

McGuire Park Phase 1

Quality of Life

Dept. & Contact: **Facilities Construction & Maintenance — David Milligan, Facilities Construction & Maintenance Director, David.Milligan@CharlotteFL.com**

Area: **Mid** Location: **21125 McGuire Ave. Port Charlotte, FL 33952**

Need:

Many elements of the existing park are in unusable condition or exceeding useful life span. Park elements do not meet the projected needs of the community, prior public input, or are poorly designed. Very little of the park meets current ADA accessibility standards. Park suffers from poor layout negatively affecting access to and interaction between elements.

Purpose:

This project will revisit public input and current CRA plan for this park to gain additional input or confirm previous concepts with the goal to develop a park site with amenities that will enhance community image, sense of user ownership, positive social interaction, and safe, healthy family recreation. The new design and amenities will also be designed to improve pedestrian connectivity. Examples of park elements that may be included as determined through public input: tennis court, splash pad, horseshoes, fitness area, restrooms, parking, canal boardwalk, shade structure, picnic shelter, open play space, emergency phone, security lighting, drinking fountains, and others.

Objectives:

Most existing park elements will be removed to accommodate the new master plan and replace worn out facilities. The park will be reconstructed to suit the needs of the community and meet current codes.

PROJECT COST PRIOR FUNDING:	NONE
PROJECT COST PRIOR FROM SALES TAX:	NONE
TOTAL PROJECT COST:	\$1,145,000
PROJECT COST REQUIRED NEW SALES TAX:	\$1,145,000
ANNUAL OPERATING COST:	\$26,611

Will the project impact public health and safety?

The park redevelopment project will address negative concerns about the existing park including real and perceived safety, opportunities to exploit anti-social behavior, lack of universal access to and within the park, and lack of personal ownership.

Will the project foster economic development and create long-term jobs?

By enhancing the community image and offering a safe and attractive recreational opportunity in a family-friendly setting, such park redevelopment has been shown to spur positive economic development throughout the community.

Will the project result in decreased, increased, or no operation and maintenance (O&M) costs?

The current park receives reasonable maintenance commensurate with the number and core condition of facilities. Redevelopment will create a demand for increased maintenance and operational costs.

Will sales tax allow for application of grant funds from another entity?

In the past the County has been successful at obtaining state and federal grants to develop parks. This project would not only be eligible for traditional grant programs, but may also qualify for specialized grant programs targeted to CRA-type redevelopment.

Project to be funded by the 1% Local Option Sales Tax Extension if passed by the voters of Charlotte County

Will the project enable furtherance of phased projects from 2008 sales tax extension?

Does not relate to 2008 sales tax project.

Is this a joint project with another entity?

Not a joint project.

Will the project meet a community obligation to serve a special needs segment of the County's population, such as: low-income, aged, or minorities?

The project falls in the Parkside CRA. A citizen-based planning process identified the park as a key element in the adopted CRA Citizens' Master Plan. The park redevelopment addresses at least 4 of the 7 stated objectives of the Parkside vision: safe and attractive, great public spaces, livable and walkable, fostering community.

Is the project included Master Plan and/or Comprehensive Plan?

The project is included in the adopted Parkside CRA Citizens' Master Plan. As it is an existing Charlotte County park it is supported by several Charlotte County Comprehensive Plan policies.

Will the project impact environmental quality of the County?

Project will design a suitable storm water management system where none exists and address unrestricted runoff from this site into a water-quality-challenged Sunrise Waterway. The project will provide the opportunity for various forms of environmental education and interpretation.

Percentage of population served

Classification as a neighborhood park will limit the user base to essentially the CRA area, as is appropriate for this size of park.

Will the project improve quality of life in Charlotte County?

This project will significantly improve the quality of life and pride in community for the residents within the Parkside CRA. By assisting to elevate the perception of central Port Charlotte in the minds of the all Charlotte County residents, the park redevelopment will contribute to the overall perception of quality of life in Charlotte County as a whole.

