of funding the system. The CRA would engage consultants to prepare a master drainage plan and a master drainage system for the CRA to quantify storm water capacity for projects requiring off site storm water capacity. In cooperation with the South Florida Water Management District, Lake Worth Drainage District, Palm Beach County, FEMA, and the Palm Beach County Airport, the CRA would pursue the development of a master drainage district to implement the plan.

New projects would not be required to store water on-site, but instead would pay a fee in lieu of providing the on-site retention. Development of a Master Stormwater Drainage District that would have the ability to raise capital for acquisition and development of storm water facilities through the sale of tax exempt revenue bonds. The debt service and operating costs to maintain the system would be borne by the property owners within the district. An assessment would be levied on all properties and permit fees would be collected for new development. Operating costs could be covered by annual maintenance fees imposed on new projects and on existing properties.

#### 6.4.7. Coordinated Planning Efforts

##### Program Description:

The CRA is within Palm Beach County and therefore frequently works with various departments. It is also subject to storm water coordination through PBC, South Florida Water Management District, the LWDD, and PBC Airport Authority. There are several large property owners within its borders as well as established business and perimeter corridors. With all the adjacent activity and multi-agency involvement, the CRA must develop and maintain regular communications and coordination. In addition, there is an opportunity to develop synergistic and collective work efforts to promote mutual interests and redevelopment of publicly owned properties within Westgate CRA.

The CRA will establish an ongoing and regular coordination effort to identify common goals and address potential opportunities and barriers to redevelopment with entities such as, but not limited to, PBC Administration, Planning Zoning & Building, Engineering, Water Utilities, OCR, DES, Parks & Recreation, Airports, Chambers of Commerce, the Business Development Board, drainage districts, the City of West Palm Beach and their departments. The CRA will work to develop and maintain communication with large property owners, major existing developments on perimeter boundaries of the CRA to facilitate coordinated master planning and development activities, including, but not limited to, the Department of Airports and the Kennel Club, the rental car business on Belvedere, and commercial centers on Okeechobee Blvd.

# SECTION 5

## Financing Redevelopment **HOW DO WE GET THERE?**



The Westgate CRA has used a number of sources to finance its projects in the past. TIF is projected to increase at least by 6% for the next 10 years, but still the CRA cannot depend on TIF alone. To be successful in completing the projects and programs proposed by this amendment, the CRA will need to continue with its effort of accessing other funding sources. In this section, funding sources that may be available to the Westgate CRA in the future are explored and described.

