

Downtown by Design: The Bradenton CRA Master Plan



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Executive Summary

The Bradenton Downtown Development Authority (DDA) has completed a citizen driven visioning effort called Downtown by Design: The Bradenton Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) Master Plan. This planning effort is intended to provide a broad foundation and public consensus for planning, regulatory and economic principles for the downtown. Downtown Bradenton is the heart and soul of the City and the regional government center for Manatee County and will continue to be a very important center of commerce, residence and recreation. The Master Plan builds upon the unique aspects of Downtown Bradenton and addresses emerging redevelopment opportunities to ensure a diverse future as an urban center serving the needs of the City's residents and its visitors.

The Master Planning process provided a community forum for discussing these issues and opportunities today, and in the future. The process was guided by a Steering Committee. The Committee was made up of the DDA Board of Directors and representatives from the Manatee Chamber of Commerce, the City of Bradenton, local neighborhoods, and the arts and business communities. In addition to this committee, there were numerous one-on-one stakeholder meetings and four public workshops that provided the residents a forum for public discourse.



Mission Statement

Based on this discourse, a mission statement was adopted:

Enhance the Riverfront Downtown area as a beautiful, livable, walkable, higher density, mixed-use place and an asset to the entire community and region.

Planning Principles

In addition to this mission statement, seven principles for building a better place were established to help direct the Master Planning process. Those principles are:

- 1. Recognize the Subdistricts in the CRA and Support Their Needs***
- 2. Reconnect Value to the Riverfront and Maintain Continued Public Access***
- 3. Leverage Economic Drivers to Enhance Shared Community Assets***
- 4. Meet the Desire for an Urban Waterfront Lifestyle and the Downtown Experience***
- 5. Beautify Subdistricts and Balance the Needs of the Pedestrians***
- 6. Balance Transportation with the Community Vision***
- 7. Create a Regulatory and Economic Implementation Plan***

Executive Summary

Action Items

With these principles guiding the process, the Master Plan envisioned the importance of developing livable solutions to various issues affecting the City today. Livable solutions means residents can live, work, shop and play in an area that is safe, walkable and convenient. In order to achieve this, a shift in the thinking about infrastructure, affordability and residential densities will have to occur. Therefore, this plan suggests higher densities than currently allowed in the City. In order to accomplish some of these high densities and without losing the sense of place that makes Downtown Bradenton special, a series of key recommendations were developed as “action items” that are intended to be the first and continuing steps the City will need to take in order to achieve the full capacity of the citizen based vision.

1. Develop a Regulatory Structure to Support the Plan

Currently, the City and CRA do not have the planning tools nor the policies in place that are needed to support and facilitate the desire of a mixed-use community or the anticipated density increases needed for successful urban development or reinvestment. Amended codes will create an increased level of surety between the development community, the government and the public regarding the desired community form and character.

2. Act on Catalytic Sites to Identify Development Opportunities

In the Master Plan, several specific sites were identified as potential catalytic properties for redevelopment. These sites stood out because of factors such as large land area, proximity to water or partnership opportunities. The City must act on these sites to identify development opportunities that could spur on other private reinvestment into the CRA.

3. Support the Economic Centers as Vital Community Assets

The vitality of the downtown government core and the healthcare economic centers are crucial to the success of the Master Plan. These

business centers are the largest downtown commercial land use and these drivers will likely continue to grow and have evolving needs. Because of the large amounts of public and healthcare sector workers, workforce housing will be needed to ensure that these economic centers will continue to grow. The CRA should be supporting the needs of these industries, while focusing their redevelopment initiatives to ensure the overall desired downtown character.

4. Commit to a Pedestrian Oriented Infrastructure Model

The most livable and economically successful downtowns enjoy a fine grain network of inter-connected, two-way, livable, attractive, walkable streets with on-street parking; and a mixed-use fabric of buildings that address the streetscape and quality public space with ‘front door’ relationships. The growing City has outlived its suburban growth model and to ensure the vitality of this redevelopment, it must become more pedestrian friendly.

5. Complete a Great Downtown Parks and Cultural Systems Plan

The CRA and the City should complete a great downtown parks and cultural system plan. An important component in any downtown setting is a connected system of great open spaces and community assets which provide the shared ‘address’ necessary to support higher density residential, retail and office uses. A group of specific enhancements are recommended.

6. Adopt a Partnership Approach to Achieve Success

The Master Plan objectives will require partnerships to leverage investment for mutual success. Key partners such as Business Associations, FDOT, Manatee County, the School Board and numerous development interests must coordinate within a partnering environment that supports their needs while ensuring desired community form.

Executive Summary

The Report is summarized beginning with the public process and the Citizen Based Themes. Following the themes is a brief analysis of the history of growth in Bradenton and some general “best practices” of urban design. The Report then walks in more detail through the various principles, followed by an example application of the planning principles in each subdistrict of the study area. There is a general summary of the potential transportation needs and the current market summary and the Report closes with the conclusion and the next steps required for action.

In the recently completed Manatee Council of Government’s Character Compatability Study, Downtown Bradenton was established as a regional urban center. This Master Plan builds on this and on the concepts inherent in the Study and it goes further to realize the future potential of the Downtown. The outcome is a consensus on the importance of reinvestment into both the public realm and private property. The Master Plan anticipates a paradigm shift in the role of Downtown Bradenton within the larger community. This will require bold new initiatives to plan, incentivize and finance many public enhancement and redevelopment activities. Partnerships between public agencies, private businesses and the community will be necessary for success. Downtown Bradenton has tremendous future as a center for urban living and rich arts and cultural resources. With a coordinated plan, and the right tools for success, Downtown Bradenton can ensure a potential as a livable City in which young professionals, retirees, families and visitors will come to live, work, play and visit.



Key Partners

Downtown by Design was jointly developed by the people of Bradenton and the people of Manatee County, the City of Bradenton, the Bradenton Downtown Development Authority and lead consultant Glatting Jackson. A special thanks goes to all the individuals that volunteered their time for interviews, workshops and sessions.

Mayor

The Honorable Wayne H. Poston

City Council

Gene Gallo, Ward 1

Marianne Barnebey, Ward 2

Patrick Roff, Ward 3

Bemis Smith, Ward 4

James T. Golden, Ward 5

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Downtown by Design Steering Committee

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Debra Cooper

Troy Dugan

Rick Fawley

Lucienne Gaufillet

Greg Green

Preston Griffith

Jack Hawkins

Jay Heagerty

Sam Hershfield

Joe McDonald

Chris Parra

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Bradenton Downtown Development Authority

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Glatting Jackson Kercher Anglin, Inc.

Pete Sechler, Principal

Ian Lockwood, Principal

John Paul Weesner, Senior Urban Designer

A. Blake Drury, Senior Urban Designer

W. Chad Cowart

Brandon Cappellari

Michael L. Haynes

Siemon & Larson, PA

Charlie Siemon

Robert Charles Lesser & Co.

Gregg Logan, Principal

Sam Kachizda, Senior Associate

Christian Volney

Special thanks to manatee Educational Television (METV), the Manatee Chamber of Commerce and the Bradenton Municipal Auditorium.

The Process

Downtown by Design was intended to facilitate the public discussion about the expectations for the future of the Bradenton CRA. The process began with a series of meetings with the Steering Committee culminating in a “Camera Exercise” where each Committee member took a disposable camera and photographed places or events that catalogued “likes” and “dislikes” relating to the future growth of Bradenton.

The design team also met with various stakeholders representing members from the business community, development community, various community boards, elected officials and downtown residents.

In addition to these meetings, four public workshops, which were attended by over 250 concerned citizens, were held and attending citizens were asked for feedback through a series of exercises. A project website was also set up where users could e-mail directly to the consultant or fill out a web-based questionnaire. The questionnaire asked basic questions about the community such as, “The thing I most like about the Downtown Bradenton area is” or “The thing I like least about Downtown Bradenton is”. Over 120 residents of Bradenton used this process to communicate their thoughts.

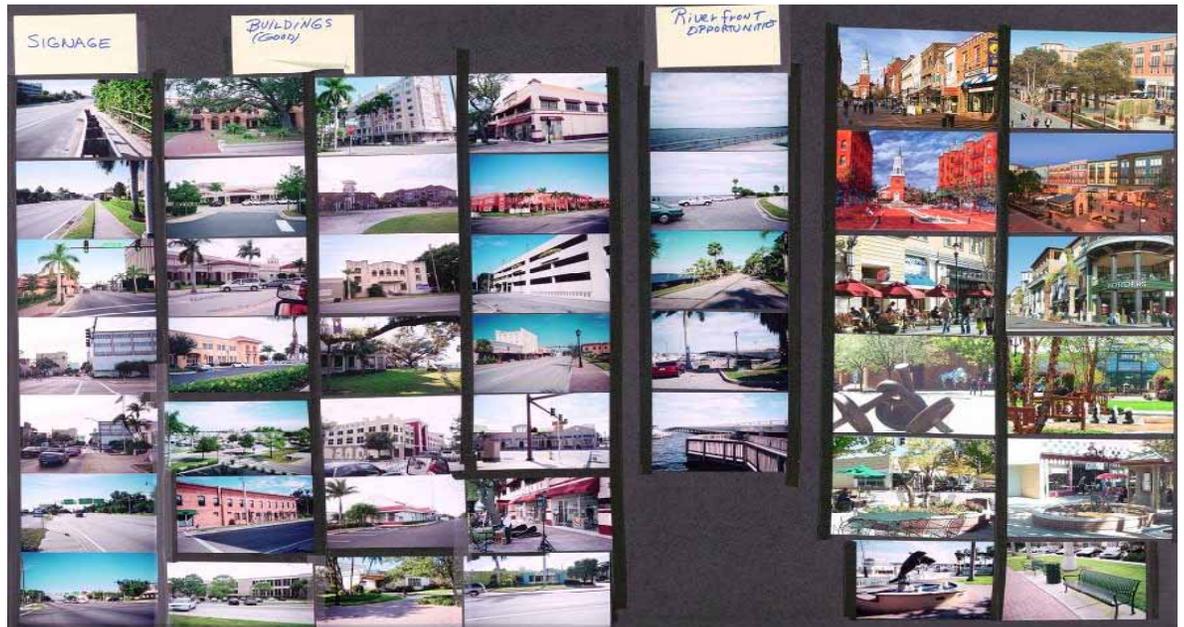
This process yielded some commonly held values within the community and those Citizen Based Themes are listed on the following pages.



Steering Committee members at work.



Residents during one of the public workshops

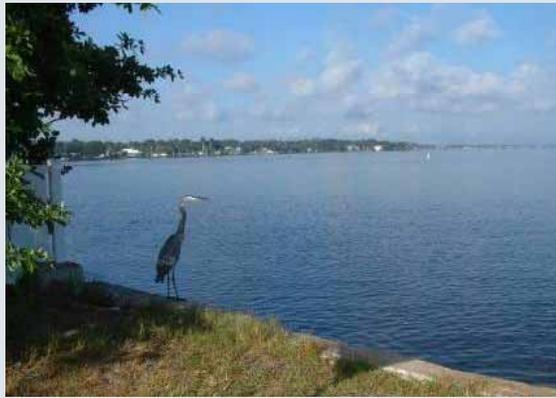


An example of one of the eight boards created by members of the Steering Committee during the “Camera Exercise”.

Citizen Based Themes

Environment & Open Space

There is a strong community desire to preserve and better maintain the natural environment and open space systems including parks, greenways, both physical and visual access to the Manatee River and the overall tree canopy of Downtown Bradenton.



LIKES:

- Greenbelt
- Picnic Areas
- Lighted Sports Courts
- Shade

CONCERNS:

- Losing Tree Canopy
- More Recreational Areas
- Need Better Amenities at Existing Facilities

Citizen Based Themes

Retail & Restaurants

Many residents discussed the likes and concerns over the current types of retail and restaurant stock. Specifically many voiced the importance of quality retail shops, adding activities to encourage better retail and creating a vibrant downtown on the armature of Old Main Street.



LIKES:

- Main Street Shopping
- Proximate Parking
- Cooperation of Businesses



CONCERNS:

- Not Enough to Do at Night
- Not Enough Retail Shopping (need critical mass)
- Need Grocery Store
- Downtown Raceway (keeps people away)

Citizen Based Themes

Transportation (Roads, Walkability, Parking)

Residents and stakeholders alike expressed general frustration over the current traffic and speed issues on Manatee Avenue and 6th Avenue and the poor pedestrian conditions, as well as the desire for a more walkable environment that better balances the pedestrian with the automobile.



LIKES:

- Walkable Streets – Old Main
- Existing Bikeways
- Some Narrow Streets
- New Landscape on Streets
- Trolley

CONCERNS:

- Poor Pedestrian Conditions
- Intimidating Streets
- Downtown Raceway
- Traffic Jams

Citizen Based Themes

Arts & Cultural Venues

Residents expressed enjoyment over the current arts and cultural venues, but many felt that the Downtown could support more venues as well as a greater diversity of cultural facilities. In addition, many wanted a stronger connection to the Village of the Arts. Some residents expressed that a greater diversity and more venues could be achieved through new programs as well as changes in the current City ordinances.



LIKES:

- Library
- Manatee Players Theater
- Marina
- City Hall as Town Center
- Events like Farmer's Market
- Public Art & ArtsCenter Manatee
- South Florida Museum

CONCERNS:

- Need More Venues for Concerts & Celebrations
- Need Stronger Patronage
- Need Movie Theater (independent, art house type, etc.)
- Need to Allow Outdoor Music at Night

Citizen Based Themes

Riverfront/Public Access (including Riverwalk, Retail, etc.)

Many citizens discussed the desire for more access and enhancements to the Riverfront, the Downtown's biggest asset. Some residents were concerned over previous and current developments that could potentially limit both visual and physical access to the River.



LIKES:

- Park Areas in Addition to Riverwalk
- Walking and Biking Trails
- Development that Enhances the River
- Day Docks



CONCERNS:

- Waterfront Could Be Blocked
- Government Uses on the Riverfront
- Maximize Water Access

Citizen Based Themes

Residential Development

There was much concern expressed over the current state of the housing and real estate market. Residents voiced desires for more affordable housing and housing that could appeal to families as well as the working-class citizen. Many thought the existing stock of buildings was prime for redevelopment and the newer architecture should be designed in such a way to incorporate or celebrate the rich cultural history of Downtown Bradenton.



LIKES:

- Housing for All Incomes
- Rehabbed Residential Areas
- Good Stock of Existing Structures (some historic)
- Height/Density is OK with Financially Attainable Housing Component



CONCERNS:

- Condominiums Overtake the Waterfront
- Affordability
- Infrastructure to Support Residential (including schools)
- Compatibility with Adjacency and Heights Issues

Citizen Based Themes

Identity & Beauty

Residents liked much of the current efforts of the Downtown to enhance physical beauty of the community, but felt there was still more to be achieved through better design standards and more stringent enforcement of current codes.



LIKES:

- Small Town Character
- Underground Utilities
- Riverfront “Feeling”
- Public Art
- Gateways and Graphics



CONCERNS:

- Lack of Design Standards
- Lack of Signage and Wayfinding
- Code Enforcement Issues
- Visible Homeless Population
- Perception of Crime

Citizen Based Themes

Governance & Coordination

Many residents voiced various concerns over issues related to local government coordination and the “follow-through” needed to implement the various plans.



LIKES:

- Main Street Cooperation
- Frequent Craft Fairs and Events
- Village of the Arts
- Community Outreach

CONCERNS:

- Need Common Retail Hours
- Review Outdoor Alcohol Restrictions
- Implementation Follow-through
- Coordinated Community Amenities vs. Separate “Condo Community”

History of Development Patterns

Bradenton began as a maritime dockage point and grew into a bustling agricultural town producing and shipping citrus and tomatoes to points north. The industrial land use tends to consume large amounts of land and as the land use changes over time, these parcels tend to remain large and disconnected from the surrounding block network.

Between the 1950's and 1970's, the retail trend moved towards large land consumptive shopping malls. This created a void in downtown Bradenton as the shops, restaurants and people moved to the suburbs. Office and government uses moved into the vacancy in downtown and the resulting traffic demands allowed the Department of Transportation to convert Manatee Avenue and 6th Avenue into one-way pairs.

The diagrams, on the following page, illustrate the abridged history of development as it affected Downtown Bradenton.



The area known as the Sandpile prior to filling.



Citrus groves in the late 1800's



A typical street in Bradenton circa 1920's



Aerial View of the Courthouse circa 1940.

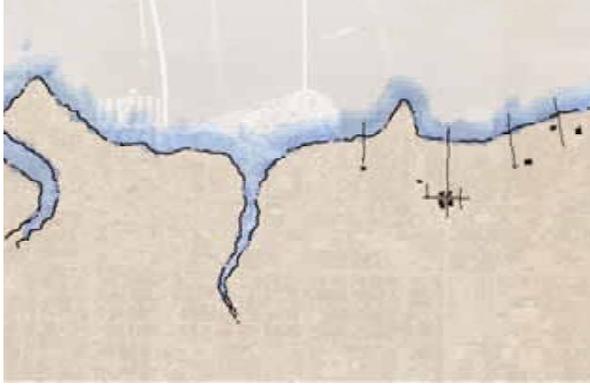


Old Main Street in Bradenton circa 1950's



A classic example of a mixed-use building in downtown Bradenton.

