



Town Center Vision Plan 103rd Street

City of Jacksonville ○ Planning and Development Department
Town Center Program ○ Phase I Initiative



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November 2004



Acknowledgments

This document was prepared for the City of Jacksonville Planning and Development Department. It was developed through input from dozens of local participants. The development process spanned 5 months, from March 2004 through August 2004. We are grateful to the many community members who participated in the neighborhood workshops and contributed their time, energy, and Visions to this report.



A special recognition is due JaxPride, a nonprofit coalition for visual enhancement, for their early and ongoing community visioning activities in Jacksonville. Their volunteer efforts have helped raise community awareness about the importance of having a Vision for neighborhood improvement.

Thanks is also extended to Bishop Synder High School and its staff for graciously hosting both public workshops.

John Peyton

Mayor
City of Jacksonville

Daniel Davis

District 12 Representative
Jacksonville City Council

Warren Alvarez

District 11 Representative
Jacksonville City Council

Jeannie Fewell

Director
Planning and Development Department

Jennifer Hewett-Apperson, AICP

Town Center Program Project Manager
Planning and Development Department

Sponsoring Organization

Westside Business Leader's Association (WBLA)

Gary Dasher, President
Joe Nairon, WBLA Town Center steering committee chair



13901 Sutton Park Drive South
Suite 200
Jacksonville, Florida 32224
904.739.3655
fax 904.730.3413
www.prosserhallock.com

Project Consultant

This document was prepared by:
Prosser Hallock, Inc.

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1 Overview

What is a town center? The phrase conjures an image of Main Street, of activity and livelihood, of a space that is historic, active, interesting, and inviting. A Town Center can take several forms. It may be an urbanized area, condensed and pedestrian oriented, with commercial enterprises and other amenities such as parks and plazas. Or, it may be a commercial corridor that links several neighborhoods together, serving both pedestrians and vehicles. As hubs of the community, Town Centers should be attractive and well-maintained.

“A neighborhood is, first and foremost, designed for people, and not solely for cars. It must allow for a range of housing options to accommodate people in all stages of life: families with children, young college students, empty nesters, single professionals, and employees of local businesses. It must feature narrow, slow-speed streets where cars and pedestrians peacefully co-exist and residents can walk safely along tree-shaded sidewalks. A true neighborhood must also offer the pedestrian someplace worth walking to: a corner store, a cozy park, a nature trail, or a friend’s house down the street. The walk itself must be interesting, featuring landscaped gardens, architectural details, and places to meet informally with neighbors.” (Welcome to Vermillion. 2000. Bowman Development Group. <<http://www.vermillion-tnd.com/default.html>>)



While this description hints at the character of a Town Center, the specific form and function can vary greatly. This report represents an effort by the 103rd Street community to redefine their Town Center corridor with assistance from the City of Jacksonville through the Town Center Program. To be part of the Town Center Program, a Town Center must be at least 30 years old and must have been at one time an established commercial district or corridor at the heart of an existing community or neighborhood.

103rd Street is an evolving corridor. Once a commercial corridor with a rural character, 103rd Street has been widened over the years and now

serves as a gateway into the rapidly developing west side of Jacksonville. Though the corridor serves as a gateway into the westside and Cecil Commerce Center, 103rd Street does not feel like a gateway with its aging buildings and lackluster streetscape. Despite these changes, the 103rd Street community

recognizes the value of the corridor as a neighborhood and cultural resource. This Vision Plan is an effort to restore and improve the Town Center corridor through a community-based initiative and with the help and resources of the City of Jacksonville.

Background

The City of Jacksonville developed the Town Center Program as a means of providing support to local organizations for redeveloping areas of

town that have served the community and that still retain some character, historically, aesthetically, or otherwise. The City also recognizes the role these Town Centers can serve as Jacksonville grows: to provide shopping, service, and entertainment alternatives, support small and local businesses, and create meaningful and memorable places that define the City as whole.

In the fall of 2003, the Westside Business Leader's Association (WBLA) applied for and received a grant from the City of Jacksonville for Phase I Visioning as part of the Town Center Program. Specifically, this Phase I effort creates a Vision for redeveloping the Town Center corridor located along 103rd Street, from Old Middleburg Road North west to Chaffee Road (see map on page 4). Once a Phase I Vision is completed, organizations are eligible to apply for Phase II funding that would enable development of construction plans; however, Phase I recipients are not guaranteed Phase II funding through the program. Phase III applicants seek construction funds to apply toward implementation. The Town Center Program is administered by the City of Jacksonville Planning and Development Department.

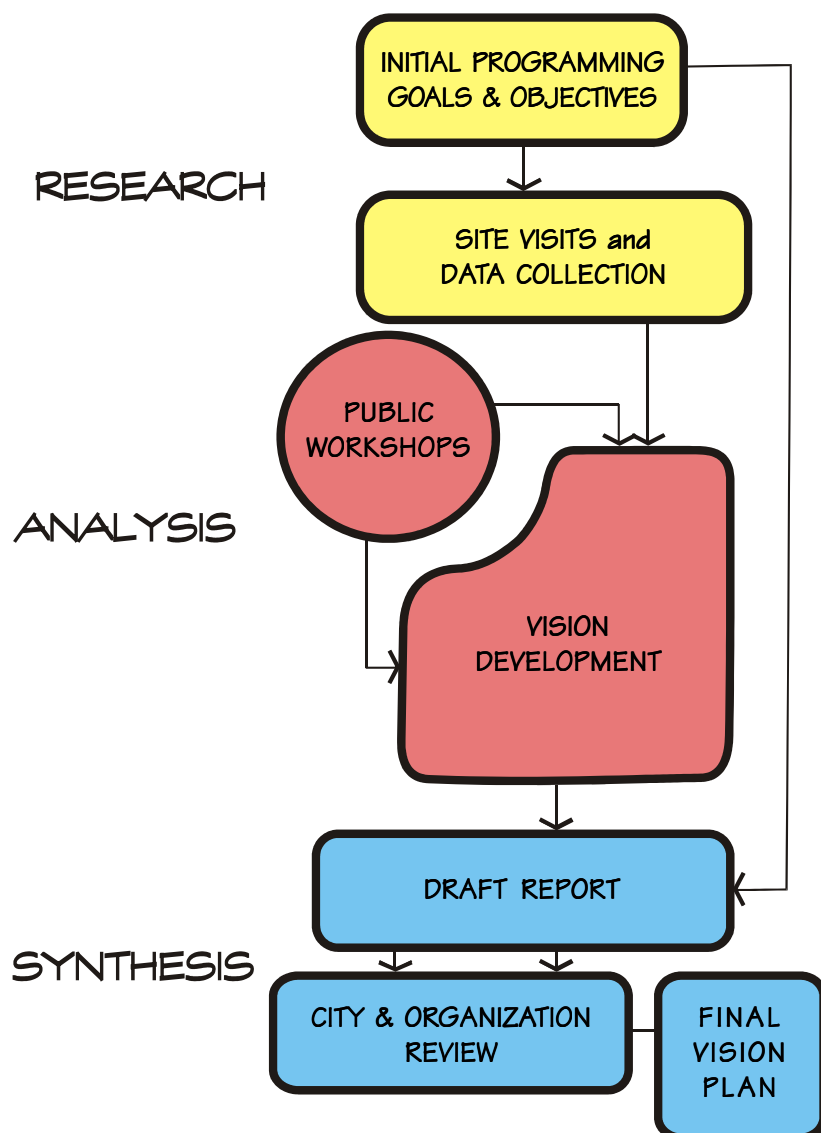
Mission

The mission of this project is to develop a Vision for 103rd Street that activates the needs and desires of the local community while incorporating the realities of cost, conditions, and other constraints. Neighborhood workshops were conducted on May 17, 2004 and June 21, 2004 to gather community ideas and opinions. This Vision Plan report is a direct result of that input.

Planning Process

To generate a Vision, a Project Team was created that included representatives from the City and professional planners, landscape architects, and engineers. The Team developed a streamlined process to encourage as much public participation and input as possible.

Team leaders initiated the process with a meeting of WBLA representatives and identified key issues concerning the area. The Project Team then conducted a series of site visits to walk the area, discuss opportunities and constraints, and record information.



With preliminary analysis completed and information collected, the Team conducted two public workshops that were carefully organized to allow direct input of the participants, at both a personal level and a communal level. This input is detailed in the next section. The workshops concluded with a prioritizing of projects by the participants, allowing the team to then develop a plan for Phase II and Phase III implementation, as presented in this report.

Plan Area

The 103rd Street Town Center is the corridor along 103rd Street, from Old Middleburg Road North west to Chaffee Road. The area between Old Middleburg Road North and Old Middleburg Road South is predominantly older commercial development which is typical of a Town Center. West of Old Middleburg Road South, the corridor is primarily residential in use, though almost all of the corridor is zoned for commercial use.

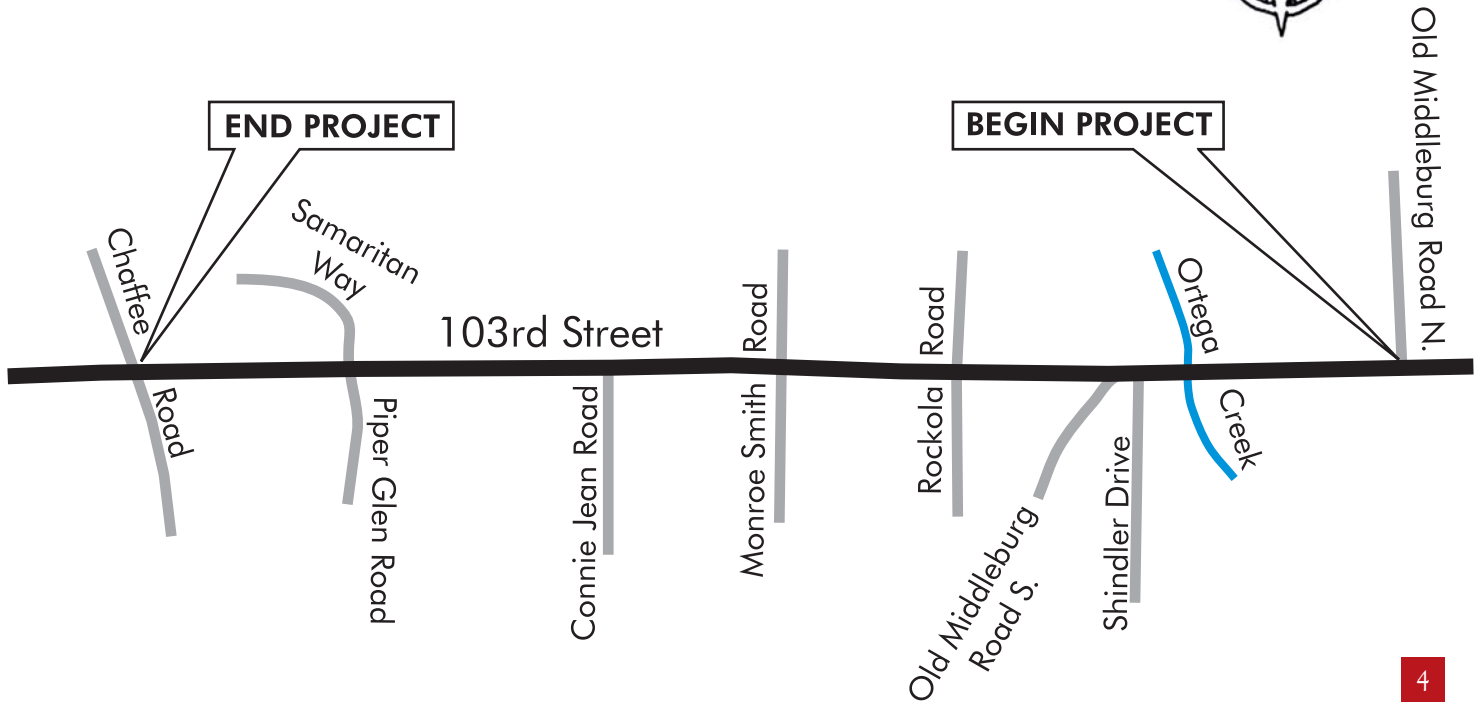
A map depicting the plan area is shown on the following page and a zoning map is found on page 14.



Town Center corridor in Jacksonville (Deerwood Park)

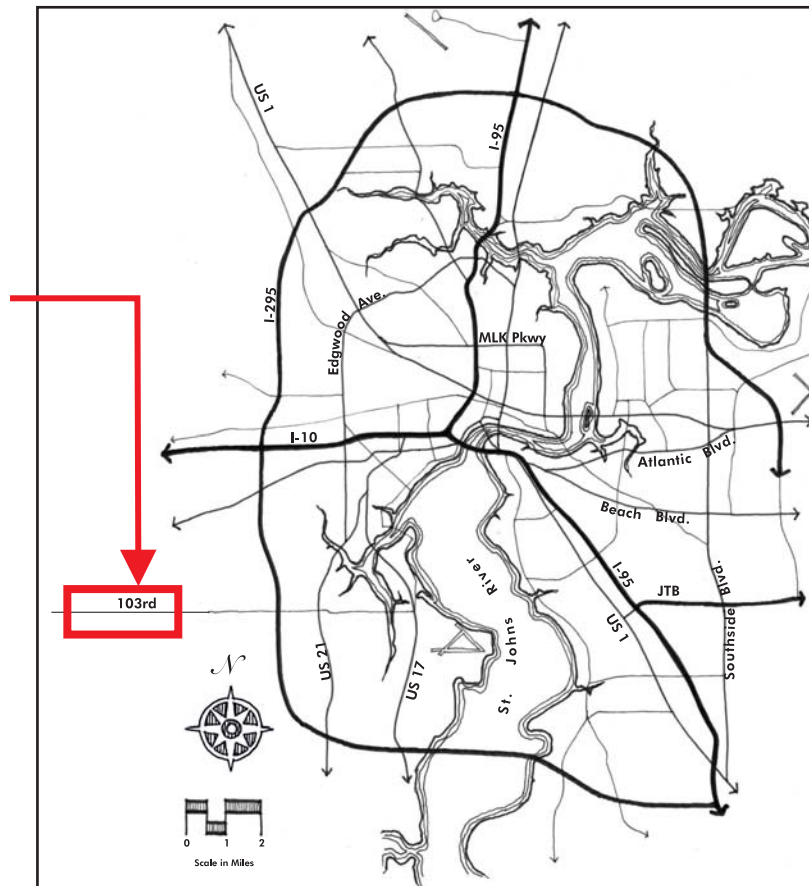
103rd Street Town Center PLAN AREA

Not to Scale



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STUDY AREA



2 Community Vision

At the heart of this Visioning process are the comments, concerns, and dreams of the area residents. These are the people who know 103rd Street best, who live and work in the area, who use the roads and sidewalks, who work to improve local conditions, and who enjoy the use of the neighborhood. To create a realistic Vision for redevelopment, their input must be included. Therefore the Project Team developed a careful program to gather as much direct input as possible within a short timeframe.

