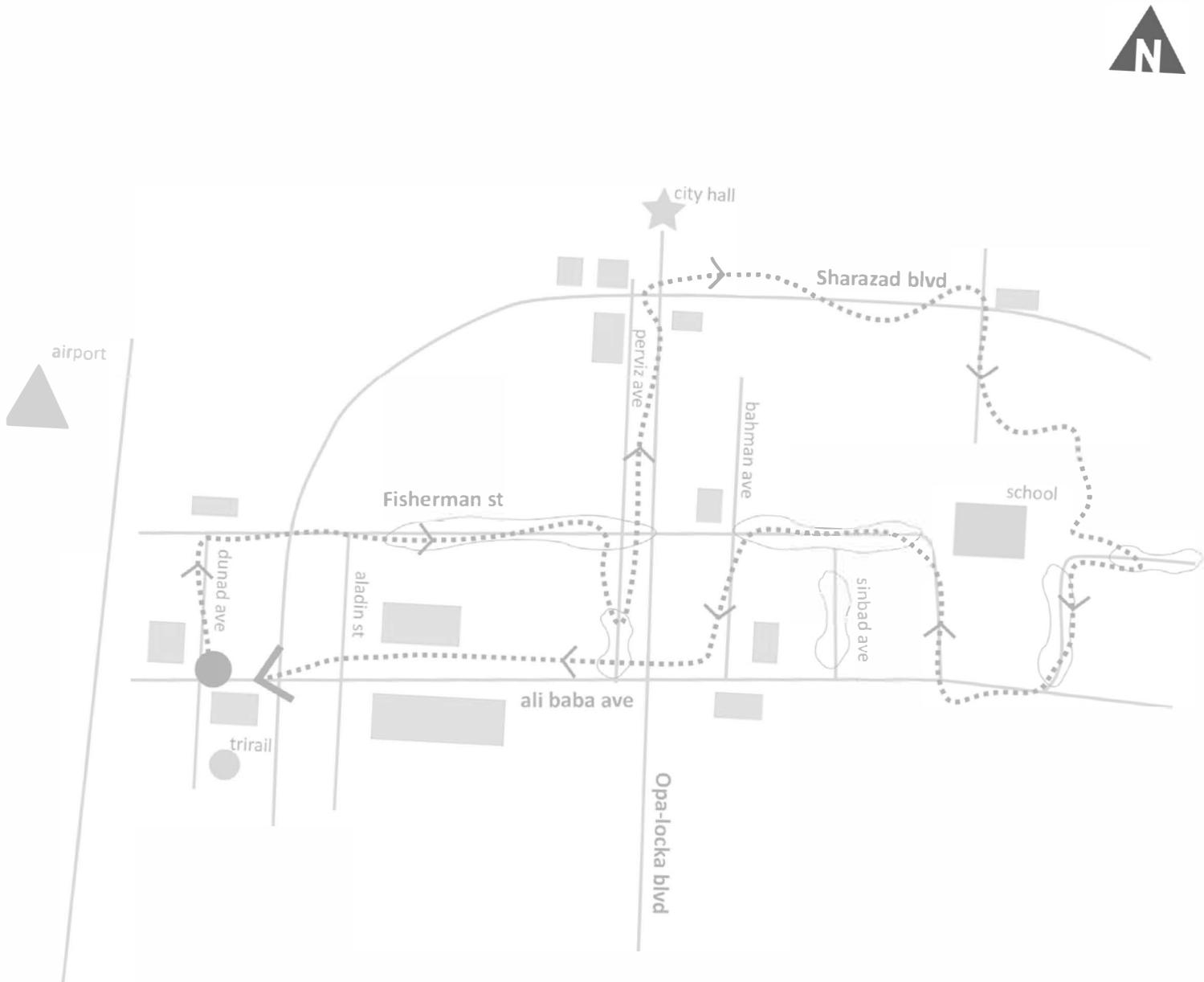




OPA-LOCKA

# DOWNTOWN CONCEPT PLAN 2015

March, 2015



## Acknowledgements



**This plan was made possible through the guidance of:**

Opa-Locka Community

Opa-Locka Community Redevelopment Agency Board

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Luis B. Santiago, Vice Chair

Myra L. Taylor, Board Member

Timothy Holmes, Board Member

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## Executive Summary

The Opa-Locka Downtown Concept Plan started as an idea during the update process of the Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Regulations. During the design process, the City of Opa-Locka saw the new, Downtown Mixed-Use zoning district as an opportunity to revitalize the Downtown area. Unlike other major cities in North Miami-Dade, Opa-Locka is the only one with the Florida East Coast railroad running through its downtown, with a downtown Tri-Rail Station, and a fantastic Moorish Revival architectural history. The opportunity to highlight these elements is the catalyst of this process.

### City Vision

In 2030, the City will be a successful and financially stable, full-service community that offers ample economic opportunities to residents, boasts a vibrant and distinctive downtown, healthy neighborhoods, and provides excellent services and a great quality of life to residents, businesses and visitors.

### Benefits of Urban Revitalization

Many older communities, especially the historic manufacturing, industrial, and transportation centers, have suffered from population declines and lack of traditional employment opportunities. These recent time-trends have had adverse implications for the upkeep of existing infrastructure, the effectiveness of traditional revitalization strategies, and the flow of federal funds from programs that allocate dollars based on population. Urban revitalization serves as an economic engine that would improve existing infrastructure and redevelop deteriorated lands. This will enhance the overall physical environment of the Opa-Locka Downtown and bring prosperity.

### Project Area and Existing Conditions

The project focuses on an area south of Sharazad Boulevard, north of Ali Baba Avenue, east of NW 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and west of NW 37<sup>th</sup> Avenue. In addition, the City identified four street segments within the downtown area for additional study, these include:

1. Ali Baba Avenue
2. Fisherman Street
3. Sharazad Boulevard
4. Opa-Locka Boulevard

The project area includes a broad mix of land uses and community destinations. Ali Baba Avenue from NW 37<sup>th</sup> Avenue to NW 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue is the industrial spine of the downtown area. It also includes the Opa Locka Tri-Rail Station, which constitutes a major local and regional transit hub, and is a community destination. Fisherman Street between NW 37<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Kalandar Street is mostly composed of multifamily and single family housing stock. In addition, it holds some local commercial businesses, restaurants, post offices, and Opa-Locka Elementary School. Sharazad Boulevard between Ali Baba Avenue and NW 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue is the spine of the residential area; other land uses include municipal, including the Old City Hall (historic landmark) and Sherbondy Park. On Opa-Locka Boulevard between Sharazad Boulevard and all the way south to NW 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue passing the railroad there is a mix of commercial, industrial, office and residential land uses. Some of the key destinations of the downtown area include:

- + Historic City Hall (Moorish architecture)
- + Community Development Corporation (Moorish architecture)
- + Opa-Locka Tri-Rail Station (transit hub)
- + Opa-Locka Elementary School
- + U.S Post Office
- + Sherbondy Park
- + Opa-Locka Executive Airport
- + Florida Department of Children and Families

The downtown entry point at the intersection of Opa-Locka Boulevard and Ali Baba Avenue is currently used as a parking lot for the Opa-Locka Community Development Corporation building and for some of the adjacent commercial and industrial businesses. Entering from Ali Baba Avenue and NW 37<sup>th</sup> Avenue, the entry to downtown is currently used as the loading zone for Central Transport Corporation and a parking lot for Aramark industrial business. On Fisherman Street, the entry to downtown is currently used as a parking lot on the

south side and a vacant multifamily lot on the north side. On Ali Baba Avenue and NW 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue the entry point is currently an auto sales dealer across from a multifamily two story edifice. On Sharazad Boulevard at NW 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue it is currently a parking lot for commercial purposes on both sides. All other access points such as Perviz Ave and Bahman Ave consist of residential zones, which are one and two story maximum building heights.

The heart of the downtown project site, starting from Ali Baba Avenue, and north along Opa-Locka Boulevard, to Historic City Hall, includes more parking than is necessary for current uses and/or most of the sites are underutilized with large amounts of surface parking. Currently this area has +/- 403,870 square feet of which +/- 278,226 is dedicated to surface parking. This demonstrates that +/- 68% of the project area is available as parking.

### **Visioning and Concept Development**

Landscape/streetscape, economic development and transit mobility improvements of downtown are the focal point in making a new Downtown Opa-Locka. At the heart of this process lies the idea to improve the community through design. The vision and concept development process was designed to give the community a voice and to develop a plan that matches their vision. This included a community kick-off meeting, workshops, and development of key concepts based on input from the community. As a follow up, there was a presentation and opportunity to comment on these concepts, leading to the selection of a recommended concept. At every meeting the community was shown updated illustrative concepts from the consultant to build up a more refined vision.

