



## Economic Development Action Plan



**The NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Community Redevelopment Agency**

*September 2014*



**IBI Group Florida, Inc.**

[www.UptownAvenue7.miamidade.gov](http://www.UptownAvenue7.miamidade.gov)  
[UptownAvenue7@gmail.com](mailto:UptownAvenue7@gmail.com)

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**Terrence A. Smith, Assistant County Attorney**

## **Economic Development Coordinator:**

**Kevin T. Greiner, IBI Group Florida Inc.**



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# Overview

## 1. Structure of the Economic Development Action Plan

The initial step in the NW 7th Avenue's CRA's Economic Development Action Plan process was to complete intensive research to identify major trends affecting the future redevelopment of 7th Avenue, and clearly categorize the CRA's major strengths and weaknesses. Most importantly, identify and rank the CRA's **Target Opportunities** — target industry clusters, building typologies, and development strategies needs have the best chance of successfully creating and/or assisting new development within the CRA.

The results and findings of that work is contained in a separate report — The **NW 7th Avenue CRA Economic Development Action Plan: Economic Development Opportunity Assessment**.

As the CRA Board and the Community are focused on launching a new round of development on 7th Avenue, the Opportunity Assessment clearly deals with challenges and weaknesses facing the CRA, but is focused on uncovering new opportunity for redevelopment along the Avenue.

The Opportunity Assessment closely informs the development of this **Economic Development Action Plan**, which details policies and projects designed to stimulate new investment in the CRA by:

- Capturing value and responding to broader trends affecting the future development of new and existing business the CRA;
- Responding to, and correcting weaknesses and challenges currently hampering redevelopment in the CRA, and most importantly;
- Leveraging its existing strengths and addressing targeted opportunities to jump-start a new round of business expansion, development and job creation along the 7th Avenue CRA Corridor.

The Action Plan is has been designed for simplicity, clarity, and ease-of-use. It details a 12-point **Action Agenda**, a projected timetable and budget for each Action Agenda item.

## 2. Rethinking NW 7th Avenue

The NW 7th Avenue CRA Economic Opportunity Assessment detailed the economic and physical redevelopment conditions on 7th Avenue, as well as an assessment of the regional economy, which identified specific new opportunities for redevelopment within the 7th Avenue Corridor. ***The overarching conclusion coming out of the opportunity assessment is that the 7th Avenue Corridor represents a critical development opportunity for the region, due to: 1) 7th Avenue is a unique regional economic development asset, 2) 7th Avenue is a critical linchpin in Miami's economic development, and 3) 7th Avenue is an important element in the County's plan to diversify, expand and improve the regional economic base.***

Executing and implementing an economic development action plan for the CRA begins with a critical re-thinking of 7th Avenue, its strengths, hidden value, and position within the regional economy.

### A Unique Regional Economic Development Asset

Few corridors within the entire state have the numerous strengths and assets present within the CRA and within it immediate community. The CRA's many strengths include the following:

- Unparalleled access and visibility: The CRA is the most connected transportation junction in the County, ***and contains one of the most daily traveled highway segments in the entire country***, with daily vehicle counts over 600,000 vehicles.
- The CRA is the commercial heart of one of Florida's largest population, purchasing, and employment sub-regions. The CRA's **Market Area** — the geographic area included within 3 miles in each direction of 7th Avenue (a 12 to 14 minute drive), contains a population of 366,253 persons, representing nearly 15% of the County's total population. ***If the CRA Market Area was it's own City, it would be Florida's third, and the Nation's 51st largest city — bigger than New Orleans, Tampa, Anaheim, Honolulu, and St. Louis, Orlando, and more than twice the size of Fort Lauderdale.***
- The CR Market Area is home to just over 7,000 business establishments employing 75,426 persons, representing 6.5% of the County's total jobs base, and 154,069 employed workers live within the Market Area, representing 13.2% of the County's employed workers. Total annual household income in the Market Area is over \$4.1 Billion.
- Many of the region's most important economic assets are also within the CRA Market Area, including major hospitals, multiple Universities, research facilities, and major business centers and employers. 7th Avenue is within 20 minutes of Miami International Airport and Free Trade Complex, 23 minutes from Fort Lauderdale-

Hollywood International Airport, 14 minutes from Opa-Locka Executive Airport, 15 minutes from the Port of Miami, and 22 minutes from Port Everglades.

- Supportive and flexible zoning allowing significant development density — up to twelve stories, with flexible parking requirements allowing maximal utilization of land.
- An extremely significant business development incentive structure: The CRA may have the most extensive set of economic incentives of any comparable area in the County.
- Property sizes, building configurations and costs that support the growth of small businesses and small business establishments, which are the engine of economic growth in the County.
- A stable and committed business community that is firmly vested in 7th Avenue and the success of the CRA and the surrounding neighborhood.
- Rising payrolls, wages, and educational attainment of workers and residents within the CRA.
- New public investments including a new police precinct and library.
- A rich and diverse cultural and ethnic fabric.

*A Critical Linchpin in Miami’s Economic Development*

Miami-Dade County is approaching being built-out. Vacant land in the urban core is increasingly scarce, and the largest tracts for potential development are at the edge of the County, require significant investment in infrastructure to redevelop, and many large parcels are either in environmentally protected areas, or agricultural land.

Additionally, transportation conditions in the County are approaching unsustainable levels. Miami-Dade County is the 11th most congested region in the US, and the total cost of congestion delays in the Miami area are the 5th highest in the nation (over \$3.7 Billion per year). Average travel time, annual hours of travel delay per commuter, and the percentage of Miami-Dade’s road system that operates under congested conditions are all above the average for the 15 largest metro areas in the Country, and accelerating (unlike the trend with many other large cities.

Without land to expand existing roads, and few opportunities to build new roads, the County is looking at difficult prospects. Between 2015 and 2035, Southeast Florida transportation agencies plan to spend approximately \$58 billion on improving the region’s roadways and transit. However, the Miami-Dade Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) forecasts that even with this spending, roadway level of service on nearly all major roads throughout Miami-Dade will continue to degrade over the next 15 years, rush-hour speeds will be 20 percent slower than they are today, and traffic congestion will continue to increase. Many road segments in the County are already at or above capacity.

The region’s traffic congestion issues are a product of population growth, and its land-use patterns. The bulk of the City’s businesses and jobs are concentrated in six zip code statistical areas — the corridor stretching from downtown through Miami International Airport to Doral, while most of the County’s population lives in the arc outside of the City of Miami at mostly suburban residential densities.