Background Data

Prior to the first workshop on May 17, 2004, the Project Team conducted a site analysis and site visit to confirm significant existing conditions that would likely influence Town Center planning. A background data summary and zoning map are provided at the end of this section.

First Workshop

For the first workshop, the Project Team developed a survey to gather demographic information. This survey asked property owners and workshop participants to consider two important questions:



Group discussion during the first workshop

“Where are we now?” and “Where would we like to be?” Participants reflected on these questions in a personal way to try to identify important issues, concerns, and visions for the future that would not be influenced or overshadowed in the open discussion to follow. The following is a summary of their responses to these questions. Their answers guided the Vision concept throughout its development.

Who are we?

The following questions were asked in the survey. (There were 30 respondents.)

Your age?

Under 15: 0
15-24: 0
25-40: 21%
41-60: 66%
Over 60: 14%

Are you married?

Yes: 80%
No: 20%

Do you have school-age children?

Yes: 24%
No: 76%

What neighborhood do you live in?

Country Oaks: 3%
Blue Jay Ridge: 3%
Plum Tree: 10%
Other / No Response.: 14%
Jax Heights: 17%
Bent Creek: 55%

How long have you lived there?

Less than 5 years: 59%
5 to 15 years: 14%
Over 15 years: 24%

Is your home within walking distance of the Town Center?

Yes: 86%

No: 10%

How often do you visit the Town Center?

Once a week or more: 86%

Monthly: 0%

Less than once per month: 0%

Do you own a business or work in the Town Center area?

Own business: 10%

Work: 7%

Neither: 79%

Where do you typically go for entertainment?

Orange Park, Roosevelt Square, J.L. Trent's, Mi Toro, Outback, Olive Garden, Fast Boys Wings, cinemas, Applebee's, fast food, Red Lobster, Avondale

Are there enough neighborhood parks in the area?

Yes: 0%

No: 100%

Where are we now?

To evaluate each participant's perspective on current corridor conditions and issues, the survey included a section that asked "where are we now?" Participants were asked to consider how they feel about their Town Center today and list their top three concerns. This question created a reference point on which to base the emerging Vision. The primary survey responses are listed below:

103rd Street is.....

- "lacking beautification with a consistent visual appearance."
- "lacking managed growth development."
- "in need of better traffic control."
- "in need of a better image."
- "lacking in family-friendly entertainment."

- "unsafe."
- "in need of more parks."
- "in need of more jobs."
- "in need of city utilities."
- "connected to naval heritage."
- "in need of environmental protection."
- "seemingly neglected."

Where would we like to be?

Participants were also asked in the survey to answer the question "where would we like to be?" They were instructed to share the top three changes they would like to see in their Town Center in the future. The intent of both survey questions was to gather an unbiased and personal vision from each individual. Again, the primary responses are listed below:

103rd Street needs.....

- "an upgraded appearance like San Jose Blvd. or San Marco."
- "new lighting, trash receptacles, and street furniture."
- "improved streetscapes."
- "consistent visual appearance."
- "walking and bike paths."
- "neighborhood parks."
- "more traffic lights."
- "to be safer to walk at night."
- "a produce market."
- "full city utilities."
- "more restaurants."
- "to be cleaner."

The survey responses indicate a corridor that has experienced some decline but with a strong motivation for improving its condition, whether to protect property values, preserve

resident safety and quality of life, or create a desirable, noteworthy community.

Census data indicates:

- The total population has decreased over the last decade by 5% (from 5728 in 1990 to 5442 in 2000).
- The average age has increased from 27.5 in 1990 to 30.4 in 2000.
- The white population is decreasing (from 5181 in 90 to 4522 in 2000); the minority population is increasing (from 547 in 90 to 920 in 2000).
- In 2000, 12% of the population had an educational attainment of high school graduation or higher (college or above).
- The average home sale price in 1990 was 74,300 dollars.
- 103rd Street (from Chaffee Road to Old Middleburg Road North) is mostly zoned commercial and medium density residential.

While residents and workshop participants recognize the issues in their community, they remain optimistic about its future, recognizing the potential of 103rd Street to serve as a vital commercial asset to the community.

Issues and Possibilities

The first workshop was held on May 17, 2004 at Bishop Synder High School with over 75 community members in attendance. During the initial segment of the workshop, participants were given an opportunity to discuss and debate major issues that were raised or that the Project Team identified. The following is a summary of those issues:

Image



- The corridor is largely rural with an equestrian presence.
- The corridor is a major entry to Cecil Commerce Center.
- General corridor aesthetics need to be addressed.

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Community and Cultural Resources



- Cecil Commerce Center is a regional resource.
- There are no playgrounds or passive parks along the corridor.
- The go-cart park (103rd Street Sports Complex) is a unique City feature, but is frequently noisy and crowded.

Natural Resources



- McGirts Creek (the upper end of the Ortega River) crosses the corridor at the east end. The creek is attractive, but there is no access. Bridge fencing to prohibit access is unattractive and presents a negative image.
- Several parcels along the corridor are heavily wooded and could be targeted for preservation.

Landscaping



- The existing medians offer some opportunities for planting, especially if median openings are eliminated in selected locations.
- Mature pines and shade trees line the corridor outside of the right-of-way.
- Space within the right-of-way is limited for roadside landscape elements.

Transportation



- New bus service to the corridor offers public transportation opportunities. New shelters are needed at central locations.
- Most of the available right-of-way is used for roads, medians, and sidewalks.
- Opportunities may exist for expanded bicycle, pedestrian, and equestrian use of the corridor.

Lighting, Utilities, and Drainage



- Overhead utilities line the corridor.
- Existing “cobra head” street lights lack character, but could possibly be upgraded.
- Street lighting is only on the south side of the street, creating an unbalanced look and dark areas on the north side of the right-of-way.

Pedestrian Access/Walkability



- Pedestrian crossings need better definition at major intersections for safety and improved aesthetics.
- Sidewalks are typically 8 feet on the south side of the corridor and 5 feet on the north side.
- Sidewalks are generally in good condition but need widening at focal points.

Signs



- Signs along the corridor are mixed in age, size, and style.
- Entry signs or features and regularly spaced signs or banners are needed to identify the corridor area.
- Guidelines are needed to coordinate sign use.

Safety



- Shallow setbacks and numerous driveways create some dangerous access issues, especially at the east end of the corridor.
- Sidewalks need better lighting, especially along the north side of the corridor.
- The Jacksonville Sheriff's Office can provide a Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) study.

Architecture and Building Improvements



- Corridor development guidelines are needed to resolve visual confusion and functional conflicts between adjacent commercial and residential land uses.
- New awnings for storefronts are a desirable improvement.
- Dumpsters and trash containers should be screened from public view.
- Rear and side parking should be encouraged where space allows.

Group Work

With personal visions and primary issues identified, workshop participants divided into groups centered around tables to brainstorm and begin the process of putting ideas and concerns onto paper.



The Project Team provided plan sheets, aerial photographs, zoning maps, and plenty of pens, markers, scales, tape, tracing paper, and other tools needed to translate ideas into images. Team members were on hand to help in the translation process, with the goal of developing a graphic Vision that responded to earlier comments and ideas. When they were finished, the groups presented their plans or Vision concepts to the overall group and responded to questions and comments. The following is a summary of each group's primary Visions:

Group 1

- Entry feature at the river similar to the one in Argyle
- Roundabouts
- Fountains
- Lighting down median or both sides to deter vandals
- Postal center (not full post office service)
- Lower speed limit by 10 mph
- Move go cart park to Cecil, use land for park
- Wildflowers, sago palms

Group 2

- Old West, Spanish, or equestrian theme
- Park or bird sanctuary near wetlands
- More police presence on the east end (substation where little church was)
- Light median with old-time lanterns or gas lanterns
- Wildflowers in median and along sidewalks
- Fire station
- Bike trails
- Oleander, pampas grass, crape myrtle, ornamental grasses, sedum

Group 3

- Nice-looking, old-themed entries
- Preserves, keep area rural
- Small post office
- Bus pull out for safety
- Traffic signals at Bent Creek and new middle school
- Move go cart to Cecil
- Regulate signs, limit number
- Change name of road

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Group 4

- Same desires as Group 3 with the addition of:
- Upscale restaurant
- Proper spacing of buildings

Group 5

- Mail drop at end of Middleburg Road
- Lighting on both sides of 103rd, especially in the wooded areas
- Signs
- City water/sewer for all
- Bus stops/shelters for school kids on 103rd, pull off for buses
- Stone or sculpted monument at entrance and smaller monuments (horse, flags) in other areas

Group 6

- Themed signs
- Oleander
- Brick pavers at crosswalks
- Decorative lighting, bollards

- Signage where trucks and buses frequently access 103rd
- Move or expand go cart
- Family park with walking trails and picnic areas
- Bike lanes on 103rd
- Fire station

Group 7

- Change name of 103rd to Cecil Parkway
- 20-25' buffer zone on both sides of 103rd
- Low maintenance plants
- Connie Jean (center) roundabouts with statue or sign, surround with restaurants
- Front doors and parking away from street
- Curves in sidewalk (avoid linear design)
- Extra roads to Normandy at Connie Jean or Rickola
- Use native plants
- Traffic signals
- Keep residential areas behind buffer zone away from street



Second Workshop

During the second workshop held on June 21, 2004, the Project Team presented participants with a series of projects, translated from the Vision concepts of the first workshop, that would meet Town Center funding parameters. These projects were presented to allow an overall group discussion. Details such as timeline and budget were discussed to assess the feasibility of the concept and to gauge group support. Workshop participants were encouraged to prioritize projects based upon the projected funding for the Town

Center Program. Participants were also asked to consider projects that could be eligible for implementation through other funding programs.

From this dialogue, the Project Team identified a staging approach that echoed participant desires. The proposed projects are listed below with the general participant response. Projects that met with general approval are listed in either Section 3 or 4 of this report, depending on whether they were considered for subsequent Town Center funding or as a future project to be accomplished outside the Town Center Program. Projects that received negative responses were dropped from the program. Nevertheless, their description is important for possible resurrection at a future time with different support or conditions than exist today.

Proposed Project: Median Expansions

Close median openings in selected locations to create safer roadway and add space for additional landscaping, especially large shade trees (current

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Participant Response: Participants generally did not favor this project. Some reasons cited include:

- Waste of money since future development will modify median openings regardless.
- Cause driving inconvenience
- Difficult to agree on locations that do not disadvantage adjacent property owners

Proposed Project: New Landscaping

Add landscaping, primarily street trees, along the corridor where space allows.

Participant Response: Participants were in general support of this project, but expressed concern about utility conflicts.

Proposed Project: Improved Crosswalks

Add new brick pavers at existing crosswalks and possibly some major side streets.

Participant Response: Participants were in general support of this project.

Proposed Project: New Entry Features

Add new entry features at each end of the corridor and possibly at a center location.

Participant Response: Participants were in general support of this project. Some additional ideas cited were:

- Improve the appearance of the McGirts Creek bridge to look like the Ortega River bridge in Ortega (Ortega Boulevard).
- Use the bridge as the east entry feature and create a new feature at Chaffee Road as the west entry.
- Entry features at each end should be smaller with a larger feature at the center.
- Use City-owned land at northwest corner of 103rd Street and Old Middleburg Road North for locating an entry feature.
- Entry feature themes should incorporate aviation, equestrian identity.

Proposed Project: New Open Space

Create new neighborhood open space along the corridor using available right-of-way near Shindler Road intersection.

Participant Response: Participants were in general support of this project.

Proposed Project: New Lighting

Add new ornamental lights along corridor in selected locations to add visual character and improve pedestrian lighting.

Participant Response: Participants were in general support of this project but had several comments:

- The high cost of fixtures impacts the budget
- There is a need for additional street lighting that may go beyond what the ornamental lights can provide.
- Must coordinate with JEA.
- Ornamental lights are important for differentiating area visually and attracting people.

Proposed Project: New Banners

Install new decorative banners on existing utility poles to create identity for area or to inform the public of events.

Participant Response: Participant response was mixed with most in support of banners but several who were concerned with better linking the banners with corridor businesses:

- Businesses could purchase banners to stretch dollars, with business names or logos incorporated into banners.
- Directional signs that include features, locations, and businesses as seen in Downtown Jacksonville were also considered as part of a way-finding or space-identifying tactic.
- Banners could create the impression of a thoroughfare to Cecil Commerce Center, rather than reinforce a sense of place.

Proposed Project: Street Furniture

Install new benches and trash receptacles at high-use and visible locations along the corridor.

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Participant Response: Participants supported this project with the provision that the metal benches illustrated in the presentation be substituted for wood benches that stay “cooler” and are more in keeping with the character of the neighborhood.

