



Finding Solutions

Building Consensus

Generating Momentum

## THE CITY OF MYRTLE BEACH, SC

November 12-13, 2014

ULI SC Technical Assistance Panel



**Urban Land  
Institute**

**South Carolina**

## **WHAT ARE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PANELS**

TAPs provide expert and objective strategic advice to sponsoring organizations on complex land-use and development issues. TAPs link public agencies and nonprofit organizations to seasoned real estate, planning, financing, marketing and technical experts through ULI district councils. TAPs are part of ULI's Advisory Services program which has assisted more than 500 communities worldwide since 1947.

## **How DO TAPS Work**

Sponsors request the services of a TAP with regard to a specific issue that can be addressed by a panel of experts in one or two days. The District Council assists the sponsor in refining the scope of the assignment and convenes a panel to address those specific issues. The sponsor works within ULI guidelines to provide background information to ULI panelists prior to the panel's convening. When convened, members of the TAP view the subject site, hear from public and private stakeholders, and then deliberate on the assigned issues. At the conclusion of its work, the panel presents an oral report to stakeholders; that is followed by a written report within approximately six weeks.

## **WHAT DO TAPs Cost**

TAP fees depend on the size of the scope, length of the panel and the detail of the final report, but typically fees run between \$10,000 and \$15,000. Each TAP is different and fees are negotiated individually. Panel members donate their time and are only reimbursed for their out-of-pocket expenses such as overnight lodging and transportation to attend the TAP. To ensure objectivity, panel members cannot be involved in matters pending before the sponsor, be working for the sponsor, or solicit work from the sponsor during the panel's assignment period.



Panelists touring the study area with the TAP sponsor

# The Panel Process

## **TAP PANEL SELECTION**

THE ULI SOUTH CAROLINA DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSIDERED THE MYRTLE BEACH DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT CORPORATION'S GOALS FOR THE TAP. SEVEN PANELISTS WERE SELECTED BASED ON THEIR EXPERTISE.

## **SPONSOR PRESENTATION**

THE TAP PANELISTS ASSEMBLED AT THE SANDY BEACH RESORT IN MYRTLE BEACH ON WEDNESDAY, NOV. 12, FOR A PRESENTATION BY THE TAP SPONSOR. THE PRESENTATION WAS MADE BY DAVID SEBOK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE DRC, AND DRC BOARD MEMBERS.

## **TOUR OF STUDY AREA AND ENVIRONS**

FOLLOWING THE SPONSOR PRESENTATION, TAP PANELISTS TOURED PORTIONS OF MYRTLE BEACH, INCLUDING THE 75-ACRE SOUTH MIXED USE AREA STUDY AREA, VIA PASSENGER VAN AND ON FOOT. THE TOUR AREA INCLUDED THE MYRTLE BEACH PAVILION SITE ADJACENT TO THE NORTHERN END OF THE STUDY AREA AND THE MYRTLE BEACH BOARDWALK AND PROMENADE, WHICH RUNS ACROSS THE EASTERN END OF THE STUDY AREA. THE TOUR CONCLUDED ON FOOT AT THE SANDY BEACH RESORT ON THE SOUTHERN END OF THE STUDY AREA.

## **STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS**

THE AFTERNOON OF NOV. 12 AND THE MORNING OF NOV. 13, PANELISTS MET WITH COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS INCLUDING ELECTED OFFICIALS, BUSINESS AND PROPERTY OWNERS, TOURISM EXECUTIVES, AND DEVELOPERS.

## **PANEL DELIBERATIONS**

THE PANEL HELD TWO WORKING SESSIONS, THE FIRST ON WEDNESDAY EVENING FOLLOWING THE SPONSOR PRESENTATION, SITE TOUR AND STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS; AND THE SECOND ON THURSDAY UPON THE CONCLUSION OF STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS AND A SECOND INPUT SESSION WITH THE TAP SPONSOR. DURING THESE SESSIONS, PANELISTS REVIEWED THE SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS, ADDRESSED THE FOCUS AREAS, IDENTIFIED OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES, DEVELOPED RECOMMENDATIONS AND PREPARED A POWERPOINT PRESENTATION THAT ADDRESSED THE QUESTIONS POSED BY THE SPONSOR, THE MYRTLE BEACH DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT CORPORATION.

## **PUBLIC PRESENTATION**

THE PANEL PRESENTED ITS POWERPOINT PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS AT 4 P.M. THURSDAY, NOV. 13, IN AN OPEN SESSION TO THE TAP SPONSORS, COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS AND INTERESTED PUBLIC IN THE HISTORIC MYRTLE BEACH TRAIN DEPOT. PANELISTS THEN TOOK QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE.

## **REPORT PREPARATION AND RELEASE**

THE TAP, UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF THE ULI SOUTH CAROLINA DISTRICT COUNCIL, PREPARED THIS REPORT ON ITS CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS. IT PRESENTED THE REPORT TO THE SPONSORS IN DECEMBER 2014.

# The City of Myrtle Beach Technical Assistance Panel

NOVEMBER 12 - 13, 2014 | MYRTLE BEACH, SC

The Urban Land Institute South Carolina  
205 1/2 King Street  
Charleston, South Carolina 29401

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

SPONSOR AND ULI PARTICIPANTS	6
BACKGROUND & SCOPE	9
STAKEHOLDER INPUT & KEY ISSUES	12
OBSERVATIONS & FINDINGS	14
TAP RECOMMENDATIONS & NEXT STEPS	18
KEY TAKE AWAYS	27
APPENDIX A: CONCEPTUAL DESIGN	29
PANELIST BIOGRAPHIES	40

# SPONSOR AND ULI PARTICIPANTS



## SPONSOR

**Myrtle Beach Downtown Redevelopment Corporation**

## PANEL CHAIR

**Matt Kennell**, City Center Partnership  
*Columbia, SC*

## PANEL MEMBERS

**Andy Gowder**, Pratt Thomas Walker  
*Charleston, SC*

**Geoff Grout**, Center Capital Solutions  
*St. Helena Island, SC*

**Jim Haley**, Cityvolve  
*North Charleston, SC*

**Patrick Head**, Studio A  
*Charleston, SC*

**Pat Mason**, Center for Carolina Living  
*Columbia, SC*



Panelists toured the study area and its immediate environs by minibus and by foot

## ULI SOUTH CAROLINA PROJECT STAFF

**Heather Foley**, Executive Director  
*ULI South Carolina*

**Grant Jackson**, Consultant / Technical Writer  
*Columbia, SC*

**Sydney Parker**, Contractor  
*ULI South Carolina*

**Jenna Wylie**, Associate  
*ULI South Carolina*



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Under the direction of the Urban Land Institute's South Carolina District Council, the Myrtle Beach Technical Assistance Panel convened at the Sandy Beach Resort in Myrtle Beach on Nov. 12 and Nov. 13, 2014, bringing together community leaders, stakeholders and a panel of planning, design, tourism and development professionals for a day and a half session focused on helping the Myrtle Beach Downtown Redevelopment Corporation, the DRC, revitalize a 75-acre section known as the South Mixed Use Area or SMUA.

Located on South Carolina's coast, Myrtle Beach is at the center of a large and continuous stretch of beach known as the Grand Strand. A major center of tourism, Myrtle Beach with a permanent population of roughly 30,000, hosts an estimated 14 million visitors each year, largely from Easter to Labor Day.

The South Mixed Use Area is an older part of the ocean front community and has suffered considerable decline as new opportunities have developed to the north and south and inland. The panel, sponsored by the Myrtle Beach Downtown Redevelopment Corporation, was asked to consider:

- What public incentives and actions can result in increased redevelopment, eliminate blighting influences, and spur new private investment?
- What uses and businesses can be attracted to this area and be compatible?
- What neighboring development and redevelopment can influence this area?

The TAP prepared its recommendations based on a review of the briefing materials, a debriefing with the executive director and members of the board of the Downtown Redevelopment Corporation, a tour of the study area and extensive interviews with stakeholders. Panel deliberations included a S.W.O.T. analysis, determining key focus areas and recommendations.

The panel made short, mid and long-term recommendations that focused on the following

- Redevelopment of the Pavilion Site
- Creation of an Arts & Entertainment District
- Children's Museum Relocation & Park Development
- Family Entertainment & Residential Development
- Boardwalk Development



## **Redevelopment of the Pavilion Site**

Urging the City and the Burroughs and Chapin Co. to form a public private partnership to redevelop the adjacent, vacant Myrtle Beach Pavilion Site as a catalyst for redevelopment of the SMUA. The redevelopment was envisioned in three sections, including:

- Amphitheater/Music Venue
- Public Park / Greenspace
- Mixed-Use Live / Work / Play Development

## **Creation of an Arts & Entertainment District**

Building off the redevelopment of the Pavilion Site to attract additional entertainment properties/venues into the SMUA. Urging adaptive reuse of older lodging properties in the northern end of the SMUA for arts and artisans incubators. Encouraging property owners to consider similar adaptive reuse such as a small business incubator or co-working and maker spaces.

## **Children's Museum Relocation & Park Development**

Moving the Children's Museum of South Carolina to the SMUA and creating an adjacent park would help transform the character of the SMUA into a family-friendly area.