History of Development Patterns



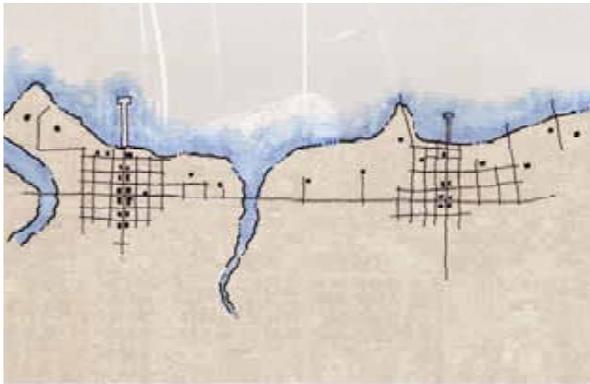
1842 - 1860's

- First Settlers
- Federal Land Grants
- Former Native American Settlements
- Bradenton Stockade



1860's - 1900's

- Two Settlements/
Two Cities
- Steamship Dockage
(deepest part of the
Manatee River)



1900's - 1920's

- Train Introduced
(1902)
- First Automobile
Bridge (1910)
- Citrus and Tomatoes
Industries



1920's - 1950's

- Manatee Merges with
Bradenton
- Two Automobile
Bridges
- Manatee Hospital
- Bradenton
Auditorium on Fill
- Jacques Creek Filled



1950's - 1980's

- Suburbia (residential
flight)
- Retail to DeSoto
Mall
- Office/Government
Moves Into Empty
Retail
- Manatee Avenue and
6th Avenue become
One-Way Pairs
- Sandpile Filled

Urban Design - Best Practices

Downtown Bradenton is a place with conflicting urban form - urban traditional patterns infused with recent suburban development, transportation ideas, building designs and regulations. This condition (which is not uncommon) has created a discontinuity in downtown which could be resolved with a stronger commitment to the traditional patterns of downtown. The following topics represent industry standards for the best practices for traditional urban downtowns based on the success of many existing cities as well as market-proven products and typologies.

Suburban vs. Urban

It is important to understand the fundamental differences between a suburban development pattern and an urban development pattern because those differences have specific impacts on block size, transportation capacity and land use/zoning laws. Suburban developments typically are single use projects that are separated from adjacent uses. This separation forces development to solve site constraints singularly by having fewer streets, larger parking areas, privatization of amenities, buffer zones and the heavy reliance on the automobile. An urban development pattern is typically interconnected and interdependent on adjacent properties and thrives from the shared access to amenities. The sites are also mixed-use, which allows for more flexibility to accommodate change and reinvestment. Development is typically created to support higher pedestrian activity and traffic patterns tend to focus on dispersing, not collecting, automobiles. There is a place for both development patterns, but conflicts are created when suburban patterns are built in urban environments and vice-versa. Downtown Bradenton is an urban environment, but has suffered from a focus on suburban development patterns within the downtown CRA.



Diagram illustrating the differences between Urban and Suburban development styles

Public Realm Orientation: Connected Street Network and ‘Front Door’ Building Relationships

Successful urban environments re-inforce the public realm of parks, natural areas and walkable streets as the primary ‘address’ from which to orient development. Therefore, traditional downtowns and neighborhoods are built on a fine grain network of streets that enjoy ‘front door’ building relationships facing streets with doorways, windows and activity, directly overlooking the street and down the street from a public park amenity. Conversely, streets and parks with buildings ‘backing up’ to them do not enjoy clear public access, visibility, safety or sense of place. The street network is highly connected and organized into a hierarchy of two-way “A” streets (Main Streets, Collectors) and “B” Streets (Secondary Streets, Alleys). Buildings are regulated to face the primary street at a “built-to” line at or near the right of way line instead of “setback” as with suburban design standards. Streets are maintained as ‘two-way’, and designed as ‘complete streets’ with generous pedestrian, transit, auto and bicycle provisions. Typically, development is not allowed to close streets (creating ‘superblocks’), but rather maintains a fine grain network of walkable streets and blocks which address streets and public open space – the shared ‘Public Realm’.

Mixed Use

The traditional downtown and neighborhood is enlivened by activity generated within a mixed-use environment of residential, retail, office and civic uses. This allows access and activity at many times of day for the greatest number of people, creating



These commercial properties have their primary address on the “A” street with parking and service behind the building on the “B” Street. The properties are also mixed use with apartments and/or condominiums above the ground floor retail.

Urban Design - Best Practices

the most interesting places. Mixed use requires creative regulatory structures that accommodate mixed parking and floor area ratio or entitlement calculations to allow many uses to occur together without penalizing the development. Retail or commercial uses with front doors on primary streets is a common requirement for residential projects to reinforce street pedestrian activity in downtown centers. When markets will not allow commercial ground floors, residential provides the necessary 'front door' effect, with raised stoops or wrought iron fence details providing a measure of safety from the street. Secondary "B" streets may be allowed to have side unit or parking structures fronting them. Parking is a commonly problematic element in mixed-use projects because it is often over-calculated by local government using high 'minimum ratios'. Successful mixed-use projects in traditional downtowns rely on shared parking with different 'peak hours', and maximum ratios (allowing minimal commercial parking) to reinforce pedestrian activity.

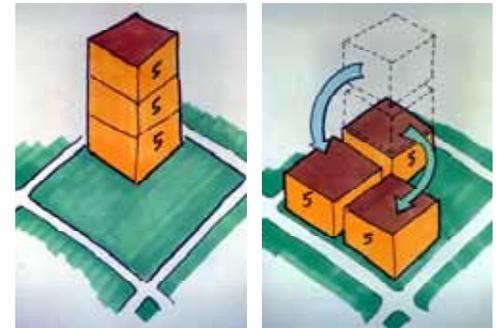
Height and Density

Building Height and Density (units/acre of land) are not the same thing. A building with large luxury units may be designed very tall to capture views, but may only be 20 to 25 units / acre (same as two story townhomes). Alternatively, a workforce housing development may package 1,000 sqft (average) units in 4 story structures, yet be designed at 60 to 70 units per acre with structured parking. Therefore, the community must decide what form of development is desired and what scale of buildings are acceptable. There is no universal national standard. This report provides suggested ranges of building heights for various areas of the CRA based on community input. Concerns with overall building scale and mass (related to existing adjacencies) are typically dealt with by using height transition zones and "wedding cake" setbacks/terracing in conjunction with the overall height limit. Additional height may be granted according to a defined scale by meeting other special requirements such as mixed use, workforce housing or community/public use.

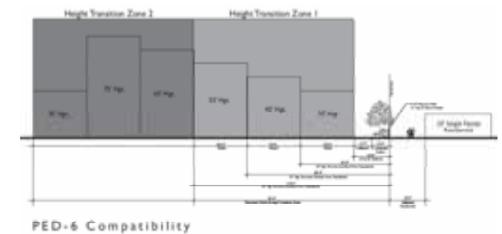
Density regulations can be designed in a similar manner. A development committed to providing workforce housing may be eligible to receive additional density assistance in funding the less expensive units, provided the overall building form is acceptable to the community. Neighborhood context challenges associated with very large buildings occur when large units, high density and unlimited height come together to create very large buildings. However, density does not equate to height and should be supported if the units are smaller (keeping the building within community height objectives) and the project serves other public objectives such as workforce housing, retail market base, transit support, etc.

Building Design and Style

Buildings are regulated to provide the correct urban form, orientation, density and height with some articulation of style. Specific design 'style' is not typically seen as critically important if the building is following the correct urban form, addressing the street with front doors and windows and supporting urban objectives. However, many communities do want some sense of detail and interest to their buildings as opposed to undifferentiated international style glass and concrete boxes. These objectives are met without mandating a specific 'style' by defining objectives for articulated details such as doorways, window details and percent glazing, signage, watertable/base, lower level 'breaks' or other subdivided building massing, awnings and overhangs, cornice/roof details, etc. Many communities identify these performance elements and use a variety of acceptable 'styles' to indicate their meaning or correct application through pattern books or other traditional design guidelines.



These two diagrams illustrate that despite height differences, the density remains unchanged.



This graphic is an example of a regulatory guideline for setbacks and height transition zones



This residential project successfully uses setbacks and good urban form to create a product that enhances the overall community.



Study Area - 2006 Aerial.

Mission Statement

Based on the existing conditions, stakeholder information, historic information, best practices and the citizen themes, a mission statement was established to focus and guide the design effort. The mission statement is as follows:

Enhance the Riverfront Downtown Area as a beautiful, livable, walkable, higher density, mixed-use place that's an asset to the entire community and region.

Ingredients that can accomplish this goal include:

- Residential
- Retail
- Office
- Government
- Medical
- Waterfront
- Cultural Assets – these are all fairly proximate (so close and yet so far – connect the dots)

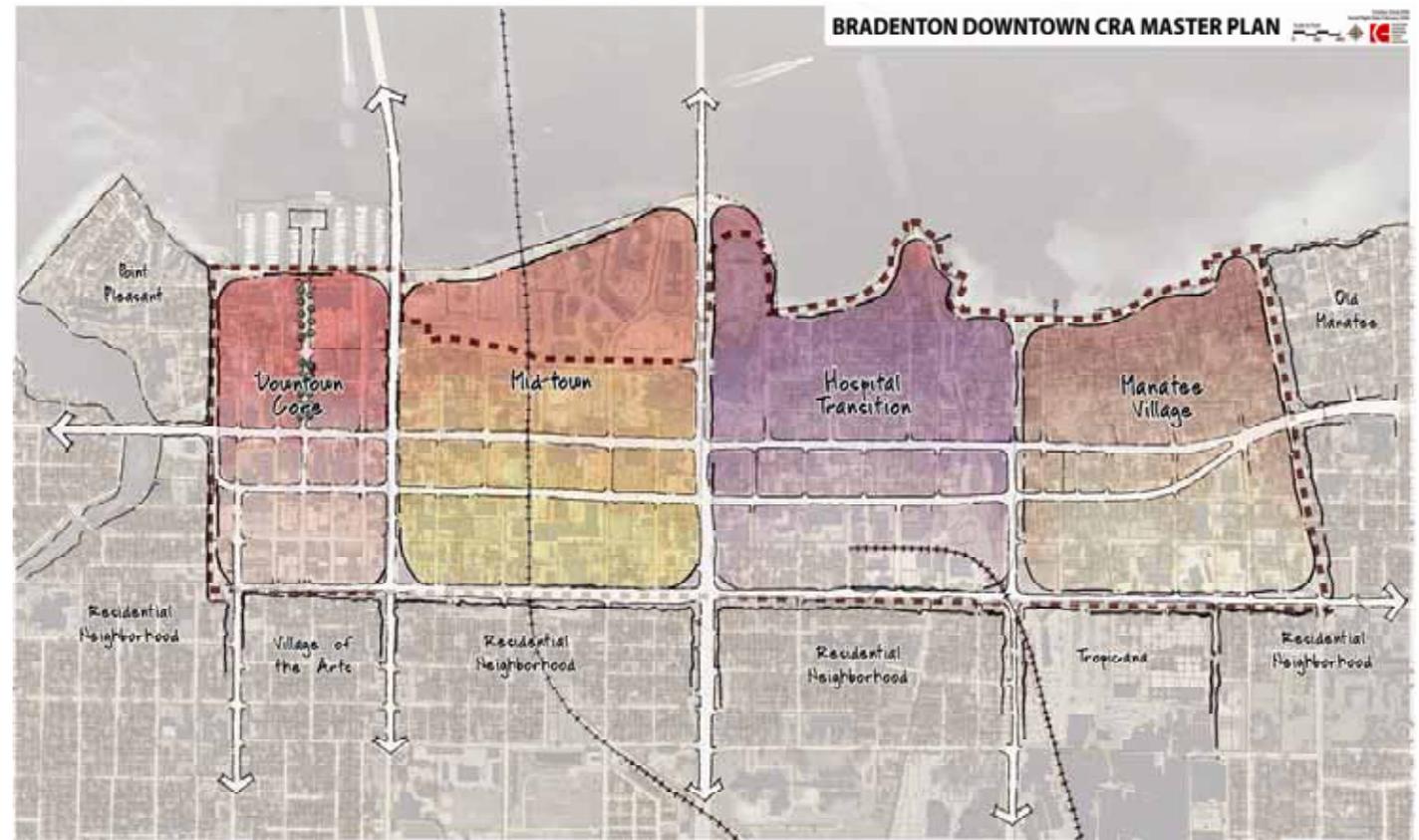
Challenges in accomplishing this goal include:

- Vacant property
- Available parking
- Street conditions
- Concentration of governmental uses on key properties
- Need for continued job growth (live, work, play)
- Need “branding”, or marketable image
- Need to capitalize on synergies

Principle #1

Recognize the Subdistricts in the CRA and Support their Needs

There are special areas within the downtown CRA that require special responses and strategies so they can reach their full potential.



Principle #2

Reconnect Value to the Riverfront and Maintain Continued Public Access

Bradenton must fully re-connect to the water not only as a continuous public waterfront through the downtown CRA, but also north/south through the east/west road barriers, connecting Village of the Arts to Downtown, Martin Luther King Avenue to the Manatee River.



Principle #3

Leverage Economic Drivers to Enhance Shared Community Assets

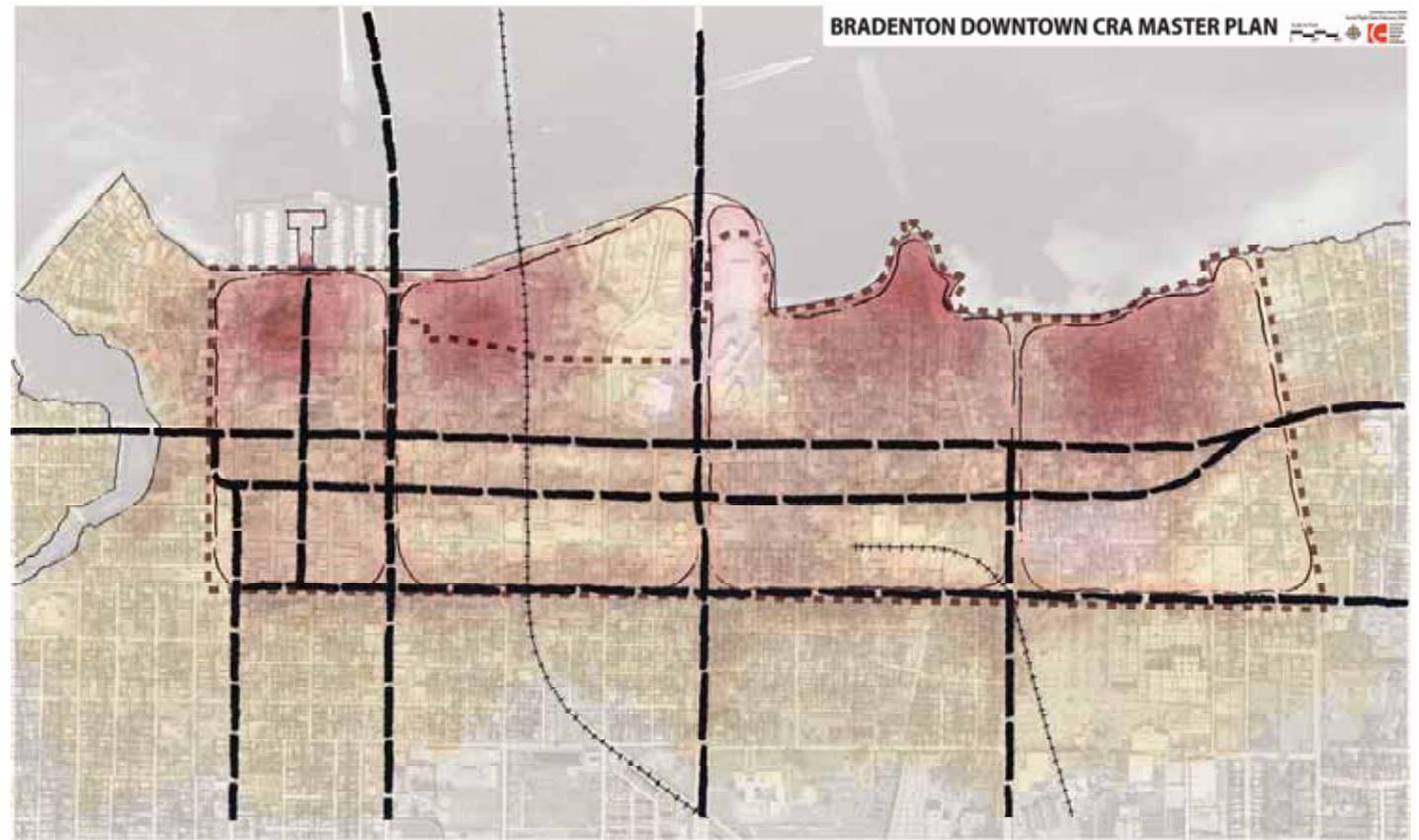
Strong downtowns typically have civic and cultural uses as the cornerstone of their respective communities. Downtown Bradenton has two major cornerstones that are also the primary economic drivers - the downtown core of retail and government uses and the hospital/healthcare uses. The energy created from these two focal points needs to be leveraged to facilitate the supporting uses and infrastructure while still focusing on the community vision.