Proposed Project: New Bus Shelters

Install new bus shelters at high-use and visible locations along the corridor.

Participant Response: Participants supported this project.

Next Steps

The next section describes the implementation program for the Vision projects that fit within the Town Center funding parameters. Viable projects identified in the workshops that do not fit within the Town Center Program are described in Section 4. Those projects can be implemented through additional funding, support, and resources by WBLA (or other related civic groups such as JaxPride or Greenscape).

Project Background Summary

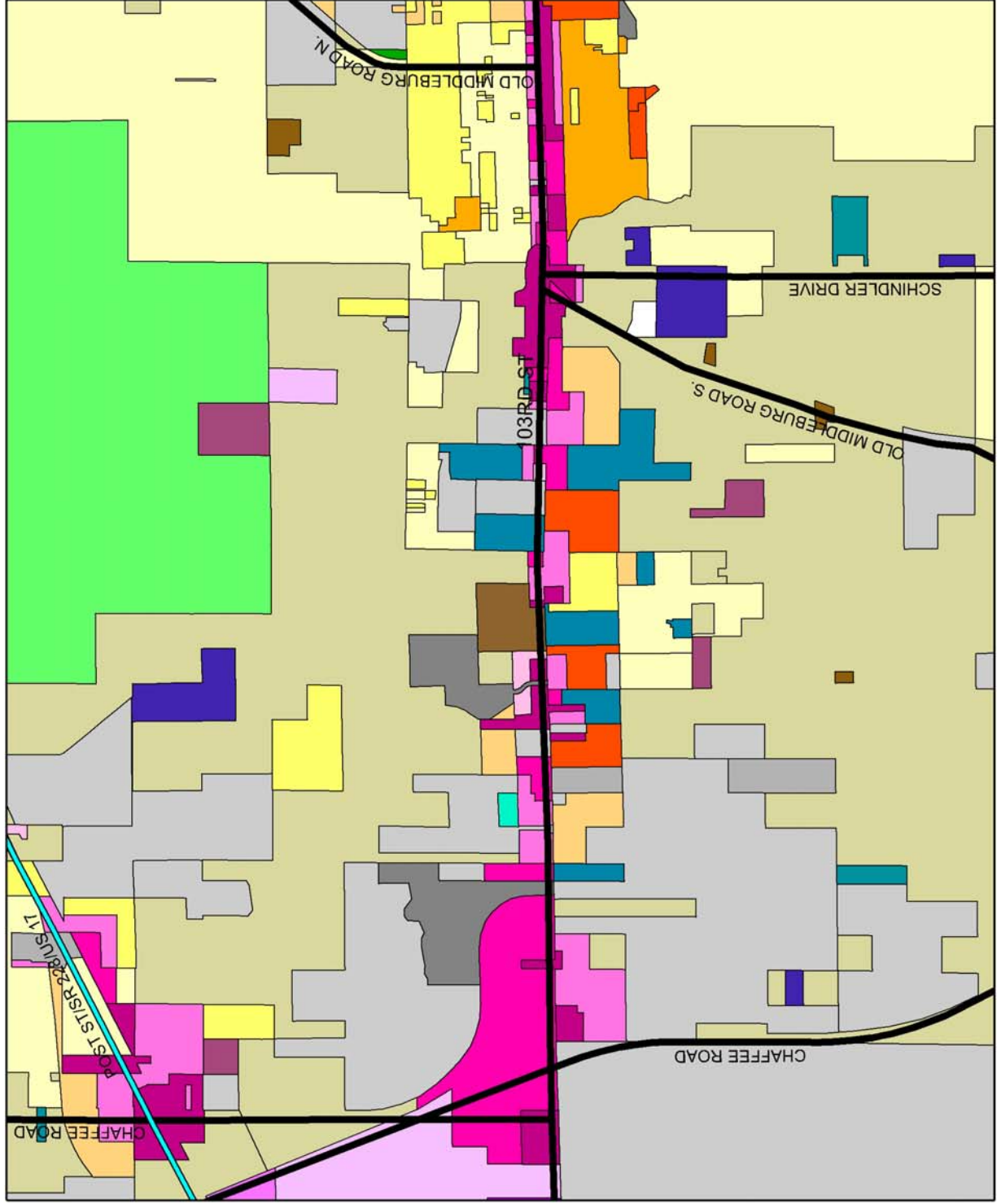
The following summary provides general information about the project area considered in establishing the Vision:

Planning District(s):	4 (Southwest)
City Council District(s):	11 and 12
City Council District Representative(s):	Warren Alvarez (11) and Daniel Davis (12)
Length of Town Center Corridor:	3.3 miles
Major Cross Streets:	Old Middleburg Road North Old Middleburg Road South Shindler Drive Chaffee Road
Corridor right-of-way jurisdiction:	FDOT
Width of Right of Way:	100-150 feet
Number of Study Area Property Parcels:	126
Zoning:	CO (23) RMD-A (5) CCG-1 (9) RMD-C (6) CCG-2 (32) RMD-E (7) CN (4) RMD-MH (1) PBF-1 (2) RLD-MH (1) PBF-2 (2) PUD (9)
Curb to Curb Width of Roadway:	60 feet
Roadway Classification:	Minor Arterial
Posted Speed Limit:	45 mph
Number of Lanes:	4, 6 east of Old Middleburg Road South
Lane Width:	12 feet
Maximum Peak Hour Traffic:	3,144
Percent of Total Capacity Used:	84.03
Total Capacity Available:	761
2003 Level of Service:	D
Average Daily Trips (2002):	22,000
Number of Signalized Intersections:	4
Number of Bus Stops:	23
Electrical Service Location:	Overhead
Historic Buildings and Sites:	None
Churches along Corridor:	103rd Street Baptist Church West Jacksonville Church of God New Hope Baptist Temple Westside Family Worship Center
Civic Buildings along Corridor:	None
Public Parks along Corridor:	None
Typical Sidewalk Material:	Concrete
Typical Width of Sidewalks:	6 feet
Typical Street Light Type:	Cobra Head
Typical Street Light Spacing:	150 feet

103rd Street Town Center Zoning Map (2003)

Legend

- Residential Low Density (RLD)
- RLD-C
- RMD-MH
- RLD-D
- Residential Low Density (RMD-B)
- Residential Low Density (RMD-A)
- AGR
- PBF-3
- RR
- Residential Low Density-Mobile Home (RLD-MH)
- Residential Mixed Density (RMD-A)
- Residential Mixed Density (RMD-B)
- Residential Mixed Density (RMD-C)
- Residential Mixed Density (RMD-D)
- Residential Mixed Density (RMD-E)
- Commercial Neighborhood (CN)
- Commercial Office (CO)
- Commercial Residential Office (CRO)
- Commercial Community General (CCG-1)
- Commercial Community General (CCG-2)
- Industrial Business Park (IBP-1)
- Industrial Business Park (IBP-2)
- Industrial Light (IL)
- Industrial Heavy (IH)
- Public Buildings & Facilities (PBF-1)
- Public Buildings & Facilities (PBF-2)
- Planned Unit Development (PUD)
- Water



3 Focusing the Vision

Working within the Town Center Program

This section describes the projects selected by the community that support their Vision and that could be funded through the Town Center Program. While funding is not assured because a new application must be submitted and approved for Phase II and Phase III projects, the projects listed in this section meet Town Center funding requirements. Section 4 describes other projects supported by the community as part of the long range Vision that are not eligible for Town Center funding or that are not suitable as a Town Center funded project due to their projected budget or complexity.

Most of the improvements envisioned for the 103rd Street corridor are expensive, especially given the length of the study area. Not all of the projects envisioned by the community can be installed within the limited budget of the Town Center Program, a maximum of \$828,750 per Town Center applicant at the time of this report. Therefore, this section represents an effort to prioritize those projects supported by the community that can utilize Town Center funds for design and implementation. With community input, the Project Team has also attempted to distribute potential funding among the projects to achieve the maximum visual and functional impact for the given dollars.

The following program has been developed with the assumption that full Town Center funds would be available for design and implementation. It has also been developed with the understanding that certain projects might also be eligible for funding through other programs, such as the City of Jacksonville's Tree Mitigation Trust Fund (section 5 describes funding alternatives). The cost estimate found at the end of this section

lists the proposed projects and an estimated cost for installation. While reasonably accurate given the conceptual nature of this report, the primary purpose of the cost estimate is to allow the community to prioritize projects based on cost in relation to desirability. This gives the projects an added dimension of reality.

The projects in this section are listed in order of priority according to the community's responses during the workshops and their understanding of projected costs. This order is intended to guide future decisions in the event full funding is not available, or if the program must be separated into different design or construction phases.

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Right-of-Way Improvements

Town Center funds are limited to improvements within the right-of-way, so most of the community's and Project Team's efforts focused on improvements to that space. Projects outside the right-of-way that are part of the community Vision are described in Section 4.

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) maintains jurisdiction over the right-of-way along 103rd Street. Proposed improvements and maintenance within the right-of-way is subject to the final approval of the FDOT. The improvements recommended below are typically agreeable to the FDOT, the City of Jacksonville, and other governing bodies, provided they meet established design guidelines and that provisions are made regarding additional maintenance requirements.

The following group of projects were identified as first priority projects that would qualify for Phase II and Phase III funding under the Town Center Program and that would make a significant, positive impact to the corridor. These projects are right-of-way improvements that could be accomplished without excessive difficulty. They fit together as a package that meets many of the objectives identified by the workshop participants. Some of these improvements encourage private property enhancements that respond to participant visions for renewal. Most importantly, these improvements are highly visible and fit within the available funding parameters. Other viable projects identified as part of the Vision but outside the funding parameters of the Town Center Program are described in Section 4.

Corridor Theme

Workshop participants identified the new Westside Regional Library being constructed on Chaffee Road, north of 103rd Street, as the guiding example for a visual corridor theme. The new library is built in a modern style, but with a “western” design character, incorporating such signature elements as natural stone veneer, exposed wood framing, and metal roofing.

The application of a strong architectural theme would help significantly improve corridor aesthetics and should be applied where possible to the project elements in this section.



Architectural Rendering of Westside Regional Library showing proposed corridor theme (image courtesy of Akel, Logan, and Shafer, PA)

Ornamental Lighting

Install new ornamental light fixtures at high-use intersections and focal points. Workshop participants indicated a strong desire to upgrade the lighting along the corridor, both functionally and aesthetically. There are two light types that were discussed for meeting this end: the overhead street lights and pedestrian-scaled post lights. The overhead lights meet functional street lighting requirements, while the pedestrian-scaled lights are purely decorative accents that provide some supplemental light.

The existing overhead street lights are standard cobra-head types, mounted to the concrete utility poles. These lights are located along the south side of the corridor only. Workshop participants noted that this condition creates inadequate lighting along the north side of the street, especially for the sidewalk, and were especially concerned about the safety issues this created. To rectify this situation, the utility provider (JEA) and the Public Works Department should consider an analysis for improving the street lighting along the

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corridor, ideally balancing the street lights on each side of the road, and perhaps using the medians as well. This analysis should be undertaken as part of the Phase II process so that some Town Center funding could be applied toward upgrading all overhead fixtures.



JEA-approved ornamental light fixture

Workshop participants favored replacement of the overhead fixtures with a decorative post style, as was done in San Marco. However, the greater dimensions and different function of the corridor appear to preclude this approach. Instead, workshop participants were presented with the option of using the newly approved JEA

“teardrop” fixture (pictured below) that would be a more appropriate replacement type. Participants agreed that this style would complement the proposed corridor theme and be maintainable by JEA. The cost estimate at the end of this section



Proposed JEA “teardrop” fixture

includes an approximation of the funding required to replace the existing cobra-head fixtures and arms with the teardrop fixtures and

decorative arms, but remounted to the existing concrete poles. New ornamental poles would be an additional expense. The estimate assumes a similar quantity and spacing to the existing lights. Actual locations and quantities will be determined in Phase II. This estimate is intended to provide JEA with significant dedicated funding with which to initiate the project, but not to cover the entire cost of upgrading the street lights along the corridor.

Pedestrian-scale ornamental lights should be installed at primary intersection or where pedestrian use is greatest. Their application is intended to create a heightened appearance for those locations, as well as provide some additional lighting. A 10 to 12-foot height is appropriate and a spacing of approximately every 20 or 30 feet would focus attention at a lower level, creating a more pedestrian feel. The fixture type should be selected that would complement the JEA “teardrop” fixture. Consideration should be given toward maintenance of these lights as well. If a fixture is selected that is not a JEA standard, then the community must assume maintenance of those fixtures, including replacement of dead bulbs and damaged poles. The community must also consider collision liability if they assume responsibility for the fixtures.