### A. Tax Increment Financing and the Redevelopment Trust

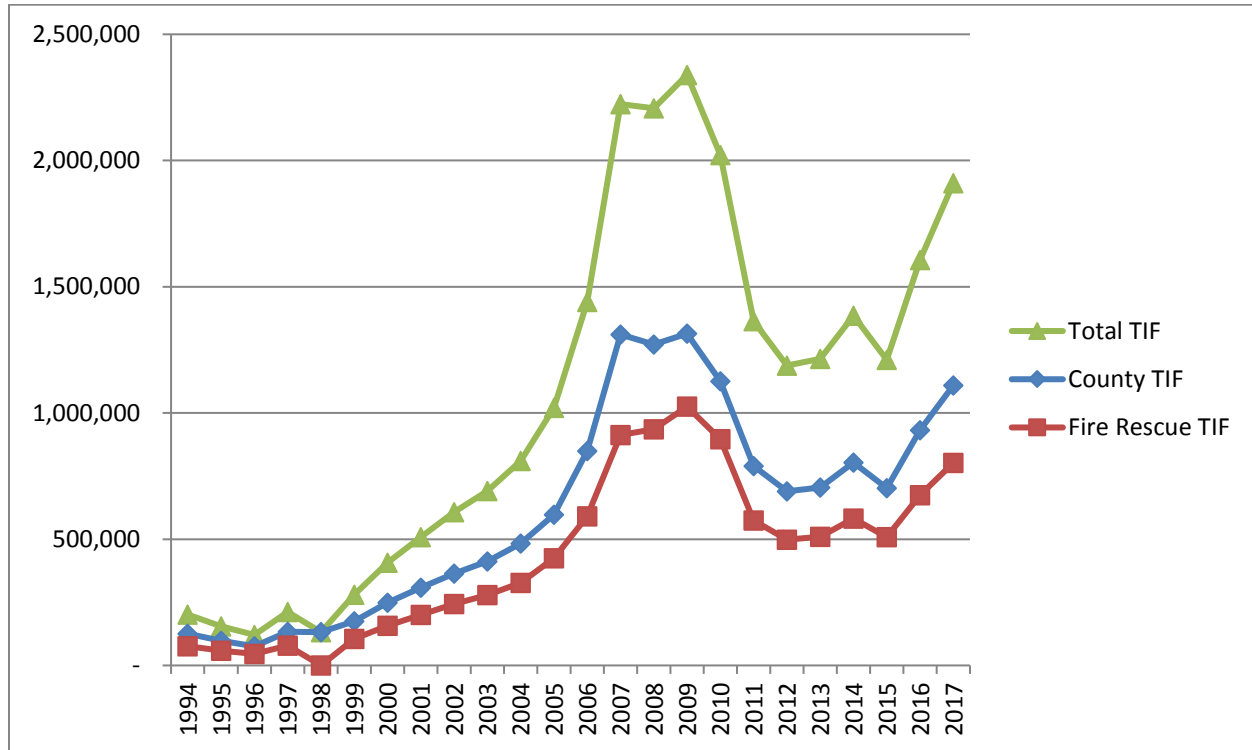
The State, in adopting Florida Statute 163, Part III, created the CRA's main source of income, tax increment funds (TIF). All CRAs in Florida are dependent taxing districts, which means that they depend upon other taxing districts to make contributions to their trust fund. The TIF funds are based upon the added value of property values within a CRA district once the base year has been set by a CRA's governing body. When the Westgate/Belvedere Homes CRA was established in 1989, its base year property evaluation (taxable value) amounted to \$190,169,267. In the current FY 2017, the property evaluation amounts to \$434,285,291. The incremental difference, subtracting one from the other amounts to \$244,116,924. Given the tax rate of Palm Beach County set for FY 2017 at 4.7185 mils and the Fire Rescue District's rate of 3.4581 mils, the Westgate/Belvedere Homes CRA's tax increment income, after a 5% required statutory reduction, amounts to \$1,910,847 for FY 2017. The 2017 amount represents an increase of 19% from 2016. These numbers are presented in the Table 5.1 below.

In 1994, six years after the CRA was created, the TIF was \$201 thousand dollars, which, in relative terms, was a very generous amount for the area; however, that amount decreased for the next two years and saw only small increases for the years thereafter until the year 2000 when the TIF reached \$407 thousand. The TIF peaked to \$2.3 million in 2008/2009 at the height of the housing market to fall back to its lowest amount in six years to \$1.1 million in 2011/2012.

The TIF contribution for the last 25 years has amounted to approximately \$25 million. That revenue, leveraged with grant funds, was used to build much needed infrastructure in the CRA. See Section 2 for the CRA's accomplishments over the years.

In 2016, the top three single businesses with highest taxable value were Cross County Associates LTD Partnership, the Palm Beach Kennel Club and Wal-Mart; however, the top three largest contributors to the TIF Redevelopment Trust Fund were Cross County Associates LTD Partnership (aka Cross County Plaza), Wal-Mart and New Country Motor Cars (aka Mercedes-Benz of Palm Beach County). Most TIF revenue originates from those businesses located on the redevelopment area's two major commercial corridors, Okeechobee Blvd. and N. Military Trail. Residential communities are not large generators of TIF revenues because of homestead exemption and other laws enacted by the Florida legislature to limit the increase of taxes on owner occupied homes.

The following graph shows the trajectory of the TIF since 1993.



**1. 20 YEAR TAX INCREMENT REVENUE PROJECTION**

The following table provides a twenty-year projection of tax increment revenues. The projected annual assessed values were estimated by making several important assumptions. The prior year increases in taxable value were considered as an indicator of a trend in increases in annual revenues but they do not indicate what would occur in the future because of the expected growth in the district. The primary funding source for CRA activities is the Redevelopment Trust Fund. This Fund is the depository for all TIF revenues generated within the Community Redevelopment Area. The following assumptions were made in the financial projections:

The current millage rates for both Palm Beach County and Fire Rescue were used throughout the projected years. The current millage rates for Fire Rescue and Palm Beach County were adopted in 2010 and 2012 respectively and were approved again for the 2017 budget in July of 2016. At the budget meeting, there was a strong desire from some County Commissioners to slightly reduce the County millage rate, but County staff argued that a decrease would affect the level of service that the County is currently providing to its citizens. There is no reason to believe at this time that the millage rate will change in the foreseeable future.