This pattern is unsustainable, and if it continues, will hamper the County’s competitive advantage for new job creation. In order to obviate crucial economic cost, transportation, infrastructure and quality of life issues facing residents and the economy, the County needs to create significant opportunities for employment outside the downtown core, closer to where the majority of its residents live. **Redevelopment of the 7th Avenue CRA is a critical component of that strategy:**

- **The CRA provides a considerable opportunity for development and job creation.** The over 70 acres of vacant and underutilized and affordable property within the CRA can accommodate a **minimum** of 1.3 Million square feet of new development, supporting a **minimum** of 3,200 new jobs.
- **The CRA has excess transportation capacity to support new development.** Unlike much of the rest of the County road network, both the I-95 and 7th Avenue segments within the CRA operate under capacity, and can support significant new development as-is. The CRA is also extensively served by every mode of transportation, making it Miami’s, and one of Florida’s most connected and accessible corridors.

*7th Avenue is Key to Diversifying Miami’s Economy*

Miami-Dade County’s political and business leadership have made diversification of the region’s economy one of its top goals. Crystallized in the **One Community, One Goal Strategic Plan**, the County and the Beacon Council completed an extensive analysis of the regional economy, focusing on its structure, competitive strengths and weaknesses. The most important conclusion of the OCOG analysis and planning process is that the County economy is reliant on a small set of industry sectors, each of which are overly sensitive to cyclical changes in the national and global economy, and one of the reasons that the Miami area and its workers were one of the hardest hit by the recent recession.

The core goals of the OCOG Strategic plan are to:

- Diversify the Miami-Dade economy, supporting the growth of industry clusters and job growth that transforms, over time, Miami’s economy into a **high performing, high-value added** economy;
- Develop an economy that’s less dependent on population increases and in-migration and more resilient and resistant to sharp economic cycles;

- Leverage local economic strengths and geographic position to support the creation and expansion of firms in nationally growing sectors, higher rates of innovative output in the form of Advanced products, services, technology platforms and business processes, and greater innovation capacity, technology adoption and market flexibility;
- Create more high-income employment, and raise per capita GMP and income, and;
- Develop an Economy with greater Horizontal mobility – knowledge and skills that apply across different industries and occupations.

The OCOG plan focuses on growing and strengthening business and job creation in thirty-nine target industry clusters seven broad business sectors which 1) have higher than average proportion of local employment, compared to other cities, 2) are part of rapidly growing national economic sectors, 3) have higher than average projected rates of growth, 4) have a regional competitive advantage compared to other regions, and 5) create high wage and value-added jobs. The seven broad target business sectors are:

- Aviation
- Creative Design
- Hospitality & Tourism
- Information Technology
- International Banking & finance
- Life Science & Health Care
- Trade & Logistics

The County needs to create significant opportunities for businesses in the OCOG target industry sectors who will not or cannot use downtown locations to form, grow and expand in new, alternative business corridors outside its traditional (downtown) business centers. Existing and new businesses in the OCOG target sectors for the most part can't use or can't afford rents, real estate prices, nor make use of the building types in the downtown core and other built-out and established business districts in the County. Small businesses and start-ups in the OCOG target sectors require affordable, flexible space, and many need rapid access to assembly or distribution facilities in addition to office floor space.

***The NW 7th Avenue CRA Corridor is a key location that could support the expansion and creation development of companies in many of the OCOG Target sectors.*** 27 of the 39 high-growth, target industries identified the One County, One Goal Plan could make use of a location within the CRA. In fact, most of the OCOG target industry clusters cannot economically make use of a high-cost downtown location, and would benefit from a more affordable and accessible location within the CRA.

Additionally, the 7th Avenue CRA corridor can provide new, affordable and more accessible locations for businesses being priced out of the Wynwood and Design District neighborhoods.

***NW 7th Avenue, given its strategic location, economic dynamics, access, assets, and motivated business community, is ideally situated to support major business development, new business creation, and emerge as one of the County's most important job growth corridors. Its redevelopment is a regional priority, in that it supports critical regional economic development goals, can reduce transportation congestion, and deliver needed jobs to the community.***

**3. Guiding Principles of the Economic Development Action Plan**

Given the needs of the CRA and the Northwest Miami Community, the challenges facing the redevelopment of the CRA, its strengths and opportunities, the priority goals of the NW 7th Avenue CRA Economic Development Action Plan are:

**3.1. Reposition 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue as a Major Regional Employment Center**

As detailed in the Economic Opportunity Analysis, NW 7th Avenue has numerous hidden strengths and significant opportunities for new development, but its competitive advantages are largely unknown, misunderstood or misperceived. Attracting new development and investment will depend upon the CRA’s ability to “reposition” 7th Avenue in the regional mindset:

- Bring greater attention regarding the regional benefits and competitive advantages of the corridor to regional policy makers, transportation planners, developers investors and the real estate community;
- Enact programs and projects that capture greater value added from 7th Avenue’s transportation access, visibility and location, and;
- More effectively communicate and represent the readiness of the 7th Avenue Corridor to take more prominent role in regional economy.

**3.2. Support the Growth And Expansion of Existing Business Located Within the CRA**

The first rule of thumb in economic and community development is to build on what you already have. The CRA contains a diverse array of highly successful small and large businesses who, because of their commitment to the neighborhood, are the best situated to make early and immediate investments in expansion and new job creation within the CRA. A core goal of the Plan is to develop and implement programs and projects that create and support new expansion and investment opportunities for the CRA’s existing businesses.

**3.3. Support Development of New Business In The CRA**

The NW 7th Avenue Corridor can be a great location for new businesses looking for a strategic, connected, and affordable location. The CRA will enact policy, programs and projects that aggressively support the location and/or relocation of new businesses in the CRA.

**3.4. Support New Job Creation, Training, And Increasing Employment Opportunities For Residents of Northwest Miami-Dade**

New jobs and improving incomes are critical to the residents of Northwest Miami-Dade. The CRA recognizes that as a largely commercial corridor, its best contribution to the development of the broader community is create new jobs for residents of the surrounding community, and enact programs to actively train and help place residents of NW Miami-Dade in new jobs as they emerge.

**3.5. Support the Aspirations of the Residents Living in the CRA to Improve Home Values, Safety, and the Neighborhood**

The CRA has a concentration of residents in the north end of the CRA District, who contribute to its development, funding, and economic health businesses in the CRA. Developing incentives and programs supporting the aspirations of its residents adds to the vitality and economic strength of the CRA.

**3.6. Execute an Economic Development Program that Delivers Results within its Financial Means**

The NW 7th Avenue CRA operates with a limited budget and resources. This Plan details program and strategies build new resources and sources of funding. However, the Plan does not rely upon, nor wait for a fundraising process to undertake programs with immediate impact. Instead the action agenda has been carefully constructed on the foundation of projects and programs that deliver immediate impact and results, and do so within the current financial capacity of the CRA.



