

North Port Neighborhood Revitalization Plan

**Community Technical Assistance Grant (DEO)
Deliverable 4 – Neighborhood Revitalization
Plan**

**City of North Port, FL
June 2017**

**Prepared by:
Weiler Engineering Corp.**



With Forgey Planning Services

In cooperation with City of North Port Staff

Acknowledgements

This project was a collaborative effort between the City of North Port staff, including Planning, Utilities, Administration, and the City Commission. Research was completed utilizing a variety of sources, including 2010 Census Data, City records, public input, and site visits.

The following report is based on data collected during preparation of Deliverable 1, 2, 3 and a roundtable meeting of City department contacts in the fields of Public Works, Parks and Recreation, Utilities, Code Enforcement, Planning, City Police, and Volunteer Coordination.

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I. Introduction

A. BACKGROUND

Deliverable 4 is a culmination of the previous Tasks, which identified challenges and potential solutions through community meetings, City staff input, and analysis of demographic data in the study area. North Port is well positioned to assist the neighborhoods to achieve several priority goals, but it will require a combination of guidance to develop their own volunteer base, as well as, implementing enhancement to City programs that were previously or are already in place, with a prioritization of addressing the identified issues.

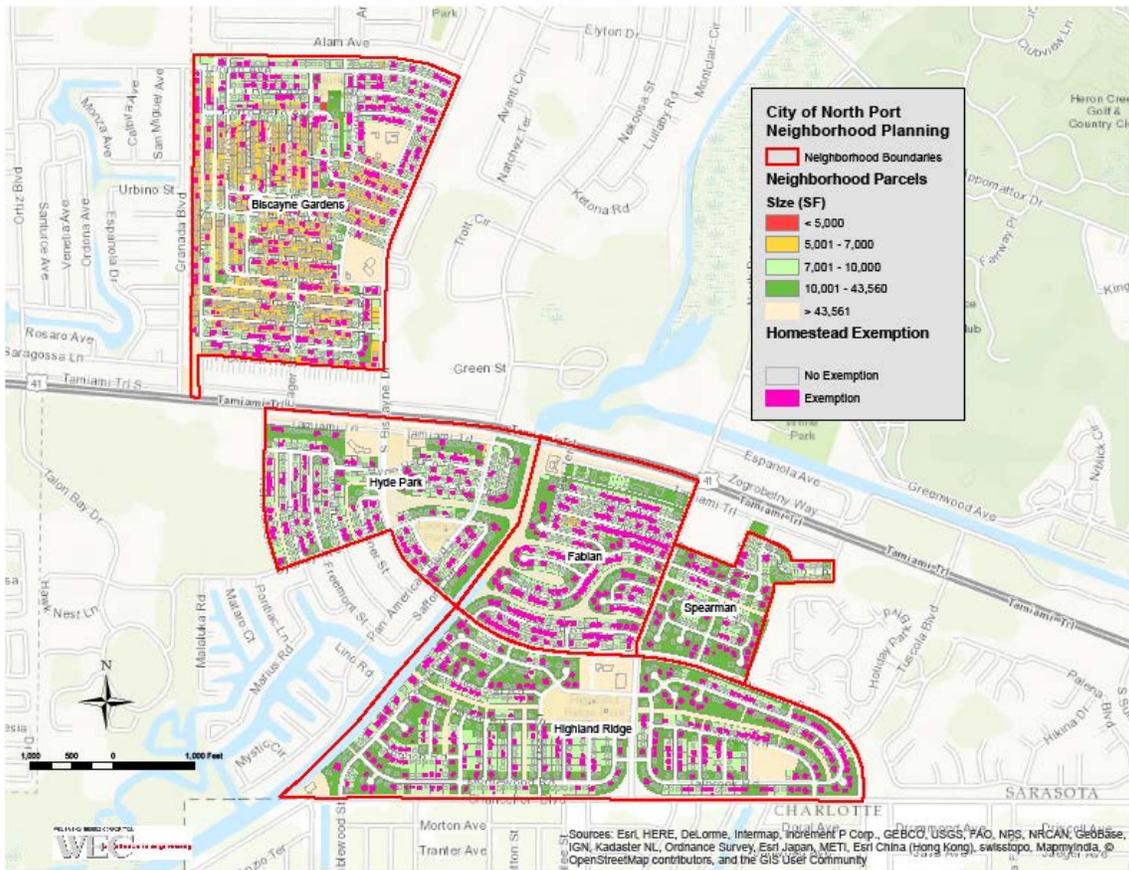


Figure 1: Old North Port Neighborhoods

B. Neighborhood's Strengths and Weaknesses

During the neighborhood meetings, several items flushed out as both a strength and weakness. This is partially due to experience and perception of the individual

commenters, but several of these points have risen to the surface as key components to the revitalization process. The following lists, of both strengths and weaknesses, include symbiology as a cross reference between the lists. * - Occurs on both lists or is part of an opposing view; ^ identified throughout this process as strategy or action item.

Strengths

- *The names of the neighborhoods that are identified on the map are the names that we call the neighborhoods by--they are correctly identified.

- *Local landmarks:
 1. Abbe's Donuts.
 2. North Port Public Library.
 3. Canal system

- We really know our neighbors
- Hyde Park is a nice place to live
- Some renters stay 10 years or more and are good neighbors
- Lots of long term residents--many people have been here 30+ years
- Cascades-neighbors take care of each other
- ^Pride of our neighborhoods and strong emotional tie to them

- *Proactive and consistent code enforcement
- Communication between city department and police department
- In our neighborhood, the City has dredged and maintained our canal
- Drug lords have been disappearing in our neighborhood
- Citizens helping maintain landscaping in neighborhoods

- Identity known in Highland Ridge neighborhood
- People walk their neighborhoods - we have sidewalks
- Streets were repaved
- Quick City response on water issues.
- You can call Police Department or Code Enforcement, you get good response.
- No deed restrictions
- *Code Enforcement really tries hard

Weaknesses

- *People are not familiar with the names of their neighborhoods, no common identification beyond street names
- Citizens feel (these neighborhoods) have taken a backseat to growth
- ^No active community groups
- No deed restrictions

- Need to fix what is broken
- Broken or missing handrails along Jeffrey waterway, citizens created a makeshift solution (Multiple comments)

- Street lights are broken and in need of paint and repair
- Dirt on collapsed pipe [picture below] is a poor response
- Ancient iron pipes need to be replaced with PVC, they are approaching 50 years and many are collapsed in front of people's homes and in rights of way

- ^"We have researched this property and have found it to be located on City ROW, no active association to maintain and no maintenance agreement can be found."

- Abandoned vehicles on City land-sit there for 2 or 3 weeks. Police don't respond. They send you to Code Enforcement
- Power outages, especially when it rains
- *Maintenance of canals, dredging
- Canal at 8460 Trionfo Ave, North Port
- One canal on Biscayne near US 41 smells like sewer
- Culvert issues, access to driveways-rough on vehicles
- Drainage could use improvement, standing water on Deeming Street (it sometimes stands for as long as 24 hours)
- Even though our canal is now perfectly well dredged and maintained there may be some unpermitted culverts
- Jeffrey Waterway needs work
- Ditches and swales not being maintain by the city
- By the library, across Hyde Park Ave, the water is clogged up with weeds
- Invasive Brazilian Pepper trees along roadways (Near Highland Ridge)
- Deferred maintenance of trees. Un-trimmed trees get caught in wires and set off fires-FPL, City not responsive
- Falling fronds aren't cleaned up
- Impinging tree ordinance

- Maintenance of trees in cul-de-sacs (Scorpio) or no trees on cul-de-sacs (Morning/Otis)
- It is hard to get a permit to repair a sidewalk
- *^Sidewalks not in good condition
- City government is a pain in the a**
- Unequal enforcement of codes
- City doesn't enforce code on rentals
- Need for more aggressive police work
- No help from government unless you complain constantly
- *Nobody responds to calls
- Elderly neighbor 85 years old not safe environment for her
- *Code Enforcement is reactive, not proactive (hold Code Enforcement department accountable)
- *North Port and S. Biscayne intersection:
 - o People do not stop at the signs
 - o The speed limit is 30 mph, but it is never enforced. That is why accidents are so bad
 - o No one ever drives at the speed limit
 - o People drive at 50 mph on S. Biscayne and on N. Port Blvd.
- ^Lack of support from the City to identify with the neighborhoods. Highland Ridge sign proposed to be demolished instead of repaired by the City
- Need benches
- No bike trail
- No street lights near bridges
- No lamp posts except when there 10 of them right next to each other, specifically on Morning Ave.
- It is hard to see kids

The following is a summary of the most notable items. They were selected based on showing up on both lists and being identified as key components to a broad plan of ideas to assist in revitalizing the neighborhoods.

- The comments that the City is reactive and helpful, while others claim they are not. This generally covers Code Enforcement, Police, and City department responses in general. There may be several reasons for this. Some are comfortable using the City's social media and other technologies for communication; while others clearly are not.

- No active community groups – which creates an opportunity for neighborhoods to have a stronger voice since they represent a collection of home owner’s rather than individuals.
- Maintenance and drainage issue responses – city staff has on-going maintenance schedule, but the residences in these neighborhoods felt they had received unbalanced attention.
- Neighborhood identification, and most specifically neighborhood signage, is an unresolved issue given the on-going discussions related to Highlands Park.
- The intersections of US 41 and S. Biscayne Ave. and North Port Blvd. are recognized as the center of the neighborhoods, but also seen as dangerous due to crossing issues and speed of drivers. There is limited accessibility for non-vehicular traffic through a sea of parking lots.
- Long term neighbors, even renters; yet many stated that abandoned homes, run down rentals, and absentee landlords caused deterioration of the housing and their neighborhood.

II. Strategies for Neighborhood Overlay Improvements

A. General Overlay Strategies

The City of North Port has several key programs and services that are on-going or were previously in place. Based on the Community Meeting held for the neighborhoods, the residents are not aware of the current programs. Participation and expansion of these programs offers an opportunity to address some of the concerns residents had about crime and community awareness. Additionally, a few recommendations have been included that are applicable to all neighborhoods, not necessarily specific neighborhoods within the study area.

Neighborhood Watch

North Port Neighborhood Watch, Inc. is an established 501(c)(3) organization that provides support to the city’s Police Department. They have a Board of Directors and hold monthly public meetings. Their mission is to “assist in the City’s crime prevention efforts by recruiting volunteers to be extra eyes and ears for the North Port Police Department and to provide the community with whatever level of assistance its members are trained and qualified to offer.”

Based on conversations during the city staff roundtable, the Neighborhood Watch program provides resources for events and community gatherings beyond traditional neighborhood watch efforts. Review of the organization’s application for volunteers indicates that volunteers are assigned “home patrol districts.” While volunteers are not necessarily limited to their home district, the lack of

knowledge about this program during the Community Meeting indicates there are no known patrols on-going in the “Old North Port” neighborhoods.

Communication and awareness of the Neighborhood Watch program is a critical component to its success as a deterrent. The roundtable of city staff was not aware of any signage available for the Neighborhood Watch program. Public Works has not approved or been requested to approve any such signs.

Recommended Actions:

- Encourage Each Neighborhood of Old North Port to submit at least one volunteer to the Neighborhood Watch program and complete training.
- Create uniform signage to be included at entry to participating neighborhoods. These can be typical right-of-way signs on posts or incorporated into additional neighborhood identification signage.
- Direct mailers and traditional marketing of digital, social media, and other resources available to the residents.

Code Enforcement

Several critical items identified by the residents during the Community Meeting were related to code enforcement tasks. Several people were concerned about abandoned homes and squatters or those that break in and commit crimes, drugs, and other unsavory activities.

Based on the city staff roundtable, the Police and Code Enforcement are working together on multiple strategies to combat crime and drug issues. The Code Enforcement Department is also acting on abandoned property reports or properties failing to meet minimum standards for safety.

First, they have implemented an abandoned real estate registry. This registry allows the Code Enforcement staff to designate and monitor specific properties that are most likely bank owned. It is unknown how many privately-owned homes are “abandoned,” but they are actively pursuing registrations by owners when complaints about non-compliance issues arise. The registration costs the owner \$150 and generates at least some income for the Department to offset enforcement costs.

Second, the Code Enforcement has implemented a Lien Relief Application process. This is critical to making properties more affordable for redevelopment, either through repair or replacement. In some cases, the liens can be greater than the value of the property, which creates a burden to achieving compliance with adopted regulations and Codes. This is a valuable tool in revitalizing neighborhoods.

The Code Enforcement Department has previously participated in what the city called “Nice Guys” program. This was designed to utilize city staff volunteers to help property owners who are physically challenged to complete repairs and keep up their homes. They offered services such as painting, minor repairs, yard cleanup, trash and debris removal. This program has not been maintained since the previous coordinator left city employment.

Recommended Actions:

- Explore opportunities to revive the “Nice Guys” program. This can also be recreated as a non-profit opportunity in partnership with the residents of the neighborhood, using Old North Port as a pilot study. Other communities, such as Port Charlotte/Parkside and Punta Gorda have participated in Paint Your Heart Out programs, which offer similar services to those in need. The target areas are neighborhoods needing revitalization and for full time residents who are physically unable to complete the repairs. Generally, they are done annually or bi-annually on a selected weekend and completed for 3-7 houses. This also allows opportunity for corporate sponsorship and participation, citywide promotion, and volunteer recruitment. The residents at the Community Meeting expressed an interest in helping their neighbors because they fully understand that improving their surrounding neighborhood has a positive impact on their quality of life and property values.
- Explore opportunities and review legal standing of expanding abandoned real estate program to include rental properties. Residents complained that poorly maintained properties are generally those that have renters and absentee landlords. Absentee landlords are less likely to monitor and ensure proper maintenance of the homes are undertaken. This program can also help understand the dynamics of renter vs. home ownership issue facing the neighborhoods. The general belief is that more owner-occupied housing will increase owner participation in the community, which in turn, helps maintain property values overall.

Absentee Landlord and Poor Housing Conditions

The residents of these neighborhoods identified a key issue for them was crime generated by non-owner occupied housing. Analysis and discussion about the specific incidents that have occurred lead us to believe it is also directly related to absentee landlords who don't live in the area and have no direct oversight of housing conditions. Rental housing makes up over 30% of the housing stock in these neighborhoods. Property Records show many homes are owned by out-of-state property owners.

Several communities have addressed similar problems through Proactive Rental Inspection programs. Similar programs in places such as Wayne, MI, Erie, PA, Miami, FL, and other communities, have utilized rental housing registration and inspection services to assist in identifying housing that is at risk or already falling below minimum housing standards. Implementation of this type of program will greatly assist Code Enforcement and City Police with creating streamlined communication and helping landlords with compliance issues.

Recommended Action:

- Develop a Proactive Rental Inspection / Renter registration Ordinance to assist in communications with landlords and expedite compliance with local regulations and laws.

Utilities

Concerns were raised by residents who had firsthand experience replacing the plumbing in their homes. Most of the housing stock in each of the five neighborhoods are roughly the same period, early 1960's. Many may be facing the end of their life cycle. Based on how owner's input, the plumbing of the houses is at risk of eroding and severe deterioration.

The neighborhood collection and distribution system for both water and sewer appear to be in working order. Asbestos concrete pipe is the primary material used for the underground utilities. While the asbestos component is of some concern, if the pipes are in working condition and not damaged, there is not any concern of impact to water quality. The Utility anticipates these collection and distribution lines to provide an extended life cycle and have no plans for replacement.

Recommended Action:

- Work with city staff and City Commission to consider incentive programs to repair or replace plumbing within well-conditioned homes in the neighborhoods. A separate, standalone Housing Corporation is discussed later and may be a vehicle to deliver such funding.

