



Urban Land Institute

Southeast Florida/Caribbean



Technical Assistance Panel for the Coral Springs Community Redevelopment Agency

May 22 and 23, 2013
Coral Springs, Florida

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Technical Assistance Panels

What are Technical Assistance Panels (TAPs)?

Since 1947, the Urban Land Institute's (ULI) Advisory Services Program has been assisting communities by bringing together week-long panels of seasoned real estate, planning, landscape architecture, financing, marketing, and development experts to provide unbiased pragmatic advice on complex land use and development issues. Several years ago, the ULI Southeast Florida/Caribbean District Council began providing panel services of one or two days to address specific local government issues in areas such as housing, parking, redevelopment, and future land use development. The District Council has some 1,200 members spread along the east coast of Florida from Indian River County through the Florida Keys and from Puerto Rico.

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?

A fee is charged for the advisory service, but the panel members are not compensated for their time. The fee depends on the length of the actual TAP convening, but is typically between \$17,500 and \$20,000, including panel expenses. Each TAP is different, and fees are negotiated individually with the sponsoring client. 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.

Who is ULI?

ULI was founded in 1936 as a non-profit 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 30,000 members worldwide. The ULI does not lobby or act as an advocate for any single industry. It is committed to providing leadership in the responsible use of land and creating and sustaining thriving communities.

Sponsors and Panel Members

Sponsor

- City of Coral Springs
- Coral Springs Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA)

Coral Springs City Commission

- Vincent Boccard, Mayor
- Tom Powers, Vice Mayor
- Claudette Bruck, Commissioner
- Dan Daley, Commissioner
- Larry Vignola, Commissioner

CRA Board of Directors

- John W. Ruffin, Jr., Chair
- Bernie Moyle, Vice Chair
- Bruce Davis
- Ginger Eisenrod
- Elissa Harvey
- Xiomara Fraga
- John Walsh

Panel Members

TAP Co-chairs

- Ken Tuma, Managing Principal
Urban Design Kilday Studios
- Charles W. DeSanti, Managing Partner
Kitson & Partners

Panelists

- Sonja Bogensperger, Marketing Director
Miami Downtown Development Authority
- Timothy P. Byal, Vice President for Finance
Miramar Development Corporation

- Christopher W. Heggen, P.E.
Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.
- Joseph A. Kohl, CNU-Accredited, Principal
Dover, Kohl & Partners Town Planning
- Yvonne Soler McKinley, Executive Director
Foundation for Human Rights in Cuba and Cuban
American National Foundation
Former City Manager, the City of Doral, Florida
- Darren J. Morse, Director of Acquisitions
Kitson & Partners
- Craig A. Werley, President
Focus Real Estate Advisors
- Sue Zabloudil, Esq.
Akerman Senterfitt

ULI Southeast Florida/Caribbean District Council

TAP Vice Co-Chairs

- Dr. Charles Bohl, Associate Professor and Director,
Graduate Program in Real Estate Development
and Urbanism, University of Miami, School of
Architecture
- Charles W. DeSanti, Managing Partner
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- Carla Coleman, Executive Director
- Jean Scott, TAP Report Preparation

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Panel Process and Agenda

Panel Process

The Coral Springs TAP process centered on the following five steps:

- Representatives from the ULI Southeast Florida/Caribbean District Council met with Coral Springs City and CRA officials and staff to discuss issues related to the TAP study area, the Sample Road/University Drive intersection, and, in particular, City Hall South and adjacent CRA owned land.
- ULI Southeast Florida/Caribbean District Council staff researched the CRA's goals for the TAP and, based on that research, selected the TAP members who had the expertise most tailored to addressing the issues raised.
- The TAP received a complete set of pre-meeting briefing materials about the study area.
- The TAP met in Coral Springs on May 22 and 23, 2013, holding its two public comment and presentation sessions in the Coral Springs Charter School Auditorium.
- The TAP, under the leadership of the ULI Southeast Florida/Caribbean District Council, prepared a report on its recommendations and conclusions.

Panel Agenda

The agenda (included as Appendix A) for the two-day TAP was organized as follows.

On May 22, the panel began its orientation with a lunch meeting and tour of the study area. The CRA and City staff used the tour to acquaint the panel with the area and its broader community and planning context. Following the tour, the panel provided an opportunity for public comments. That was followed by a working dinner that allowed panel members and City and CRA officials and staff to further discuss the study area and their hopes and goals for it.

On May 23, the panel spent the morning and early afternoon working on the issues that it had been asked to address, along with issues raised in the public input session from the day before. In the afternoon, the panel members presented their observations and recommendations to an audience of interested citizens, community groups, and others.

Public comments from both meetings are incorporated in this report.

Background: The TAP Focus Area

The CRA convened the TAP to discuss and give advice on a set of issues related to the redevelopment of the Sample Road and University Drive intersection (top image to the right). Particular focus was on an area on the southwest quadrant of the intersection, just west of the Coral Spring Financial Plaza, that is under consideration for a new City Hall/City Center Complex.

The Coral Springs Context

The City

Incorporated in 1963, the City of Coral Springs has evolved from its origins (mostly marshy wilderness) to a thriving city that is the fifth largest in Broward County and the 15th largest in Florida. Today the 23.79-square mile city is only one percent undeveloped, underscoring its desirability as a place to live, work, and invest. Thanks to forward thinking founders, the city is known for its abundant parks, quality schools, numerous athletic programs, arts facilities, and attractive, well-landscaped and maintained neighborhoods.