# Action Agenda

## 1. Re-Brand the CRA

Like successful businesses, neighborhoods benefit from a broader identity and knowledge of what that community has to offer the region. Calle-Ocho, Brickell, the Miracle Mile, Coco Walk, Wynwood, and the Design District, to name a few, are neighborhoods that have built a brand identity which over time, conveys a clear image to the region regarding shopping experiences, living, working, and investing in that community.

However, few developers, site selectors, tenants, or business owners that would benefit from a location in the CRA knows of the CRA or its location, have limited or no knowledge of it's underlying economic dynamics and strengths. Many real estate brokers in the Miami area still do not understand what CRA's are, how they function, or what benefits may accrue to a client's location in the CRA. Very few real estate professionals have indicated any awareness of the multiple layers of economic incentives or benefits available within the CRA.

The development of a positive brand identity creates create clear competitive advantages, becoming the platform upon which to build a successful marketing campaign, supporting the growth of business within the CRA, attracting new investment, and public support.

The CRA is undertaking the development of a new **Brand Identity**, beginning with a new name that best captures its dynamism, optimism, community spirit and diversity. "The NW 7th Avenue CRA," as a name for an aspiring business district, falls short of being able to convey a sense of place, neighborhood, goals, or tradition that an effective Brand Name needs to communicate.

In the sprit of community, the CRA is opening the process to the public — giving residents a direct voice in developing a new brand name for the CRA through an open contest — the **NW 7th Avenue Brand Name Challenge**. The NW 7th Avenue Brand Name Challenge contest will take place at the CRA's web site, at:

<http://feedback.miamidade.gov/Community/se.ashx?s=57F31458313D02CE>

The Brand Name Challenge solicits a new Brand Name and Tag Line — a brief one line statement, that captures and important sentiment, goal, attribute or aspiration about the community and the CRA. Contestants can also submit a new logo as a part of the contest.

The contest is open to any Miami-Dade resident, and closes in June 2014.



## Give us your Best, Miami!

### The NW 7th Avenue CRA Business Corridor Brand Name Challenge

Help us give a name to the NW 7th Avenue CRA Business Corridor.

The NW 7th Avenue CRA runs along both sides of NW 7th Avenue, from NW 79th Street to Route 826.

**WORKSHOP CHAIRS**  
**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**  
 JEAN MONESTRIER, DISTRICT 2  
 AUDREY M. FORACINSON, DISTRICT 3

The NW 7th Avenue Community Redevelopment Area is poised to assist your business grow. With a new business plan and new property underway, the CRA is ready to aggressively assist residents and business owners achieve their vision and create new jobs for the communities of Northwest Miami.

As the centerpiece of its new community and business development program, the CRA needs a new name. The CRA wants to let the world know that 7th Avenue is a great place to work, live, and play, but the CRA needs your help. The CRA needs a new name that expresses its new energy, its new mission, and immediately identifies it as Miami's next great neighborhood.

The Board of the CRA, and the Hon. Commissioners Jean Monestriier and Audrey Edmonson needs the residents and businesses of Miami to give the CRA a new name.

In the form below, give us your best new name and a "tag line" for the 7th Avenue corridor — something short and memorable that immediately identifies 7th Avenue to the region and the world. Your name and tag line can capture 7th Avenue's central location, its access to all of South Florida, its cultural richness, history, its energy, vibrancy, or something you think is special about this community. It can be in any language you want. All we ask is that it's short, simple, and immediately identifies the 7th Avenue Community, its Businesses and new mission.

The winning entry will be selected by the CRA Board and County Commissioners Jean Monestriier and Audrey Edmonson. The person supplying the winning entry, as selected by the Board, will win a \$200 gift card for a meal at the restaurant of your choice, and will be recognized at the February CRA Board meeting.

Enter as many names as you like — no limits. The Contest closes January 31, 2014.

## Good Luck, and Give us your Best!!

Last Name:

First Name:

Email:

Address:

Telephone:

How/When for the CRA (2) Chosen Best:

Tag Line/Name (100 Character Max):

## 2. Re-Tool the CRA Business Development Program Incentives Package

As noted in the Economic Opportunity Analysis, the CRA has, through its location in the State Enterprise Zone, County Brownfield, and other State Target Industry programs, significant incentives in the form of job tax credits, tax refunds, and property tax rebates. Its underlying incentive programs are competitive with other CRAs and business development districts. However, the NW 7th Avenue CRA lacks the ongoing annual income other larger CRAs enjoy that are typically used for cash grants, infrastructure investments, debt offsets, or land cost reductions.

In order to improve the effectiveness and visibility of CRA spending, to better align it with the needs of small businesses and to more effectively induce business expansion and creation in the CRA corridor, the CRA will seek to adopt the following changes to its local incentive program:

- Make CRA grant and incentive programs contingent on new private investment, either a capital investment in plant or equipment, or the addition of new jobs, in order to receive funding. Additionally, give a priority for CRA incentive programs for office development, as it creates the highest number of jobs per square foot of development. In this way, CRA resources will be spent alongside new private investment, leveraging its value;
- Create a NW 7th Avenue CRA Business Enhancement, Relocation and Development Incentive (BERDI) Program, providing grants of up to \$50,000 for qualified existing or start-up businesses who are physically expanding building or facilities, purchasing land for immediate productive use, buying new equipment, and creating new jobs. Grants may also cover operating expenses (including rent), relocation expenses, and because for the physical condition and age of many properties, retrofit and demolition costs. Investing CRA funds in businesses operations is a better return on investment for the CRA and the community, and more effectively multiplies the CRA investment in its business clients. The program will be funded by moving funds from the Commercial Improvement Program into the CRA Business Enhancement Grant program.
- Create a new incentive program for qualifying existing or new businesses to receive a partial rebate of their annual TIF (property tax) payment, on the stipulation of making an investment in the CRA. Eligible investments include site improvement costs, building, equipment, relocation expenses, and design and engineering. The TIF rebate will equal up to 50% of the approved business's regular TIF payment for 5 years. This program provides flexible incentives that can be tailored to the business needs of the applicant. The benefit accrues to large property investments in the CRA, but could

work as an effective alternative incentive for small businesses making equipment purchases.

## 3. Aggressively Market a Newly Branded 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue

Given the CRA's assets, hidden strengths, and extensive incentives, aggressively marketing the CRA to the business world and the community is the most important immediate element of the CRA Action Plan. The CRA will implement a multi-pronged, multi-media marketing program to coincide with the launch of its new Brand Name. The elements of the marketing program are as follows.