### **Visioning**

The design/consultant team led visioning sessions for both City Staff and general public. The format enabled an opportunity for a free flowing discussion and comments among community members, such as, business owners, merchants, and residents. A summary of those discussions were:

- + Vibrant place with shops and restaurants (mixed-use development)
- + More residential (affordable housing and mixed-use development)

- + Pedestrian comfort (shade trees, planting buffers, and connectivity)
- + City identity (street furniture, crossing markings, pedestrian & bike signage)
- + Look forward (modern architecture, sustainability and flexibility)
- + Arts (zoning transitions, seamless land uses and artistic development)
- + Economic development (new places and more jobs)
- + Beautification (new City image)

### **Concepts**

The project team which included constituents/stakeholders, City Commission, City Staff, the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) and The Corradino Group, developed design concepts for the downtown. Each of these concepts were carefully developed to reflect the desires of the community shared during the workshops and meetings. Each concept has new or expanded public gathering spaces, streetscape improvements, connectivity, and creates a seamless transition to the downtown area. It fills the heart of downtown with complete streets mixed-use developments that illustrates the desire to become a vibrant community. The concept plan for key elements of downtown development include:

- + The concept plan will serve as a foundation for potential public and private space improvements for key civic spaces and the downtown district
- + Develop concepts for redevelopment opportunities, urban design elements, and landscape/streetscape enhancements
- + Reflect updated comprehensive plan and land development regulations for the readiness of the City.

Each concept is named for the idea behind the concept. They were the in-fill development strategy of vacant lots into new desirable mixed-use buildings, complete streets (landscape/streetscape enhancements), and connectivity (sidewalk

installation and pedestrian and bicycle delineated pathways).

#### **Six Pillars for Making a Great Downtown**

- + Defined
- + Comfortable
- + Safe
- + Connected
- + Memorable
- + Unique

#### **Recommended Plan**

The design concepts were presented with a progress report on February 6, 2015. The overall feedback was positive and reflected what the community desired. Some new elements were included such as the branding of the downtown gateways, and mini gateways. These items were combined into a final recommended plan.

The recommended plan includes the following key features:

- + Vacant lots development/redevelopment into Mixed-use entities (Defined)
- + Downtown gateway features at key entry points (Unique, Memorable)
- + Transitional land uses within and bordering downtown (Connected)
- + Opa-Locka Tri-Rail Station enhancement and support (Unique, Connected)
- + Streetscape/landscape improvements (Comfortable, Safe)
- + Pedestrian and Bicycle delineated pathways (Connected, Safe)
- + More housing, shops, and restaurants (Comfortable, Defined)

#### **Other Recommendations**

The downtown concept plan for the heart of Opa-Locka is the starting point for a city-wide organizational plan. Part of what will make this successful is the attention to detail as these changes are implemented and the commitment of the City.

Other key aspects for a successful implementation will include:

- + Incentives for new businesses to locate in the downtown area
- + Programming of new public spaces and downtown events
- + Funding of local and regional entities for right-of-way improvements

#### **Funding Sources**

When considering possible funding sources for the recommended improvements (especially those in the public domain), it is important to remember that not all design and construction activities will be accomplished with a single funding source. It will be necessary to consider several sources of funding, that when combined, would support full project realization. It is recommended that the City participates in public/private partnerships. The City shall continue to seek new funding sources in addition to the following:

- + Community Development Block Grants
- + Economic Development Action Grants
- + Environmental Protection Agency Brownfield Grants
- + Transportation Alternative (drainage and roadway improvements)
- + Safe Routes to School Funding

#### **Economic benefits of Opa-Locka Downtown Concept Plan**

Developing and connecting urban corridors has become a popular way for cities and towns to revitalize their downtowns and transform them into vibrant communities. Several cities throughout the region and country have used downtown concept plans to reverse downtown degeneration such as abandoned buildings, low rates of use by residents and visitors, undesirable places, shrinking property tax revenues, low building occupancy rates, and deteriorated streetscape environments.

Opa-Locka Downtown Concept Plan will restore a historical, cultural, and economic source that strengthens the social fabric and vitality at its heart. Residents, businesses, and visitors will be attracted to the City Center, where opportunities to recreate and socialize along its corridors will stimulate local growth. It is imperative to give significance to the City's unique architectural Moorish motif that brings a historic component. The development of new mixed-use entities, new connectivity patterns, and comfortable pedestrian ways will form important connections between key destinations in the downtown area, drawing people to the heart of the City to live, work and play.

Investing in the development and revitalization of Opa-Locka Downtown can produce a positive economic impact for the entire City. This positive economic outcome for Opa-Locka includes:

- + Tourism, attractions, and visitor spending
- + Property value and tax revenue increases
- + Attracting and retaining workers and employers
- + Direct use impact

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## Project Background

The Opa-Locka Downtown Concept Plan started as an idea during the update process of the Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Regulations. During the design process the City of Opa-Locka saw the new Downtown Mixed-Use zoning district as an opportunity to revitalize the Downtown area. Among the major cities in North Miami-Dade, Opa-Locka is the only one with the Florida East Coast railroad running through its downtown, with a downtown Tri-Rail Station, and a fantastic Moorish Revival architectural history. The opportunity to highlight these elements is the catalyst of this process.

In the fall of 2014, the project team: constituents/stakeholders, City Commission, City Staff, the CRA and the consultant gathered in Opa-Locka (Sherbondy Village) for a kick-off meeting to develop design ideas for the downtown area and adjacent spaces throughout Opa-Locka. The downtown area sits at a strategic location in the urban context of the City and the County, creating a special experience. It is surrounded by a large residential stock in the north and northeastern portions of the City, a large industrial area in the south, and the Opa-Locka Executive Airport in the west. The various street segments in the downtown area are no longer identifiable from other corridors in the City. The character of the downtown area is diffused, losing the importance that it should carry has the heart of the City.

The highlight of the initial design meeting was the discussion to connect the downtown area better to itself and to other parts of the City through the implementation of landscape/streetscape enhancements. This would enable the City to have a walkable downtown that would be entirely unique to Opa-Locka. It could also be a catalyst to revitalize a downtown that is a destination for residents or a desirable location for retail, dining, and entertainment oriented businesses.

Working with the Opa-Locka Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) and Opa-Locka Community Development Corporation (CDC), the City developed a scope of work to further study an overall concept plan for the revitalization of Opa-Locka Downtown.

**Kick-off Meeting**  
October 1, 2014

**The Great City of Opa-Locka**  
Illustrative Concept Plan for Community Redevelopment Area



+ Kick-off Meeting/Workshop October 1, 2014

**Community Redevelopment Agency**  
Board Meeting  
January 14, 2015

**The Great City of Opa-Locka**  
Illustrative Concept Plan for Community Redevelopment Area



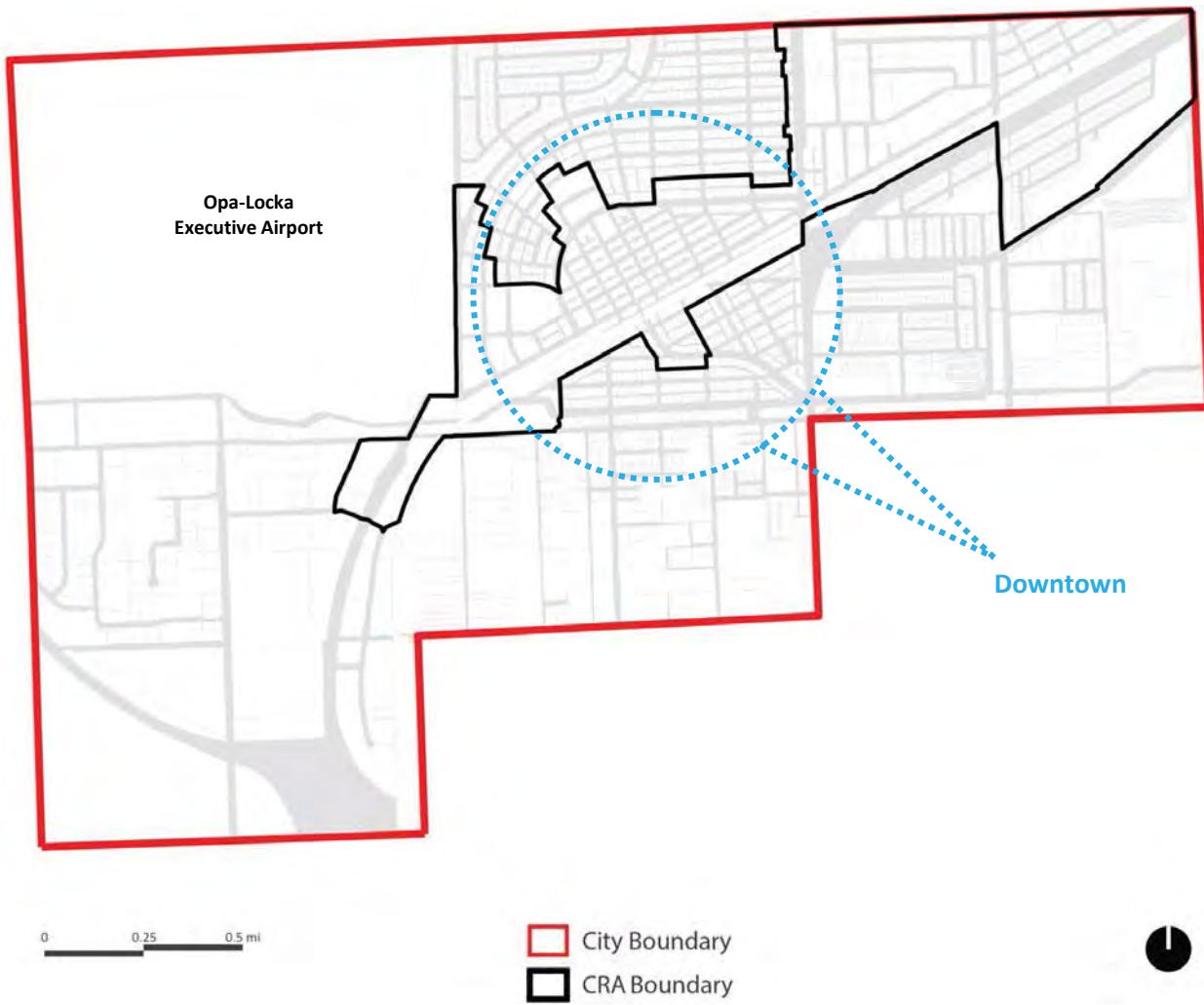
+ CRA Board Meeting January 14, 2015

**Progress Report**  
February 6, 2015

**The Great City of Opa-Locka**  
Illustrative Concept Plan for Community Redevelopment Area  
"Crossroads of North Miami Dade"