A 6% increase was also assumed for the next 10 years. To maintain that percentage, an average yearly increase of at least \$20 million in taxable value must occur. This projection is consistent with the current

trend. There is good reason to believe that property values will continue to rise as the economy rebounds. The CRA is also optimistic that some of the new redevelopment projects currently in the County entitlement process will be built in the upcoming years to maintain increases in taxable values.

**Table 5.1 – 20 Year Tax Increment Revenue Projection (\$)**

Calendar Year	Taxable Value	Taxable Value Increment	County Millage Rate	Fire Rescue Millage Rate	Tax Revenue	Statutory Reduction	Final Tax Increment	Changes	Percent Changes
1988	190,169,267	Base Year							
2005	329,749,687	139,580,420	0.0045000	0.0031990	1,074,630	0.950	1,020,898		
2006	390,996,979	200,827,712	0.0044500	0.0030990	1,516,048	0.950	1,440,246	419,348	41%
2007	512,487,263	322,317,996	0.0042800	0.0029800	2,340,029	0.950	2,223,027	782,781	54%
2008	544,306,595	354,137,328	0.0037811	0.0027794	2,323,318	0.950	2,207,152	-15,875	-1%
2009	556,004,505	365,835,238	0.0037811	0.0029500	2,462,474	0.950	2,339,350	132,198	6%
2010	462,927,140	272,757,873	0.0043440	0.0034581	2,128,084	0.950	2,021,680	-317,670	-14%
2011	365,451,066	175,281,799	0.0047500	0.0034581	1,438,731	0.950	1,366,794	-654,886	-32%
2012	341,996,623	151,827,356	0.0047815	0.0034581	1,250,997	0.950	1,188,447	-178,347	-13%
2013	345,390,869	155,221,602	0.0047815	0.0034581	1,278,964	0.950	1,215,016	26,569	2%
2014	367,146,237	176,976,970	0.0047815	0.0034581	1,458,219	0.950	1,385,308	170,293	14%
2015	344,771,209	154,601,942	0.0047815	0.0034581	1,273,858	0.950	1,210,165	-175,143	-13%
2016	395,436,502	205,267,235	0.0047815	0.0034581	1,691,320	0.950	1,606,754	396,589	33%
2017	434,285,291	244,116,024	0.0047815	0.0034581	2,011,418	0.950	1,910,847	304,094	19%
2018	460,342,408	270,173,141	0.0047815	0.0034581	2,226,119	0.950	2,114,813	203,965	11%
2019	487,962,953	297,793,686	0.0047815	0.0034581	2,453,701	0.950	2,331,016	216,203	10%
2020	517,240,730	327,071,463	0.0047815	0.0034581	2,694,938	0.950	2,560,191	229,175	10%
2021	548,275,174	358,105,907	0.0047815	0.0034581	2,950,649	0.950	2,803,117	242,926	9%
2022	581,171,684	391,002,417	0.0047815	0.0034581	3,221,704	0.950	3,060,618	257,501	9%
2023	616,041,985	425,872,718	0.0047815	0.0034581	3,509,021	0.950	3,333,570	272,951	9%
2024	653,004,505	462,835,238	0.0047815	0.0034581	3,813,577	0.950	3,622,898	289,329	9%
2025	692,184,775	502,015,508	0.0047815	0.0034581	4,136,407	0.950	3,929,587	306,688	8%

**Assumptions: 2014 millage rate used up to 2025. Assessed value acceleration rate of 6% is used.**

## 2. USES OF TAX INCREMENT REVENUES

Tax increment revenue can be used for any programs and/or projects that are described in an approved Community Redevelopment Plan. Tax increment funds can also be used for administrative costs and for the repayment of revenue bond(s) and loans debt service and fees. As the CRA invests its funds on redevelopment projects and programs, and completes them, it is expected that the assessed property values in the CRA will rise, which in turn will provide for more tax increment income. Significant tax increment revenue does not appear until redevelopment occurs and existing property values increase.

