



# FINDING OF NECESSITY OF THE EXPANSION FOR THE NW 7TH AVENUE CORRIDOR COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AREA

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FLORIDA'S *Big* LOCAL FIRM

# Findings of Necessity for the Expansion of the NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor Community Redevelopment Area

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Finding of Necessity (FON) report assesses conditions of slum and blight in the Proposed NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor Expansion. The study area is bounded on the north by the City of Miami Gardens; bounded on the east by Interstate 95; bounded on the west by the westernmost property line of all those parcels of land that abut the westerly right-of-way line of NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue/State Road 441; and bounded on the south by the City of North Miami. The Proposed NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor Expansion is approximately 134 acres of unincorporated land.

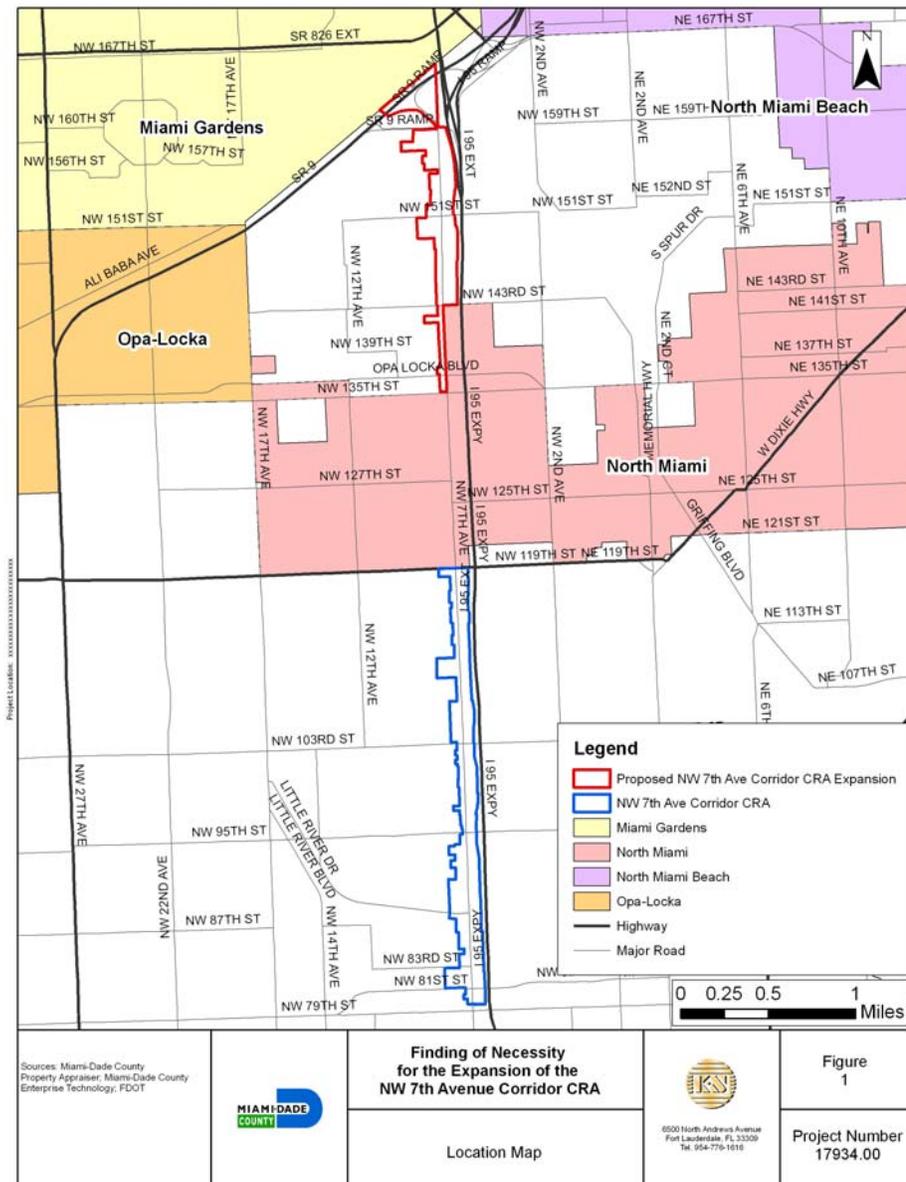
Providing the basis for creating a Community Redevelopment Area (CRA), in accordance with Chapter 163.355, Florida Statutes requires a detailed examination of existing land use characteristics, socio-economic conditions, and other indicators. Working with Miami-Dade County staff, Keith and Schnars, P.A. assembled this information, conducted field surveys, and analyzed the data, in a manner consistent with Florida Statutes, and made the finding that the Proposed NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor Expansion does meet the requirements for a CRA. This finding is based upon a determination that the following criteria of slum and blight are met (i.e. at least two slum factors and four blight factors).

- High density of population, compared to the population density of adjacent areas within the county or municipality; and overcrowding, as indicated by government-maintained statistics or other studies and the requirements of the Florida Building Code (“slum”). *The Study Area has a higher person per household rate (3.5) than the County (2.9). Family households with 5 people or more in study area (23%) exceeds that of County (15%).*
- The existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes (“slum”) or, unsanitary or unsafe conditions (“blight”). *Unkempt vacant lots are scattered throughout the Study Area. Dumping and trash in combination with overgrown tall grasses can easily create a higher risk of fire hazard, as well as attracting vermin that create other health risks. Vacant land comprises 11 percent of the area.*
- Deterioration of site and other improvements (“blight”). *Almost 21 percent of the parcels containing residential structures (single and duplex) were found to be in deteriorating conditions.*
- Incidence of crime in the area higher than in the remainder of the county or municipality (“blight”). *Crime rates in the study area are higher than the unincorporated County.*
- Delinquent taxes in the area higher than in the remainder of the county or municipality (“blight”). *Average delinquent taxes in study area (11.89%) exceed that of the County (8.83%).*

# INTRODUCTION

## Location

The Proposed NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor CRA Expansion FON report provides a slum and blight assessment of the approximately 134 acres of land in unincorporated Miami-Dade County. The study area is bounded on the north by the City of Miami Gardens; on the east by Interstate 95; on the west by the westernmost property line of all those parcels of land that abut the westerly right-of-way line of NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue/State Road 441; and on the south by the City of North Miami. Figure 1 depicts the general location of the Proposed NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor CRA Expansion in relation to the existing CRA.