+ Progress Report February 6, 2015



**City of Opa-Locka map**

## Existing Conditions

The project is defined as the area south of Sharazad Boulevard, north of Ali Baba Avenue, east of NW 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and west of NW 37<sup>th</sup> Avenue, focusing along Ali Baba Avenue between Opa-Locka Boulevard and NW 37<sup>th</sup> Avenue. In addition, the City identified four street segments within the downtown area for additional study, these include:

1. Ali Baba Avenue
2. Fisherman Street
3. Sharazad Boulevard
4. Opa-Locka Boulevard

The project area includes a broad mix of land uses and community destinations. Ali Baba Avenue from NW 37<sup>th</sup> Avenue to NW 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue is the industrial spine of the downtown area. It also includes the Opa-Locka Tri-Rail Station, which constitutes a major local and regional transit hub. The buildings lining the street are mostly one or two-story concrete with flat stucco facades and range in age from about 20 to 70 years old. The oldest building along Ali Baba Avenue is the Opa-Locka Community Development Corporation building which is 90 years old and is considered historical for its Moorish motif. Ali Baba Avenue is fairly consistent on both sides of the railroad with industrial uses. There are +/- 68,570 square feet of vacant private and City Owned lots along Ali Baba Avenue. Fisherman Street between NW 37<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Kalandar Street is mostly composed of multifamily and single family housing stock. In addition, it has some commercial businesses, a restaurant, post office, and Opa-Locka Elementary School. This segment character is mostly one- or two-story single and multifamily houses. West of Opa-Locka Boulevard on Fisherman Street most of the properties are multifamily, excluding some commercial entities and the U.S. Post Office. On the east side of Fisherman Street towards Kalandar Street all the properties are single family with the exception of some commercial uses near Opa-Locka Boulevard and Opa-Locka Elementary School. Sharazad Boulevard between Ali Baba Avenue and NW 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue is the spine of the residential area; with additional land uses including municipal including the Old City Hall (historic landmark), and Sherbondy Park. On Sharazad Boulevard there is a

similar trend to that of Fisherman Street with single and multifamily housing units, except some properties at the intersection of Opa-Locka Boulevard. The Opa-Locka Historic City Hall is one of Opa-Locka's buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is located at this intersection, acting as a termini/anchor point at the end of Opa-Locka Boulevard.

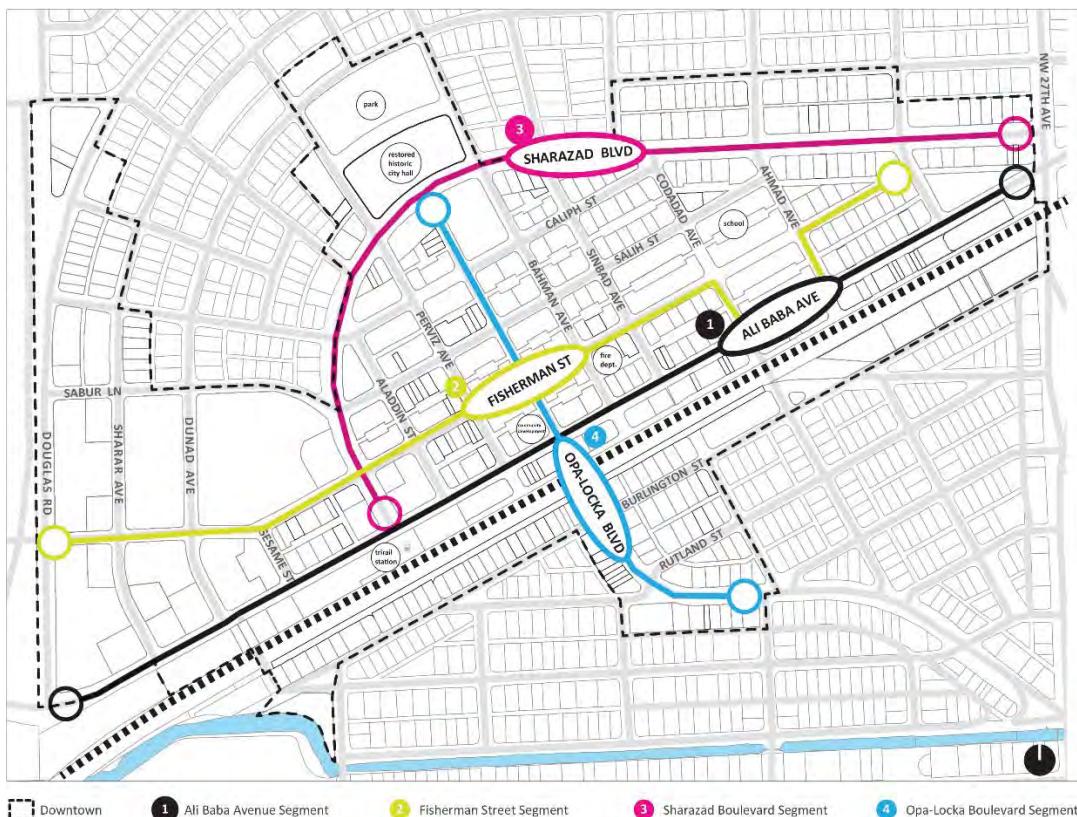
On Opa-Locka Boulevard between Sharazad Boulevard and NW 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue there is a mix of commercial, industrial, municipal, offices, park, and residential land uses. Some of the key destinations of the downtown area include:

- + Historic City Hall (Moorish Architecture)
- + Community Development Entity (Moorish architecture)
- + Opa-Locka Tri-Rail Station (Transit Hub)
- + Opa-Locka Elementary School
- + U.S Post Office
- + Sherbondy Park
- + Opa-Locka Executive Airport
- + Florida Department of Children and Families

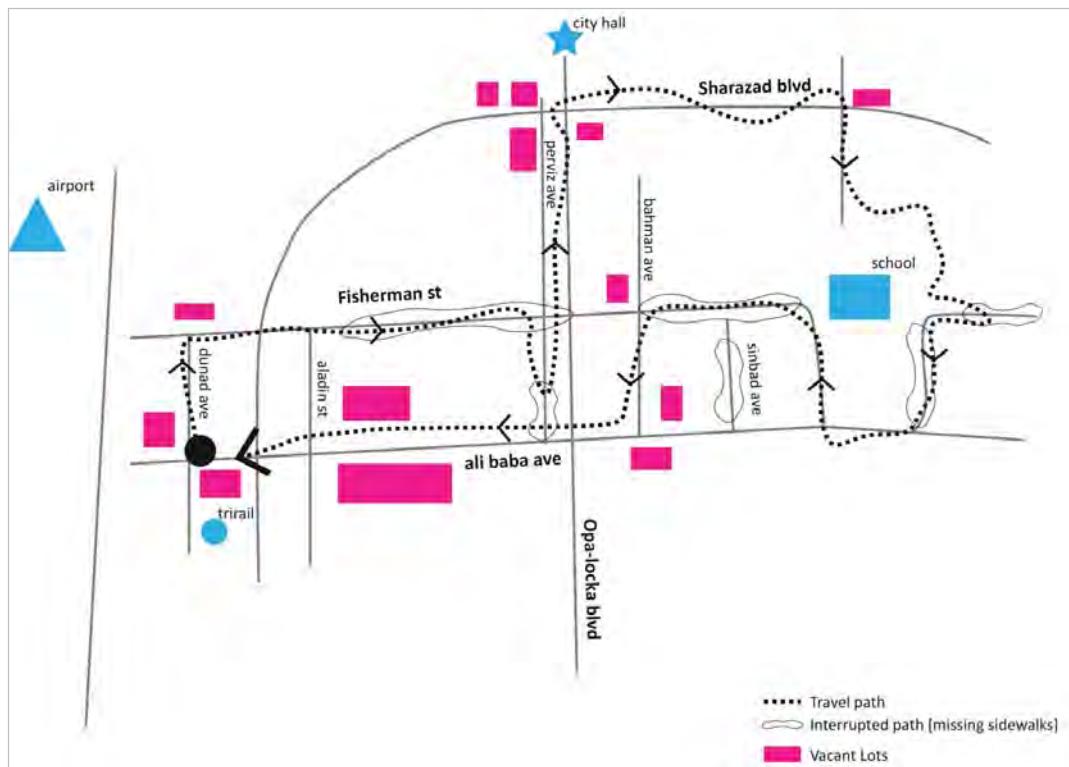
The downtown access point at the intersection of Opa-Locka Boulevard and Ali Baba Avenue is currently used as a parking lot for the Opa-Locka Community Development Corporation building and some adjacent commercial and industrial businesses. Entering from at Ali Baba Avenue and NW 37<sup>th</sup> Avenue there is the loading zone for Central Transport Corporation and a parking lot for Aramark industrial business. On Fisherman Street the entry point is currently a parking lot on the south side and a vacant multifamily lot on the north side. On Ali Baba Avenue and NW 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue it is currently an auto sales dealer across from a multifamily two story building. On Sharazad Boulevard at NW 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue it is used as a parking lot for commercial purposes on both sides. All other access points such as Perviz Avenue and Bahman Avenue are comprised of residential zones.