The Westgate/Belvedere Homes CRA used its funds in the first twenty-five years since its creation on infrastructure improvements such as sewer service, drainage improvements, and roadway construction. Most of the infrastructure need of the CRA has been completed. This amended plan expands into other areas of activity including land acquisition, housing, economic development and crime prevention.

## B. Redevelopment Financing – Tools and Sources

### 1. REVENUE BONDS

One of the most powerful tools that a CRA has in order to encourage redevelopment is the power to issue revenue bonds. The Westgate/Belvedere Homes CRA has utilized this authority, and with the assistance of the County secured approximately \$4 million of bonds to initiate and complete the South Westgate Infrastructure Improvement Project several years ago. The CRA uses a portion of its annual funds to pay the bonds debt. The bond will be paid off in 2018. The CRA will be able to issue a new bond if it desires to utilize this tool to pay for some of its programs and projects. By making improvements with the funds generated by revenue bonds, the CRA will accelerate the redevelopment process.

### 2. GENERAL OBLIGATIONS BONDS

Palm Beach County could issue General Obligation Bonds to finance projects in the Westgate CRA. Such bonds would be secured by debt service millage on the real property within the Westgate CRA and would need to be approved by the voters. Proceeds for the General Obligation Bond could be used to build parks, enhance Westgate Avenue, and complete other infrastructure improvement projects. The County has issued several General Obligations Bonds in the past to finance infrastructure improvement projects countywide.

### 3. SALES TAX

Palm Beach County could also use a portion of its sales tax revenue to finance projects in the Westgate CRA. On November 8, 2016 Palm Beach county voted in a One-Penny Sale Surtax to fund infrastructure repairs, restorations and replacements, and maintain current levels of service provided by the School District, the County and municipalities. If implemented, the surtax will stay in effect up to ten years. It must be discontinued by December 31, 2026 or earlier whenever the proceeds collected equal or exceed \$2.7 billion. Out of that total, the School District will receive 50%, the County 30% and the municipalities 20%. There are 11 capital improvement projects within the Westgate CRA that are proposed to be funded by the surtax. They include Westgate Elementary School facility and technology improvements, Westgate Park and Recreation Center athletic field renovations, a Westgate Avenue resurfacing project and the Belvedere Road Canal piping project.

### 4. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANTS (CDBG)

The Westgate CRA is one of Palm Beach County's "Community Development Target Areas." It qualifies to apply and has been the recipient of several CDBG grants from Palm Beach County. Some of those grant funds came from the County annual CDBG allocation received directly from the Federal Government. Other grant funds have come from Disaster Recovery Initiative (DRI), the Stimulus CDBG-R funded under

the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) and the Neighborhood Stabilization Program 2 (NSP2). Over the last 10 years, the CRA has received more than \$10 million dollars in CDBG funds to complete the North Westgate infrastructure improvement projects, including the Dennis P. Koehler Preserve and Babbling Brood, rehabilitate and build houses, reconstruct the Cherry Road Bridge, install streetlights in Belvedere Homes, and install drainage and sewer systems in Belvedere Homes.

The CRA will continue to apply for CDBG funding in the future. CDBG funds can be a good source of funds for outstanding infrastructure projects in Belvedere Homes and Belvedere Heights. CDBG funds can also be used to acquire property alongside the L-2 Canal for open space and the future widening of the canal.

One unexplored CDBG source available to the CRA is the Economic Development Administration grant. Efforts need to be made to bring those available funds in the area to support Section 108 loan activities.

## 5. SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICT

The Westgate CRA could also establish special assessment districts to fund some of the projects, programs and initiatives identified in the plan. Palm Beach County has used that mechanism in the past to fund roadway and sewer improvement projects. The CRA looked into this mechanism 10 years ago, but, at the time, residents did not support contributions to an assessment fund to address drainage issues. This idea needs to be revisited, particularly to fund additional policing and/or security patrols for the Westgate Avenue and Congress Avenue corridors.

## 6. LEASE PROCEEDS

The CRA owns several properties that are being held for redevelopment that can be leased. Lease income is a minimal part of the budget; however, it provides a supplemental source of income for the activities of the CRA. As the CRA acquires more properties, consideration should be made to allow them to be available for lease as they await redevelopment. By leasing CRA owned properties, the CRA not only increases its revenues, but also prevents criminal activity from occurring on these properties.