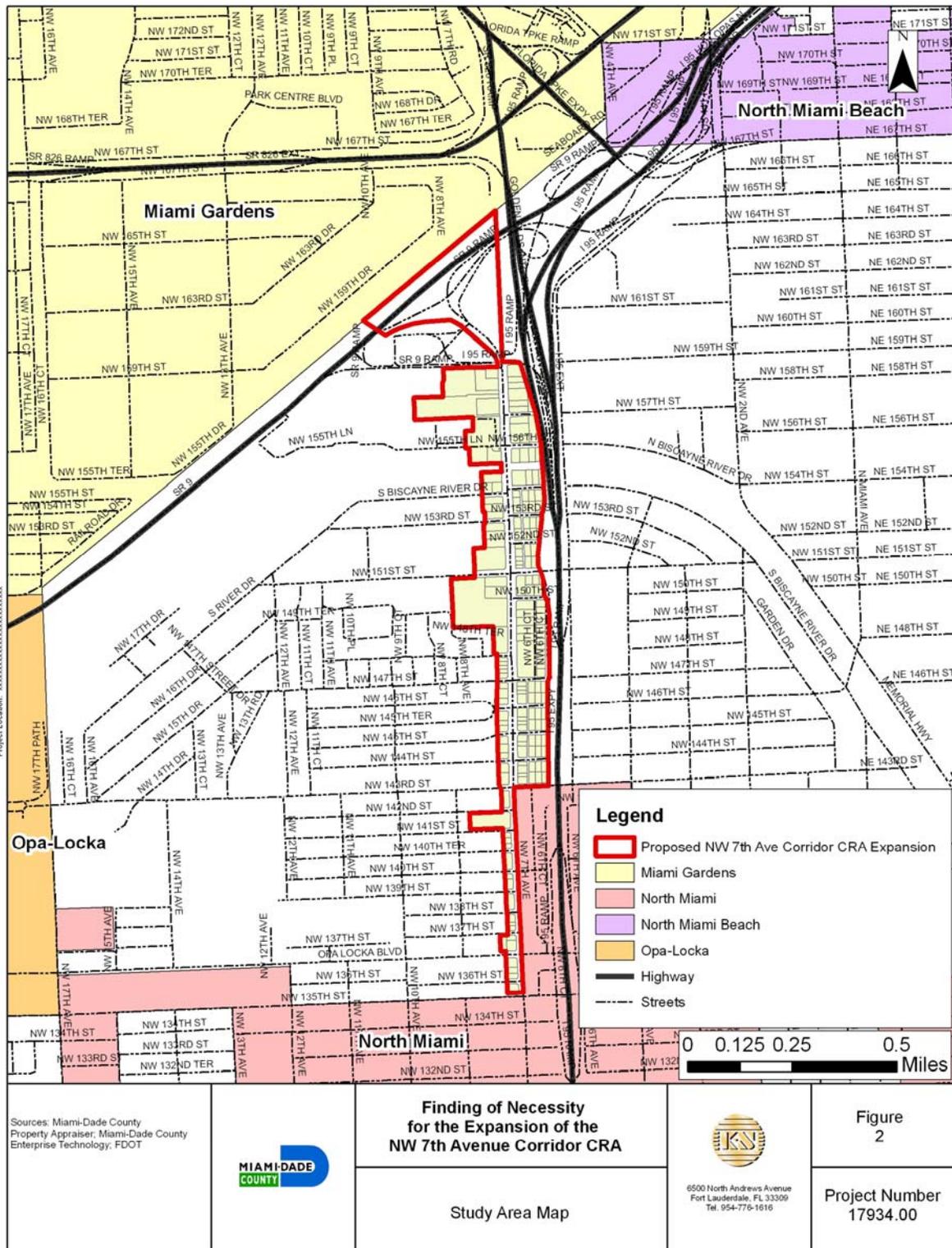
## Legal Description

The following, is the legal description of the Proposed NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor CRA Expansion as depicted on Figure 2.

BEGIN at Southeast corner of the Southeast one-quarter (1/4) of Section 23, Township 52 South, Range 41 East, Miami-Dade County, Florida, also being the intersection of the centerline of NW 135 Street and the centerline of NW 7 Avenue (U.S. Highway 441); thence westerly along the south line of the said Southeast one-quarter (1/4) of Section 23, also being the centerline of NW 135 Street, to the intersection with the southerly projection of the west line of Lot 1, Block 2 of TROPICAL FARMS, according to the plat thereof recorded in Plat Book 42, Page 86 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida; thence north along said southerly projection, the said west line of Lot 1, and its northerly projection to the southwest corner of Lot 30, Block 2, of said TROPICAL FARMS; thence continue northerly along the west line of said Lot 30 and the west line of Lots 31 and 1 respectively, Block 2 of said TROPICAL FARMS; thence continue north along the northerly projection of the west line of said Lot 1, Block 2 to the intersection with the south line of Lot 3, Block 1 of HIGHVIEW GARDENS, according to the plat thereof recorded in Plat Book 45, Page 22 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida; thence westerly along the said south line of Lot 3, Block 1 to the southwest corner of said Lot 3; thence northerly along the west line of said Lot 3 and the west line of Lot 14, Block 1 of said HIGHVIEW GARDENS, to the northwest corner of said Lot 14; thence easterly along the north line of said Lot 14 to the intersection with the southerly projection of the west line of Lot 1, Block 4, of said HIGHVIEW GARDENS; thence northerly along said southerly projection and the westerly line of said Lot 1 to the northwest corner of said Lot 1, also being the southwest corner of Lot 15, Block 4 HIGHVIEW GARDENS SECTION "A", according to the plat thereof recorded in Plat Book 45, Page 29 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida; thence northerly along the west line of said Lot 15 to the northwest corner of said Lot 15; thence continue northerly along the northerly projection of the west line of said Lot 15 to the southwest corner of Lot 2, Block 5 of said HIGHVIEW GARDENS SECTION "A"; thence northerly along the west line of said Lot 2 and the west line of Lots 15 and 1, Block 5 respectively, to the northwest corner of said Lot 15; thence northerly along the northerly projection of the west line of said Lot 15 to the southwest corner of said Lot 2, Block 8, HIGHVIEW GARDENS SECTION "B"; according to the plat thereof recorded in Plat Book 45, Page 37 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida; thence northerly along the west line of said Lot 2 and the west line of Lots 1 and 15, Block 8 of said HIGHVIEW GARDENS SECTION "B" to the northwest corner of said Lot 15; thence continue northerly along the northerly projection of the west line of said Lot 15 to the southwest corner of Lot 2, Block 9 of said HIGHVIEW GARDENS SECTION "B"; thence northerly along the west line of said Lot 2 and the west line of Lots 1 and 15, Block 9, respectively, to the northwest corner of said Lot 15; thence northerly along the northerly projection of the west line of said Lot 15 to the southwest corner of Lot 2, Block 12 of HIGHVIEW GARDENS SECTION "C", according to the plat thereof recorded in Plat Book 45, Page 43 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida; thence northerly along the west line of said Lot 2 and the west line of Lots 1 and 15, Block 12 respectively, of said HIGHVIEW GARDENS SECTION "C", to the northwest corner of said Lot 15; thence northerly along the northerly extension of the west line of said Lot 15 to the intersection with the south line of Block 13 of HIGHVIEW GARDENS SECTION "D", according to the plat thereof