Is the project state or federally mandated?

No State or Federal mandates.



CHARLOTTE COUNTY

Sales Tax Projects - McGuire Park Phase 1



Stateplane Projection
Datum: NAD83
Units: Feet
Source: Community Development,
SWFWMD
Metadata available upon request



0 12.5 25 50 Feet

Citizens' Master Plan



Excerpt from the Parkside
Citizen's Master Plan

Find the entire plan and more at

<http://www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov/CRA/Parkside/Pages>



***District Redevelopment Plan
Adopted August 16, 2011***

Prepared with the help of Charlotte County Government
Building and Growth Management Department

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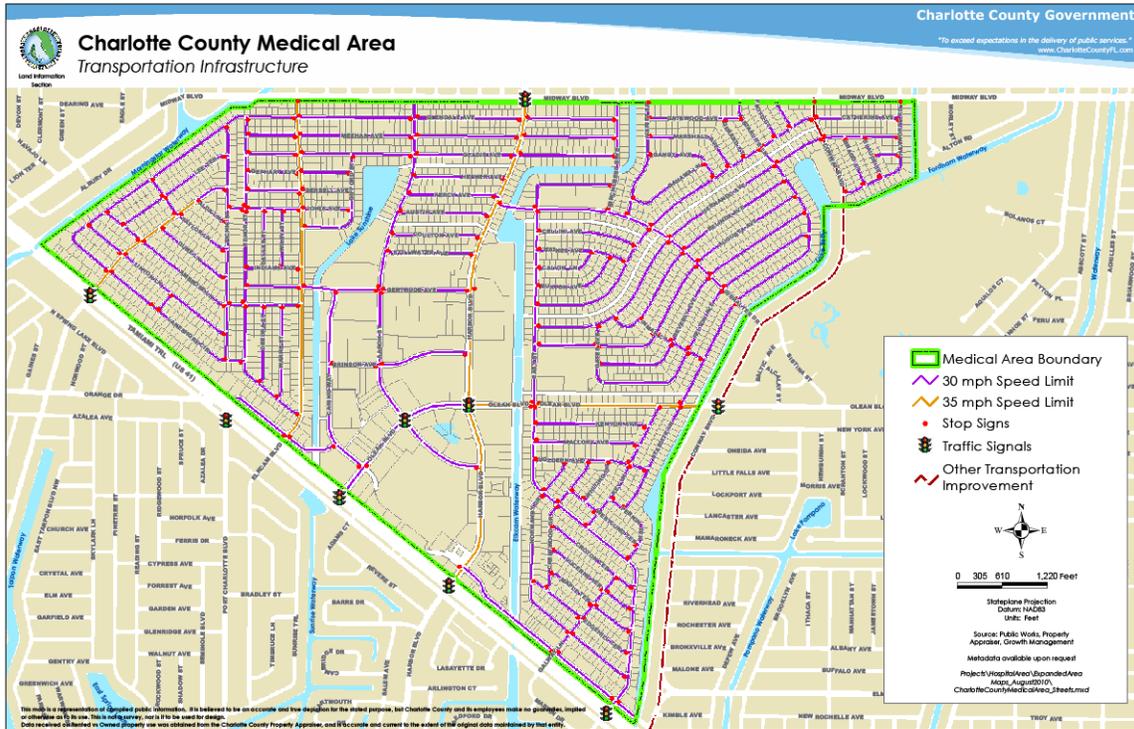
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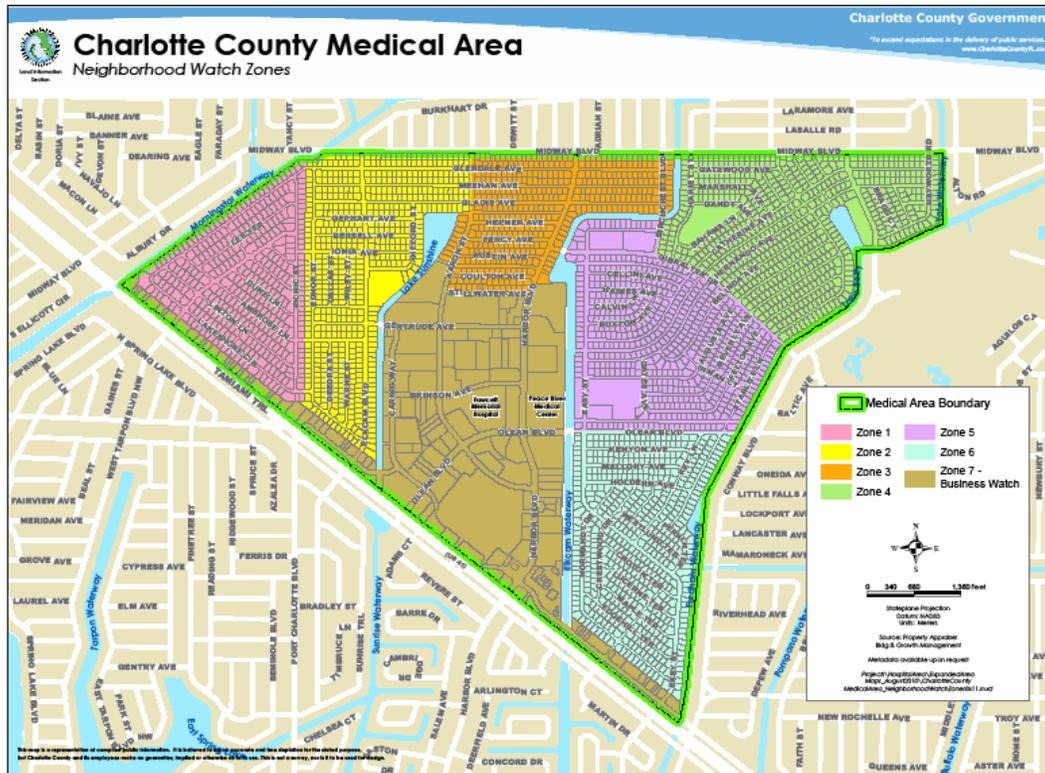
Street and Brinson Avenue are missing sidewalks adjacent to medium density condominiums. Sidewalks are altogether absent east of West Tarpon Boulevard. Though most of the district contains sidewalks, these paths are inadequate to meet the demands of the diverse population that has come to reside, work and shop in the district.