Principle #4

Meet the Desire for an Urban Waterfront Lifestyle and the Downtown Experience

There are unique character areas on the riverfront that create an un-met residential lifestyle desire for potential residents of all backgrounds. These residents want to live, work and play in Downtown Bradenton and need to have downtown neighborhoods to accommodate this demand.



Principle #5

Beautify Subdistricts and Balance the Needs of the Pedestrian

Enhance the overall identity of Downtown Bradenton through beautification within each subdistrict and focus on a stronger and more healthy pedestrian environment.



Principle #6

Balance Transportation Needs with the Community Vision

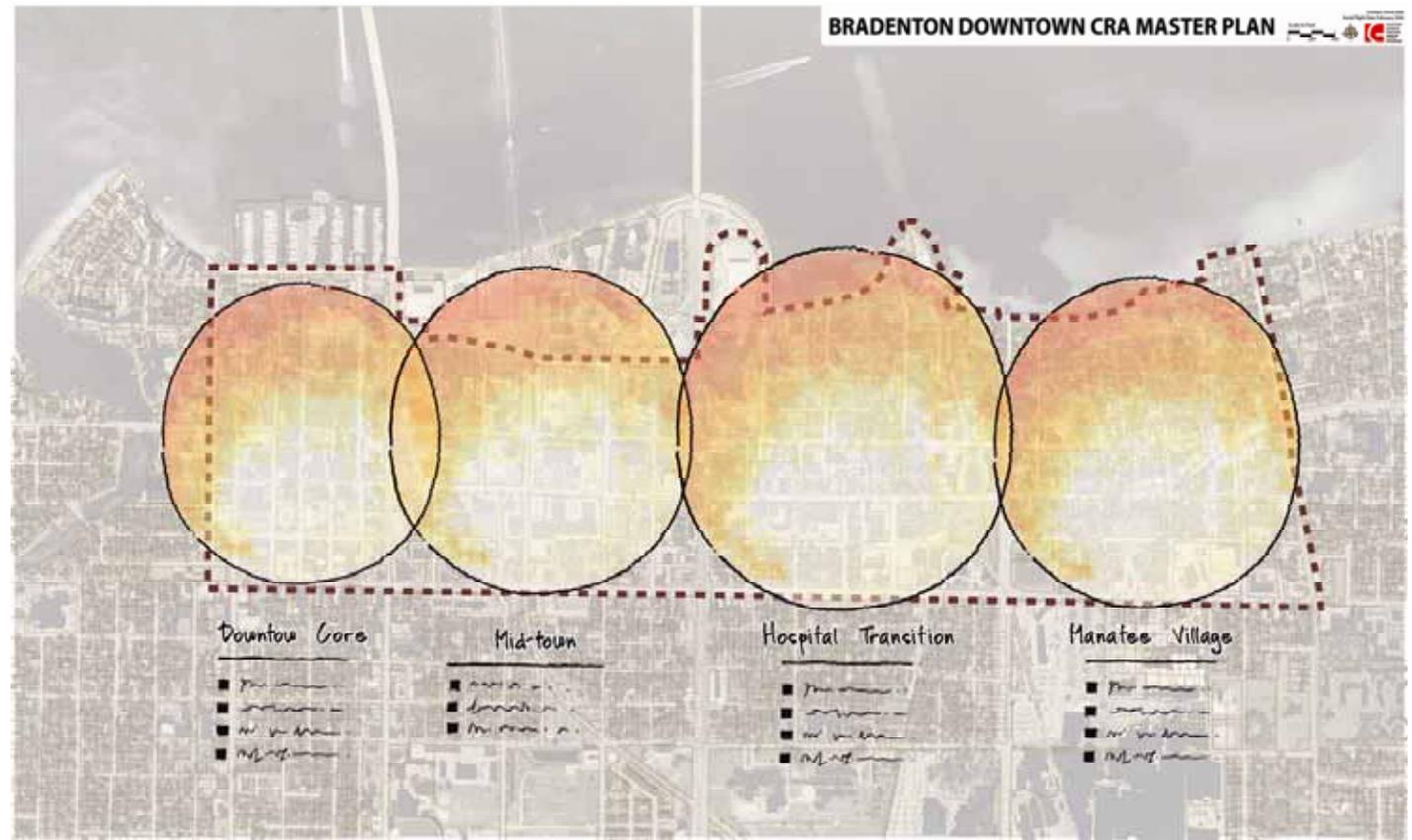
There must be a balance struck between the pedestrian walkability and the demand of roadways to enhance the community vision.



Principle #7

Create a Regulatory and Economic Implementation Plan

Downtown Bradenton must decide on what the community vision is and then create a regulatory structure to implement this vision and an economic strategy to ensure the success of the plan.



The Plan

District Plan

As a way to break down the various subdistricts and understand specifically their needs, the district plan attempts to define the areas of town that are physically different. ***These areas are defined for the purposes of the master plan report and are not intended to be the “official naming” of each part of town.***

Scale of Change Plan

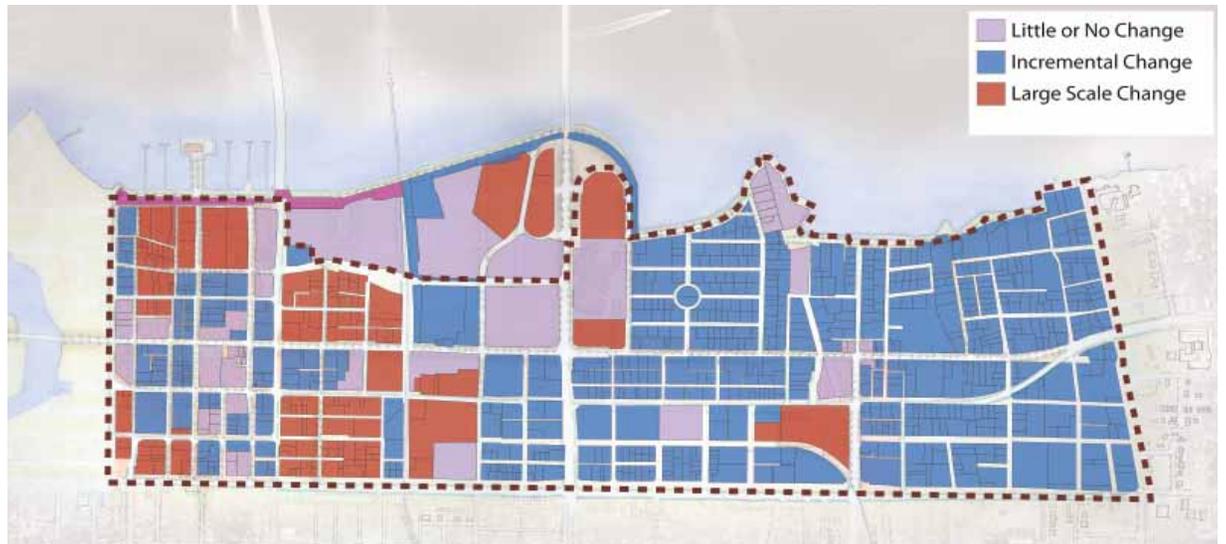
As a “big picture” understanding of the study area and based on current market conditions and current proposals, the Scale of Change Plan shows which properties are potential candidates for change within the next five years. However, this only captures a moment in time within the economic market and these properties would be subject to change.

The Master Plan

On the following pages, the proposed master plan is broken down into the previously mentioned district plans. The master plan is the culmination of the all of the citizen based input, the current and potential market conditions and the feasibility of those projects in Downtown Bradenton.



District Plan.



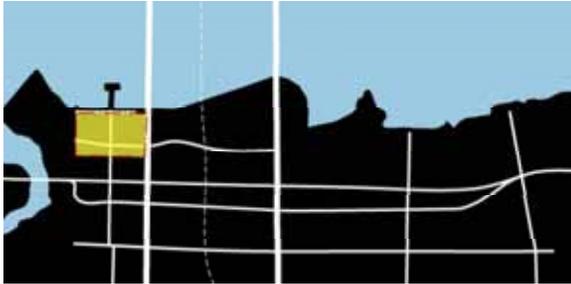
Scale of Change Plan.

The Plan



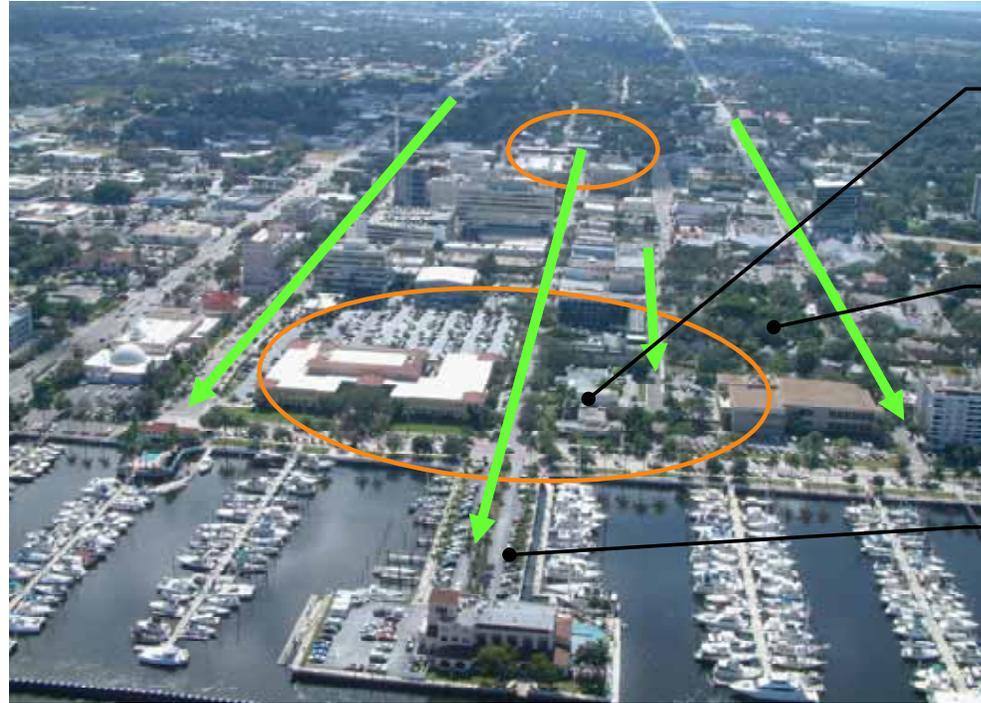
The Master Plan - the darker buildings represent potential new buildings, while the lighter buildings represent existing facilities that are either maintained or improved in this plan.

The Plan - Downtown Riverwalk



Downtown Riverwalk

Downtown Bradenton needs to have a great destination place on the water. The Riverwalk in the downtown core has potential to become this great place. Currently the civic uses of the South Florida Museum, City Hall, Manatee Players Theatre and Central Library take up nearly all of the available riverfront properties. The Players Theater is slated to move east and will create a unique opportunity for the City to re-evaluate the land uses on the Riverwalk. It is the recommendation of this plan that the City should focus on the development potential of these sites and explore further options on the viability of redevelopment. Given that the site requires more study, one example of the site's potential is shown on the following pages.



Create an active waterfront place with clustered restaurants, retail, books, music, open space. Leverage publicly owned property.

Partner with Church, Private development for infill residential, shared parking.

Enhance pier as attractive, walkable public plaza and event space.



Park Avenue, Winter Park, FL - A vibrant mixed-use main street with many outdoor cafes



Places for people to sit and "people-watch" is crucial for successful public spaces

The Plan - Downtown Riverwalk

The master plan envisions this area as the premiere public place in Downtown Bradenton, with a focus on walkability, entertaining retail and active open space.

In order to create this plan, a few assumptions were made. First, the Manatee Central Library could be re-located behind the existing Police Station on the parking lot or on another site. The Police Station could be moved to another site and the current City Hall use could be moved into the old Police Station structure. This would free up space in the existing City Hall shell for redevelopment. In order to fully maximize the development potential, the law office behind the Manatee Players Theater would also need to be acquired.

Assuming all of these elements come into place, a mixed-use hotel as well as two mixed-use residential projects could be built on the resulting land. The buildings would have appropriate “step-backs” from the water with taller areas shifted back away from the water. On the City Hall site, a garage would be constructed with the mixed-use residential project to accommodate parking for the City Hall as well as the new Library and new retail needs. The buildings would have ground floor retail with residential above. The former City Hall structure could be reused so that the Old Main Street and Barcarrota Boulevard sides could be more retail friendly (cafés, shops, a bookstore, etc.).



New mixed-use buildings with height step-backs to maintain view corridor to Riverwalk. Leverage public properties for best development practices.

Infill residential with a mix of townhomes and low-rise condominiums with shared parking with Church facilities.

Enhanced Riverwalk and Pier with vibrant mix of retail, restaurants and event space.



An interactive Riverwalk with places for people to sit, walk, bike and shop are important for viability.



Sanford Riverwalk, Sanford, FL - An example of a successful riverfront park, retail area in Florida.

The Plan - Downtown Riverwalk

The green space running along Barcarrota Boulevard could be re-designed to accommodate more festival space, the parking could be re-configured to achieve more open space and instead of using walls to accommodate the grade, steps rising up from the street level to the new retail area should be encouraged to facilitate more interaction between the retail foreground and the street/ Riverwalk.



Proposed sketch of Barcarrota Boulevard with on-street parking, lawn steps rising to new retail uses on the old City Hall.



Five story building with mixed-use on the ground level and residential above.



A taller building with appropriate architectural detail and step backs away from the street and background.

The Plan - Downtown Riverwalk



Proposed aerial sketch showing potential of Downtown to include new mixed-use buildings and connective open space

New mixed-use buildings with height step-backs to maintain view corridor to Riverwalk. Leverage public properties for best development practices.

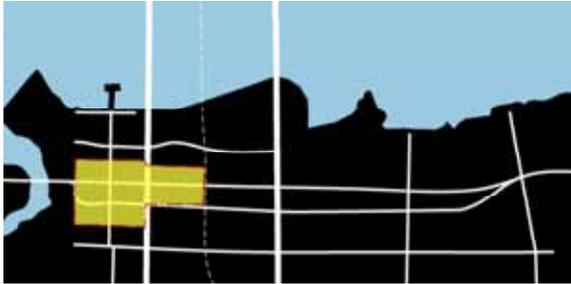
Infill residential with a mix of townhomes and low-rise condominiums with shared parking with Church facilities.

Enhanced Riverwalk and Pier with vibrant mix of retail, restaurants and event space.



Before aerial.

The Plan - Courthouse Square



Courthouse Square

This district is made up of primarily office and government uses. However, there is a fair amount of empty or under-utilized land that could be redeveloped, which would add to the quality of life in Downtown Bradenton. This redevelopment should include infill mixed-use buildings with ground level retail or office and residential above.



Infill mid-rise to high-rise office with ground level retail and potential workforce residential.

Two-way east/west street system with strengthened north/south pedestrian connections to water.

Transit/Trolley loop connecting key retail, cultural, office and parking assets.



Taller buildings could occur within Courthouse Square with step-backs, good architecture, etc.



An eight-foot build to line has allowed this street to have tables and chairs and street furniture.



An electric trolley should be considered to connect parking to the other cultural, retail amenities

The Plan - Courthouse Square

This residential mix should include a fair percentage of workforce housing as to encourage a more walkable, live/work environment. The conversion of the one-way pairs to two-way streets will significantly help pedestrianism and encourage more ground floor retail. Parking should be accommodated with garages and/or more extensive on-street parking. Because of narrow rights-of-way, an eight-foot build to line could be used to increase the sidewalk area to a total of sixteen feet of retail area for tables and chairs or expanded green space with the street view corridor.

The City should also explore the use of an electric trolley that could run a short circuit between the Village of the Arts, Courthouse Square, the Riverwalk and the Arts on the Riverwalk West. This would connect key retail, office, cultural amenities and most importantly expand the zones of parking areas.



Infill mixed-use with garage surrounding by liner retail, residential, both market rate and attainable housing.

Two-way east/west street system with strengthened north/south pedestrian connections to water.

Transit/Trolley stops adjacent to parking areas and important office or government centers.

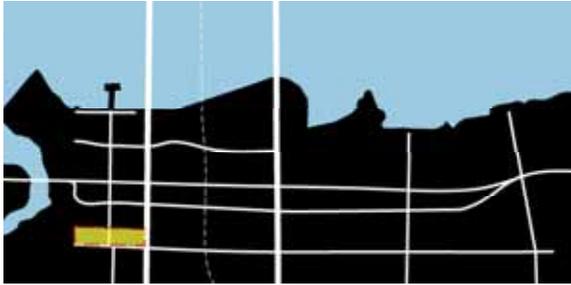


Before streetscape.



Proposed typical streetscape - expanded space for retail tables and chairs, street furniture, signage, etc.

The Plan - Arts Gateway



Arts Gateway

The area just south of the Courthouse District is characterized by smaller, single-use structures that have surface parking and poor connectivity. However, it has the potential to support attainable housing with some mixed-use components.