Selective use of pedestrian-scale decorative fixtures would give 103rd Street a renewed and individual identity within the City. The Project Team has estimated 10 new ornamental lights for each of the following 6 intersections (a total of 60) for best visual impact and best distribution of Town Center funding:

- Old Middleburg Road North
- Shindler Drive
- Old Middleburg Road South
- Connie Jean Road
- Piper Glen/Samaritan Way
- Chaffee Road



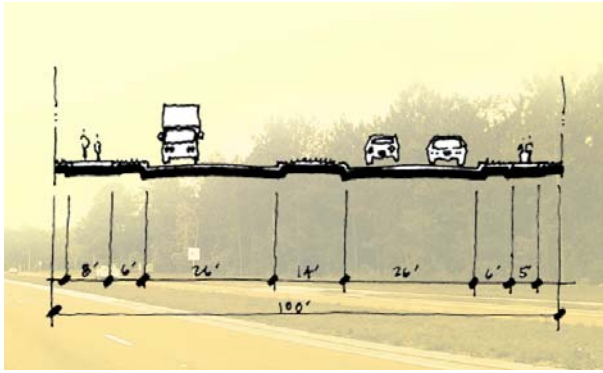
Ornamental, pedestrian-scale light fixtures at the Park and King Town Center in Avondale

Landscaping

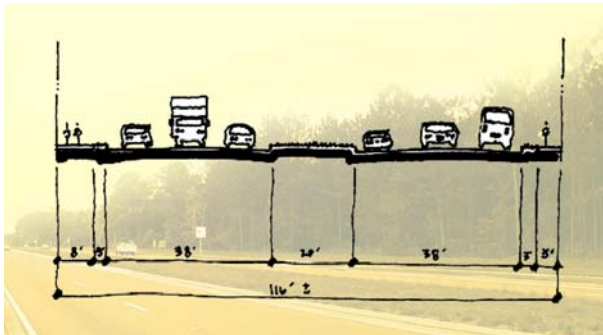
Install new plants along 103rd Street where space allows. The addition of new landscape plantings along the 103rd Street corridor will greatly improve the aesthetics of the road. Trees, more than any other single element, will create the greatest visual impact. Evenly spaced trees create a pleasing visual rhythm along the road and provide added protection for pedestrians when located between sidewalks and roads. Trees also add environmental value to the corridor by increasing shade, filtering dust and pollutants, and providing a habitat for birds and other animals.

Plant Locations

There are planting limitations along 103rd Street imposed by existing conditions as well as state and local regulations. There are two primary planting zones: roadsides and medians.



Typical section of road found in the “suburban” segment of the corridor west of Shindler Road

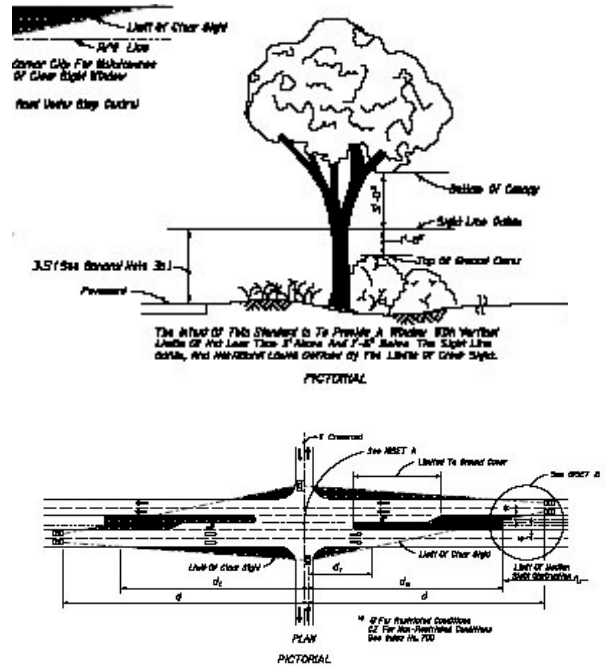


Typical section of road found in the “urban” segment of the corridor east of Shindler Road

Roadsides

The space between the back of the road curb and the edge of the sidewalk averages between 3 and 6 feet. Space between the outside of the sidewalk and the right-of-way line varies, though in many instances it appears there is little or no planting space available. Adjacent property owners have often built fences or parking lots up to the edge of the sidewalk, eliminating planting space within the right-of-way. Also, many segments of the corridor exhibit mature trees along the right-of-way line, limiting the need and space for new adjacent plantings. The space between the road and sidewalk was considered the most viable and appropriate location for new street trees.

The FDOT maintains “clear zone” safety setback and visibility requirements for trees and landscaping within the right-of-way. For 103rd Street, the setback for trees along the sides of the road is 4 feet from the edge of the outer travel lanes. The City of Jacksonville also maintains a setback requirement for trees to edges of pavement to reduce eventual damage to the pavement. For larger shade trees this setback is 4 feet; for smaller



FDOT "sight distance at intersections" standard details

trees, the setback is 2 feet. Given these requirements, only smaller trees would be allowed along the sides of the 103rd Street corridor, and these could be planted where space is at least 6 feet. Where space is less than 6 feet, small shrubs and ornamental grasses could be planted to create visual interest and provide greater protection for pedestrians.

Medians

The FDOT requires median trees to be set back at least 6 feet from the face of the curb. This necessitates a minimum width of 12 feet for medians to support trees. Medians narrower than 12 feet must use shrubs and groundcovers. At intersections and median openings, a visibility “window” must be maintained that limits the mature or maintained height of shrubs and groundcovers to 2 feet, and the lowest tree branches to 5 feet (see illustrations above).

Because there are many median openings with turn lanes that reduce median widths to less than 12 feet, the Project Team proposed closing and merging some openings during the community workshops. This would provide additional space for trees while improving traffic safety. However, this proposal was met with significant resistance as



Crape myrtles used as median and street trees in La Villa

recorded in the previous section. Therefore, the Project Team focused on existing median locations in determining the cost estimate. Nevertheless, the typical plans found at the end of this section for planting wide medians would apply to new medians in the event median openings are merged in the future.

For ends of medians and where visibility requirements restrict tree planting, shrubs or groundcovers should be installed. Shrubs and ornamental grasses are much lower maintenance than smaller groundcovers once they are established. Smaller groundcovers, even after establishment, require more dedicated maintenance to remove weeds, fertilize, mulch, and prune. Nonetheless, groundcovers, especially flowering annuals and perennials, are generally very attractive additions to the landscape. When well maintained, they visually communicate the care given to the area. These should be concentrated at high-use intersections and where dedicated maintenance is assured.

Plant Types

The corridor segment between Old Middleburg Road North and Old Middleburg Road South is decidedly more urban than the segment west of Old Middleburg Road South. The segment west of Old Middleburg Road South is more suburban in character, even rural toward the western end. Landscaping can be used effectively to match the different conditions of the corridor and to reinforce the positive attributes of each.

Roadsides

Roadside planting space is limited to small trees, shrubs and groundcovers. There are several species that would be suitable for the 103rd Street corridor, in terms of hardiness and appearance. The community supported crape myrtles and holly trees as appropriate selections. The table on page 20 designates recommended species and spacing for the corridor.

Medians

Median spaces, with their greater width, offer opportunities for large trees to be introduced in addition to small trees, shrubs and groundcovers. A minimum setback of 6 feet from the face of the curb is required by FDOT. Therefore, wherever median widths are 12 feet or greater, large trees should be planted. Unfortunately, within the project area, most medians associated with turn lanes appear to be between 7 and 9 feet in width, prohibiting trees in these spaces.

Shrubs and ornamental grasses should be used where median widths are less than 12 feet and for underplanting wide median segments intermittently. Mowed grass is the “default” plant material where trees or groundcovers are not proposed or feasible. Because all of the medians are currently grassed, new grass is not part of the cost estimate.

Workshop participants strongly favored large shade trees such as live oaks for the median spaces along the entire corridor. Tree spacing could be used to differentiate the rural and suburban corridor segments. Regularly spaced shade trees would respond appropriately to the commercial, developed quality of the urban segment, while irregular, grouped spacing would reinforce the suburban segment character.

The recommended plant species and spacing are listed in the table found on the next page. Final selection of plant types, quantities, and locations will be made during the Phase II design process.

Landscape Species and Spacing:

Where space between the face of median curbs is 12 feet or greater:

Live oak

(*Quercus virginiana*)

Where space between the back of curb and the sidewalks is 6 to 8 feet:

Crape myrtle for the urban segment

(*Lagerstroemia indica* 'Tuscarora')

Foster holly tree for the suburban segment

(*Ilex X attenuata* 'Foster #2')

Where roadside space is less than 6 feet between curbs or sidewalks, or less than 12 feet between median curb faces:

Indian hawthorn for the urban segment

(*Raphiolepis indica*)

Muhly grass for the suburban segment

(*Muhlenbergia capillaris*)

Recommended Spacing:

Live oak: 40 feet, on center

Small tree (roadside): 20 feet, on center

Indian hawthorn: 2 feet, on center

Muhly grass: 2 feet, on center

Quantity

Landscape quantities are difficult to estimate given the variety of unknown limiting conditions within the study area. However, some assumptions have been made to establish an estimate of cost as presented at the end of this section. The following quantities are provided with a rationale to give some understanding behind the estimate.

Roadside Trees

Roadside quantities are based upon the corridor (3.3 miles) and a typical small tree spacing of 20 feet. The Project Team has estimated 1,200 small trees (600 per side) to be required to line 103rd Street roadside within the project area. This estimate roughly accounts for intersections, driveways, visibility, and other conflicts.

Median Trees

Median widths are currently 7 to 10 feet where turn lanes are present, and 15 to 18 feet without turn lanes. Based upon aerial photographs and site analysis, the Project team has estimated space is available for approximately 102 live oaks (or similar trees) spaced on 40 foot centers.

Because landscaping was given a high priority during the workshops and because some or all of their cost could be paid using Tree Mitigation funds (see Section 5), a large percentage of the budget is dedicated to new trees.

Shrubs and groundcovers

Shrubs and grasses are estimated by area. An average area of 2000 square feet is applied for each of the 13 larger intersections along the corridor, for a total of 26,000 square feet. The square footage for each intersection should be distributed within the narrow median segments and along the roadsides as space allows. This quantity should also provide for some limited plantings in combination with large trees within the medians. The estimated groundcover area is intended to provide sufficient quantity for design flexibility in Phase II.

20

Intersection Improvements

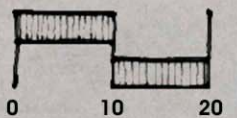
The following intersections should be modified to improve pedestrian access to the commercial district, better connect adjacent residential areas, improve safety for crossing pedestrians, and enhance the visual quality of the corridor.

Brick and Concrete Pavers

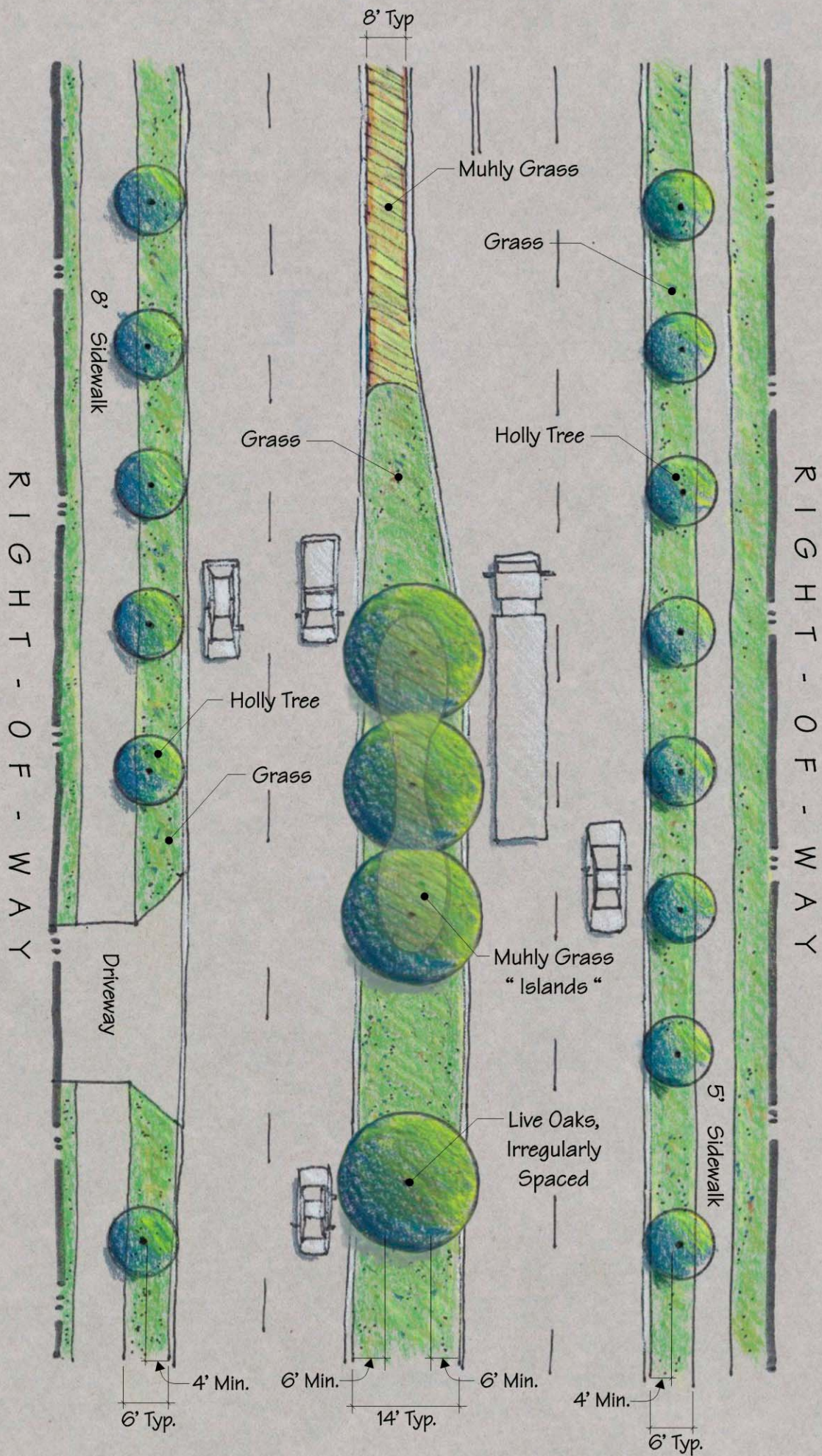
The use of colored and textured road pavers or similar ornamental paving material are recommended throughout this section as a key element of intersection improvements. Colored brick or concrete pavers have been used with success throughout the city. They provide for better visual definition of crosswalks and intersections and drivers notice the sound and slight bumps they create when passing over them. At a minimum, they create a more sophisticated and