### 3.1. A New CRA Web site

Effective web exposure is critical to broadcast the CRA's presence, programs and benefits to businesses, investors, developers and site selectors. The new CRA website will be the central marketing tool for the CRA, and should be redesigned as a complete Web site becomes complete marketing package with all basic information anyone would need to consider expanding, growing, or relocating a business in the CRA. Suggested website components would include:

- **Locate you Business Here:** A concise but complete explanation of the benefits and competitive advantages of locating on 7th Avenue, including the size of the market, market statistics, demographics, strategic location, and transportation access — in short, a recap of the CRA strengths discussed in the overview and detailed in the Economic Opportunity Assessment.
- **Business and Development Incentives:** A complete listing and explanation of and incentive programs available in the CRA.
- **Feature Property Listings.**
- **Feature Project**
- **The CRA Feature Business**
- **Complete Business Listing and Links:** Contact information for all businesses in the CRA.
- **Maps:** Location and directions. Also, an asset, institutions and infrastructure locator map showing driving distances to major economic assets near the CRA.
- **CRA News and News releases.**
- **Partners:** a listing of the CRA's service and funding partners.



- Contact Us: Contact information for the CRA and the County.

### 3.2. Direct Marketing Program

The Website address, updates, and CRA news will be actively “pushed” to anyone visiting the site, and to important constituencies in the market. Expanding knowledge regarding the CRA and its programs will immediately boost interest. The most important targets for marketing the CRA (through the Website) are:

- Existing Businesses in the CRA — They are the most likely candidates for immediate business expansion.
- Existing business in the CRA Market Area (14 minute drive radius)
- Real estate developers and brokers, especially those with mixed-use experience.
- Miami-Dade companies in the County, State, and CRA target industry clusters, detailed in the Economic Opportunity Assessment.
- National Site Selectors & Location Consultants
- Miami-Dade Residents

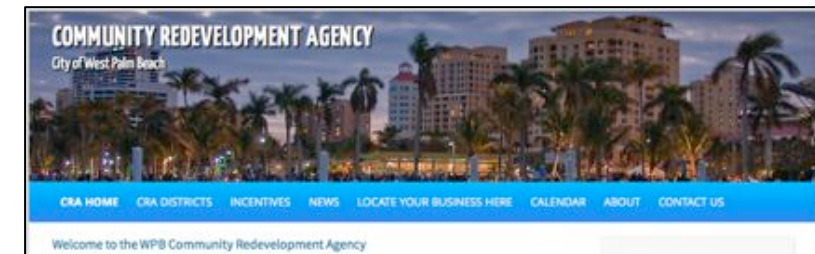
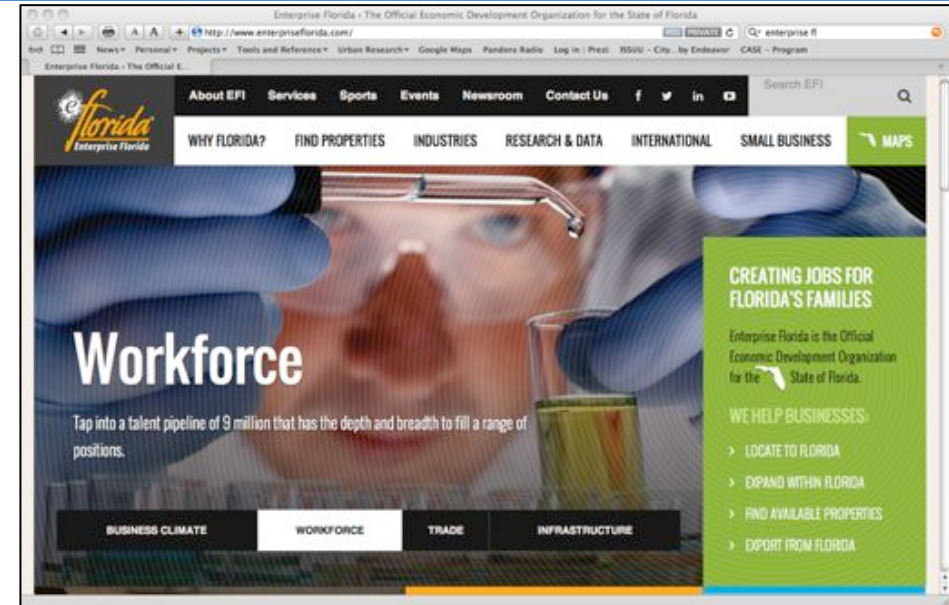
### 3.3. Cross-Link the Website With Other Sites and Portals

- List CRA Properties on MiamiDadesites.com
- List CRA with site selectors and location consultants
- Get properties listed on the Miami-Dade County business site selector portal
- Cross-Link CRA Web site with the Beacon Foundation
- Cross link listed properties RE Brokerage listing sites
- Cross-Link the Website with the Florida Redevelopment Association

### 3.4. In-Person Presentations and Regular Communications

In-person presentations to professional development and business groups will be crucial to spread the “story” regarding 7th Avenue. Relationships and a presence for the CRA will be built through in-person events and presentations, including:

- The Miami Association of Realtors
- MREIA — the Miami Real Estate Investors Association
- Inviting and hosting national site selectors
- Regular News Releases



#### 4. Strategic & Incremental Investments in Place Making, Streetscape & Traffic Improvements

Almost the entire 7th Avenue Corridor needs a major investment in the public realm. The realities of these needs are balanced by the limited resources of the CRA, requiring a targeted, incremental, and strategic approach to making improvements in streets, sidewalks and public space. Similar to its use of business development Incentives, the CRA will target and leverage its investment in the appearance of 7th Avenue by making targeted investments in the CRA's streetscape, coinciding with private investment along the Avenue.

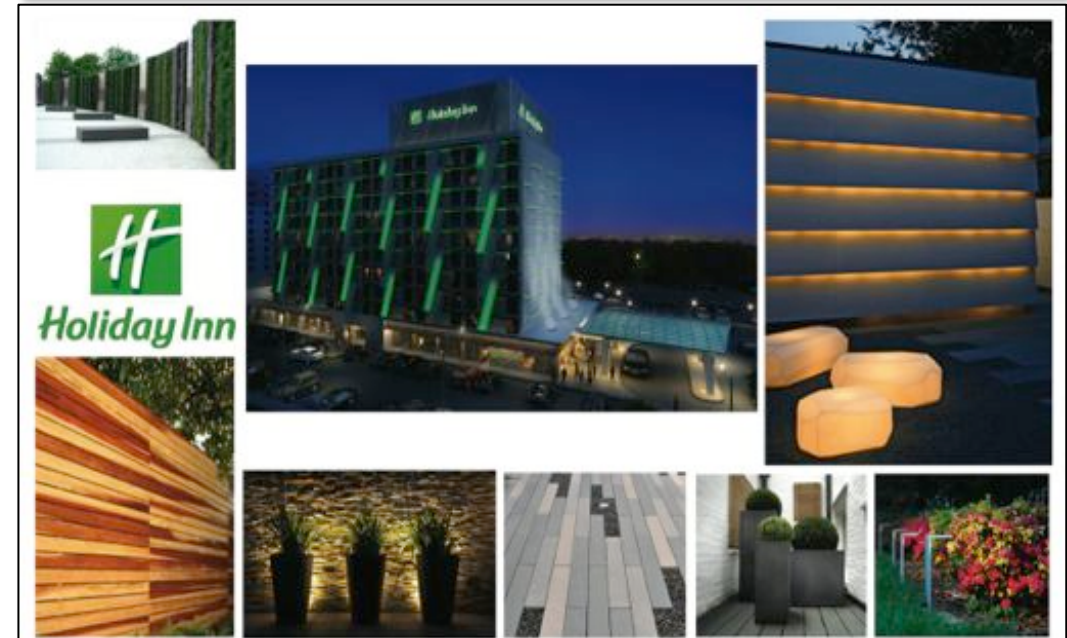
Rather than attempt to plan and fund, and implement an entire streetscape design and construction program, which could take years, the CRA will make its streetscape investments alongside new business improvements. The elements of the program are as follows.