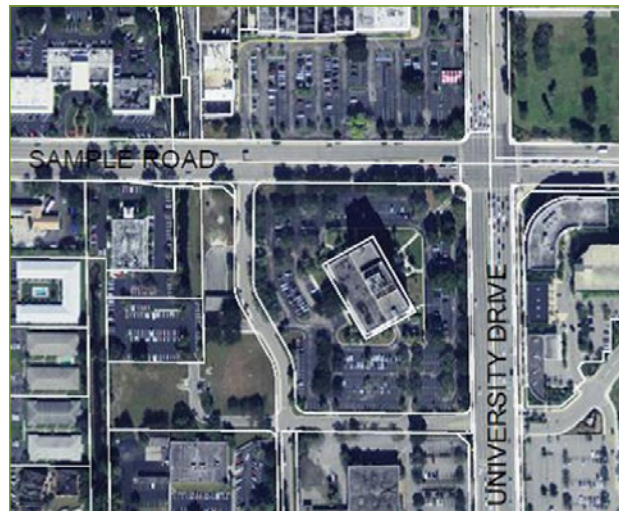
The city's sound management and thoughtful planning over the years are reflected in its many awards. It is the first state or local government to receive the prestigious Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award for performance excellence and innovation and is among a group of only 34 cities nationwide to have bonds rated "AAA" (the highest rating for municipalities) by all three Wall Street rating agencies. It is also a two-time winner of the Governor's Sterling Award and in 2010 and 2012 was recognized in Money magazine's Best Places to Live. In 2005, 2007, and 2008 the city was named one of the 100 Best Communities for Young People by America's Promise.

Other city attributes also make it attractive. They include a highly rated school system (19 of its schools, including all of its high schools, achieved A ratings in 2012), a highly educated population



The TAP focused its work on the southwest corner of the Sample Road and University Drive intersection, the heart of the city's envisioned downtown (depicted above).

Specific attention was given to the area containing City Hall South and adjacent CRA land, across Sample Road from the main City Hall built in 1967.



(92 percent graduated from high school and 33.3 percent hold bachelor's degrees or higher), and its relatively young population (a little over one-quarter of its 121,000 population is 18 or under) –reflecting a growing school-age population. In addition, the percentage of the city's population 65 and over is much smaller than for the rest of the South Florida region (in 2010, five percent versus 16.64 for the region). As baby-boomers age, both figures are projected to increase as a proportion of the whole population.

The City also has a strong record of emphasizing community engagement, demonstrated by its two citywide visioning processes. The most recent one was held in the spring of 2012 where participants were asked to “Just Dream It.” Their responses (as documented in the Vision report) highlight a desire for:

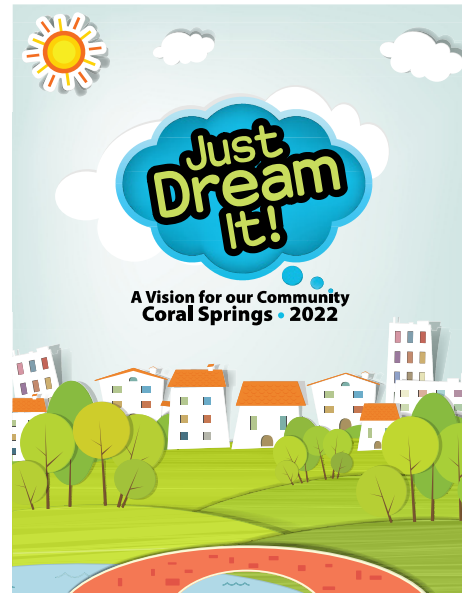
- A vibrant downtown with an array of entertainment for residents and visitors alike and gathering places that would attract performers and serve as a great venue for fun activities for all ages.
- Expanding downtown to include a much-needed new City Hall surrounded by pedestrian-friendly walkways and an art and entertainment district.
- A Farmer's Market every Saturday.
- Access to innovative means of transportation and covered walkways.

The CRA

The Coral Springs CRA was established by the City Commission in 2001. Since then it has taken a number of major steps to establish the necessary foundation for transforming the approximately 140-acre CRA area (small for a CRA which has limiting impacts on resources such as funding) into what the CRA redevelopment plan describes as an attractive and desirable downtown that serves as the functional and symbolic center of the city. Illustrated in the image on the prior page, the CRA area includes the four quadrants of the Sample Road

CRA VISION

“To create a vibrant and sustainable Downtown in which Coral Springs’ residents, businesses, and visitors can live, work, shop and entertain.”



Participants in the City of Coral Springs 2012 visioning workshop, Just Dream It, (shown above) highlighted their desire for a pedestrian-friendly downtown that offers engaging public gathering places with things to do for all ages and surrounding a new City Hall.

The CRA area (depicted below) contains approximately 140 acres within the vicinity of the Sample Road and University Drive intersection, considered to be Coral Springs’ downtown.



and University Drive intersection: Illustrated in the image on the prior page, the four quadrants of the intersection include:

- Northeast – the Publix Super Markets Inc. property and the City National Bank of Florida property (both vacant parcels).
- Northwest – the Main City Hall and the Village Square Association retail property which contains the Broward College Coral Springs Academic Center.
- Southeast – the One Charter Place building, Coral Springs Charter School, and Broward County Northwest Regional Library.
- Southwest (the TAP focus area described in more detail later in this report) – the Coral Spring Financial Plaza, Bank of America, City Hall South, and the Post Office.

The focus of the redevelopment plan (adopted by the City in 2002) is on converting the current low-density, unconnected, car-dependent, development pattern into a “real downtown” where none has existed before – “no small feat,” as the plan calls out. Designated Downtown Coral Springs, the area would contain a relatively intense mix of uses that are well connected and create the sense of a true city. Uses would include office, residential, and retail, including outdoor cafes and restaurants, and facilities for outdoor art and music festivals lining well designed streetscapes.

As described in the CRA plan, although Coral Springs is “one of the most successful of the large scale, new community projects in the country” and has enviable attributes such as parks, a diverse housing stock, and fiscal integrity, it “finds itself longing for a sense of place.” “The problem is not that Coral Springs was not well planned,” the plan notes, “but that it was planned at a time when the concepts of ‘place’ and balanced land uses took a back seat to other considerations” and disconnected “strip commercial was the retailing mode.” According to the plan, that development pattern has resulted in obsolete commercial

“The City and CRA have carefully laid the foundation needed to move forward when the market returns. As a result, we are in position to use the location and design of the new City Hall to catalyze redevelopment of the downtown into that true city center. Creating such a place is what people said they wanted during last year’s community visioning workshop and is about the future of the city – its next 50 years.”