Typical Landscape Plan

Suburban Segment

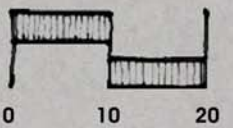
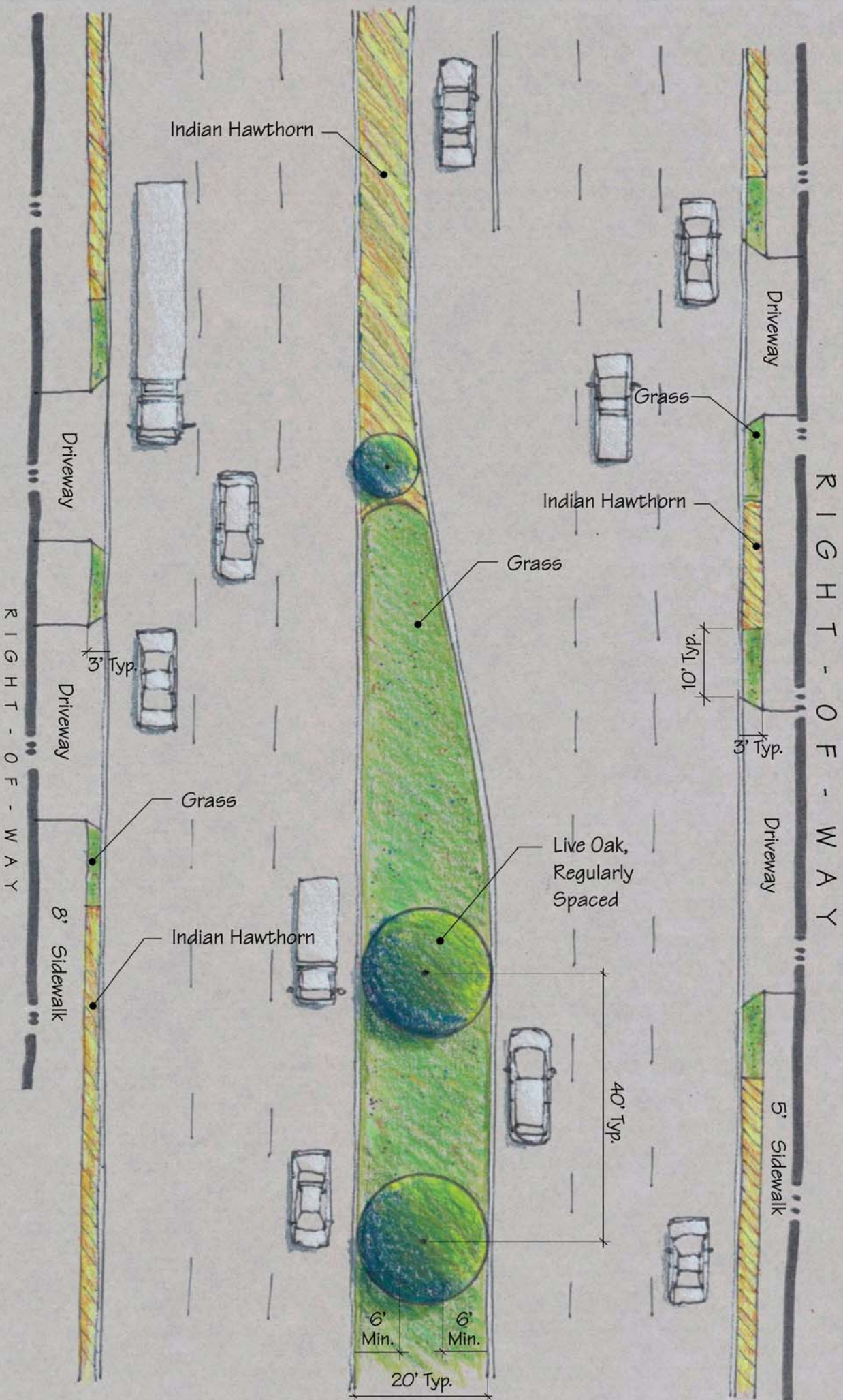


SCALE IN FEET

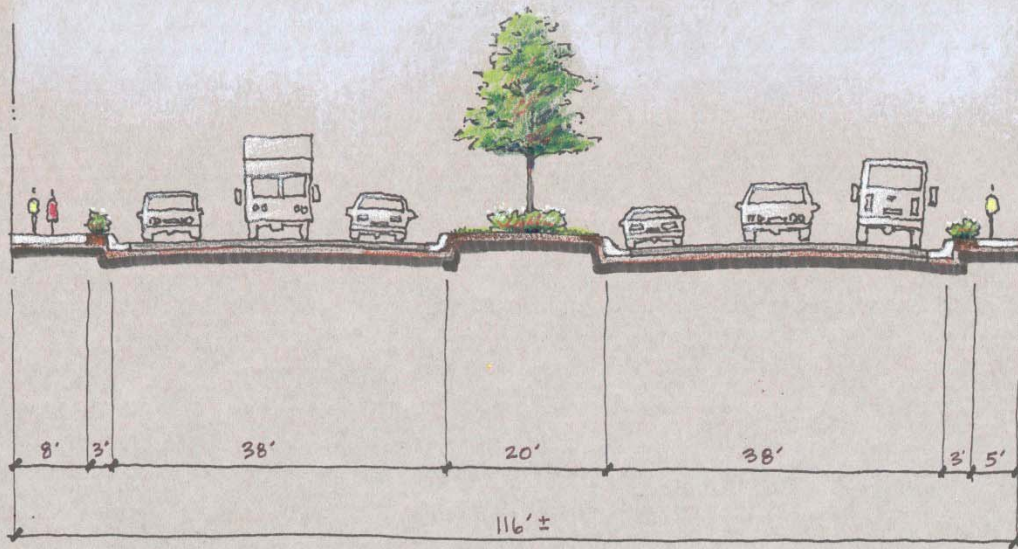


Typical Landscape Plan

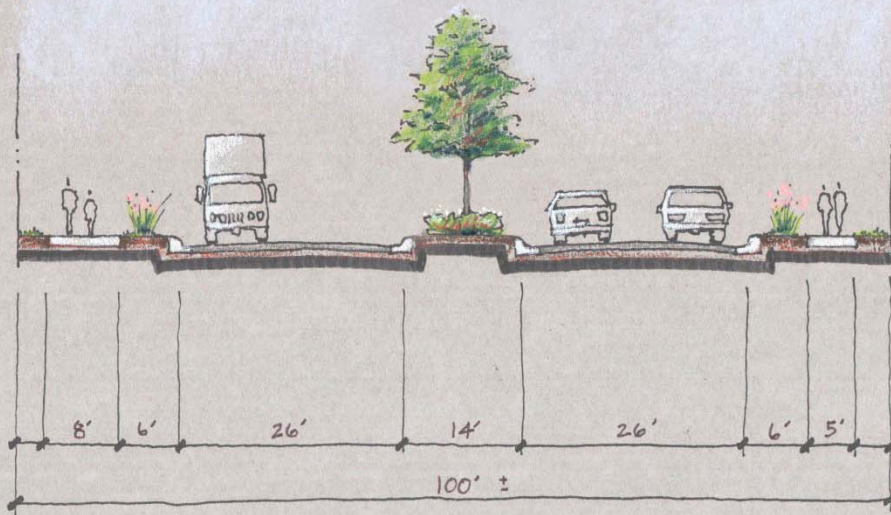
Urban Segment



SCALE IN FEET



Typical Landscape Section
Urban Segment (looking west)



Typical Landscape Section
Suburban Segment (looking west)

finished look to an intersection. Specific paver colors and patterns will be determined during Phase II development.



Brick paver crosswalk in LaVilla

Traffic Signals

The traffic signals recommended in this section are “single mast arm” types that replace signals hanging from overhead wires with unified metal structures. The City is using mast arm signals for new intersections, such as Chaffee Road at the west end of the corridor, and to upgrade old intersections in some locations, such as Old Middleburg Road North. These signal types are commonly painted black but can be painted other colors, such as muted browns or greens, to complement the surrounding area. They provide a clean, modern, and unified appearance for intersections and are generally more visible to motorists and pedestrians. Replacing current suspended fixtures on 103rd Street with mast arm signals would help improve the look and function of the corridor.



Single mast arm traffic signal at the Old Middleburg Road North intersection

The following improvements are recommended for 103rd Street intersections:

103rd Street and Old Middleburg Road North:

Install new 8-foot crosswalks on all sides of intersection using colored concrete road pavers.

103rd Street and Shindler Drive:

Replace existing signals with single mast arms, colored black and consistent with other City intersection improvements. Install new 8-foot crosswalks on all sides of intersection using colored concrete road pavers (see illustration on the following page).

103rd Street and Old Middleburg Road South:

Replace existing signals with single mast arms, colored black and consistent with other City intersection improvements. Install new 8-foot crosswalks on all sides of intersection using colored concrete road pavers.

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103rd Street and Rockola Road:

Install new 8-foot crosswalk on south side of intersection using colored concrete road pavers.

103rd Street and Connie Jean Road:

Install new 8-foot crosswalk on south side of intersection using colored concrete road pavers.

103rd Street and Piper Glen/Samaritan Way:

Install new 8-foot crosswalks on north and south sides of intersection using colored concrete road pavers.

103rd Street and Chaffee Road:

Install new 8-foot crosswalks on all sides of intersection using colored concrete road pavers.



Existing conditions at 103rd Street and Shindler Drive



Illustration of proposed improvements to the 103rd Street and Shindler Road intersection

McGirts Creek Bridge Improvements

Replace or upgrade the existing bridge railing and fencing with decorative railing and fencing.

Install new bridge accent lighting. The bridge crossing McGirts Creek has served as an entry into Jacksonville Heights for many decades. The creek is the upper end of the Ortega River and is pristine at the crossing. Unfortunately, it is not readily apparent to passing motorists. The current bridge



Existing Ortega Creek bridge

structure limits visibility. The chain-link fences mounted to the bridge railings were apparently installed to prevent fishing or jumping from the bridge. They are unattractive and limit visibility, giving a negative impression of the community.

Workshop participants pointed to the Ortega River bridge in Ortega (Ortega Boulevard), which was recently refurbished, as a good example of how decorative features could be integrated into a bridge. They also identified this project as an excellent means of reinforcing the architectural theme along the corridor. Three primary improvements are proposed for the bridge to meet this objective, new rail cladding, new fencing, and new lighting.

The bridge railing is currently a standard concrete barrier wall type. To maintain the safety quality of

this design and minimize construction costs, a veneer could be applied over the existing



Ortega River bridge

wall. A natural stone matching other improvement elements, such as proposed entry monuments and bus shelters, could be mortared to the roadside face and ends of the walls without compromising the integrity of the wall.

Fencing above the barrier wall should be reconsidered. No such fencing is present on the Ortega River bridge or others like it throughout the city. Workshop participants suggested the existing chain link fence was installed to prevent people from jumping off the bridge. This deterrence should be reevaluated, especially since the chain link fencing presents a negative community image. If upon further evaluation, fencing is determined to be truly necessary, a more decorative style should replace the existing chain link. An open, metal picket style is recommended as durable and visually appropriate. New fencing should be painted black to reduce its appearance and permit easier viewing of the waterway.

Decorative lighting should be installed atop the bridge railing wall, and most prominently at the four corners to create a dramatic visual impression and provide some additional sidewalk lighting. Bridge lights, however, do not need to be overly bright and should instead provide a low, soft light that properly accents the bridge itself. The fixture style should complement those selected for street and ornamental lighting, and agree with the overall corridor theme.

These three alterations, would dramatically improve the appearance of the bridge and create a memorable community feature. The cost estimate

at the end of this section provides anticipated installation expense for each of these features.

As an additional consideration, public access to the river near the bridge should be considered. This project is further described in Section 4.

Entry Monuments

Install new masonry entry signs or monuments at each end of the corridor and near the center of the corridor. Workshop participants supported the idea of installing new entry monuments to help identify the 103rd Street Town Center corridor. A monument style sign of masonry or metal construction would be more visible and durable than a conventional wood sign. A vertically oriented monument-type sign would provide a positive contrast with the many horizontally oriented commercial signs along the corridor, helping it stand apart visually. A vertical structure also takes up less space, a concern where available right-of-way is limited. Since entry monuments are typically located near the road, a vertical sign that has a smaller footprint also reduces the chances of an automotive collision.

26

Stacked stone, brick, and stucco veneer are appropriate masonry materials that would blend with area buildings, both new and old. A stacked stone style with wood accents is recommended to

reinforce the corridor theme and help establish a complementary style for new buildings along the corridor.



San Marco entry monument

Monuments should have an affixed sign face, preferably metal, that announces the entry to the 103rd Street Town Center. Each sign could also be used to identify the



Entry monument with stacked stone at World Golf Village

platted neighborhoods associated with the 103rd Street corridor. Entry monuments should be lighted for night visibility.

Workshop participants suggested that a logo or symbol be created to pay homage to the history and tradition of the area. Several logo themes were discussed, with equestrian and aviation themes being the most popular. One or both of these could be incorporated into the entry monuments.

Three primary locations for entry monuments are proposed. Workshop participants favored coordinating an east end monument with the Ortega Creek bridge to reinforce a boundary. To meet this objective, a new monument could be built into the bridge railing or constructed in the median just west of the bridge, oriented toward westbound traffic. At the west end of the corridor, an entry monument should be located in the wide median just east of Chaffee Road and oriented toward eastbound traffic. The community favored a third monument to be located near the center of the corridor that would be taller or more prominent than the two at each end. Such a monument could be located in the wide median space near the intersection with Connie Jean Road.

Bus Stop Improvements

Upgrade primary bus stops along the corridor with new benches, trash receptacles, and shelters.

The Jacksonville Transportation Authority (JTA) recently extended bus service to the 103rd Street corridor. Workshop participants were in favor of dedicating a small percentage of Town Center funding toward installation of new bus shelters at some high-use locations, and benches and trash receptacles at others. Another consideration during the workshops was coordination of school bus routes to allow double use of the shelters, giving school children better protection from the elements. This would require further coordination between the community, the JTA, the WBLA, and the Duval County School Board.