recorded in Plat Book 45, Page 58 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida; thence westerly along the south line of said Block 13 to the intersection with the east line of the west 115.00 feet of said Block 13; thence northerly along said east line of the west 115.00 feet of said Block 13 to the north line of said Block 13; thence easterly along said north line of Block 13 to the intersection with the southerly projection of the west line of Lot 2, Block 16 of HIGHVIEW GARDENS SECTION "E", according to the plat thereof recorded in Plat Book 47, Page 29 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida; thence northerly along said southerly extension of Lot 2, the west line of said Lot 2, and the west line of Lots 1 and 15, Block 16, respectively, of said HIGHVIEW GARDENS SECTION "E", to the northwest corner of said Lot 15; thence northerly along the northerly projection of the west line of said Lot 15 to the intersection with the south line of Lot 23, Block 6 of BISCAYNE GARDENS SECTION F PART 2, according to the plat thereof recorded in Plat Book 50, Page 8 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida; thence westerly along the south line of said Lot 23 and the south line of Lot 22 to the intersection with a line 10 feet west of and parallel to by perpendicular measure to the west line of said Lot 23; thence northerly along said line 10 feet west of and parallel to by perpendicular measure to the west line of Lots 23 and 24, respectively, and continue along the northerly extension thereof to the intersection with the westerly projection of the south line of Lot 31, Block 5, of said BISCAYNE GARDENS SECTION F PART 2; thence easterly along said southerly projection to the southwest corner of said Lot 31; thence northerly along the west line of said Lot 31 and the west line of Lots 32, 33, and 34, Block 5, and its northerly projection to the southwest corner of Lot 29, Block 4, of said BISCAYNE GARDENS SECTION F PART 2; thence continue northerly along the west line of said Lot 29 and the west line of Lots 30, 31, 32, the northerly projection thereof, along the west line of Lots 31 through 34, Block 2 of said BISCAYNE GARDENS SECTION F PART 2, its northerly projection, and along the west line of Lots 1 through 5, Block 1 of said BISCAYNE GARDENS SECTION F PART 2, to the northwest corner of said Lot 5; thence northerly along the northerly projection of the west line of said Block 1 to the intersection with the south line of Tract "A" of SOUTH AVENUE CENTER, according to the plat thereof recorded in Plat Book 130, Page 50 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida; thence westerly along said south line to the southwest corner of said Tract "A"; thence northerly along the west line of said Tract "A" to the northwest corner of said Tract "A" and the intersection with the south line of Tract "A" of NAPOLITANO TRACT, according to the plat thereof recorded in Plat Book 106, Page 90 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida; thence westerly along the south line of said Tract "A" of NAPOLITANO TRACT to the southwest corner of said Tract "A" NAPOLITANO TRACT, thence northerly along the west line of said Tract "A" NAPOLITANO TRACT to the northwest corner of said Tract "A" of NAPOLITANO TRACT; thence easterly along the north line of said Tract "A" of NAPOLITANO TRACT to the intersection with the southerly projection of the west line of Lot 81 of BISCAYNE GARDENS SECTION F PART 1, according to the plat thereof recorded in Plat Book 44, Page 46 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida; thence northerly along said southerly projection and the west line of said Lot 81 to the northwest corner of said Lot 81; thence easterly along the north line of said Lot 81 to the southwest corner of Lot 45 of said BISCAYNE GARDENS SECTION F PART 1; thence northerly along the west line of said Lot 45 and along the west line of Lots 44 and 43 respectively, of said BISCAYNE GARDENS SECTION F PART 1 to the northwest corner of said Lot 43; thence easterly along the north line of said Lot 43 to the intersection with the southerly projection of a line 20 feet east of and parallel to by perpendicular measure the west line of Lot 42 of said BISCAYNE GARDENS SECTION F PART 1; thence northerly along said

southerly extension and said line 20 feet east of and parallel to the west line of said Lot 42 to the intersection with the south line of Lot 41 of said BISCAYNE GARDENS SECTION F PART 1; thence westerly along the south line of said Lot 41 to the southwest corner of said Lot 41; thence northerly along the west line of said Lot 41 and the west line of Lot 40 of said BISCAYNE GARDENS SECTION F PART 1 to the northwest corner of said Lot 40; thence easterly along the north line of said Lot 40 to the intersection with the southerly projection of the west line of the East 115.90 feet of Lots 3 and 2 respectively, of said BISCAYNE GARDENS SECTION F PART 1 to the intersection with the south line of the North 55.00 feet of Lot 2; thence westerly along said south line of the North 55.00 feet of said Lot 2 to the west line of said Lot 2; thence northerly along the west line of said Lot 2 and Lot 1 respectively, of said BISCAYNE GARDENS SECTION F PART 1 to the northwest corner of said Lot 1; thence northerly along the northerly extension of said Lot 1 to the north line of the 15 foot reserved strip as shown on the Plat of said BISCAYNE GARDENS SECTION F PART 1 that lies north of and adjacent to said Lot 1 to the west right of way line of NW 7 Avenue; thence northerly along said west right of way line and the northerly projection thereof to the southeast corner of Tract 1-A of GOLDEN LAKES, according to the plat thereof recorded in Plat Book 96, Page 35 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida; thence westerly along the south line of said Tract 1-A and the south line of Tract 1-B of said GOLDEN LAKES to the southwest corner of said Tract 1-B; thence northerly for 219.00 feet along the west boundary of said Tract 1-B; thence westerly along the west boundary of sold Tract 1-B for 40.00 feet; thence northerly along the west boundary of said Tract 1-B for 212.78 feet; thence easterly along the west boundary of said Tract 1-B for 95.00 feet; thence northerly along the west boundary of said Tract 1-B for 180.00 feet to the northwest corner of said Tract 1-B and the south line of Lot 2 of CENTER LAKE APARTMENTS LTD., according to the plat thereof recorded in Plat Book 129, Page 7 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida; said south line also being the south line of the North 1/2 of the North 1/2 of the Southeast one-quarter (1/4) of Section 14, Township 52 South, Range 41 East; thence westerly along the said south line of Lot 2 to the southwest corner of said Lot 2; thence northerly along the west line of said Lot 2 to the northwest corner of said Lot 2; thence easterly along the north line of said Lot 2 for 331.45 feet; thence northerly parallel to the west line of Lot 1 of said CENTRE LAKE APARTMENTS LTD. For 170.02 feet; thence northeasterly for 54.79 feet; thence northerly parallel to the west line of said Lot 1 to the north line of said Lot 1; thence easterly along said north line of Lot 1 to the intersection with the west right of way line of NW 7 Avenue (U.S. Highway 441); thence northerly along said west right of way line and the State Road 9 Limited access right of way line to the intersection with the south right of way line of State Road 9; thence northwesterly at right angles to and to the intersection with the northerly right of way line of S.A.L. Railroad (Tri-Rail); thence northeasterly along said northerly right of way line to the intersection with the northerly projection of the west right of way line of NW 7 Avenue (U.S. 441); thence southerly along said west right of way line to the intersection with the State Road 9 Limited Access right of way line; thence easterly along said Limited Access right of way line to the intersection with the west right of way of Interstate Highway 95; thence southerly along said west right of way line to the south line of the northwest one-quarter (1/4) of Section 24, Township 52 South, Range 41 East, also being the centerline of NW 143 Street; thence westerly along said south line and the centerline of NW 143 Street to the northeast corner of the southeast one-quarter (1/4) of said Section 23, also being the intersection with the centerline of NW 7 Avenue (U.S. Highway 441); thence southerly along the east line of said Southeast one-quarter (1/4) of Section 23, also being the centerline of NW 7 Avenue (U.S. Highway 441) to the point of beginning.