## **Family Entertainment & Residential Development**

Targeting the southern end of the SMUA for redevelopment for additional family entertainment and development of a complementary family residential district. This area includes the new location of the Children's Museum of South Carolina.

## **Boardwalk Development**

Leveraging the Myrtle Beach Boardwalk & Promenade by extending it the entire length of the oceanfront bordering the SMUA and eventually tying it into the Withers Swash Boardwalk at Family Kingdom Amusement Park.



# BACKGROUND & SCOPE

With its greatest asset its location on the South Carolina Coast, Myrtle Beach's permanent population of around 30,000 can rise to 10 times that number during any given week, with its peak season from roughly Easter to Labor Day. Myrtle Beach has long catered to families and hosts some 16 million visitors annually. While the baby boomers and their families still have a huge impact on the tourism industry, the demographics are shifting and changes are being felt in the market. The Millennials, born between 1980 and the mid 2000s, are now the largest generation and are having a huge impact on the U.S. economy. Any redevelopment effort must now take into consideration the wants, desires and lifestyle of this hugely diverse group. But Myrtle Beach must also continue to be boomer friendly as Boomers retire and their expected lifespan continues to increase.

The seasonal nature of Myrtle Beach has given rise to some unique challenges as much of the year businesses, especially along the beach, are shuttered or open on a limited basis, economic activity declines precipitously, and many vacation rental properties are not occupied.



Study Area: South Mixed Use Area (SMUA)



Existing conditions range from well-maintained cottages, to operational motels to abandoned properties.

The Myrtle Beach Downtown Redevelopment Corporation engaged the services of an Urban Land Institute South Carolina Technical Assistance Panel in an effort to reinvigorate an area known as the South Mixed Use Area, or SMUA, a 75-acre, roughly 18-block area bordered by 1st Avenue N., Kings Highway, 7th Avenue N., and the oceanfront. The area is sandwiched between two entertainment districts -- the Myrtle Beach Pavilion Site on the north and the Family Kingdom Entertainment District on the south.

With the exception of some development along the oceanfront, the SMUA is a largely blighted area of older hotel/motel properties in disrepair, a disproportionate number of vacant lots sometimes used for surface parking, poor or non-existent lighting, no sidewalks, and streets in need of repair. Because of the seasonal nature of the beach economy, many properties lay fallow from October to April. Many of these older hotel properties provide housing for seasonal tourism workers. A lack of investment in private property maintenance coupled with a need for stronger building codes and code enforcement also contributes to a sense of decline in the area.

The private property is very diverse with a mixture of local and out of the area / state ownership. Many are individual lots and only a few cohesive groups of lots are under one controlling party making it difficult for major new development to produce modern market demand projects. The area has few larger tracts under common ownership. Missing lots make it difficult for modern redevelopment to occur, with the “hole in the donut” and adjacent blighted parcels problem. Additional challenges include owners with high value expectations that are not market or redevelopment supported.

Exceptions to the blight can be found in some older, well-maintained beach cottages and along the oceanfront. The oceanfront is lined mainly with accommodations properties, including older motels, older hotel/condo mid-rises, and newer pre-recession high-rise condotels. However, at present no nationally branded properties sit along this stretch of the beach. Kings Highway has some new streetscape elements bordering generally older strip commercial buildings that are likely still viable but some vacancies exist.

Crime is an issue in the SMUA, which now attracts a less than “family friendly” customer and criminal element resulting from the general disinvestment in the properties and their deteriorated and outdated condition. The exceptions are the better managed mid- and high-rise properties along the oceanfront and a few older but renovated and well maintained beach cottages.



Utility projects within the study area demonstrate public investment in the SMUA



New crosswalks and streetscape have helped to contribute to the success of the Boardwalk project.

While there seems to have been a general lack of public investment in the area, bright spots include the Boardwalk/Promenade, 3rd Avenue South Gateway Project, construction of the 2nd – 9th Avenue N. Ocean Boulevard Utility and Streetscape Project, and Kings Highway Streetscape projects.

Other than the beach, the Boardwalk and the streets there is no public property or public amenities in the area.

Despite all the challenges the SMUA seems to offer a real opportunity to increase values and provide a special neighborhood to visit or live in close proximity to the beach and Boardwalk, the adjacent entertainment attractions north and south, and the generally busy Ocean Boulevard and Kings Highway corridors

To assist the DRC's efforts in revitalizing the South Mixed Use Area, the Urban Land Institute Technical Assistance Panel was asked to address these questions/issues:

**What public incentives and actions can result in increased redevelopment, eliminate blighting influences, and spur new private investment?**

Public improvements and amenities that:

- Add value to neighboring private property.
- Create a special attraction.
- Change the vehicular and pedestrian experience and increase access [public parking, streetscapes, pedestrian block streets, etc

Financial incentives to private investment and redevelopment [such as reduced fees and taxes, demolition of blighted structures, leased parking spaces, etc.].

- Business friendly permit processes.
- Zoning overlays permitting added signage and creating an architectural or environmental theme & character.

**What uses and businesses can be attracted to this area and be compatible?**

- Tourist vs. residential.
- Accommodations, retail, entertainment, and employment.

**What neighboring development and redevelopment can influence this area?**

- The Pavilion Site.
- The "Next Big Thing".
- Chester Street and Kings Highway and avenue treatment.
- Family Kingdom and 3rd Avenue S. Gateway.
- Key catalyst projects.



# STAKEHOLDER INPUT & KEY ISSUES

“Myrtle Beach can’t figure out what it wants to be, said one stakeholder. There is a lack of image and a lack of style, another said. “Myrtle Beach just morphed along the coastline,” said another. Myrtle Beach has forgotten how to be a beach community, another said. “There is great opportunity, but you need to change the perception of Myrtle Beach.””

Following a briefing by David Sebok, Executive Director of the Myrtle Beach Downtown Redevelopment Corporation, and several members of the DRC board; a tour of portions of Myrtle Beach and the South Mixed Use Area; and interviews with numerous stakeholders, the panel identified several key issues with direct relevance to the questions posed for the TAP:

## Image/Brand

Several stakeholders expressed concern that Myrtle Beach either has no real brand or that it projects a less than favorable image. This was especially true of the image of the study area, the SMUA. There was concern that the old core of Myrtle Beach has been allowed to deteriorate while development has been encouraged and pushed to newer areas away from the beach. “Myrtle Beach can’t figure out what it wants to be,” said one stakeholder. There is a lack of image and a lack of style, another said. “Myrtle Beach just morphed along the coastline,” said another. Myrtle Beach has forgotten how to be a beach community, another said. “There is great opportunity, but you need to change the perception of Myrtle Beach,” said another. The City needs to maximize the value of the beach, said another.

## Infrastructure

Crumbling and insufficient infrastructure is an issue in the SMUA that was mentioned by business and property owners. As noted in the DRC’s project description, the SMUA is an area with “poorly lit and unimproved avenues with no sidewalks.” While significant infrastructure improvements have been made along portions of Ocean Boulevard and Kings Highway, the lack of public improvements in the interior of the SMUA has helped create an island of blight. The lack of and crumbling infrastructure within the SMUA was very evident during the panel’s tour.

## Abandoned & Neglected Property and Seasonal Use

The interior of the SMUA is a patchwork of vacant and neglected properties. One stakeholder described the SMUA as a forgotten area with stagnant ownership and another described it as “the other side of the tracks.” While some property owners have made significant efforts to improve and upgrade their properties, absentee ownership contributes to issues of neglect. Some of the older hotels and motels are only open during the vacation season and often attract a less than family-friendly clientele. Weekly and monthly tenants are problematic in the off-season with little respect for the area, one stakeholder said.

The **Redevelopment Ready Community** initiative in Michigan is a state-wide certification program that supports communities to become development ready and competitive in today's economy. It encourages communities to adopt innovative redevelopment strategies and efficient processes which build confidence among businesses and developers. ([michiganbusiness.org](http://michiganbusiness.org))



Stakeholders also noted a lack of building code enforcement contributing to the decline of property in the area, with inspectors overwhelmed by new construction and unable to focus on older properties. Nothing is done to clean up the vacant lots and trash, one stakeholder said. During the tour of the area, panelists noted buildings, especially older lodging properties, that appeared to be abandoned but were told they were simply closed for the season. Numerous vacant lots in the area appeared to be used as unpaved parking lots.

## Crime

Crime was cited by a number of stakeholders as a significant issue in the South Mixed Use Area and confirmed by police. Drug crimes such as burglaries and prostitution are a concern and may be exacerbated by the seasonal use of some properties, which gives rise to a lack of activity in the area for much of the year. Poor street lighting in the area is also a contributor. The many vacant and dark properties are dangerous and breed criminal activity. Police noted that they expend much of their time dealing with “Quality of Life” crimes such as graffiti, littering, trespassing and vandalism in the area. While other areas of Myrtle Beach have active Neighborhood Watch organizations, efforts to organize in the SMUA have not been successful, largely because of the lack of permanent residents. Police do a good job of responding to calls in the area, but are not proactive, one stakeholder said.

Homelessness, while certainly not a crime, is also an issue in the area, stakeholders said, that can require the use or diversion of police assets.