## 7. GRANTS AND DONATIONS

The CRA's TIF Redevelopment Trust Fund alone is not sufficient to pay for major infrastructure improvement projects and incentivize developers to build thereby increasing the tax base. Over the last 20 years, more than half of the CRA budget has been used to pay for debt service. The other half is used for administration and a few small programs. The CRA has utilized a large amount of grant funding to leverage TIF dollars to complete several drainage and sanitary sewer projects. The following is a list of grants that the CRA should pursue:

**7.1. CDBG:** As discussed above, the County receives an allocation of CDBG funds each year based on the needs of its population. The Westgate CRA must be prepared to apply for CDBG funds every time they are made available. Those funds can be used for housing, infrastructure improvements, public services, property acquisition, and occasionally, economic development.

**7.2. HMGP:** The Hazard Mitigation Grant Program is administered by the State of Florida Department of Emergency Management as a pass-through from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).



The CRA has received several HMGP grants to complete projects to mitigate flooding in the area. These projects include the L-2 Pump Station, the L-2 Canal Expansion, the Dennis Koehler Preserve and other drainage improvement projects as described in Section 2 of this plan. The CRA needs to continue to participate in the Local Mitigation Strategy group to be eligible to apply for HMGP funding.

**7.4. New Markets Tax Credit:** The New Markets Tax Credit (NMTTC) Program was established as part of the Community Renewal Tax Relief Act of 2000. It was developed to encourage redevelopment activities in low-income neighborhoods. According to the Tax Relief Act, it provides tax credit incentives to investors for equity investments in certified Community Development Entities, which invests in low-income communities. The credit equals 39% of the investment paid out (5% in each of the first three years, then 6% in the final four years, for a total of 39%) over seven years. The Community Development Entity must have a primary mission of investing in low-income communities and persons. This program is best utilized when there is concrete project that can benefit from the investment. It is a program that the CRA should explore in the future.

**7.5. Other State Grants:** The State of Florida has several grants that the CRA can use. The Department of Economic Opportunity has just awarded a Community Planning Technical Assistance grant to the CRA for the preparation of a concept Westgate Avenue Corridor Streetscape Plan. The EPA has several grant programs that the CRA can use for redevelopment activities. There are also legislative appropriations that can be made available to the CRA.

**7.6. Local Grants and Donations:** Several government entities in Palm Beach County offer some grant programs. These entities include Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners, South Florida Water Management District, and Solid Waste Authority. The CRA has also received private grants and donations from the Quantum Foundation, the Rodriguez Foundation and the Palm Beach Kennel Club. The CRA has used these funds to pay for infrastructure improvements, home improvements and community development programs. The CRA should continue to foster those partnerships and develop additional partnerships in the future.

**7.7. Examples of other grants:**

**KRESGE FOUNDATION**

- arts & culture - creative placemaking
- social investing
- human services

**KNIGHT FOUNDATION**

- Region & Community Program
- sustainable development
- “homes for all”
- economically vibrant neighborhoods

**ROBERT JOHNSON WOOD FOUNDATION**

- supports healthy communities – elimination of food deserts & health disparities

## WHOLE CITIES FOUNDATION

- bringing healthy nutritious food to underserved communities

## CULTURAL COUNCIL OF PALM BEACH COUNTY

- promotion of the arts – art in public places

7.8. Other Funding Sources

**7.8.1. Loans and Line of Credit:** Depending on the CRA's cash flow, loans and line of credits can be used to finance redevelopment projects. These loans are usually secured and paid out of future TIF revenues. In 2007, the CRA took a loan from Bank of America to acquire properties for redevelopment or drainage. The Agency should consider working with lending institutions to secure funding for some of the projects and programs outlined in the plan.

**7.8.2. CDC:** In order to apply for grants from foundations and other non-governmental entities, the CRA believes that a nonprofit arm of the CRA would be the best avenue to approach. If the CRA created a Community Development Corporation (or CDC), the CDC could apply for a CHODO (Community Housing Development Organization) designation to apply for housing grants from HUD. The process of creating a CDC called the Westgate Community Development Corporation has already begun; Articles of Incorporation are being drafted and potential Board members are being recruited. The CDC would assume the logo of Celebrate Westgate and incorporate the Celebrate Westgate community festival, the Westgate Greenmarket Express, and The Gate community garden along with other special events under the umbrella of the CDC. The CDC would also apply for grants for housing (such as CDBG grants for activities other than infrastructure) and housing grants directly from HUD.