Public Works

The Public Works Department is currently in process of implementing a citywide drainage repair program. The program is designed to systematically schedule swale and drainage facility maintenance on a neighborhood by neighborhood scale. The Department started a pilot program based on data provided by complaints and in-house inspection of facilities. The grid plan will allow the Department to schedule areas of need for repairs and track time, costs, and needs for each portion of North Port. Recent improvements in the East Highland neighborhood were cited as examples of recent projects in the Old North Port area.

As the pilot study is tweaked and transformed into a set grid plan for the City, drainage improvements will be implemented, but dependent on regular funding. Public Works is very responsive to citizen complaints about drainage problems; however, they are complaint driven and require the citizens to do legwork with notification of their Department. While many residents of the neighborhoods felt, there were issues, many did not know the best way to inform the City of these issues. Again, many of these residents expressed a lack of understanding of how to utilize North Port's modern portals, such as Facebook and phone applications, to notify of problems.

It is not clear if the issues expressed by residents at the Community Meeting were flooding issues and what structures or systems were to blame. The Public Works staff highlighted concerns about the corrugated metal culverts that are prominent throughout the older neighborhoods. They rust, are crushed over time, and become blocked with sediment. Repair or replacement of these culverts are the responsibility of the home owner, but it appears many are not aware and may be easily confused because culverts are located within the right-of-way.

Secondly, the Public Works Department is carrying out an aggressive Capital Improvement Plan to fund pedestrian and bicycle facilities along major thoroughfares. Most of the focus has been on large projects that provide connectivity between destination points. Additional projects include beautification, such as the landscape project along S. Biscayne Dr. that is due to

begin in 2017. These projects will enhance the City and bring additional safety to the fringes of the Old North Port neighborhoods. These projects make a splash in public relations, but they also overlook the gaps in the existing network.

Expanding this program to identify the gaps in infrastructure will further enhance the existing network, specifically sidewalks and bicycle facilities. A collection of small projects can be grouped together as one larger project that may qualify for similar funding sources, such as Local Agency Program (LAP) through FDOT funds. North Port is a certified LAP community and can request funding for these projects. This may require completing a sidewalk network and crosswalk inventory within the neighborhoods prior to submittal of funding requests.

Finally, our discussion with the city staff identified a lack of signage for the existing Neighborhood Watch program. The participants weren't sure why, but were aware of other communities that allow signage within public right-of-way to identify participating neighborhoods. Coordination with the Watch group can easily resolve a lack of identification. Either through all participating neighborhoods or some other request process.

Recommended Action

- Create a public outreach and marketing campaign to educate the public about their responsibility to repair and replace culverts. Damaged drainage structures have a dramatic impact on the quality of stormwater conveyance and collection.
- Complete a neighborhood pedestrian facility inventory, to include sidewalk gaps, ADA non-compliance, and crosswalk locations, existing and needed.
- Identify a collection of small projects to group together by neighborhood and submit for a round of funding through the LAP funding program. Projects including completing sidewalks along a city park frontage, multiple new crosswalks, and ADA compliance repairs at specific locations, all within individual neighborhoods of the study area. The prioritization shall be the neighborhoods identified in the inventory analysis that has the most projects that can be completed within a typical program budget.

- Create a uniform sign standard for Neighborhood Watch neighborhoods that will accommodate appropriate signage at an entryway to the participating neighborhood.

B. Neighborhood Specific Strategies

1. *Biscayne Gardens*

Biscayne Gardens is geographically separated from the other neighborhoods in the study area. US 41 provides a substantial division between the neighborhoods. Additionally, Biscayne Gardens doesn't have frontage on US 41, so creating a compact and uniform boundary for any Overlay District can be challenging. However, Biscayne Gardens is unique from the other study area neighborhoods in that the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) category assigned to the area is Medium Density, which allows up to 10 dwelling units per acre; whereas the other four neighborhoods are Low Density Residential, which permits up to five dwelling units per acre. Since the FLUM was adopted after these neighborhoods were platted and mostly built, the categories assigned are an attempt to reflect the existing pattern of development. As identified during the demographic and census research portion of Deliverable 1 and 2, the neighborhoods are predominantly single-family housing. Biscayne Gardens has a large collection of lots under 7,000 square feet. There is a clear pattern of smaller lots within Biscayne Gardens north of US 41 versus the remaining neighborhoods south of US 41.

One of the impediments to redevelopment of this area is fractured land ownership and a limited supply of undeveloped parcels. The properties were platted as part of the original development of the Old North Port neighborhoods, but developed in a slightly more intense manner with the duplex/villas, quad lots, and smaller single-family homes. Biscayne Gardens development patterns, with duplex housing type, also makes it a prime location for absentee landlords. The physical appearance of portions of the neighborhood lend itself to cramped and rundown. This includes numerous cars parked on the edge of the road and less front yard than larger single-family homes.

Additionally, the perimeter of the Biscayne Gardens neighborhood is bound by S. Biscayne Drive. This major thoroughfare provides substantial exposure to traffic and allows code enforcement and appearance issues to be more noticeable than the other four neighborhoods, which have a greater sense of enclosure when traveling through them.

Revitalization Strategy #1

Complete a city initiated rezoning of the lands within Biscayne Gardens to Residential Multifamily (RMF) which allows utilization for the density already afforded to it by the adopted City Comprehensive Plan of up to 10 dwelling units per acre.

Revitalization Strategy #2

Modify the ULDC to create an overlay district that incentivizes the acquisition and consolidation of land into a form more appropriate for newer development and takes advantage of its proximity to the commercial core of Old North Port, existing parks, and Warm Mineral Springs, along with excellent roadway network that can support higher densities.

Funding Source: Internal time and materials adopting and modifying draft language provided as part of Deliverable 4.

Revitalization Strategy #3

Adopt language within the overlay district that prohibits open storage, carports, outdoor storage of household items, and other items that detract from a clean appearance, to be located adjacent to non-local roadways such as S. Biscayne Drive.

Funding Source: Internal time and materials adopting and modifying draft language provided as part of Deliverable 4.

Revitalization Strategy #4

Create a street-tree master plan to create a street canopy coverage and shade within the neighborhood. Additional focal areas at entry points to the neighborhood along S. Biscayne Dr. and in coordination with current landscape efforts along S. Biscayne Dr.

Funding Source: One time consulting fee budgeted to create uniform landscape mater plan; on-going tree purchase and installation through the allocation of existing tree permitting funds being collected; submit a CDBG grant for planning, design, and implementation.

2. Fabian

The Fabian neighborhood is also unique from the other neighborhoods in that it has significant canal frontage for a portion of the lots. The canals have direct access to the Myakka River and Charlotte Harbor. This creates an opportunity to

market itself in a unique manner and differentiate itself. In theory, water front and canal access should bring higher property values and increased investment.

The canals are a challenging feature. There is not an established canal maintenance program and dredging hasn't been done in close to a decade anywhere in North Port. Analysis of the lots fronting the canal system indicate a variety of techniques have been used to gain access to the water. Seawalls, overland docks and walkways, bulkhead designs, and others. These variations of water and boating access create inconsistent shore lines and differences among property owners.

Revitalization Strategy #1

Investigate need for dredging and measure boater accessibility. Points of interest include sediment areas near the ends of canals along N. Port Blvd., where city drainage swales cross under the roadway and empty into the canal system.

Funding *Source*: CDBG grants, establish a canal maintenance assessment (MSTU) to all canal front properties (may also apply to portions of Hyde Park and Highland Ridge).

3. Hyde Park, Spearman, Highlands Ridge

As previous discussed, the study area neighborhoods share similar conditions and challenges. We have grouped these three neighborhoods because they specifically because they lack some dominant unique characteristics described in Fabian (water front/canals) and Biscayne Gardens (smaller lots).

Each of these neighborhoods will benefit from the general strategies discussed under section I of this report. Most importantly, assisting the neighborhoods with creating a sense of place and identify through signage will go a long way in creating good will with the residents. Additionally, addressing their concerns about sidewalk access and repair. Some of the latter issues seem related to a lack of communication or difference in communication techniques between the residents and the City. Public Works operates primarily on a citizen report system. If the residents of these neighborhoods are not participating in the electronic reporting that North Port prefers, then their voice may be lessened.

4. Commercial / non-residential Districts along US 41

The study area, particularly Hyde Park, Fabia, and Spearman, are adjacent to commercial centers along US 41. The Community Meeting identified the intersection of S. Biscayne Drive as their perceived center of the community.

There are four corners of non-residential activity at this intersection, including two strip commercial centers (NW and SW), a drive thru bank, and a city library. Other commercial areas along North Port Blvd and US 41 also include small retail stores.

Due to the parking requirements of the North Port Unified Land Development Code (ULDC), the commercial strip centers must utilize a substantial percentage of their property for parking that is only full for a few hours during the day. Peak parking hours coincide with peak travel times, morning and afternoon commutes. This leaves the parking lots vacant during off peak times and during weekends.

Through use of alternative development regulations, such as reduced parking, increased mixed use opportunities, and streamlined processes, additionally economic activity can occur around these major intersections and points of access to the neighborhoods. Increased economic activity generally leads to reinvestment and expansion of the businesses that serve the study area.

Revitalization Strategy #1

Develop alternative ULDC development standards for the commercial acreage within the Overlay District. The alternative codes will allow for the following:

- Reduced or alternative parking strategies and maximizing access to alternative modes of transportation and create a multimodal corridor and community;
- Increased Floor Area Ratio to maximize use of existing impervious surfaces;
- Reduced setbacks and increased allowance of mixed use that complement the surrounding uses;
- Expedited and streamlined development review process.

Funding Sources: Internal time and materials adopting and modifying draft language provided as part of Deliverable 4

Revitalization Strategy #2

Develop a gateway signage plan to identify the study area and collection of neighborhoods. The Signage shall be located along US 41 at North Port Blvd heading North and near Granada Blvd. heading South.

Funding Sources: Prepare estimates based on similar projects in other communities and submit a request for design and construction through FDOT LAP funding.

III. Additional Opportunities

A. Create Overlay District

Creation of an Overlay District as part of North Port's ULDC has been discussed throughout this report. It has been mentioned where applicable to specific circumstances related to a neighborhood or commercial area. Here we will summarize additional components of an Overlay that can apply to all the neighborhoods.

Most importantly, signage. The attendees of the Community Meeting were very clear that they take pride in their neighborhoods, identify with their historic names, and would like recognition of them.

Revitalization Strategy #1

Create signage regulations to permit neighborhood signs within City right-of-way, City owned property. Such regulations may permit location, size, and setbacks to allow for the identification of neighborhoods at a minimum of two locations and where best suited depending on traditional traffic flows.

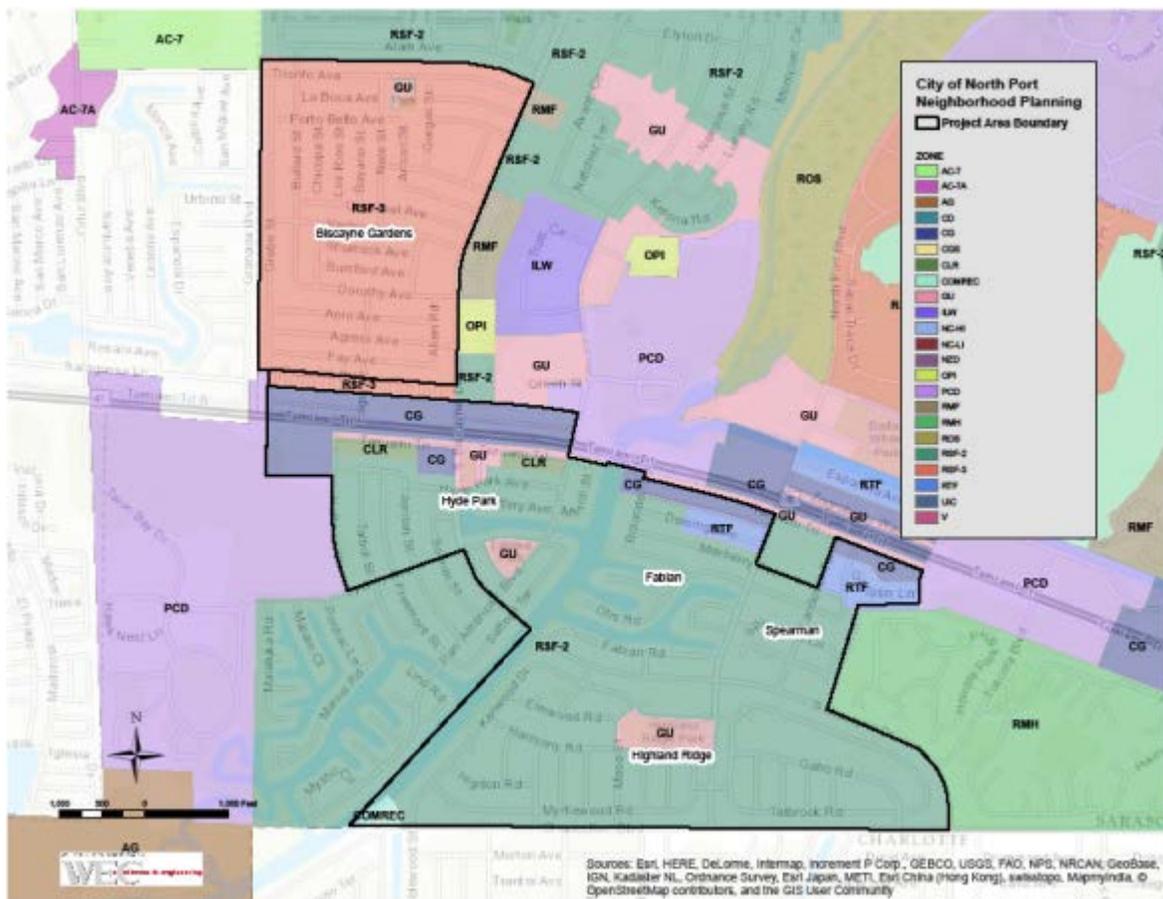
Funding Sources: May be submitted as part of Gateway signage request to FDOT and the LAP funding source.

B. Housing Corporation

Creation opportunities that focuses on creating owner occupied residences will help stabilize the neighborhoods. One manner to accomplish this task is to establish a non-profit Housing Corporation that funds down payment assistance, repair and maintenance funds, and property upgrades.

Establishing a Housing Corporation is a long-term project that requires commitment and participation from community leaders, businesses, and industries who may stand to gain from the creation. Ideally, those who are serving in public safety, nursing, teaching, or other similar community service industries are priority targets. This also helps create opportunities to revitalize the most distressed properties in the neighborhoods.

Overlay District Map



North Port Neighborhood Revitalization Plan

**Community Technical Assistance Grant (DEO)
Deliverable 1 and 2**

**City of North Port, FL
April 2017**

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Acknowledgements

This project was a collaborative effort between the City of North Port staff, including Planning, Utilities, Administration, and the City Commission. Research was completed utilizing a variety of sources, including 2010 Census Data, City records, public input, and site visits.

Enclosed are data, analysis, and public comments that comprise Deliverable 1 and Deliverable 2 of the DEO Community Planning Technical Assistance grant.

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I. Introduction

A. BACKGROUND

In conjunction with the City Staff of North Port, Weiler Engineering Corporation and Forgey Planning Services have conducted preliminary research and analysis of the neighborhoods identified in the Department of Economic Opportunity grant. The grant funds are intended to foster “vibrant, healthy communities” through local community planning. It is the City’s intent to develop strategies for neighborhood beautification, maintenance of improvements, and hopefully identify funding sources or opportunities to improve the identified neighborhoods.