+ Downtown Opa-Locka aerial view



+ Downtown Opa-Locka four street segments



+ Visual analysis walk-through

Photo #	Location	Description
1 + 2	Sesame St and Alibaba Ave looking east	vacant lot [industrial], adjacent to Tri-Rail station
3	Dunad Ave and Alibaba Ave looking north to Fisherman St	missing sidewalks
4 + 5	Dunad Ave and Fisherman St looking west to airport	vacant lot [multifamily]
6 + 7	Fisherman St between Sesame and Dunad Ave looking east	missing sidewalks
8	Fisherman St and Sesame St looking east to Opa-Locka Blvd	vacant lot [commercial]
9 + 10	Fisherman St and Sesame St looking east to Opa-Locka Blvd	missing sidewalk
11	Sharazad Blvd and Fisherman St looking south to Tri-Rail station	missing landscape enhancement [shaded trees]
12	Sharazad Blvd and Fisherman St looking northeast	vacant lot [adjacent to new development]
13	Fisherman St between Sharazad Blvd and Aladdin St looking north	vacant lot
14 + 15	Fisherman St and Aladdin St southeast corner	vacant lot [commercial] adjacent to post office
16 + 17	Perviz Ave and Fisherman St looking south to Ali Baba Ave	missing sidewalk [cutoff + interrupted path]
18	Fisherman St and Perviz Ave looking west to airport	missing landscape enhancement
19	Perviz ave between fisherman and sharazad looking west	new development
20	Perviz Ave and Sharazad Blvd southwest corner	vacant lot [commercial liberal + residential]
21 + 22	Perviz Ave and Sharazad Blvd northwest corner	vacant lot [commercial liberal]
23	Perviz Ave and sharazad Blvd looking west to airport	missing crosswalk striping [signage]
24 + 25	Sharazad Blvd and Opa-Locka Blvd looking north	City hall [historic preservation]

26 + 27	Sharazad Blvd and Bahman Ave looking east	vacant lot [commercial]
28	Sharazad Blvd between Bahman Ave and Sinbad Ave looking east	Missing landscape enhancement + bike lane
29	Sharazad Blvd and Codadad St northeast bound	Dog Park missing landscape improvements
30	Sharazad Blvd and Codadad St northeast bound looking west to airport	missing sidewalk improvements [shaded trees]
31	Sharazad Blvd and Ahmad St looking north	missing sidewalk
32 + 33	Sharazad Blvd and Ahmad St northeast corner lot	vacant lot [multifamily]
34	Sharazad Blvd and Ahmad St northeast corner looking east to NW 27 <sup>th</sup> Ave	sidewalk shading improvements
35 + 36	Ahmad St between Sharazad Blvd and Fisherman St looking south	missing sidewalk + landscape improvements
37 + 38	Ahmad St and Fisherman St looking east to NW 27 <sup>th</sup> Ave	missing sidewalk
39	Ahmad St and Fisherman St looking south to Ali Baba Ave	missing street curb + delineation
40	Ahmad St and Ali Baba Ave northwest corner	interrupted corner [landing] sidewalk
41 + 42	Alibaba Ave between Ahmad St and Codadad St looking west to airport	missing street-scape improvements [shaded trees]
43 + 44	Fisherman St between Codadad St and Sinbad Ave looking west	missing street-scape improvements [school zone]
45	Fisherman St and Sinbad Ave looking south to Ali Baba Ave	missing sidewalks
46	Fisherman St and Sinbad Ave looking north to Sharazad Blvd	missing sidewalks
47 + 48	Fisherman St and Sinbad Ave northwest corner lot	vacant lot [commercial liberal] + empty building
49	Alibaba Ave between Aladdin St and Perviz Ave looking south	vacant lot [industrial] 23,750 sq ft
50 + 51	Alibaba Ave between Aladdin St and Perviz Ave looking west	missing sidewalk improvements
52 + 53	Alibaba Ave and Aladdin St southeast corner lot	vacant lot [same as 49]
54 + 55	Alibaba Ave and Sharazad Blvd northwest corner lot	vacant lot [commercial liberal, hotel] + empty building

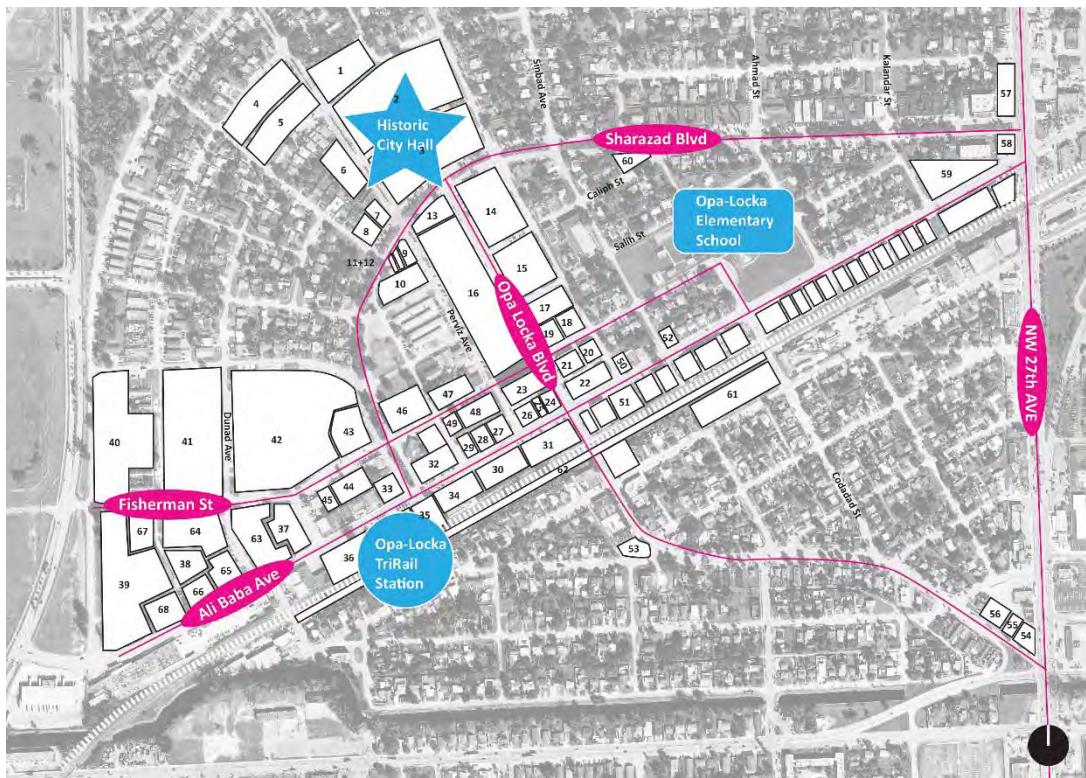
**+ Visual analysis walk-through results:**

- + High amount of vacant lots
- + Missing sidewalks
- + Sidewalk interruptions
- + Missing streetscape improvements
- + Missing landscape enhancement
- + Missing mixed-use development (economic incentive)
- + Missing street furniture/signage
- + Missing linkage opportunities (connectivity)
- + Underutilized parcels (lot size vs. building size)