## Findings of Necessity

This report is intended to be adopted by the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners, and used as evidence for expanding the NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor CRA, by making a legislative finding of the area that according to Florida Statutes 163.355:

- 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 elderly, exist in the study area; and,
- 2) The rehabilitation, conservation, or redevelopment, or a combination thereof, of such area or areas, including, if appropriate, the development of housing which residents of low or moderate income, including the elderly, can afford, is necessary in the interest of the public health, safety, morals, or welfare of the residents of such county or municipality.

The FON, as set forth in Section 163.355 Florida Statutes, is an assessment of the area that provides the evidence of blight and need for redevelopment, due to the area's deficiencies in attracting market-based investment of the same rate and quality as surrounding areas and the County as a whole. The report relies upon a variety of empirical data and observations of all the parcels within the Proposed NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor Expansion study area in determining the existence of slum or blighted conditions as defined by and criteria outlined in Chapter 163.340, Florida Statutes.

## Slum Determinants

According to Chapter 163.340(7), Florida Statutes, "Slum Area" means an area having physical or economic conditions conducive to disease, infant mortality, juvenile delinquency, poverty, or crime because there is a predominance of buildings or improvements, whether residential or nonresidential, which are impaired by reason of dilapidation, deterioration, age, or obsolescence, and *exhibiting one or more of the following factors*:

- Inadequate provision for ventilation, light, air, sanitation, or open spaces;
- High density of population, compared to the population density of adjacent areas within the county or municipality; and overcrowding, as indicated by government-maintained statistics or other studies and the requirements of the Florida Building Code; or
- The existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes.

## Blight Determinants

According to Chapter 163.340(8), Florida Statutes, "Blighted Area" means an area in which there are a substantial number of deteriorated, or deteriorating structures, in which conditions, as indicated by government-maintained statistics or other studies, are leading to economic distress or endanger life or property, and in which *two or more of the following factors are present*:

- Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout, parking facilities, roadways, bridges, or public transportation facilities;
- Aggregate assessed values of real property in the area for ad valorem tax purposes have failed to show any appreciable increase over the 5 years prior to the finding of such conditions;
- Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness;
- Unsanitary or unsafe conditions;
- Deterioration of site or other improvements;
- Inadequate and outdated building density patterns;
- Falling lease rates per square foot of office, commercial, or industrial space compared to the remainder of the county or municipality;
- Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land;
- Residential and commercial vacancy rates higher in the area than in the remainder of the county or municipality;
- Incidence of crime in the area higher than in the remainder of the county or municipality;
- Fire and emergency medical service calls to the area proportionately higher than in the remainder of the county or municipality;
- A greater number of violations of the Florida Building Code in the area than the number of violations recorded in the remainder of the county or municipality;
- Diversity of ownership or defective or unusual conditions of title which prevent the free alienability of land within the deteriorated or hazardous area; or
- Governmentally owned property with adverse environmental conditions caused by a public or private entity.

## **EXISTING LAND USE CHARACTERISTICS**

This section of the report provides an assessment of all characteristics of the land and built properties according to the criteria listed above. With reference to slum and blight criteria, it addresses the following:

- Area Composition;
- Site and Structure Deterioration;
- Vacant Lots;
- Code Violations;
- Conditions that Endanger Life and Property;
- Commercial vacancy

### **Area Composition**

The Proposed NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor CRA Expansion includes approximately 134 acres of land of which 76 acres are real property. It is worthy of mention that the study area comprises 58 acres of right-of-way (ROW) which includes the Golden Glades Interchange parking and terminal facilities to the north. ROW is not part of the land use character analysis. The existing land use distribution is approximately 43 percent commercial, 17 percent single family, 16.5 percent multifamily, 11 percent vacant, 7 percent institutional, 3 percent other properties and 2 percent industrial. A detailed description of existing land uses is provided in Table 1 and illustrated in Figure 3.

To summarize, the area is predominantly characterized by commercial uses along the corridor, mostly located along NW 7 Avenue. Single family lots predominate to the east side of the Corridor and are about a quarter of an acre in size. Vacant lots with average size of .34 acres predominate along the Corridor north of NW 151 Street. No recreational and open space uses are present. There are many church institutions in the area, as well. Right-of-way in the study area predominates to the north of NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue where Golden Glades Interchange parking lot is located.

Table 2 illustrates the density and intensity of the study area. There are a total of 377 dwelling units in the study area with an overall residential density of 14.4 units an acre. However, density in the multifamily land use is at 25.5 dwelling units per acre. Floor area ratios are approximately 0.7 for industrial, 0.3 for commercial, and 0.2 for institutional.

**Table 1: Existing Land Use Composition, 2010**

Existing Land Use	Acreage	%	Number of Parcels
Single Family	12.8	16.9%	53
Duplex	0.8	1.1%	3
Multi Family	12.5	16.5%	3
Commercial	32.2	42.5%	72
Industrial	1.5	2.0%	3
Institutional	5.0	6.6%	5
Governmental	0.1	0.1%	2
Other Properties	2.4	3.2%	1
Vacant Land	8.4	11.1%	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>75.8</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>167</b>

Source: Miami Dade Property Appraiser

Note: Does not include ROW and northern Golden Glades parking facility.

**Table 2: Density and Intensity, 2010**

Land Use	Area (acres)	Area (SQ/FT)	Units	Building SQ FT	Density (DU/AC)	FAR (SF/SF)
Single Family	12.8	558,172.1	53	NA	4.1	NA
Duplex	0.8	35,775.0	5	NA	6.1	NA
Multi Family	12.5	544,500.0	319	NA	25.5	NA
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>26.1</b>	<b>1,138,447.1</b>	<b>377</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>14.4</b>	<b>NA</b>
Commercial	32.2	1,401,608.0	NA	411,196.0	NA	0.3
Industrial	1.5	66,708.0	NA	47,626.0	NA	0.7
Institutional	5.0	218,465.0	NA	41,379.0	NA	0.2
Governmental	0.1	4,352.8	NA	0.0	NA	0.0
Other Properties	2.4	104,882.0	NA	504.0	NA	0.0
Vacant Land	8.4	367,075.0	NA	0.0	NA	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>75.8</b>	<b>3,301,537.9</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>

Source: Miami Dade Property Appraiser

Note: Does not include ROW and northern Golden Glades parking facility.



## Site and Structure Deterioration

Dilapidated and deteriorated residential structures were identified through a series of site inspections conducted on May 7, 2010. The parameters of the survey were based on the definition of “slum area” and “blighted area” pursuant to Chapter 163.340, Florida Statutes. Only residential parcels were surveyed for structural deficiencies, landscaping and upkeep of property. However, general visual observations were made of industrial and commercial properties. Generally, industrial structures to the north end of the corridor did not exhibit significant deterioration and are kept in good structural and landscape condition. Commercial structures are mostly in adequate condition, but are poorly maintained.

A visual analysis of the area indicated that a significant amount of residential properties can be classified as dilapidated or deteriorated. The condition of buildings and yard maintenance were the two main factors used to rank residential properties. A common attribute is unkempt landscape in properties and right-of-ways.