This district should serve as the transition from the height and density of the downtown core to the single family residential of the Village of the Arts. The plan envisions mid-rise (3-6 stories) mixed-use buildings with potential for “loft” style residential.



Mid-rise loft residential, retail, office uses on key sites transition to Village of the Arts.

Streetscape/gateway signage linking downtown to Village of the Arts.



Structures should transition down the height from downtown to the adjacent single family housing.



“Loft” style housing with some mixed-use can be used to also transition the districts

The Plan - Arts Gateway

Improvements should be made to the north/south pedestrian connections across Martin Luther King Avenue as well as streetscape and signage celebrating the Village of the Arts.

Design standards for the City should be implemented to encourage national chain stores to comply with local architectural and streetscape standards.



Infill mid-rise mixed-use buildings with structured parking or surface parking. Height should transition between downtown core and Village of the Arts.

Gateway signage and transit stops linking the downtown core to Village of the Arts.



National retailers do have models to accommodate design standards of a downtown.

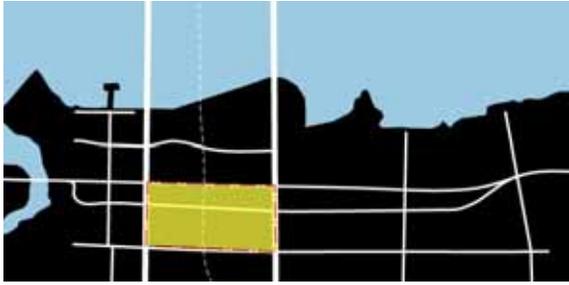


Corner retail with housing above could provide good opportunities for attainable housing.



This residential building has retail and office on the first level with adjacent surface parking.

The Plan - West Warehouse Loft District



West Warehouse Loft District

The warehouse loft districts are remnant industrial areas that are prime candidates for incremental redevelopment as small type residential. In addition to these smaller incremental projects, the Champs Sports Headquarters and the School Board may also see some expansion and this expansion should be in line with the future potential of this district.



Redevelop strip center and infill Champs Sports site and School Board property (structure parking).

Water tower property could be a City park opportunity to help with open space demands of the future residential growth.

Options for additional incremental townhome projects along Martin Luther King Avenue.

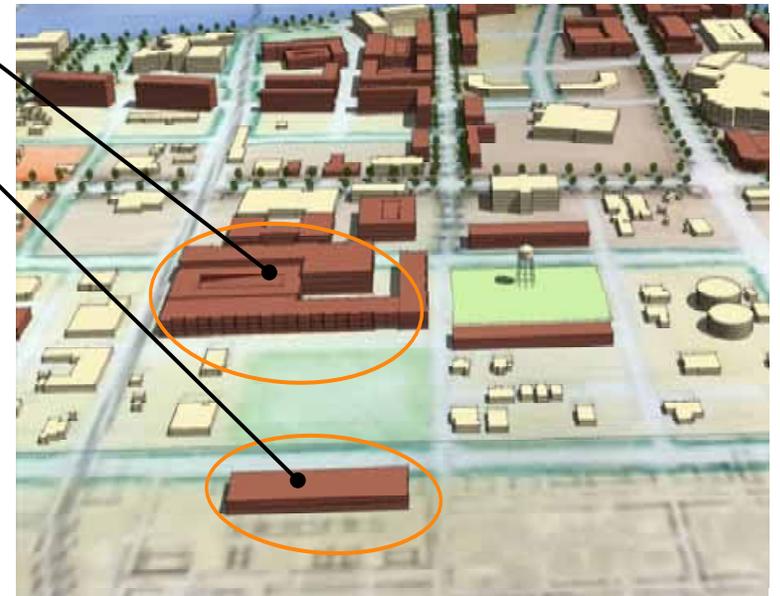
Potential for Rail-to-Trail on CSX line or Future Regional Transit.

Mixed-use building with structured parking and attainable housing component.

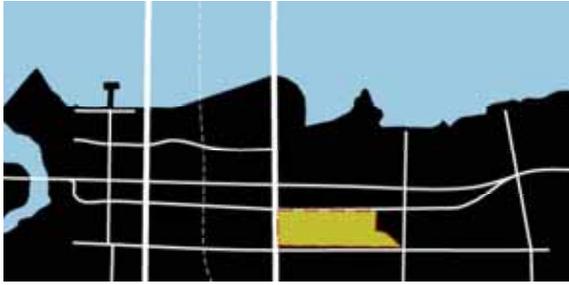
Incremental, attainable townhome projects on Martin Luther King Avenue.



Various types of workforce or attainable housing should be encouraged here including low-rise apartment/condo and 2-3 story townhomes similar to existing residential on Martin Luther King Avenue.



The Plan - East Warehouse Loft District



East Warehouse Loft District

Similar to the West Warehouse Loft District, this area is prime for incremental low-rise residential with some potential for live/work office that could support the Health & Wellness District. However, design standards should be considered to ensure the office and residential uses are compatible.

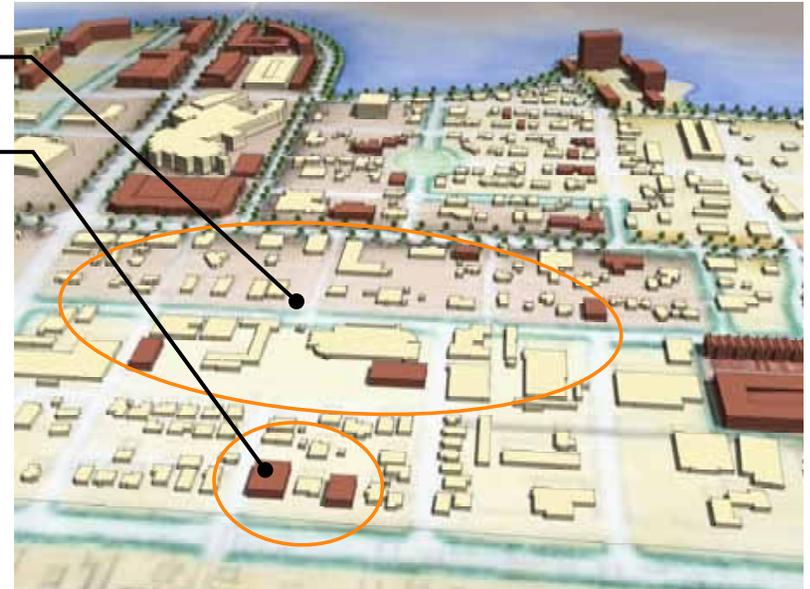


Incremental residential infill that is at the townhome scale, "Hard Loft" concept.

Some potential warehouse conversion, assembly on larger parcels may yield loft office, residential or mid-rise potential.

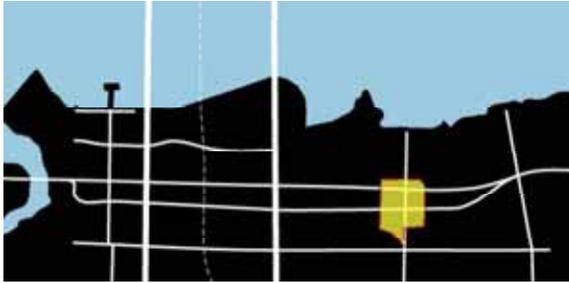
Incremental residential infill and/or mixed-use warehouse conversion.

Continue incremental attainable projects on Martin Luther King Avenue.



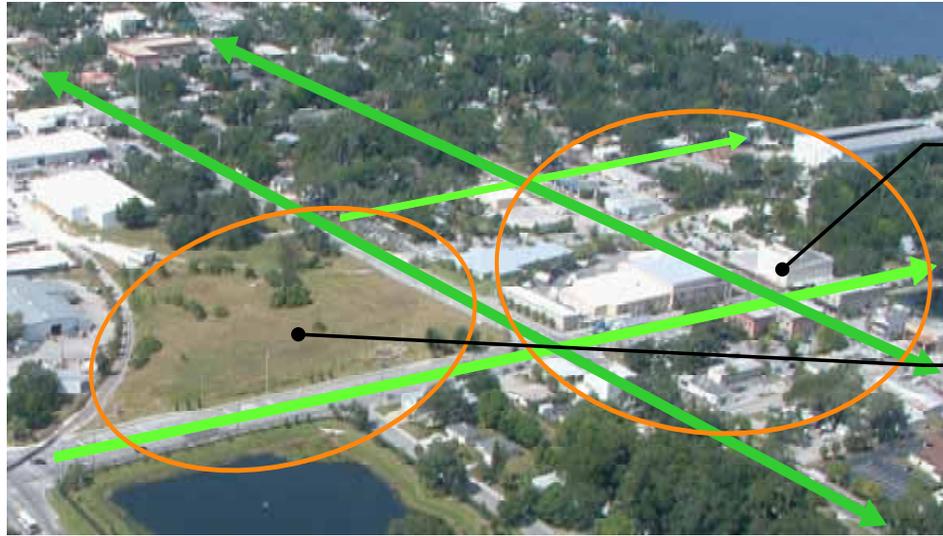
Attainable housing should be encouraged as well as incremental office that will support the growing Health & Wellness District. This can be designed in a way consistent with the district.

The Plan - Intown Manatee



Intown Manatee

Intown Manatee is already well established as a commercial “Design District” and future development should continue to capitalize on the recent investment. Future growth should include mixed-use buildings with some live/work structures to support the growing Heath & Wellness District.



Protect and enhance historic intown Manatee. 2-4 story infill commercial structures, built to street with mixed-use upper level office & residential loft. Design District Concept.

Redevelop CSX parcel with workforce accessible residential, with limited retail, office. Enhance Street frontage.



“Loft” style residential should be consistent with existing district design standards



Live/work structures such as this in Thornton Park in Orlando, FL are highly successful.



Form based codes and/or design standards can help achieve good looking buildings for national retailers and restaurants

The Plan - Intown Manatee

The parcel adjacent to the CSX railroad presents an incredible opportunity for the City to encourage a denser, attainable housing project. This project could be between four and five stories and backup to the railroad in such a way as to maximize the site for structured parking and meet the growing need for affordable, workforce housing. Densities of around 60 or 70 units per acre with proper architectural design, open space and streetscape treatments should be encouraged.



Infill mixed-use structures designed and built within Design District concept.

High density, low height residential with attainable residential and some mixed-use. This would also need structured parking.



4-5 stories can yield high densities that can accommodate the growing need for attainable housing in Downtown Bradenton. Architectural detailing and streetscape design are essential for success.

Echelon at Cheney Place Development Data

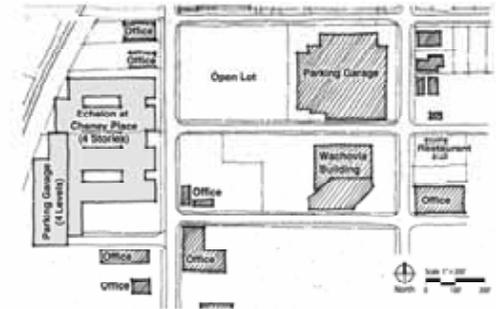
Location: 860 N. Orange Ave.
Orlando, FL 32801

Type of Development: Apartments
Number of Units: 303 units
Site Acreage: 3.9 acres
Parking: 372 spaces
Development Cost: \$26 M

Echelon at Cheney Place is an apartment community that lies in the heart of Orlando's entertainment and business district, as well as the historic Antique District. Community amenities include a fitness center, landscaped courtyards, two swimming pools, and a resident business center equipped with computers, printer, fax and copier. The Echelon at Cheney Place also offers a gated four level parking garage.



Main Entry into Echelon at Cheney Place

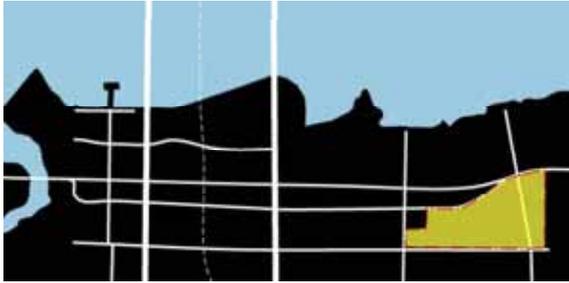


Echelon at Cheney Place facing Orange Avenue



Echelon at Cheney Place in Orlando, FL is an example of a successful attainable housing project adjacent to railroad. The parking serves as the buffer from the railroad and residential units.

The Plan - Manatee South



Manatee South

Manatee South is characterized by existing single family residential and adjacent industrial land uses. The plan envisions incremental infill housing as well as replacement single family housing.

In order to preserve the affordability of the land, special mechanisms should be researched such as a Community Land Trust or system-built modular housing. In addition to these some of elements, the district will need to have commitments of infrastructure and park improvements. The Community Redevelopment Agency can assist with some of these needs.



Incremental residential infill, small lot single family, townhome, duplex/quad infill.

Mid-rise off Martin Luther King Avenue if parcel available.

Street, infrastructure enhancements, potential pocket park opportunity.



Alternative building materials and methods can help control the sales price and maintain affordability.

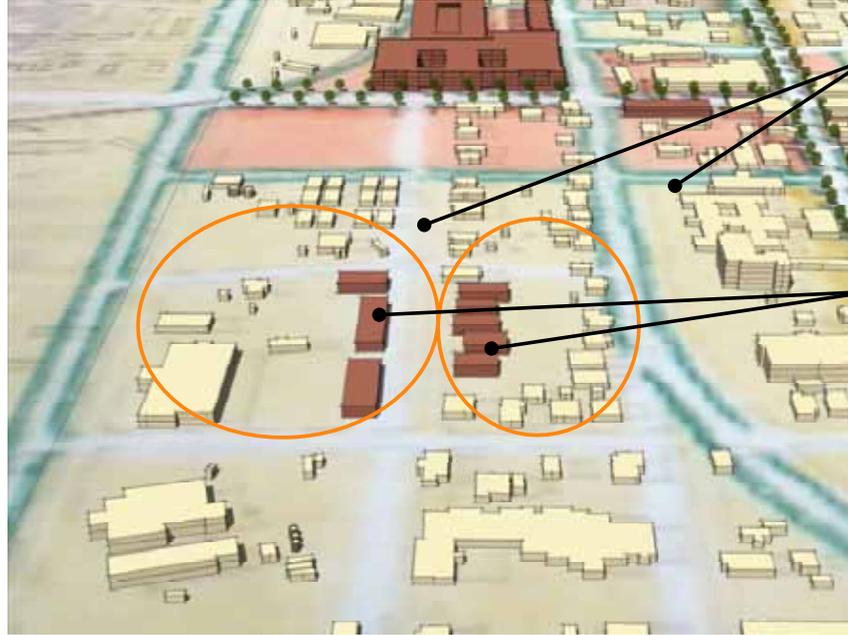


Attainable housing should be designed with context sensitive architecture and should meet the street.

The Plan - Manatee South



Tampa, FL - This affordable housing project sits up on the street and engages the community in an urban way.



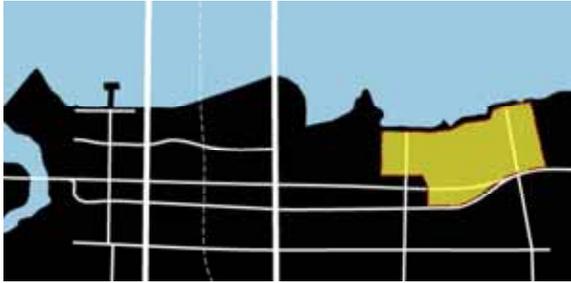
Street enhancements and connections to the River to enhance neighborhood quality.

Incremental residential infill built as small lot single family with attainable opportunities like Community Land Trusts or other mechanisms.



Various projects around Florida have utilized Community Land Trusts in which the land under the home is owned by a non-profit corporation and the rising land cost is not passed onto the homeowner.

The Plan - Manatee Village



Manatee Village

The Manatee Village district includes historic residential housing, two City parks and access to the Riverfront. These existing amenities should be celebrated and maintained.

The master plan envisions improved neighborhood connectivity, townhome and mid-rise housing. Townhomes could be between 2-3 stories depending on how parking is treated. Mid-rise buildings should be designed with context sensitive architecture and step-back from the riverfront. Home restoration should be encouraged with the remaining historic single family structures.



- Streets connect to water.
- Townhome and mid-rise condominium on public waterfront drive.
- Single family, townhome and mid-rise residential on improved streets.
- Enhance Glazier Gates and Indian Springs Parks, potential developer partnership.
- Begin street treatment and two-way conversion, some retail development on Manatee Avenue.



Mid-rise residential buildings should be designed with context sensitive architecture.



Taller residential buildings can step back away from the Riverfront to ensure view corridors to the water.

The Plan - Manatee Village

Glazier Gates Park and Indian Springs Park should be enhanced and include more neighborhood friendly amenities. The public street along the Riverwalk should be improved and enhanced in line with the comprehensive Riverwalk Master Plan. The north/south streets should connect all the way to the River.



- Park improvements at Glazier Gates Park.
- Mid-rise condominiums on improved public waterfront drive. Height is setback from River.
- Townhomes on improved roads and retail/mixed-use buildings on Manatee Avenue
- Two-way conversion begins here.
- Park improvements at Indian Springs Parks.



Townhomes or low-rise structures should orient to the street grid to preserve view corridors to the River.