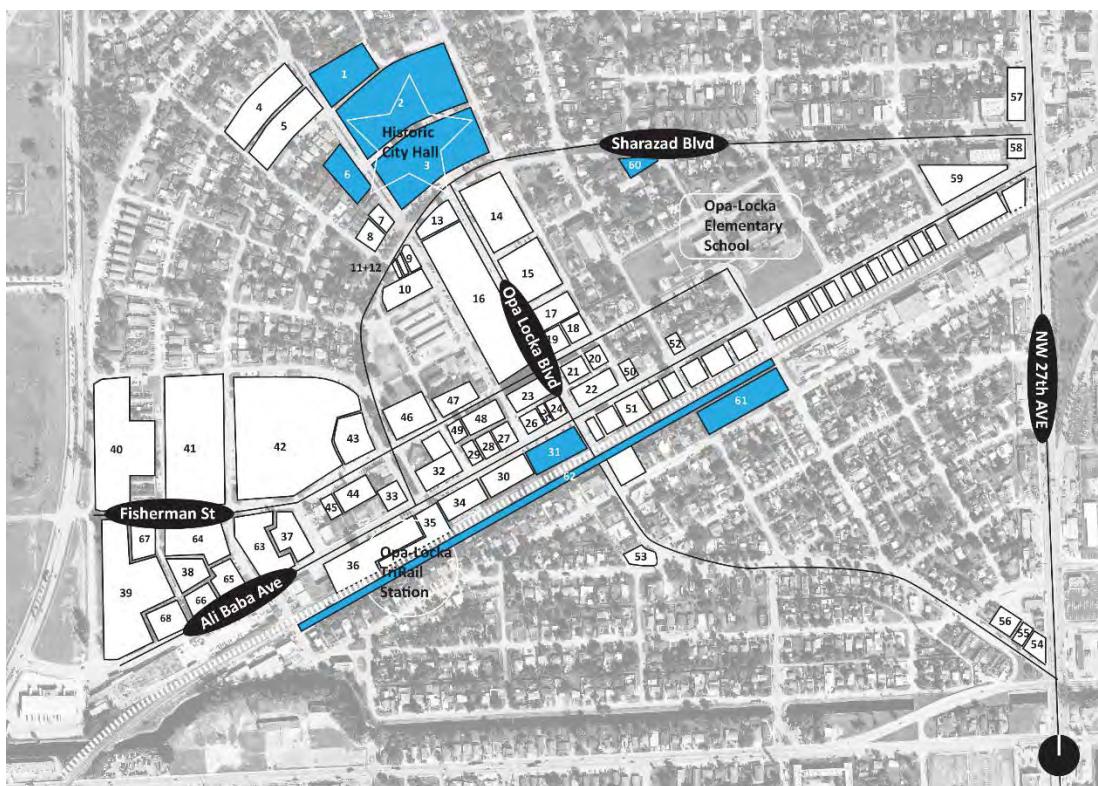




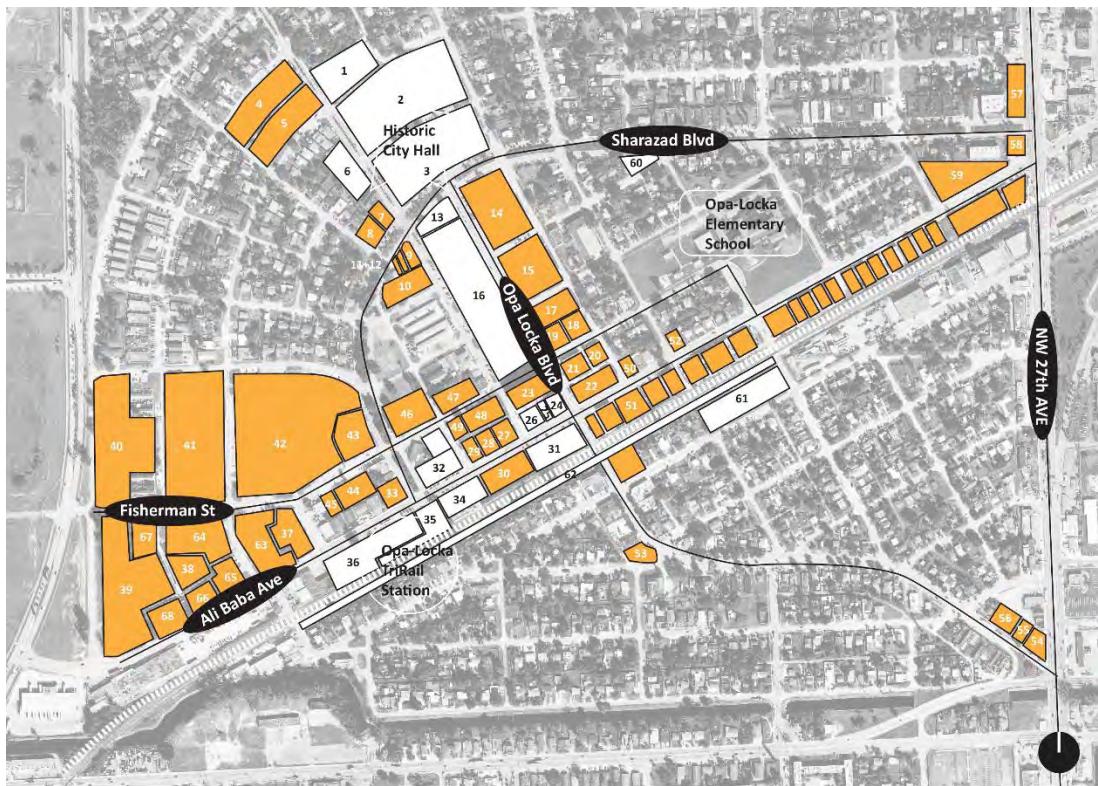
Opa Locka Downtown Concept Plan 2015



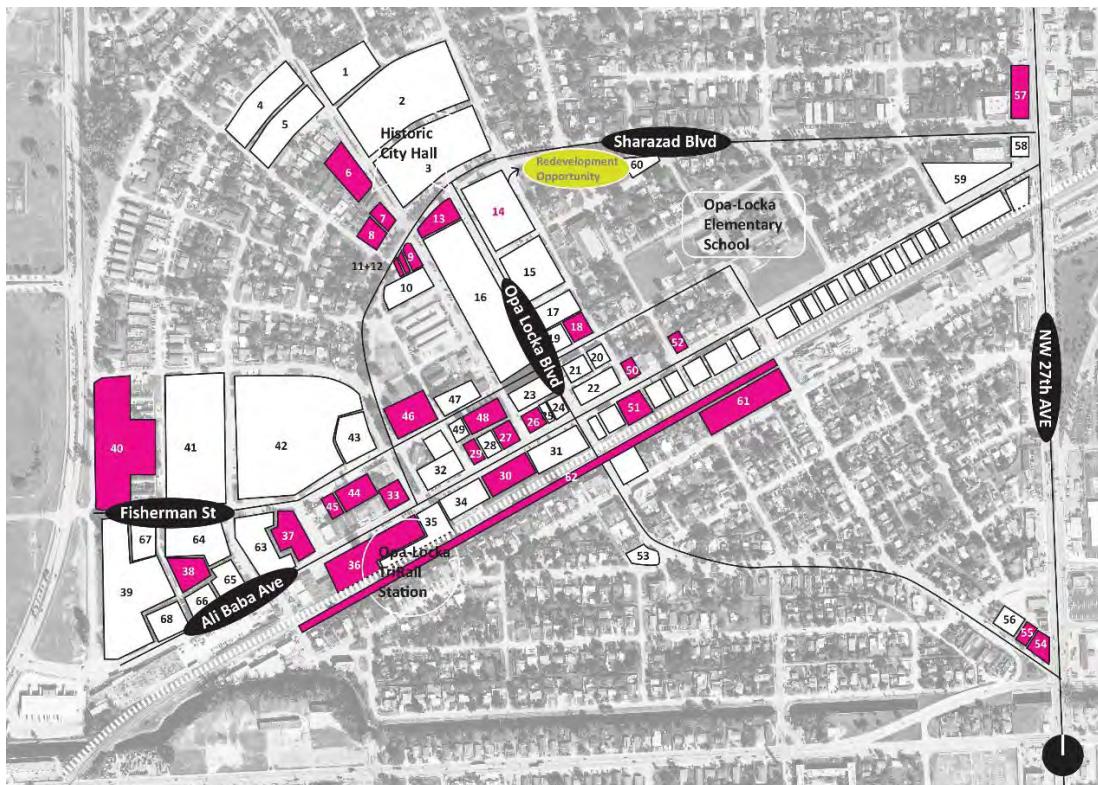
+ Parcel map (56.6 acres)



+ City Owned Parcels (13 acres)



+ Private Owned Parcels (38.3 acres)



+ Vacant Parcels (22.8 acres)