New bus shelters would introduce another visible element within the right-of-way to further define the corridor, especially if they are built in a unique style that complements the visual character of the corridor. The community expressed agreement over using the new Westside Regional Library's architectural design as a theme for new bus shelters. Strong architectural components such as stacked stone, exposed timbers, and metal roofing should be considered in the design of new bus shelters.

27

The cost estimate provides funding for approximately 6 new shelters along the corridor. The JTA, in an effort to encourage and promote bus use, has indicated a willingness to match construction funds for new, nonstandard shelters. The final cost and location of each bus shelter will be determined during the Phase II process.

The community also expressed interest in a larger, "Kiss and Ride" transit stop at the east end of the corridor. This project is described in Section 4.

Street Furniture

Install new benches and trash receptacles along the corridor in appropriate locations and as space allows. Workshop participants indicated a need for additional outdoor seating and trash receptacles at major intersections and other locations along the corridor, such as high-use bus stops. Bench and trash receptacle types that would be

well-suited to the corridor in terms of aesthetics and durability are pictured below. Twenty benches and 20 trash receptacles are estimated to initially complement the proposed improvements. Specific types, colors, and locations will be identified during the Phase II process.



Downtown bench and trash receptacle standards that would be suitable for 103rd Street

Open Space Seating Area

Create a new seating area with benches, pavement, landscaping, and lighting, using available right-of-way space on the south side of 103rd Street between Shindler Road and Old Middleburg Road South. The Northwest/Southwest Vision Master Plan identifies this location as a potential activity node. Its situation between two large intersections and its proximity to Ortega Creek and nearby commercial uses, support the creation of a pedestrian-oriented open space at this location. Workshop participants were also in favor of this project as it could meet the need for more neighborhood open space. This would not be a park, but rather a visible and accessible place for pedestrians to gather and sit.

Location of a new bus shelter near this space would help it serve as an activity node. The

adjacent convenience store adds to the potential use of this location as place where people could also enjoy an ice cream or a cold drink. Public access to Ortega Creek, as described in the next section, could be located on the south side of the corridor to create a third level of activity to this space.

The planned realignment of Old Middleburg Road South through the Better Jacksonville Plan will also create additional right-of-way space at this intersection. A new intersection is planned for Old Middleburg Road South further west of the existing intersection. A cul-de-sac is planned for the terminus of the existing Old Middleburg Road South, creating a new parcel of open space that could support the proposed improvements. While this project is already planned, designs are very preliminary and an implementation schedule is not yet available. Therefore, the proposed improvements are based upon the current configuration. If plans are finalized during the Phase II process, the new right-of-way should be factored into the design.

28

Envisioned improvements call for creation of a paved space of at least 15 square feet using brick pavers, with at least 4 ornamental lights, at least 3 shade trees, and some supplemental landscaping. As with other right-of-way improvements, this space would require an additional level of maintenance not typically supported by FDOT.



Small public seating area in Leesburg, Florida

Decorative Banners

The repetitive use of decorative banner signs was supported by workshop participants as a means of further identifying the Town Center corridor. Decorative banner arms have been used in other areas of Jacksonville with success to create a sense of place as well as advertise local events.

The new ornamental lights recommended earlier in this section should be selected with banner arms to support this need. The existing concrete utility poles along the corridor can also be fitted with support arms to allow presentation of new banners.

The WBLA should consider a visual theme for the banners, such as a specific color and logo that could be presented on every banner. This would help identify the corridor and advertise the WBLA to the community.

To provide an initial quantity of banners for the corridor, 160 banner signs and arms were estimated. This quantity is intended to cover the estimated amount of overhead and pedestrian-scale street lights along the corridor. Final costs, and locations for the banners will be determined during Phase II.



Decorative banners applied to ornamental and street light fixtures at World Golf Village

Irrigation

Supplemental irrigation for the plants specified in this report is recommended but is not critical to their success. The recommended plant species are hardy and well suited to the harsh urban environments typical of this corridor. Once established, ordinarily a one-year process, these plants will live without supplemental irrigation.

The cost estimate on the following page provides a broad approximation for an automated irrigation system for the plants recommended in this section. The Department of Public Works will provide final requirements, designs, and feasibility of irrigation systems as a part of Phases II and III. In every circumstance, maintenance responsibility for an automated irrigation system must be resolved prior to completion of Phase II plans.

Cost Estimate

The Project Team prepared a cost estimate for the projects described in this section. It is based upon current construction trends and material and labor costs. It is also based upon a conceptual plan. Dimensions and takeoffs are averages and based upon some assumptions. This estimate must be accepted as such and not be interpreted as absolute. A more accurate budget will be developed during the Phase II construction plan development.

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A note on methodology: Each project was broken into its major components and calculated with fixed unit costs representative of current construction averages. Unit costs include labor and installation hardware. All totals include a 15 percent contingency to allow for non-included and unforeseen costs, such as mobilization, permitting, and buried hazards.

Cost Estimate

103rd Street

Maximum Phase III Funding: \$828,000

Project Type	Quantity	Unit	Unit Cost	Sub-Total
Ornamental Lighting				\$598,000.00
Pedestrian-scale lights	60	EA	\$4,500.00	\$270,000.00
Overhead street lights	100	EA	\$2,500.00	\$250,000.00
Contingency 15%				\$78,000.00
Landscaping				\$522,675.00
Large median shade trees	102	EA	\$750.00	\$76,500.00
Small roadside trees	1,200	EA	\$250.00	\$300,000.00
Shrubs and groundcovers	26,000	SF	\$3.00	\$78,000.00
Contingency 15%				\$68,175.00
Crosswalks				\$104,727.70
Intersection crosswalks	6,500	SF	\$11.00	\$71,500.00
Side street crosswalks	2,880	SF	\$11.00	\$31,680.00
Contingency 15%				\$1,547.70
McGirts Creek Bridge Improvements				\$80,500.00
Masonry cladding	1,400	SF	\$25.00	\$35,000.00
New ornamental fencing	400	LF	\$50.00	\$20,000.00
Ornamental bridge lighting	20	EA	\$750.00	\$15,000.00
Contingency 15%				\$10,500.00
Entry Monuments				\$51,750.00
Masonry entry monuments	3	EA	\$15,000.00	\$45,000.00
Contingency 15%				\$6,750.00
Bus Stop Improvements				\$69,000.00
Custom designed shelters	6	EA	\$10,000.00	\$60,000.00
Contingency 15%				\$9,000.00
Street Furniture				\$46,000.00
Benches	20	EA	\$1,200.00	\$24,000.00
Trash Receptacles	20	EA	\$800.00	\$16,000.00
Contingency 15%				\$6,000.00
Open Space Seating Area				\$57,500.00
Small open space in right-of-way	1	LS	\$50,000.00	\$50,000.00
Contingency 15%				\$7,500.00
Decorative Banners				\$52,900.00
Banner signs and hanging arms	115	EA	\$400.00	\$46,000.00
Contingency 15%				\$6,900.00
Irrigation				\$508,990.00
Trees	1,302	EA	\$300.00	\$390,600.00
Sod and Groundcovers	26,000	SF	\$2.00	\$52,000.00
Contingency 15%				\$66,390.00
Subtotal				\$2,092,042.70
Tree Mitigation Reimbursables				\$941,965.00
Trees				\$376,500.00
Irrigation				\$508,990.00
Contingency 15%				\$56,475.00
Total Estimate				\$1,150,077.70

4 Expanding the Vision

Non-Town Center Program Projects

The following projects and improvements are listed as a separate group than those described in the previous section because of their dependency on outside elements, budget constraints, or unknown variables to reach completion. Nonetheless, they are important projects that were identified and discussed in the workshops, and they should continue to be considered for coordination, funding, design, and implementation. If political and financial support are found for some or all of these projects, they could be designed and installed concurrently with the projects described in Section 3.

PROJECTS within the PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY:

These projects meet Town Center funding requirements as improvements to the right-of-way, but are too large in scope to be feasible or best uses of available funding according to community input.

Locating Overhead Wires Underground

Workshop participants unanimously agreed that locating overhead utilities underground would improve the aesthetics of the corridor. Aging utility poles could be removed, sidewalk space expanded, ugly wires buried from sight, and trees no longer required to be severely pruned, but there are cost and coordination issues that restrict this course of action.

The dollar cost for removing overhead utility wires and burying them underground is extremely high. Available Town Center funds would not come close to covering this expense, even if it was the only project recommended. Funds are much better allocated to those improvements outlined in the previous section that will have a positive visual impact and that will improve pedestrian access to the Town Center. Nevertheless, because the community was extremely united in this desire, this project remains part of the Town Center Vision.

JEA, as the electrical utility provider, has indicated in word and practice a desire to put their wires underground, and this is their general preference with new development. Burying existing wires in an older neighborhood, however, presents major challenges. The technology exists to “jack and bore” the wires underground without disturbing the surface, but it is a costly exercise. Additionally, other service providers that share the overhead lines with JEA, such as telephone and cable, must also agree with this direction for it to occur. It is not clear who would be responsible for paying for this service as no one party feels they should assume the full cost.

In other areas of town, JEA has participated in burying their overhead lines when major road or utility work has occurred. Repair or replacement of existing underground utilities, like storm sewers or water lines, would be a prime example of projects that could be coupled with relocation of utility lines underground. The most likely scenario for procuring underground corridor utilities would be during the planning stage of the next major roadway construction.

To move this project forward, the WBLA should create a subcommittee to spearhead the burying of overhead utility lines along 103rd Street. The committee should solicit support from their City Council District representatives and create an active dialogue with JEA and the Public Works Department to create a priority for this project. In addition, the committee should solicit support from area business leaders, the mayor's office, and other interested parties to assist with the cost and scheduling of this effort.

Roundabouts

Workshop participants indicated preferences for new roundabouts at several intersections along the corridor: at the intersections with Shindler Road, Old Middleburg Road South, Chaffee Road, and most prominently, near the center of the corridor at the intersection with Connie Jean Road. Roundabouts could add significant visual interest to the area and serve as memorable features for the Town Center corridor. Highly visible items such as fountains or sculptures could be located in the center of the circles.



New roundabout on SR A1A at the entrance to Amelia Island Plantation

But fitting a new roundabout into the existing right-of-way is problematic. The minimum diameter for an urban, two-lane roundabout is

150 to 180 feet (Kittleson and Associates, Inc., "Roundabout Planning and Design," 1999). A detailed study is required for each proposed location to determine existing traffic volumes, crash histories, right-of-way constraints, utility and sewer constraints, and other issues that would affect the feasibility of a new roundabout.

Each intersection proposed for a roundabout would require acquisition of additional right-of-way to fit the circles into the roadway. This adds another level of expense and difficulty to the project, and it prohibits use of Town Center funds since those funds cannot be used to purchase or improve private property.

The type of road is a significant consideration for retrofitting a roundabout into an intersection. 103rd Street is a minor arterial carrying traffic loads averaging 22,000 trips daily. The road is also straight, with no traffic signals between Old Middleburg Road South and Chaffee Road. Traffic rates regularly exceed the posted speed limit of 45 mph in this stretch, and introducing a unique roundabout at its center could create serious safety issues.

The construction cost for installing a new roundabout is a final consideration. Costs range from \$100,000 to \$300,000 for a typical two-lane urban roundabout. This cost does not include right-of-way acquisition, new utilities, or additional landscape elements. For these reasons, roundabouts as a single project are located in this section, outside of the Town Center budgeted project program. They remain, nonetheless, a viable part of the long-range vision for the Town Center corridor supported by the community.

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Neighborhood Park

There are no passive parks within the study area. Workshop participants were clear in their responses that such a public facility is desired and needed to enhance the community.

The existing city-owned go-cart park near the western end of the corridor (officially named "103rd Street Sports Complex") was given serious consideration during the workshops. The current location is somewhat problematic for its use as go-cart track because it creates noise problems for adjacent residential properties. The size of the property also appears too small to support the parking needed for regular events.

Relocation of the facility was discussed in each workshop, and Cecil Field Commerce Center (CFCC) was



Mandarin Park with interpretive center and playground

considered as a possible location. However, CFCC already has an approved master plan that does not incorporate such a facility. Also, noise associated with go-cart activity would cause conflicts with the new equestrian center already located at CFCC.

WBLA should continue to work with the Parks and Recreation Department, which manages the property, and their City Council representatives to seek a new home for the go-cart facility or improve the existing park so that negative impacts are mitigated, allowing the existing park to become a more compatible and desirable community amenity.

Riverside Park

Public access to McGirts Creek at the 103rd Street crossing is limited at best. Private property abuts the creek on both sides and it is not clear from property maps or aerial photographs if public access is possible at all without trespassing. Nevertheless, this section of the creek is pristine. The City of Jacksonville should purchase enough property near the bridge to allow limited, but visible public access to the creek. A large public boat ramp is not necessarily an appropriate level of access. Instead, a simple park with natural landscaping, benches, lighting, and a small dock would allow for the public to view the river, fish, and launch non-motorized boats. Improvements should also include efforts to beautify the creek banks where exposed riprap currently disrupts the natural appearance.

River access at this location could also provide another aspect of eco-tourism and the develop-

ment of a greenway network throughout the city. The new greenway in Baldwin has been well-received by Jacksonville residents and has helped to promote Baldwin. A unique new riverside park would help boost the identity of 103rd Street and give residents a rare opportunity to interact easily with one of Jacksonville's scenic waterways. As with the proposed neighborhood park above, the WBLA should work with the Parks and Recreation Department and their City Council representatives to purchase property necessary for creating a new park and its access from 103rd Street.