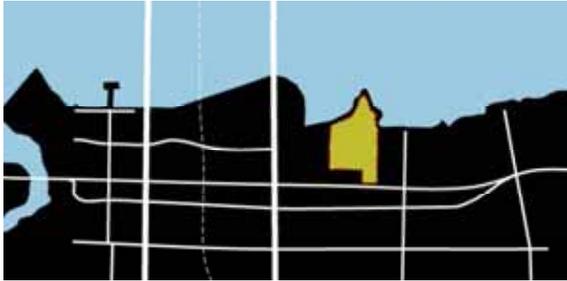


Home restoration should be encouraged to promote history and identity of the district.



The Riverwalk should transition from the commercial downtown section to a more residential feel.

The Plan - Manatee West



Manatee West

Manatee West is made up of existing residential that is currently going through transition into denser residential and supporting medical uses. In addition to the growing medical office use in this district, the City has recently approved the Tarpon Pointe residential project which includes residential towers and townhomes and improvements to the public Riverwalk and possible marina expansion which will all add value to the community.

As this area redevelops, 4th Street East should be the dividing line between the medical office uses and residential area. The City should look for opportunities to increase east/west street network connections to Manatee Village which will the existing single family residential flourish.



Neighborhood enhancements, market driven renovation, lot by lot redevelopment (single family & townhomes).
 Medical Village influence, some small lot medical office.
 Public parkway, sidewalk, street enhancements.
 Tarpon Pointe: staggered towers with townhomes, marina, public riverwalk access.



Low rise residential buildings could help support the growing need for workforce housing.



Neighborhood sensitive architecture should be considered with infill townhome developments as well as live/work buildings

The Plan - Manatee West

Residential closer to the hospital and Manatee Avenue could be low rise apartments or mixed-use with neighborhood retail. These apartments could provide an outlet for the needed medical workforce housing and still be within walking distance of the hospital.

The Riverwalk should be improved to begin the transition from the commercial/cultural section west of US 41/301 (1st Street) to the more residential/neighborhood to the east.



- Market driven infill residential (single family and townhomes).
- Medical Village residential support with some small lot medical office.
- Riverwalk and street enhancements.
- Tarpon Pointe project with staggered towers, townhomes, marina, riverwalk access.



The riverwalk edge should be enhanced to create a strong neighborhood connection to the water.

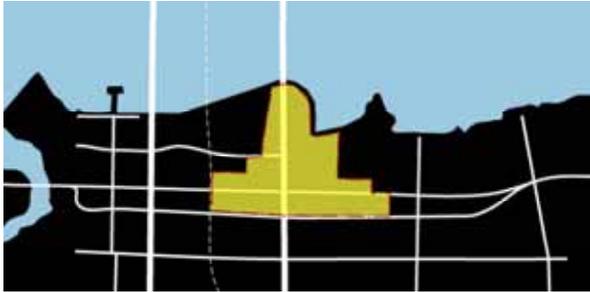


Adaptive re-use of existing single family residential should be encouraged.



As in Manatee Village, home restoration should be encouraged and supported.

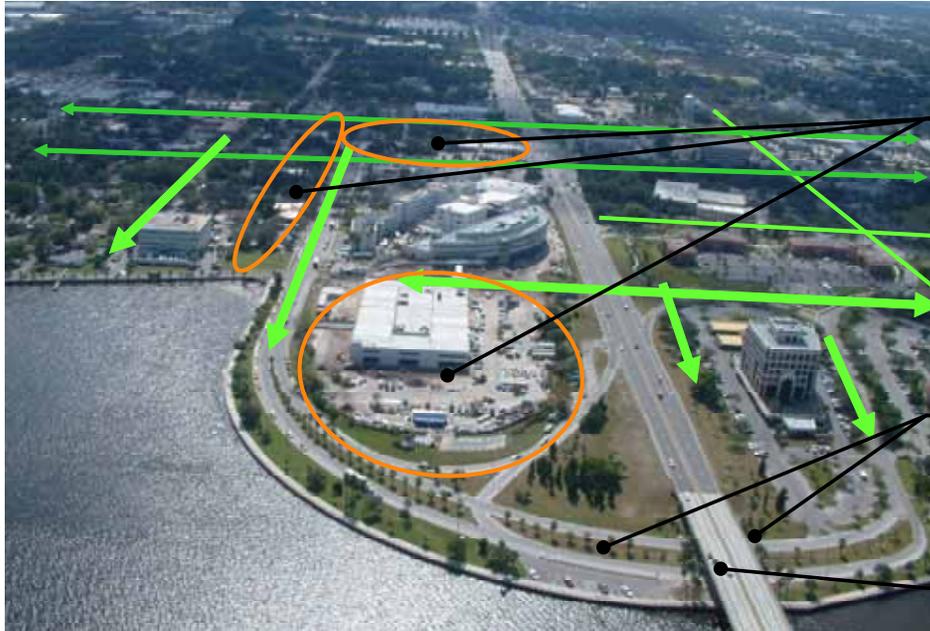
The Plan - Health & Wellness District



Health & Wellness District

Over the last thirty years, Manatee Memorial Hospital has steadily grown and its impact on the community has become more significant. As the City grows, a stronger connection should be established in order to ensure a healthier community.

The Hospital-owned property has good potential for future growth of office and some residential. The land around the new garage could be infilled with medical office expansion as well as some live/work residential on the higher floors. The current surface parking area between the Hospital and Manatee Avenue could be redeveloped into structured parking and medical office. The expanded medical office could include a much needed ambulatory surgery center. The conversion of the one-way pairs will also simplify ambulance routes as well as access to the ER for potential patients.



'Wellness Village' with future mid-rise medical/office and health related retail development fronting 2nd St. East, Manatee Avenue and wrapping parking structure.

Rebuild highway geometry into waterfront drive and enhance promenade.

Gateway features at all bridges.



Encourage live/work opportunities that could incorporate the growing need for medical office with the equally growing need of workforce housing.



Medical related office should follow design standards consistent with district and be placed up in the street with parking in back and on-street.

The Plan - Health & Wellness District

The current Riverfront road is oversized and acts like an on-ramp to US 41/301 (1st Street). This street should be simplified and enhanced to connect the downtown Riverwalk with the adjacent residential neighborhoods. During the planning process the concept of a boat ramp was considered. Due to its large land consumptive nature (parking, circulation) and its disruption of the Riverwalk connectivity, a boat ramp is a conflicting use in an urban core and other sites outside of the Downtown should be considered.

There is also an opportunity at the US 301 bridge to create a gateway feature that could either be an architectural feature or the bridge itself.



Medical office fronting Manatee Avenue with structured parking.

Health related mixed-use wrapping parking structure and along riverfront.

Gateway feature at bridge.

Re-configured road geometry to enhance riverfront drive and promenade.



Gateway architecture can be incorporated into the bridge itself and create a structure of civic pride.

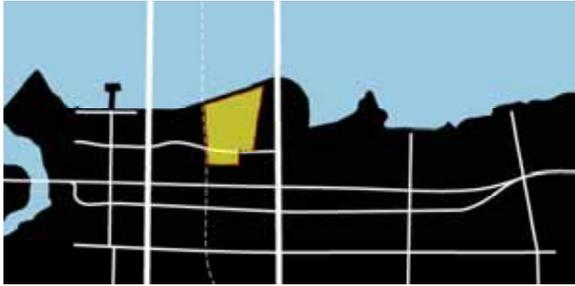


The Riverwalk should be extended and serve as the transition between the downtown civic core and the adjacent residential neighborhoods



Medical related office can also serve as a catalyst for better landscape standards and image/beauty enhancements.

The Plan - Riverwalk East



Riverwalk East

The Riverwalk East has been recently built using suburban development standards. In the short term this will hinder the overall walkability of the mid-town area. However, the master plan suggests that this district will eventually redevelop and when it does, different solutions should be considered.

The Riverfront parkway coming from under US 301, should continue along the River towards the Sandpile West District creating a “Riverside Drive”. The land use should focus on more mixed-use, high density and taller buildings with appropriate architectural detailing and step-backs away from the River. The Riverwalk should be enhanced and serve as a continuous public greenway connecting to the downtown core.



Anticipate the eventual redevelopment of hotel and apartment sites with form based codes and future street grid/public waterfront drive vision.

Moderate enhancements to pedestrian promenade, mile markers, interpretive signage.



Georgetown, Washington, D.C. - Mid-rise to High-rise mixed-use residential units with good street presence and architectural detailing.



Brownstones or similar “urban” townhouses with on-street parking and tree-lined streets could enhance the overall image and beauty of this district.

The Plan - Riverwalk East

The street network needs to be expanded and further connect more of the north/south streets to the Riverfront. The streets ending at the “Riverside Drive” could have an accompanying “moment” such as an interactive water feature or short pier/boardwalk that could be incorporated into the Riverwalk design.



Reconnect streets to the River, mixed-use redevelopment including residential. Set up and guide future redevelopment with form based codes.

Pedestrian promenade improvements will enhance value at the riverfront.



The Riverwalk should incorporate environmental graphics and wayfinding unique to Bradenton.

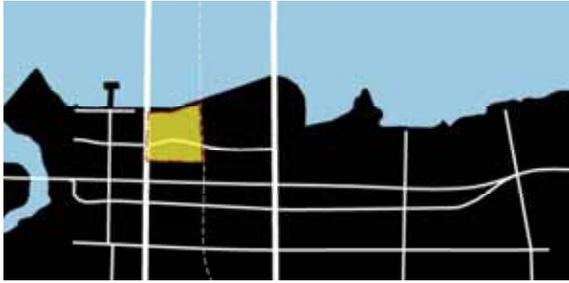


The north/south streets should extend all the way to the River and could end with “moments” such as this interactive fountain feature which is also part of the Riverwalk.



Taller structures that stepped back from the riverfront should be encouraged to maintain view corridors and riverwalk connectivity.

The Plan - Riverwalk West



Riverwalk West

The Riverwalk West has seen the most recent residential growth in Downtown. This development has included taller buildings setback from the River and the inclusion of public open space. There are more blocks south of 3rd Avenue and north of Manatee Avenue that are prime for further redevelopment. Because these blocks are insulated by adjacent uses, residential uses here could be taller in the same context of the downtown core. Taller residential structures (more “heads in beds”) could create the opportunity for other amenities such as an urban grocery store which is one of the primary desires of the community.

This district also provides an excellent place to consider “day docks.” Day docks would allow other visitors from Bradenton and other areas to visit the district and have easy access to the Downtown core and other cultural and civic amenities. This area would also allow the continuation of the visual “marina feel” on both sides of the Green Bridge.



Possible taller buildings along south side of 3rd Avenue transitioning down to Manatee Avenue.

Develop new 3rd Avenue cultural facilities with form based codes and public access, on-street parking.

Enhance public open space and clarify relation between ‘public waterfront’ and private development.



Grocery stores like Trader Joe's or Whole Foods will find it more attractive with more residents living and working in Downtown.



Quality architectural detailing and open space improvements could be used as an incentive for more height. Cultural facilities could also be introduced on the ground floor of these structures.



The Plan - Riverwalk West

The “riverside drive” from the Riverwalk East should be continued and if possible, connect under the Green Bridge to Barcarrota Boulevard. “Riverside Drive” should be designed as a 20 MPH narrow street, providing access at normal hours and could be closed for events. The creation of this street will help delineate the private vs. public realm, however if this street isn’t feasible then special attention should be focused on making the spaces along the Riverwalk more publicly accessible.



Taller buildings are set back from the Riverfront transitioning down towards Manatee Avenue.

New ‘Cultural Arts’ corridor on 3rd Avenue.

Clarified edge between public and private development with possible introduction of limited access roadway.

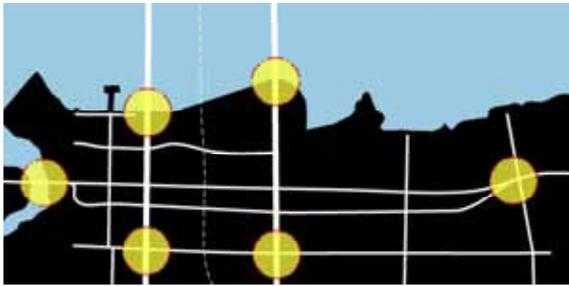


The street should be brick and provide a clear delineation between public and private.



Proposed rendering of the Riverwalk through the Riverwalk West. If a public street is not feasible, then a clearer delineation between public and private should be considered. Using brick, street furniture, open lawns and short walls can all help to better separate the spaces

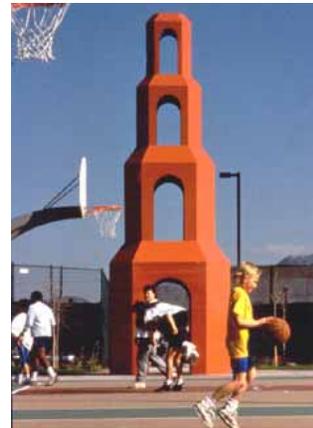
The Plan - Gateways



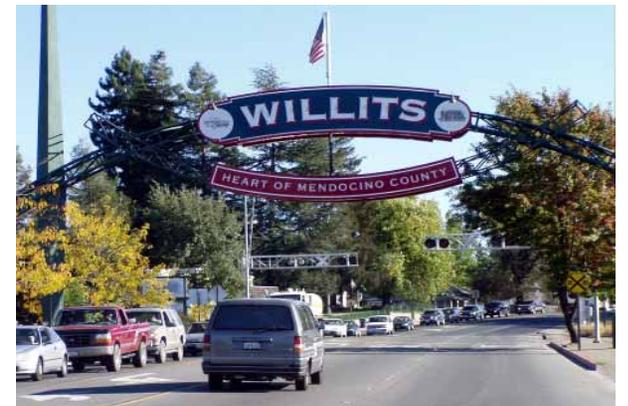
Gateways and Signage

At the various entry points to Downtown Bradenton gateways should be considered as a way to establish a sense of arrival. These gateways can be established in a variety of ways including roundabouts, signage, architecture, etc.

There should also be a hierarchy to sequence of arrival. At the major road entrances (Manatee Avenue, US 41 and US 41/301) should be one level of gateway, followed by small more detailed signage at various important nodes like the downtown core, Village of the Arts, the Hospital, etc. Each of these entry routes should comfortably lead the visitor to regional top destinations and public amenities. The following images showcase some examples of potential gateways and signage.



Public Art can also serve as a gateway feature.



Traditional signage as a gateway element is also a viable option for Downtown Bradenton.



The hierarchy of signs should lead visitors from the gateway to the top destinations within Downtown Bradenton.

The Plan - Gateways



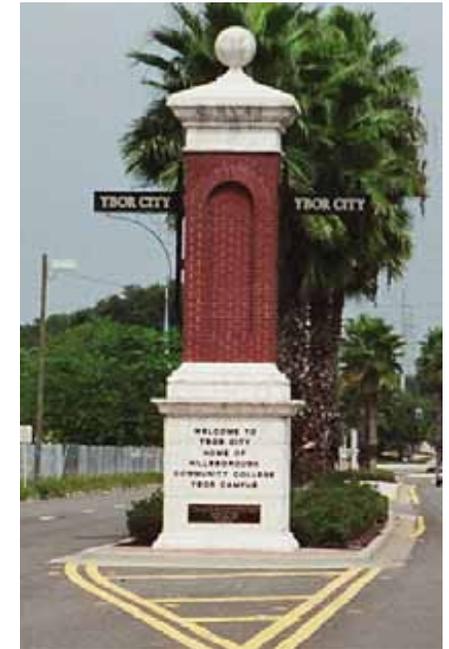
Signage on the bridge or architecture on the bridge itself will itself create a strong identity for the community.



Residential neighborhoods can also use architectural features as wayfinding.



Gateway architecture can include vertical elements with or without verbage.