Structural conditions were evaluated based on the physical condition of the following features:

- roof;
- exterior walls;
- paint exterior;
- windows; and
- fences

Yard maintenance was evaluated based on the following features:

- parking;
- walkways;
- litter on property;
- swale maintenance;
- sidewalks;
- landscaping; and
- drainage

A dilapidated structure is defined as one that is not safe for occupation. Dilapidated structures exhibit roof holes or leaks; more than half of the windows boarded up; structural damage; exterior paint has eroded away showing stucco and cracks; rotted wood; fallen fences and property abandonment.

A deteriorated property is defined as one that has been neglected by property owners and is in need of maintenance to prevent hazardous conditions. These properties exhibit the following: worn roofs; missing tiles or shingles; several roof patches; boarded up or broken windows; littered properties; overgrown grass; faded paint; a lack of swale maintenance; cracked sidewalks and walkways, and broken fences.

Out of 56 residential properties (excluding multifamily), eleven were classified as deteriorated and one as dilapidating. In other words, 21 percent of the housing stock was deteriorated. The predominant condition of deterioration housing was unkempt landscape/overgrown grass, unkempt front ROW, faded exterior paint, and cracked walkways. The study area percentage rate of deteriorated and dilapidated property exceeds the Miami-Dade County Tax Increment Financing Committee guideline of 5 percent.

It is worth mention, some single family homes adjacent to the study area boundary were found dilapidating. They are located on NW 140<sup>th</sup> Terrace, behind the commercial uses along NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

**Figure 4: Structure Deterioration Photos**



Dilapidating house located on 14940  
NW 6<sup>th</sup> Court



Deteriorating duplex located on 655  
NW 153<sup>rd</sup> Street, unkempt yard and  
fading paint



Deteriorating house located 671 NW  
145<sup>th</sup> Terrace exhibits unkempt  
landscape and cracked walkway

**Figure 5: Structure Deterioration Photos**



View of condominium property from on northwest corner  
of NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue and NW 157<sup>th</sup> Lane, exhibits  
deteriorating paint

## Vacant Lots

Vacant lots, by similar mechanisms as deteriorated and dilapidated structures, devalue property. When vacant lots predominate in an area, they become a contributing factor towards blight. In addition, vacant lots attract dumping, and long term trash problems. Dumping and trash, in combination with overgrown tall grasses, can easily create a higher risk of fire hazard, as well as attracting vermin that create other health risks. Finally, a predominant pattern of vacant lots may contribute to higher crime due to the existence of large spaces that are hidden from view and not easily patrolled.

The pattern of vacancy is as important as the amount of land that is vacant. A large tract of vacant land does not demonstrate blight as much as the same amount of vacant land distributed over many smaller lots, especially if these lots are widely dispersed in a neighborhood. While a significant proportion of vacant lots may provide a more suitable “clean slate” for development, it is also evidence of an area that for various reasons is economically disadvantaged in comparison to the surrounding area.

For this analysis, vacant land was evaluated in terms of acres located in respective zoning codes. Miami-Dade County Property Appraiser data was used. As previously stated, 11 percent of the study area land is vacant or 8.4 acres of land is vacant.

**Table 3:  
Vacant Land by Acres**

Zoning	Code <sup>1</sup>	Developed	Vacant	Total Acres	Percent Vacant
Single Family and Duplex	0100	13.8	0.6	14.4	4.4%
Multi Family Med Density	3900, 5000	12.4	1.0	13.4	7.7%
Commercial	6100, 6200, 6400, 6600	41.0	6.0	47.0	12.8%
Office	6900	0.3	0.7	1.0	74.2%
<b>Total</b>	--	<b>67.38</b>	<b>8.42</b>	<b>75.8</b>	--

Source: Miami-Dade County Property Appraiser

Note: Does not include ROW and northern Golden Glades parking facility.

Of the property zoned under commercial, 13 percent is vacant. Office zoned land is 74 percent vacant but with 1 acre of total land under this zoning category, 74 percent is not significant. Of the land that is zoned for multifamily, 8 percent is vacant. Land zoned under single family and duplex categories, is 4 percent vacant.

In an analysis of demand and supply of commercial land performed by the Miami-Dade County Department of Planning and Zoning in March 2009, *NW 7<sup>th</sup> / NW 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue Corridor*, it was revealed that the absorption rate of 1.6 acres per year (demand) for the area and the acreage of

<sup>1</sup> Property Appraiser's Code

vacant land in the Corridor, supply will not be depleted for the next 25 years. This means that demand for vacant land along the Corridor is quite low. Therefore, there is not an excessive supply of vacant land but rather a low market demand. Given this trend, it is questionable if the larger commercial parcels along the Proposed NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor Expansion will be developed in the near future given the low market demand and the already existing commercial vacancies along the corridor shopping centers. An extension of the existing CRA to the study area is likely to create options for vacant land.

**Figure 6: Vacant Parcel Photos**



Vacant land with for sale sign north of Crystal Lake Apartments zoned for commercial use.



Two highly visible tracts of vacant land located east of NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue and north and south of NW 156<sup>th</sup> Street with a total of 3.2 acres. One zoned for commercial and the other for multifamily.

## Unsanitary and Unsafe Conditions

Dumping and trash, in combination with overgrown tall grasses, can easily create a higher risk of fire hazard, as well as attracting vermin that create other health risks. The study area is characterized by alleys, which grass is overgrown; have cracked or unpaved right-of-way; and have dumping. As illustrated in figures below, property may fall victim to vandalism and graffiti. The resulting deterioration further contributes to decline of the area and deterrent to future business growth. Further, the resulting reduction in tax revenue and the added disproportionate cost for police, fire, and other services, place a burden on public resources.

**Figure 7: Unsafe Condition Photos**



Graffiti, overgrown grass and trash along NW 136<sup>th</sup> Street



Dumping and overgrown grass along NW 136<sup>th</sup> Street

**Figure 8: Unsafe Condition Photos**



Dumping at alley behind commercial uses between NW 145<sup>th</sup> and 144<sup>th</sup> Street, east of NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue



Dumping behind commercial use west of NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue and north of NW 139 Street



Alley with deteriorated pavement north of NW 136<sup>th</sup> Street



Graffiti behind commercial use along NW 143<sup>rd</sup> Street east of NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue

## Code Violations

Code violation data is evidence of health and safety issues that create unsafe conditions and may contribute to risk of loss and injury from electrical hazards, fire, and unsafe structures. In addition, evidence of unsanitary conditions, and health issues related to structure materials, hazardous material contamination, presence of vermin, and poor light and ventilation may be obtained. Data for the study area was gathered from Miami-Dade County *My Neighborhood* website <http://gisims2.miamidade.gov/MyNeighborhood/codemap.asp> accessed on April 27, 2010. Violations are listed by type with corresponding folio. A total of 4 violations were found ranging from Unauthorized Use – Residential/Business; Vehicle Advertising Violation; and Unusual Use of Property.