## Vision, Engagement & Process

An issue for several stakeholders was at least a perception, if not actual, lack of vision and engagement by the City in the SMUA, except on the oceanfront. “The City has to make it attractive for developers to come into the area,” one stakeholder said.

The panel also noted that the City has engaged in multiple planning initiatives that involved the SMUA, but has not moved to action. One panel member suggested that the City just needs to take the three plans, find common elements and move to action.

Stakeholders also expressed concerns over the City’s development process, especially with actions of the Community Appearance Board. However, while some smaller-scale developers said they found it difficult to navigate through the process, others said they had no issue at all with the CAB.

# OBSERVATIONS & FINDINGS (SWOT)

Based on the briefing, tour and stakeholders' interviews, the Panel performed a simple SWOT – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats – analysis.

## STRENGTHS

- Myrtle Beach Downtown Redevelopment Corporation
- Successful development of the Boardwalk & Promenade
- Burial of utility lines and new streetscape on Ocean Boulevard
- Investment in public infrastructure, although limited
- The oceanfront makes Myrtle Beach and the SMUA a highly desirable location
- Excellent public access to the beach
- Some owners and operators are invested in the community and see lots of upside potential
- Strong tourism market
- A sense of civic pride



The Boardwalk has become a destination for tourists and Myrtle Beach residents



Market Common continues to attract national retailers and residential development.

## WEAKNESSES

- Perception that the area is not safe
- Limited Building Code enforcement
- Unregulated use of land for parking
- Lack of a downtown brand
- Uncertain development approval process
- Lack of residential presence and housing options downtown
- Poor communication between the development community and public officials
- Proximity of schools to downtown (There is a complex of schools from Elementary to High School around 30<sup>th</sup> Avenue N.)



Limited commercial activity and public amenities deter residents and tourists from spending time in the SMUA

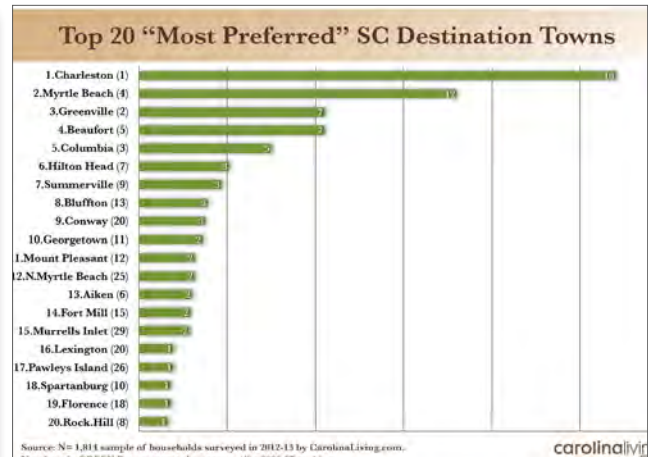


Owners and operators are not accountable for maintaining their property.



## OPPORTUNITIES

- Ample redevelopment opportunities along the ocean
- Build on the success of the Boardwalk
- Relocate and expand the Children's Museum to enhance family atmosphere
- Extend the Boardwalk
- Connect to Withers Swash area
- Create an amphitheater / concert venue / with adjacent open space and mixed-use development
- Expand the entertainment district
- Create additional interim public uses of the Pavilion Site
- Create a pricing strategy for parking based on proximity to the beach
- Attract large Millennial demographic to diversify tourist market
- Create pedestrian/bicycle friendly traffic patterns
- Encourage adaptive reuse of buildings
- Expand family-oriented activities
- Attract corporate investment in the public realm
- Brand Myrtle Beach as "South Carolina's City on the Beach"

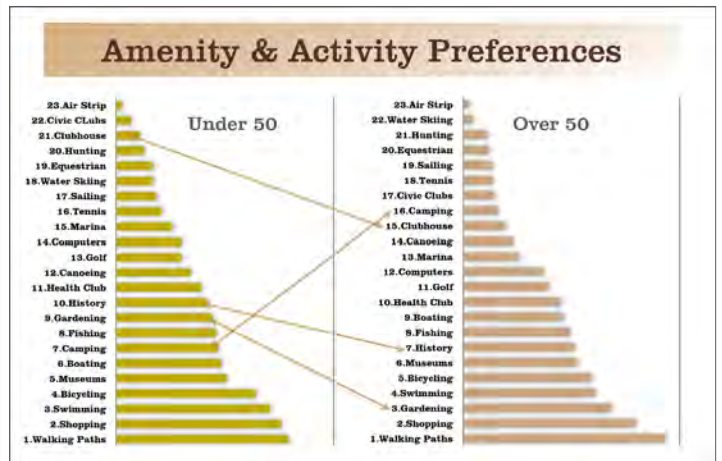


Myrtle Beach is the No. 2 destination town in South Carolina. There is ample opportunity to expand the current demographic.



## THREATS

- Crime / perception of crime & homelessness
- Blighted properties
- Poor public infrastructure
- Vacant properties
- Absentee property owners
- Seasonal property use
- Lack of year-round tourism options
- Singular tourism driven economy
- Lower annual visitation as the golf industry declines
- Diminishing Baby Boomer population




## GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

- Older generation has a strong connection to the community's history
- Mistrust / lack of interest from outside the downtown community
- Untapped market potential
- Lack of collective vision
- Improvement projects identified in the 1999 Pavilion Area Master Plan do not include updated and current prioritization and pricing
- Need for focus and implementation on plans already adopted
- New zoning ordinance good, but not always consistent with vision
- Need for diversity of employment options
- Lack of Non-Government Organization and non-profit presence in the SMUA
- Community Appearance Board policies and procedures need overhauling, including board turn-over and timely response.

# RECOMMENDATIONS & NEXT STEPS

The Panel divided its recommendations into short-, mid- and long-term efforts and also took a more detailed look at major opportunities.



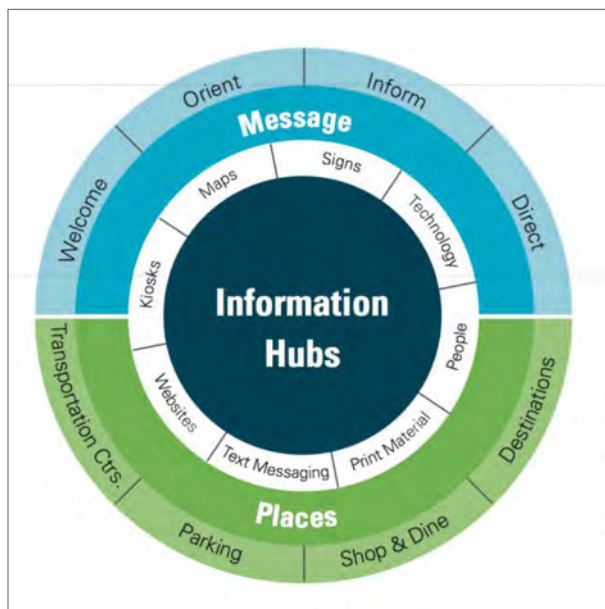
“In this day and age, where people often select where they will make their home as much by aesthetics as necessities, form and function have to work in tandem to create communities that have a compelling narrative, and public art is often the first, and most accessible, means of creating that narrative.”

## SHORT TERM (PRESENT – 1 YEAR)

- *Adopt a Municipal Improvement District to fund governance, safety, streetscape and advocacy*
- *Build public consensus from past planning efforts to guide all future development*
  - *Distill existing plans into an implementation strategy*
- *Identify public and private project champions for major initiatives as well as for the overall effort*
- *Increase code enforcement and create a more visible police presence to enhance public safety*
- *Permit limited closing of streets to serve as a venue for street fairs and festivals*
- *Encourage adaptive reuse of older existing houses and motels for artist and small business incubators*



Combine Public Art & City Identity



1. Create exterior lighting guidelines for neighborhoods, parks, buildings and streetscapes.
2. Update zoning and design review documents to include energy efficient lighting and associated incentives.
3. Identify lighting goals (i.e. safety, identifying pedestrian connections, enhance nighttime use of SMUA District, highlighting architectural features and seasonal celebrations)

Develop a signage and lighting strategy to enhance public safety and security

## MID TERM (PRESENT – 5 YEARS)

- Form a joint venture with the Burroughs and Chapin Co. to create a mixed-use venue at the Pavilion Site to include concert venue / amphitheater on the beach, active public park, and hospitality / residential project
- Create a Landmark Architectural Feature for concert stage
- Relocate and expand the Children's Museum and create an adjacent public park and expanded greenway to spur development of a family residential district
- Acquire property as available to assemble and make available for public use and development (Public Private Partnerships)
- Use New Market Tax Credits and Tax Increment Financing and other municipal finance tools
- Create, develop or utilize innovative land acquisition tools
- Consider eminent domain when appropriate and/or necessary for parks, greenways or other public uses
- Evaluate and amend existing zoning and building codes to conform with the master plan
- Use financial incentives for owners to restore properties (i.e. low interest loans) in exchange for private sector buy-in to bring properties into compliance with master plan and neighborhood expectations
- Extend the Boardwalk/Promenade to connect to the Withers Swash Walk