Vincent Boccia, Mayor, City of Coral Springs



The CRA’s redevelopment plan calls for converting the car-dependent and disconnected development found in the Sample Road-University Drive area into a true destination that is walkable and makes visitors want to stay a while.

structures that cannot compete in a rapidly changing retail environment and a dysfunctional form of development that lacks connectivity and is dependent on the use of automobiles to get anywhere.

The redevelopment plan sums up the significance of the Downtown Coral Springs initiative: "... the importance of community redevelopment as a matter of community value and fiscal responsibility is real and for Coral Springs, the time for intervention is now, not after further obsolescence and deterioration make the task even more difficult and expensive." A vibrant city center "will be an enormous resource in its own right but also will serve as an anchor and catalyst for the renovation of the city as a whole."

Other CRA initiatives include:

- Bus Shelters – Construction of four new bus shelters through a partnership with Broward Transit. The shelters, along with benches, trash cans, and bicycle racks, will be placed at four intersection locations.
- The Sample Road and University Drive Infrastructure Master Plan – A plan for improvements to traffic circulation and the pedestrian experience that contains design work for new turn lanes, underground drainage and power lines, sidewalks, streetscape, landscaping, bus shelters, mast arms, traffic signals, and public art. Partial funding to implement the infrastructure called for in the plan is coming from American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds.
- One Charter Place – A 210,000-square foot project that includes a 95,000-square foot Class A office building surrounded by a free-standing bank, parking garage, and retail structures. One Charter Place anchors the first phase of downtown Coral Springs and is located on a 3.8-acre site near the Coral Springs Charter School.
- A Façade Improvement Program – A joint venture between the City of Coral Springs and the CRA, the program (using U.S. Department of



One Charter Place (above) was the first development completed in the CRA downtown area.

The City of Coral Springs and CRA are using the arts as a cornerstone of their events to bring more people to the core downtown area. Events include the Coral Springs Festival of the Arts and BizArt Festival (below).



Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grants) provides matching grants up to \$40,000 for businesses on both sides of Sample Road stretching west of Coral Hills Drive and east of the canal adjacent to NW 99th Way. The funds were used for exterior work that faces public roadways.

The CRA has strong history of partnering with other organizations:

- A marketing partnership with the Economic Development Foundation to gain feedback from brokers, businesses, and other organizations in order to identify opportunities that would benefit the CRA area as well as Broward College workforce efforts.
- A partnership with the Coral Springs Festival of the Arts which takes place over a two-day period at The Walk on University Drive and attracts some 30,000 people to the downtown area. The BizArt Festival is another event that provides a variety of activities including a live fine art painter, music, and trolley tours of the city's public art.

The TAP Focus Area

The TAP was asked to focus on the 28-acre southwest quadrant of the Sample Road and University Drive intersection, specifically a 5.76-acre site (illustrated on the next page) that is composed of City Hall South and a CRA-owned parcel purchased in 2007. That is the proposed site for a new City Hall/City Center complex.

The current City Hall on the north side of Sample Road, the TAP learned, was built in 1967 and is outdated and functionally obsolete. Because it was originally a real estate sales center, the facility was never designed to serve as a municipal complex. When the City moved into the building in 1976, it was considered a temporary location and, therefore, was not the focus of new investments. Among its many deficiencies, the building is not fully ADA-accessible or energy efficient, has security and life safety limitations, provides inadequate meeting space, is not hurricane-hardened, offers insufficient room for growth, lacks sufficient parking, and suffers from a history of deferred maintenance because of plans for a new City Hall.

A 2007 space analysis shows that to accommodate the City's operational needs for the next 20-25 years and be able to consolidate its operations and staff in one location, a building of at least 65,000 square feet would be needed, along with 250-plus parking spaces. It is important that the new building includes