Map 5: Existing Transportation Infrastructure

2.2.5 Parks and Open Space

The district has about 62.15 acres of lands designated as “Public Lands and Facilities.” About 26.95 acres of property within the district is vacant at this time. The 2030 Future Land Use Map currently lists 10.16 acres of “Parks and Recreation” lands in the area (see Map 7). **Currently, two parks - McGuire and Lake Betty - are within the district. They are configured as individual, isolated neighborhood parks. McGuire has large tennis courts, basketball, horseshoes, playground equipment, a Girl Scout facility, and public restrooms. Most of these features are old and broken. There is very poor line-of-sight visibility into the park, so it is very comfortable and convenient for groups of homeless people to spend their day sitting, drinking in the park. Poor line-of-sight visibility also makes this park a magnet for criminal activity.** Lake Betty has a basketball court, picnic facilities, a small children’s playground, and fishing. The district also contains several canals as open space. These facilities, particularly the Sunshine waterway and Sunshine Lake, are in need of dredging to enhance both the drainage control function and area aesthetics.



Map 9: Neighborhood and Business Watch Zones

3.2.6 Implement Business Watch Program

The County, in cooperation with the County Sheriff's Office, shall help facilitate district Business Watch (see Map 9).

3.2.7 Implement Park Watch Program

The County, in cooperation with the County Sheriff's Office, shall help facilitate a district Park Watch Program to promote "eyes on parks."