## LONG TERM (PRESENT – 10+ YEARS)

- Strategically realign the street grid to enhance pedestrian/bicycle experience and viability of developable lots
  - Consider closing and abandoning portions of Flagg Street between 2nd and 8th avenues and some avenue blocks
  - Consider reconnecting Chester Street through the Pavilion Site
  - Realign the 501 entrance gateway to 7th Avenue North
- Develop the entertainment and hospitality district adjacent to the amphitheater site
- Develop a complementary family residential district to the south adjacent to Family Kingdom



Recommended SMUA Redevelopment

# MAJOR INITIATIVES

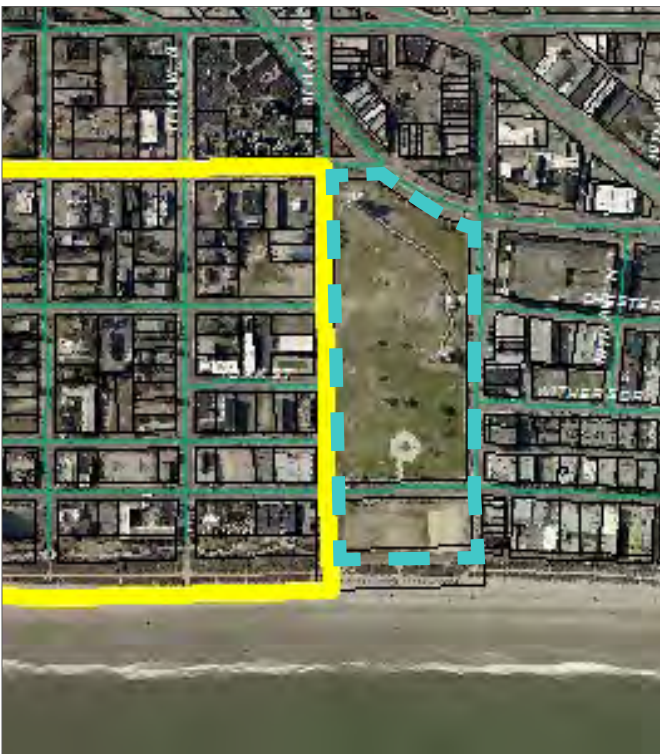
## Pavilion Site: The Next Big Thing

Redevelopment of the Pavilion Site as a mixed amphitheater, park, and hospitality / residential site is envisioned as the “Next Big Thing” for the area. The site is adjacent to the northern end of the South Mixed Use Area and could be a huge catalyst for redevelopment of the area.

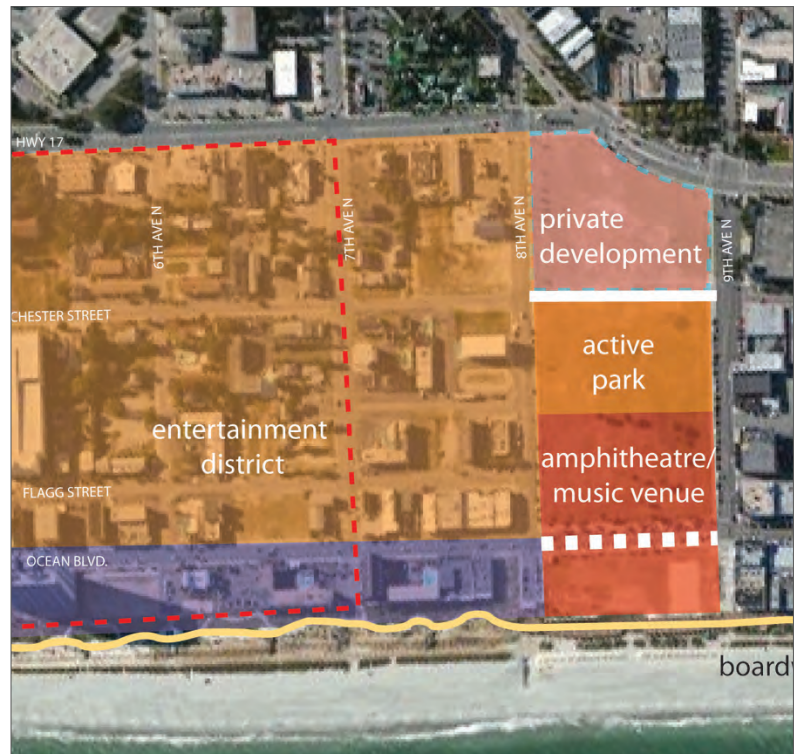
The City of Myrtle Beach should seek a public/private partnership joint venture with the Burroughs and Chapin Co. for redevelopment of the site that would pay homage to the Burroughs and Chapin legacy in Myrtle Beach. This needs to be a true partnership with the City contributing substantial resources to the initiative.

The panel recommends that the site be redeveloped in three sections:



1. Amphitheater / Music Venue
2. Public Park / Greenspace
3. Mixed-Use Live / Work / Play



Existing Conditions



Recommended Development of Pavilion Site

-  SMUA Study Area
-  Existing Pavilion Site





### > Amphitheater / Music Venue

An outdoor amphitheater could attract entertainment ranging from classical symphony concerts to rock concerts, including the Hot Summer Nights series, to outdoor dramas. This venue should be located at the eastern end of the property adjacent to the oceanfront with the stage facing inland from the ocean and outdoor seating with an ocean view. The panel recommends that the stage be developed as a Landmark Architectural Feature.



### > Public Park / Greenspace

A large active park / greenspace is recommended for the middle section of the Pavilion Site. This park could be used for numerous outdoor activities, including festivals and outdoor arts & crafts shows. It would also provide an entryway to the amphitheater / music venue. The park also could be connected via a greenway through the recommended arts & entertainment district on the northern end of the SMUA to the park at the relocated Children's Museum in the SMUA.



### > Mixed-Use Residential/Retail

The far western end of the Pavilion Site, bordering U.S. 17, is recommended for a mixed-use residential & retail development. The panel feels a live-work-play development in this location would have considerable appeal to the Millennials.

The Noisette Company partnered with the City of North Charleston to create Riverfront Park. The park includes a boardwalk, playground, dog park and amphitheater.

## THE MILLENNIAL IMPACT

*"Today's 20-somethings are a restless bunch. During this time of young adulthood and general experimentation, vacationers and ambitious professionals are always seeking out the best economical and social opportunities to enjoy across the country. Although interests vary across the board, some of the most important factors in choosing a vacation or residential destination at this age are cultural attractions, the social scene (especially nightlife), median population age, and access to public transit."*

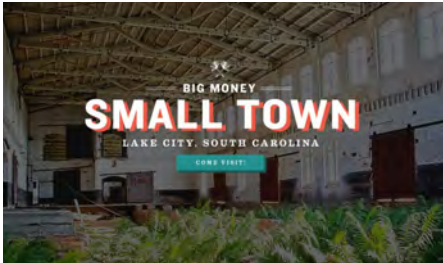
Wall Street Cheat Sheet, December 2014



# THE ECONOMIC IMPACT

## Artfields, Lake City, SC

April 24 - May 2, 2015



*“And by nearly anyone’s standards, the inaugural ArtFields was a success. The 10-day festival attracted 22,000 people — more than three times the town’s population — and pumped a whopping \$5.4 million into the local economy, according to an economic impact study conducted by Miley and Associates of Columbia. Fowler says seven to 10 new businesses have opened up on Lake City’s Main Street alone since the last ArtFields”*  
- Charleston City Paper, April 2014



## Arts & Entertainment District

The panel believes that the northern half of the SMUA has potential to be developed into an extended Arts & Entertainment District. Many cities have had considerable success in attracting artists to what have been less than desirable properties, generally because of the below market-rate availability of space. Beach locations have always been a huge draw for artists, and now for the emerging artisan economy as well. Myrtle Beach has the opportunity to create its own beach-side artists & artisans community.

The eclectic nature of the older hotels/motels and beach cottages in the SMUA could be a huge draw if marketed properly. Such use also might make it easier to preserve some of the old Myrtle Beach feel of the area, rather than wholesale demolition of properties and new build.

### *Possibilities include:*

1. Adaptive reuse of an older existing hotel or motel for an arts incubator
2. Adaptive reuse of existing hotel or other larger commercial property for artisan and small businesses.
3. Encouraging property owners to consider adaptive reuse and market available properties.
4. Building off the redevelopment of the Pavilion Site into an amphitheater/music venue to attract additional entertainment properties/venues into the SMUA.

## > Arts Incubator

The City should consider developing a partnership with area arts organizations to acquire an older lodging property in the northern end of the SMUA that could be turned into an arts incubator. Rooms could be transformed into artists’ studios and space offered at reasonable long-term rental rates.

## > Artisan Incubator

The 21st Century Artisan Economy includes web designers, authors, manufacturers of small but exclusive lines of luxury items, consultants in niche specialties, online retailers, and software developers as well as artisan bakers and candlestick makers. As with arts incubators or standard small business incubators, Myrtle Beach has the opportunity to see a property in the SMUA repurposed as an artisans’ incubator, and to encourage the adaptive reuse of other properties for artisan businesses. As with the arts incubator, this could be a joint venture, perhaps with Coastal Carolina University or Horry-Georgetown Technical College.