**Table 4:  
Number of Open Code Violations**

Type of Violation	Folio
Unauthorized Use – Residential/Business	3021230110160
Address / House Number not Display	3021240060100
Vehicle Advertising Violation	3021230150970
Unusual Use of Property	3021130032150

Source: <http://gisims2.miamidade.gov/MyNeighborhood/codemap.asp>

Code violation for County as a whole collected by the Neighborhood Compliance Division of the Building and Neighborhood Compliance Department on April 12, 2010 was 6,528. However, since the study land area is narrow and is characterized by commercial uses along the corridor, only the four categories of violations, referenced in table above, were analyzed for the County. As shown in Table 5, there are more code violations per 1,000 residents in the County as a whole than in the Proposed NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor CRA Expansion.

Even if there were less code violations in the study area, the site survey revealed more potential code violations than there were actually issued. This is supported by the Unsanitary and Unsafe Conditions findings.

**Table 5:  
Open Code Violations per 1000 Persons**

Location	Violations	2000 Population	Violations / 1,000 Persons
NW 7 <sup>th</sup> Avenue Extension <sup>2</sup>	4	1,000	0.004
Miami Dade County	657	2,253,362	0.290

Source: Miami-Dade County Building and Neighborhood Compliance Department

<sup>2</sup> Rounded from 963.

## Commercial Vacancies

One indicator of economic vitality in a community is commercial utilization or occupancy. Significant commercial vacancies were found to exist along the NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue corridor. The degree of economic blight poses a threat to the efforts of the viable business that exist within the study area. Businesses find it difficult to draw customers into an area that exhibits visual signs of blight and decay.

A sample of commercial establishment vacancies was taken during the May 7, 2010 site visit. Shopping strip vacancies were evaluated on both sides of NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, south of NW 151<sup>st</sup> Street and north of NW 143<sup>rd</sup> Street.

A Winn-Dixie serves as anchor on the south west corner of NW 151<sup>st</sup> Street and NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue; all business establishments were occupied in that shopping center. Immediately south of the Winn-Dixie a shopping strip with 11 business establishments had 5 vacancies; or 45 percent of the business establishments were vacant. To the east of said shipping strip another row of business establishments with 24 percent of them vacant. Overall business establishments, discounting the Winn-Dixie shopping center, totaled 65 between NW 151<sup>st</sup> Street and NW 143<sup>rd</sup> Street, 40 percent were vacant. In some blocks the commercial vacancies were as high as 80 percent.

The rate of commercial vacancy, per the site survey, is excessively high and contributes to the lack of economic vitality in the study area.

**Figure 9:  
Commercial Vacancies Photos**



Shopping strip immediately south of  
Winn-Dixie



Shopping strip immediately south of  
Winn-Dixie

**Figure 10:  
Commercial Vacancies Photos**



Commercial vacancy with for lease sign located east of NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue south of NW 147<sup>th</sup> Street.



Commercial vacancy located on southeast corner of NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue and NW 147 Street



For lease / for sale sign located east of NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue south of 146<sup>th</sup> Street

**Figure 11:  
Commercial Vacancies Photos**



Commercial for sale and structure deterioration located on 15700 NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue



Commercial vacancy located on west side of NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue south of NW 141<sup>st</sup> Street



For lease sign along shopping strip east of NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue and south of NW 150<sup>th</sup> Street

## **SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS**

Socio-economic conditions such as demographics, real estate value, and incidences of crime are factors that contribute to slum and blight. All socioeconomic characteristics, with the exception of population and race percentages were estimated. All other data was collected at the Block Group level (4.01.2-4 and 7) since this is the smallest unit of analysis in which this data is available.

### **Demographic Characteristics**

Table 6 provides demographic data from the 2000 Census depicting the household economic status.

**Table 6:  
Socio-Economic Characteristics, 2000**

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Proposed CRA Extension</b>	<b>Miami- Dade County</b>
Population <sup>3</sup>	963	2,253,362
White	35.1%	69.7%
Black or African American	55.3%	20.3%
Hispanic or Latino	16.4%	57.3%
In Labor Force (persons 16 and older)	62.7%	57.5%
Person Per Household	3.5	2.9
Employed (persons 16 and older)	88.6%	91.1%
Tenure	--	--
Owner occupied housing	49.4%	57.8%
Renter occupied housing	50.6%	42.2%
Median Household Income	\$31,765	\$35,966
Household Income	--	--
Less than \$10,000	17.0%	13.9%
\$10,000 - \$19,999	18.3%	14.6%
\$20,000 - \$34,999	26.8%	20.2%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	11.4%	15.7%
\$50,000 and over	26.5%	35.6%
Household Below Poverty	22.5%	18.1%

Source: US Census 2000

<sup>3</sup> Population calculation: Total population in blocks containing single and duplex housing units at 185 people total. Population for multifamily calculated by averaging the average household size of single family in study area (2.44 x 318 units = 778).

At the time of the 2000 Census, the area in which the proposed CRA extension is located had a total population of approximately 963 people. African American residents made up 55 percent of the population, compared to 20 percent countywide. The breakdown of owner to renter ratio is more or less even.

Evidence of economic distress experienced by the residents of the Proposed NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor CRA Extension:

- Median household income was \$31,765 in the study area versus \$35,966 County wide.
- Household incomes in the lower income ranges are higher in the study area when compared to Miami-Dade County as a whole. For instance, 35 % of the households in the study area have incomes below \$19,999 versus 28 % County wide.
- Poverty levels are higher in the study area when compared to the County.

## Real Estate Values

Table 7 provides aggregate real estate property values in the Proposed NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor CRA Expansion for each year from 2004 through 2009.

**Table 7:  
Taxable Value of Real Property**

Year	Proposed NW 7 <sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor CRA Expansion		Miami-Dade County	
	Real Estate Value	Annual Change	Real Estate Value	Annual Change
2004	34,465,092	N/A	147,593,766,605	N/A
2005	39,240,229	13.9%	175,222,910,067	18.7%
2006	52,133,136	32.9%	212,656,281,938	21.4%
2007	61,831,220	18.6%	245,337,415,441	15.4%
2008	63,448,400	2.6%	245,562,406,227	0.1%
2009	60,398,166	-4.8%	222,141,817,140	-9.5%
<b>Average Annual Change</b>		<b>12.6%</b>	---	<b>9.2%</b>

Source: Miami-Dade Property Appraiser

The real estate value in the proposed CRA increased from approximately \$34.5 million to \$60.3 million over five years. The following points are noted with respect to the table:

From 2004 to 2009, the real estate value of property countywide increased at an average annual rate of 9.2 percent. Likewise, during the same period, the taxable property value of the property within the proposed CRA expansion increased at an average annual rate of 12.6 percent. Increases exceeding the average annual change occurred in the 2005, 2006, and 2007 in both the study area and County, reflecting the extremely strong real estate market in South Florida. Annual change in 2008 and 2009 decreased and reflect the market crash and current economic depression.

Overall, the Proposed NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor CRA Extension's real estate values are increasing at a higher rate than the County.

## Delinquent Taxes

Another indicator of a declining economic climate is the rate of delinquent taxes. An analysis of advertised delinquent taxes was performed by the Miami-Dade Property Appraiser's Office Staff. In this study, total folios for the County were accounted and a rate of delinquent taxes was assessed. The same analysis was performed for the proposed CRA expansion along NW 7 Avenue. Over a five year period of 2005 through 2009, the average countywide property tax delinquency rate was 8.83 percent. In contrast, the properties within the NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor area averaged a delinquency rate of 11.89 percent. Years 2006 and 2007 had the largest difference between delinquent folios in the County and delinquent folios in the study area with a gap of 4.11 and 4.07 percent, respectively.