The study area is considered part of the original North Port and are older neighborhoods located along US 41 in the Big Slough area, centered on Key Biscayne Drive. Originally seven neighborhoods were identified, but since then the City has trimmed the target study area to five neighborhoods. Per grant requirements, a minimum of four of the neighborhoods shall be evaluated; however initial research indicates some commonalities among the remaining five, which will be the basis for the evaluation.

The neighborhoods also host several community and commercial facilities. US 41 frontage is anchored by two commercial strip centers along with a City Library and a national bank; while a large Boys and Girls Club of North Port facility is centrally located to the southern neighborhoods.

B. Neighborhoods

The neighborhoods included with this study are:

- Biscayne Gardens (north of US 41, west of S. Biscayne Dr.)
- Hyde Park (south of US 41, west of Big Slough waterway)
- Fabian (south of US 41, east of Big Slough waterway)
- Spearman (south of US 41, east of North Port Blvd.)
- Highland Ridge (south of US 41, south of Spearman and Fabian)

II. Research and Analysis

A. Demographics

There are approximately 3,000 housing units within the identified neighborhoods. An estimated population of over 5,300 people resides within these areas. The neighborhoods are predominantly single-family housing. The

northern section of Biscayne Gardens has a large cluster of duplex structures, the area for which can be identified in Figure 1 within the cluster of “orange” that identifies lots under 7,000 square feet. There is a clear pattern of smaller lots within Biscayne Gardens north of US 41 versus the remaining neighborhoods south of US 41. The smaller lot sizes trend towards smaller homes and more duplex/multifamily style units. Properties fronting along US 41 are commercial and include two strip shopping centers, a national bank, and a North Port Library.

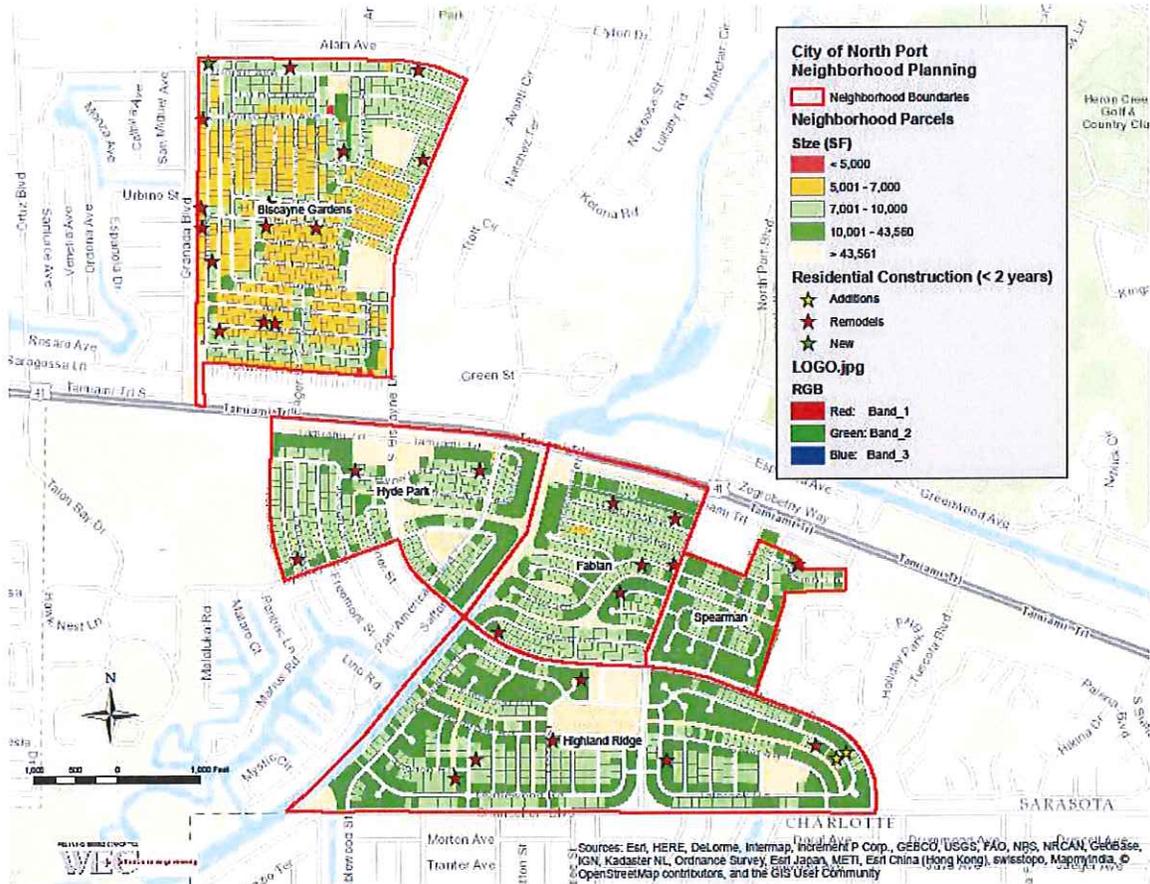


Figure 1 – Lot sizes by Neighborhood / *Note-all figures are also available as separate attachments within Deliverable 1.

Along with a slight difference in housing type, there is a strong presence of non-homesteaded properties within the Biscayne Gardens neighborhood, as can be seen in Figure 2 below. The non-homesteaded property factor generally indicates renters or out of state owners and as confirmed by Census 2010 data of 27.81% “renter occupied.” 2010 Census data compiled for the study area also shows “owner occupied” percentage of 51.15%, with several portions of the study area dipping as low as 36.36%; versus a 2011-2015 owner-occupied rate of 73.9% on a city-wide bases.

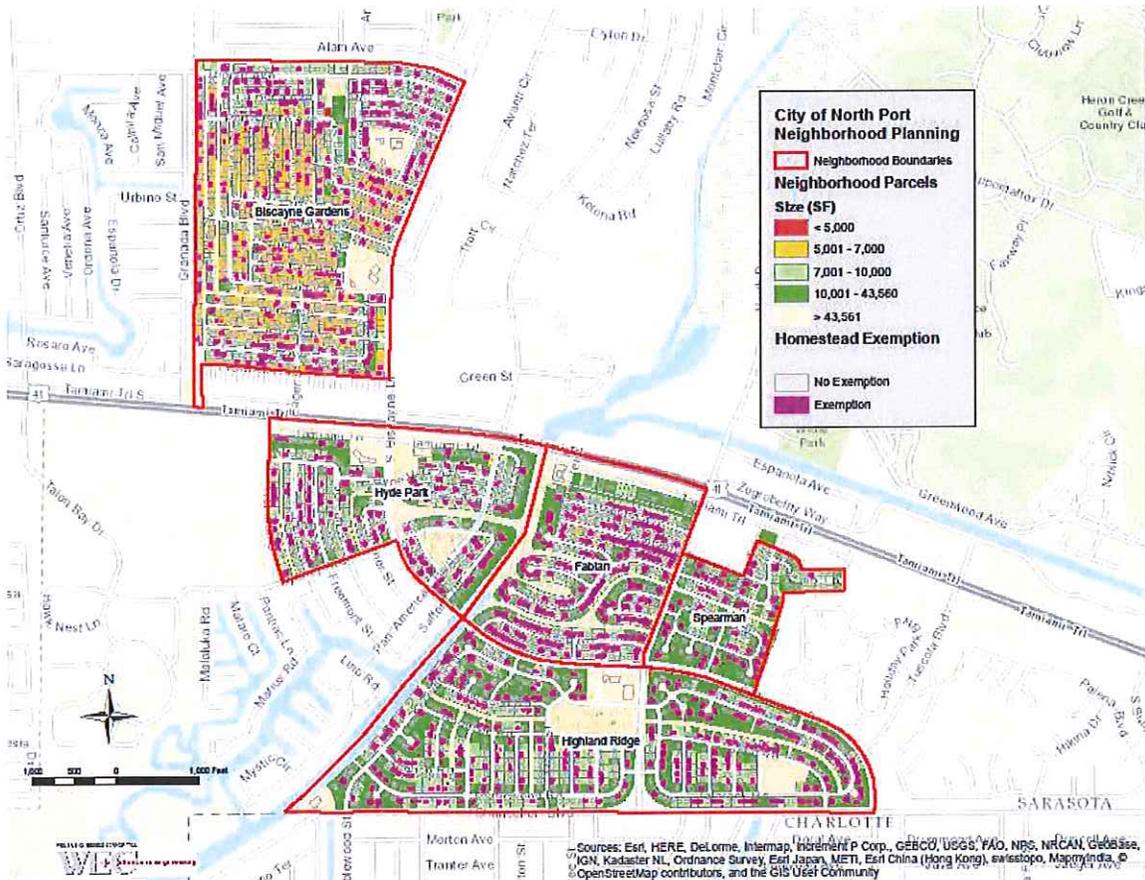


Figure 2 – Homestead vs Non-homestead properties

A windshield survey of the neighborhoods certainly indicates a variation in the level of maintenance and property upkeep within the duplex and non-homesteaded areas of Biscayne Gardens versus other portions of the neighborhoods. There are pockets of blight and property maintenance issues throughout, but a visual survey seems to strongly indicate a greater concentration within the northwest section of Biscayne Gardens.

Further research of the demographics of the area indicates older housing stock, which is typical of the original platted neighborhoods in North Port, Port Charlotte, and other surrounding communities in Southwest Florida. These areas were part of the General Development Corp. platting in the 1950's. In fact, portions of the neighborhoods south of US 41 were originally platted as Port Charlotte Additions.

Each of the Census age and race categories indicate that the neighborhood trends slightly older and more non-white than the City at large; however, they each category is generally within a few percentage points across the board of the race and age measurements.

Additionally, the Census data reflects some of the citizens concerns, covered more in Section III, that there are a number of homes that are unoccupied. Reports from the attendees of the workshop had differing levels of concerns and description of current conditions of these unoccupied housing units, but the Census data supports their concern per a housing occupancy rate of only 78.96%, which means over 21% of the existing structures are identified as unoccupied. The unoccupied structures cause concern for the attendees regarding maintenance, crime, squatters, appearance, property value impacts, and long-term impacts of potentially dilapidated housing on their neighborhood and their own homes.

As part of this research, our team reviewed income and crime / code enforcement data for the neighborhoods from over a two year period (3/2015-3/2017). Crime and Code Enforcement data was compiled by City staff based on their internal databases. Review of the data is limited based on coding and software conflicts, but initial review indicated Code Enforcement was actively enforcing mowed yards. Some of the attendees complained about unkempt properties, but the activity level in the neighborhoods leaned heavily towards grass enforcement. It is unclear if this is a specific policy of the City to address this individual issue or if these are driven by complaints only; and therefore, the leading enforcement action.

The City has also been active in sign and commercial site violation enforcement. The visibility along US 41 in the central portion of the study area lends itself to this enforcement. More visibility generally equals more complaints by citizens or those passing by. Also, since these commercial sites serve as a gateway to the neighborhoods, enforcement of property maintenance codes have a direct impact on the surrounding neighborhoods.

The crime data for the study area provides a window into patterns of activity. "Accident" and "Hit and Run" cumulatively show up most often within the reported incident database. These results can be assumed to be partially influenced by the heavy traffic volume along US 41, but also because S. Biscayne Dr. and North Port Blvd. serve as major connectors between neighborhoods.

The income data revealed that in general, and as can be seen in Figure 3 below, the subject neighborhoods had household median incomes several tiers below the surrounding communities. Biscayne Gardens and Hyde Park, respectively, fell into the lowest category of \$0-29,975.