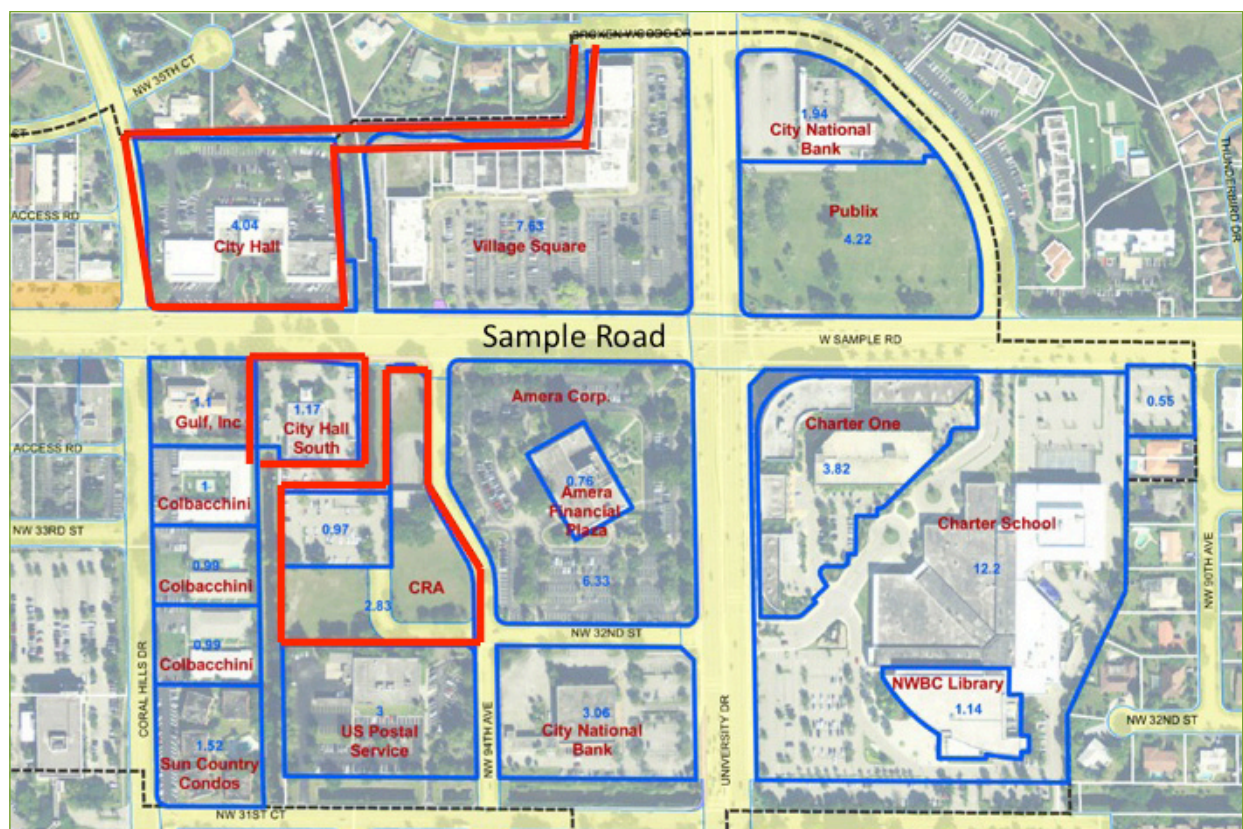


Because the current Coral Springs City Hall (top image above) is outdated and too small (the city's population has grown by 8,183 percent since it was built), the city has proposed a new City Hall/City Center complex on the south side of Sample Road in the area where the current City Hall South (lower image above) is located.

additional storage space, improved City Commission chambers, and public meeting space. The proposed City Hall/City Center site currently allows up to 200,000 square feet of commercial uses, a 200 room hotel, and 600 high rise residential units. A mix of uses in and around the City Hall/City Center would create a much-needed identifiable catalytic destination that brings people downtown and augments other nearby downtown facilities such as the library, post office, Broward College Coral Springs Academic Center, Broward Health Coral Springs, The Walk, and financial institutions. It would also enable the City to leverage vertical parking to avoid large expanses of surface parking.

In April 2013, to prepare for the new City Hall/City Center complex, the CRA approved a streetscape program to create an attractive pedestrian-friendly environment in the downtown core area. Design is underway for streetscape improvements and water line installations affecting NW 31st Court, NW 32nd Street, NW 94th Avenue, University Drive, and Sample Road.

The streetscape improvements are consistent with the goal of the Broward County Metropolitan Planning Organization's Complete Streets Program. Its vision is to create a safe and efficient transportation network that promotes the health and mobility of all residents and visitors by providing high quality multi-modal (pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and automobile) access throughout the county.



With City Hall South's proximity to a CRA-owned site, the area presents a unique and timely opportunity to create a new City Hall/City Center complex that will catalyze the investments needed to transform the area to a true walkable city center destination where people want to linger rather than rushing through and never getting out of their cars. The new City Hall would be the focal point of the redevelopment, occupying what the 2002 Downtown Redevelopment Plan called a place of visual prominence.

Issues for the TAP

The TAP was asked to focus on a set of specific issues related to the proposed City Hall/City Center site. As described in more detail in Appendix B (Questions for the TAP), the TAP structured its comments to address the following topics:

- If the 2002 Community Redevelopment Plan needs to be updated to reflect current economic forecasts and economic conditions.
- How to realize the development potential of the southwest quadrant of the Sample Road and University Drive intersection, including the staging of a new City Hall/City Center complex and related public uses that provide places to gather.
- Potential public sector incentives to encourage private investment and redevelopment.
- How to create a more pedestrian-friendly environment and make transit part of the redevelopment.
- If parking requirements should be changed and how a parking structure should be sited to facilitate future redevelopment.

Panel Response to the City of Coral Springs Community Redevelopment Agency's Questions

TAP co-chairs Charles DeSanti and Ken Tuma began the panel's public presentation of its recommendations by introducing the panel and highlighting the qualifications of each member. The panel, they noted, not only brought a broad range of expertise, it also had extensive knowledge of Coral Springs and included more members than most TAPs because of the wide variety of issues involved.

"The City is well-positioned to use the new City Hall to create the heart that residents want and will achieve their vision for Coral Springs – a small town with big city opportunities." The ULI Technical Assistance Panel

The TAP began its comments with observations about what residents said they wanted for the site and what it saw as the site's strengths and challenges.

General Observations

What Residents Said About the New City Hall Site and Creating a Real Downtown

When talking about what they wanted for the site, residents emphasized the importance of establishing Downtown Coral Springs with a main street environment that creates a sense of place and includes:

- A mix of uses including restaurants with outdoor cafes and other spaces
- A City Hall design that activates the street and sparks private investments
- Arts and entertainment (an amphitheater and galleries were mentioned)
- Day and night time activities and places to go for all ages, including youth and those over 55 (a chalk walk and farmers' market, for example)
- Complete, walkable streets that are safe for pedestrians and bicycles
- Good parking
- Spaces for small, local businesses to grow

In the words of several residents:

"Downtown needs to be a place to stay, not pass through – that place where people can come together."

"Coral Springs is about arts, culture, and kids."

"We need downtown to be that place to take a stroll and make it an evening."

There were also some resident concerns that locating the new City Hall/City Center on the south side of Sample Road would remove the site from the tax roll. In response, City representatives noted that the property was already in city ownership and not paying property taxes. A number of residents also offered comments about two issues important to them: discussions of moving the Coral Springs Center for the Arts and the Coral Springs Charter School. Those two topics, the TAP and city made clear, were not part of the TAP's scope. Should either move forward, it would be through a separate process offering ample opportunities for full public engagement, something that the city of Coral Springs highly values.

Strengths and Challenges

Strengths to build on, the TAP noted, include:

- Community involvement and support for redevelopment of the downtown, something a lot of cities don't have
- Sound fiscal health of the city, also unique in a time of financial stress for many communities
- Strong elected leadership ready to take action
- A lot of community pride (in, for example, the city's arts, sports, youth, and educational institutions)

Challenges to be addressed include:

- The CRA's inability to use the power of eminent domain
- The lack of land in public ownership to use as leverage
- The difficulty in making the Sample Road and University Drive intersection walkable and connected due to the number of lanes and traffic counts

TAP Recommendations

The panel organized their recommendations around the following topics: Community Redevelopment Plan, City Hall/City Center Complex, Transportation and Connectivity, and Moving Forward: A Menu of Implementation Strategies. Collectively the TAP's comments within those topics address the issues set forth by the city and CRA.