**Table 8:  
Delinquent Property Taxes**

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	5-year Average
<b>Miami-Dade County</b>						
Total Folios	779,824	811,493	838,619	861,266	877,732	833,787
Total Delinquent	50,533	66,169	89,795	85,318	76,290	73,621
<i>Delinquency Rate</i>	<b>6.48%</b>	<b>8.15%</b>	<b>10.71%</b>	<b>9.91%</b>	<b>8.69%</b>	<b>8.83%</b>
<b>Proposed CRA Extension</b>						
Total Folios	318	318	318	318	318	318
Delinquent Folios	26	39	47	38	39	38
<i>Delinquency Rate</i>	<b>8.18%</b>	<b>12.26%</b>	<b>14.78%</b>	<b>11.95%</b>	<b>12.26%</b>	<b>11.89%</b>
Difference	1.70%	4.11%	4.07%	2.04%	3.57%	3.06%

## Crime

Incidence of crime in the area is one of the blight determinant criteria under Chapter 163.340(8). The Miami-Dade County Police Department uses grids to identify areas within the County for response and statistical analysis. The County is divided into 3,300 grids. The Proposed NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor CRA Expansion lies within police grid numbers 0328, 0329, 3328, 0389, and 0390 and are highlighted in yellow in Figure 12.

In the year 2009, the Miami-Dade County Police Department responded to a total of 476, 989 calls on unincorporated County, of which 4,683 were located within the five grid area that comprise the NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue CRA corridor extension.

For comparison purposes, crime is analyzed per 1000 residents for population in the year 2000. The number block group grids that most closely align to the five police grids are four, with a population of 7,982.

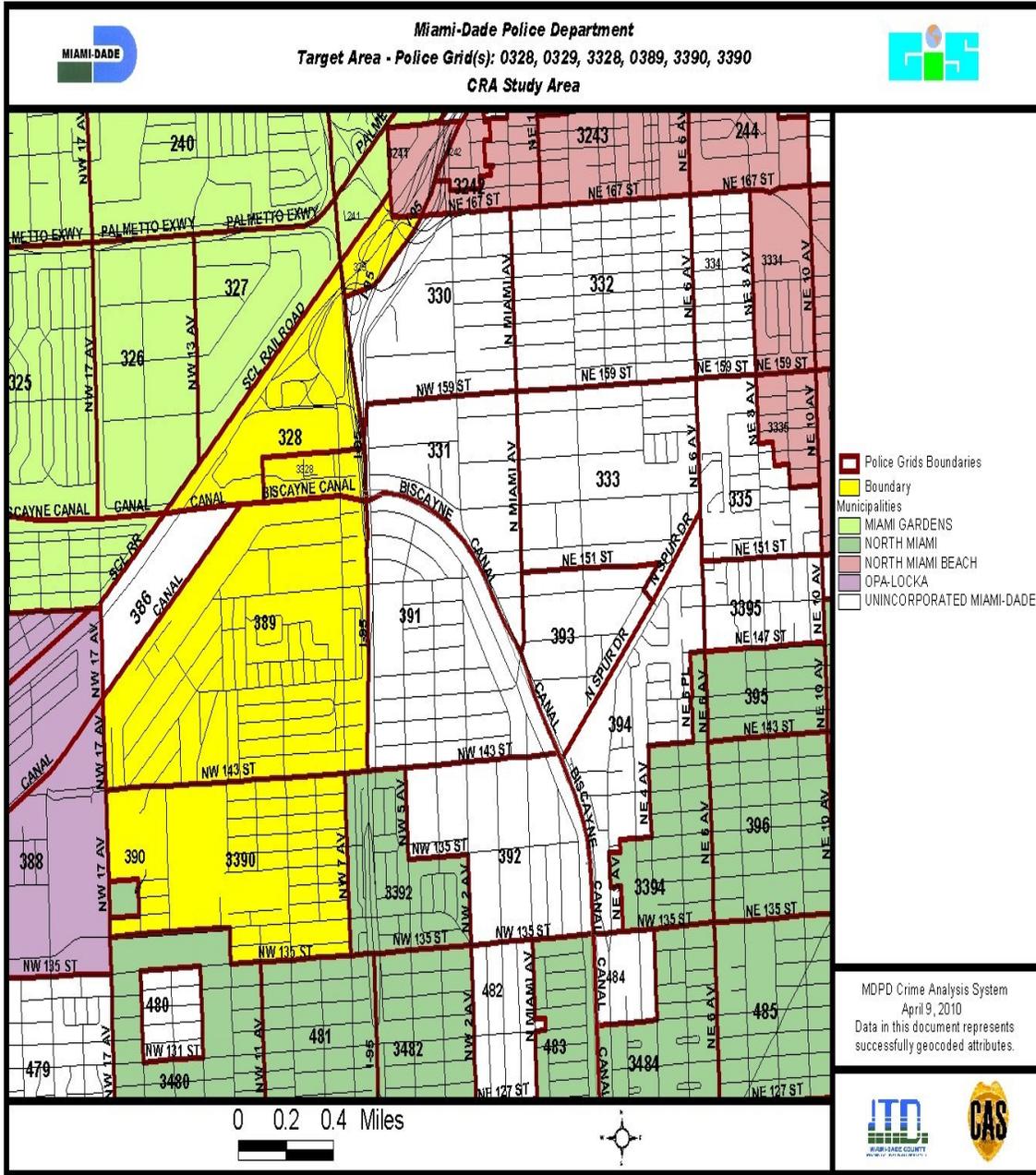
Crime incidences per 1,000 persons in the Proposed NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor CRA Expansion is higher than in unincorporated Miami-Dade County as a whole, as shown in Table 9.

**Table 9:  
Crime per 1000 Population**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Total Crimes</b>	<b>2000 Population</b>	<b>Crimes/ 1000 Persons</b>
Proposed CRA Extension	4,683	7,982	586
Unincorporated Miami-Dade County	476, 989	1,005,687	474

Source: Miami-Dade Police Department and Miami-Dade County Department of Planning & Zoning (Fact Sheet 2009)

**Figure 12:  
Study Area Police Grids**



## **OTHER INDICATORS OF SLUM AND BLIGHT**

Government intervention to improve the economic status is already occurring in some portions of the Proposed NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor CRA Expansion. As shown in Figure 13, the following programs are already in place:

- Brownfield Designation;
- Neighborhood Stabilization Program

### **Brownfields**

With certain legal exclusions and additions, the term *brownfield site* means real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. The primary goals of Florida's Brownfields Redevelopment Act are to reduce health and environmental hazards on existing commercial and industrial sites that are abandoned or underused due to these hazards and create financial and regulatory incentives to encourage voluntary cleanup and redevelopment of sites. Other goals are to derive cleanup target levels and a process for obtaining a "No further Action" letter using Risk-Based Corrective Action principles and provide the opportunity for Environmental Equity and Justice. Brownfields data was provided by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to assist in the determination of areas with potential for economic revitalization.