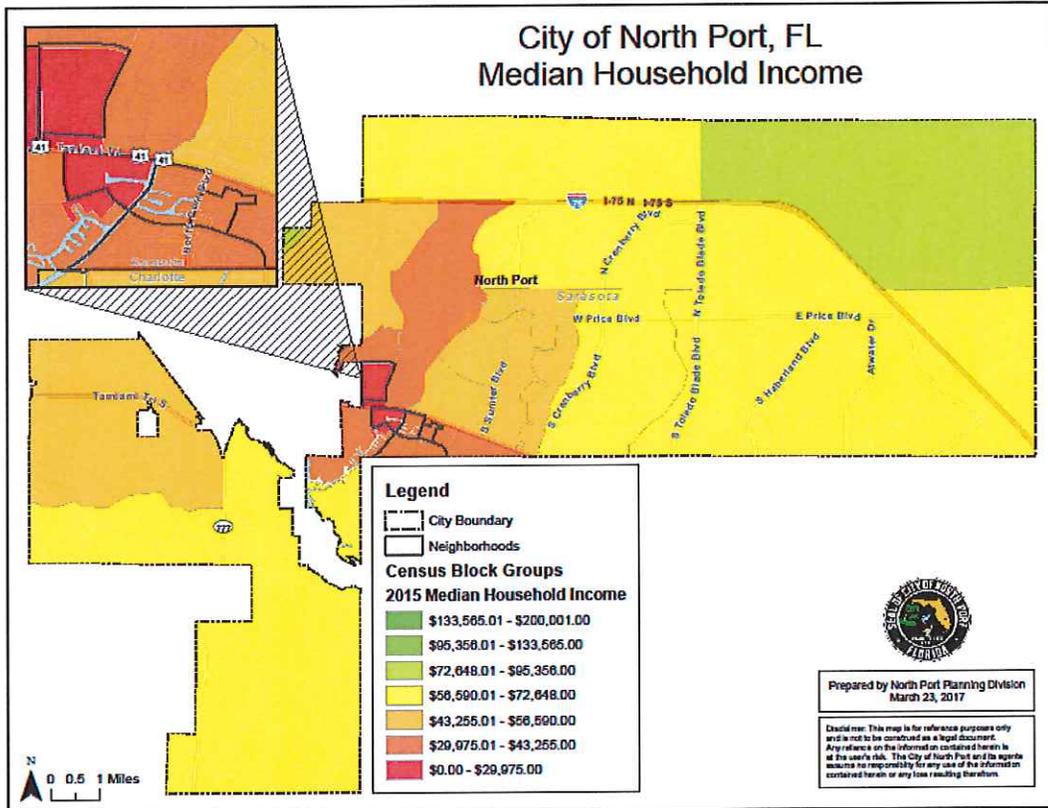


Figure 3 – Median Household Income

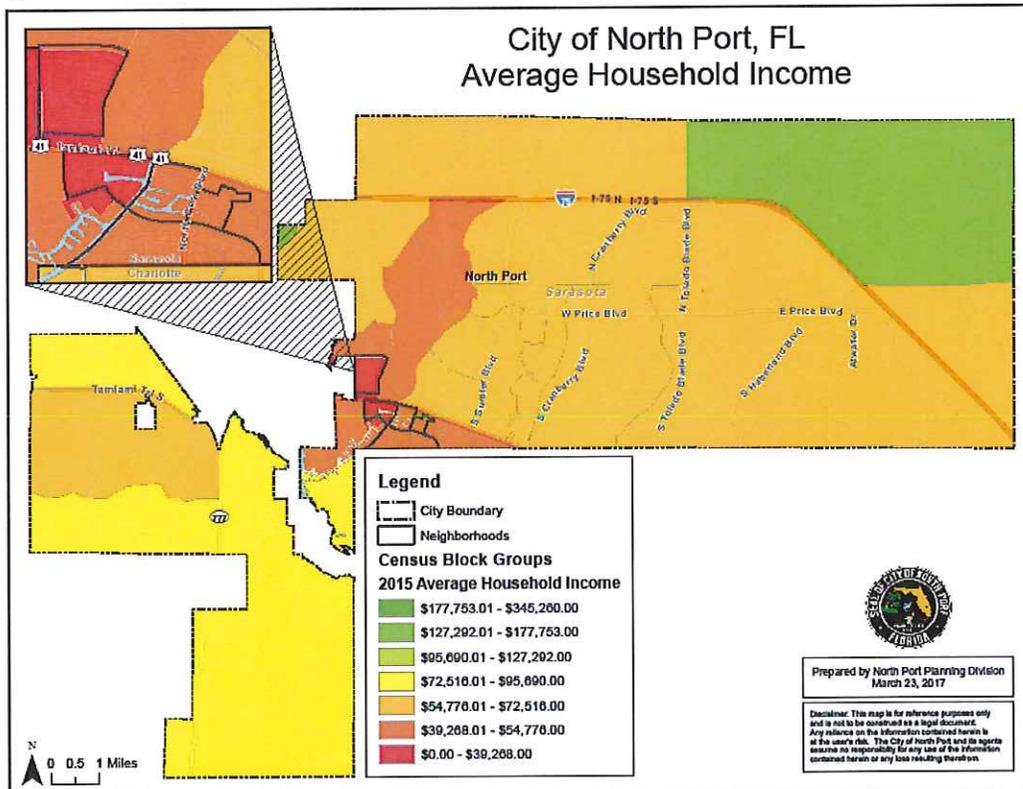
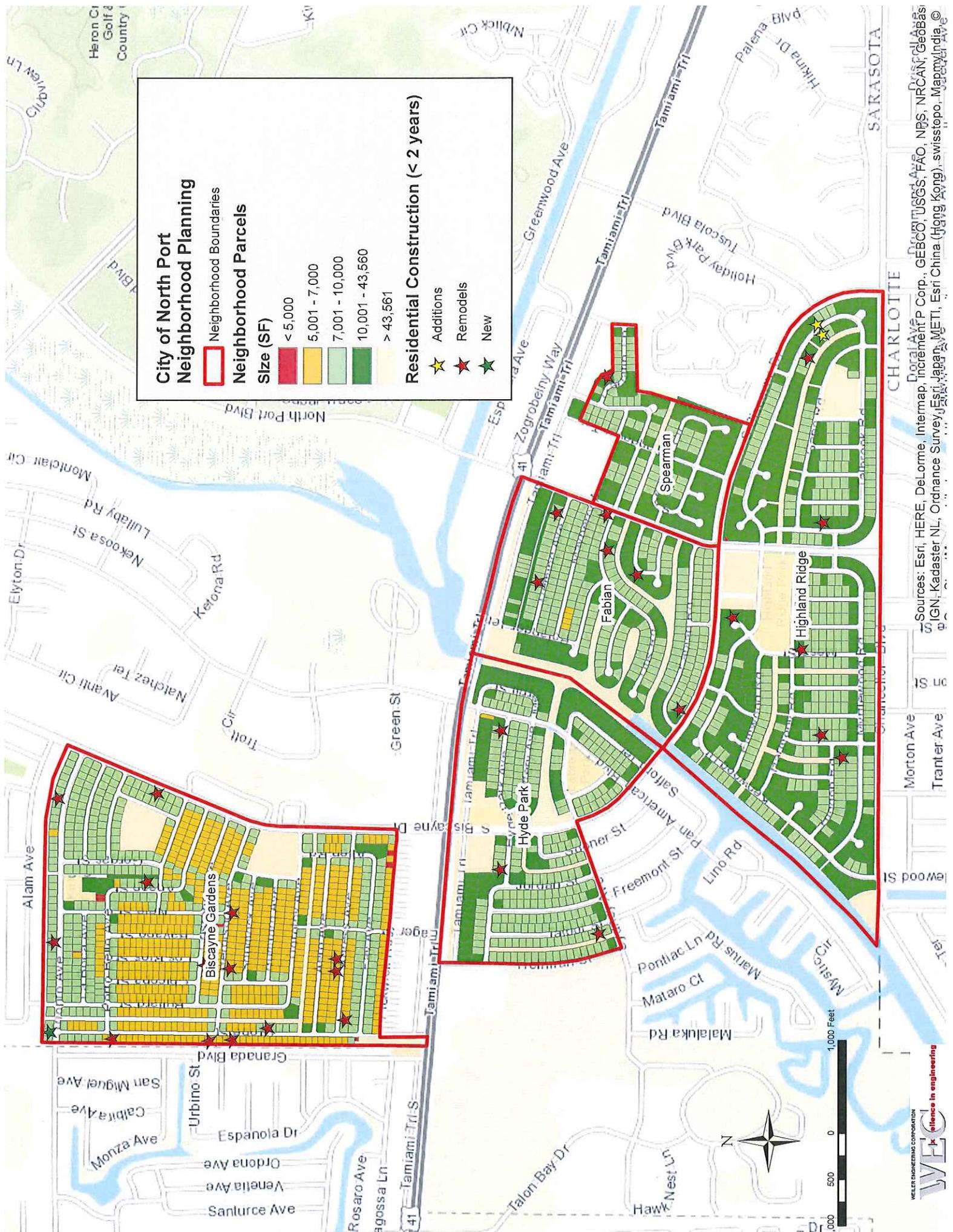


Figure 4 – Average Household Income

II. B. Maps and Tables

Figure 1 – Lot Sizes



City of North Port
Neighborhood Planning

Neighborhood Boundaries

Neighborhood Parcels

Size (SF)

- < 5,000
- 5,001 - 7,000
- 7,001 - 10,000
- 10,001 - 43,560
- > 43,561

Residential Construction (< 2 years)

- ★ Additions
- ★ Remodels
- ★ New



Figure 2 – Homestead vs. Non-Homestead Property

City of North Port Neighborhood Planning

Neighborhood Boundaries

Neighborhood Parcels

Size (SF)

< 5,000

5,001 - 7,000

7,001 - 10,000

10,001 - 43,560

> 43,561

Homestead Exemption

No Exemption

Exemption

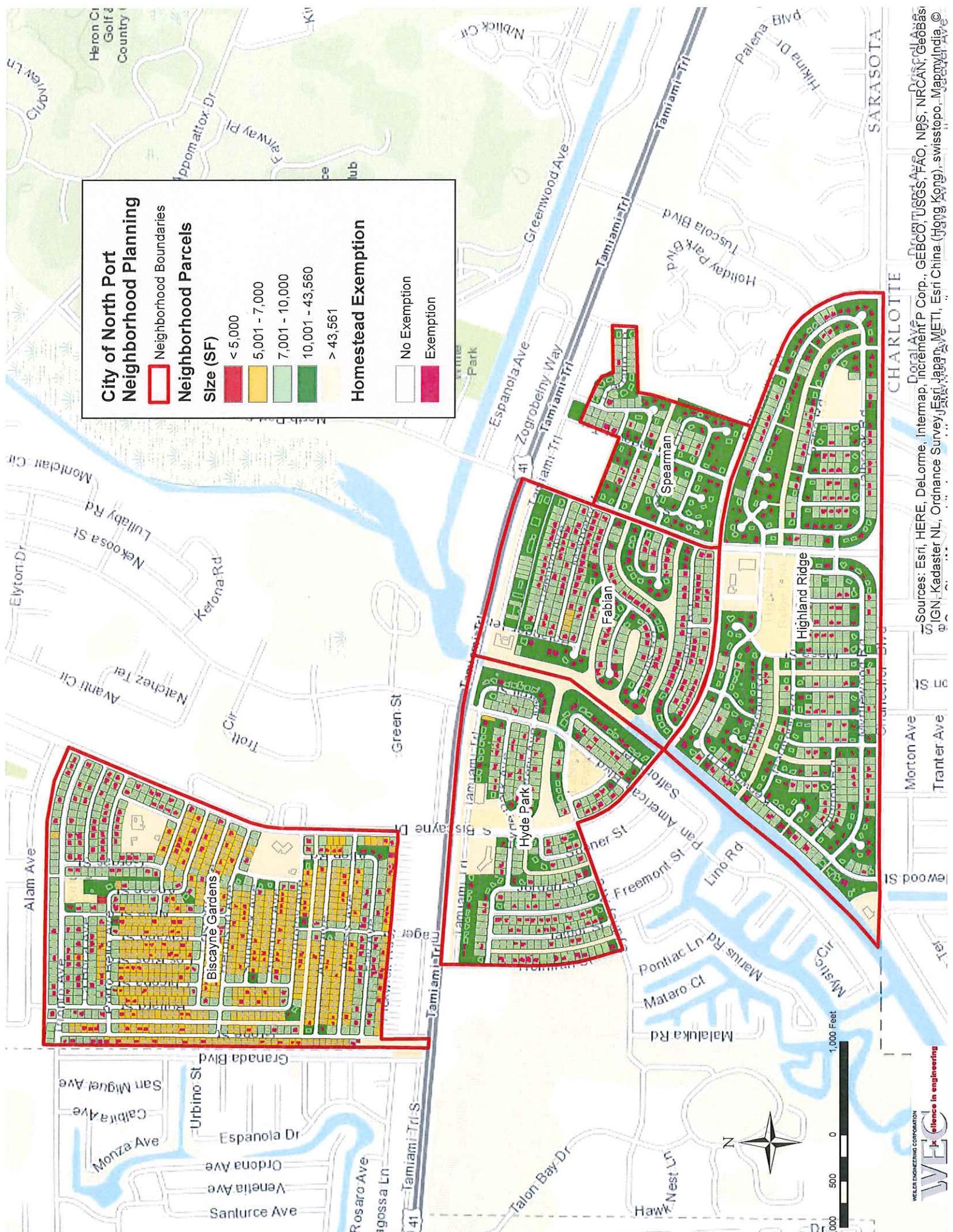
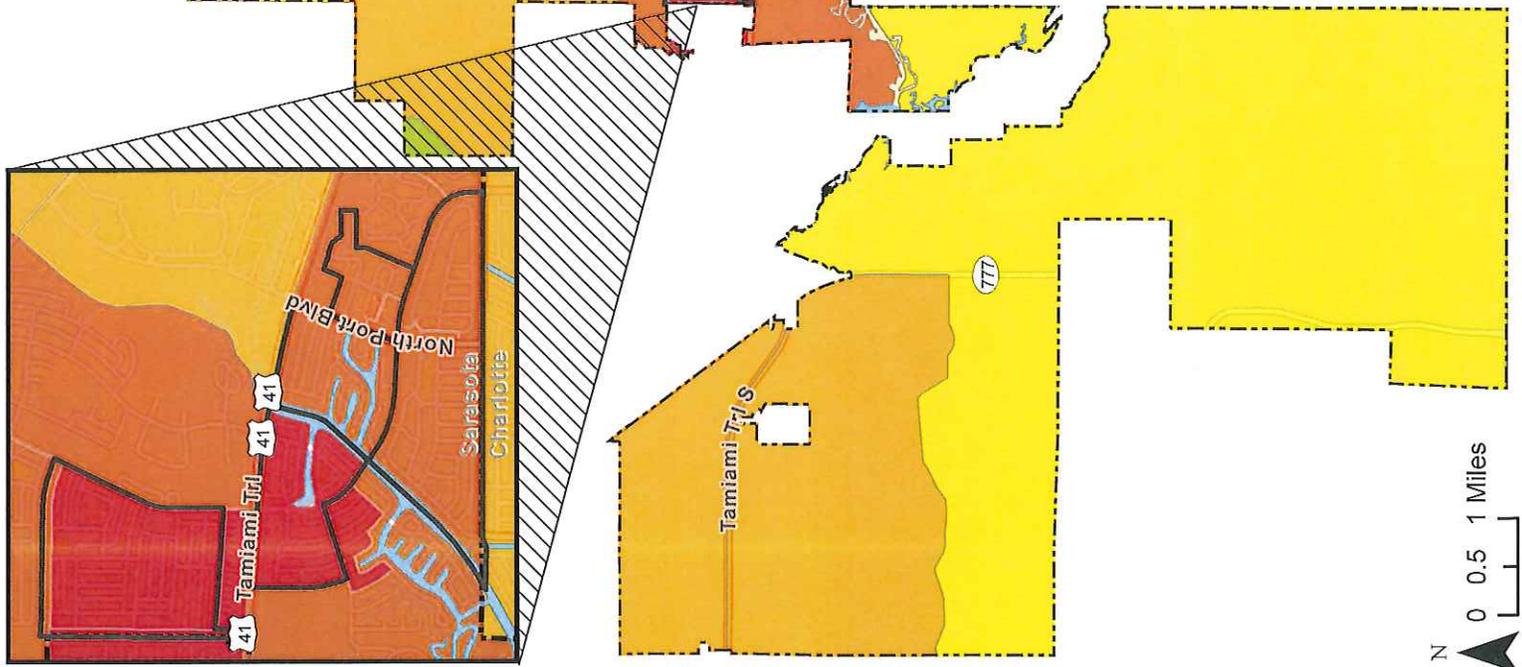


Figure 3 – Median Household Income

City of North Port, FL Median Household Income



Legend

- City Boundary
- Neighborhoods

Census Block Groups

2015 Median Household Income

	\$133,565.01 - \$200,001.00
	\$95,356.01 - \$133,565.00
	\$72,648.01 - \$95,356.00
	\$56,590.01 - \$72,648.00
	\$43,255.01 - \$56,590.00
	\$29,975.01 - \$43,255.00
	\$0.00 - \$29,975.00

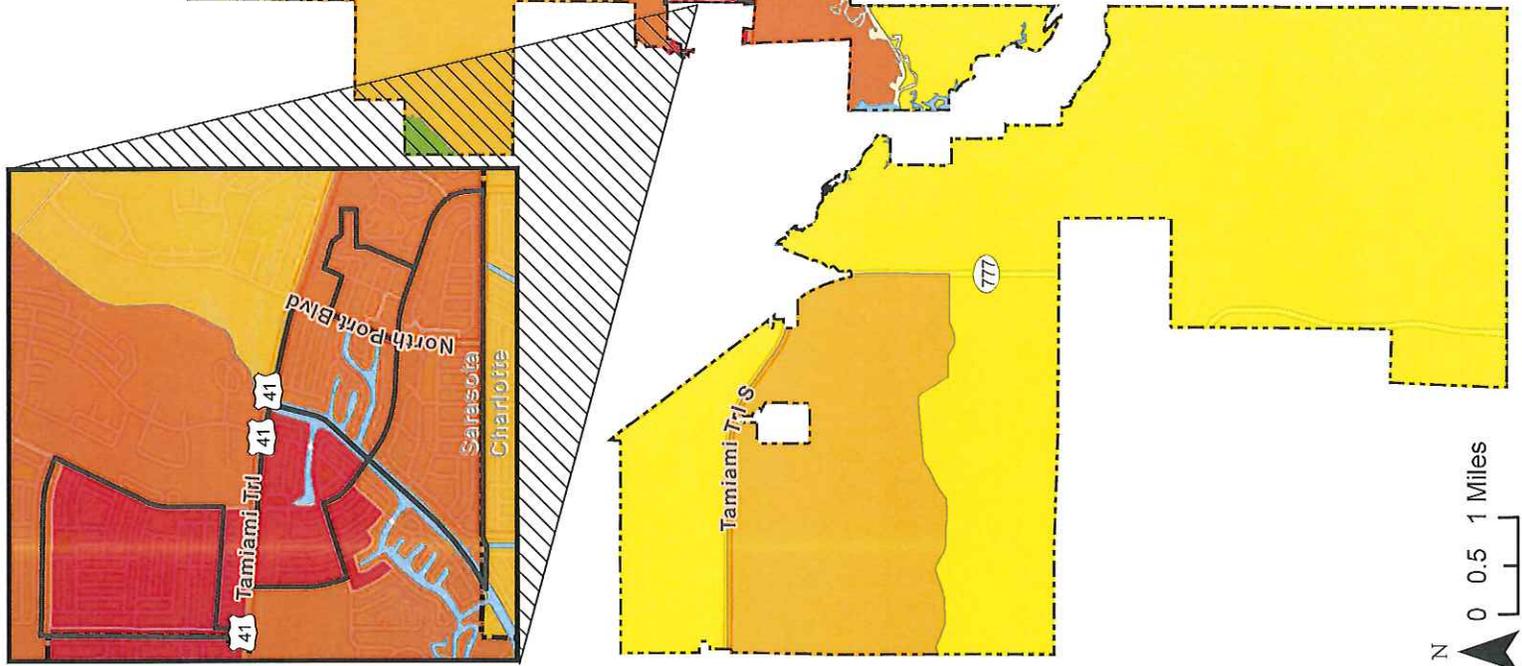


Prepared by North Port Planning Division
March 23, 2017

Disclaimer: This map is for reference purposes only and is not to be construed as a legal document. Any reliance on the information contained herein is at the user's risk. The City of North Port and its agents assume no responsibility for any use of the information contained herein or any loss resulting therefrom.