## B. Financing the Work Program

### 1. REDEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS

The following table provides an estimate of cost and a list of projects that the County, the Westgate CRA and/or other agencies of the County will need to undertake in order to continue to improve the area. The list is provided for a five-year period and will be updated as needed.

**TABLE 5-2 CRA AND COUNTY FUNDED CAPITAL PROJECTS AND MAJOR PROGRAMS – 2017 TO 2022 (5 YEAR PLAN)**

Programs & Project Name		Total Public Cost
<b>1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT &amp; REDEVELOPMENT</b>		
	Westgate Avenue Corridor Streetscape Project	\$8,000,000.00
	"Heart of Westgate" Redevelopment Project	\$4,000,000.00
	Congress Avenue Beautification Project	\$1,000,000.00
	Land Assembly for Infill Redevelopment Program	\$500,000.00
	Westgate Merchants Association	\$25,000.00
	Site Development Assistance Grant Program	\$1,000,000.00
	Façade Improvement Grant Program	\$500,000.00
	Green Design Incentives Program	\$100,000.00

<b>2. MARKET POSITIONING</b>		
	REbrand & REboot Westgate Campaign	\$300,000.00
	Place-making, Intersections & Entryway Features Initiatives	\$500,000.00
	Business Incubator Initiative	\$200,000.00
	Business Recruitment Program	\$250,000.00
<b>3. HOUSING</b>		
	Workforce Housing Incentives Program	\$500,000.00
	Neighborhood Improvement Grant Program	\$350,000.00
	Landlord's Association	\$25,000.00
	Homeownership Incentives Program	\$100,000.00
	Special Needs Housing Program	\$200,000.00
<b>4. COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT</b>		
	Events & Community Programming	\$300,000.00
	Community Policing Initiatives	\$300,000.00
	Property Maintenance Initiatives	\$300,000.00
	Public Art Program	\$200,000.00
	Safe Routes to School Plan, Design & Implementation	\$100,000.00
	Westgate Belvedere Homes Neighborhood Association	\$50,000.00
<b>5. INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS &amp; PUBLIC SPACES</b>		
	Neighborhood Streetlight Program	\$300,000.00
	Streetscapes & Public Spaces	\$1,000,000.00
	Belvedere Heights Infrastructure Improvements	\$4,000,000.00
	Belvedere Homes Phase III Infrastructure Improvements	\$4,000,000.00
	Land Acquisition for Additional Storm-water Capacity Project	\$300,000.00
	Pedestrian Friendly Streets and Street Diet	\$200,000.00
	Ongoing Maintenance of CRA Owned Wet & Dry Retention Areas	\$200,000.00
	Adaptive Reuse Program	\$200,000.00
<b>6. PLANNING FOR REDEVELOPMENT</b>		
	Grants Sourcing & Financing Strategies Program	\$100,000.00
	Land Development Regulations & Land Use Policy Amendments	\$200,000.00
	Commercial Corridors Feasibility Study & Market Analysis	\$100,000.00
	Northeast Industrial District Study	\$100,000.00
	Creation of a Community Development Corporation (CDC)	\$400,000.00
	Master Drainage Plan	\$100,000.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$30,000,000.00</b>

## 2. BUDGET

The budget planning process begins in late May/early June when the Palm Beach County Property Appraiser sends out an estimate of taxable values. One month later (on July 1<sup>st</sup>) the CRA receives a preliminary tax roll value. It is the July 1<sup>st</sup> estimate that the CRA uses to formulate the budget which is presented to the CRA Board twice before going to the BCC for approval and adoption. Priority programs and projects are identified during the yearly budget planning process. An evaluation of the previous years' activities provides a measure of performance, determines priorities, and the allocation of budget funds.

## 3. 5-YEAR PROJECTION OF REVENUES AND EXPENSES

The following table shows a five-year projection of revenues and expenditures. It does not propose any bonds or loan programs. It assumes that the CRA will continue to seek grant funding to finance major infrastructure improvement projects.