The brownfield areas shown in Figure 13 were designated by DERM and adopted by the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners (R-286-99 and Agenda Item No. 6(D)(1)(D) approved on July 13, 1999). As defined in these resolutions, brownfield areas are those urban or rural areas of unincorporated Miami-Dade County within the Urban Development Boundary of the Enterprise Zones, Enterprise Communities, Empowerment Zones, Developable Areas, Target Urban Areas, and areas eligible for Community Development Block Grants. Contaminated sites may be few and far between within the brownfield areas as shown in Figure 13.

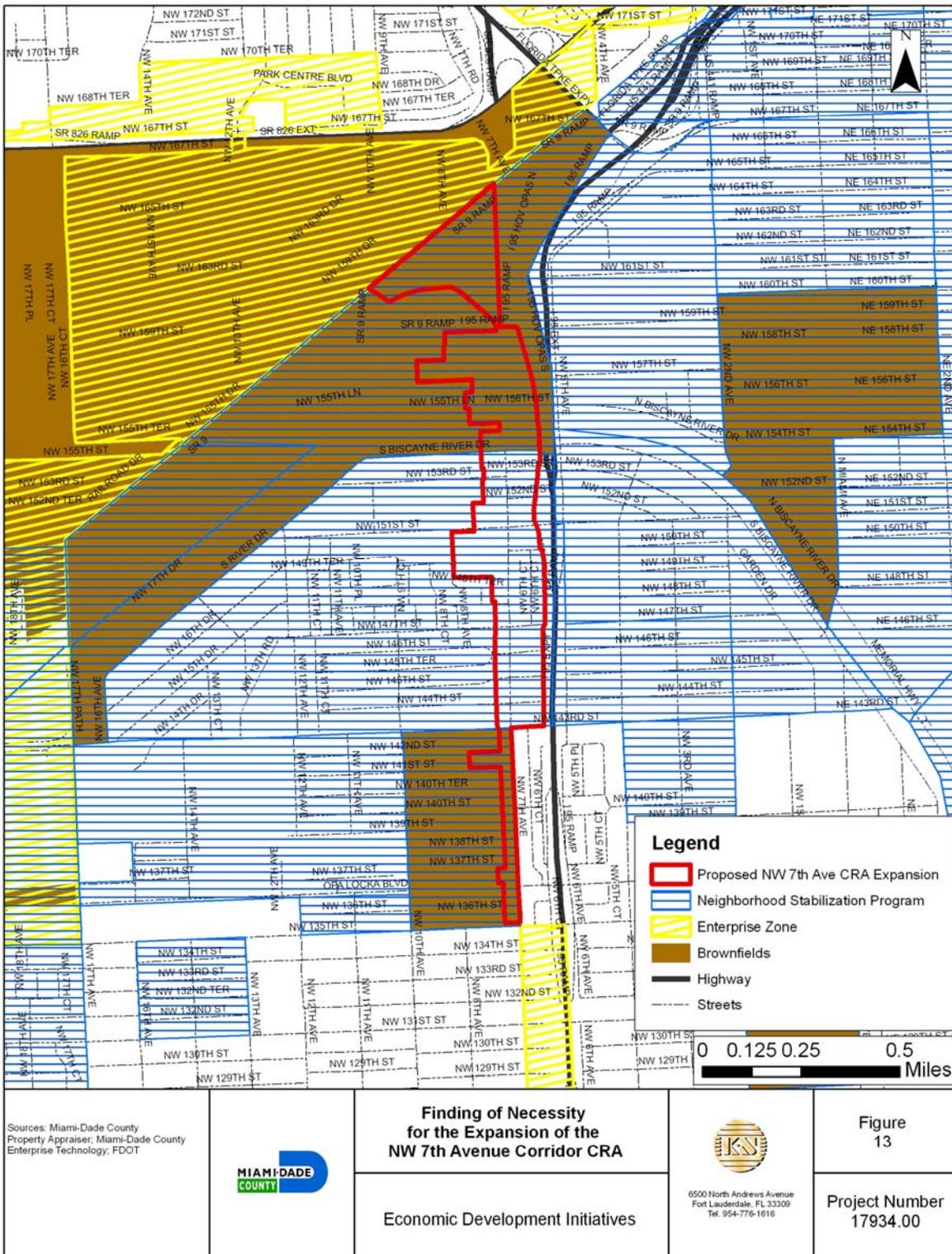
Brownfield areas offer an opportunity for environmental clean-up, redevelopment and revitalization. Economic incentives, tax credits, a streamlined process and low interest loans are some of the resources available to developers who clean up and develop brownfield sites in Miami-Dade County.

### **Neighborhood Stabilization Program**

Miami-Dade County's Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) is a Housing and Urban Development (HUD) program that provides emergency assistance to state and local governments to acquire and redevelop foreclosed properties that might otherwise become sources of abandonment and blight within their communities. All of the study area is located within the designated NSP.

### **Enterprise Zones**

Enterprise Zones are special areas in the County where certain incentives from the State are available for new businesses. The Enterprise Zone program seeks to attract business investment through a package of incentives which includes property tax abatement, occupational license fee exemption, electricity tax exemption and the waiver of impact fees. These areas were created based on studies of income and employment as well as state requirements. Enterprise Zones are located adjacent to the study area.



## CONCLUSION

This Finding of Necessity (FON) report assesses conditions of slum and blight in the Proposed NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor CRA Expansion area to determine if the expansion is necessary to protect the public, health, safety, morals and welfare.

Providing the basis for creating a CRA, in accordance with Chapter 163.355, Florida Statutes requires a detailed examination of existing land use characteristics, socio-economic conditions, and other indicators. Working with Miami-Dade County staff, Keith and Schnars, P.A. assembled this information, conducted field surveys, and analyzed the data, in a manner consistent with Florida Statutes, and finds that the Proposed NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor CRA Expansion does meet the slum and blight criteria. Findings were based upon a determination that the following criteria of slum and blight are met (i.e. at least two slum factors and four blight factors).

- High density of population, compared to the population density of adjacent areas within the county or municipality; and overcrowding, as indicated by government-maintained statistics or other studies and the requirements of the Florida Building Code (“slum”). *The Study Area has a higher person per household rate (3.5) than the County (2.9). Family households with 5 people or more in study area (23%) exceeds that of County (15%).*
- The existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes (“slum”) or, unsanitary or unsafe conditions (“blight”). *Unkempt vacant lots are scattered throughout the Study Area. Dumping and trash in combination with overgrown tall grasses can easily create a higher risk of fire hazard, as well as attracting vermin that create other health risks. Vacant land comprises 11 percent of the area.*
- Deterioration of site and other improvements (“blight”). *Almost 21 percent of the parcels containing residential structures (single and duplex) were found to be in deteriorating conditions.*
- Incidence of crime in the area higher than in the remainder of the county or municipality (“blight”). *Crime rates in the study area are higher than the unincorporated County.*
- Delinquent taxes in the area higher than in the remainder of the county or municipality (“blight”). *Average delinquent taxes in study area (11.89%) exceed that of the County (8.83%).*



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