Figure 4 – Average Household Income

City of North Port, FL Average Household Income



Prepared by North Port Planning Division
March 23, 2017

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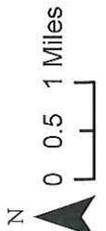


Figure 5 – Census Data (2010) Table

North Port Neighborhood Revitalization - Census Data (2010)

NBRHD	# of Census Blocks	Population 2010	Pop - White	% Pop White			
13	38	1627	1408	86.54%			
11	34	1358	1225	90.21%			
4	19	515	455	88.35%			
5	31	998	812	81.36%			
6	10	533	480	90.06%			
7	8*	204	164	80.39%			
TOTAL	140	5235	4544	86.15%			
NBRHD	Pop - Under 5	% Pop Under 5	Pop - 5-17	Pop - Under 18	%Pop Under 18	Pop - 65+	% Pop 65+
13	113	6.95%	280	393	24.15%	321	19.73%
11	75	5.52%	188	263	19.37%	264	19.44%
4	32	6.21%	73	105	20.39%	94	18.25%
5	62	6.21%	145	207	20.74%	191	19.14%
6	20	3.75%	75	95	17.82%	148	27.77%
7	10	4.90%	44	54	26.47%	28	13.73%
TOTAL	312	5.59%	805	1117	21.49%	1046	19.68%
NBRHD	Avg. HH Size	Avg. Family Size	Housing Units	Occupied	% Occupied		
13	2.78	2.99	784	628	80.10%		
11	2.14	2.70	853	621	72.80%		
4	1.71	2.03	292	221	75.68%		
5	2.31	2.65	496	413	83.27%		
6	1.77	1.88	284	230	80.99%		
7	2.22	2.62	110	89	80.91%		
TOTAL	12.93	14.87	2819	2202	78.96%		
NBRHD	Owner Occupied	% Owner Occupied	Renter Occupied	%Renter Occupied	Vacant - Seasonal	%Vacant - Seasonal	
13	437	55.74%	191	24.36%	46	5.87%	
11	417	48.89%	204	23.92%	95	11.14%	
4	139	47.60%	82	28.08%	16	5.48%	
5	290	58.47%	123	24.80%	22	4.44%	
6	170	59.86%	60	21.13%	27	9.51%	
7	40	36.36%	49	44.55%	3	2.73%	
TOTAL	1493	51.15%	709	27.81%	209	6.53%	

III. Public Workshop

City of North Port

Table Notes from Workshop March 30, 2017 at Boys and Girls Club

Strengths

- The names of the neighborhoods that are identified on the map are the names that we call the neighborhoods by--they are correctly identified.



- Local landmarks:
 - (1) Abbe's Doughnuts.
 - (2) The really good [North Port Public] Library.
 - (3) Good canal system. Feel that improvement has been seen in Highland Ridge and behind Abbe's and Highland Ridge.



- There has been a general improvement in neighborhood appearance.
- We really know our neighbors.

- Hyde Park is a nice place to live.
- Some renters stay 10 years or more and are good neighbors.
- Lots of long term residents--many people have been here 30+ years.
- Cascades-neighbors take care of each other.
- Pride of our neighborhoods and strong emotional tie to them.



- Effective cooperation with owners on tree maintenance and replacement.
- Effective cooperation with house painting, street lights, and park benches
- Proactive and consistent code enforcement
 - Communication between city department and police-code
- In our neighborhood, the City has dredged and maintained our canal; they are perfect now.



- Drug lords have been disappearing in our neighborhood.
- Citizens helping maintain landscaping in neighborhoods.
- Highland Ridge is a great neighborhood, but fix the entrance sign.



- Identity known in Highland Ridge neighborhood. (Your neighbors know you)
- People walk their neighborhoods
- Morning Ave. is very neighborly, but it is unsafe to walk along because of the condition of the sidewalk.
- We have sidewalks

- Streets were repaved
- Quick City response on water issues
- You can call Police Department or Code Enforcement, you get good response.
- No deed restrictions
- Code Enforcement really tries hard.

Weaknesses

- People are not familiar with the names of their neighborhoods, no common identification beyond street names.
- Citizens feel (these neighborhoods) have taken a backseat to growth.
- No active community groups.
- No deed restrictions.
- Need to fix what is broken.
- Broken or missing handrails along Jeffrey waterway, citizens created a makeshift solution (Multiple comments).





- Street lights are broken and in need of paint and repair.
- Dirt on collapsed pipe [picture below] is a poor response.
- Ancient iron pipes need to be replaced with PVC, they are approaching 50 years and many are collapsed in front of people's homes and in rights of way.
- City government is a pain in the a**.
- Unequal enforcement of codes.
- City doesn't enforce code on rentals.
- Need for more aggressive police work.
- No help from government unless you bitch.
- Nobody responds to calls.
- Elderly neighbor 85 years old not safe environment for her.

- Code Enforcement is reactive, not proactive (hold Code Enforcement department accountable).
- North Port and S. Biscayne intersection:
 - People do not stop at the signs.
 - The speed limit is 30 mph, but it is never enforced. That is why accidents are so bad.
 - No one ever drives at the speed limit.
 - People drive at 50 mph on S. Biscayne and on N. Port Blvd.
- Merrill Street:
 - In the last year, it was flooded due to heavy rain.
 - Pavement on the road towards the 41 was not visible
- Lack of support from the City to identify with the neighborhoods. Highland Ridge sign proposed to be demolished instead of repaired by the City.



“We have researched this property and have found it to be located on City ROW, no active association to maintain and no maintenance agreement can be found. The City discontinued maintaining the sign approximately five years ago. However, the options are as follows: 1) Remove the sign from City ROW and sod the area. 2) Clean up around the sign and sod so it can be cut while the other areas in the ROW are scheduled. 3) Re-plant and mulch the area around the sign.”

*Option 1 or 2 should be considered based on the following:
1) This sign is an enhancement feature for the Highland Ridge subdivision and not a benefit to all taxpayers. 2) Maintenance of the ROW adjacent to an improved property is the responsibility of the landowner. 3) Reduction in force and alternative service providers is calculated on buildings and parks owned by the City and benefit all taxpayers. City staff and management are reviewing these options. "*

-Scott Williams, Director of the Neighborhood Development Services Department

- Abandoned vehicles on City land-sit there for 2 or 3 weeks. Police don't respond. They send you to Code Enforcement.
- Dead rats in road-they did sweep it up finally.
- Power outages, especially when it rains.
- Maintenance of canals, dredging.
- Canal at 8460 Trionfo Ave, North Port.
- One canal on Biscayne near US 41 smells like sewer.
- Culvert issues, access to driveways-rough on vehicles.
- Drainage could use improvement, standing water on Deeming Street (it sometimes stands for as long as 24 hours).
- Even though our canal is now perfectly well dredged and maintained there may be some unpermitted culverts.
- Jeffrey Waterway needs work.



- Ditches and swales not being maintain by the city.
- By the library, across Hyde Park Ave, the water is clogged up with weeds.
- Inadequate landlord involvement.
- Tore down Biscayne Blvd---(curbing will arrive in April per Michelle Norton)
- Invasive Brazilian Pepper trees along roadways (Near Highland Ridge).
- Diseased trees along Biscayne.
- Deferred maintenance of trees.
- Un-trimmed trees get caught in wires and set off fires-FPL, City not responsive.



- Falling fronds aren't cleaned up
- Impinging tree ordinance.
- Maintenance of trees in cul-de-sacs (Scorpio) or no trees on cul-de-sacs (Morning/Otis).
- There's a legend that the City won't approach the private property owner with the dangerous trees and wires because it is owned by a disgruntled ex-city employee.
- Trees in lines, 6112 Talbot St. and 6115 Freemont St.
 - Resident will not let trees get trimmed.
- Trees in lines
 - Been experiencing power outages every time it rains.
 - There have been about 4 trees burning in the power lines
 - FPL , Asplundh, and the City of North Port refuse to trim the trees down.
 - All three have been contacted several times and talked to all thee in person.
- It is hard to get a permit to repair a sidewalk
- Sidewalks not in good condition.



- Need benches (when elderly walk, they need to take breaks and currently have nowhere to do so).
- No bike trail.
- Bolander Terrace to North Port Boulevard, [City] spent over ¼ million dollars on walkway lights, then patched walkway instead of replacing.
- No street lights near bridges.
- No lamp posts except when there 10 of them right next to each other, specifically on Morning Ave.
- It is hard to see kids.

Opportunities

- Concentrate on stuff that can be done now.
- Partnerships with homeowners for maintenance of easements.
- Neighbors see improvement by young families moving in and cleaning up properties.

- Resident on Slate had a quick response from the city to replace water system, and subsequent sidewalk repair that stemmed from the issue.
- Opportunity to increase police patrol.
- Clarify line of responsibility between police department and Code Enforcement. Citizens state issues where each department says the other is responsible, and nothing gets done.
- If codes are not applicable, get rid of codes or figure out how to enforce them. North Port needs a code that people will follow, one that creates accountability, especially for absent landlords and property owners and one that is equally enforced (throughout the city).
- Opportunity to post speed limits, 20mph speed limit would help.
- North Port Blvd and Biscayne Blvd intersection is dangerous. Needs a 4-way stop.
- Opportunities for neighborhood signs at Highland Park etc.- All 5 should have signs.
- Dorothy Avenue cut through-- street signs and speed limits signs would help.
- Paving on Bowler Street.
- Canal system should be dredged.
- Don't replace grass with weed grass. Replace it with native ground cover
- Seniors could use some painting help on their home's exteriors (doesn't have to be a government project, that is in the plan per Michelle Norton).
- Landscaping along North Port Blvd.
- Opportunity to complete sidewalks. They are in bad condition (liability issue) and are not safe after dark, they lack connectivity or suddenly end.



- Opportunity to paint.
- Opportunity to build bike paths. The existing ones are too narrow and have no connectivity between neighborhoods.
- Opportunity to install bike racks at businesses and key locations (Abbe's Doughnuts, market).
- Opportunity to complete rows of street lighting/discontinuities (Fabian, Morning Ave., Cascadas, and at bus stops, especially for early mornings).
- Opportunities for benches for the elderly (especially along Jeffrey waterway).
- Opportunities for Sumter-style gazebos throughout the neighborhood.
- Can Habitat for Humanity, or a similar organization be recruited to help with rehab?
- Add a follow up meeting
- Get to know your neighbors!

Threats

- Abandoned homes- in disrepair, broken windows, rats, “lawn on the roof”, etc. Concern for safety, with these homes presenting an opportunity to be “dragged inside.” Where is the owner responsibility?
- Drug houses
- Homelessness
- Police don’t respond unless it is a crime
- Lawn growing on roof of house. Nobody has lived there for at least 5 years. There are 12+ in the neighborhood.
- Squatters
- Intersection from hell, need 4 way stop at NP Blvd and Biscayne
- Slum lords (a frequently repeated comment)
- Too high a percentage of rental properties
- Empty houses, but they do seem to be getting fixed up in Hyde Park
- Cars in driveways



Questions & Comments

Summary of Written Comments from Participants

1. We need a new hospital
2. Back flow devices are not visible
Water is wasted because they are sometimes hit and wastes water, therefore, it needs to be up by the house.
3. By the Library, across Hyde Park Ave.:
 - a. Needs to be cleaned out
 - b. The land by this clogged waterway is ideal for benches and historical marker about the historical neighborhoods
4. Canals at 8460 Trionfo Avenue need to be mowed more often than every three month.
5. Help coordinate community association by neighborhood to help cohesiveness.
6. Need signs directing folks to right building [at the Workshop]. 40% went to the wrong one.
7. Start trimming trees on easement
 - a. Have low income aid available for home improvements without raising taxes on which the low income can't afford.
 - b. Have citizens work with the City to help with necessary improvements.
8. Pamela D. Johnson of Fabian Road recommends:
 - a. Street lights on both sides
 - b. Safer sidewalk
 - c. North Port city side beautified for vs to maintain
 - d. Speed limit signs to try to slow down traffic down.
9. Kelly Colome, sellingbykelly2gmail.com, (941-888-4248) recommends:
 - a. More than 1 notice for each meeting
 - b. More than 5 days ahead door knocking to inform community.

10. Richard, 941-426-0068, recommends:

- a. Florida should get rid of the unfair system of homestead exemption.
- b. All residents should pay the same amount of taxes.
- c. The permanent residents use the roads and the services more than the part time residents.

11. Biscayne Blvd:

- a. Sidewalks both sides
- b. Landscape as nicely as Sumter Blvd.

12. North Port Blvd

- a. Sidewalks on both sides
- b. Landscape esp. 41 to Chancellor

13. Upgrade neighborhood lights

- a. Change to lamp look from outdated pole lights
- b. Space for safety, not just on corners.

14. Neighborhood signs

- a. Ex. Highland ridge
- b. Need all points of entry
- c. Had no idea Kenwood was in highland by the waterway side we live on.

15. Neighborhood signs and lights

- a. Shuffle board court at highland ridge park should be restored.
- b. The intersection at N. Port Blvd. and Biscayne sign should be a 4 way stop.
- c. The light at Branch and Kenwood drive should be improved.

- How much money will this project cost?

Email comments received prior to workshop

"Hi, we are unable to attend the meeting on Thursday but I would like to tell you that we are very happy that you are concerned about the area. We live on Grobe St. We have been here for four years. We were unaware that most of the homes were rentals. Some of the landlords that rent these properties do not seem to care about the conditions at these homes. My concerns are front yards that are full of junk. So many cars in front yards that they look like used car lots. Garbage cans that are never put away and just stay in the front yard. There are many homes that are

keeping their home neat and tidy. Let's hope that they will all help in keeping this a good place to live. Also, enforcing the speed limit. This is a residential area. Many cars are traveling way above the speed limit of 30 miles an hour."

-B. and R. J.

"I live behind San Pedro Church and am pleased with things in the neighborhood such as sidewalks. Newly paved streets, trash pickup and recycling. I am pleased with the convenience of the local retail stores. I would like to see some of the neighborhood restrictions done away with such as the boat parking and such. I bought here because of its proximity to water and the number of boats and campers parked at homes. Leave the restrictions to the HOAs. I would also like to see less money spent on making this area a North Naples. Keep this area affordable for families."

-Sincerely, D. M.