##### 4.1. Immediate Gateway Treatment at the Southern Entrance to 7th Avenue

The City Inn Project, a new 241-room hotel, restaurant, meeting rooms, and parking garage, promises to be a game-changing project for the CRA. At \$22 Million for phase I, the project is the largest single investment made on 7th Avenue in at least five years. Additionally, the hotel building, which sits directly overlooking I-95, has been a highly visible eyesore. The redevelopment of the hotel will be an extremely visible notice to all of the daily traffic on I-95 that major reinvestment is taking place on 7th Avenue. Phase II plans to deliver a 10 story mixed-use building with retail and housing.

The CRA will make its first major strategic streetscape investment to design and build a new gateway entrance to on 7th Avenue near 79th Street, to launch its new brand name, and improve what is one of the most heavily traveled intersection in the CRA. Planned improvements include street and sidewalk improvements, public furniture, an improved bus stop, and a gateway signage, banners, and/or lighting treatment over or across 7th Avenue, featuring the CRA's new name and logo. Final design of the streetscape improvements and gateway will have to be made in concert with FDOT.

Making the street improvements in parallel with the City inn project leverages both the developer's and CRA's investments — providing a bigger return on investment for both. The CRA will fund a portion of the project using CRA reserve funds, and the remainder from other public and grant sources. An application for **FDOT Landscape & Streetscape Grant** funding will be submitted in May 2014.



The New City Inn Hotel, located at 7th Avenue and 82nd Street



#### 4.2. Side Street Parking Treatments

Parking for commercial properties on the east side of 7th Avenue is generally sufficient, even ample, given demand. Most large properties in the CRA have sufficient surface parking on-site. However, on the east side of 7th Avenue in two segments of the CRA, from NW 97th Street to NW 102nd Street, and from Opa-Locka Blvd to 139th Street, properties tend to be smaller, with buildings taking up most or all of the property, built close to property lines and neighboring buildings, and closer to the street, leaving little or no room for on-site parking.

This condition along these two portion of the CRA inhibit long-term redevelopment potential of these sites, and contribute to poor physical perception, as employees, owners, and customers are forced to park on side yards and unmarked (sometimes unpaved) informal portions of the block and/or adjoin cross street.

As the need arises — new businesses invest in these blocks — the CRA can support new business development by installing on-street parking on the dead-end streets on the east side of 7th Avenue. Candidate streets would include NW 97th Street through NW 102nd Street. The CRA will stripe parking spaces at the curb line on each dead-end as needed, and if finding exists at the time, planter boxes or other low-cost decoration can be placed on the sidewalk.

As these streets are County owned, and dead-ends, the approval process is simple and limited. However, the addition of formal parking to support new development is immediate, extremely low-cost, and immediately cleans up the appearance of the intersection.

#### 4.3. Complete a CRA-Wide Streetscape Design Standards Program

Long term, the CRA needs a distinctive streetscape design that utilizes its new brand, logo, visually and functionally ties the street together, improves way-finding by car, and significantly improves the pedestrian experience on the street. In anticipation of completing a new streetscape construction fund (described in Section 11), the CRA will commission the development of a Complete Streets Design Standards Program. The Design Standards program will establish guidelines for signage, lighting, sidewalks, vegetation, and develop unique street treatments, banners, lighting and public art that builds and expresses a unique identity for 7th Avenue. The Design standards program will also consider street design, traffic management and traffic calming issues, study the development of medians in 7th Avenue, and the possibility of establishing on-street parking on 7th Avenue in support of small parcels north of NW 98th Street.

#### 4.4. Take a Lead Role on the Ongoing SR7-Route 441 Transportation Study

The CRA will work with FDOT, the community, and the Metropolitan Planning Organization in the completion of the SR7-Route 441 Transportation Study, seeking to balance traffic capacity issues with economic development and physical development issues important to the CRA.







Lighting, landscaping, signage and art will play a prominent role in the CRA's new Streetscape design



## 5. Targeted Safety & Security Program

### 5.1. Crime Patterns in the CRA

Crime within the CRA — real and perceived — is a critical issue for retailers, offices, restaurants, and all visitors to the street. Crime rates within the CRA are well below the surrounding neighborhood. The vast majority of crimes committed in the CRA are vehicle break-ins and thefts of items from parked cars. Burglaries and theft against buildings is a minor percentage of crime committed throughout the year.

**Additionally, Crime along the CRA is a work-week phenomenon.** Criminals are following the pattern of customers and workers arriving to businesses in the CRA, and not waiting for after-hours or for less people on the street. ***Security measures, to be effective, cannot be allocated on limited hours, but must be allocated Monday thru Friday, throughout the entire workday (8:00 – 5:00).***

**The CRA's Security program must also consider the size of the spatial stretch of properties most heavily impacted.** The heaviest crime rate runs from 103rd Street to 119th Street, and includes 50 parking lots over 25 blocks. This is a large area to effectively patrol.

Visibility and real-time presence are having the most effective deterrent value on 7th Avenue. Surveillance cameras without active monitoring have had mixed results at select locations. Some property owners have bolstered their on-site cameras with on-site security guards with better results.

The completion and opening of the Miami-Dade Police Precinct on 7th Avenue and NW 81st Street will add a much needed level of security and improve response times to police calls on the street, but may not be enough.

### 5.2. Targeted Private Security Program

The CRA launching is the **NW 7th Avenue CRA Active Security Program** — a combination of 1) Monitored Video Cameras, and 2) Private Security Patrol Officer, installed on, and patrolling, private properties who opt into the CRA security program.

A monitored video system, installed at selected properties, combined with a single private security officer patrolling in a vehicle, provides the highest level of security coverage, at the lowest cost. On a per-hour basis, it is far-and-away the most cost effective and lowest cost alternative. Utilizing a trained, professional security officer to augment the video security system provides an additional level of deterrence, since the patrol can be assigned throughout the CRA as needed for additional on-site monitoring.