Transit Stop

The community identified a vacant, city-owned parcel at the northwest corner of Old Middleburg Road North and 103rd Street as a possibility for an improved transit stop. This was envisioned as a larger station that could provide temporary automobile parking for picking up and dropping off bus passengers ("kiss and ride"). This level of service is between a standard bus stop and a "park and ride" facility with permanent parking lots. Such a station would encourage bus use by giving local commuters the ability to safely drop off and pick up bus passengers. Any improvements to the site should be made using the Westside Regional Library corridor theme.

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The City's intended use for this property is unclear. The WBLA should work with the City of Jacksonville and the JTA to communicate this desired use and its feasibility.

Community Post Office

Workshop participants expressed a strong need for a local post office of some kind, since individual mail service is limited along the 103rd Street corridor. The nearest post office is located at Wesconnet Boulevard, over three miles away. Participants noted a preference for a small, local office that would provide a place to mail letters, buy stamps, and perhaps host a few post office boxes.



Small post office at Seaside, Florida

The acclaimed post office in Seaside, Florida was noted by the community as a good example of a small and unique postal facility. Its

architecture set an early visual tone in the development of Seaside, and it has since become a national icon. A small postal office built in an architectural style complementary to the corridor, along with the proposed entry monuments and bus shelters, would help establish an architectural precedent for new development along the corridor. The community should work with the appropriate agencies, such as the United States Postal Service and the City of Jacksonville, to determine the feasibility of and possible sites for these improvements.

Bike Lanes

The community expressed a desire for bike lanes during the workshops, but an analysis of the existing conditions revealed significant limitations. (see cross section diagram on page 18).

Creation of new bike lanes would necessitate widening of the roadway by at least 4 feet on either side. While room exists to implement this measure, it would be an expensive process, with reconstruction of roadside drainage features being the most costly. This would also reduce the already limited space for landscaping.

An alternative approach would be widening the existing sidewalks to create new “multiuse” trails. Minimum widths for such trails is 10 feet. Space appears available on each side of the road to create such trails, but this would limit space for new landscaping.

More research needs to be done to determine if a real need exists for bike lanes and who the expected users are. For example, a multiuse trail would be preferable over road-level bike lanes if

school children are determined to be the majority users. The planned elementary school near Connie Jean Road may provide sufficient influence to support this project.

The FDOT reserves enhancement funds for bike lanes (see Section 5). WBLA should open a dialogue with FDOT to fund a study and possible implementation of new bike lanes.

PRIVATE PROPERTY PROJECTS

These projects do not meet Town Center funding requirements because they are either located on private property or require the purchase of private property. Town Center Program funding for improvements is limited to the public right-of-way.

Building Improvements

Buildings are one of the primary elements defining the Town Center corridor, especially east of Shindler Road. Their architectural style, history, arrangement, and use create a sense of place more than any other single corridor feature. Buildings older than 40 or 50 years (from the date of this report) were built in an era when raw materials, especially lumber, were of a much higher quality. Craftsmanship had a higher social value at that time, and attention to form and detail was important. Also significant is the location of these buildings; they were typically built with store-fronts facing the primary road and close to the right-of-way. This placement is in contrast with development trends that evolved with the automobile and shifted priorities toward parking convenience, resulting in buildings being pushed toward the rear of lots. The placement of buildings close to the road is a visually defining element that is desirable from a pedestrian point of view. Buildings from the older era are visually apparent and an immediate indicator of a historic place.

Older buildings are usually worth preserving and renovating; however, preservation and renovation

can be tedious and expensive, which is why old buildings are often forsaken for new construction. In addition, current building codes are written with new development in mind and can complicate or limit the process of renovation. Still, if a viable Town Center is sought, these difficulties must be overcome through encouragement programs that ease financial and permitting burdens. The following recommendations are among the most important for creating an appealing Town Center:

- **Awnings for commercial storefronts that abut the right-of-way.** Building awnings add visual interest as well as much needed shelter from the elements, especially at building entrances. Awnings that project are preferable over ones that hang vertically. Awnings should extend a minimum of 4 feet to provide adequate shelter for pedestrians.
- **Restoration of storefront windows.** Traditional storefront windows should be preserved and alteration with metal frames or excessive paint should be avoided.
- **Removal of burglar bars on windows.** Invisible security measures, such as automated electrical systems, should be implemented in place of metal window burglar bars that are visually unappealing and promote the perception that crime is a problem in the area.
- **Traditional door replacement.** Traditional building doors are wood with possibly a glass insert. Replacement doors if made of modern materials such as metal or fiberglass should be manufactured to look historically correct or at least sympathetic to the prevailing historic theme.
- **Do not paint exposed brick.** Many of the storefronts along the corridor are unpainted brick. They should remain unpainted to preserve the original appearance. Painting of brick is most often irreversible and should be avoided whenever possible.
- **Dilapidated buildings should be demolished.**

- **Dumpsters and trash containers should be screened from public view.**
- **Limit on-site parking to the sides and rear of the property.**

Overlay District

During the workshops, participants discussed the value of creating an overlay district for all or part of the 103rd Street area. Low-end commercial strip buildings is the current development trend along 103rd Street and the existing zoning does nothing to alter this pattern. Residents expressed serious concern about the ultimate loss of local identity, increased traffic, and general ugliness resulting from this trend.

One alternative is an overlay district for 103rd Street. An overlay district would create some enforceable conditions that would better control development along the corridor, especially of the commercial type. An overlay district would include written guidelines specific to the neighborhood and geared toward protection and promotion of its valuable assets. Development guidelines would give greater understanding, form, and direction to renovation and new development efforts. Establishment of an overlay district would also give an added measure of protection to historic properties.

Workshop participants were primarily concerned with establishing commercial design standards. The WBLA should coordinate consideration of an overlay district with their City Council representatives, corridor property owners, and the Planning and Development Department.

Commercial Signs

Signs along the corridor, including commercial signs and transportation signs, have significant visual impact. Because transportation signs must maintain a universality for effectiveness, the commercial signs along the corridor should be the primary focus. As part of the overlay guidelines, WBLA should develop sign guidelines specific to

103rd Street. Sign guidelines would aid new businesses attracted to the Town Center through this initiative by developing a consistent approach. Guidelines would also aid existing business owners in communicating the long-term objectives of the program and, while not obligating them to change or replace their current signs, at least inform them of the Vision. Sign attributes such as size, location, height, color, shape, and material should be considered.



Decorative business sign in Leesburg, Florida

to the Town Center Initiative. Architectural guidelines should initially address facade improvements as the most visible and public aspect of commercial buildings. General guidelines for facade improvements are offered in Section 4, but a primary consideration is creating architectural standards based upon the corridor theme established by the new Westside Regional Library.

Architectural Guidelines

As with sign guidelines, WBLA should create architectural guidelines for the overlay district, specific to the needs and Vision of the 103rd Street Town Center. Such guidelines would serve to assist business owners in providing renovation standards, while also boosting investor confidence in the strength of local commitment



Improved building facades in San Marco

5 Implementing the Vision

The previous two sections describe many projects that make up the overall Vision for 103rd Street. Those projects described in Section 3 qualify for Phase II funding.* Some of those Vision elements could be implemented within a relatively short time, probably 2 to 4 years from the date of this report. Nevertheless, these projects alone are not enough to ensure that 103rd Street will grow into the energetic, pedestrian-oriented community envisioned by workshop participants. There are still several implementation measures that WBLA and the community need to consider. Fortunately, a model exists that provides an established framework on which WBLA could base their own Town Center initiative.

The Florida Main Street Approach

The 103rd Street Town Center corridor functions similarly to a small town Main Street. In this regard, the Florida Main Street program provides a useful model for developing implementation strategies.

Florida Main Street is a program of the Department of State, Division of Historical Resources, Bureau of Historic Preservation. The program provides training and technical assistance to local Florida Main Street programs in accordance with the National Main Street Center Four Point

* Funding for Phase II and Phase III requires a separate application and approval process through the Planning and Development Department. Satisfactory completion of Phase I Visioning does not guarantee funding for Phase II and Phase III of the Town Center Program.

Approach and with assistance from the National Main Street Center.

“Design improvements alone will not bring about meaningful change; effective marketing, a strong organizational base and solid economic development strategies are all necessary to reverse the cycle of decay from which many downtowns suffer and to sustain preservation activity.” (Florida Main Street)

Design

“Design involves improving the downtown’s image by enhancing its physical appearance—not just the appearance of buildings, but also that of street lights, window displays, parking areas, signs, sidewalks, promotional materials and all other elements that convey a visual message about the downtown and what it has to offer.” (Florida Main Street)

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Of the four points, design is the one most frequently addressed in this report. Through this study and its subsequent Town Center phases, major design initiatives will be implemented. There remain, however, other important issues that need to be addressed.

Develop a Handout We recommend that WBLA design a handout dedicated to outlining Vision goals and progress to date, as well as solicit involvement and input. This handout would be used as a promotional tool.

Form a Subcommittee Dedicated to Future Programming. Projects listed in Section 4 are not funded under the City’s Town Center Program. The Project Team recommends that WBLA form a subcommittee that will be responsible for coordination with Parks and Recreation, City Council representatives, the Planning and Development Department, area business representatives,

and other stakeholders affected by the proposed projects. Additionally, this group should identify alternative funding sources to create more development options.

Organization

“Organization means building consensus and cooperation among the groups that play roles in downtown. Many individuals have a stake in the economic viability of the downtown, including: bankers, property owners, city and county officials, merchants, downtown residents, professionals, chamber of commerce representatives, local industries, civic groups, historic societies, schools, consumers, real estate agents, and local media.” (Florida Main Street)

Form a Steering Committee. Organization is at the heart of Main Street success. Main Street programs always have a dedicated manager. Often this is a full-time paid position. WBLA as the sponsoring group is already a dedicated organization. To ensure that needs specific to this vision are met, the Town Center steering committee that was formed for the Phase I application should continue to oversee the implementation of this Vision through Phase II and Phase III of the Town Center Program as well as through means outside the program.

Promotion

Promotion involves marketing the area’s unique characteristics to shoppers, investors, new businesses, residents, tourists, and others. Effective promotion creates a positive image for the area through retail promotional activity, special events and ongoing programs to build a positive image of the community.

Involve Local Merchants. To gain the support necessary to enact this Vision, the program and 103rd Street itself must be actively promoted. The local merchants need to be a part of this promotion effort and involved in its organization. It is important that promotion planners understand merchant needs such as access and visibility, and it is just as important for business owners to under-

stand that promotion often involves extra effort, such as extending store hours at certain times.

Create a New Event. Regular events are an excellent means of generating interest and activity for a Town Center. We recommend that WBLA create at least one new event that is unique to the area that would attract local residents as well as people from around the city. Dade City Main Street used a two-event-per-year program to effectively build support for their Main Street and at the same time create new local traditions. They created one event to be family-oriented, inexpensive, and fun (a Halloween carnival) and one event that was purely for the merchants (a Christmas walk). Both events required a great deal of organization but have resulted in a very successful redevelopment of their Town Center.

Economic Restructuring

“Economic restructuring means strengthening the existing economic base of the downtown while diversifying it. Economic restructuring activities include helping existing downtown businesses expand, recruiting new businesses to provide a balanced mix, converting unused space into productive property and sharpening the competitiveness of downtown merchants. By strengthening the downtown’s economy, communities are able to support the ongoing use of historic commercial buildings, preserving unique community assets.” (Florida Main Street)

Conduct a Market Study. A market study would examine in detail the economic and demographic conditions specific to 103rd Street. Initial efforts might include identifying sources of funding to pay for a professional analysis. Alternatively, WBLA could conduct their own market study, using volunteers to research available data and draw conclusions regarding the current and potential conditions of the environment. In either case, this would be a significant first effort toward economic restructuring, lending the necessary information to make informed decisions.

Town Center Program Phase II

With the completion of this report, the 103rd Street community is eligible to apply for Phase II funding through the City's Town Center Program. WBLA, as the sponsoring agent for Phase I, is the logical choice to make the Phase II application.

The types of improvements found in Section 3 of this report and their estimated costs can serve as the guide for the Phase II application. The Phase II effort would include continued community input as well as coordination with the City and other affected agencies for construction details.

Other Funding Opportunities

Several funding opportunities could be used by WBLA (or other viable party) to help implement the "expanded vision" projects described in Section 4. The following list is meant to be a starting point; numerous other opportunities exist and may provide the best fit for implementing one or more of these projects.

City of Jacksonville

The following City programs are accessible but often competitive, requiring the sponsoring agent to be organized and persistent as recommended earlier. Nevertheless, the projects outlined in this report as community building initiatives are ideal candidates for funding from many of these sources. This list is meant to be a starting point as other opportunities exist and may provide a better fit for implementing one or more of these projects.

Small Business Development Initiative Program

This program is aimed at small and start-up businesses and provides low interest loans to qualified applicants for up to 30% of the project cost, and not to exceed \$250,000.

Mayor's Neighborhood

Matching Grants Program

"The Mayor's Neighborhood Matching Grants (MNMG) Program makes awards of up to \$5,000 to specific neighborhood projects that build relationships and enhance the physical attractiveness of a community. As part of the city's continuing efforts to improve and strengthen Jacksonville neighborhoods, the Mayor proposed and the City Council approved an appropriation of \$250,000 for the Fiscal Year 2004-2005 budget cycle.

Any neighborhood association, civic organization or community group that has been in existence for at least six months and is located in Duval County was eligible to submit an application. This year more than 50 eligible applications were received.

Each project is being evaluated on the basis of how well it addresses the program's main purpose of improving the physical appearance of neighborhoods." (<http://www.coj.net>)

The Matching Grant Program offers neighborhood organizations the opportunity to initiate and implement smaller scale projects and manage the projects themselves. This program may offer opportunities to develop some of the smaller projects identified in this report or pieces of larger ones. Local information about the program can be obtained at 630-7041 or on-line at www.coj.net.