Community Redevelopment Plan

The 2002 CRA Plan, the TAP concluded, should be updated (a process that is already underway thanks to the progressive leadership of the city and CRA). The update (which should be done every five years because of changing conditions and community needs) should include a current demographic study to pick up on trends such as more empty-nesters impacting the type of housing that is built, a survey of general population needs and preferences (including transportation), a retail and business

"The most immediate redevelopment opportunities in the CRA area exist west of the Sample Road and University Drive intersection. They include the property associated with a new City Hall site south of Sample Road (the first priority), the current north City Hall site, and Village Square." The ULI Technical Assistance Panel



The TAP members invested their time in getting to know the study site and its community context. That included a tour of the area, listening to public comments about the area, and work time (above) to study the issues and develop recommendations.

environment study, and preparation of (with the Coral Springs Economic Development Foundation) an economic development plan geared at attracting new investment that will help achieve CRA plan goals for a Downtown Coral Springs. It should also involve reviewing the CRA's agreement with its master developer.

Two other points merit attention:

- Look at how the city and CRA can take advantage of new visitors and tourists to the area because of the nearby Seminole Casino Coconut Creek.
- Evaluate whether the Broken Woods Golf Course redevelopment plan reflects the appropriate density based upon the evolving downtown node and a growing market, driven by the millennial and over-55 populations, for smaller residences.

In addition, the plan should recognize that the CRA is ready to move into plan implementation, which means that the timing and pace of potential development opportunities will be important.

Those potential opportunities include:

- Moving ahead with a new City Hall to further establish the four quadrants as the heart of the downtown of Coral Springs and help instill confidence for private sector investment. "The new City Hall site," the TAP highlighted, "can be a positive example for businesses considering investing in the area. In addition, city employees can add foot traffic to the downtown area as they frequent surrounding restaurants and businesses."
- Developing the common green, today, to create a sense of place and an aesthetically pleasing location for community events.
- Introducing structured parking that can be shared with the new City Hall and adjacent uses; a mix of uses, including retail, should wrap the parking structure.
- Bringing the current north City Hall site to the market (for sale) when the new City Hall is developed; evaluate highest and best use (retail, multifamily, etc.).
- Promoting more multifamily residential development with a mix of retail and commercial uses (the Coral Spring Financial Plaza, Village Square, and Publix sites are three examples). Alternatively, the Financial Plaza and Village Square (and the current north City Hall) could also be a potential site for an expanded Broward College Campus.
- Providing for connectivity and walkability between commercial uses; for example, from the new City Hall site to The Walk on University Drive.



In Boca Raton, the highly successful mixed-use Mizner Park lined a parking garage with town homes (above) to provide a compatible view for a residential neighborhood across the road and create a more pedestrian-friendly environment.

Co-working space should be part of the new development to create the places where young entrepreneurs and those with new start-up companies can come to carry out their individual work in shared space.



- Planning the parcel containing the Coral Spring Financial Plaza in conjunction with the proposed City Hall site. While that action would be a future phase of development, integrating that block with the proposed City Hall site would be a testament to the public-private partnership essential in achieving the desired placemaking vision. For that to occur, the city would need to enlist Amera to plan the block and integrate the planning into the proposed City Hall site. Amera, in turn, would need to coordinate with the owner of the Coral Spring Financial Plaza to encourage its redevelopment into compatible use(s), thereby achieving a significant improvement at the southwest corner of University Drive and Sample Road. (Amera Corporation owns the surface parking within that block. While the parking is contractually obligated to support the needs of the Coral Spring Financial Plaza, by providing a structured parking facility, the contractual obligation could be met, freeing up critical land for redevelopment and potentially creating a shared parking opportunity for adjacent uses.)

Additional strategies should include:

- Enhancing recruitment of larger tenants who would locate office functions downtown.
- Using vacant office space to meet the needs of the younger demographic (for example, creating co-working spaces that encourage entrepreneurship and start-ups and/or an incubator program with Broward College or other nearby colleges).

New City Hall/City Center Complex

The TAP evaluated four potential sites for a new City Hall: (1) Coral Spring Financial Plaza, (2) Mullins Park, (3) City Hall South, and (4) existing north City Hall. The TAP concluded that the City Hall South site and adjacent CRA-owned land would provide the most sensible location. The other options were either cost prohibitive, did not represent the highest and best use for the land, had no clear advantage, and/or would impact prized public park space.

The new City Hall site south of Sample Road, the TAP emphasized, should be the first public project in creating Downtown Coral Springs. That location would enable the city to use public investment (a signature civic complex) to leverage private development and create the sense of place and destination that residents desire.



The Walk, a popular retail and dining destination located on University Drive south of the Coral Spring Financial Plaza should be the focus of walkable-friendly connections between it and the new City Hall.

The Coral Spring Financial Plaza (below) presents an opportunity for coordinated planning with the new City Hall. That collaboration would greatly further, the redevelopment of the southwest corner of the University Drive and Sample Road intersection. It could also facilitate a structured parking facility and create a dynamic downtown Coral Springs.



“Public gathering places are more than nice places to visit, they fulfill a human need to be together – we are relational beings.” Charles DeSanti, TAP Co-Chair

which means it should be constructed as a strategic early phase initiative along with the construction of the new City Hall.”

- Transforms a drainage canal to a water feature running through the site, thus creating an ambience that cannot be found elsewhere (bottom image, prior page). A bike path and greenways run parallel to the water, connecting the north and south sides of Sample Road. Shown in the inserted photo, the highly successful San Antonio Riverwalk is a network of walkways that line the San Antonio River (in that area generally only four to five feet deep). Once considered a dangerous place to be at night, some 2.5 miles of the river are now lined with hotels, restaurants, and shopping that serve as a major tourist destination and economic generator. Boat rides (reminiscent of gondolas in Venice, Italy) carry visitors from point to point.

The improvements above can be undertaken with or without redevelopment of adjacent properties. Such redevelopment could include mixed-used development on both sides of Sample Road and redevelopment of the Coral Springs/Amera Financial Plaza (top image to the right).