The CRA will release a bid to qualified security companies to provide actively monitored security cameras and a single patrol officer, focusing initially on the area between NW 103rd Street and NW 199th Street.

The CRA will either subsidize the entire program, or split costs with private property owners opting into the program. Similar programs in business districts in Chicago, New York City, and Detroit have had significant success at reducing crime, improving visitor perception, and stimulating new investment.

In addition, advertising the system extensively before and while it is installed is as important as the system itself in terms of deterrence. The program will be actively marketed as part of the





## 6. Implement Immediate, Low-Cost Projects to Re-Energize “Zombie” Street Spaces

The CRA along 7th Avenue is full of “missing teeth” in the streetscape — empty lots and spaces facing 7th Avenue that have no activity, especially during the evening. The poor condition of the streetscape, long blocks and inconsistent building conditions adds to real and perceived feelings of insecurity and lack of safety along 7th Avenue.

The CRA also lacks a sense of “place,” or multiple places. The entire length of 7th Avenue, despite the variety of businesses along the corridor, is for the most part complete undifferentiated in look and feel. It lacks visible nodes or centers, which help define the identity of its different segments, and assist physical navigation and way finding by car or by foot.

Some of the easiest and fastest ways to change the perception of a business district, and bring real foot traffic and new spending, is to implement simple strategies to “energize” empty spaces — create spaces and/or events that draw visitors to the street, even if they are not permanent. The CRA will implement three strategies to begin energizing one or two prominent “zombie,” or empty spaces to jumpstart new interest in 7th Avenue, draw in new potential customers, market and re-brand the CRA.

### 1. Free Public Art Installations

Free public art is a simple and low-cost way to visually re-energize street-front spaces, and is available from a variety of sources, and can include permanent installations, sculpture, lighting, or temporary display or events. The Arts Community in Miami is always looking for interesting new venues to display, promote, and sell new art works. The CRA will promote itself as a location for public Arts events, and seek to make arrangements with property owners, at low or no cost, to host installations or art events.

### 2. Create marketing events for Businesses on the Street

CRA and Business Districts customarily engage in regular events which highlight a unique aspect of their locations, District, or community. The CRA will work to develop a program of events which highlight its businesses, food and/or culture. Many times events are simply looking for a location, and can carry their own costs. Events also become great ways to change public perception, and generate real business for CRA business owners. The most successful events need not be large, annual festivals, but are often on a more regular basis — monthly or weekly — so as to draw a larger volume visitors throughout the year, and more repeat visitors throughout the year.

Event that the CRA might consider include a Custom Car Walk (monthly), a 7th Avenue Restaurant Crawl (monthly), a monthly food-truck gathering, and/or monthly cultural and art displays.

### 3. Pop-Up City or Pop-Up Public Square

One of the most popular retailing and restaurant trends in Miami has been the growth of pop-up shops, or temporary stores including pop-up restaurants, pop-up lounges and pop-up hotels, in many cases attracting high-end, luxury brand retailers and consumers. Pop-up retailing has become extremely stylish, popular, and for new businesses looking to build brand recognition quickly, a very low-cost way to get to the public.

Creative cities around the world have taken pop-up retailing to the next level — supporting the installation and location of pop-up malls, and pop-up mini shopping and dining districts. Pop-up shops are usually built from shipping containers, typically cost between \$12,000 and \$25,000 to complete, can be installed anywhere, and can be moved easily when a permanent use is ready to be developed on a vacant property.

The CRA has no public square, and no nodes of community interest. Arranging to develop a pop-up plaza, square, or mini-entertainment district on a currently vacant property facing the street would have numerous benefits:

- An immediate, very unique, recognizable center of activity that could work 24-7, and in a very short time frame (90 days) have an established, new retail, business, and/or entertainment center;
- For the property owner agreeing to host “Pop-Up City,” a chance to market her property in a completely new and unique way, earn rent otherwise lost, and test the market for future permanent retail and entertainment uses;
- **For small businesses, Pop-Up City could be a pop-up business incubator** — the CRA could easily partially subsidize the cost of acquiring and/or retrofitting shipping containers for entrepreneurs looking to launch a new enterprise, or expand their existing brand. A Pop-Up City business incubator is an ideal way to help entrepreneurs in the CRA and surrounding neighborhood quickly launch their business vision, and;
- **A low cost, high return, immediate impact investment for the CRA:** For \$100,000, the CRA could partially subsidize 10 to 20 new pop-up shop businesses, and for no additional cost, advertise them on the new CRA Website.





*Pop-up districts have been used around the world to re-energize struggling commercial areas, and provide a distinctive architectural experience for visitors.*



### 7. Implement the 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Virtual Business Incubator and Accelerator

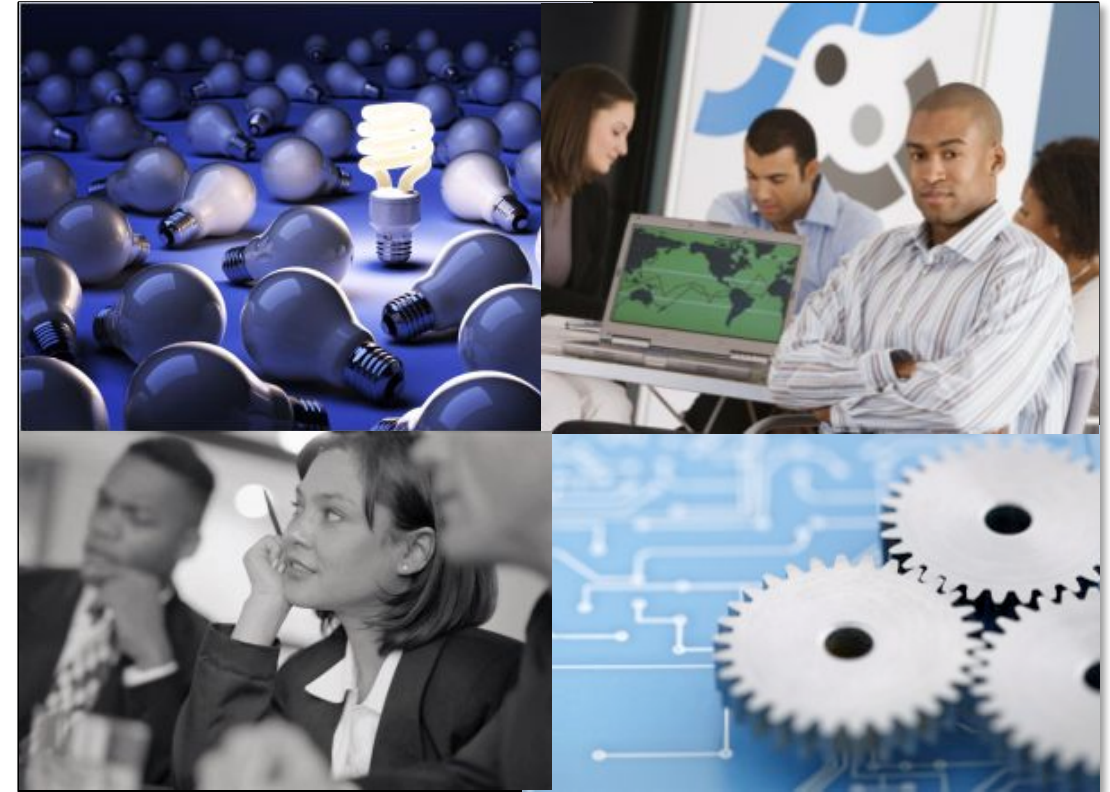
Supporting new start-up businesses in the CRA is crucial to its future, and a real development opportunity, given the space available in the corridor, its pricing, location, connectivity and visibility. The CRA has extensive existing business development programs supporting new business creation. The adoption of the NW 7th Avenue CRA Business Enhancement, Relocation and Development Incentive (BERDI) Program, provides a direct and targeted funding program to assist start-ups in the CRA.