		Lot Size (sqft)	Adjusted Area (sqft)	Parking Surface (+/- sqft)	Use	Vacant	Religious	City	Parking	Commercial	Multifamily
1	City of Opa-Locka	38,379	40,279		Community Facility			**			
2	City of Opa-Locka	167,000			Sherbony Park			**			
3	City of Opa-Locka	140,847	12,546		Historic City Hall			**			
4	OPL United Meth Church	92,431	14,434		Religious		**				
5	OPL United Meth Church	92,431	14,434		Religious		**				
6	City/777 Sharazad	33,977			Vacant	**		**			
7	NGE Keywest LLC	8,998			Vacant Commercial	**					
8	NGE Keywest LLC	11,761			Vacant Commercial	**					
9	Missionary Christian Church Inc.	6,970			Vacant Residential	**					
10	Missionary Christian Church Inc.	26,250	3,870		Religious		**				
11 + 12	Ruiz Foreclosure Inc.	5,000			Vacant Commercial	**					
13	TITF/DMS Regional Service Center	26,380			Vacant Governmental	**					
14	Davcommercial Acquisition LLC	72,703	17,795		Supermarket				**		
15	New Fellow Baptist Church	43,000	11,361		Religious		**				
16	TITF/DMS Regional Service Center	172,317	65,752	106,555	Governmental Services						
17	MAQ Management Inc.	21,600	6,390		Commercial				**		
18	RJR Property Enterprises LLC	10,800	1,414		Abandoned Building	**					
19	RJR Property Enterprises LLC	10,800	6,635		Retail Outlet				**		
20	David Kramer	6,300	3,576		Office						
21	F. George & W Tomasina Lessor Alan Anolik Lesse	15,300	10,451		Retail Commercial				**		
22	441 OPL Blvd LLC Town Center Properties			20,500	Parking Lot			**			
23	JWV Florida Properties LLC	21,225	82,003		Office						
24	Community Development Corporation	8,125	13,248		Community Development Office						
25	Community Development Corporation	6,375	2,700		Repair Shop				**		
26	Community Development Corporation	6,000			Vacant	**		**			
27	Town Center 675 LLC	5,000	5,040		Vacant	**					
28	Town Center 675 LLC	8,500			Manufacturing Light						
29	Town Center 675 LLC	11,750			Vacant	**					
30	Mario J. Verdeja	23,750			Vacant	**					
31	City of Opa-Locka			20,900	Parking Lot			**	**		
32	U.S. Postal Office	33,750	10,183		Postal Services						
33	PO Folk Invest and Dev. Inc.	16,800	5,607		Abandoned Building	**					
34	Community Fund of N. Miami Dade	28,750	3,374	24,000	Educational (near station)						
35	CSX Transportation Inc. Tax Department	23,522			Parking and TriRail Station			**			
36	Reference Only	23,920		29,952	Parking Lot and Vacant Lot	**		**			
37	Ibone 17 LLC.	29,179			Vacant Residential	**					
38	Michelle Family LTD Partnership	19,482			Vacant Residential	**					
39	Aratex Services Inc.			147,344	Parking Lot			**			
40	Bethany Baptist Church of Carol City	112,406			Vacant Residential	**					
41	Michelle Family LTD Partnership	207,946	33,110		Multifamily				**		
42	Opa Property Management Corp.	304,342	42,234		Multifamily				**		
43	Mikon Fin Serv Inc.	38,780	3,240		Multifamily				**		
44	Med One Medical Management	18,000			Vacant	**					
45	Jesus R. Alvarez	4,500			Vacant	**					
46	RUDG Town Center LLC	22,202			Vacant	**					
47	Fleet Reserve Hall Inc.	19,250	3,711		Health Care						
48	N. Dade Community Dev. Corp.	5,250			Vacant	**					
49	Fisherman Salih LLC			18,435	Parking Lot			**			
50	Juanita Lane	5,000			Vacant Residential	**					
51	Anthoneel Allen and Alton Henry	8,075			Vacant Industrial	**					
52	Elvelinda D. Castellon and Rosalio A. Castellon	5,700			Vacant Residential	**					
53	Alfonso J. Ervin III and W Natasha L Ervin			11,320	Parking Lot			**			
54	Carlos Fernandez	9,383	2,001		Vacant/Abandoned Building	**					
55	Carlos Fernandez			7,500	Vacant/Parking Lot	**					
56	DCN Inc.	15,000	2,460		Restaurant						
57	Realty Income Properties 18 LLC			10,260	Vacant/Parking Lot	**					
58	Shamid M. Sheik	5,199	1,608		Nightclub/Entertainment						
59	1360 Building LLC	66,037	42,862		Multifamily				**		
60	City of Opa-Locka	10,741.5			Plaza/community			**			
61	City of Opa-Locka	37,800			Vacant/community facilities	**					
62	City of Opa-Locka	82,613			Vacant/community facilities	**					
63	Opa Property Management Corp.	55,327	11,794		Multifamily				**		
64	Reference Only	54,400	6,000		Multifamily				**		
65	Opa Property Management Corp.	32,729	4,730		Multifamily				**		
66	Reference Only	17,182	4,000		Multifamily				**		
67	Reference Only	26,400	4,000		Multifamily				**		
68	Reference Only	32,000	7,452		Multifamily				**		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Square Feet</b>	<b>2,465,634.5</b>	<b>500,294</b>	<b>396,766</b>		<b>568,456</b>	<b>254,112</b>	<b>411,844.5</b>	<b>271,973</b>	<b>120,403</b>	<b>655,081</b>
	<b>Acre (+/-)</b>	<b>56.6</b>	<b>11.4</b>	<b>9</b>		<b>13</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>9.4</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>15</b>
	<b>Percentage (%)</b>					<b>22.8</b>			<b>16.5</b>		
	<b>Average (sqft)</b>	<b>41,499</b>	<b>16,511</b>	<b>39,677</b>							
	<b>Average (Acre) (+/-)</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>							

Private Vacant  
City Owned

### Existing Parking

The heart of the downtown, starting from Ali Baba Avenue and north along Opa-Locka Boulevard, to Historic City Hall, includes more parking than is necessary for current uses and/or most of the sites are underutilized with large amounts of surface parking. Some of the current parking stock are adequate for the uses, however parking lots are not efficient in land usage. Ground level exposed parking surface takes up most of the properties, creating placeless spaces within the downtown. Currently this area is +/- 403,870 square feet of which +/- 278,226 is dedicated to surface parking. This demonstrates that +/- 68% of the project area is available as parking. This includes parking on and off the street in surface lots, and in private lots. Most of the parking in the heart of downtown is off street parking, and the small amount of on street parking is not properly delineated. Visitors to this area, even at peak use times, have no problem finding parking near their destination.



+ Parking lot at Ali Baba Ave and Opa-Locka Blvd



+ Parking lot at Opa-Locka Blvd and Caliph St



+ Vacant parcel at Codadad St and Burlington St



+ Vacant parcel at Fisherman St and Aladdin St

## City Assets



- + **Historic City Hall (City of Opa-Locka has the largest number of Moorish buildings in the western hemisphere)**



- + **Opa-Locka Tri-Rail Station (major transit hub)**



- + **Opa-Locka Executive Airport**

## Visioning and Concept Development

Landscape/streetscape, economic development and transit mobility improvements of downtown are the focal point in making a new Downtown Opa-Locka. At the heart of this process lies the idea to improve the community through design. The vision and concept development process was designed to give the community a voice and to develop a plan that matches their vision. This included a community kick-off meeting, workshops, and development of key concepts based on input from the community. As a follow-up, there was a presentation and opportunity to comment on the concepts, leading to the selection of the recommended concept. At every meeting the community was shown updated illustrative concepts from the consultant to build up to a more refine and complete vision.

### Visioning

There needs to be a clear vision/goal for what Opa-Locka Downtown should be, that should represent the desires of the community. The City and consultant conducted several meetings in which the general public gave key input to the visioning process. The presentations provided an opportunity for free flowing thoughts/comments and discussion among community members. The community shared personal and generalized stories about their own experiences living in Opa-Locka and provided comments on key elements for consideration, such as, the need for streetscape and landscape improvements, the need for code reinforcement, the desire for modern architecture, the desire for new mixed-use entities, and many other comments. They identify other places with great downtowns and discussed how to bring those best features to Opa-Locka. They also described what their vision/goal is for Opa-Locka Downtown. All the lists, comments, and other information were recorded and provided in Appendix A. The most important ideas are summarized as follows:

*"Create the City's Own Community Identity"*

- + **Streetscape/Landscape Improvements** - The community feels that the streets in Opa-Locka are lacking adequate elements of safety, comfort, and aesthetics. There are currently a large amount of street segments/blocks that suffer from sidewalk interruptions, missing sidewalks, missing shade trees, missing crossing signage, missing crossing markings, and missing bicycle lanes. One example that was brought up in the meetings is Fisherman Street, which is the residential spine of the downtown area. The community wants landscape enhancements, design, shade trees, improvements in hardscape, and authentic street furniture.
- + **Architectural Features** - The community wants to preserve the existing Moorish historic architecture, however they desire new modern buildings. They do not want to imitate their historic architecture in new buildings. The call of the community is to foster a design that would provide flexibility and adaptation to uses overtime and that would increase land value.
- + **Vacant Lots** - The community expressed their discomfort with the current deteriorated and untreated conditions of their vacant lots. They want to bring in new development if possible and/or at least treat the current vacant lots with landscape designs. The need to connect their street network into safe and pleasant pathways is imperative for their well-being. They see great opportunities for development and wish to incentivize developers to invest Downtown Opa-Locka.
- + **Vibrant Place with Shops, Restaurants, and Residences** - There is a strong desire to have a unique downtown center that would foster a place to live, work, and play. Most examples of successful downtowns include streets lined with desirable destinations, including retail and dining opportunities. This is a part of the community's visions for Opa Locka.

- + **Opa-Locka Tri-Rail Station** – Opa-Locka is the only community in North Miami-Dade County to have a station in the heart of downtown. Therefore, there is a great desire to enhance the station and its surroundings with a connected street network and make the transit hub a key feature of downtown.