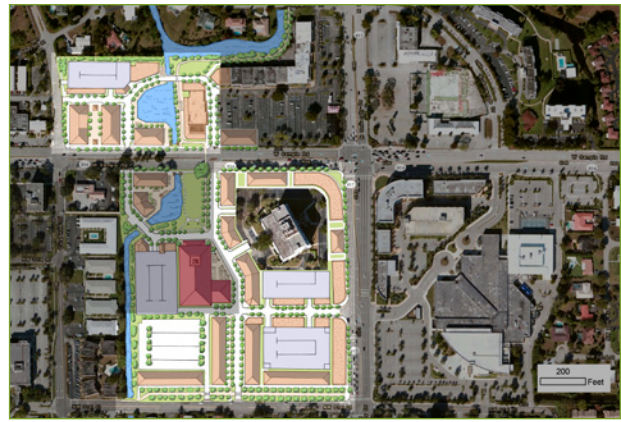
Programming Approach

The TAP organized their comments around possible uses of the new City Hall and potential site amenities.

Possible City Hall Uses

In addition to housing regular city services and standard meeting rooms, the new City Hall could incorporate multiple uses that would create a true destination civic center for residents and visitors of all ages. Examples include:

- A city welcome and information center (could include a city history and/or archives center)
- Meeting and event space for city boards and non-profits
- CRA and other local organization offices, including the Chamber of Commerce



The 300-foot long Española Way in Miami Beach depicts the intimate outdoor public spaces that would make the area around the New City Hall stand out as a unique place to go. The street is narrow and lined on both sides with two- to three-story buildings that help shade the street (one reason why most old Caribbean cities have narrow streets).



The 2009 West Palm Beach City Center contains three separate uses: City Hall and, lining it with frontage on Clematis Street (the city's historic main street), the West Palm Beach Public Library and the Palm Beach Photographic Center. The building is designed around an inner courtyard that opens to the street and serves as a gathering place for community events, and its architecture define it as a city landmark. Parking is provided in an attached garage that also serves the downtown area.

- State and federal offices, possibly including the Post Office (would require U.S. Postal Service cooperation); a Post Office relocation could free up valuable adjacent land to the south for redevelopment
- A large civic space that could be used for conferences and receptions and overlook the site's water features and green
- Space for small retail and places to eat such as a coffee shop, lunch café, and evening take-out
- Digital, classic art, and photography/videography studios, displays, and/or classes
- Small business incubator with flex space options
- Space for continuing education for seniors and tutoring for students as well as job search and vocational training assistance (good opportunities for partnerships with schools)

Potential Site Amenities

The civic space around City Hall, including the common green, could be used for a variety of uses that would draw residents and visitors to the area (and make it that place to go and see friends). Night as well as day time activities should be included. Examples include:

- An outdoor urban garden
- Benches and shaded places for sitting
- Art activities (a chalk walk, for example)
- Children's play area
- A farmers' green market (day or night)
- Pop-up retail and restaurants that provide rent-free space in empty storefronts for several months and helps young entrepreneurial businesses get a foothold in the market. It also helps animate the space and street and attract people to an area. Portland's PDX Pop-Up Shops, for example, fills empty retail during the holiday season
- An area for programming outdoor activities such as concerts, live art, yoga and tai chi, arts and crafts festivals, antique shows, food-related events, and holiday programming

A site feature could include a fountain that draws people to the area. Illustrated on the next page West Palm Beach provides two different examples:



Above, a farmers' market, outdoor book fair, and yoga classes can be used to draw people to the city center.

- The dancing water fountain in CityPlace (middle image) provides an exciting feature that activates a public plaza and provides a backdrop for events such as concerts and festivals. CityPlace is a mixed-use residential-retail-entertainment development that, because of strategic action and investment by the city, replaced a failed redevelopment site on a blighted edge of the downtown.
- An adaptable fountain (bottom image) at the end of Clematis Street provides an inviting place for kids of all ages to play and cool off. Shaded seating surrounds the area. The water feature can be turned off in order to use the space for community events such as the Thursday night Clematis by Night Fountainside Concert Series sponsored by the City.

Lush shading (of particular importance in subtropical South Florida) and landscaping should be featured throughout the site. If done with native trees and plants, the area could become an educational arboretum, thus creating another attraction.

The existing CRA staff can take on the initial responsibility of programming events, with an eye to creating a full-time position for a Director of Programming and Marketing. That position is essential to the success of the City Center and the effective use of the common green concept.

Transportation and Connectivity

The TAP focused its comments on making the study area transit ready and pedestrian-friendly – a place where residents can go and “age in place” because they do not have to rely on driving a car to meet daily needs.

Transit Ready

Recommendations to make the study area transit ready contain a mix of strategies.



Pop-up retail and restaurants (above) can also help animate vacant storefronts and serve as destination attractions.



Fountains in West Palm Beach serve as a major attraction.

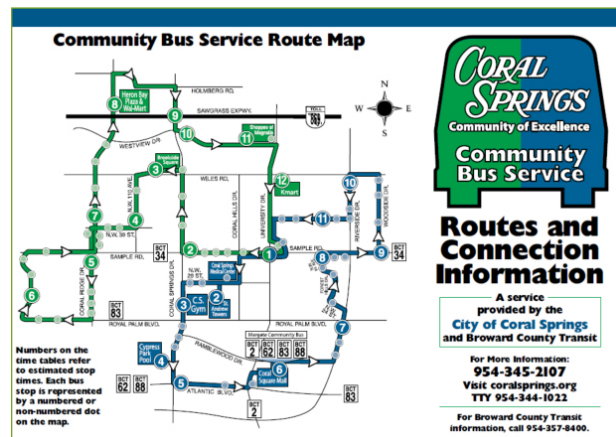
Transit-ready strategies should include:

- Adopting transit-friendly code requirements. That could include code features that result in the desired form of development (one that makes people want to get out of their cars). That could mean buildings designed with overhangs, loggias, or awnings that provide shade and protection from rain (in other words, features that make walking to transit or within the site more desirable).
- Consolidating route options to ease transfers and accommodate a hierarchy of services (premium bus rapid transit service, standard bus service, a community shuttle, and a local downtown circulator that operates more often and could provide short (10-15 minute) headways (the time between vehicles).
- Creating a gateway transit hub with multiple bays to accommodate different services. Such a hub could be located in the southwest quadrant of the Sample Road and University Drive intersection near the parking garage next to the new City Hall to facilitate easy park and ride.
- Explore federal and state funding to assist in the creation of the gateway hub. Consider integrating the gateway hub into the first floor of the parking garage (with extended first floor heights).