Projections	Table 5-3: CRA 5-Year Projection of Revenues & Expenses				
	Fiscal Year				
	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22
Projected Assessment (Base on 6% yearly increase)	460,342,408	487,962,953	517,240,730	548,275,174	581,171,684
Base Year Assessment (1988)	190,169,267	190,169,267	190,169,267	190,169,267	190,169,267
Increment Increase	270,173,141	297,793,686	327,071,463	358,105,907	391,002,417
Tax Increment Revenue	2,114,813	2,331,016	2,560,191	2,803,117	3,060,618
<b>Revenues</b>					
Tax Increment Revenues	2,114,813	2,331,016	2,560,191	2,803,117	3,060,618
Loans / Bonds	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Debt Service Reserve	250,000				
Sale of Property		100,000	80,000	120,000	
Grants and Donations	400,000	2,400,000	2,200,000	2,000,000	2,000,000
Leases	40,000				
Other Revenues					
<b>Total Revenues</b>	2,804,813	4,831,016	4,840,191	4,923,117	5,060,618
<b>Expenditures</b>					
Debt Service	385,500	32,737	36,499	37,490	41,460
Project Expense	1,840,000	4,190,000	4,165,000	4,215,000	4,315,000
General & Administrative (Base on 5% yearly Increase)	579,313	608,279	638,692	670,627	704,158
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	2,804,813	4,831,016	4,840,191	4,923,117	5,060,618

#### 4. 5-YEAR REDEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMING AND FUNDING ALLOCATIONS

The Five-Year Redevelopment Program and Funding Allocations table provides a five-year plan to fund the 6 areas of focus identified in the Plan. It intends to serve as a guide for project implementation and cash flow management; however, it does not intend to replace the annual budget. The costs are only estimates that can be used for the purposes of planning. The table does not provide any guarantee that funding will be available for any given project. Funds will be allocated to actual projects by the CRA Board during their budget planning meetings.

Project Name	Table 5-4: CRA 5-Year Redevelopment Programming and Funding Allocations				
	Fiscal Year				
	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22
<b>Redevelopment Program &amp; Projects</b>					
<b>Economic Development</b>					
Priority Commercial Corridor Projects	200,000	500,000	1,500,000	1,500,000	1,000,000
Incentives & Grants Programs	200,000	500,000	500,000	600,000	650,000
<b>Economic Development Sub-total</b>	<b>400,000</b>	<b>1,000,000</b>	<b>2,000,000</b>	<b>2,100,000</b>	<b>1,650,000</b>
<b>Market Positioning</b>					
Rebrand & Reboot Westgate Campaign	100,000	100,000	100,000	50,000	
Place making & Entryway Features Initiatives	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
<b>Market Positioning Sub-total</b>	<b>200,000</b>	<b>200,000</b>	<b>200,000</b>	<b>150,000</b>	<b>100,000</b>
<b>Housing</b>					
Residential Neighborhood Improvement	75,000	75,000	100,000	100,000	150,000
Workforce Housing Incentives Program	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
<b>Housing Sub-total</b>	<b>175,000</b>	<b>175,000</b>	<b>200,000</b>	<b>200,000</b>	<b>250,000</b>
<b>Community Improvement</b>					
Events & Community Programming	100,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	50,000
Community Policing & Property Maintenance	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	100,000
<b>Community Improvement Sub-total</b>	<b>150,000</b>	<b>200,000</b>	<b>200,000</b>	<b>200,000</b>	<b>150,000</b>
<b>Infrastructure</b>					
Streetlights, Streetscapes & Public Spaces	200,000	250,000	250,000	250,000	300,000
Belvedere Heights Infrastructure	200,000	1,000,000	500,000	500,000	800,000
Belvedere Homes Infrastructure	200,000	1,000,000	500,000	500,000	800,000
Ongoing Maintenance of CRA Detention Ponds	90,000	90,000	90,000	90,000	90,000
<b>Infrastructure Sub-total</b>	<b>690,000</b>	<b>2,340,000</b>	<b>1,340,000</b>	<b>1,340,000</b>	<b>1,990,000</b>
<b>Planning</b>					
Grants Sourcing & Financing Strategies	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
Land Use/Zoning Regulations & Policies Amendments & Studies	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
Creation of a Community Development Corporation	50,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	50,000
Master Drainage Plan	50,000	50,000			
<b>Planning Sub-Total</b>	<b>225,000</b>	<b>275,000</b>	<b>225,000</b>	<b>225,000</b>	<b>175,000</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>1,840,000</b>	<b>4,190,000</b>	<b>4,165,000</b>	<b>4,215,000</b>	<b>4,315,000</b>