### Concepts

The project team which included constituents/stakeholders, City Commission, City Staff, The Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) and the consultant, developed design concepts for the downtown. Each of these concepts was carefully developed to reflect the desires of the community that were shared during the workshops and meetings. Each concept has new or expanded public gathering spaces, streetscape improvements, connectivity, and creates a seamless transition to the downtown area. It fills the heart of downtown with complete streets and mixed-use developments that illustrates the desire to become a vibrant community. The concept plan for key elements of downtown development include:

- + The opportunity to create the City's own community identity
- + The concept plan will serve as a foundation for potential public and private space improvements for key civic spaces and the downtown district
- + Develop concepts for redevelopment opportunities, urban design elements, and landscape/streetscape enhancements
- + Reflect updated comprehensive plan and land development regulations for the readiness of the City

Each concept is named for the idea behind the concept. They were, in-fill development strategy of vacant lots into new desirable mixed-use buildings, complete streets (landscape/streetscape enhancements), and connectivity (sidewalk installation and pedestrian and bicycle delineated pathways).

### In-fill Development

This concept includes modifying and improving deteriorated abandoned/vacant lots to better meet the needs of the community and to make a focal point of entertainment/retail downtown district. The plan begins with the identification of vacant properties in the downtown area, its owners, square footage, and its adjacencies. These would enable developers to improve the site and its surroundings by incorporating design strategies that would fit into the City's vision. The plan shows the correlation of the new developments with its adjacent properties. For example, new developments on Fisherman Street and Sharazad Boulevard should have a greater percentage of housing units than that of office or retail. On the other hand, on Ali Baba Avenue and Opa-Locka Boulevard there should have a greater emphasis on commercial, retail, and office uses rather than that of housing. Development of mixed-use buildings on Ali Baba Avenue and Aladdin Street would incorporate ground level shops, cafes, and restaurants. Ample sidewalk width, street furniture, and marking elements would enhance and foster pedestrian activity as well as provide a safe environment for people and bicyclists. It would support local businesses generating economic prosperity. These new edifices will play an important role in connecting to and from Opa-Locka Tri-Rail Station.

### Streetscape/Landscape Improvements

This concept incorporates the safety and comfort in the overall downtown area, which will expand to other parts of the City as well. Starting from NW 27th Avenue on Opa-Locka Boulevard where the current downtown gateway symbolizes an access point; there will be a more urban feeling with extensive low rise plantings, shade trees at intervals (specify in Land Development Regulations) or canopy coverage, whichever is less, sidewalk widening (if necessary) to a minimum of 15' from the property line, delineated bicycle lanes with green buffers between on street parking, bicycle signs creating awareness to bicycle traffic, City

banners, seating, trash receptacles, light posts, mid-block crossings, ADA compliant ramps providing universal access for all, high visibility crossing markings and pedestrian signage enhancements providing pedestrian safety, and standardized pavers throughout the downtown district bringing City identity, and sense of place. These same streetscape and landscape improvements will be implemented on Ali Baba Avenue and Opa-Locka Boulevard from NW 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue to Sharazad Boulevard. For Fisherman Street and Sharazad Boulevard residential districts, there will be a neighborhood feeling with sidewalk implementations, where necessary, to connect the urban fabric, bicycle delineated lanes, low speed signs, ample space for children's recreational activities, safe routes to school elements, traffic calming elements and nodes, where appropriate, shade trees for pedestrian comfort, stop signs, and pocket parks for leisure activities.

#### **Six Pillars for Making a Great Downtown**

The concepts for the downtown where base on six (6) key elements that where extracted from the overall process, this concludes that downtown Opa Locka must be:

- + Defined
- + Comfortable
- + Safe
- + Connected
- + Memorable
- + Unique

## Concept Visualizations









Current Condition  
Sharazad Avenue

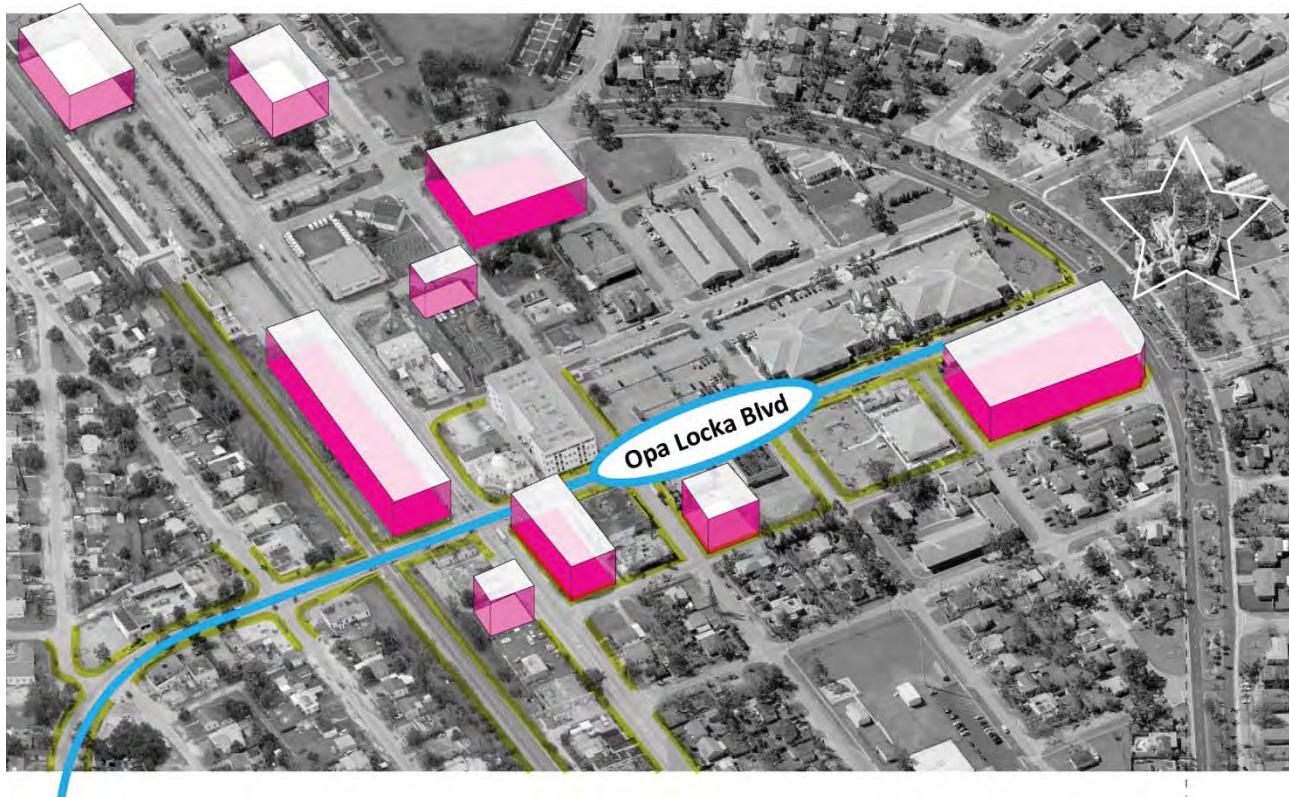


Streetscape Improvement  
Sharazad Avenue





## Mixed-use development opportunities



Mixed-use (3-4 stories) development opportunities



Landscape Improvements

## Recommended Plan

The design concepts were presented with the February 6, 2015 progress report. The overall feedback was positive in regards to what the community desires. Some new elements were included such as the branding of the downtown gateways and mini gateways. The overall concept was to provide a vision of new developments in downtown and implement streetscape elements that would enhance and support existing and new infrastructure. These items were combined into a final recommended plan.

The recommended plan includes the following key features:

- + **In-fill development/redevelopment into Mixed-use entities (Defined)** - The investment of mixed-use development and associated amenities in the downtown comes with the expectation that business investment will follow. There may be an initial risk to investors/developers to establish a new business, restaurant, shop, or market in a downtown area due to its lack of successful history therefore the City should develop policies that will incentivize investors/developers to locate their business(es) in downtown Opa-Locka. The form and type of incentives should be developed by the City with the advice of economic development experts. Alternatives may include reductions in taxes, fees, or public/private partnerships. It is recommended to generate a downtown market analysis on retail, office, and residential entities as an initial step to incentivize investors with real numbers.
- + **Programming (Memorable)** - A key success of the public spaces in the downtown area of Opa-Locka comes with programming and planning of events. The downtown will need events to draw residents to the area, particularly when the new developments and streetscape elements are first built, to establish the downtown core as a community public gathering space. A mix of events from large to small

with broad community appeal and special interests should be planned to keep the downtown active, interesting, inviting at all times, for all users.

+

### **Streetscape / Landscape Improvements**

**(Comfortable, Safe)** - Inviting walkable streets are a key component of the vision set forth by the community in Opa-Locka. The street segments identified in the design process as Ali Baba Avenue, Fisherman Street, Sharazad Boulevard, and Opa-Locka Boulevard are the starting point for this streetscape plan. Recommendations for the design of these streets includes the following key elements:

- + Wide sidewalks
- + Lighting and furnishings
- + On street parallel parking between sidewalk and lanes of travel
- + Curb extensions
- + Landscaping
- + Decorative pavers
- + High visibility crosswalks and signage
- + Bicycle parking and delineated bicycle lanes

This design should extend, at a minimum, to NW 27th Avenue and NW 135th Street and should continue to have wide sidewalks, pedestrian-scale lighting and street shade trees. At the heart of downtown, Opa-Locka Boulevard has some of these components, however developing more of these kinds of streetscape elements on the other street segments can make these streets desirable destinations for both visitors and new businesses, as well as a complete network of interconnected seamless streets.