Pedestrian-Friendly

Incorporating complete street principles in all road design is important in creating a positive pedestrian experience. That should include, as described above, features that protect people from the sun and inclement weather. It should also include completing the street grid in the southwest quadrant and creating a functional Main Street along NW 94th Avenue (potentially expanding to NW 33rd Street as future phases of the downtown evolve).

Infrastructure improvements could include brick pavers, lighting, landscaping, and pedestrian pathways to promote the walkability and image of the downtown area. One such pathway should enhance uses between NW 31st Court and The Walk.



Redevelopment success includes making the area easily accessible by various forms of transit that can connect in a centralized gateway hub.

Green: Coral Spring Community bus route Green line

Blue: Coral Spring Community bus route Blue line

Orange: BCT Route 34

Red: BCT Route 2 + Breeze (Limited Stop Service)

Green Circles: Signalized intersections



Protecting pedestrians from sun and rain is also important.

Moving Forward: A Menu of Implementation Strategies

Implementing the development approach outlined above will require a variety of incentives and other tools to help achieve the desired vision for the area, the TAP emphasized.

Incentives

Incentives that will attract private investment to the area are an essential part of moving forward. A variety of incentives should be used to create a combination that meets the needs of individual developers and their proposed projects (one-size-fits-all does not apply to incentives).

Examples of incentives that the City and CRA could explore:

- Working with existing landowners to ensure that property for sale or available for redevelopment is being brokered and marketed to the development community in the context of the plans for a Downtown Coral Springs.
- Providing density and other bonuses tied to zoning and the permitting process.
- Adjusting parking requirements to ensure that future redevelopment is not stifled by overly restrictive regulations and codes (especially considering the potential for shared and/or on-street parking as well as the parking garage).
- Offering tax and/or impact fee abatements or deferrals. That could include staggering impact fees tied to jobs or waiving of certain fees.
- Subsidizing leases for limited amounts of time for targeted businesses (for example, to transition traditional office to co-working space to take advantage of a young demographic and provide a place for startups to grow and collaborate).
- Providing a business concierge service that expedites the permitting process for projects that implement the plan vision for the area.
- Offering grants (matching or full) for events or programming that meet redevelopment plan objectives.

Important to each incentive and achieving plan success will be the City and CRA taking an active role in creating public-private partnerships that work. That should include identifying and recruiting the right partners and nurturing, managing, and monitoring the relationships. An example is working with Amera and the owner of the Coral Spring Financial Plaza to create an integrated block design that will enhance the proposed new City Hall site and the main corner of the southwest quadrant and create a vibrant redevelopment core.

Other Tools to Consider

As the City and CRA move forward, they should also examine additional strategies, such as the following, that could facilitate plan implementation. That includes:

- Creating an association of nearby landowners, business owners, and merchants to collaborate on redevelopment efforts and programming.
- Continuing public outreach so that the public remains supportive of infrastructure projects. That should include spending time explaining and educating them about the importance of public investments, including signature municipal buildings that beautify the city, catalyzes private investment, and heighten city pride.

- Reviewing design and landscape guidelines to ensure they reflect the current community vision.
- Considering engaging a qualified external design team that includes a land planner, engineer, and architect to help generate a concept plan for the study area. The plan would provide a visual and programmatic stimulus to engage the community and encourage private investment in the process.
- Exploring adoption of a form-based land use code for the CRA area that helps increase the predictability of future development that reflects the desired community character and is not stifled by antiquated abstract textual rules.
- Working with Broward Health in understanding their future needs and how they can become part of Downtown Coral Springs and serve as a potential major anchor.

Although the location of the Coral Springs Charter School was not part of the TAPs questions or scope, the fact it is in the CRA boundary resulted in a discussion about the site. In the future the City might explore working with the charter school operator and most importantly residents, students, and parents to address the future needs of the school and explore development of a more modern facility that includes much needed recreation/green space. The current charter school site presents a long-term opportunity to further develop the downtown core.

TAP Concluding Comments

The TAP concluded that the City and its CRA are absolutely on the right track. The City and CRA-owned sites on the south side of Sample Road, west of University Drive, is the right location for a new City Hall/City Center Complex, and this is the right time to move forward to the next step. The City has an outstanding financial standing (AAA bond rating), construction costs are down, and the market is warming up. Most important, the City has established a strong foundation of planning and put in place a clear vision of what it wants (a valuable marketing asset).

"A series of ULI workshops on transit-oriented development made it clear: the best asset to attract developers is a clear vision for the site that brings with it more development certainty and predictability." The ULI Technical Assistance Panel



Depicted above, the TAP's development approach strategically uses the new Coral Springs City Hall site to catalyze redevelopment that will create a signature city center. It provides a framework vision that can be used as the CRA updates its plan and as the City moves forward with planning the new City Hall.

To move forward with implementation, the City and CRA, the TAP concluded, should:

City Hall

Use the new City Hall as the catalytic project to achieve what the CRA's plan calls for: a new downtown that would enable the City of Coral Springs to establish a sense of place in the traditional sense of "city" and be a major step in the maturation of Coral Springs from a planned community into a real city with a defined soul, sense of place, and organic feel. The new City Hall, combined with a one-stop parking garage and a common green, will give the private sector the confidence it needs to invest. Incorporating multiple uses in City Hall and investing in active programming in and around it will create a true destination civic center for residents and visitors of all ages.

The Common Green

Move ahead now with creating and programming the common green. Its development should occur in the near future as long as it is designed with the new City Hall in mind and its completion will enable residents to experience the benefits of a destination downtown core. The City should also continue with its streetscape improvements in order to create a more pedestrian-friendly environment (that place residents and visitors want to take their time strolling through) and to promote multi-modal development that moves away from the current car-centric environment. Combined with the recommended water features, which are not only on the green but also run throughout the site, and the lush native tree canopy and landscaping, the common green will create an oasis with an ambience that cannot be found elsewhere in the area.