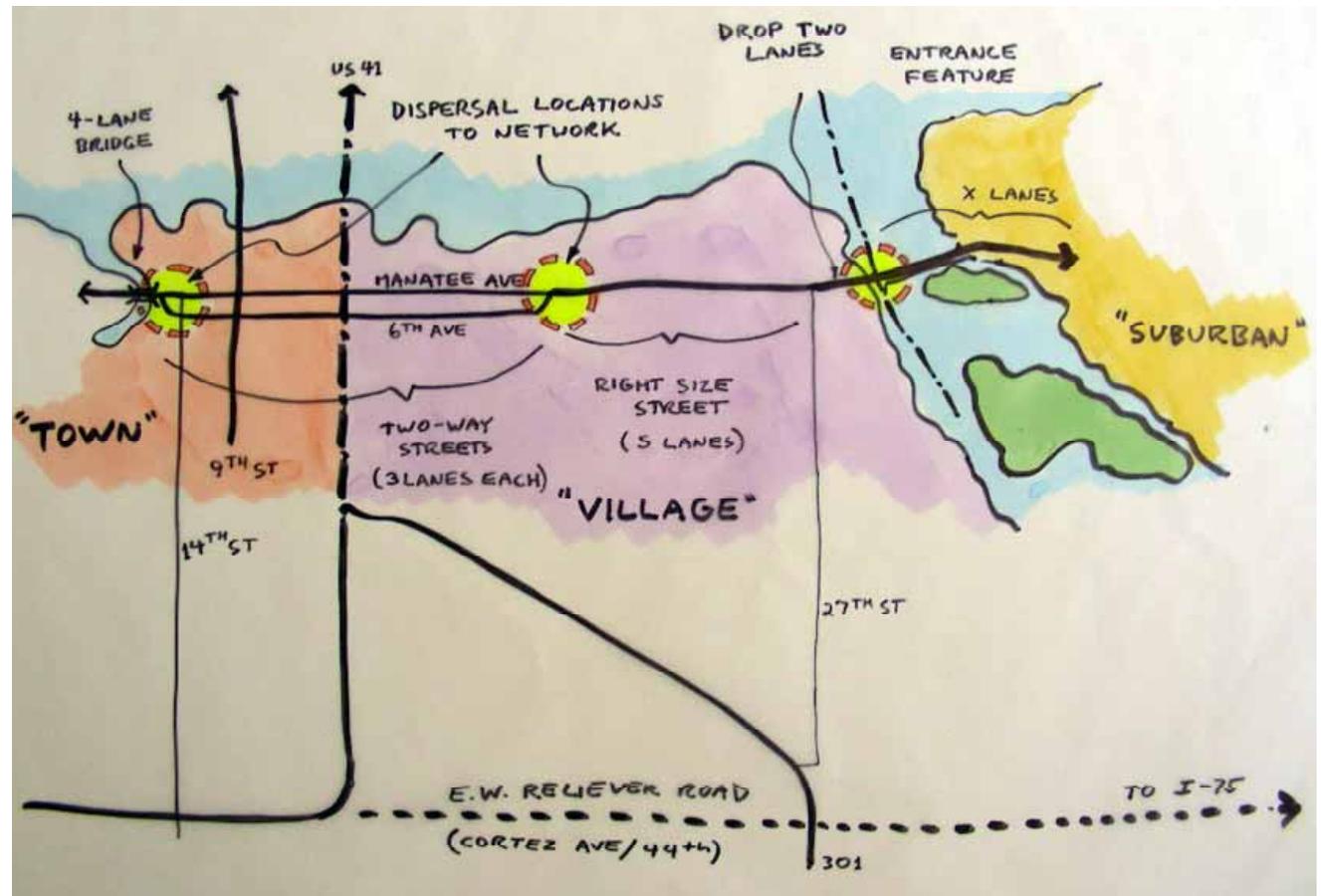


The Streets

Transportation Solution

The purpose of cities is to maximize interaction and exchange. In order to accomplish this, vibrant cities tend to have connected networks of streets. Street network also informs land use. As shown in the diagram to the right, further east, where there are large blocks and large single land uses (residential, large malls, etc) the required roads need to be large and oversized to handle the heavier automotive volume. But as the street network transitions into the downtown core, the surrounding uses become more diverse and the street network becomes more fine grained to accommodate the increased transportation capacity and exchange.

Because of the future east/west connector on Cortez Road, there should be increased opportunity for reducing the number of lanes on Manatee Avenue and 6th Avenue, while also replacing the one-way pair in downtown Bradenton with two-way streets. In order to distribute the trips more effectively two roundabouts are proposed at 15th Street East and 15th Street West. The following pages will discuss these proposed changes in more detail.

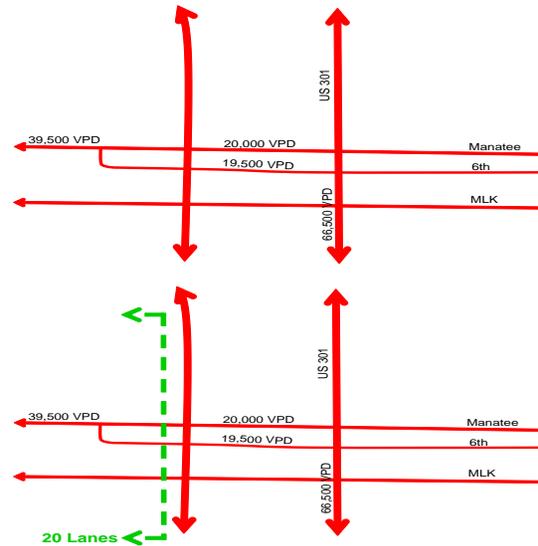


Manatee Avenue /6th Avenue Context and Strategy.

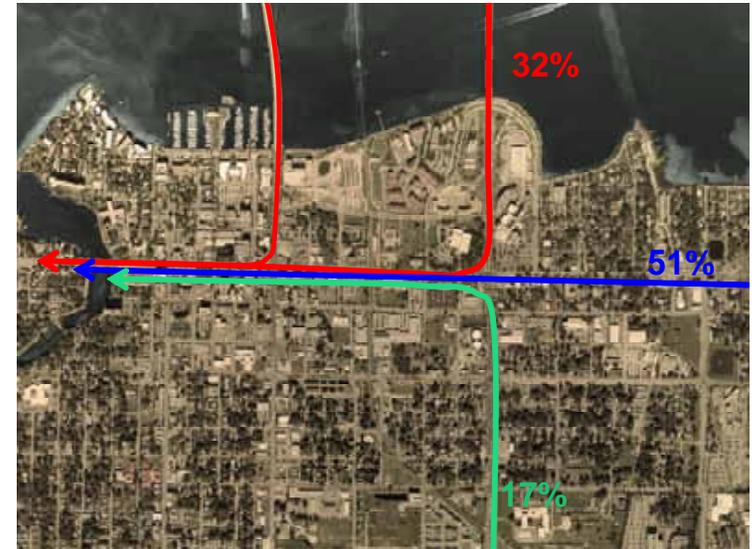
The Streets

Traffic Capacity

Only 51% of traffic on Manatee Avenue & 6th Avenue moves through the downtown. The remaining 49% moves all the way north or south through downtown, but all the traffic uses the same street (Manatee Avenue & 6th Avenue) because the remaining network is not available. Downtown Bradenton currently has at least twenty lanes of street network that are heavily under-utilized.



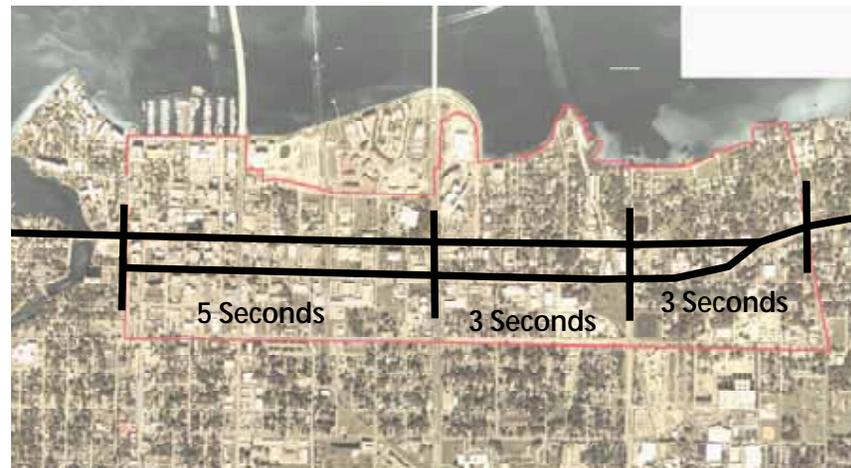
There are many lanes in Downtown Bradenton, but only a few carry all the traffic. Data source: FDOT



Not all trips have the same destination.

Traffic Speed vs. Pedestrianism

The higher the traffic speed, the higher the danger and problems for pedestrians and cyclists. However, research has shown that, at 20-30 mph, streets can carry a lot of traffic and, if applied, may only result in an increased travel time of less than thirty seconds through the downtown, but the benefits to the pedestrian environment will increase substantially.



Lowering the speed limit by 10 mph would increase travel time through Downtown Bradenton by approximately eleven seconds.

Vehicle Speed	Percentage of Pedestrian Fatalities in accidents
15 Mph	3.5%
31 Mph	37.0%
44 mph	83.0%

Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Federal Highway Administration

Speed compared to pedestrian fatalities

The Streets - One-Way Pairs

One-Way Pairs

The one-way pairs of Manatee Avenue and 6th Avenue have created several problems for Downtown Bradenton. The primary purpose of one-way pairs is to facilitate high speed movement of motor vehicle traffic through the downtown. This conflicts with the community vision to create a livable, walkable downtown. One-way streets also present problems for commercial and retail parcels because of eclipsed frontages on the opposite sides from the direction of travel on one-way streets. Because of the faster speed, the signage must be larger, the scale of the street must increase and the drivers' expectation of speed is increased (which also contributes to "road rage" when these expectations are not met).

The conversion to two-way streets will require further study, but a preliminary review of the data suggests that if network were increased in downtown through the connection of a few streets, the two-way system will provide sufficient network capacity and be more successful on a number of fronts.

Long Term Strategy

As Downtown Bradenton continues to redevelop, special attention should be paid to potential street connections to enhance connectivity and network. In addition to the creating more network, the comprehensive plan should be reviewed and current metrics for roadways and roadway modifications should be amended to encourage walkability and pedestrianism.

As previously mentioned, a more connected street network will also create a better "bone" structure that will help foster and support the dynamic mixed-use community vision.

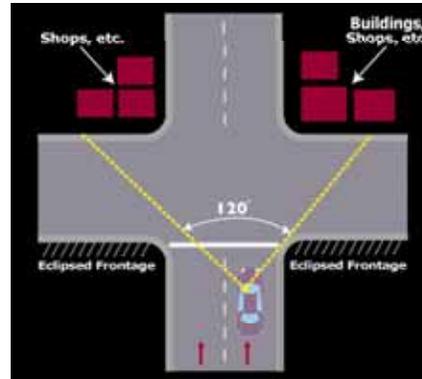


Diagram showing eclipsed frontages on a one-way street.



Faster streets require bigger signs so drivers can see the signs from further away.



The yellow dashed lines represent future streets recommended to increase the walkability and connectedness of Downtown Bradenton.

The Streets - Conceptual Sections

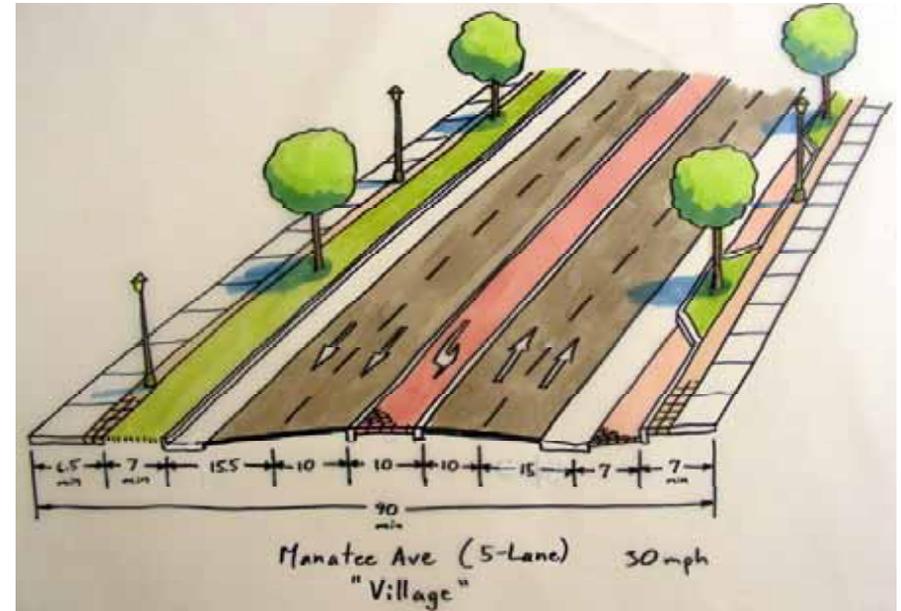
Manatee Avenue East of 15th Street East

The proposed section for Manatee Avenue east of Downtown Bradenton calls for a “road diet” narrowing the inside lanes to 10’-0” and the introduction of a textured center turn lane. Bike lanes should also be introduced. Valley gutters should be used because they facilitate bulb-outs, crucial in creating on-street parking where existing or new buildings front the street.

The bulb-outs will allow for street tree planting which will optically narrow the street for the driver and help reduce speeding. Where no buildings front the street, a grass lawn and street trees could be used until redevelopment occurs. The speed limit should also be no higher than 30 mph which will result in a complete street that meets the needs of the cyclists, pedestrians and motorists.



Textured pavement in a center turn lane.



Proposed section for Manatee Avenue east of 15th Street East.



Bicycle lanes are essential for multi-modal vibrant downtowns

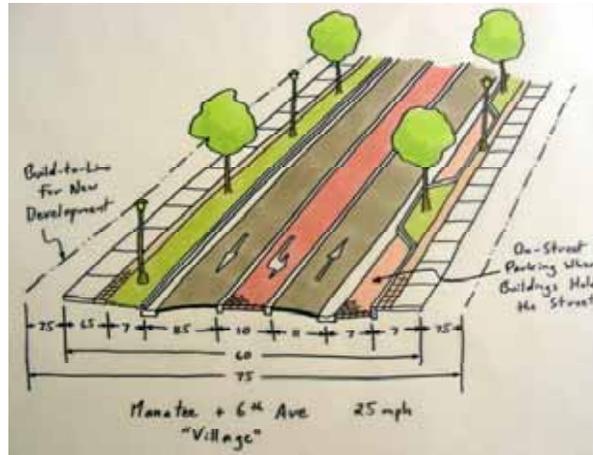


Despite being “curvy”, this 5-lane section is similar to the proposed section.

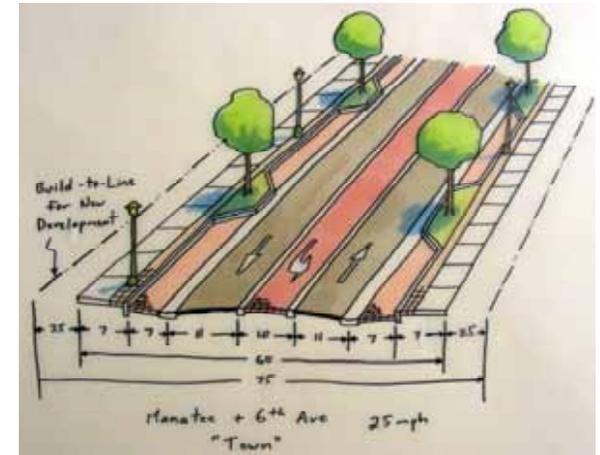
The Streets - Conceptual Sections

Manatee Avenue & 6th Avenue between US 41/301 & 15th Street East.

Building on the pattern already set east of 15th Street East and assuming the streets have been converted to a two-way pair, the section is basically the same except two more lanes have been dropped leading to a 3-lane section. This section would also require a “build-to” line for new development to ensure an urban section in the downtown. The speed limit should be 25 mph, which is optimal for walkability, safety and traffic movement.



***Proposed section for Manatee Avenue & 6th Avenue
between 15th Street East and US 41/301.***



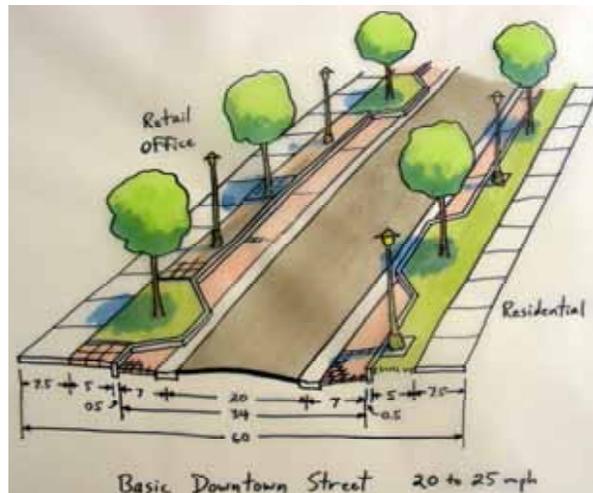
***Proposed section for Manatee Avenue & 6th Avenue
between US 41/301 and 15th Street West.***

Manatee Avenue & 6th Avenue in Downtown between 15th Street West & US 41/301

The section remains the same with the exception of proposing on-street parking on both sides of the street.

Typical Downtown Street

The typical downtown street removes the center turn lane and narrows the street to 2-lane section. On-street parking on both sides remains and either a grass lawn or pavers are used between the sidewalk and curb. The speed limit should be either 20 or 25 mph.



Proposed section for a typical downtown street.