Other adjacent streets within the downtown can benefit from these improvements. Most of the streets in the

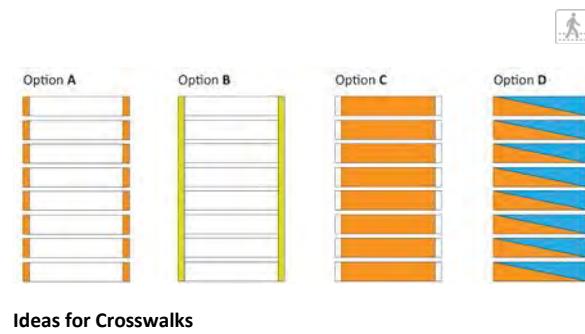
downtown area apart from the already mentioned focus segments should have wider sidewalks and all streetscape enhancements as necessary. Specifically the streets that are secondary in the downtown area. These include:

- + Perviz Avenue
- + Bagdad Avenue
- + Aladdin Street
- + Dunad Avenue
- + Bahman Avenue
- + Sinbad Avenue
- + Caliph Street
- + Salih Street
- + Ahmad Street
- + Kalandar Street
- + Codadad Street
- + **Pedestrian and Bicycle delineated pathways (Connected, Safe)** - With improvements to primary and secondary street segments in the downtown area, there will be additional interest in walking and biking not only in the downtown area, but in the community of Opa-Locka as a whole. A comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian plan, including improvements in the downtown area, will improve safety and increase opportunities for walking and biking. An analysis of walking distances from, to, and within the downtown will demonstrate that most destinations are reachable on foot within five to ten minutes. Especially if we consider Opa-Locka Tri-Rail Station as a starting point within the downtown. Here is an opportunity to provide a transit mobility plan that would enhance alternative modes of transit for the health of the community and the environment.

+ **Traffic and Parking Study (Safe and Connected)** - During the design process it was acknowledged that parking garages may be feasible, but must have a further analysis completed to determine the specific configuration and details of the design. Adequate parking for the proposed concept is an area of concern, due to the current situation that has more parking available in the downtown area than is necessary for current uses. At the conceptual level, the implementation of parking garages within new development will meet demand. However, a parking study also should be part of this design process.

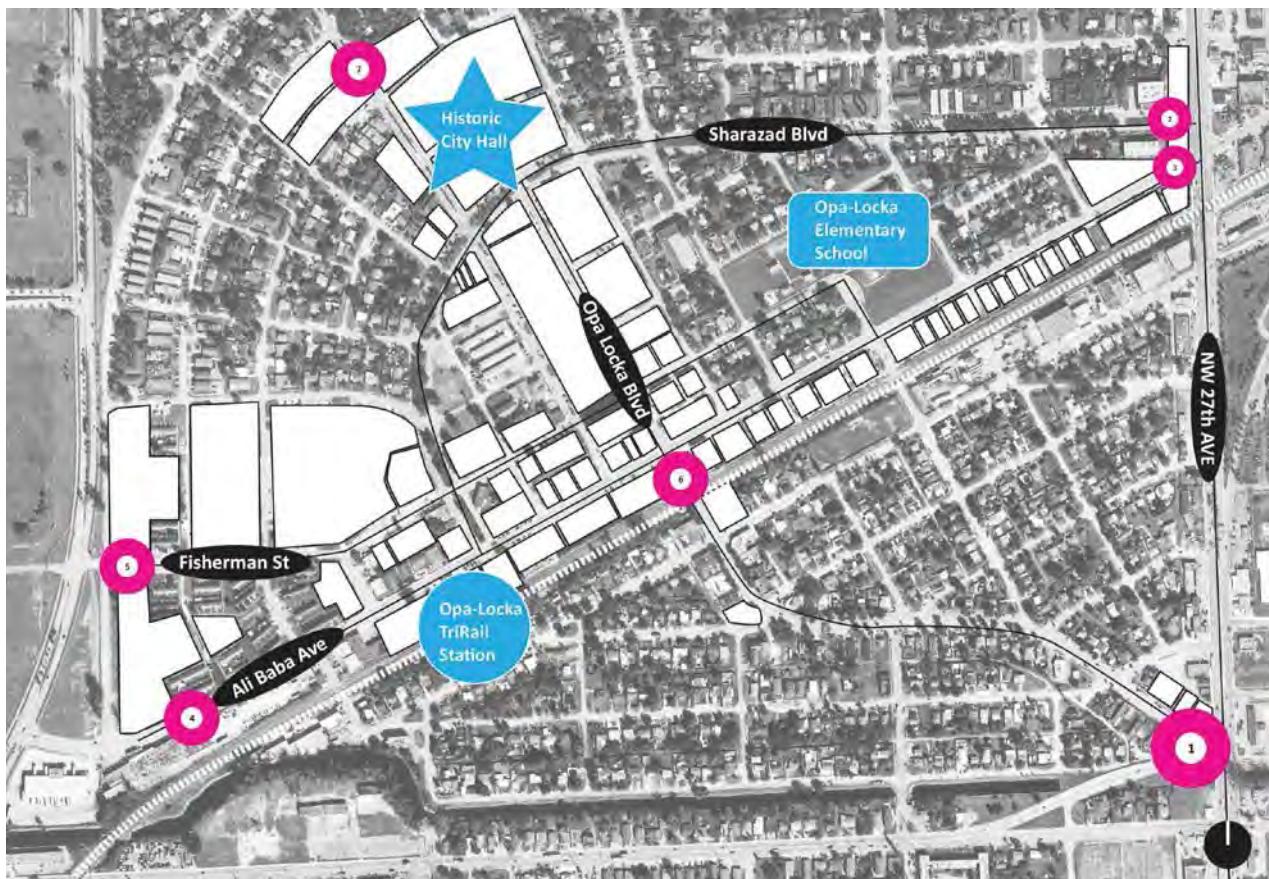
#### Other Recommendations

The Downtown Concept Plan for the heart of Opa-Locka is the starting point for a citywide cohesiveness plan. Part of what will make this successful is the attention to detail as these changes are implemented and the commitment of the City. Other key aspects for successful implementation will include incentives for new businesses to locate in the downtown area, programming of new public spaces and downtown events, funding of local and regional entities for right-of-way improvements, implementation of gateways and mini gateways to downtown, lighting, event programming, way finding signage, crossing elements and more. Many of these details are shown in the plan and must be carried into the design phase of the project.



Ideas for Crosswalks

**Downtown Opa Locka Gateway Locations**



Before



Before



Visualization



Visualization

## Funding Sources

When considering possible funding sources for the recommended improvements (especially those in the public domain), it is important to remember that not all design and construction activities will be accomplished with a single funding source. It will be necessary to consider several sources of funding, that when combined, would support full project realization. It is recommended that the City ventures into public/private partnerships to secure the development and public services of vacant lots. In addition, the City shall seek the following funding sources as options for consideration at federal, state, and local government level, and from the private sector and community support.

**State and Federal** - Federal funding is typically directed through state agencies to local governments either in the form of grants or direct appropriations, such as:



- + **Mini Grants**
- + **Local Funding**
- + **Private Funding**
- + **Federal Funding 101**

## 40 Years



**Building Better Neighborhoods**

- + **Community Development Block Grants**



- + **Economic Development Action Grants**



- + **Environmental Protection Agency Brownfield Grants**



- + **Transportation Alternative (drainage and roadway improvements grant) for bike/pedestrian mobility improvements**

## Appendix A

# The Great City of Opa-Locka | Downtown Concept Plan

### Kick-off Meeting [community comments]

October 1, 2014

- Realistic objective
  - economically viable
  - code/zoning realistic
  - Infrastructure w/ costs
  - Return in investment
  - cost vs. benefits
  - city support
  - code reinforcement
- Complete packages
  - site + cost
  - construction cost
  - program/ land use
  - to support community needs
  - sustainability
  - mixed-use development
  - per capita income ++
- Architectural features
  - preserved historic buildings
  - preserved history
  - do not imitate
  - lets look forward
  - modern/futuristic architecture
  - maximize spaces + flexibility
  - adapt over time to different functions
  - increase land value
- Right-of-way
  - landscape enhancements
  - design - shade trees
  - improvements in hardscape
  - identity crosswalks
  - street furniture [city pride]
  - "both gain"
- Comprehensive planning
  - economic development
  - per project [area]
  - per block
  - per building
- Vacant lots
  - great opportunities
  - vision developments
  - developers incentives to invest
  - landscape treatment
  - what to offer
- The developers

- Business practices

cost + time + program + profit

keep business owners

expand business

enhance development

owners + newcomers gain

economic + public benefit

airport

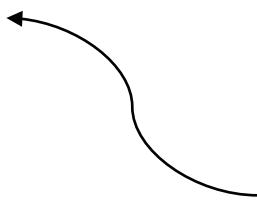
Tri-Rail Station

history

available land to develop

community engagement in the process

- PPP's
- Enhance assets



The desire to make this happen!

# Thank You

Prepared by:

The Corradino Group



BY:  
THE CORRADINO GROUP