3.2.8 Regulate Alcohol and Tobacco Use in District Parks

The County shall consider prohibiting alcohol consumption at McGuire and the district's Pocket Parks. The County shall evaluate similar regulations for alcohol at other district parks as well, and may choose to prohibit alcohol consumption or to allow it by permit in designated areas. The County shall consider prohibiting smoking at McGuire youth park and may consider making all the district's parks smoke-free areas.

3.3 KNOWN FOR GREAT PUBLIC SPACES

The Plan proposes extensive public investment in parks, roadways, and about 6 miles of multi-use bicycle pedestrian facilities connecting people and places. Together these

improvements will substantially transform the district into a great public space. Some of the activities that will accomplish this objective include the following:

3.3.1 Transform Harbor and Olean Roadways into Grand Urban Boulevards

The County shall reconstruct Harbor and Olean roadways from suburban-style automobile-oriented streets into grand, multi-modal, urban, bicycle and pedestrian-oriented boulevards (see Figure 7).



Figure 7: Improved Harbor and Olean Boulevards

3.3.2 Transform McGuire and Lake Betty Parks into Destination Attractions

The County shall reconstruct McGuire and Lake Betty Parks. McGuire shall focus primarily on providing facilities for children ages 12 and under. Lake Betty shall focus on 13 to college age (see Figure 8).



Figure 8: Gateway to McGuire Park

3.3.3 Acquire and Construct New Events Square as Destination

The County shall acquire land and develop a central event/outdoor performance area within the district to include a stage, a boardwalk surrounding the area's lake and connecting to the main district trails, a gazebo and other fitting amenities. This area shall focus on outdoor musical events, farmer's markets and other similar community events.

3.3.4 Establish Pocket Parks and Waypoint

The County shall develop nine pocket parks within the district providing an active venue for recreation and attractive waypoints between district parks and other destinations (see Figure 9 and Map 10). The County shall develop a pocket park on the south side of the Cultural Center of Port Charlotte as a bocce ball court and shall develop a checker/game board park near the corner of Aaron Street and Brinson Avenue. Other park themes are yet to be determined. Pocket parks shall have active features within them to promote healthy living. The County shall consider providing benches every one-eighth of a mile between pocket parks within the core commercial area and in other locations, as it determines appropriate.

3.6.4 Develop District Parking Strategy

The County shall incorporate on-street parking into its designs for Harbor and Olean Boulevards. As development returns to the district, the County shall investigate and assist private businesses to develop strategies to address parking and to facilitate development of dedicated parking structures in the district.

3.7 FOSTERING COMMUNITY

The County shall promote community events and encourage community gatherings within the district.

Examples of events that may occur in the district might include a Farmer's Market, a "Healthy Place Race," Big Band or Jazz concerts. Events might take advantage of the close proximity of amenities, for instance, the Cultural Center of Port Charlotte might serve as the host site for a family conference with McGuire and Lake Betty Parks offered as areas in which to take a break from learning.

3.8 SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH

The quality of amenities anticipated in the district must be appropriate to attract and encourage land development by technology companies and new medical, professional, and financial service offices, and other quality employers.

3.8.1 Focus District Strategy

The County, through its Economic Development Department, shall establish a strategy of sustainable economic development and job growth within the district.

3.8.2 Provide Business Improvement Incentives

The County may consider developing and implementing business improvement grant and loan programs, such as business façade improvement programs.

3.8.3 Support Construction Trades

The County shall help facilitate opportunities for the construction trades within the district by helping promote remodeling, County Weatherization Programs, site demolition and reconstruction, Neighborhood Stabilization Programs (NSP monies), and other programs.

3.8.4 Provide Incentives for Redevelopment of Properties throughout the District

The County shall develop a program of density and other incentives to promote redevelopment and sustainable economic growth.

The purpose of such incentives is to promote greater economic viability of projects. Density incentives are intended to add density to the district. They are intended to be provided on properties that are within walking distance of future transit stops at the Cultural Center, Promenades Mall and the corner of Harbor and Olean Boulevard.