Re: Biscayne Gardens

"I received your card in the mail and appreciate your concern for my neighborhood. Unfortunately, I have to work that evening so I won't be able to attend but I would like to leave a comment or two. I have lived in

Biscayne Gardens for 17 years and have seen many changes over the years, all for the good. There have been many resales and overall the homes look so much better than they did 17 years ago. People seem to care more about where they live. I do have a question on the signs that were placed regarding "street flooding". I live on the corner of Boca Grande and Gorgas where there is a sign indicating street flooding. I don't know where you got your information but this area has never flooded and that includes several hurricanes. Why would you spend money on signs when it isn't true? Also, if the city is going to spend money spend it on the road swales, good drainage will keep the water flowing and keep flooding at a minimum. Thanks, and good luck with your meeting, I would be interested in the outcome if you keep any minutes from the meeting."

-Nancy L.

"As residents of the Highland Ridge neighborhood, my wife and I would like to make a few suggestions to make our area more appealing. The Highland Ridge neighborhood signage needs to be updated and taken care of. It would be nice to have sidewalks on the park side to be able to walk to the playground from any direction. Care needs to be taken to make sure trash is picked up and courts/nets/lights are all in good shape. The playground equipment is very nice but something for younger kids would be great. Make sure the current sidewalks in the neighborhood are in good shape. We feel this is already a great neighborhood and these few things would make it even better! Thanks."

-M. M.

To whom it may concern,

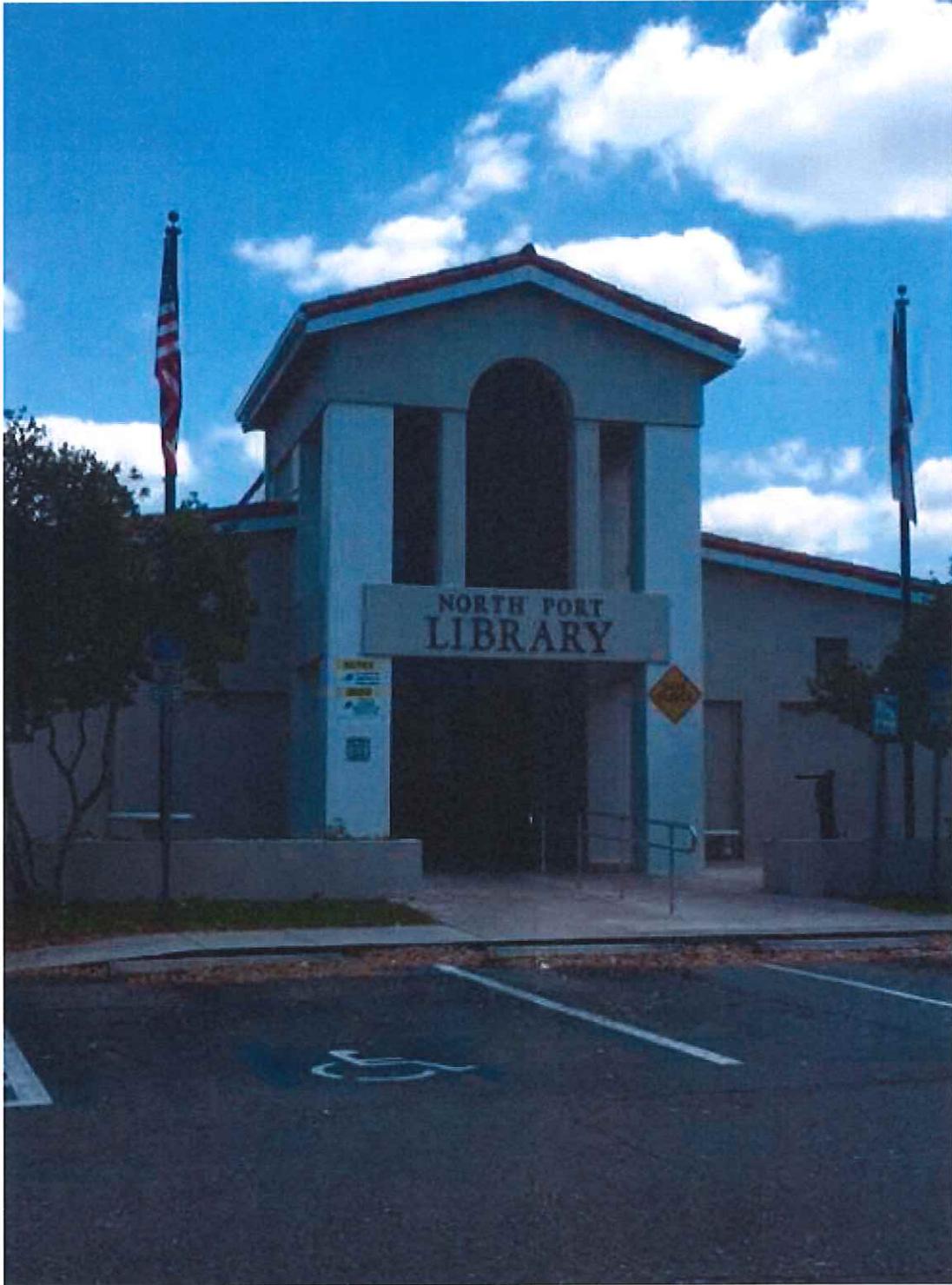
Please accept my thanks and gratitude for investigating and hopefully taking steps to improve the 5 neighborhoods identified recently. I apologize, but I cannot attend the meeting. I do however want to provide a few thoughts, ideas, and opinions. I am most familiar with Highland Ridge as I own a home there, but have visited the other areas as well on occasion. Ideas for improvement:

- Identify properties that are not to code, homes, outbuildings, and property in-general.
- Issue warnings/fines to tenants and owners alike. I believe many of the "eyesore" properties are rentals, with absentee landlords often times.

- Empower code inspectors to do more than just drive by a property to determine code violations.
- Increase code inspections/enforcement/follow-up
- Enlist the help of the Fire Dept. with home inspections as again many properties are simply not up to code and can present fire hazards.
- Investigate obtaining help from the Health Dept., many properties present a Health hazard due to excessive debris in and out of the homes.
- Encourage tenants/property owners to take advantage of the yard debris pick-up that the City offers, so many properties have unsightly yards, unfortunately.
- Allow grant monies, or 0% interest loans to home owners that have financial needs and who need to have their home repaired or painted, etc.
- Ask service groups to help, Boy Scouts, Youth Orgs., Church Groups, with clean up, painting, minor repairs.
- Hire High School/College kids to work with the City's General Services Dept. to assist in clean-up efforts Positions could be part-time, or full-time in the summer months.
- The Highland Park Signage at the corner of Biscayne and North Port Blvd. is in disrepair and the landscaping around the sign is neglected.
- Increase Police patrols, especially between the hours of 9:00 PM and 4:00 AM.
- Additional funding for upgrades to the parks in the neighborhoods. I believe the park near the corner of Biscayne and North Port Blvd. is very nice presently and I see children/families there often. Money spent on some upgrades would be a good thing and appreciated by the young and not so young residents.

I believe these neighborhoods have tremendous potential to serve as initial housing for retirees and families. The North Port area is tremendous, and folks can establish themselves in these neighborhoods and then may have an opportunity to move to areas of North Port that have homes that are newer and typically at a higher price point. I think these neighborhoods, if revitalized properly, would help spur additional growth in North Port long term. I believe funding provided by the City of North Port on revitalization would show return on the investment and would be manifested in many ways to the City's benefit.

-S. S.



III. B. Outreach Material

- Invitation Mailer
- Agenda
- Sign-in Sheets

Invitation Mailer



City of North Port
Neighborhood Development Services
Planning Division
4970 City Hall Boulevard
North Port, FL 34286

NEIGHBORHOOD CONVERSATION

City Planning for Neighborhood Revitalization

Discussing 5 of the City's original 1950's & 1960's neighborhoods, looking for public input to identify neighborhood strengths and weaknesses to develop strategies for a sense of place and long term quality housing.

WHERE: Boys & Girls Club
685I S. Biscayne Drive, North Port
WHEN: March 30, 2017
TIME: 6 pm to 8 pm

If you can't make it but want to participate, please e-mail your input to:
mmcnish@cityofnorthport.com

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City of North Port
Neighborhood Development Services
Planning Division
4970 City Hall Boulevard
North Port, FL 34286

NEIGHBORHOOD CONVERSATION

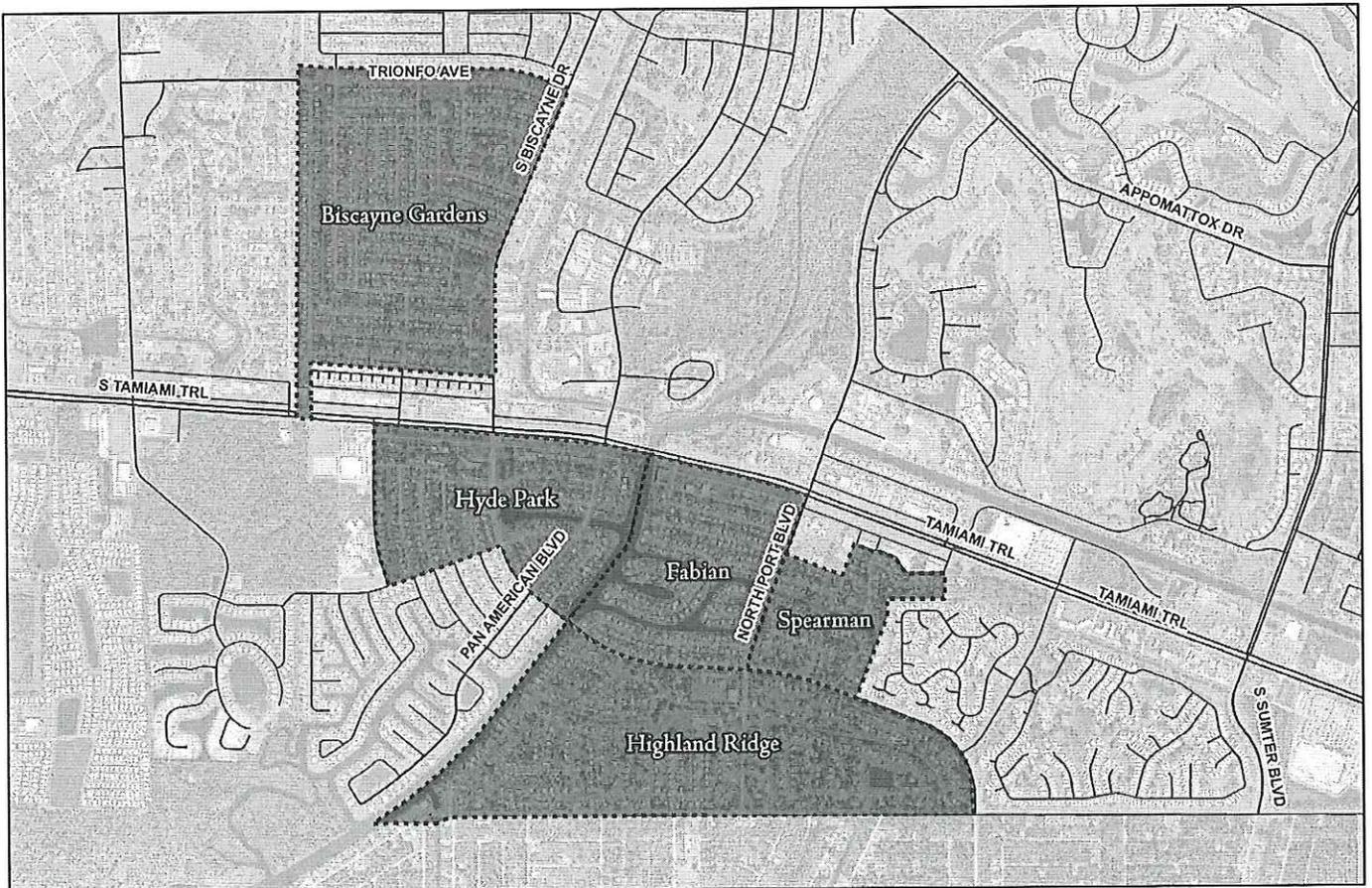
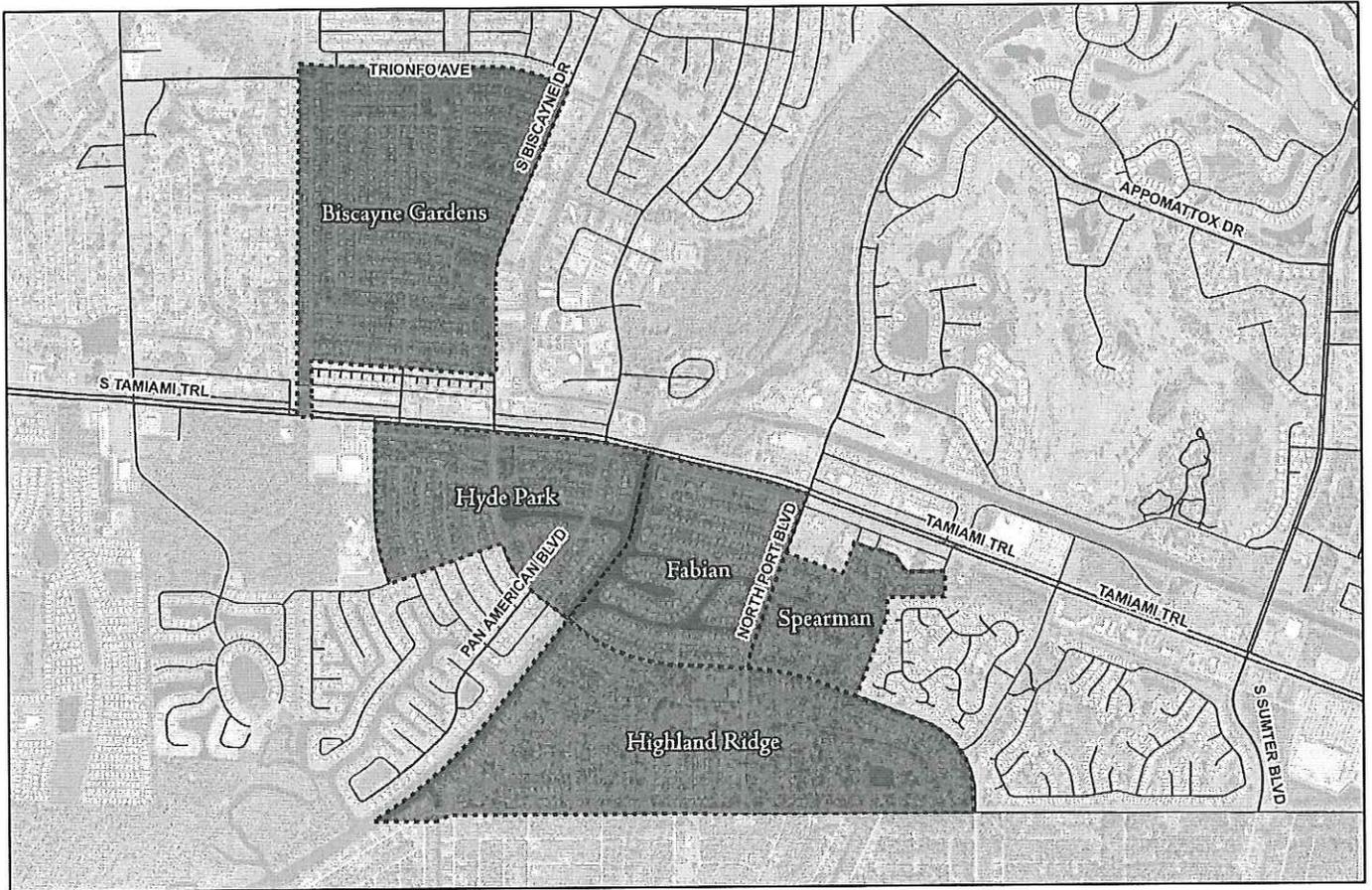
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Agenda

North Port DEO Grant Neighborhood Meeting

March 30, 2017

6PM-8PM Boys and Girls Club of North Port

1. Open house while people arrive (Snacks, view boards, team answer questions about display boards)
2. Introduction by County staff of project, elected officials, and consulting team.
3. Who we (Jason and Max) are:
 - Private planning consultants with decades of experience in SW Florida
 - Both of us are ex-local government planning directors
 - Both of us have read the North Port Comprehensive plan
 - NOT City employees
 - NOT elected officials
 - We own no businesses in North Port and have no bosses in town.
 - We have both been to North Port on many occasions but we have no preconceived notions.
 - Our mission tonight is to listen and report back
 - ☞ We do NOT have an answer to the question—“What are you planning for my neighborhood?” We want YOU to tell us what you want for your neighborhood’s future, so we can pass it on to City decision makers with recommendations about how to accomplish your recommended actions.
 - We promise to listen, but we make no guarantees.
4. Why We Are Here
 - **City of North Port Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR)**—Analysis of the North Port Comp Plan by City Staff and U of Florida (we are NOT U of F). Every seven years, local governments take a close look at their comprehensive plan and their future direction. There has been an audit of every policy of the North Port Comp Plan.
 - EAR process has identified this part of the City as an area of special interest.