Community Development Block Grant

"The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) is an entitlement grant awarded to the City of Jacksonville through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (U.S. HUD) that is based upon need factors including population, income, unemployment level and housing conditions.

CDBG grants are to be used for a wide range of housing and community development activities directed toward neighborhood revitalization, economic development and improved community facilities and services, and must give "maximum

feasible priority” to activities that will benefit low-and moderate-income persons or aid in the prevention or elimination of slums or blight. Funds may also be used to meet other community development needs that present a serious and immediate threat to the health or welfare of the community.” (<http://www.coj.net>)

Some of the projects outlined in this report could be eligible for CDBG funding. Local information about the program can be obtained at 630-7030 or on-line at www.coj.net.

Historic Properties

“In November 1992, the State of Florida authorized local governments to provide a partial tax exemption on historic properties. The City of Jacksonville approved an ad valorem tax exemption for locally designated properties that undergo a substantial rehabilitation.” (<http://www.coj.net>)

To be eligible for Historic Property benefits, the property or area must have a historic designation. Properties can seek “landmark” status at the local level or apply for a listing on the National Register of Historic Properties through the Trust for Historic Preservation. 103rd Street is not part of an established historic district; therefore, each building or property would apply individually.

Tree Protection and Related Expenses Trust Fund

The Jacksonville City Council approved the creation of the Tree Protection and Related Expenses Trust Fund to provide for the replacement of removed protected trees within the public right-of-way and for their establishment and care. Contributions to the fund come primarily from property owners, both private and public, that remove protected trees (as defined by the ordinance) and elect to pay for each protected tree removed (at \$107 per caliper inch at the time of this report), rather than replace them with new trees according to the ordinance requirements. The proposed trees in this report are located in the right-of-way and may be eligible for funding through the Tree Protection and Related Expenses Trust Fund.

State of Florida

The following resources and contact information are listed for potential state funding and assistance. They are listed in order of applicability to this Vision report and those with greatest correlation are described more fully.

Florida Department of Transportation

The current Transportation Enhancement Program (TEP) provides enhancement funds for improvements that are recommended in this report as well as other improvements not specifically addressed, such as provisions for bike lanes.

ISTEA Enhancement Program

Transportation enhancement projects, including bike and pedestrian trails.

Robert Crimm (850) 487-3985
605 Suwannee Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0450

“The Transportation Enhancement Program (TEP) is a federal program administered by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). TEP guidance and direction are provided by the Environmental Management Office, whereas the selection and implementation of most enhancement projects are handled by the FDOT District Offices with input from Metropolitan Planning Organizations or County Commissions.

Funding for transportation enhancement projects is provided by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) through the Federal Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). This funding is intended for projects or features that go beyond what has been customarily provided with transportation improvements. This program is for projects that are related to the transportation system but are beyond what is required through normal mitigation or routinely provided features is transportation improvements. TEP is not a grant program, rather projects are undertaken by project sponsors, and eligible costs are reimbursed.”

TEP Activities Defined -

1. *Provision of facilities for pedestrians and bicycles.*
2. *Provision of safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicyclists.*
3. *Acquisition of scenic easements and scenic or historic sites.*
4. *Scenic or historic highway programs (including the provision of tourist and welcome center facilities).*
5. *Landscaping and other scenic beautification.*
6. *Historic preservation.*
7. *Rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation buildings, structures, or facilities (including historic railroad facilities and canals).*
8. *Preservation of abandoned railway corridors (including the conversion and use thereof for pedestrian or bicycle trails).*
9. *Control and removal of outdoor advertising.*
10. *Archaeological planning and research.*
11. *Environmental mitigation to address water pollution due to highway runoff or reduce vehicle-caused wildlife mortality while maintaining habitat connectivity.*
12. *Establishment of transportation museums.”* (<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov>)

Department of Community Affairs

Florida Communities Trust

This program could provide another funding mechanism for acquiring the land for the proposed parks described in Section 4.

“Florida Communities Trust (FCT) is a state land acquisition grant program housed at the Florida Department of Community Affairs. FCT provides funding to local governments and eligible nonprofit environmental organizations for acquisition of community-based parks, open space and greenways that further outdoor recreation and natural resource protection needs identified in local government comprehensive plans.” (<http://www.dca.state.fl.us>)

Janice Browning (850) 922-2207
2555 Shumard Oak Boulevard
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-2100

Department of State

State Historic Preservation Grants-in-Aid Program

Historic and archaeological site identification, preservation, restoration and education.

Fred Gaske (850) 487-2333
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0250

Historical Museums Grants-In-Aid Program

Development of exhibits on Florida history.

David Gregory (850) 487-1902
The Old Capitol, Room B-11
400 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0250

Cultural Facilities Program

Funding for acquisition, construction and renovation of cultural facilities.

Don Blancett (850) 245-6483
1001 DeSoto Park
Tallahassee, Florida 32301

Challenge Grant Program

Funding to support unique or innovative cultural projects.

Dr. Gaylen Phillips (850) 245-6482
1001 DeSoto Park
Tallahassee, Florida 32301

6 Maintaining the Vision

Maintenance is a significant issue determining the success or failure of proposed improvements, whether on public or private land. Maintenance represents care, and the care of a place is visually apparent even from a fast moving car. The degree of care offered to a place, whether building or landscape, is usually a factor of time and money, but it also depends greatly on varying attitudes about what is visually acceptable by a community.

The broad design measures recommended in this report are prepared with the benefit of training and expertise. The use of certain materials and their arrangement will create a more ordered and appealing environment, even with little continual maintenance. Where a more manicured appearance is desired, supplemental maintenance will be required. The recommendations below are aimed at providing the necessary coordination and practice to achieve a higher quality appearance and longer lasting product for the proposed corridor improvements.

Partnerships

With regard to public right-of-ways and parks, the immediate solution for elevated maintenance is the creation of partnerships. Partnerships between public and private entities many times allow for a win-win situation, with each often getting what they want. Public agencies aim to please the community while maintaining a budget; private entities desire a higher degree of control over the look and upkeep of their shared environment. In many partnerships, all or a percentage of the public maintenance budget is allotted to the private entity for maintenance purposes under a contract clearly stating minimum requirements. In some cases, the established



Roadside maintenance in Deerwood, a public/private partnership

public budget is adequate to fund the desired maintenance when supplemented with volunteer labor, donations, and other resources not available to the public entity.

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The FDOT is the public agency that maintains jurisdiction over the right-of-way along 103rd Street. To move this Vision forward, it is important for WBLA to coordinate the implementation goals of this plan with the FDOT and City. Ultimately, a contract may be required between all public agencies, the residents, and the businesses to achieve a consistency in maintenance along the entire corridor.

Landscaping

Landscape plants are one of the most visible clues to the degree of maintenance an area or place undertakes. Basic landscape maintenance is relatively inexpensive when compared to the cost of roadway, infrastructure, utility, building, or other maintenance efforts. Typical landscape routines for public sector entities are limited to regular mowing with occasional edging and trimming.

Extended Maintenance Period

The critical maintenance period for landscape plants is the first year following installation. Typical FDOT and City of Jacksonville landscape contracts require a 90-day maintenance period. This is not long enough to ensure proper plant establishment. The duration of maintenance through establishment is further necessitated when there is no automated irrigation system and this plan has been developed to not be contingent upon such a system. Therefore, installation contracts should include an extended maintenance program for a minimum of one year to allow better establishment of new plants.

General Maintenance Practices

General maintenance practices should conform to industry standards. While the plants recommended in this report are hardy and should do well with little attention once established, they will grow faster, be healthier, and look better with regular attendance.

Plants should be fertilized annually, according to their specific need. Plants should be inspected annually for pests or disease, and pesticides should be applied as needed to infested or diseased plants. Pruning should be accomplished only by licensed personnel and according to ANSI A-300 pruning standards. Pruning should only be performed to remove dead or low-hanging branches. Crape myrtles especially should not be cut back severely from the top but instead allowed to achieve a natural, small tree form. Weeds should be removed at least twice per year during establishment, and after shrubs and ground covers have been established, on an as-needed basis. To limit weed intrusion, an annual application of mulch and pre-emergent herbicide is recommended for all planting beds. Pine straw and pine bark are recommended mulch selections. Cypress bark should be avoided as a nonrenewable resource and artificially colored mulches avoided due to their unnatural appearance.

Sidewalks, Crosswalks, and Seating Areas

Paved areas outside of the roadway itself need to be inspected annually for cracking, settlement, and other conditions that pose a hazard to pedestrians. Weeds that appear in cracks and spaces should be spot-treated as needed and diligently with an herbicide.

Light Posts and Signal Posts

Light and signal posts should be inspected annually and damage reported to JEA. Repainting should occur when fading or peeling is visible.

Buildings

Older buildings such as the ones along the Town Center corridor require continual maintenance. Facade treatments, storefronts and street-facing, publicly visible features are of concern in this report. Exposed wood materials should be kept painted, stained, or treated to maintain the quality of the wood and a well-kept appearance. Jacksonville's climatic conditions necessitate repainting on a five-year average. Faded or torn awnings, or other cloth or plastic material mounted to the facade, should be replaced with new material. Property owners should keep sidewalks that are their responsibility in good repair and clean of all litter and debris to maintain a well-kept appearance. Graffiti should be removed immediately from sidewalks or building walls. Graffiti that lingers signals to residents and vandals that the neighborhood does not care, while prompt removal has the opposite effect. Products are available for this purpose, and standard oven cleaner apparently works well.

7 Final Recommendations

As a final measure of ensuring the ongoing realization of the 103rd Street Town Center Vision, some recommendations are offered to address other issues discussed by the group.

CPTED

“CPTED is the acronym for Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design. CPTED is defined as “the proper design and effective use of the built environment that can lead to a reduction in the fear and incidence of crime and an improvement in the quality of life.” CPTED addresses crime problems through controlling the environment.

CPTED is based on these three overlapping strategies:

1. **Natural Surveillance** - The placement and design of physical features to maximize visibility. This includes building orientation, windows, entrances and exits, parking lots, walkways, guard gates, landscape trees and shrubs, fences or walls, signage and any other physical obstruction.

2. **Natural Access Control** - The use of sidewalks, pavement, lighting and landscaping to clearly guide the public to and from entrances and exits. Also, the use of fences, walls or landscaping to prevent and/or discourage public access to or from dark and/or unmonitored areas.

3. **Territorial Reinforcement** - The use of pavement treatments, landscaping, art, signage, screening and fences to define and outline ownership or property.

Program Goals

The goal of CPTED is to reduce opportunities for crime that may be inherent in the design of structures or in the

design of neighborhoods. The goal is accomplished through the involvement of CPTED trained law enforcement officers in the planning, development, and design review of community projects.

How does CPTED impact me?

CPTED impacts each citizen by increasing safety, promoting secure environments and improving the appearance of neighborhoods and public amenities. CPTED improves existing services by working with neighborhoods, businesses, community groups and law enforcement.” (<http://www.coj.net/jso/>)

Called “septed,” this City of Jacksonville’s Sheriff’s Office (JSO) program from the JSO helps communities identify crime-causing elements in the environment and solutions to rectify them. JSO has designated officers specially trained to communicate this process to the community and to find solutions specific to the area. Many of their observations are intriguing and escape notice by the layperson. Often it is little changes to the environment that make big differences in reducing crime. As this is a free service, WBLA is strongly encouraged coordinate a CPTED survey through the JSO.

Officer Laurie Dill (904) 630-2160
JSO Community Affairs Division
501 East Bay Street, Room 204
Jacksonville, Florida 32202

Code Enforcement

Workshop participants cited greater code enforcement as a high priority to ensure a cleaner and more appealing corridor. Significant problems noted by participants included:

- Private property maintenance, especially concerning deteriorating residences and yard maintenance
- Trash removal from the right-of-way
- Cars parked in front yards
- Vandalism and graffiti
- Crime

The Jacksonville Ordinance Code provides for minimum acceptable social practices to maintain a consistent appearance and pleasant, healthy living environment. Citizens may register complaints and violations directly with the City through City Link and the C.A.R.E. system.

City Link

117 W. Duval Street
Suite M-150, City Hall
Jacksonville, FL 32202.
(904) 630-2489 or
630CITY@coj.net

JaxPride is another resource available for assisting with local code enforcement through their Neighborhood Inventory of Visual Pollution (NIVP) program. This program provides assistance to local communities for identifying code violations in their neighborhood that cause visual blight. The program has been very successful in helping inform and empower concerned citizens, as well as improving the visual quality of the city.

JaxPride

904-398-4646
jaxpride@fcol.com

8 Conclusion

The 103rd Street commercial district has a viable opportunity through the City's Town Center Initiative to restore and revitalize its character, provide better, safer shopping, service, and entertainment alternatives for area residents, and create a more meaningful and aesthetically pleasing environment. This report represents the first step in effecting those changes. The Vision for 103rd Street, as conceived in this plan through data collection, community input, Vision concepts, and implementation recommendations, is a prerequisite for moving forward.



This report meets Town Center Program Phase II funding requirements and contains the necessary ingredients to steer development of construction drawings; however, Phase I recipients are not guaranteed Phase II funding through the program. If selected by the City for Phase II funding, the Phase II design consultant should use this report to identify the primary themes and recommendations developed for 103rd Street.

The Vision Plan illustrations provided in this report are intended as a guide for developing construction drawings. They are reasonably accurate and should be referred to by the Phase II consultant once a more accurate base plan is developed. Where changes must occur due to unforeseen circumstances, the Phase II consultant should make needed adjustments while keeping the theme of the Vision in mind.

WBLA has taken a strong first step in pursuing this program to create a revitalized 103rd Street Town Center corridor. This Vision plan is an outgrowth of that effort

and responds directly to the needs and desires of the community. Through the fulfillment of this Vision, the 103rd Street community will become more attractive, safe, and prosperous, recognized as a unique and desirable place within the greater city of Jacksonville.