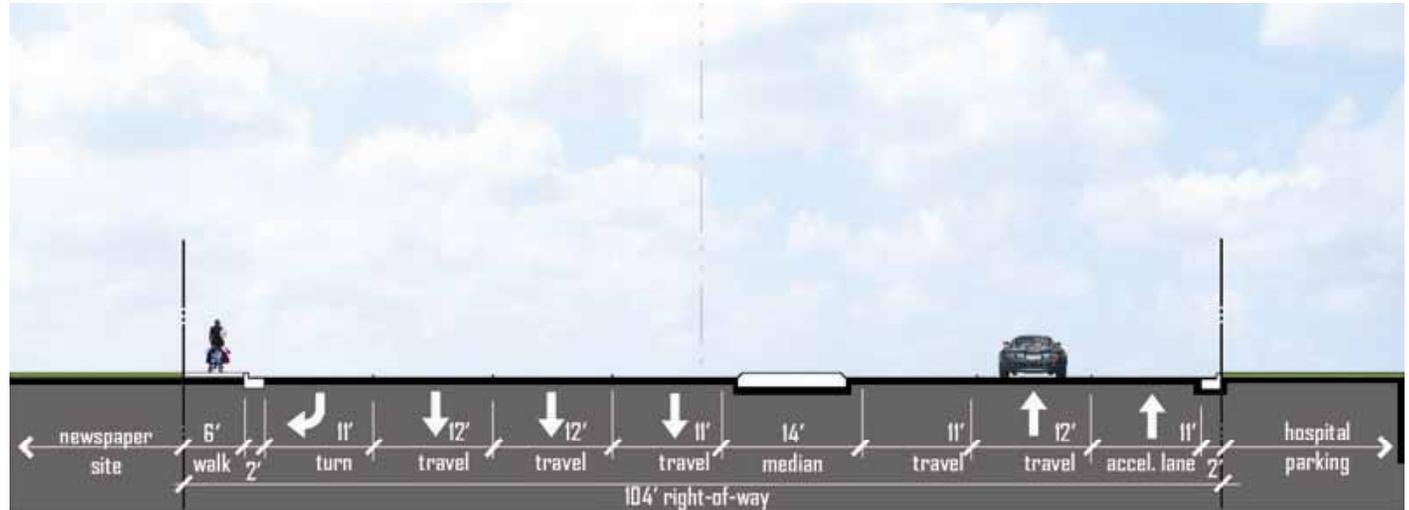
This example shows how a 2-lane section with on-street parking looks for a typical downtown street.

The Streets - Conceptual Sections

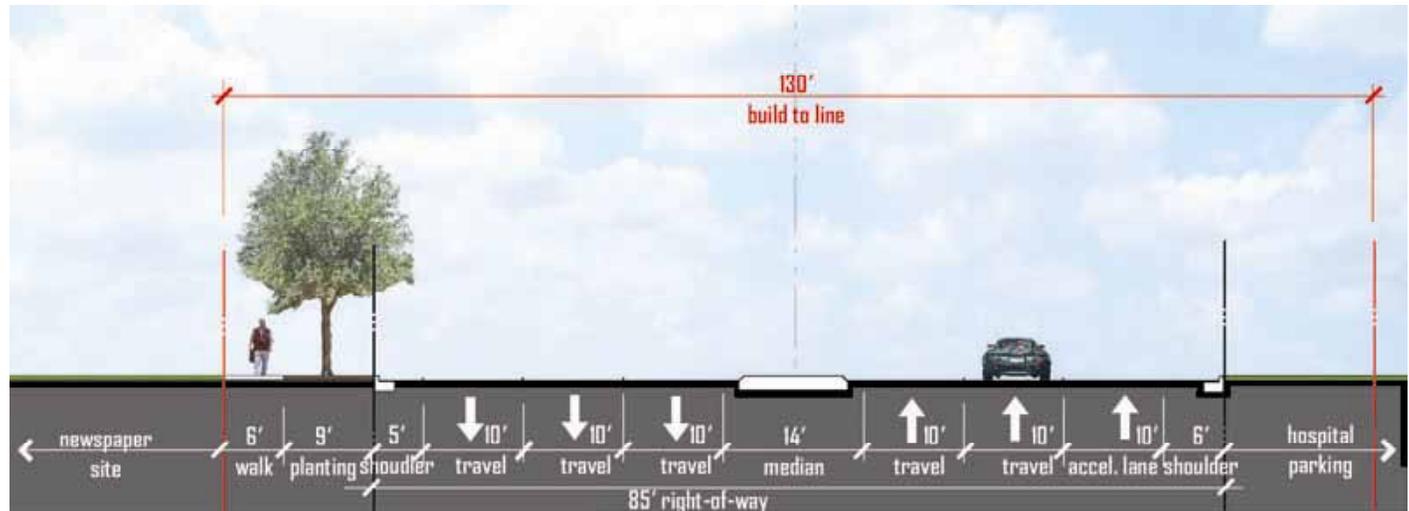
US 41/301 (1st Street)

There are two minor recommendations for US 41/301. The first change is to reduce the lane widths from 12'-0" to 10'-0" with the outside lane having a 5'-0" shoulder for larger vehicles. This would also provide space for cyclists without the need to make official bike lanes. Also, the space on the side would help create a buffer for pedestrians.

The second recommendation is remove the right turn lanes. The right turn lanes do not increase car-carrying capacity much and only serve to increase speed or set-up the expectation of speed. With these changes, there could be room within the right-of-way for street tree planting or a gateway architecture as previously mentioned.



Existing section of US 41/301.



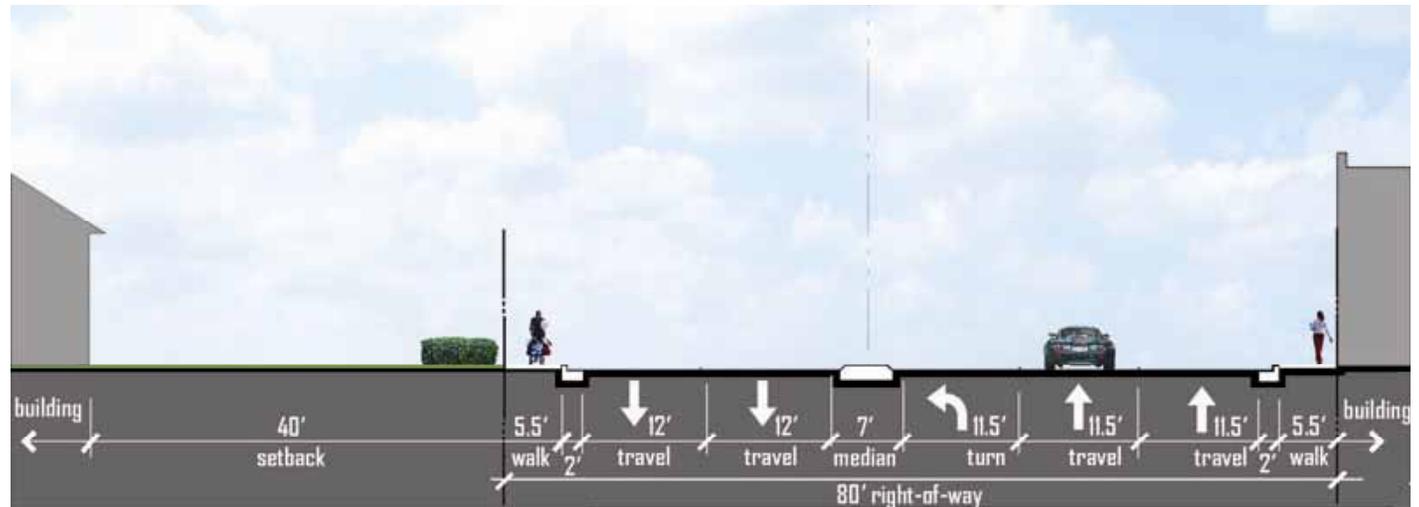
Proposed section of US 41/301.

The Streets - Conceptual Sections

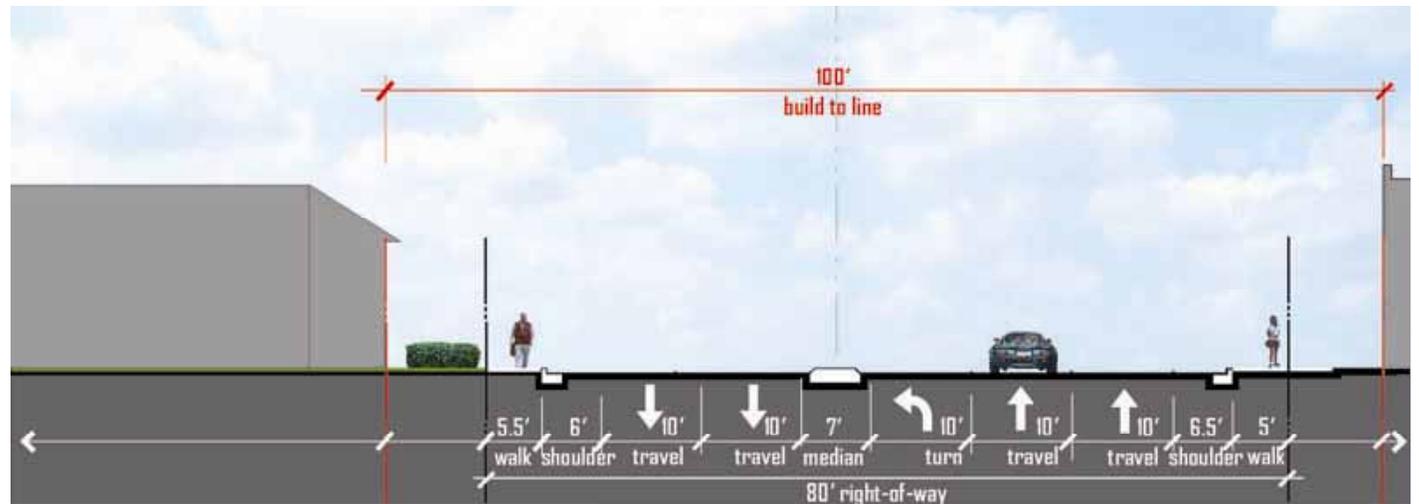
9th Street West

The primary recommendation for 9th Street West is to put the lanes on a “road diet” and use the remaining space to create larger shoulders which could support cyclists and provide increased buffer from pedestrians.

Because of the 9th Street West’s presence in the downtown, a build-to line should be required for all new development. This build-to line will help calm the road by narrowing the driver’s optical width while still allowing for street tree planting.



Existing section of 9th Street West.



Proposed section of 9th Street West.

The Streets

Roundabouts

Roundabouts are proposed in two places within the study area: on the west side just after the Ware’s Creek Bridge and on the east side just before 15th Street East where Manatee Avenue and 6th Avenue currently meet. The roundabout allows an efficient and safe method for dispersing traffic at these critical locations.

A vehicle entering a roundabout must yield to any vehicle already in the roundabout. Pedestrians cross at the splitter islands. These crossings can be marked with striping or specialty paving. Cyclists can either use the roundabout like other vehicles or use the sidewalks and behave like the pedestrian. Emergency vehicles or oversized vehicles with large “swept paths” can utilize the mountable apron on the inside circle.

The proposed designs need further detailed study, but could be estimated to need between 150’-0” to 190’-0” inscribed diameter of right-of-way for a two-lane roundabout. Additionally, further discussion will be needed to engage adjacent private property owners, whose land may abut or impact the roundabout locations.



This roundabout in Bradenton Beach has been successful for traffic circulation as well as the community.



Roundabouts can also be beautiful elements within the community.



Roundabouts are designed to facilitate emergency vehicles and other large vehicles like this school bus

Park and Open Space Systems

Parks and Open Spaces

Downtown Bradenton should consider a parks master plan to bring together all the various districts and neighborhoods in a connective pattern of green open space.

First and foremost should be a Riverwalk Master Plan connecting 15th Street East with 15th Street West. Along this connective Riverwalk should be a sequence of parks that are “plastic” in the sense that they flex and bend to all different kinds of uses. These parks should be the centers of community life and be composed of discrete outdoor rooms, shaded paths and garden architecture.

They are meant to be inclusive social hubs, relevant on “every” days and “special” days, activated by people who are playing, watching, resting, eating, listening and learning. If designed successfully, they will become understandable places of civic pride and beauty and contribute to the overall image of Downtown Bradenton.



Existing parks and greenway/bikeways that should be maintained and improved where necessary.



Different types of community events enhance park life.



Many different things can happen in the same park.



Interactive features for children are a source of civic pride and popularity.

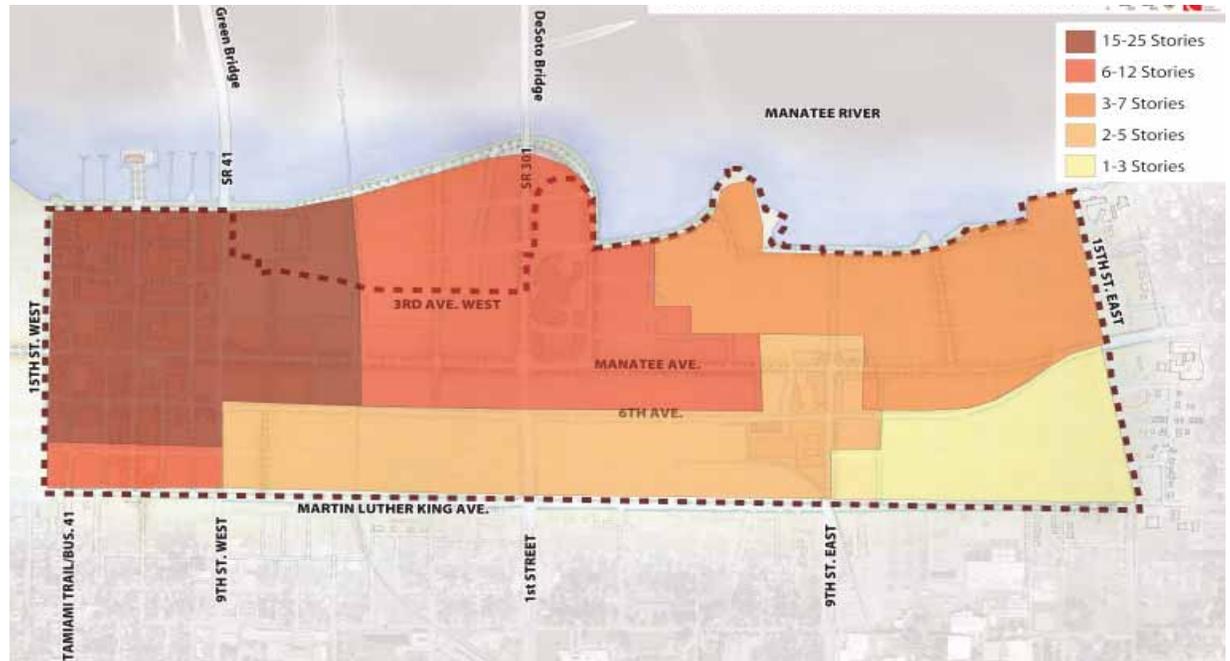
Building Heights

Height Recommendations

The proposed development program for the various district underscores the importance of creating height standards for the various districts in Downtown Bradenton. The tallest buildings should be focused towards the downtown core with the height stepping down as you move south and east towards the existing neighborhoods. Taller buildings should be built to the street and be placed appropriately on the site to maintain or create view corridors to amenities such as the Riverfront.

The City should also consider “Give and Get” rules, or incentive packages, that allow developers to achieve taller heights, but at the cost of giving back something, whether it be public open space enhancements, use of public art or high quality and context-based architecture as some examples.

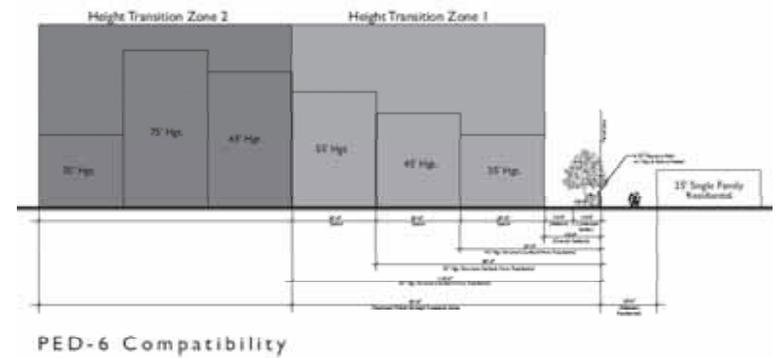
The City should continue to study the use of form based codes and/or design standards to guide and facilitate future building types.



Proposed height range recommendations for various areas in Downtown Bradenton. The taller heights would only be allowed as a part of an incentive package.



The use of architectural detailing breaks down the impact of height.



Architectural “step-backs” help to preserve view corridors and lessen the impact of taller buildings adjacent to small structures.

Market Analysis - Summary

Methodology

The methodology used to complete this analysis included the review of national, regional and local data forecasting economic trends. Those trends were analyzed to determine the regional market trends and the estimated demand for each land use. Once this data was established, a focused analysis of the Downtown Bradenton CRA was completed to determine the estimated capture of this regional demand within study area. The following is a summary of the market conditions and outlook for the Downtown Bradenton CRA based on the perceived market conditions, realistic product types, viable price points and potential absorption.

Overview

The current demographic trends and market characteristics bode well for the downtown residential market. A sizable portion of the CRA's housing stock is dated or in disrepair and therefore has a higher potential for redevelopment and reinvestment. The migration of families to suburban areas over the past several decades has altered the Downtown's landscape. However, national and local demographic shifts show a growing preference for an urban lifestyle and a highly walkable environment with diverse amenities that is proximate to retail and cultural offerings.

Market Outlook

Statewide, Florida is experiencing strong population growth. This growth will continue to fuel the Bradenton market and, specifically, the Downtown. The recent increase in new construction in Downtown will continue to yield positive ramifications with the CRA. These new high-end developments will help attract the types of retail in line with the community vision. However, to create a truly vibrant environment within the CRA, developers, local authorities and the community need to work towards offering attainable and workforce housing. This mixture of residential typologies will in turn allow the resulting retail growth to be rich and diverse.