4.1.8 Establish TIF Funding

The County shall establish Tax Increment Financing (TIF) as one of many sources of revenue for the district.

4.1.9 Retain Right to Use Revenue Bonds

The County may issue bonds to finance public improvements within the project area. Eligible projects may include parking and utility improvements.

4.1.10 Establish Tax Redevelopment Trust Fund

The County shall seek to adopt an ordinance establishing a Redevelopment Trust Fund for this area in accordance with state statutory requirements. Per Florida Statute §163.387, a trust fund shall be established to finance or refinance community redevelopment activities pursuant to this approved plan.

The cost of such redevelopment activities may include the professional service fees associated with redevelopment activities, including but not limited to design, planning, engineering, architecture, legal, any and all administrative fees associated with such redevelopment activities, all soft costs and other programmatic expenditures associated with implementing capital-based community redevelopment plan activities.

4.1.11 Restrict Resale

The County shall restrict the resale of any property it acquires in accordance with statutory requirements.

4.2 DESCRIPTION OF TAX INCREMENT FINANCING

In 1977, the Florida Legislature authorized the use of Tax Increment Financing as a method to pay for redevelopment within CRAs. The regulation is §163.387, Florida Statutes.

TIF is a tool that uses future tax revenues generated in excess of the base tax existing at the time the TIF is formed to fund district improvements. The assumption is that, as public projects within the district (e.g., the reconstruction of McGuire and Lake Betty Park, the reconstruction of Harbor and Olean Boulevards, the construction of a multi-use trail throughout the district) are completed, there will be an increase in the value of surrounding real estate. New investments (e.g., new and rehabilitated buildings) are also expected to have this effect on property valuations. The increased site values and investments generate increased tax revenues, known as the "tax increment" (see Figure 14).

Tax Increment Financing dedicates that CRA's tax increment generated within the district back into the area to help pay for Plan improvements. Without these revenues, full implementation of the Citizens' Master Plan might not be possible.

Often TIF revenues are bonded in anticipation of receiving them, so that revitalization may occur more swiftly and TIF revenues may begin to grow more rapidly. Any funds received from a Tax Increment Financing area must be used for specific redevelopment purposes

4.3.1 Fund Project in Current CIP Plan

As of the fiscal year 2012 CIP plan, the County shall fund the acquisition and development of the Events Square area within the district.

4.4 PROPERTY REHABILITATION (STATUTE REQUIRES DISCUSSION)

The County shall follow statutory requirements related to rehabilitation within the district.

4.4.1 Private Land Acquisition, Land Assembly, Redevelopment and Rehabilitation

The County shall rely primarily upon private sector investment to perform property rehabilitation, redevelopment, land assembly and land acquisition for development purposes; however, the County may purchase and redevelop lots through programs such as the National Stabilization Program (NSP-III) or similar programs.

The district project is one that will depend almost exclusively on private investment for site redevelopment.

4.4.2 County Land Acquisition

The County shall use existing rights-of-way for improvements wherever possible; however, the County may purchase a small number of sites to accommodate the district's proposed interconnected trails and bridges, Concert Square, and to provide sufficient space for pocket parks.

4.4.3 Demolition and Removal of Structures

The County may remove structures on property acquired for trails, parks or other park amenities. The County may also demolish, remove and reconstruct homes through its existing housing programs.

4.4.4 Public Improvements

The Citizens' Master Plan contemplates an ambitious investment in the district. Land and construction projects include:

- Redevelopment of Harbor and Olean Boulevards,
- **Reconstruction of McGuire and Lake Betty Parks,**
- The acquisition and construction of a new Event Square,
- Construction of approximately six miles of trails,
- The construction of nine pocket parks,
- The possibility of some sort of transit option,
- The possibility of business improvement grants and loans, and
- The addition of gateway and wayfinding signs.