Children's Museum Park, San Diego, CA



## Children's Museum Relocation & Park Development

As a major facet of the South Mixed Used Area, the panel recommends relocation of the Children's Museum of South Carolina, which has been at its North Oak Street location for 18 years, to a family friendly entertainment and residential district suggested for the southern half of the district. The panel also recommends the creation of a new children's public park/ green space adjacent to the museum.

### Relocation of Children's Museum

Since opening in 1994 in a local mall, The Children's Museum of South Carolina has experienced tremendous growth, and two expansions have followed. Visitation is 50% tourist and 50% locals, making it an ideal fit for the SMUA. Moving the museum to a new facility in the SMUA would provide additional space, a home much closer to the oceanfront and would help transform the character of the SMUA into a family-friendly area.

### Development of New Park / Greenspace

Developing a new neighborhood park adjacent to a new children's museum would be another aspect of changing the character of the SMUA. If property for the museum could be acquired one to two blocks from the oceanfront, the park could be a linear greenspace perhaps stretching all the way to the beach. This space could draw visitors from the beach to the museum.

A meandering greenway could also be extended to the north tying the area to the redeveloped Pavilion Site park and to the south tying into a boardwalk extension that is connected to Withers Swash. This system of linear greenways could create a family and pedestrian / bicycle-friendly connectivity for the entire redeveloped SMUA.



Les machines d'île Nantes, France

## Family Entertainment & Residential Redevelopment

The panel recommends that the southern end of the SMUA, adjacent to the Family Kingdom entertainment complex, be targeted for redevelopment for additional family entertainment and development of a complementary family residential district. This area includes the new location of the Children's Museum of South Carolina.

### Family Entertainment Venue

An effort should be made to attract a family entertainment venue that would not be tied to the seasonal nature of Myrtle Beach's tourism economy. A venue such as the Great Wolf Resorts complexes with indoor/outdoor amenities would provide an attraction for families year-round and help the SMUA's tourism economy begin to move away from a purely seasonal focus. Other types of year-round family focused entertainment should also be recruited.

### Family Residential District

Both seasonal family-oriented rental and year-round, owner-occupied residential development should be targeted for the southern end of the SMUA. Some development of this type has already occurred adjacent to the area on the west side of Chester Street and some of the better maintained properties in the SMUA are family residential properties. This should include market rate, multi-family apartments and other housing options to encourage year-round occupancy. Amenities such as the proposed park adjacent to the relocated Children's Museum and a linear greenway cutting through the district could help create family and pedestrian/bicycle -friendly connectivity and attract this kind of residential development.

### Boardwalk Development

The Myrtle Beach Boardwalk & Promenade opened in 2010 and has been a great success in revitalizing areas of the ocean front. The northern section, a raised wooden deck, runs from Pier 14 to Plyler Park at the foot of Mr. Joe White Avenue. The middle section, also a raised wooden deck, runs from Plyler to the Pavilion Site. The Southern Promenade, which runs from the Pavilion along the entire eastern edge of the SMUA and currently terminates at 2nd Avenue N., has been described as a meandering oceanfront park. The panel is recommending continued development of the Boardwalk to include encouraging greater year-round commercial activity along the Southern Promenade and eventual extension of the Boardwalk & Promenade to the Withers Swash Boardwalk at Family Kingdom Amusement Park. The panel also recommends the City work with the owners of Family Kingdom and other property owners to explore a way to bridge King's Highway and continue the boardwalk/promenade to the Withers Swash neighborhood.

## Continued Commercial Development

On the walking tour of the area, the panel noted that the middle section of the Boardwalk was abuzz with open businesses and people enjoying the numerous amenities, even in the off-season, while the Southern Promenade area was virtually devoid of activity. The panel suggests encouraging increased commercial activity along areas of the Southern Promenade. The areas fronting and adjacent to the Second Avenue Pier would appear to be prime locations for this kind of development similar to the development between Plyler Park and the Pavilion Site. A Boardwalk Survey Project conducted in the Summer/Fall of 2014 by the DRC would seem to bear out a desire for more of this kind of development. Of the 1,306 responses received on the survey among the most common answers were:

- “Extend the Boardwalk North & South”
- “Higher quality shops”/“Upscale boutiques”
- “More restaurants”/“Mom and Pop restaurants”/“Seafood”
- “Larger variety of adult businesses like bars and clubs”
- “More Boardwalk amenities, including shade, benches, fountains, bathrooms”
- “More large kid/family friendly attractions”

Thought might even be given to redeveloping sections of the Southern Promenade to mirror the Boardwalk.

Revitalization of the South Mixed Use Area will require significant leadership and investment from both the private and public sectors. The panel identified the following key takeaways:

## Extension of Boardwalk & Promenade to Withers Swash

Extending the Boardwalk & Southern Promenade from its current terminus at 2nd Avenue and connecting it to the Withers Swash Boardwalk at the Family Kingdom Amusement Park would continue to promote a sense of connectivity and access to the beach. Imagine the ability of families to safely walk/stroll/bike the entire length and have easy access to the Skywheel and Plyler Park, the Second Avenue Pier, and Family Kingdom, all without having to get back in their car or negotiate a single traffic crossing, plus enjoying a myriad of commercial establishments along the way. This would continue to revitalize the beachfront along the SMUA. An imaginative bridging/crossing of U.S. 17/Kings Highway to Withers Swash would provide even greater connectivity and open up even greater possibilities for family-oriented recreation.

A desire for an extended boardwalk is borne out again by the Boardwalk Survey Project, with one of the most common answers.



# Key Takeaways



Revitalization of the Southern Mixed Use Area will require significant leadership and investment from both the private and public sectors. The panel identified the following key takeaways:

## Leadership

- Seek a collaborative vision for Myrtle Beach that includes the SMUA
- Build public consensus from past planning efforts to guide future development
- Identify both public and private champions for redevelopment elements
- Utilize, support and enhance the DRC as the redevelopment leader and agent of change

## Government Engagement

Bold action will be required by the city government and its ancillary agencies such as the Downtown Redevelopment Corporation to:

- Acquire property as available to assemble and make available for redevelopment through:
  - Public Private Partnerships
  - New Market Tax Credits
  - Tax Increment Financing
  - Innovative Land Acquisition Tools
- Evaluate and amend existing zoning and building codes to conform with the master plan.
- Realign 501 at Kings Highway to improve vehicular and pedestrian circulation.
- Reopen Chester Street between 8th and 9th Avenues North
- Identify and make available financial incentives for owners to restore properties
  - Low interest loans
  - Require properties to be in compliance with the master plan
- Work with property owners to create a Municipal Improvement District to fund governance, safety, streetscape and advocacy
- Ensure that the development process is transparent, easy to navigate and consistent

## Public Infrastructure

The City needs to find mechanisms to:

- Repair existing infrastructure in the interior of the SMUA
- Add sidewalks to the area
- Add lighting to the area
- Acquire property to create new public spaces, such as new parks and greenways.

## Crime

The City needs to be willing to tackle both a perceived and real crime problem in the SMUA.

- Increase code enforcement
- Create a more visible police presence
- Push for creation of an active Neighborhood Watch

# APPENDIX A: CONCEPTUAL DESIGN

Upon the conclusion of the technical assistance panel, the Myrtle Beach Downtown Redevelopment Corporation worked closely with LS3P Associates in Charleston to develop conceptual site plans and design based on the recommendations presented in November. These renderings include the Pavilion site which is owned by Burroughs and Chapin as well and other sites that are owned by several private entities. The recommendations, plans and renderings represent one set of ideas; however, other development and redevelopment opportunities exist.