Residential

The regional residential growth is expected to continue with a focus towards a more urban lifestyle. In addition to the projects already under construction or recently completed within the CRA, the annual new home demand can be expected to be around 230 units annually. Of these 230 units, 49% of new homes will be within the \$100,000-\$200,000 price point range. This underscores the importance of a focused growth in attainable housing, because this range of residential is a largely unmet demand in the Downtown CRA.

Retail/Commercial

Though relatively strong, the local retail market lacks variety and therefore loses business to its neighbors within the region. High quality area shopping centers are averaging occupancy rates above 90%, however, most recent construction has occurred in East Manatee County. The market is dominated by traditional enclosed malls and cookie-cutter strip malls with national big box tenants. Bradenton residents go to Sarasota and Tampa in search of nightlife and unique shopping/dining experiences.

Home Price	Projected Manatee County Demand	Subject Area Capture
Below \$100k	1,539	-
\$100 to \$150k	4,535	68
\$150 to \$200k	3,010	45
\$200 to \$250k	1,755	26
\$250 to \$350k	3,082	46
\$350 to \$450k	997	15
\$450k +	1,963	30
TOTAL	16,880	230

Based on RCLCO market research and analysis

The recent success of “Main Street at Lakewood Ranch” suggests that the market has a strong preference for an open air, unique shopping environment. Similarly, Downtown Bradenton is uniquely positioned to deliver an authentic and historic main street shopping environment. Retail designations that can create a sense of place and a public realm with extensive programming centered on parks, water and unique civic spaces will capture consumers from the formulaic, suburban retail centers. With current market conditions, the Downtown can expect a retail growth of approximately 180,000 square feet within the next five years.

Combining the Old Main Street charm with the existing historic buildings and the beautiful vistas to the riverfront will create a unique environment with a sense of place that can successfully draw visitors and residents alike to Downtown Bradenton. However, currently 75% of the buildings in the downtown core are currently occupied by civic and office uses. This needs to have a more vibrant mixture of land uses, most importantly, supporting residential. If this happens, there will be more opportunities for diverse retail that will spur more successful redevelopment.

Office

A surging local economy and strong job growth have resulted in a healthy office market. Following a trend that has occurred in most major metro areas across the country, local suburban office markets have grown in popularity. Since 2000, the Downtown has added 100,000 square feet of office while the suburban community of Lakewood Ranch has added 583,000 square feet of office space.

The Downtown Bradenton office market is largely occupied by the Manatee County governing office market and it generally commands lower rents than its neighbors to the north and south. Furthermore, Downtown’s rents are less than the local suburban office markets making it difficult to attract new, financially feasible office buildings. At 13% vacancy, Class A office space in the Bradenton CRA is currently within the 10-15% vacancy equilibrium range. Based on current market conditions, the Bradenton CRA can absorb an additional 132,000 square feet of office space within the next five years.

With projections pointing to a continued robust growth, demand for office space should remain. Strong suburban office markets and high land costs will make it difficult to deliver rental office space in the downtown. Developers will respond by offering for-sale office condominiums and introducing other innovative solutions such as mixed-use projects and the reinvestment and redevelopment of older, historic buildings. The market trends suggest the aging boomer population is not yet ready to retire and increasingly are starting new businesses and seeking small office space. Therefore, large floor plate buildings catering to big corporate tenants should not be encouraged, rather a greater opportunity lies in providing office space for small businesses.

The health and wellness sector will also provide a strong anchor for future development. Manatee Memorial Hospital is a strong local economic engine. The Hospital employees are in acute need of quality nearby housing and neighborhood serving retail. Likewise, the physicians are seeking office space to serve their growing clientele. Therefore, the aging of Bradenton’s population and accommodating growth of the healthcare industry will mean the areas surrounding the Hospital are well-positioned for redevelopment.

Additional information regarding the complete Market Analysis, as well as comparable Case Studies of other similarly sized cities, can be found in ***Appendix B*** of this document.

Conclusions & Next Steps

Conclusion

The Bradenton CRA and the City are in a unique time and place. Although the real estate market is currently soft, particularly with regard to residential condominiums, the market will eventually rebound and the City should be prepared with revised plans and regulations that ensure the community vision will be achieved through future development. The Downtown by Design Master Plan establishes a relatively specific vision for the future of Downtown Bradenton.

However, Master Plans have a limited shelf life, particularly relative to recommended planning/policy revisions. Without continued discussion and near term action, the energy and stakeholder consensus identified in the planning process will be lost and forgotten. By acting now, the CRA will be better equipped to respond to the marketplace, particularly when the residential market increases from its current temporary slowdown.

The following are series of recommendations based on the outcome of the Downtown by Design visioning process to guide the City and the CRA towards achieving the community driven vision.

Develop a Regulatory Structure to Support the Master Plan

Property owners' expectations and future plans are based on existing plans and regulations, however, existing plans and regulations lack specificity and do not always reflect community goals and objectives. Inconsistencies between existing plans and regulations and community goals and objectives incorporated in Downtown by Design invite conflicts between developer proposals and the community. Therefore, the City and CRA need to move expeditiously to implement Downtown by Design. Here are some steps needed to achieve this:

- a. Formally endorse the Master Plan and establish a firm schedule for adoption of proposed comprehensive plan and land use regulation amendments.
- b. Amend City Comprehensive Plan to address Goals, Objectives and Policies relevant to the downtown CRA, establish necessary downtown CRA land use classifications and designate the downtown CRA on the future land use map.
- c. Extend the CRA Cycle (which expires in 2010) for another term to maintain this vital function for the future. Negotiate a compromised tax increment model between the City, County and CRA.
- d. Amend the CRA Plan incorporating the provisions of the Master Plan, including: pedestrian and vehicular circulation, urban design principles, identified redevelopment projects and strategic redevelopment actions such as public investments or incentives.
- e. Amend the City's Land Development Regulations to support the urban form and development objectives of the Master Plan. This may include the creation of form based codes tailored to the specific goals and new urban design standards for the downtown CRA.
- f. Adopt strategic policies for community redevelopment including specific actions and measurable objectives for catalytic projects, economic development incentives and the prioritization of public infrastructure improvements.

Act on identified catalytic sites to identify development opportunities

Several specific sites were identified in the Master Plan report as potential catalytic properties for redevelopment due to factors such as large land area, proximity to water or partnership opportunity. These sites require further review and feasibility studies to gauge the full potential value and to prioritize which sites will have the most impact. Three of those potential sites are listed below with the potential steps needed to activate those opportunities:

Conclusions & Next Steps

- a. Explore the potential of the City Hall site for either phased redevelopment of the parking lot and portions of the building, or the entire property. Discuss potential inclusion of the County Library and 'Player's Theater' sites for a large waterfront mixed-use, residential redevelopment opportunity. This may include a developer's solicitation (RFQ) to field proposals for consideration.
- b. CSX site at 9th Street East and 6th Avenue East. This site may be ideal for a large multi-family residential project which could support downtown commercial and employment centers with moderate price point (workforce accessible) housing, provided appropriate density rights and/or other incentives can be brought to the table to make a financially viable development.
- c. Downtown worship sites. There are several downtown churches with large areas of surface parking. These areas could be explored for joint development of structured parking which would serve the church on weekends and business/retail areas during the week and at night. A small portion of spaces could be reserved for the churches during the week. This strategy could provide needed joint use parking, while liberating the balance of the church property for its own facility expansion needs.
- d. Underutilized surface parking lots. There are a few parking lots west of the new downtown parking garage that could be partnered with to create additional downtown mixed-use housing. The proximity to downtown services and the lack of current building stock makes these parking lots prime candidates for redevelopment.

Support the downtown government and healthcare economic centers and other downtown commercial as vital community assets

The downtown centers of Manatee County and the City of Bradenton government offices and Manatee Memorial Hospital are the largest downtown commercial land use drivers and based on current market trends they will likely

continue to grow and have evolving needs. The CRA should be supportive of the needs of these industries, while focusing their redevelopment initiatives to support overall desired downtown character. Strategies for accomplishing this are listed below:

- a. Develop a program for workforce housing in the downtown area to support the government and hospital employment centers. This may include specific entitlement incentives or other subsidies as well as increased programs with local or regional community development partners to build a mix of housing alternatives close to downtown.
- b. Pursue all forms of mixed residential in the CRA and attract daily needs elements such as a grocery store to make downtown a more viable living alternative.
- c. Support a well designed mixed-use medical wellness district around the hospital including new doctor and hospital office/retail opportunities and joint planning on large new healthcare investments.
- d. Support a well designed, mixed-use legal and government district around the downtown core including new legal office/retail opportunities and joint planning on large new investments.
- e. Continue joint parking and transit/trolley development opportunities for shared use between business and evening/weekend.

Commit to a pedestrian oriented and attractive infrastructure model for Downtown Bradenton

The most livable and economically successful downtowns enjoy a fine grain network of interconnected, two-way, livable, attractive, walkable streets with on-street parking and a mixed-use fabric of buildings that address the streetscape and quality public space with 'front door' relationships. Downtown

Conclusions & Next Steps

Bradenton has the “bones” to support such a vibrant place and the following are recommendations for achieving this desire:

- a. Pursue a Two-Way street study with the regional authorities to balance the auto movements with pedestrian and business development needs. Utilize two way streets and increased network to facilitate the many local auto, bike and pedestrian movements which are currently being hampered by the high speed, one-way regional pairs and other large roads.
- b. Test a downtown trolley or transit circulator between the primary downtown employment centers and nodes such as Main Street, Cultural Facilities and Waterfront.
- c. Complete infrastructure enhancements as needed to support specific redevelopment, which may include enhanced utilities, new streetscape/circulation or park/open space improvements.
- d. Create a downtown wayfinding system to provide attractive downtown graphics and assist pedestrians and vehicles in finding points of interest, important activity nodes and special events.
- e. Create downtown gateways by enhancing bridge and street entries with architectural features, lighting and landscaping into the downtown.

Complete a great downtown parks and cultural system

An important component in any downtown setting is a connected system of great open spaces and community assets which provide the shared ‘address’ necessary to support higher density residential, retail and office uses. A group of specific enhancements are recommended below:

- a. Complete a high quality Riverwalk Master Plan. This includes a higher quality and consistent trail, with benches, trees, overlooks, interpretive signage and wayfinding and other amenities, as well as signed bike routes south of the river leading to the trail. This amenity enhances waterfront activity while extending the waterfront address to properties which are not located directly on

the water.

- b. Enhance Glazier Gates Park and other park sites within the study area to be more attractive, with needed community program and supported by enhance maintenance budgets.
- c. Commit to ‘front door’ visibility for Riverwalk and open space sites. Require, where possible, a public roadway between open space and the front door of buildings.
- d. Identify neighborhood enhancement programs such as sidewalk repair, livable, intersection crossing, street trees and lighting which can be implemented incrementally throughout the CRA.
- e. Expand partnerships between the CRA, the City, Downtown businesses and cultural venues to promote market and leverage weekly and annual events.
- f. Identify specific enhancements to Old Main Street retailing, including improvements to vacant property and blank facades to support an active retailing appearance.
- g. Develop a mechanism through a Capital Improvement Plan budget to fund the improvements and their maintenance.

Adopt a partnership approach to achieving success

In virtually every case, the Master Plan objectives will require partnerships to leverage investment for mutual success. Very few elements act in physical or economic isolation within a diverse, mixed-use and active downtown setting. Key partners such as Neighborhood Associations, Business Associations, FDOT, Manatee County, City of Bradenton, the School Board of Manatee County, and numerous development interests must be met within a partnering environment that supports their needs while ensuring desired community form – which should be mutually supportive goals.

- a. Identify a package of potential incentives for desired private development such as additional development rights, parking structure subsidy or infrastructure enhancements which can be targeted for specific projects as they meet community needs for land use and urban form.
- b. Work with The School Board and County on potential revisions

Conclusions & Next Steps



- or enhancements to educational/magnet or special use facilities, as well as library, transit and courthouse opportunities.
- c. Work with County and FDOT on regional transportation studies necessary to explore the downtown road design and develop context sensitive solutions responsive to the desired walkable downtown ‘urban village’ environment.
- d. Maintain contact with neighborhood groups and local government as the plan is implemented to continue conversation, receive comments and input for mutual success.

Commitment is vital to the success of Downtown Bradenton. The opportunity is there to succeed, but only if there are coordinated efforts of all parties and the continued dialogue with the public. Downtown Bradenton has a tremendous future as a center for urban living and rich in arts and cultural resources. Within this document, the City and the CRA have some of the tools needed to ensure that this community vision for Downtown Bradenton is achieved.

***“Success isn’t a result of spontaneous combustion.
You must set yourself on fire.”
– Arnold H. Glasow***

Bradenton City Council Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. 07-16

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BRADENTON, FLORIDA, ADOPTING "DOWNTOWN BY DESIGN" - THE BRADENTON COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AREA MASTER PLAN.

WHEREAS, the City's once-great downtown lost its vibrancy over the second half of the 20th century as a result of nearby suburban development patterns and uses; and

WHEREAS, over the past 20 years, there has been an amazing renaissance in downtowns across America and that growth and development is testament to the emotional commitment to our urban heritage and the pent-up consumer demand for walkable, vibrant places in which to live, work and play; and

WHEREAS, the Council recognizes the need for citizen-driven planning initiatives to guide the City of Bradenton and other agencies and individuals to ensure orderly redevelopment and effective utilization of funds; and

WHEREAS, the Bradenton Downtown Development Authority (DDA) commissioned Glatting Jackson, a community design and planning firm, to manage the creation of Downtown by Design, a citizen-driven, community-authored plan to redevelop the Bradenton Community Redevelopment Area (CRA); and

WHEREAS, Downtown by Design was developed for the City of Bradenton and the Bradenton Downtown Development Authority by area property owners, the business community, the arts and culture community, institutions, neighborhood representatives, and, most importantly, the people of Bradenton and Manatee County; and

WHEREAS, Downtown by Design is intended to provide a broad foundation and public consensus for planning, regulatory and economic principles for Downtown Bradenton and the entire CRA; and

WHEREAS, Downtown Bradenton possesses the heart and soul of the City of Bradenton, serves as every citizen's shared neighborhood, and stands as an important center of commerce, residence and recreation; and

WHEREAS, Downtown by Design builds upon the unique aspects of Downtown Bradenton and addresses emerging redevelopment opportunities to ensure a diverse future as an urban center serving the needs of its residents and its visitors; and

WHEREAS, Downtown Bradenton is a key element in the City's overall economic prosperity and as an important part of its efforts to promote and market Bradenton to new investments; and

Resolution 07-16

1

WHEREAS, with Downtown by Design as a guide and the right tools for success, Downtown Bradenton will transform itself into a more livable city in which young professionals, retirees, families and visitors will come to live, work, play, shop and visit.

WHEREAS, commitment to this plan and continued dialogue with the public is vital to Downtown Bradenton's future success; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BRADENTON, FLORIDA:

1. Downtown by Design attached hereto and made a part hereof; is hereby adopted, serving as a guide for the successful redevelopment of the Bradenton CRA.
2. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

PASSED AND DULY ADOPTED this 28th day of February 2007

ATTEST:

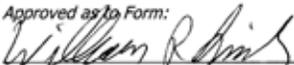


Carl Callahan, City Clerk & Treasurer



Wayne H. Poston, Mayor

Approved as to Form:



William Lisch, City Attorney



Resolution 07-16

2

Bradenton DDA Resolution



RESOLUTION NO. 07-03

A RESOLUTION OF THE BRADENTON DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, ACTING AS THE BRADENTON COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY, ADOPTING "DOWNTOWN BY DESIGN" - THE BRADENTON COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AREA MASTER PLAN.

WHEREAS, the City's once-great downtown lost its vibrancy over the second half of the 20th century as a result of nearby suburban development patterns and uses; and

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WHEREAS, Downtown by Design builds upon the unique aspects of Downtown Bradenton and addresses emerging redevelopment opportunities to ensure a diverse future as an urban center serving the needs of its residents and its visitors; and

WHEREAS, Downtown Bradenton is a key element in the City's overall economic program and as an important part of its efforts to promote and market Bradenton to new investments; and

WHEREAS, with Downtown by Design as a guide and the right tools for success, Downtown Bradenton will transform itself into a more livable city in which young professionals, retirees, families and visitors will come to live, work, play, shop and visit.

WHEREAS, commitment to this plan and continued dialogue with the public is vital to Downtown Bradenton's future success; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BRADENTON DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, ACTING AS THE BRADENTON COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY:

1. Downtown by Design attached hereto and made a part hereof; is hereby adopted, serving as a guide for the successful redevelopment of the Bradenton CRA.
2. This Resolution shall be submitted to the City Council of the City of Bradenton, Florida, as an endorsement of Downtown by Design and as a request of the City Council to accept and endorse the plan.

PASSED AND DULY ADOPTED this 27th day of February 2007.

ATTEST:


Mike Kennedy, Executive Director


Debra Cooper, Chair

Approved as to Form:

William Lisch, City Attorney