- City is in the process of updating the Comprehensive Plan based on what they learned in the EAR.
- City is also rewriting their land development code; that includes zoning and subdivision ordinances—this is a major project that most cities undertake about every 20 years. (Hold one up for them to see.)

5. The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) contract.

- City obtained a grant to take a look at your neighborhood; to identify some actions that might improve infrastructure, housing stock, and community life.
- City contracted with us to:
 - Evaluate data (population, property values, school enrollment, utilities, accidents, crime, etc.)
 - Take a look at the community—what's in good/ bad shape?
 - Propose amendments to the comprehensive plan—if needed
 - Propose amendment to the zoning code—if needed
 - Conduct a neighborhood meeting

6. The Neighborhood Meeting—your opportunity to talk about your neighborhood and what it needs

7. The 5 things we want from tonight's meeting—

- Tell us the Physical Boundaries of your neighborhood (Show map)
 - Are these what you call your neighborhood (sub-neighborhood)? Show map with names.
 - What are the landmarks?
 - What defines your neighborhood?
 - Is there a focal point?
 - Is it a neighborhood at all?

- Tell us what the Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats are

(This is called a SWOT analysis). We don't want to influence you, but if you get stuck, we can give you examples.

- **STRENGTH**—Something (a landmark, an institution, a bricks-and-mortar building or structure, a business, an attitude, a value) that makes your neighborhood special, and you don't want to see changed.
 - **WEAKNESS**—Something about your neighborhood that should be eliminated or improved (an eyesore, an attractive nuisance, a service that isn't provided or is misdirected, a business that is needed-but-lacking, an institution that hasn't lived up to its mission, a bad attitude, or civic fault) that you would like to amend.
 - **OPPORTUNITY**—That once-in-a-lifetime or once-in-a-decade chance to do something big. It could be the result of a local election, the opening of a key business or institution, a change in the national or local economy, or a recent improvement in very local infrastructure or services as a micro-level. Please tell us why you think it's an opportunity and what good could come of it.
 - **THREAT**—That downturn or event that could make things worse.
- One recommendation that will make a Strength stronger, neutralize a Weakness, take advantage of an Opportunity or head off a Threat. (Doesn't have to be regulatory.)
 - Run some ideas past you. Please tell us frankly what you think of them
 - Utilities – age / quality of infrastructure
 - Stricter code enforcement
 - improved ADA-compliant sidewalks
 - Improved drainage/flood improvements
 - Traffic / traffic calming
 - Permitting / Housing improvements

- **Safety**

- **Crime**
- **Public safety (Fire/EMS)**
- **Lighting**
- **Accessibility**

- **Prioritization – Which of these key items that you have identified do you see as critical to life, health, safety; and which ones will help improve your overall quality of life?**

Future communication – follow up (future meetings, Code changes, etc.)

Emails

Mailers

Social media (North Port)

Newspaper / advertising

Sign-in Sheets

Sign in Sheet
North Port Neighborhood Meeting

Name	Address	Email and/or Phone #
PAUL CORNELL	8241 Pickwick RD	PAUL - C AUTOS @ Yahoo.COM
Giselle Luke	5323 Grobe St.	
Grace Kevin Mullaney	6222 Morning Ave	mull04@gmail.com
Karrisa	5845 Grobe St	
Christina McCauley	210 Alystar - Habitat 4H.M.	C.McCauley@habitat4south Sarasota.org
Tony & Guine Finkato	5858 Mayberry AVE.	42424201@gmail.com
Neil & Sue Thomas	6701 Elmwood Rd	suetthomas@comcast.net
Bryan & Kimberly Tiedge	6461 Elmwood Rd	Tiedge3@verizon.net
Larry Ponten	2589 Fannish St.	941-256-6047 / 426-8359
DAVE & KORI DOEN	8460 IRONFO AVE	941-423-9137
Amy Futch	Rt 4040 GROBE	941-716-0631 AmyRFutch@yahoo.com
Jill Luke	7265 BECREST CRT	GISELELUKE@GMAIL.COM
h J LOFTUS	6382 1st AB/AY RD	
Suzanne Ann Sewert	6081 Matthews Rd.	Goofy51@aol.com
Mandi & Tony	8132 Coco Solo	Supermag445@aol.com
Ann & Marilyn Davis	5521 Talbrook	The.davis@gmail.com
D. B. De	12 Medical Pt	NONE U.S. POST MAIL

Sign in Sheet
North Port Neighborhood Meeting

Name	Address	Email and/or Phone #
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Frank+Steph Wagner	6292 Seaver St.	franklinwagner@ncs.com
Teri Michel	6083 MERILL ST	pranaananda8@gmail.com
DAN STENCER	6999 N. PORT BLVD	941-426-2335
Linda McCorkle	7578 Parrish St	941-423-1836
Joel+Candy Martin	5985 Spearman Circle	269-223-0388
Philip Borsilli	6697 Mara Ct	941-497-7384
Cheri Lee	3297 Alward St	941-993-7384
Val Shevchenko	8009 CASCADIAS AVE	(651) 231-5913
Joan Sankwin	6075 Merrill St	703-628-0681 jhs1@comcast.net
Paul Szurtei	6225 Deming Ave.	Pszurtei@hotmail.com
Ruth Trainor	6216 S Talbot St	941-456-6054
Faime Allen-Emrich	5662 Gabo Rd.	941-223-7120 eallen@sun-herald.com
DEB SIKPILLA	6355 Scorpio Ave	dsikpilla@gmail.com

Sign in Sheet
North Port Neighborhood Meeting

Name	Address	Email and/or Phone #
Judith McWilliams	6122 Talbot St.	941-426-1748
Addison McWilliams	NORTH BR. FL 34287	—
HELEN MARCESE	8361 DOROTHY AVE N.P. FL 34287	941-426-1421
Nancy + David Mills	6076 Slade Rd	207-455-3443
Herb Ives	6351 Kabree St	426-8887
Bob + CoKe Moore	8567 Dorothy Ave	941-426-8397
PAMELA D. JOHNSON	6295 FABIAN ROAD	423-7795
ANN FERT	6342 FABIAN RD	426-8365
Richard Knapp	8271 Pickwick Rd	607-648-3668
Richard Acosta	6252 Morning Ave	207-205-0038
Kevin + Grace Mulaney	6222 Morning Ave	941-240-8256
Jerry + Marty Ruyle	7068 Kenwood Dr	941-441-8459
Shirley + Richard Schwend	6053 Fabian Rd.	941-426-0068
David + Ricq Spennach	8046 Boca Grande Av.	941-423-9780
ROXANNA STENCLE	6880 S. BISCAYNE DR	941-423-7397
BONNIE McLEOD	8439 DOROTHY AVE.	941-870-3688
Dwight MORRIS	6245 DEMINGS AV. N.P. 34287	423-902-0708

North Port Neighborhood Revitalization Plan

**Community Technical Assistance Grant (DEO)
Deliverable 3 – Neighborhood Report and
Strategies**

**City of North Port, FL
May 2017**

**Prepared by:
Weiler Engineering Corp.**



With Forgey Planning Services

In cooperation with City of North Port Staff

Acknowledgements

This project was a collaborative effort between the City of North Port staff, including Planning, Utilities, Administration, and the City Commission. Research was completed utilizing a variety of sources, including 2010 Census Data, City records, public input, and site visits.

The following report is based on data collected during preparation of Deliverable 1, 2, and a roundtable meeting of City department contacts in the fields of Public Works, Parks and Recreation, Utilities, Code Enforcement, Planning, City Police, and Volunteer Coordination.

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I. Introduction

A. BACKGROUND

Deliverable 3 builds on the previous summary report compiled for Deliverable 1 and 2. The first two were an analysis of census data and existing conditions that was supplemented by public input. During this process, several key items rose to the surface as being critical for the neighborhoods future success.

One of those items is increased communication and notification to the neighborhood residents about opportunities that already exist within the City framework. It is evident that the age and social structure of the residents of these neighborhoods don't rely heavily on computers and modern social media platforms for communication. They prefer simple mail. This presents challenges to the City as they modernize and move towards online interaction and notifications. Digital marketing and communications generally allow a broader reach and make communications more affordable. However, the residents of the neighborhoods are clear in their preference for mail. Finding solutions to bridging this gap will be critical to the City's success moving forward.

The study area, identified as part of the original North Port, or in some circles referred to as "Old North Port," and consists of five neighborhoods. The neighborhoods share many characteristics, such as age of housing stock, demographic and development patterns, and concern for the future of their neighborhoods. Some differences were identified and will be key components of the revitalization plan for each. Specifically, Biscayne Gardens (North of US 41) has challenges related to renter occupancy and deterioration of housing stock that is primarily two-unit attached, or villas.

Additionally, the residents identified the intersection of S. Biscayne Dr. and US 41 as the "center" of their community and the location which they identify with as their commercial center. Incorporating this area as part of the overlay will help build on branding and development opportunities, but the area is not in a specific neighborhood.

The primary purpose of Deliverable 3 is to identify three key elements for the revitalization plan for each neighborhood. Many of the strategies can be implemented across all neighborhoods in a uniform manner with some variance in application. The key elements are:

- Revitalization strategies

- Funding Sources
- Strategies for maintenance and improvements of funding sources

B. City Programs or Services

The City of North Port has several key programs and services that are on-going or were previously in place. Based on the Community Meeting held for the neighborhoods, the residents are not aware of the current programs. Participation and expansion of these programs offers an opportunity to address some of the concerns residents had about crime and community awareness. Additionally, a few recommendations have been included that are applicable to all neighborhoods, not necessarily specific neighborhoods within the study area.

Neighborhood Watch

North Port Neighborhood Watch, Inc. is an established 501(c)(3) organization that provides support to the city's Police Department. They have a Board of Directors and hold monthly public meetings. Their mission is to "assist in the City's crime prevention efforts by recruiting volunteers to be extra eyes and ears for the North Port Police Department and to provide the community with whatever level of assistance its members are trained and qualified to offer."

Based on conversations during the city staff roundtable, the Neighborhood Watch program provides resources for events and community gatherings beyond traditional neighborhood watch efforts. Review of the organization's application for volunteers indicates that volunteers are assigned "home patrol districts." While volunteers are not necessarily limited to their home district, the lack of knowledge about this program during the Community Meeting indicates there are no known patrols on-going in the "Old North Port" neighborhoods.

Communication and awareness of the Neighborhood Watch program is a critical component to its success as a deterrent. The roundtable of city staff was not aware of any signage available for the Neighborhood Watch program. Public Works has not approved or been requested to approve any such signs.

Recommended Actions:

- Encourage Each Neighborhood of Old North Port to submit at least one volunteer to the Neighborhood Watch program and complete training.

- Create uniform signage to be included at entry to participating neighborhoods. These can be typical right-of-way signs on posts or incorporated into additional neighborhood identification signage.
- Direct mailers and traditional marketing of digital, social media, and other resources available to the residents.

Code Enforcement

Several critical items identified by the residents during the Community Meeting were related to code enforcement tasks. Several people were concerned about abandoned homes and squatters or those that break in and commit crimes, drugs, and other unsavory activities.

Based on the city staff roundtable, the Police and Code Enforcement are working together on multiple strategies to combat crime and drug issues. The Code Enforcement Department is also acting on abandoned property reports or properties failing to meet minimum standards for safety.

First, they have implemented an abandoned real estate registry. This registry allows the Code Enforcement staff to designate and monitor specific properties that are most likely bank owned. It is unknown how many privately-owned homes are “abandoned,” but they are actively pursuing registrations by owners when complaints about non-compliance issues arise. The registration costs the owner \$150 and generates at least some income for the Department to offset enforcement costs.

Second, the Code Enforcement has implemented a Lien Relief Application process. This is critical to making properties more affordable for redevelopment, either through repair or replacement. In some cases, the liens can be greater than the value of the property, which creates a burden to achieving compliance with adopted regulations and Codes. This is a valuable tool in revitalizing neighborhoods.

The Code Enforcement Department has previously participated in what the city called “Nice Guys” program. This was designed to utilize city staff volunteers to help property owners who are physically challenged to complete repairs and keep up their homes. They offered services such as painting, minor repairs, yard cleanup, trash and debris removal. This program has not been maintained since the previous coordinator left city employment.

Recommended Actions:

- Explore opportunities to revive the “Nice Guys” program. This can also be recreated as a non-profit opportunity in partnership with the residents of the neighborhood, using Old North Port as a pilot study. Other communities, such as Port Charlotte/Parkside and Punta Gorda have participated in Paint Your Heart Out programs, which offer similar services to those in need. The target areas are neighborhoods needing revitalization and for full time residents who are physically unable to complete the repairs. Generally, they are done annually or bi-annually on a selected weekend and completed for 3-7 houses. This also allows opportunity for corporate sponsorship and participation, citywide promotion, and volunteer recruitment. The residents at the Community Meeting expressed an interest in helping their neighbors because they fully understand that improving their surrounding neighborhood has a positive impact on their quality of life and property values.
- Explore opportunities and review legal standing of expanding abandoned real estate program to include rental properties. Residents complained that poorly maintained properties are generally those that have renters and absentee landlords. Absentee landlords are less likely to monitor and ensure proper maintenance of the homes are undertaken. This program can also help understand the dynamics of renter vs. home ownership issue facing the neighborhoods. The general belief is that more owner-occupied housing will increase owner participation in the community, which in turn, helps maintain property values overall.

Utilities

Concerns were raised by residents who had firsthand experience replacing the plumbing in their homes. Most of the housing stock in each of the five neighborhoods are roughly the same period, early 1960's. Many may be facing the end of their life cycle. Based on how owner's input, the plumbing of the houses is at risk of eroding and severe deterioration.

The neighborhood collection and distribution system for both water and sewer appear to be in working order. Asbestos concrete pipe is the primary material used for the underground utilities. While the asbestos component is of some concern, if the pipes are in working condition and not damaged, there is not any concern of impact to water quality. The Utility anticipates these collection and

distribution lines to provide an extended life cycle and have no plans for replacement.