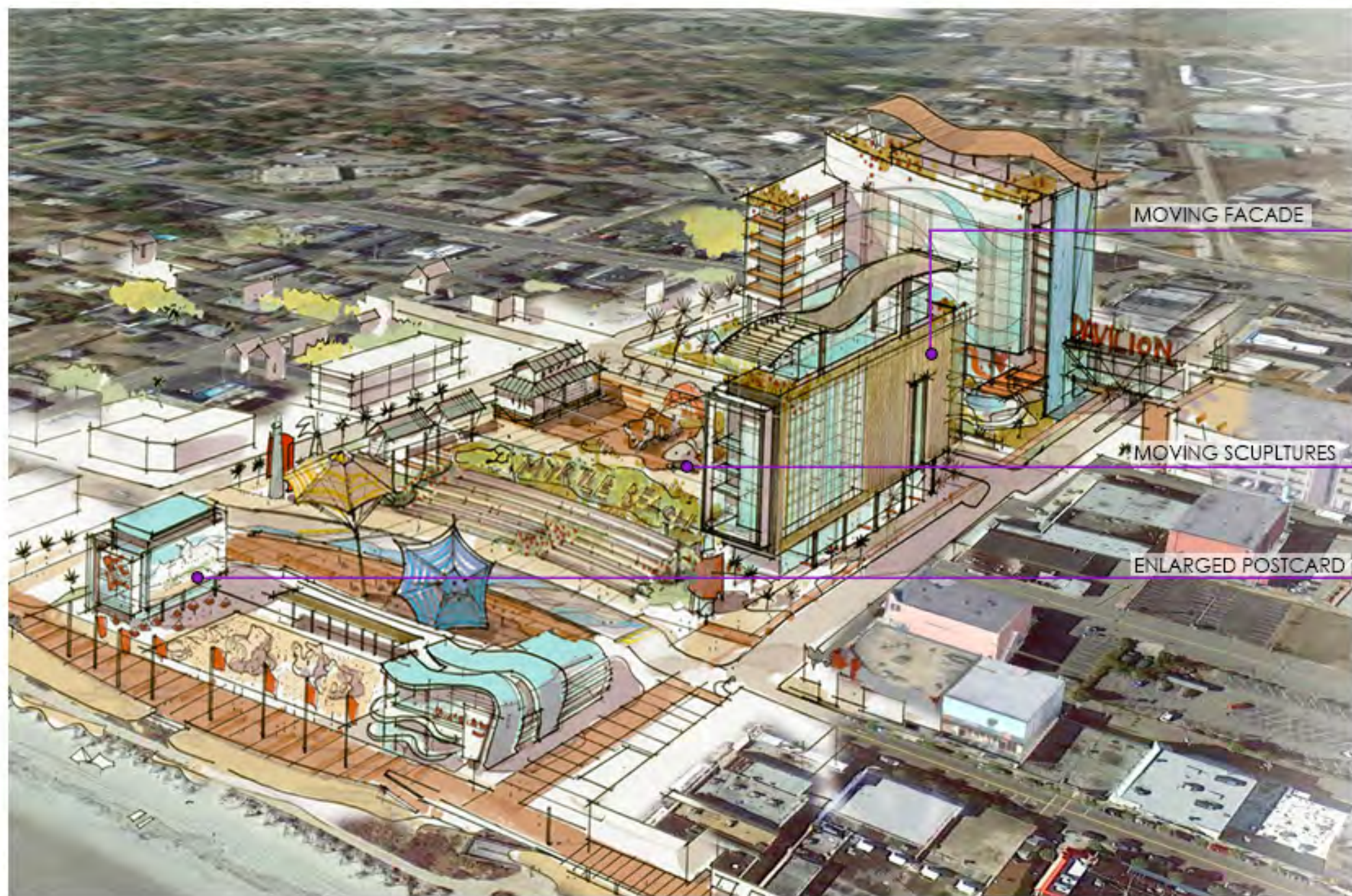
















LS3P



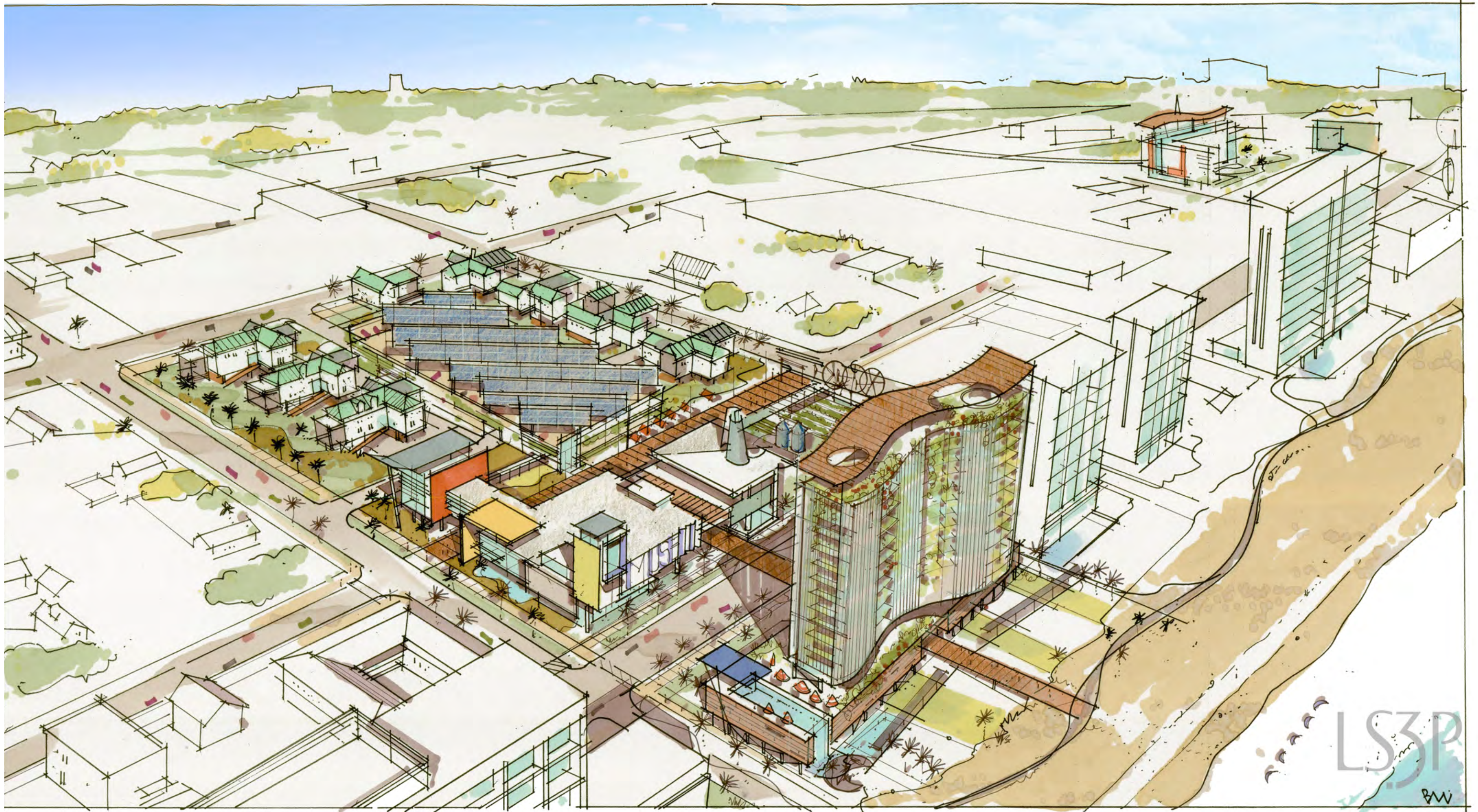


- RESIDENTIAL HOMES
- PARKING GARAGE AND SOLAR PANELS
- PEDESTRIAN ROAD
- WATERFRONT HOTEL
- CHILDRENS MUSEUM

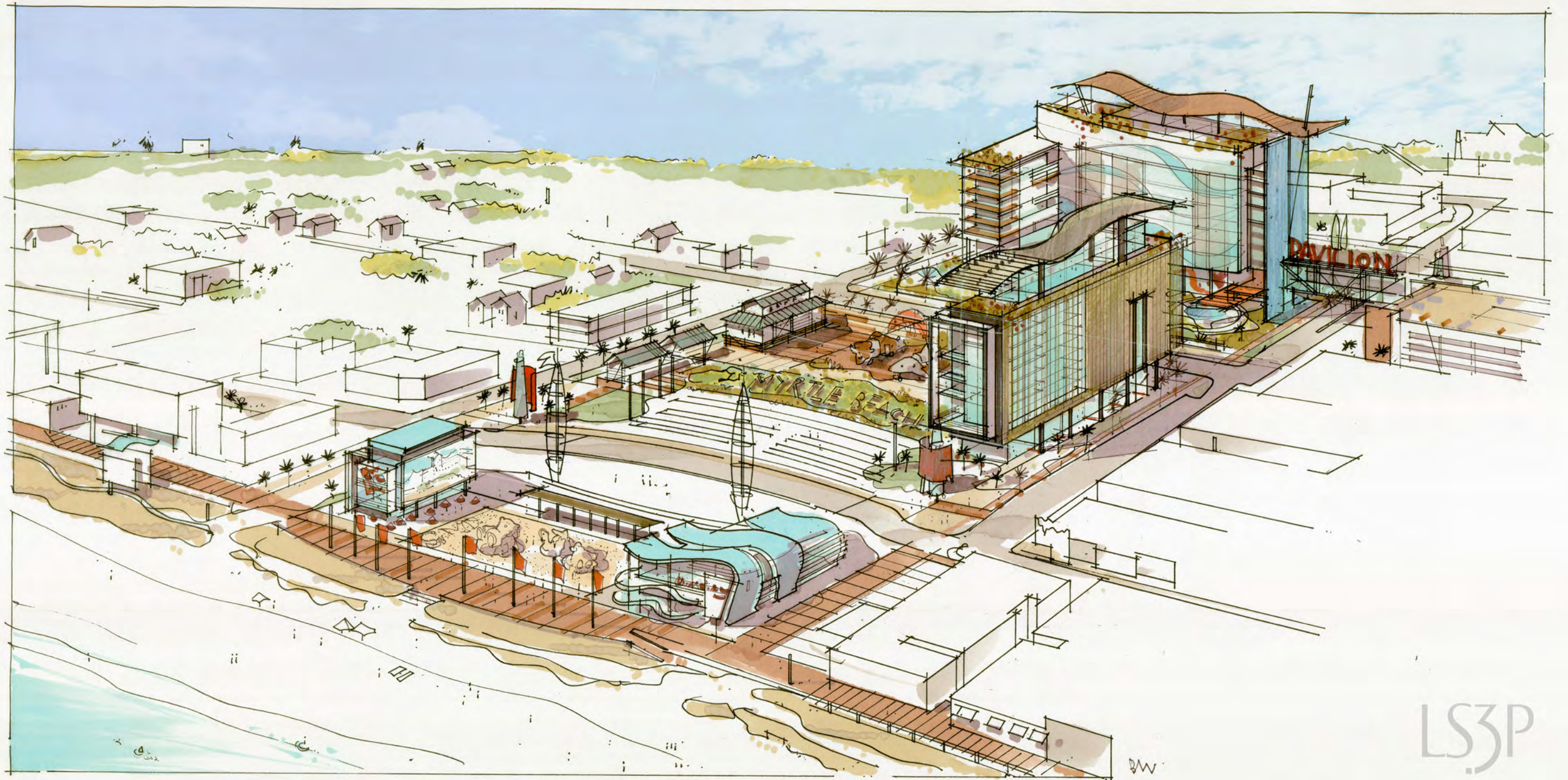






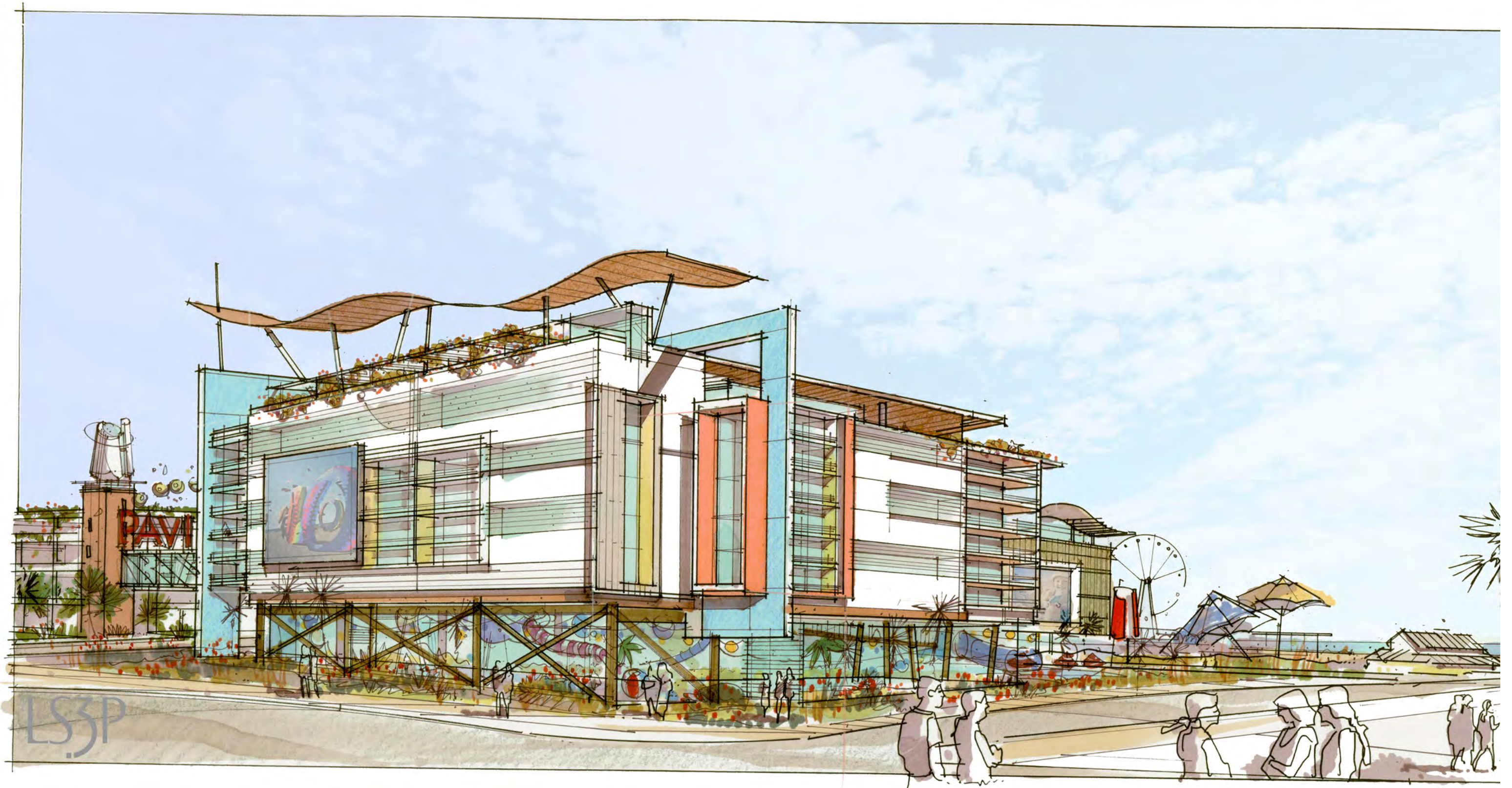




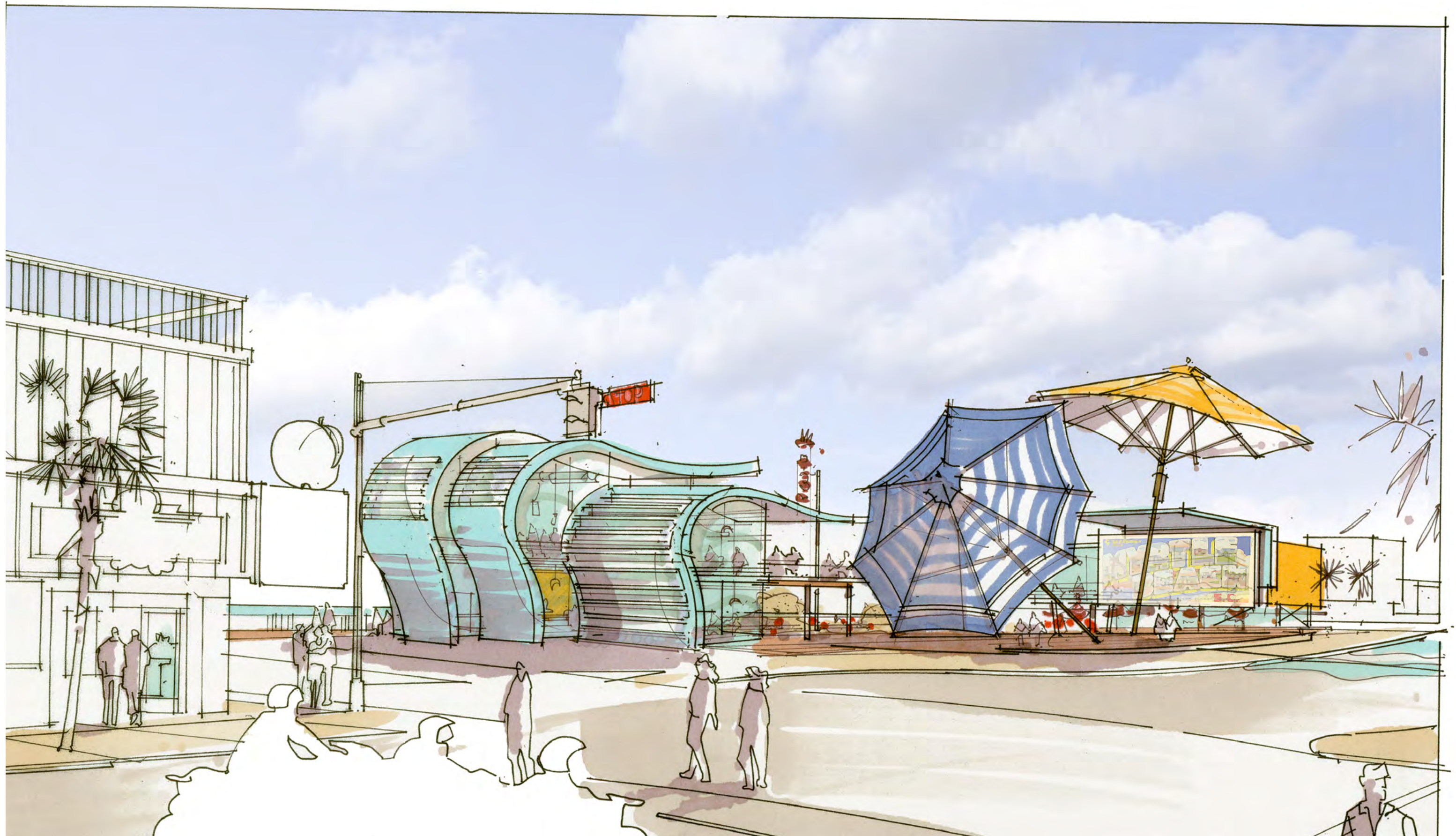


LS3P











# THE PANELISTS BIOGRAPHIES



Matt Kennell, City Center Partnership

## **Matt Kennell, President & CEO City Center Partnership, Columbia**

### **Panel Chair**

Matt Kennell has worked in urban development and management for almost 30 years in a variety of roles including City Planner, Main Street Manager, Community Development Manager, and in Business Improvement District (BID) management in Florida, Virginia, and South Carolina. He is a graduate of Christopher Newport University in Virginia and Florida Atlantic University where he earned his MPA degree in Environmental Growth Management. Matt currently serves as the President and CEO of the City Center Partnership in Columbia, which provides public space management, economic development, retail recruitment, homeless outreach, public advocacy and planning.