However, funding alone is not enough to help new business succeed. Business incubators and Accelerators work by providing mentoring from experienced experts, industry connections, peer-to-peer and business to business interaction, and a host of other technical and business support services.

As the CRA does not have immediate access to property with which to launch a small business incubator or accelerator, the CRA is pursuing development of the **NW 7th Avenue Virtual Business Accelerator**. Modeled after the NewMe accelerator in San Francisco, and the virtual incubator program in Clearwater, the 7th Avenue Virtual Incubator would provide financial support through its incentive programs, including rent subsidies to start-ups, and equipment grants.

However, the extended value to the program is to partner with established institutions in the region that already run successful accelerator programs, and bring the remainder of start-up and acceleration services to small businesses. Services to client businesses are then delivered through live video meetings, regular face-to-face meetings and events, and arranging presentations to investors and venture capital.

A virtual incubator format extends the CRA's limited funding, launches the program quickly, in that it does not have to wait for physical space to be acquired and/or retrofitted. It also opens the possibility of serving many more client companies that a physical incubator, which are limited by their physical size as to how many businesses they can start and graduate at one time.





### 8. Link Residents with New Employment Opportunities & Job Training

Providing resident with access to new jobs as they are created is a critical need of the CRA and the NW Miami Community. The CRA will aggressively pursue, schedule and demand as a condition of receiving CRA grant monies or support, job fairs for NW Miami residents with each company investing, expanding, or relocating into the CRA.

The developers of the new City Inn Hotel complex have agreed to host a job fair for residents in early 2014.

In addition, the CRA will provide information links to the Miami-Dade public schools and local College and University job training programs. One of the School District's largest facilities operates on NW 79th Street, just south of the CRA.

### 9. Execute Formal Development and Marketing Partnerships

Extending the capacity of the CRA to market itself, 7th Avenue, its programs, and competitive and location strengths is crucial due to the limited operating budget of the 7th Avenue CRA. The CRA will immediately pursue partnerships with the region's leading business development, economic development and institutions to share information, develop joint marketing programs, insure that sister organizations share the NW 7th Avenue "big picture" regarding the value and strengths of the CRA (See the Overview, Section 2, above.)

Also, these partnership[s] can develop an "early warning" communications relationship, where information regarding possible development, relocation, or expansion candidate businesses are shared, and incentive programs which may be limited, can be expanded using sources not regularly utilized by the CRA.

The CRA has approached the area's leading economic development institutions and will formalize agreements before the end of the 2nd Quarter, 2014.





## 10. Implement a Signature Development Project

Many CRAs throughout the State enjoy the advantage of larger income streams which they use to purchase key properties and directly manage, incentivize, and solicit private or public-private development agreements to anchor or stimulate the development of the surrounding CRA. Recent “signature” development projects include grocery stores, hotels, residential, retail, art, and mixed-use projects, and if successful, and visible enough, can provide great impetus to following rounds of development. The Miami Omni CRA project to develop the Miami Entertainment Complex, which selected EUE/Screen Gems as the developer, is a local success that may be a game changing development for the Omni CRA.

At the current time the CRA does not own an inventory of property. Private investment in the CRA has been slow, and in order to jump-start significant new development in the CRA Corridor, the CRA will pursue the direct development of an underutilized parcel or property with the intent of inducing or partnering to sponsor a signature, high-impact development project. The CRA will use up to \$1 Million of its cash reserve to apply to the project, which could take one of four forms:

- Partner with a property owner to simply assist with the solicitation (RFP) of a private developer, using CRA programs, State programs, and its own cash to induce and stimulate a significant project that would not otherwise happen on its own;
- Option an exiting property, with an agreement to solicit (RFP) the property to the development community on behalf of the property owner. The CRA would not close on the purchase of the property, but transfer the purchase option to a successfully responding developer. The CRA can decide what, if any additional stimulus it provides to such a project (portion of the land cost, infrastructure, demolition, etc.);
- Purchase a property outright, and solicit (RFP) proposals for redevelopment. The CRA would in this case act as a master developer, but step out of the way for development of the winning proposal. Purchase terms would be proposed by responding developers and negotiated as part of the purchase from the CRA, or;
- Execute a public-private partnership agreement with a property owner to solicit and RFP the property for redevelopment, on established terms, and both the property owner and CRA stay in as partners on the project (land-lease, etc.)

Use of the CRA’s funds, terms of development, acquisition, etc. would have to be determined carefully, with the goal of directly jumpstarting a significant and visible new development that brings measurable value to the CRA and the Community. These funds will also be viewed as an investment, with expectation of a return on that investment for the CRA.



**11. Develop Additional Equity Investment Sources Through Partnerships**

The CRA is not in the position to be an significant equity investor in CRA development projects, however, it can be instrumental in providing access to equity investors, equity enhancement, debt financing enhancement, and community and private development funding sources and institutions. The CRA will actively market, engage, and partner with equity, debt and institutional investors to provide a showcase of CRA business, expand recognition and identity of the CRA and its strengths and opportunities for such investors, and provide immediate aces to client businesses needing enhanced development financing.