Recommended Action:

- Work with city staff and City Commission to consider incentive programs to repair or replace plumbing within well-conditioned homes in the neighborhoods. A separate, standalone Housing Corporation is discussed later and may be a vehicle to deliver such funding.

Public Works

The Public Works Department is currently in process of implementing a citywide drainage repair program. The program is designed to systematically schedule swale and drainage facility maintenance on a neighborhood by neighborhood scale. The Department started a pilot program based on data provided by complaints and in-house inspection of facilities. The grid plan will allow the Department to schedule areas of need for repairs and track time, costs, and needs for each portion of North Port. Recent improvements in the East Highland neighborhood were cited as examples of recent projects in the Old North Port area.

As the pilot study is tweaked and transformed into a set grid plan for the City, drainage improvements will be implemented, but dependent on regular funding. Public Works is very responsive to citizen complaints about drainage problems; however, they are complaint driven and require the citizens to do legwork with notification of their Department. While many residents of the neighborhoods felt, there were issues, many did not know the best way to inform the City of these issues. Again, many of these residents expressed a lack of understanding of how to utilize North Port's modern portals, such as Facebook and phone applications, to notify of problems.

It is not clear if the issues expressed by residents at the Community Meeting were flooding issues and what structures or systems were to blame. The Public Works staff highlighted concerns about the corrugated metal culverts that are prominent throughout the older neighborhoods. They rust, are crushed over time, and become blocked with sediment. Repair or replacement of these culverts are the responsibility of the home owner, but it appears many are not aware and may be easily confused because culverts are located within the right-of-way.

Secondly, the Public Works Department is carrying out an aggressive Capital Improvement Plan to fund pedestrian and bicycle facilities along major thoroughfares. Most of the focus has been on large projects that provide connectivity between destination points. Additional projects include beautification, such as the landscape project along S. Biscayne Dr. that is due to begin in 2017. These projects will enhance the City and bring additional safety to the fringes of the Old North Port neighborhoods. These projects make a splash in public relations, but they also overlook the gaps in the existing network.

Expanding this program to identify the gaps in infrastructure will further enhance the existing network, specifically sidewalks and bicycle facilities. A collection of small projects can be grouped together as one larger project that may qualify for similar funding sources, such as Local Agency Program (LAP) through FDOT funds. North Port is a certified LAP community and can request funding for these projects. This may require completing a sidewalk network and crosswalk inventory within the neighborhoods prior to submittal of funding requests.

Finally, our discussion with the city staff identified a lack of signage for the existing Neighborhood Watch program. The participants weren't sure why, but were aware of other communities that allow signage within public right-of-way to identify participating neighborhoods. Coordination with the Watch group can easily resolve a lack of identification. Either through all participating neighborhoods or some other request process.

Recommended Action

- Create a public outreach and marketing campaign to educate the public about their responsibility to repair and replace culverts. Damaged drainage structures have a dramatic impact on the quality of stormwater conveyance and collection.
- Complete a neighborhood pedestrian facility inventory, to include sidewalk gaps, ADA non-compliance, and crosswalk locations, existing and needed.
- Identify a collection of small projects to group together by neighborhood and submit for a round of funding through the LAP funding program. Projects including completing sidewalks along a city park frontage, multiple new crosswalks, and ADA compliance repairs at specific locations, all within individual neighborhoods of the study area. The prioritization

shall be the neighborhoods identified in the inventory analysis that has the most projects that can be completed within a typical program budget.

- Create a uniform sign standard for Neighborhood Watch neighborhoods that will accommodate appropriate signage at an entryway to the participating neighborhood.

II. Neighborhoods

A. *Biscayne Gardens*

Biscayne Gardens is geographically separated from the other neighborhoods in the study area. US 41 provides a substantial division between the neighborhoods. Additionally, Biscayne Gardens doesn't have frontage on US 41, so creating a compact and uniform boundary for any Overlay District can be challenging. However, Biscayne Gardens is unique from the other study area neighborhoods in that the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) category assigned to the area is Medium Density, which allows up to 10 dwelling units per acre; whereas the other four neighborhoods are Low Density Residential, which permits up to five dwelling units per acre. Since the FLUM was adopted after these neighborhoods were platted and mostly built, the categories assigned are an attempt to reflect the existing pattern of development. As identified during the demographic and census research portion of Deliverable 1 and 2, the neighborhoods are predominantly single-family housing. Biscayne Gardens has a large collection of lots under 7,000 square feet. There is a clear pattern of smaller lots within Biscayne Gardens north of US 41 versus the remaining neighborhoods south of US 41.

One of the impediments to redevelopment of this area is fractured land ownership and a limited supply of undeveloped parcels. The properties were platted as part of the original development of the Old North Port neighborhoods, but developed in a slightly more intense manner with the duplex/villas, quad lots, and smaller single-family homes. Biscayne Gardens development patterns, with duplex housing type, also makes it a prime location for absentee landlords. The physical appearance of portions of the neighborhood lend itself to cramped and rundown. This includes numerous cars parked on the edge of the road and less front yard than larger single-family homes.

Additionally, the perimeter of the Biscayne Gardens neighborhood is bound by S. Biscayne Drive. This major thoroughfare provides substantial exposure to traffic and allows code enforcement and appearance issues to be more noticeable than

the other four neighborhoods, which have a greater sense of enclosure when traveling through them.

Revitalization Strategy #1

Modify the ULDC to create an overlay district that incentivizes the acquisition and consolidation of land into a form more appropriate for newer development and takes advantage of its proximity to the commercial core of Old North Port, existing parks, and Warm Mineral Springs, along with excellent roadway network that can support higher densities.

Funding Source: Internal time and materials adopting and modifying draft language provided as part of Deliverable 4.

Revitalization Strategy #2

Adopt language within the overlay district that prohibits open storage, carports, outdoor storage of household items, and other items that detract from a clean appearance, to be located adjacent to non-local roadways such as S. Biscayne Drive.

Funding Source: Internal time and materials adopting and modifying draft language provided as part of Deliverable 4.

Revitalization Strategy #3

Create a street-tree master plan to create a street canopy coverage and shade within the neighborhood. Additional focal areas at entry points to the neighborhood along S. Biscayne Dr. and in coordination with current landscape efforts along S. Biscayne Dr.

Funding Source: One time consulting fee budgeted to create uniform landscape mater plan; on-going tree purchase and installation through the allocation of existing tree permitting funds being collected; submit a CDBG grant for planning, design, and implementation.

B. Fabian

The Fabian neighborhood is also unique from the other neighborhoods in that it has significant canal frontage for a portion of the lots. The canals have direct access to the Myakka River and Charlotte Harbor. This creates an opportunity to market itself in a unique manner and differentiate itself. In theory, water front and canal access should bring higher property values and increased investment.

The canals are a challenging feature. There is not an established canal maintenance program and dredging hasn't been done in close to a decade anywhere in North Port. Analysis of the lots fronting the canal system indicate a variety of techniques have been used to gain access to the water. Seawalls, overland docks and walkways, bulkhead designs, and others. These variations of water and boating access create inconsistent shore lines and differences among property owners.

Revitalization Strategy #1

Investigate need for dredging and measure boater accessibility. Points of interest include sediment areas near the ends of canals along N. Port Blvd., where city drainage swales cross under the roadway and empty into the canal system.

Funding Source: CDBG grants, establish a canal maintenance assessment (MSTU) to all canal front properties (may also apply to portions of Hyde Park and Highland Ridge).

C. Hyde Park, Spearman, Highlands Ridge

As previous discussed, the study area neighborhoods share similar conditions and challenges. We have grouped these three neighborhoods because they specifically because they lack some dominant unique characteristics described in Fabian (water front/canals) and Biscayne Gardens (smaller lots).

Each of these neighborhoods will benefit from the general strategies discussed under section I of this report. Most importantly, assisting the neighborhoods with creating a sense of place and identify through signage will go a long way in creating good will with the residents. Additionally, addressing their concerns about sidewalk access and repair. Some of the latter issues seem related to a lack of communication or difference in communication techniques between the residents and the City. Public Works operates primarily on a citizen report system. If the residents of these neighborhoods are not participating in the electronic reporting that North Port prefers, then their voice may be lessened.

D. Commercial / non-residential Districts along US 41

The study area, particularly Hyde Park, Fabia, and Spearman, are adjacent to commercial centers along US 41. The Community Meeting identified the intersection of S. Biscayne Drive as their perceived center of the community. There are four corners of non-residential activity at this intersection, including two strip commercial centers (NW and SW), a drive thru bank, and a city library.

Other commercial areas along North Port Blvd and US 41 also include small retail stores.

Due to the parking requirements of the North Port Unified Land Development Code (ULDC), the commercial strip centers must utilize a substantial percentage of their property for parking that is only full for a few hours during the day. Peak parking hours coincide with peak travel times, morning and afternoon commutes. This leaves the parking lots vacant during off peak times and during weekends.

Through use of alternative development regulations, such as reduced parking, increased mixed use opportunities, and streamlined processes, additionally economic activity can occur around these major intersections and points of access to the neighborhoods. Increased economic activity generally leads to reinvestment and expansion of the businesses that serve the study area.

Revitalization Strategy #1

Develop alternative ULDC development standards for the commercial acreage within the Overlay District. The alternative codes will allow for the following:

- Reduced or alternative parking strategies and maximizing access to alternative modes of transportation and create a multimodal corridor and community;
- Increased Floor Area Ratio to maximize use of existing impervious surfaces;
- Reduced setbacks and increased allowance of mixed use that complement the surrounding uses;
- Expedited and streamlined development review process.

Funding Sources: Internal time and materials adopting and modifying draft language provided as part of Deliverable 4

Revitalization Strategy #2

Develop a gateway signage plan to identify the study area and collection of neighborhoods. The Signage shall be located along US 41 at North Port Blvd heading North and near Granada Blvd. heading South.

Funding Sources: Prepare estimates based on similar projects in other communities and submit a request for design and construction through FDOT LAP funding.

III. Additional Opportunities

A. Create Overlay District

Creation of an Overlay District as part of North Port's ULDC has been discussed throughout this report. It has been mentioned where applicable to specific circumstances related to a neighborhood or commercial area. Here we will summarize additional components of an Overlay that can apply to all the neighborhoods.

Most importantly, signage. The attendees of the Community Meeting were very clear that they take pride in their neighborhoods, identify with their historic names, and would like recognition of them.

Revitalization Strategy #1

Create signage regulations to permit neighborhood signs within City right-of-way, City owned property. Such regulations may permit location, size, and setbacks to allow for the identification of neighborhoods at a minimum of two locations and where best suited depending on traditional traffic flows.

Funding Sources: May be submitted as part of Gateway signage request to FDOT and the LAP funding source.

B. Housing Corporation

Creation opportunities that focuses on creating owner occupied residences will help stabilize the neighborhoods. One manner to accomplish this task is to establish a non-profit Housing Corporation that funds down payment assistance, repair and maintenance funds, and property upgrades.

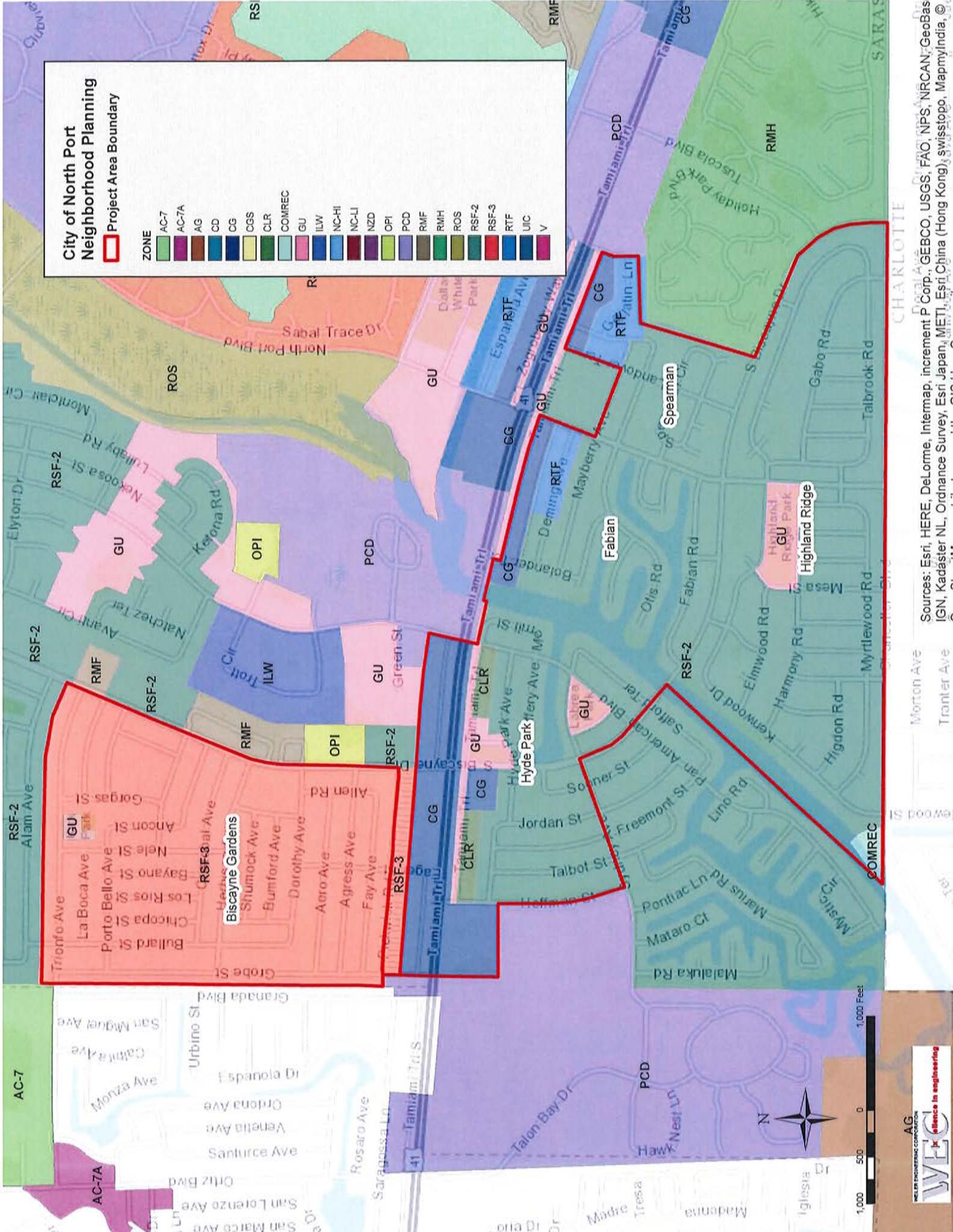
Establishing a Housing Corporation is a long-term project that requires commitment and participation from community leaders, businesses, and industries who may stand to gain from the creation. Ideally, those who are serving in public safety, nursing, teaching, or other similar community service industries are priority targets. This also helps create opportunities to revitalize the most distressed properties in the neighborhoods.

Draft Overlay District Map

City of North Port Neighborhood Planning

Project Area Boundary

ZONE	Color
AC-7	Light Green
AC-7A	Purple
AG	Light Blue
CD	Dark Blue
CG	Light Green
CGS	Light Green
CLR	Light Green
COMREC	Light Green
GU	Pink
ILW	Light Blue
NC-HI	Light Blue
NC-LI	Light Blue
NZD	Light Blue
OPI	Yellow
PCD	Light Blue
RMF	Light Blue
RMH	Light Blue
ROS	Light Blue
RSF-2	Light Blue
RSF-3	Light Blue
RTF	Light Blue
UIC	Light Blue
V	Light Blue



Sources: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBas, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), swissltopo, MapmyIndia, ©