Andy Gowder, Pratt-Thomas Walker

## **Andy Gowder, Attorney, Pratt-Thomas Walker, Charleston**

Andy Gowder is a shareholder with the Charleston law firm of Pratt-Thomas Walker, P.A. His counseling and litigation practice is focused on corporate formation and governance for profit and nonprofit organizations, local government, land use, environmental and real property law and intellectual property. Andy has written and edited books and articles on legal topics relating to land use, urbanism, planning, sustainability and the environment and speaks frequently on those topics. He is currently the Chair of the Urban Land Institute (ULI) Sustainable Development Council, a past statewide chair of ULI South Carolina and a member of its Governance Committee. He earned his J.D., cum laude, in 1986 from Wake Forest University School of Law, and his B.A., summa cum laude, in 1983 from Wofford College.



Geoff Grout, Center Capital Solutions

## **Geoff Grout, Managing Member, Center Capital Solutions, St. Helena Island**

Geoff Grout is the designer and implementer of optimal value solutions for the owners of real estate in both the public and private sectors, delivering 40 years of expert navigation through complex challenges across an array of product types, development scales, capital structures, market conditions and geographic locations. Geoff formed Center Capital Solutions in 2000 to provide clients with maximum flexibility in solving problems. Center Capital's expertise is in leveraging existing organizational capacities with proven industry best practices to define successful outcomes. His clients have included the City of Jacksonville (FL) OED, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp., the U.S. Air Force, and the



Rhode Island Economic Development Corp.

Prior to 2000, Geoff held senior leadership positions with QuestCap (a Morgan Stanley-Quest Group Venture), Chrysler Capital and Manufacturers Hanover Trust. While at Manufacturers, he was CEO and GM of the Charter at Beaver Creek, an \$80 million condominium resort hotel.



Jim Haley, Cityvolve

**Jim Haley, Co-Founder, Cityvolve, North Charleston**

Jim Haley has a wealth of experience in the field of real estate financing and development with a focus on sustainable development projects that match solid development principles with traditional debt and equity sources and non-traditional financing options such as historic tax credits, new market tax credits, and tax increment financing. Jim's experience led him to the creation of Cityvolve LLC, a development and consulting firm focused on redevelopment, adaptive reuse and urban infill projects within districts that are poised for reinvestment and revitalization.

Prior to establishing Cityvolve, Jim spent eleven years as the Chief Financial Officer for the Noisette Company. At Noisette Jim was a senior member of the leadership team responsible for redeveloping the 340-acre urban-infill project.



Patrick Head, Studio A

**Patrick Head, Project Manager, Studio A, Charleston**

Patrick Head manages diverse projects of varying scale and collaborates on design for award-winning Studio A Architecture, a sustainability focused architecture firm in Charleston, SC. Prior to joining Studio A in Charleston, Patrick managed a design team for high-end, high-profile, multi-unit residential projects for internationally acclaimed architecture firm, Studio Daniel Libeskind in New York City. Patrick also teaches at Clemson University's College of Architecture. He earned his degree from Columbia University in New York.



Grant Jackson, GrantJax Communications

**Grant Jackson, Principal, GrantJax Communications, Columbia**

C. Grant Jackson is a private consultant for economic & community development, strategic planning and communications. Prior to forming GrantJax Communications, he served as Senior Vice President for Community Development for the Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce from 2008 to 2013.

Grant joined the chamber following a long career as a newspaper journalist. He holds a Bachelor of Arts from Mercer University in Macon, GA, and a Master of Arts in journalism from the University of Missouri.

He is a graduate of ULI's Center for Sustainable Leadership and was involved in planning and execution for the 2011 Columbia Connectivity ULI Technical Assistance Panel: Linking Main Street and the Vista, and in the ULI National Advisory Services Panel in 2013 on Columbia: Strategies for a Connected City.



Pat Mason, Center for CarolinaLiving.com

**Patrick Mason, Center for CarolinaLiving.com, Columbia**

Patrick Mason spent 10 years in marketing with the Marriott Corp. in Washington, DC, Chicago, and New York. In 1983 he moved to South Carolina to administer a \$6-million real estate marketing communications budget for U.S. Capital Corp in Columbia.

In 1986, Pat formed American Lodging Resources, Inc., a consulting firm specializing in research, lead generation and "destination marketing" for the real estate and tourism industries. Within a year, he forged an alliance between the private sector and state government to measure the economic impact of in-migration and to position the Carolinas to attract affluent visitors and newcomers of all ages. Today that division is called the Center For Carolina Living (CFCL) and CarolinaLiving.com the country's most recognized multi-state destination marketing firm.

# The Panel Process

## **TAP PANEL SELECTION**

THE ULI SOUTH CAROLINA DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSIDERED THE MYRTLE BEACH DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT CORPORATION'S GOALS FOR THE TAP. SEVEN PANELISTS WERE SELECTED BASED ON THEIR EXPERTISE.

## **SPONSOR PRESENTATION**

THE TAP PANELISTS ASSEMBLED AT THE SANDY BEACH RESORT IN MYRTLE BEACH ON WEDNESDAY, NOV. 12, FOR A PRESENTATION BY THE TAP SPONSOR. THE PRESENTATION WAS MADE BY DAVID SEBOK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE DRC, AND DRC BOARD MEMBERS.

## **TOUR OF STUDY AREA AND ENVIRONS**

FOLLOWING THE SPONSOR PRESENTATION, TAP PANELISTS TOURED PORTIONS OF MYRTLE BEACH, INCLUDING THE 75-ACRE SOUTH MIXED USE AREA STUDY AREA, VIA PASSENGER VAN AND ON FOOT. THE TOUR AREA INCLUDED THE MYRTLE BEACH PAVILION SITE ADJACENT TO THE NORTHERN END OF THE STUDY AREA AND THE MYRTLE BEACH BOARDWALK AND PROMENADE, WHICH RUNS ACROSS THE EASTERN END OF THE STUDY AREA. THE TOUR CONCLUDED ON FOOT AT THE SANDY BEACH RESORT ON THE SOUTHERN END OF THE STUDY AREA.

## **STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS**

THE AFTERNOON OF NOV. 12 AND THE MORNING OF NOV. 13, PANELISTS MET WITH COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS INCLUDING ELECTED OFFICIALS, BUSINESS AND PROPERTY OWNERS, TOURISM EXECUTIVES, AND DEVELOPERS.

## **PANEL DELIBERATIONS**

THE PANEL HELD TWO WORKING SESSIONS, THE FIRST ON WEDNESDAY EVENING FOLLOWING THE SPONSOR PRESENTATION, SITE TOUR AND STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS; AND THE SECOND ON THURSDAY UPON THE CONCLUSION OF STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS AND A SECOND INPUT SESSION WITH THE TAP SPONSOR. DURING THESE SESSIONS, PANELISTS REVIEWED THE SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS, ADDRESSED THE FOCUS AREAS, IDENTIFIED OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES, DEVELOPED RECOMMENDATIONS AND PREPARED A POWERPOINT PRESENTATION THAT ADDRESSED THE QUESTIONS POSED BY THE SPONSOR, THE MYRTLE BEACH DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT CORPORATION.

## **PUBLIC PRESENTATION**

THE PANEL PRESENTED ITS POWERPOINT PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS AT 4 P.M. THURSDAY, NOV. 13, IN AN OPEN SESSION TO THE TAP SPONSORS, COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS AND INTERESTED PUBLIC IN THE HISTORIC MYRTLE BEACH TRAIN DEPOT. PANELISTS THEN TOOK QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE.

## **REPORT PREPARATION AND RELEASE**

THE TAP, UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF THE ULI SOUTH CAROLINA DISTRICT COUNCIL, PREPARED THIS REPORT ON ITS CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS. IT PRESENTED THE REPORT TO THE SPONSORS IN DECEMBER 2014.

## Who is ULI

ULI was founded in 1936 as a nonprofit institute to facilitate the open exchange of ideas and information among local, national, and international real estate industry leaders and policy makers dedicated to creating better places. Today it has more than 37,000 members worldwide.

ULI does not lobby or act as an advocate for any single industry. The Institute is committed to providing leadership in the responsible use of land and creating and sustaining thriving communities through the experience of its members.

It is through member involvement and information resources that ULI has been able to set standards of excellence in development practice. The Institute has long been recognized as one of the world's most respected and widely quoted sources of objective information on urban planning, growth, and development.

## ULI South Carolina

ULI South Carolina was founded in 2005 to support the larger mission of ULI. The District Council has some 500 members across the state who are working



Panel Members from Left to right: Partick Head, Andy Gowder, Pat Mason, Matt Kennell, Jim Haley and Grant Jackson





205 1/2 King Street  
Charleston, SC 29401  
843-513-9331  
[southcarolina@uli.org](mailto:southcarolina@uli.org)

© 2014 by the Urban Land Institute South Carolina

All rights reserved.

Reproduction or use of the whole or any part of the contents without written permission of the copyright holder is prohibited.