**11.1. Partner with Alternative Providers of Equity and Debt**

Potential equity, debt, and investment partners include, but are not limited to:

- Partnering with holders of state and federal New Market Tax Credits (NMTC): the NMTC program is one of the most successful community development programs in Federal history, and Florida has emulated the program with its own state New Markets tax Credits. New Markets Tax Credits are allocated annually to community development Corporations, which can be non-profit or for-profit. Investors purchase the tax credits though a syndication process, The cash they use to buy the tax credits goes toward a development project as an equity contribution. The equity contribution is paid back to the investor through annual tax credits, taken over seven years on their Federal tax return. At the end of seven years, the investor retires from the project, and the their equity stake is relinquished — in essence, providing up to 20% of a project’s cost for free to the developer. The CRA has reached out to multiple holders of NMTC’s, and will position important projects for NMTC investment as they emerge.
- Partner with Community Investment Banks: Community Investment Banks throughout Florida are seeking quality investment projects. Agencies such as the Florida Community Loan Fund and others have indicated an interest in the NEW Miami community and 7th Avenue. The CRA will secure formal agreements to market client businesses to such banks, arrange business showcases with potential debt providers and investors, as well as “elevator pitch” contest for new and expanding business.
- Solicit EB-5 Investors: The Federal EB-5 program is growing in popularity, particularly in south Florida. Under the program, foreign investors receive a green card in exchange for an investment as low as \$100,000 in a Federally registered **EB-5 Regional Center**. The Regional Center then pools multiple investors monies, and provides a direct equity investment into projects it selects. Regional Centers must invest in Federally designated distressed communities (of which the CRA is in), and the development project or business must remain operating for 5 years. The EB-5 program

has been used in Florida to fund part of the Scripps Labs project in Jupiter, and most recently the development of the University of Miami Life Science & Technology Park. With the rapidly growing interest from foreign investors in Miami, the EB-5 program is a perfect fit for business seeking equity investors in the CRA. There are over 25 qualified regional centers in Florida.

**11.2. Build a Comprehensive Streetscape Improvement Fund**

The CRA needs to build a significant streetscape improvement fund, but will not be able to do so out of projected revenue income. The goal is to build a multi-million dollar grant fund to complete a streetscape improvement program for as much as 7th Avenue as possible.

The CRA will immediately submit grant applications for the FDOT **FDOT Landscape & Streetscape Grant for Streetscape Improvements Program**, and the U.S. Department of Transportation’s (DOT) **Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER)** discretionary grant program, the FDOT **FDOT County Incentive Grant Program (CIGP)**, the FDOT **Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP)**, and the Federal **Livable Communities and Sustainable Development** program.

Each program provides large-scale (multi-million dollar) transportation, roadway, and streetscape funding.

## 12. Make Minor Zoning Changes to Enhance Development Opportunities

The County's zoning regulations are generally flexible, and allow significant density of development throughout the CRA. In general, the North Central Urban Area District (NCUAD) guidelines cover the CRA from 79th to 95th street, east of 7th Avenue, to I-95, and allows for 60 residential units per acre, and a minimum height of 3 stories, and maximum height of 12 stories, regardless of use. For the CRA area west of 7th Avenue from 79th to 95th, as well as the entire CRA area from 95th to 119th the NCUAD allows for a maximum of 36 housing units per acre, and a maximum building height of 6 stories, regardless of use. All new uses in the CRA are required to adhere to a minimum 1.0 Floor Area Ratio (FAR).

Additionally, height, density and setback requirements are strictly limited for properties abutting single-family residential properties.

**Supporting the redevelopment of small businesses and small parcels in the CRA is one of its most important issues.** While flexible regarding use and design, and permitting considerable density, the CRA is recommending XX minor changes to the NCUAD Zoning provisions to better respond to property and development conditions in the CRA. They are:

- Remove the density cap for residential along east side of 7th Avenue (currently 36 and 60 units per acre). With the small size parcels (most under 1 acre), a limit of 36 units per acre may be uneconomic. The existing height, bulk, design, and parking regulations will insure that buildings do not get out of scale, while improving mixed-use and residential project economics.
- Add live-work space as an allowed use in the NCUAD. Modern live-work buildings are loft spaces, usually with retail on the ground floor, and do not have to involve noxious uses. Live-work mixed-use housing is being successfully developed in Wynwood, and importantly, live-work projects are eligible for a much wider range of housing and economic development incentives and tax credits than traditional workforce housing. Given the difficult status of obtaining housing tax credit financing in Florida, this may make the difference between early investments in residential development in the CRA and none at all.
- Develop a shared parking strategy in the Zoning code specifically for small parcels by allowing the use of shared, off-site parking spaces to count toward a development project's parking space total. Usually shared parking within 750 feet issued toward a building's total parking count.
- Lastly, consider re-categorizing 7th Avenue as an NCUAD **Urban Core**, rather than and Urban Edge. This simple classification change would allow all of the same uses, but even greater density.





# Proposed Program Costs

The proposed program costs suggested here are not in addition to the CRA’s existing budget. It is recommended that the existing Budget is adjusted to accommodate the new programs, and older programs with limited participation are reduced or removed from the budget.

In every instance additional non-CRA funds will be explored to offset costs to the CRA. Other funds are shown as a minimum required to start the program.

Potential Costs of Programs Proposed in the Action Plan	CRA Funds	Other Source of Funds	Total
7th Avenue Brand Name Challenge	-	-	-
NW 7th Avenue CRA Business Enhancement, Relocation and Development Incentive (BERDI)	500,000		500,000
TIFF Rebate Program	-	-	-
New CRA Web Site	25,000		25,000
Annual Web Site Maintenance	25,000		25,000
Southern CRA Gateway Streetscape Project	200,000	50,000	250,000
Public Art Program	-	50,000	50,000
Marketing Events - Classic car, Food Truck Nights, etc.	25,000		25,000
Pop-Up City	100,000		100,000
7th Avenue Virtual Business Incubator	25,000	50,000	75,000
7th Avenue Job Fairs	5,000		5,000
Executing Formal Development & Marketing Partnerships	-	-	-
Signature Development Project	1,000,000	-	1,000,000
Partner With alternative Equity & Tax Credit	-	-	-
Comprehensive Streetscape Fund		10,000,000	10,000,000
Zoning Revision	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,905,000</b>	<b>10,150,000</b>	<b>12,055,000</b>

## Proposed Action Plan

### Program/Project Schedule

Proposed Program Timetable	Completion
1. 7th Avenue Brand Name Challenge	Q2 2014
2. NW 7th Avenue CRA Business Enhancement, Relocation and Development Incentive (BERDI)	Q2 2014
3. TIFF Rebate Program	Q2 2014
4. New CRA Web Site	Q2 2014
5. Annual Web Site Maintenance	Ongoing
6. Zoning Revision	Q2 2014
7. Public Art Program	Q2 2014
8. 7th Avenue Job Fairs	Q2 2014
9. Executing Formal Development & Marketing Partnerships	Q2 2014
10. Partner With alternative Equity & Tax Credit Investors	Q2 2014
11. Marketing Events - Classic car, Food Truck Nights, etc.	Q3 2014
12. Pop-Up City	Q4 2014
13. 7th Avenue Virtual Business Incubator	Q4 2014
14. Signature Development Project (Developer Agreement Executed)	Q1 2015
15. Comprehensive Streetscape Fund	Q2 2015