Incentives and Other Strategies for Moving Forward

Assess the incentives and other strategies that facilitate the desired redevelopment and attract private investment. "Without public sector incentives and intervention, private sector investment," the TAP stressed, "is unlikely." Outlined earlier, incentives should be designed to be used in combination. They could take a variety of forms, including those related to zoning (density bonuses, for example), adjusted parking standards, tax and impact fee breaks, subsidized leases for targeted businesses, and streamlined permitting. Other strategies include making sure that City codes and other plans and agreements enable the desired form of development and investing in public outreach and education. That investment is requisite to maintaining broad public support for the City's and CRA's investments and their efforts to give Coral Springs that desired small town feel with big city opportunities.

In short, as Mayor Boccia observed, the new City Hall and surrounding amenities will launch Coral Springs' next 50 years by creating the true destination downtown center that residents have said they want.

APPENDIX A: TAP AGENDA
ULI Southeast Florida/Caribbean
Technical Advisory Panel (TAP) Workshop
Coral Springs Downtown/City Hall Area
May 22 & 23, 2013

Wednesday, May 22, 2013

- 12:00 – 1:30 pm** Panel arrives, meets over catered lunch with City & CRA Staff
Coral Springs Financial Plaza, 3300 University Drive, 2nd Floor, Coral Springs,
(Building located at corner of University Drive and Sample Road)
- 1:30 – 3:00 pm** Van tour of Study Area
- 3:00 – 4:00 pm** Hotel check-in (for those panelists staying overnight)
Marriott Heron Bay, 11775 Heron Bay Blvd., Coral Springs, FL
- 4:30 – 6:00 pm** Panel interviews of, community representatives, neighbors, etc., and other
interested parties
This meeting is open to the public.
Coral Springs Charter School Auditorium, 3205 N. University Dr., Coral Springs, FL
- 6:00 – 9:00 pm** Dinner with Coral Springs City Commission & the Coral Springs CRA
Board Members
Coral Springs Financial Plaza, 3300 University Drive, 2nd Floor, Coral Springs, FL

Thursday, May 23, 2013

- 7:30 – 8:30 am** Breakfast for Panelists Staying Overnight at Hotel
Marriott Heron Bay restaurant (Informal)
- 8:30 – 10:00 am** Panel work session (closed to public)
Coral Springs Financial Plaza, 3300 University Drive, 2nd Floor
- 10:00 – 10:30 am** Break
- 10:30 – 12:30 pm** Panel work session (closed to public)
- 12:30 – 1:30 pm** Working lunch onsite (*catered*)
- 1:30 – 4:00 pm** Panel work session (closed to public)

4:00 – 4:15 pm	Break
4:15 – 5:00 pm	Panel review of Draft Report (closed to public)
5:00 – 6:00 pm	Presentation of Draft Report; Questions & Answers This meeting open to public. <i>Coral Springs Charter School Auditorium, 3205 N. University Dr., Coral Springs, FL</i>

NOTE: Final report sent to client 45 days after panel adjourns.

APPENDIX B: QUESTIONS FOR PANELISTS

Technical Assistance Panel on Coral Springs Downtown/City Hall Area

2002 Community Redevelopment Plan / Market Analysis

1. Are the goals, strategies and recommendations contained in the 2002 Community Redevelopment Plan for Downtown Coral Springs still relevant? Are the plan's assumptions still valid? What new goals and strategies should be included, if any?
2. Does the 2002 Community Redevelopment Plan for Downtown Coral Springs need to be updated to reflect economic and demographic forecasts and market conditions (i.e., removal of eminent domain, impact of Seminole Casino, Broken Woods redevelopment, housing market, etc.)?
3. What type/mix of uses could successfully create a catalyst for redevelopment?
4. Identify any immediate impediments to redevelopment of this area. What are the strengths (families, education, parks, quality of life) to build on?
5. Identify possible locations for an expanded Broward College campus, if any.
6. What are the most immediate redevelopment opportunities for Sample Road west of University Drive?
7. How can the four quadrants at Sample and University be linked? Should their redevelopment be phased or redeveloped at one time? If phased, which quadrant should the City focus on first and what actions should be undertaken?

City Hall / Public Spaces

1. Should City Hall be the first public project? What other public uses would be appropriate to accompany it, besides parking (County and State offices, public exhibit space, multi-use assembly, Post Office, first floor public use [retail]; mixed-use government spaces)?
2. Identify opportunities to create open/public gathering spaces either through redevelopment or through new development to provide opportunities for the public to congregate. (Note: three acres required for sense of place.)
3. How does this project interrelate to the four corners and to Sample on the west and University on the south?
4. Should City Hall have a presence on Sample Road or be internal to the site?
5. How can City Hall support / facilitate downtown businesses after hours and weekends?

Transportation and Connectivity

1. Identify strategies for making transit an integral component of redevelopment in the area, i.e., how do we make the area 'transit ready.'
 2. Recommend two or three ideal locations for the siting of a neighborhood transit center/gateway hub. (MPO funding for Transit Gateway in 2016)
 3. Can we make this area more pedestrian friendly and visually attractive (elevated crosswalks/plaza)?
 4. Should there be a new Main Street (south side Sample/ west side of University)?
- Public Sector Incentives
1. What is the likelihood of redevelopment occurring on its own without public sector intervention?
 2. What type of incentives, programs, regulations or improvements could be offered to encourage redevelopment or property improvements? What roles should the City/CRA have in a public/private venture?
 3. What specific actions can the City/CRA undertake to attract private investment to the area? For example, Sample Road rezoning (441 to University), Coral Hills Drive rezoning, creating an overlay district?

Parking

1. Should the City/CRA undertake a parking study to review code requirements, parking utilization, analyze parking inventory and examine the pros and cons of providing public parking (structured) options. Evaluate parking needs and potential solutions.
2. What are potential locations for parking structures?
3. Should parking be constructed first before other projects?

NOTE: If all questions cannot be adequately addressed during time frame of this TAP, questions dealing with new city hall siting and auxiliary uses, quadrant of its siting, and parking issues take priority. Every effort will be made to adequately address questions contained in all five sections.